



MODERNIZE THE TRUCK FLEET CLEANER • SAFER

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

ISSUE

Roadway safety and crash avoidance are top priorities for all of us. The trucking industry continues to deploy new safety technologies to keep drivers and other road users safe. New trucks and trailers have several, mandated safety features, such as electronic stability control (ESC) and anti-lock braking systems (ABS). Additionally, today's new truck buyers can choose from an array of high-tech safety technologies, such as automatic emergency braking (AEB); adaptive cruise control, and adaptive cruise control with braking; lane departure warning, and lane-keeping assist (with intervention); forward collision mitigation; blind spot warning; traction control; tire pressure monitoring, and automatic tire inflation; automatic wipers and headlamps; and side airbags for rollovers.

While new commercial trucks and trailers are the safest they have ever been, deployment of new safety equipment can be delayed due to the high cost of a new truck, which includes a 12% federal excise tax (FET) that Congress levies on trucks and trailers at the point of sale. This means the FET is applied to the cost of each new safety feature the customer may decide to add to the vehicle at that point of sale. The FET routinely adds \$10,000 - \$22,000 to the price of a new truck or trailer—on top of the nearly \$40,000 in regulatory costs for recent federal emissions and fuel-efficiency mandates. Simply put, the FET constrains the ability of businesses to afford new trucks and acts as a deterrent to the selection of additional safety features that could be purchased with a new truck.

Congress should pass H.R. 2381/S. 1839, the “Modern, Clean, and Safe Trucks Act of 2019,” to repeal the FET. Repealing this onerous tax will help spur the sale of new trucks, which offer the latest safety, fuel efficiency, and emissions performance improvements and, in turn, will help modernize the truck fleet and make our roadways safer.

KEY POINTS

- **Abolishing the 12% FET, which delays the deployment of the newest, safest trucks and trailers, will help the trucking industry update their fleets and adopt safety equipment at a faster pace.** Paying the FET, which can often exceed \$20,000 per truck, discourages many fleet owners and truck drivers from purchasing new trucks. As a result, owners hold onto older trucks longer.
- **Accelerating heavy-duty truck fleet turnover will have a significant impact on highway safety.** The average age of heavy-duty trucks on the road is almost 10 years. That means that many trucks in service today lack the benefits offered by nearly a decade of safety technology advancements.
- **The federal government should encourage the sale of new heavy-duty vehicles, which represent a significant improvement from earlier generations in safety technology.** The deployment of newer, safer trucks will help reduce roadway crashes and related injuries and fatalities.

BOTTOM LINE

Members are urged to cosponsor H.R. 2381/S. 1839 to spur new truck sales and promote a safer trucking fleet. To learn more, please contact Mike Joyce at 202.423.8805 or mjoyce@totalspectrumsga.com.