

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
108th Congress
Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6315

April 22, 2005

The Honorable Don Young
Chairman
House Committee On Transportation & Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:


As the Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business, I want to commend you for including the Truckload Fuel Surcharge legislation in H.R. 3, the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. The truckload fuel surcharge provision is a reasonable, responsible, and appropriate way to address the enormous fuel cost burden that is threatening America's small business trucking companies.

As you know, small business truckers comprise approximately 80 percent of the trucking industry. Considering that trucks are the only providers of goods to 75 percent of American communities, they are the backbone of our country's transportation system. Inconsistent and often high fuel prices have devastated small trucking companies over the last few years, forcing the closure of thousands of these businesses. This has had a significant impact on the freight hauling capacity of the trucking industry and its ability to provide for the needs of America's farmers, manufacturers and retailers.

Fuel surcharges are commonly used by large corporations in the trucking industry to recoup increased fuel costs. Impediments within industry procedures make it very difficult for small trucking companies to access fuel surcharges, leaving them at a distinct competitive disadvantage. The fuel surcharge provision provides all companies in the truckload segment of the trucking industry with the ability to withstand erratic and rising fuel costs. This provision will help to maintain a competitive and reliable trucking industry without cost to the federal government.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with you to ensure the inclusion of this provision in the final version of the highway bill conference report. Thank you for your concern and support for America's hard-working small businessmen and women.

Sincerely,


Donald A. Manzullo
Chairman