



**TESTIMONY OF  
Timothy S. Doyle  
ON**

**L.D. 534, “An Act to Allow Commercial Driver’s License Holders  
Who Are 18 to 20 Years of Age to Haul Hazardous Materials  
Intrastate”**

Good afternoon, Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Tim Doyle and I am the Vice President of Maine Motor Transport Association. The Association is comprised of over 1,700-member companies, whose employees comprise a large portion of the nearly 34,000 people who make their living in the trucking industry in Maine.

I am here today to testify neither for nor against LD 652, but to offer information to the Committee.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations require drivers in interstate commerce to be 21 years of age. The State of Maine, via the adoption of the federal regulations in the chapter 4 rules of the Maine State Police, allow for drivers in intrastate commerce to be younger than 21 and makes other intrastate exceptions to the federal regulations. Chapter 4, however, specifically states that no exceptions to the federal regulations are made with respect to transportation of hazardous materials.

This bill seeks to allow drivers who are at least 18 years of age to transport hazardous materials, intrastate. The goal of the bill is certainly well intended and timely, as all aspects of the transportation industry are in desperate need of drivers, and the average age of drivers is more than 50 years old.

MMTA is keenly aware of the driver shortage issues and has endeavored as an Association to work to attract more, and younger drivers and technicians into the industry. A couple of initiatives we've invested in include [GO YOUR WAY MAINE](#), which is a social media marketing campaign aimed to attract Gen Z to all aspects of transportation industry jobs including drivers. A second initiative is an interest free loan program, that has resulted in over 200 new CDL drivers to the industry in Maine in the last 18 months.

MMTA has also supported and advocated for the Safe Driver Apprenticeship Program, a federal pilot program authorized by the bipartisan IIJA passed in Congress. This pilot allows for 18 to 20-year-old to drive in interstate commerce in a very tightly controlled and supervised apprenticeship program. One of the caveats of this program, however, is that apprentice drivers may not transport passengers or hazardous materials, or operate double- or triple-trailer combinations or cargo tank vehicles while participating in the pilot program, regardless of any license endorsements held.

The pilot program requires motor carriers (that meet certain safety standards) to qualify and register for the program. Once registered they can then employ 18 to 20-year-old drivers who will drive for 2 probationary periods totaling 400 hours that includes mandatory on-duty and driving time. The vehicles driven must have specific safety equipment including speed limiters, automatic transmissions, active breaking collision mitigation system and a forward-facing camera system. The apprentice drivers must be accompanied by qualified mentors at all times, who also meet very stringent requirements in order to maximize safety.

Sen. Angus King and Congressman Jared Golden have been strong supporters of the SDAP and MMTA has communicated with them to provided information regarding Maine's experience with CDL drivers who are younger than 21. This data, however, while proven to support our belief that it is safe, is somewhat limited in scope in terms of the broader picture.

One of the main purposes of the SDAP will be to provide additional data on this age group that FMCSA will use to compare the safety performance data of 18-, 19-, and 20-year-old intrastate drivers to known safety performance of intrastate drivers and interstate drivers. FMCSA will use existing data from FMCSA systems to compare current safety and performance of CMV operators to the safety and performance of apprentices participating in the pilot program. Additionally, FMCSA will analyze the performance of apprentices before, during, and after their probationary periods.

To conclude, MMTA believes that there is a role (and need) for 18 to 20-year-old drivers to play in the industry and in interstate commerce. At this time, however, there is not a great amount of data to aid policy makers such as yourselves in making difficult decisions such as the one presented to you by this bill. The SDAP will hopefully provide such data in the future. MMTA is also happy to participate in additional data and information gathering processes in Maine to see if updated statistics on 18 to 20-year-old drivers provides more meaningful highway safety results.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.