

JOINT COUNCIL OF TEAMSTERS NO. 28

Affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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Rick Hicks, President

March 31, 2020

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Washington State Governor
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Via Facsimile Transmittal
FAX #(360) 753-4110
Hard Copy To Follow

Re: Public Safety Issues

Dear Governor Inslee:

Recently Brad Lovaas, Executive Director of the Washington Refuse and Recycling Association (WRRRA), submitted a letter to you dated March 20, 2020 requesting that the waiver issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration of hours-of-service regulations on commercial vehicle drivers be broadened, state public and private landfill hours be extended, a temporary waiver of RCW 70.95.410, the waiver of local ordinances such as zoning restrictions, local environmental regulations and the temporary suspension of municipal contracts.

Teamsters Joint Council No. 28 believes this to be a sweeping attempt at deregulation and respectfully requests that WRRRA's petition for a general moratorium on all these issues be denied.

To date, there has been no interruption in the collection and disposal of sanitation in this state. To grant even a temporary waiver of these regulations that protect our environment, our communities and our workers without any data or evidence that these measures are needed or have been called for by any public official should be rejected in full.

Also, Kris Johnson, President & CEO of the Association of Washington Business (AWB), submitted a letter to you dated March 19, 2020 requesting that the waiver issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration of hours-of-service regulations on commercial vehicle drivers be broadened to include not just the movement of certain emergency supplies related to the COVID-19 outbreak, but *all* emergency supplies and consumer goods. AWB further requested that you waive weight restrictions, allow truck companies to utilize triple trailers, and suspend local ordinances limiting hours of deliveries. Additionally, AWB urged you to consider exempting every component of the supply chain that carries and delivers emergency supplies (including marine transportation, air, trucks, railroads and ports), as well as manufacturers of such cargo.

Letter to Governor Jay Inslee
Re: Public Safety Issues
March 31, 2020
Page 2

Teamsters Joint Council 28 believes this to be a sweeping attempt at deregulation and respectfully requests that AWB's petition for a general moratorium on transportation operations be denied.

Year after year we have seen piecemeal proposals – whether it be to suspend local ordinances limiting hours of service, exempt weight restrictions or allow triple trailers – that would effectively roll back worker protections and public health and safety regulations, and have defeated all such attempts. What we are seeing currently is an all-out pursuit to that end under the guise of an emergency. While we must collectively do what is necessary to combat the public health emergency presented by the spread of COVID-19, we must not aggravate the urgency of our situation by compromising the safety of both Washington State residents and truck drivers.

With respect to triple trailers, AWB's proposal would put the longest and inarguably most dangerous trucks on our secondary roads which were never designed to handle big rigs. The federal government has already recommended against increasing the size and weight of trucks. The U.S. Department of Transportation studied truck size and weight laws over four years and in 2016 delivered its report to Congress which recommended against any such increases (and, worth noting, did not recommend any pilot projects). The study also found that triple-trailer trucks take an additional 12 feet to stop than single-trailer trucks, and 17 feet longer to stop than standard double-trailer trucks, thereby posing increased risk to both existing infrastructure and commuters.

In his letter, Mr. Johnson mentioned needing "swift and effective action from all of us." We could not agree more. It is our job to help ensure we are serving the needs of fellow Washingtonians and leading the way to recovery from this pandemic, but we are not going to do that by compounding our public health crisis with deregulation that will only result in less stringent safety requirements and, consequently, more harm.

On behalf of the working people of the state of Washington, we ask that you give due consideration to our concerns and not advance corporate interest above all that we already have at risk (something to this effect...).

Respectfully,

JOINT COUNCIL OF TEAMSTERS NO. 28



RICK HICKS, PRESIDENT

In unity,



**Larry Brown (he/him)
President**

Washington State Labor Council AFL-CIO

RH:dm