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83rd House District

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Sponsor Testimony

House Bill 155

House Ways and Means Committee

May 16, 2017

Chair Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the Ways and Means Committee, thank you for giving us the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 155. We introduced House Bill 155 to increase training opportunities for new truck drivers, in order to address our economy's growing driver shortage.

Over two-thirds of freight is moved throughout the United States by trucks, and the drivers that move freight are a critical part of our country's economy. Although drivers play a key role in our country's economic success, we continue to face a growing workforce shortage. Over the last 15 years, with the exception of three years that began in 2008, our country has faced an increasing truck driver shortage. In 2014, the industry was in need of an estimated 38,000 additional drivers. In 2015, that figure increased to an estimated 48,000 drivers. The growing demand for drivers is expected to continue.

Under the bill, employers will be eligible for up to a fifty-percent match of up to \$50,000 in an annual tax credit to train new drivers. The statewide tax credit will be limited to \$3,000,000 per year. In the calendar year prior to offering training, employers that have an interest in receiving the tax credit will be required to submit an estimate of costs to the Ohio Development Services Agency. After the estimated training costs are certified by Ohio Development Services Agency, employers will offer training during the following year. Before January 21st of the next calendar year, employers can apply for a tax credit that equals one-half of the eligible training expenses that were incurred during the preceding calendar year. Eligible training may include training to obtain a commercial driver's license or on-the-job training.

By increasing training opportunities, this legislation is meant to help reduce the urgent and growing demand for truck drivers throughout the State of Ohio. Thank you for your time and consideration. We are happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.