ATRI American Transportation Research Institute

State Top Industry Issues Report 2021
Indiana
57 Responses

1. Driver Shortage
- Advocate for expedited launch of the DRIVE-Safe Act pilot program to expand interstate CDL eligibility to 18-20 year olds.
- Develop new outreach initiatives targeted toward high school students and young adults.
- Advocate for expansion of the U.S. EB-3 Permanent Work Authorization permit to recruit qualified candidates from other countries.

2. Driver Retention
- Research and prioritize retention strategies, based on driver feedback and driver tenure data.
- Quantify the relationship between safety technology deployment (e.g. cameras, speed limiters, active braking systems) and driver satisfaction and retention.
- Evaluate the impact of truck driver benefits, including health insurance and retirement benefits, on driver retention.

3. Economy
- Promote reforming/repealing ineffective and burdensome regulations that add to industry costs without providing benefits.
- Advocate for a repeal of the Federal Excise Tax (FET) on new truck purchases to stimulate modernization of the nation's truck fleet.
- Advocate for legislation to establish an office within the U.S. Department of Commerce to protect the supply chains of industries critical to the U.S. economy and national security.

4. Driver Distraction
- Recognizing the growing role of automated technologies, identify solutions that support safe technology usage in the truck cab.
- Advocate for national standards for distracted driving laws for all motorists.
- Encourage harsher penalties and more aggressive enforcement of distracted driving violations for drivers of all vehicle types.

5. Driver Compensation
- Quantify the relationship between truck driver compensation models and driver satisfaction / productivity.
- Research and prioritize the effectiveness of carrier retention programs that financially incentivize drivers for performance in the areas of safety, fuel economy, and trip productivity.

Issues and strategies are listed in order as ranked by Indiana-based respondents.

6. Lawsuit Abuse Reform
- Advocate for elimination of "phantom" medical damages.
- Educate motor carriers and law enforcement on how to identify staged accidents and advocate for legislation that makes it a criminal offense to stage an accident with a commercial motor vehicle.

7. Truck Parking
- Advocate for states to expand the availability of accurate, real-time truck parking availability information on roadside changeable/dynamic message signs.
- Create a new dedicated federal funding program to increase truck parking capacity at freight-critical locations.
- Encourage local and regional governments to reduce the regulatory burdens limiting the construction and expansion of truck parking facilities in major metropolitan areas.

8. Hours-of-Service
- Research the safety impacts from the additional sleeper berth flexibility in the June 2020 final HOS rules.
- Assess industry impacts from the June 2020 final HOS rule expanding the short haul exception to the 150 air-mile radius and extended duty day.
- Analyze how HOS rules might be modified for highly automated trucks, and identify what research and data would be necessary to justify future rule changes.

9. Transportation Infrastructure / Congestion / Funding
- Create a new funding program to focus federal resources on truck bottlenecks on major freight corridors.
- Continue to advocate for long-term highway funding through an increase in the fuel tax or other direct user fees, and prevent additional diversion of revenue to non-highway projects.
- Prevent imposition of truck-only taxes.

10. Diesel Technician Shortage
- Conduct research to quantify the scope and cause of current technician shortage and develop best practices for technician recruitment and retention.
- Encourage collaboration between motor carriers and local community colleges/tech schools to promote technician training and placement.
- Work with the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service to encourage interest among veterans in technician training.

Issues and strategies are listed in order as ranked by Indiana-based respondents.