



HOUSE BILL 284
House Insurance Committee
October 31, 2017

Chairman Brinkman, Vice-Chairman Henne, Ranking Member Bocchieri, and members of the House Insurance Committee, my name is Tom Balzer, and I am the president and CEO of the Ohio Trucking Association and the Ohio Association of Movers. Collectively, we represent over 1,000 trucking, moving, logistics, and warehouse companies and allied vendor members.

The shortage of drivers in the trucking industry has reached epic proportions. According to the American Trucking Association, the current truck driver shortage is at 50,000 drivers. If this course continues, shortages will reach 250,000 drivers by 2025.

While the workforce shortages are being felt throughout all industries, there are a number of complicating factors that make trucking different. In addition to the federally mandated pre-employment requirements, including drug testing and verification of motor vehicle records, trucking companies have to check the employability of younger drivers with their insurance companies. Every driver has to be given a “yes” or “no” by their insurance provider, they even have the ability to provisionally approve a potential employee’s hire with a probationary period. Unfortunately, there is a group of drivers disqualified for no other reason than their age. Drivers under the age of 25 are usually prohibited from coverage or are prohibitively priced based solely on age.

The intent of HB284 is to establish a short-term study committee to find answers to the issue of the insurability of drivers under the age of 25. It is not the intention of this study to discuss insurance practices, but to cooperatively work with trucking companies and the insurance industry to see if there are solutions to ease the employment of drivers under 25 while protecting the integrity of funds.

The state of Ohio isn’t new to this game; previously, the state entered into the medical malpractice arena to help insurers and medical professional find solutions to the impasse that existed at that time. I believe Ohio can again lead this national conversation.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions.