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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEB SITE: <http://commerce.senate.gov>

January 24, 2014

ELLEN DONESKI, STAFF DIRECTOR
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Ms. Anne S. Ferro
Administrator
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Ferro:

I write in support of the National Propane Gas Association's request for you to declare a state of emergency and grant regional exemptions from Hours of Service (HOS) regulations for the Western Service Center. Your support for regional exemptions in the Midwest, Eastern, and Southern Service Centers have provided relief to these areas, however many of the states in the Western Service Center, including my home state of South Dakota, are still experiencing similar propane supply constraints and disruptions.

Due to the high demand for propane stemming from a wet corn harvest, the extreme cold temperatures this winter, and regional supply disruptions, propane prices have increased to record highs. This has resulted in distributors facing challenges securing supplies for residents of South Dakota and in some cases even rationing supplies. These conditions led South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard to declare a state of emergency on January 8, 2013, to provide intrastate HOS relief.

It is now time for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to act and provide more expansive relief to South Dakotans and others in the Western Service Center. In doing so, it is important that the FMCSA extend the HOS service relief to Texas, which is home to the world's largest underground propane storage facility. This action by FMCSA, would again compliment an action taken earlier this week by Texas' Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, which waived certain licensing, permitting, and certification requirements for petroleum gas trucks and operators.

I thank you for your consideration of my request, and look forward to your assistance in this pressing matter for a growing number of individuals and businesses.

Sincerely,



JOHN THUNE
Ranking Member