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House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
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REPUBLICAN TRANSPORTATION CHAIR



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Victoria P. Edwards, Regulatory Counsel
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 9th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120-8212

RE: Department of Transportation Proposed Regulation #18-484: Vehicle Equipment and Inspection

Dear Ms. Edwards:

As Republican Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, I write to provide comments on the proposed regulation, *Vehicle Equipment and Inspection (18-484)*.

I would first like to applaud PennDOT for providing stations and inspectors the ability to pay a monetary penalty in lieu of serving a suspension for sanctions imposed resulting from a violation of Chapter 175. The monetary penalty in lieu of serving a suspension for sanctions imposed was sorely needed and will allow a station or inspector to continue operation while being appropriately sanctioned, without causing delays in service to Pennsylvania drivers who rely on stations and inspectors for their vehicle service and repairs.

Furthermore, I commend PennDOT on working closely with stations, inspectors, and relevant stakeholders to develop the regulatory changes that will positively impact drivers in Pennsylvania and allow for the efficient operation of stations and their inspectors.

However, I would like to express concerns insofar as the current inspection procedure is concerned, which would require additional amendments to the proposed regulations.

Section 175.80 (2)(ii) relates to the inspection procedure for the windshield itself which prohibits anything mounted below 3 inches from the top unless the product or material is transparent and does not encroach upon the AS-1 portion of the windshield as provided by

FMVSS No. 205. This provision in the current regulation is more restrictive than Federal inspection criteria, which prohibits anything mounted below 8.5 inches from the top. Why does PennDOT require more restrictive regulations than the Federal inspection criteria? This restrictive criteria has served as a disincentive for those who would wish to use safety equipment such as a windshield-mounted camera, as an example. I would ask that PennDOT considers an exemption to allow the mounting of certain devices on the interior of the windshields of commercial motor vehicles, which would include placement within the area swept by windshield wipers, in accordance with Federal standards.

Additionally, all commercial vehicles that operate in interstate commerce are required to pass an inspection at least annually, and while Pennsylvania's inspection program complies with Federal standards, under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, requiring a Pennsylvania based inspection program is a disincentive to registering commercial motor vehicles in Pennsylvania. This requirement places Pennsylvania trucking companies at a disadvantage with trucking companies in other states, while hampering the number registered commercial vehicles in the Commonwealth, which begets less funding for necessary infrastructure in Pennsylvania. I would ask that PennDOT considers an amendment to the proposed regulation to align our requirements with existing federal standards, reduce duplicative inspections for interstate carriers, and ease compliance burdens for operators in Pennsylvania.

To conclude, I appreciate the opportunity to submit my comments to PennDOT on the proposed regulatory changes. I commend the attempts of PennDOT to streamline the inspection process and provide flexibility for vehicles and for stations and inspectors alike. The proposed regulatory changes will provide clarity and modernize the outdated inspection process that our inspection stations must follow in order to perform the inspections that we all rely upon for safe operation on Pennsylvania roadways. I look forward to hearing from PennDOT regarding the comments presented.

Sincerely,



KERRY A. BENNINGHOFF

Republican House Transportation Chairman

171st Legislative District