DARLENE HOOLEY
5th DISTRICT, OREGON

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January 24, 2003

Annette Sandberg
Acting Administrator
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Sandberg:

I would like to request that you give all due consideration to the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for an exemption from 49 CFR Parts 393 and 396.

Oregon law has exempted farm vehicles weighing less than 80,000 pounds from certain regulations since 1978, and a review of reportable crashes in Oregon leads the state to believe this practice has not had an adverse impact on safety. Farm trucks in Oregon, most of which are small single axle vehicles used primarily on rural roads, have a strong safety record and accounted for less than 1% of the state's truck accidents from 1995-2001. The vast majority of these truck accidents are caused by driver behavior rather than mechanical failure, and Oregon has a comprehensive traffic enforcement program that applies to farm truck drivers.

ODOT believes granting this exemption would not have an effect on enforcement of the state's laws and regulations concerning rules of the road and vehicle equipment and feels that its motor vehicle safety regulations provide adequate safety requirements for the interstate operation of farm vehicles. ODOT already has authority to inspect all farm trucks for compliance with Oregon's motor vehicle laws that cover parts and accessories.

I hope you will give ODOT's application strong consideration.

Sincerely,

Darlene Hooley

DARLENE HOOLEY
Member of Congress