



October 27, 2021

The Honorable Jay Edwards
77 S. High St., 12th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Chairman Edwards and Members of the House Economic and Workforce Development Committee,

On behalf of the Ohio Trucking Association, I am writing to express our support for the amendment accepted to SB 166 that would make technical revisions to the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program, which was created in the main operating budget (HB 110).

The workforce needs facing the logistics industry are great. The driver shortage is becoming more apparent than ever before, as it has increased the costs of goods and resulted in shortages throughout the state. While the problem is evident, the state currently does very little to remove barriers for individuals to enter the industry. One of those barriers is the financial cost associated with attending CDL school. This barrier can often prevent Ohioans from changing professions or entering the logistics industry.

The Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program that was created in HB 110 provides \$2.5 million per year to offer scholarship and loan opportunities to those Ohioans attending CDL school. As a provision of the program, the student must remain employed in the state for at least a year. This bipartisan proposal will provide the critical resources necessary to remove the financial barrier facing many as they pursue a high-paying career that is essential to all Ohioans.

In working with the Ohio Department of Higher Education, it was identified that technical changes needed to be made to the language in order for the agency to administer the program. These changes do not change the intent of the program, nor the impact it will have on those individuals seeking to obtain a CDL.

We would like to thank this committee for its support of the amendment, as well as the bill's sponsor and numerous other legislators who have helped to create the Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom 10/27/21".

Thomas A. Balzer, CAE
President and CEO
Ohio Trucking Association
CC: Ohio House Economic and Workforce Development Committee

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