



**TEAMSTERS
LOCAL 959
STATE OF ALASKA**

Affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Gary Dixon, Secretary-Treasurer

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April 5, 2023

VIA EMAIL Sen.James.Kaufman@akleg.gov

The Honorable Senator Kaufman

Chairman

Senate Transportation

120 4th St.

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Letter of Support for SB 123; An Act Relating to CDL License Requirements

Senator Kaufman:

Teamsters Local 959 writes to support Senate Bill 123, an Act relating to CDL license requirements. This bill will help speed up the CDL certification process for students who apply from rural areas. Rural Alaskans are at a disadvantage to get a personal driver's license due to the lack of DMV access, having to travel, and, at times using a vehicle for driving tests.

SB 123 opens the door and allows rural Alaskans to test for personal and CDL driver's licenses without a holdover period. This will greatly increase the number of candidates for certified training programs that will provide qualified CDL drivers to rural parts of Alaska. Please pass SB 123.

Sincerely,
Teamsters Local 959

Patrick FitzGerald
Political Coordinator

PF:jk

040523 SB 123 Support Letter - Senator Kaufman

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www.akteamsters.com



ALASKA TECHNICAL CENTER

April 10, 2023

Senate Transportation Committee,

The Alaska Technical Center is an adult vocational education facility located in Kotzebue. We offer a variety of vocational and technical training including training for one to receive their commercial driver's license.

One of the barriers we have seen is the State requirement for an individual to hold a Class D driver's license for a full year prior to receiving their CDL. Current state law assumes that a young person will get their driver's license when they turn 16 and be ready to test and train to obtain their CDL at age 18. This is typical for youth in urban areas but is not true for those in rural areas where roads are non-existent or limited and a driver's license is not required.

This requirement places an undue burden on rural, primarily Alaska Native, youth who may decide to pursue a commercial driver's license and must wait for a year, possibly losing interest and missing out on employment opportunities.

Alaska and the nation are short of commercial truck driver's and this state requirement is hindering our ability to recruit and train new drivers. With the revisions and modernization to the federal Entry-Level Driver Training program, there is no safety value added by the state requirement.

The Alaska Technical Center supports SB123, "An Act relating to commercial motor vehicle drivers' license requirements" and encourages you to **pass SB123**.

Sincerely,

Karl Kowalski, Director
Alaska Technical Center
(907)442-1501
kkowalski@nwarctic.org



Support for SB123

Senate Transportation Committee,

The Alaska Trucking Association would like to thank the Senate Transportation Committee for its leadership in introducing SB 123 "An Act relating to commercial motor vehicle driver's license requirements." The passage of SB 123 will eliminate one of many barriers to the entry of people into a career in trucking and transportation.

In February of 2022 the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) implemented its Entry Level Driver Training program (ELDT), establishing "Minimum Training Requirements for Entry-Level Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators" This program came from years of engagement with Safety Organizations, Industry, and other Stakeholders. ELDT provides a checklist of well over 100 different skill, inspection, and knowledge requirements an applicant must prove proficient in before they are allowed to test for a CDL. In light of these new requirements, the Alaska Trucking Association views holding a regular driver's license for a calendar year as a redundant barrier to entry into our industry.

There is a small but growing group of truck drivers from outside of the United States that have chosen to make Alaska their home. They are qualified and want to work at their chosen profession but must wait a year before they can earn for their families and themselves. These newcomers to Alaska still would have to take ELDT and prove their skill set. The Transportation Industry would benefit and welcome them into our workforce.

The Alaska Trucking Association encourages the passage of SB 123. Trucking has labor shortages at all levels of its industry and SB 123 takes a step in the right direction.

Respectfully

Joe Michel
Alaska Trucking Association



NORTHERN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING, LLC

Support for SB 123

Senate Transportation Committee,

Thank you for introducing SB 123 "An Act relating to commercial motor vehicle driver's license requirements."

SB 123 is needed to remove the self-imposed, and now out of date, barriers of AS 28.33.100(a)(2). AS 28.33.100(a)(2) requires a person to hold a regular drivers license for one year prior being able to take a practical exam for a commercial driver's license (CDL). This state Law was put in place over 30 years ago, before we had the current processes to get a regular driver's license, let alone the Federal Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) standard to get a CDL. This outdated law has the effect of being a barrier to earning a CDL and disproportionately affects those that live in rural Alaska and those that have moved here from foreign nations.

Alaska, and the entire nation currently have a shortage of CDL licensed drivers. When we look ahead at the upcoming projects that will help drive our state economy, we need to remove unnecessary barriers, and that is exactly what SB 123 does. With the implementation of federal standards for an individual to get a CDL under ELDT on 2/7/2022, we have steps and a process in place that ensure candidates are safe and skilled enough to take a CDL test.

We need more entrants into our local economy and removing barriers is one way to help Alaskans access more efficiently the opportunities we have available. Please pass SB 123 and remove a barrier towards a career.

Respectfully,



Joey Crum



Senate Transportation Committee,

Alaska and the nation are short of commercial truck drivers. To keep trucks delivering the products, parts and payloads that drive our economy we need to be recruiting new truck drivers into the industry. This is why **I support SB 123**, "An Act relating to commercial motor vehicle drivers' license requirements". Current state law assumes that a young person will get their drivers' license when they turn 16 and be ready to train and test for their commercial drivers' license at 18. While this may be true in urban areas, it is not true in rural areas. In many rural areas there is no need for a young person to get a drivers' license, so if they decide to pursue a commercial driving career they have to wait for a year, often losing interest or finding other work or career.

Also, drivers that have not driven in the US, but are highly skilled drivers are affected by the current law requiring one year of possessing a driver's license before obtaining a CDL.

At Crowley we hire throughout the villages in western Alaska and so we have real world experience with the challenges of getting CDL's for new commercial drivers that do in fact have driving experience but have not possessed a driver's license for the required one year.

Please pass SB 123 and let the modernized federal Entry-Level Driver Training program be the tool that ensures properly trained drivers are able to obtain CDL's. The ELDT training program is designed to ensure that new CDL drivers have the necessary skills whereas the current one-year restriction does not.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Whitlatch', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

P.S. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about HB 124

Phil Whitlatch, Terminal Manager (Palmer)
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