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Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review

Nathan H. Manning
State Representative

Chair Ryan, Vice-Chair Lipps, Ranking Member Cera, and fellow members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 154 which would establish the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program. The Commercial Trucking sector is an area in need of qualified workers to fill jobs which are currently available. In addition to the current available employment, Ohio Jobs and Family Services projects that over 18,000 new jobs will be created in the industry by 2024. Our country as a whole is projected to have 800,000 unfilled jobs nationwide by 2027 due to the average age of commercial truck drivers being more than 55 years old.

With the need for qualified workers, the intent of this legislation is to create a dual scholarship and loan program which requires enrollees to have a stake in the process while giving individuals with lower means the ability to participate. There is a screening process which would require applicants to be able to qualify for an Ohio Commercial Driver's License and typical employment with a commercial transportation company by evaluating their driving record, a drug test, and an Ohio residency requirement. I believe this is common sense legislation that will help bolster a valuable sector of Ohio's economy but most importantly help lower and middle class individuals gain important worthwhile training which directly leads to a good paying job with an average beginning salary of \$40,000 per year. I would like to thank my joint sponsor, Speaker Smith, for working with me on this important legislation and will turn the podium over to him. I would be happy to take any questions at the conclusion of his testimony.