Deploy Newer, Cleaner Trucks and Trailers on the Highway Today—Support H.R. 2381/S. 1839

ISSUE

Modern medium and heavy-duty trucks and trailers are cleaner and more fuel-efficient than ever before. Because of the development of new technology and the implementation of stringent emissions standards, new trucks are drastically reducing the transportation sector’s environmental footprint.

Unfortunately, new trucks and semi-trailers are not reaching the road fast enough to reap the benefits of emerging green technologies. Only a third of medium and heavy-duty trucks on the road today are model year (MY) 2010 or newer. To reduce fuel consumption and slash emissions, Congress should pass an infrastructure bill that helps facilitate the purchase of cleaner, more efficient trucks and trailers, by eliminating the onerous, outdated 12% federal excise tax (FET) on the purchase of new trucks and trailers. Repeal of the FET would also help stimulate the economy, as new, cleaner trucks and trailers are manufactured and distributed across thousands of communities throughout America. Congress should include H.R. 2381/S. 1839, a bill to repeal the FET, in comprehensive infrastructure legislation to help modernize America’s truck fleet.

KEY POINTS

• The commercial truck fleet has an outsized impact on the transportation sector. Although medium and heavy-duty trucks account for only 4 percent of all vehicles on the road, they haul 70 percent of domestic freight, consuming over 20 percent of the nation’s transportation fuel, or approximately 22 billion gallons of diesel fuel every year, while traveling over 200 billion miles per year. This activity means small improvements to the truck fleet can yield large results. The American Lung Association has credited fleet turnover as an integral factor in helping to improve America’s air quality.

• Technology is making trucks cleaner and more efficient. Vehicle, fuel, and powertrain technologies are advancing rapidly. Over the past three decades, cleaner fuel and advanced engines have combined to reduce nitrogen oxide (NO\textsubscript{x}) emissions by 97% and particulate matter (PM) emissions by 98%. To put that in perspective, it would take 60 of today's new trucks to generate the same level of emissions as a single truck manufactured in 1989. New trucks mean a cleaner environment. For example, the owner of a heavy-duty truck powered by a modern engine can expect to save about 960 gallons of fuel each year over a 1998 MY truck.

• New trucks have already contributed significantly to environmental quality improvements. Diesel engine improvements to trucks manufactured since 2010 and on the road today have reduced carbon dioxide (CO\textsubscript{2}) emissions by 43 million tons, nitrogen oxide (NO\textsubscript{x}) emissions by 21 million tons, and particulate matter (PM) emissions by 1.2 million tons. Also, since 2010, new, more efficient diesel trucks have saved 101 million barrels of crude oil and 4.2 billion gallons of diesel fuel.

New greenhouse gas (GHG) and fuel efficiency (FE) rules ensure continued progress. The Environmental Protection Agency’s and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s mandates, governing greenhouse gas emissions and fuel efficiency (GHG/FE) will apply to all new trucks with standards that become steadily more stringent through 2027 and beyond. Phase 1 of the program established fuel efficiency standards for model-year 2014 through model year 2018 and is expected to save 530 million barrels of oil and reduce CO\textsubscript{2} emissions by 270 million tons. Phase 2 will address model-year 2021 and beyond and will further improve upon these gains by establishing standards that will rely upon the adoption of both currently available technologies, as well as those not yet developed and widely deployed. Emissions reductions and efficiency improvement standards can be found on the next page.

BOTTOM LINE

A new truck is a clean and green truck. Congress should prioritize policies that facilitate truck fleet turnover by eliminating the burdensome upfront cost of the 12% FET. Members are urged to cosponsor H.R. 2381/S. 1839 to spur new truck sales and promote the deployment of cleaner and safer trucks to modernize the truck fleet. To learn more, please contact Mike Joyce at 202.423.8805 or mjoyce@totalspectrumsga.com.

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NEW TRUCKS HAVE ACHIEVED NEAR ZERO EMISSIONS