**Trucking Industry Remarks**

*June 2015*

**Introduction**

Trucks: we see them every day on our roads and bridges. We ride alongside them on the highway. Nearly every major industry that moves goods and services across our country is moved by a truck.

And yet, many of us don’t make the connection that these trucks are likely delivering something that we’ll use today and rely on tomorrow—food on our tables, medicine to stay healthy, equipment for our military and even the clothes on our backs.

The fact is that trucking is the only industry that directly ships to every community in America, rain or shine.

Trucking is not only connecting the country and delivering goods that keep us healthy and comfortable; it’s an economic engine that is valuable to our country in many ways.

Fewer trucks on the road would mean more expensive products, less interstate commerce and slower deliveries.

The trucking industry also means jobs—about 30,000 of them, in fact. That’s a substantial portion of the nearly 7 million people employed nationwide in trucking jobs. Many truck companies are owner-operators, with over 90% driving their own small, independent business.

Most of you may know someone who works in the professional trucking industry. These are well-paid, middle-class jobs, from positions as professional drivers, to the mechanics, to logistics specialists and vendors, who often work behind the scenes to keep these trucks on the road.

The trucking industry allows businesses to prosper—to the benefit of business owners, employees, and consumers. Collectively, trucking industry wages paid in 2013 exceeded $12.7 billion. This economic activity brings in significant tax revenue for our nation.

All across America, the trucking industry is strengthening small businesses—arguably the most important element of our nation’s long-term economic stability.

The industry also helps other businesses stay efficient by delivering essential products that move our communities and families. Trucks transport 70 percent of the total manufactured tonnage in America—that’s 11 billion tons of freight each year.

So next time you are driving on the highway and a tractor-trailer passes by, or you’re at the local grocery as a truck docks in the delivery bay, you’re not just looking at an impressive 18-wheeler traveling the road; you’re looking at a vital machine that powers the American economy.

**Safety….**

I’d like to share some numbers with you.

3 million miles, 3.5 million miles, 2.7 million miles.

These are not simply totals of highway miles logged. These are the millions of *accident-free* miles of individual, dedicated professional truck drivers. Not an easy task when, collectively, truck drivers travel more than 420 billion miles each year. For trucking professionals, safety is the number one priority, not only for fellow truck drivers, but for other motorists who share the road with trucks.

Every day, more than 3 million professional truck drivers take to the road to meet our nation’s freight needs, and many strive to meet a critical safety feat—to be accident free.

The professional trucking industry remains committed to the highest safety standards. Each year, scores of drivers are recognized as leaders, for their commitment to safety, proficiency in advanced driving techniques, and building the next generation of professional drivers.

Thanks to these educational programs and new technologies, the facts demonstrate that the industry is indeed becoming safer. The U.S. Department of Transportation reports that the fatal crash rate has fallen 73 percent since 1973, when the agency started collecting the data.

And, in 2011, the fatal crash rate was the lowest it had ever been, according to the DOT.

**Sustainability….**

The trucking industry is *committed to improving the environment,* and current efforts and programs are making a difference. A rule developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency will ensure that trucks and buses built from 2014 through 2018 will help to reduce oil consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

Many trucking companies have also increasingly participated in a sustainability program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by one billion tons and fuel consumption by 86 billion gallons over the next ten years.

Have you ever seen some of those panels flapping on the side and back of a truck while you are traveling on the highway? The panels under the body of the truck are called aerodynamic panel skirts, side panels, or side skirts. These help to reduce drag and save fuel, especially at highway speeds. Side panels also reduce air turbulence on the undercarriage and wheels of the rig. When operating at peak efficiency, these skirts can save between 5 and 15 percent on fuel costs.

Trucks are embracing these types of green technologies and other environmental improvements. Many trucking companies are developing trailers made of carbon-fiber, which helps to reduce weight by nearly 4,000 pounds of weight. This technology allows fleets to carry more freight.

New engines, filters and new management techniques have also reduced the industry's environmental impact.

**Community Partner….**

Additionally, during times of *community need*, trucking delivers.

Trucks connect and grow communities across the country, day in and day out, one truck at a time.

In times of crisis, our industry is there. To deliver the goods and supplies to help communities rebuild. The industry performs a massive service to victims of natural disasters, delivering everything from food and housing relief to first aid and hauling away debris.

And when the immediate crisis is over, trucks deliver the essentials to rebuild those communities. For example, in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, as many as 32 food trucks were dispatched, each serving more than 500 meals to storm victims in areas without access to food or restaurants.

**Conclusion …**

For over a century, our nation has placed its trust in the American trucking industry to *deliver goods safely and on time.*

These trucking professionals are fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters—aiming to deliver the goods in ways that are safe, efficient and environmentally friendly. Only by coming together can we tell our story, because we know that trucking moves America forward.