



March 13, 2012

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley:

The National Federation of Independent Business is pleased to support S.A. 1814, an amendment to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (S.1813). This amendment would allow farmers and ranchers who live near state borders to transport their products to the closest processing facility even if it may be in a neighboring state, eliminating needless red tape.

Farming remains an integral part of the American economy and is at its core one of the most basic entrepreneurial endeavors. The federal government needs to be sure to use care when regulating the farming industry to ensure its viability.

Currently, many farm vehicles are regulated as commercial motor vehicles – vehicles like 18-wheel tractor trailers and other heavy duty trucks that often drive many hours and hundreds if not thousands of miles per trip. These vehicles are subject to extensive regulation and inspection in order to ensure the public safety. An unfortunate side effect of these regulations is that farmers with heavy equipment that live near state borders are subject to regulation and inspection when crossing state lines to their local processing facility simply because that facility is in another state.

Your amendment would exempt certain farm vehicles from these inspections so that farmers are free to transport their harvested products without delay or unnecessary regulation. Specifically, the amendment would exempt vehicles that are registered as farm vehicles and driven by the farmer, an employee or family member; are transporting to or from the farm agricultural goods, machinery or supplies; and are less than 26,001 lbs. – or if heavier only travels in a 150 mile radius of the farm.

NFIB supports this commonsense amendment because it will free farmers and ranchers from unnecessary regulation that does not enhance the public safety in any way. We urge the Senate to approve amendment to help America's agricultural community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Eckerly". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Susan Eckerly  
Senior Vice President  
Public Policy

National Federation of Independent Business

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