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A M E R I C A N S  
F O R M O D E R N  
T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

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March 14, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Office of the Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

As the Department of Transportation (DOT) continues its leadership in identifying solutions to improve and modernize our current infrastructure system, the undersigned organizations support policies that will improve vehicle safety, reduce congestion, lower fuel consumption, and address freight capacity issues. Specifically, we call on DOT to consider modernizing the national twin trailer standard from 28 feet to 33 feet as part of any infrastructure policy recommendations that are put forward by the Administration.

The case for policy change is clear. The U.S. population has almost doubled in the past 50 years, and there are 75 million more vehicles on the road today than there were in 1990. Domestically, e-commerce sales have grown from \$42 billion in 2002 to \$446 billion in 2017. In addition, DOT forecasts a 45 percent increase in freight volumes by 2045 – further exacerbating the freight industry’s ongoing capacity and workforce shortages.

Twin 33-foot trailers would immediately improve the efficiency and safety of truck operations across the nation’s congested freight network and benefit taxpayers and travelers in the following ways:

- Dr. John Woodrooffe’s research has shown that twin 33-foot trailers are more stable and less likely to roll over than twin 28-foot trailers.<sup>1</sup>
- Twin 33-foot trailers will reduce congestion. Authorizing twin 33-foot trailers to operate on the national highway network—only where twin 28-foot trailers currently operate—would result in 3.1 billion fewer vehicle miles traveled, 4,500 fewer annual truck crashes, and 53.2 million hours saved due to less congestion.<sup>2</sup>
- This creative capacity solution, which would maintain current federal weight restrictions, would also reduce wear and tear on existing infrastructure according to a study by Dr. Ron Knipling.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Blower, D., Woodrooffe, J., Green, P.E.(2013) "Real-world Safety Effect of Roll Stability Control." Accepted for publication, SAE, Commercial Vehicle Engineering Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Knipling, Ronald R., Ph.D., (2017) "Twin 33 Foot Truck Trailers: Making U.S. Freight Transport Safer and More Efficient."

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



AMERICANS  
FOR MODERN  
TRANSPORTATION

America must deploy innovative solutions to critical highway capacity issues that threaten U.S. economic growth and competitiveness. A new national standard for twin 33-foot trailers will add instant capacity while reducing congestion and improving the safety and efficiency of the roadways.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring our nation's infrastructure is second to none. We look forward to working with you to include safe highway reforms—such as modernization of twin trailers—to make improvements to the highway freight system that are necessary to a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

Sincerely,



cc: Members of the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure