



House Transportation and Public Safety Committee
Written Testimony – SB 170
2/28/18

Honorable Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony today in support of SB 170. My name is Michael Cope and I am the president of the Ohio Coal Association. The Ohio Coal Association is dedicated to representing the interests of Ohio's underground and surface coal producers. The Ohio Coal Association represents nearly all of Ohio's coal producers and dozens of associate members. Collectively, we represent every aspect of the regional coal industry, including coal production, equipment manufacturing and supply, electric power generation, engineering, coal transportation, blasting and other similar enterprises.

As you can imagine, the coal industry in Ohio heavily utilizes truck drivers, both in our daily operations at our sites, as well as in transporting coal to processing plants. The qualified and trained drivers operating within the industry play a large role in helping insure that Ohio's consumers have access to reliable electricity. Trucks offer an extremely versatile transportation option to our members as they can operate nearly anywhere in Ohio. Nevertheless, the driver shortage has made transporting coal by trucks more difficult than ever.

The Ohio Coal Association supports Ohio's efforts to address the driver shortage facing the trucking industry. SB 170 will create a pilot program in Ohio that will expedite the CDL process for our veterans who have experience operating heavy duty vehicles in the military. SB 170 allows our brave veterans to seamlessly transition to a profitable career in the trucking industry, while also helps businesses that are in dire need of drivers. I would like to thank Senator LaRose for introducing this important legislation and urge support for the bill.

Sincerely,

Michael Cope
President, Ohio Coal Association