



**For Immediate Release:
March 9, 2005**

CLARIFYING HOURS OF SERVICE AMENDMENT ADDED TO HOUSE HIGHWAY BILL

Moran Amendment Clarifies Permanent Status of Exemption and Agricultural Commodity Definition

Washington, D.C. – The House of Representatives today overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the highway reauthorization bill offered by Congressman Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) to provide ironclad protection of the hours of service exemption by a vote of 257 to 167. The permanent agricultural exemption is strongly supported by the Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) and The Fertilizer Institute (TFI).

Congressman Moran's effort strengthens language adopted last week by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee by providing a technical correction to the definition of "agricultural commodities" to ensure that livestock, milk and other farm products are included in the definition, and clarifies the permanent protection of the hours of service exemption, preventing the secretary of transportation from rolling back or revoking the hours of service exemption approved by Congress.

“Passage of Congressman Moran's bill is half of the battle in our effort to secure permanent protection for the hours of service exemption,” said ARA President and CEO Jack Eberspacher. “ARA and our allied organizations are extremely pleased that this measure has passed in the House. ARA appreciates the significant contribution of the Agricultural Food & Transporters Conference of the American Trucking Associations on this amendment and we are grateful for their efforts. We will work with Senator Burns and other allies in the Senate to pass similar language in the Senate version of the highway bill and ensure that this vital legislation is available to future generations of Ag retailers.”

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“We thank Rep. Jerry Moran for his persistent efforts to secure the permanent agricultural hours of service exemption for our members,” said TFI President Kraig R. Naasz. “We look forward to working with our industry’s allies in the Senate to secure final approval of this vital exemption.”

Congressman Moran’s amendment had the strong support of nearly 40 national and state agricultural organizations including the Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA), The Fertilizer Institute (TFI), the American Farm Bureau Federation, National Cotton Council, National Corn Growers Association, American Soybean Association, National Grain & Feed Association, and the Agricultural Food & Transporters Conference of the American Trucking Associations.

The House is expected to approve its version of the highway bill by week’s end, while the Senate is expected to consider its version of the highway bill in April.

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The Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) is a national trade organization providing a national voice for the retail sector of the agricultural industry. With offices in Washington, D.C., the ARA is focused on issues and programs that affect the profitability and professionalism of ARA members.

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The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) represents the nation’s fertilizer industry. Producers, retailers, trading firms and equipment manufacturers which comprise its membership are served by a full time Washington, D.C., staff in various legislative, educational and technical areas as well as with information and public relations programs.

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