REBUILD OUR NATION’S INFRASTRUCTURE

The United States’ infrastructure is crumbling and our leaders in Washington must work in a bipartisan manner to provide long-term certainty and increased investments in federal infrastructure programs. A modern infrastructure system is essential to the nation’s economy and to ensure the efficient movement of all goods – from machinery to agriculture products – to customers and ports. With the current highway bill (the FAST Act) set to expire in 2020 and the Highway Trust Fund approaching insolvency, Congress must identify new revenue sources to restore the federal highway program’s long-term fiscal stability and increase investment levels. Our nation also faces a significant shortfall in dams, levees, airports, broadband, pipes and water system investments. Rural infrastructure is particularly underfunded. Congress and the administration must work to upgrade the United States' infrastructure substantially.

INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF SKILLED, TECHNICAL WORKERS

One of the greatest challenges facing equipment dealers is the lack of skilled service technicians. Federal laws should be updated to reflect the current workforce needs. Congress must also increase funding for the Carl D. Perkins Act and other programs that support providing skilled technical education opportunities. Additionally, lawmakers should expand need-based Pell Grant eligibility to qualifying, short-term career and technical education programs and incentivize tuition reimbursement by making company contributions to their employees’ student loan payments tax-free, a benefit to both the employer and the employee.

PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND COMMERCE

The United States operates in a global economy. Equipment dealers and manufacturers rely on free trade agreements and other accords that permit accessible and efficient international trade. The administration should refrain from implementing tariffs, particularly on our key trading partners, which increase the cost of imports, invite retaliation and create market uncertainty, detrimentally impacting equipment dealers, manufacturers, contractors, farmers and U.S. consumers. The United States must also pursue greater regulatory harmonization with Canada and improve the movement of goods across the northern border. Additionally, Congress and the administration should reject efforts to expand Buy America provisions that unnecessarily increase costs and delay infrastructure projects.
RESTORE CERTAINTY AND PREDICTABILITY TO THE TAX CODE

While the Tax Cuts & Jobs Act contained many pro-growth policies, including lowering the tax burden for pass-throughs, full expensing of new and used equipment purchases, business interest limitations tied to EBITDA and increased estate tax exemption levels, these provisions are temporary. Congress must work to preserve these critical capital investment incentives and make them a permanent part of the tax code to provide certainty for equipment dealers, manufacturers and their customers. Congress and the administration should also clarify that equipment rental income earned by taxpayers actively participating in an equipment distribution trade or business is exempt from Obamacare’s 3.8 percent passive income tax.

PROVIDE REGULATORY RELIEF FOR JOB CREATORS

Recent regulatory reform efforts have provided much-needed relief to the equipment industry and its customers. However, more can be done to strike the correct balance between the need for health, labor, safety and environmental regulations and economic growth. To that end, Congress and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration should make commonsense revisions to the hours of service rules for drivers, such as equipment service technicians, where operating a vehicle is incidental to their primary job responsibilities. Additionally, policymakers should continue to streamline federal permitting so construction projects can start sooner and cost less.

EXPAND DOMESTIC ENERGY PRODUCTION

The United States must continue to develop its energy resources and become an even more significant global energy producer. Shale energy development has been a vital economic driver for communities across the country and the federal government should refrain from intervention, as its benefits are best understood at the state level. Congress and the administration should work together to renew the vitality of other energy sectors – including coal – that have been undermined by past federal policy. Finally, speeding the construction of new pipelines to transport and process energy must also be a priority.

REFORM THE BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

The United States’ immigration system is broken, which is hindering economic growth and prosperity. Congress and the administration must work in a bipartisan manner to reform the nation’s immigration laws to strengthen national security, enforce the rule of law, address workforce shortages and provide certainty to employers and employees. Strong border security is essential to overhauling the country’s immigration system. Additionally, the United States’ immigration laws must be modified to address current employer needs, such as expanding visa categories to fill in-demand jobs like equipment service technicians. Furthermore, a pathway toward legal status should be available to law-abiding, undocumented workers and individuals brought to the United States illegally as children by their parents (“Dreamers”).