

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 25, 2010

The Honorable Allen D. Biehler
Secretary of Transportation
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Secretary Biehler:

We write today addressing a critical issue that will impact nearly every farm family in Pennsylvania – revised intrastate transportation regulations spurred by a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) audit.

The FMCSA conducted an audit of the Pennsylvania Intrastate Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code in March 2007, determining that several provisions of Pennsylvania's intrastate transportation regulations were "less stringent" than Federal interstate standards. In response, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) issued a notice of proposed rulemaking that would replace a body of intrastate regulations that have been in place for more than 15 years and provided local agricultural transportation with common-sense exemptions from regulatory requirements with one that imposes the same Federal standards that apply to interstate commercial trucking companies to short-haul farm trucks necessary to conduct daily farm activities.

The proposed changes will place unworkable requirements on farmers in "legally" managing the operation and use of agricultural vehicles around the farm, with essentially no improvement to vehicle or driver safety. According to the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, who has confirmed their interpretation of the new regulations with PennDOT, virtually every situation in which a trailer or implement is being towed by a farm truck will cause the vehicle and driver to be regulated like an interstate truck driver. We have attached a summary, prepared by the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, outlining the severe impacts on farms and their families across the Commonwealth.

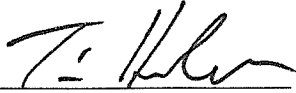
Agriculture has had a series of economic blows over the past year or more – from historically low milk prices to the impact of the "Swine Flu" hysteria, and significant reductions in agricultural exports. Pennsylvania farmers are already finding it difficult to economically survive. These changes to Pennsylvania intrastate regulations will certainly prevent a large segment of family labor that farm families have vitally needed to complete the planting, cultivating, fertilizing, harvesting and delivery tasks to remain viable in farming from being used on the family farm.

In discussions with FMCSA, we understand PennDOT must apply to FMCSA for an extension of the imposed March 31 deadline. We ask that you submit this application promptly to FMCSA so we

have the opportunity to fully investigate this matter and hear testimony on the impacts on the number one industry in Pennsylvania – agriculture.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

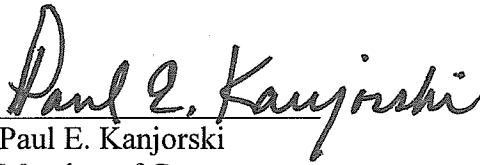
Sincerely,



Tim Holden
Member of Congress



Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress



Paul E. Kanjorski
Member of Congress



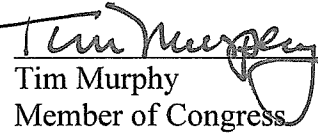
Todd Russell Platts
Member of Congress



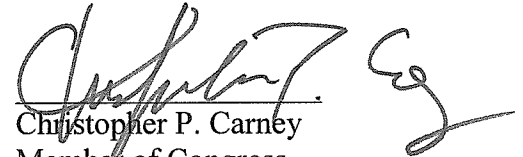
Bill Shuster
Member of Congress



Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress



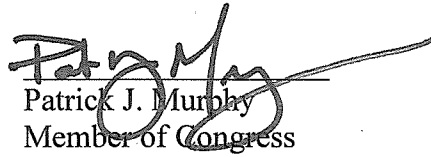
Tim Murphy
Member of Congress



Christopher P. Carney
Member of Congress



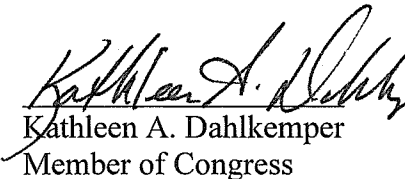
Jason Altmire
Member of Congress



Patrick J. Murphy
Member of Congress



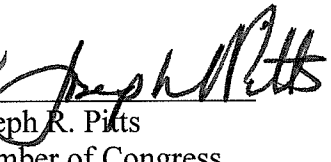
Joe Sestak
Member of Congress



Kathleen A. Dahlkemper
Member of Congress



Glenn Thompson
Member of Congress



Joseph R. Pitts
Member of Congress