



## Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association

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September 28, 2017

Ambassador Robert Lighthizer  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
600 17th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Mr. Lighthizer:

As the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) progresses, the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) urges the inclusion of long-haul trucking as an exempted service in Annex II. As currently written, the original NAFTA trucking provision harms American small-business truckers and jeopardizes highway safety. OOIDA is the largest trade association representing the views of small-business truckers and professional truck drivers. We have approximately 158,000 members located in all fifty states that collectively own and operate more than 240,000 individual heavy-duty trucks.

The original NAFTA agreement provided that the U.S. and Mexico would allow each other's trucks to carry goods across the border to make deliveries anywhere inside their respective nations. However, the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) continues to make unacceptable, special accommodations to Mexico-domiciled motor carriers that the U.S. did not promise or agree to under NAFTA. This failed provision has allowed Mexican trucking companies and drivers that are not held to the same, rigorous U.S. safety, security, or environmental regulations to operate on American roadways. Following the completion of a dubious Obama Administration pilot program, Mexican trucking companies are currently taking away jobs and profits from American drivers and motor carriers. At the same time, Mexican trucks are endangering the motoring public. In fact, the 2016 annual DOT safety statistics showed that the crash rate for Mexican-domiciled carriers was 2.8 times higher than U.S. carriers.

Mexico's promise of an equally open border and nationwide access to U.S. motor carriers and drivers is, for all practical purposes, illusory. Since the original agreement, the Mexican border territory has become more dangerous due to drug smuggling and gang violence, providing little incentive for U.S. carriers to engage in business there. The state of Mexico's infrastructure and the absence of police security in Mexican states far outweigh any economic incentive there might otherwise be to move freight south of the border. Additionally, Mexican trucks have been a conveyance for contraband and undocumented immigrants.

OOIDA, in conjunction with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, requests that the Office of the United States Trade Representative include long-haul trucking as an exempted service in Annex II of the NAFTA renegotiations. This fix would restrict access to Mexican trucks beyond the Border Commercial Zones and end the unsafe, nonreciprocal trucking program currently in place. We hope that NAFTA 2.0 will keep our highways safe from trucks and drivers that do not meet our regulatory standards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Todd" being more prominent than the last name "Spencer".

Todd Spencer  
Executive Vice President  
Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, Inc.