

June 19, 1998

Docket Clerk
U. S. DOT Dockets
Room PL-40 1
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20540-0001

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
DOCKET SECTION
98 JUN 22 AM 11:36

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Docket NO. FHWA-98-3706 -40

The Virginia, Maryland and Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (Association) is an organization representing 14 electric distribution cooperatives in the three-state area. This represents approximately 1.2 million consumer-owners. On behalf of our member systems, the Association appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) proposed rulemaking published April 20, 1998, regarding the hours of service rules.

The hours of service rules were intended to regulate over-the-road, long-haul truckers. However, in some instances, electric utility vehicles and drives are subject to these requirements. Because of the nature of our business, the hours of service restrictions and record-keeping requirements are clearly unnecessary and unrealistic. In most cases, our drivers travel to a job site, work for several hours, and then return.

The self-monitoring system being proposed by this rule requires beginning, intermediate and ending "documentation". Our companies have work orders, but no true crosscheck mileage system. It will be extremely burdensome for electric cooperatives to meet these new requirements.

The proposed regulation also requires a driver to retain a copy of each record of duty status for the previous seven days. Because linemen change vehicles frequently, the only way to truly comply would be for each lineman to carry his or her paperwork, which is not practical.

As stated above, this regulation was intended to regulate long-haul truckers. As such, we recommend that the FHWA exempt companies whose workers report to and are discharged from a specific place of business each day. If an exemption is not going to be considered, we request that the FHWA accept daily time-sheet records as the only needed supporting documents for our group. Daily time sheets should suffice, as an employee will not drive for more hours of service than the time for which the employee is paid.

Page 2

We hope the FHWA will consider the comments being submitted herein. If you should have any questions, contact me at (804) 968-4084.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark D. Tubbs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "M" and "T".

Mark D. Tubbs
Manager of Governmental Affairs

PC: Greg White
Salud Layton
Regulatory Liaisons
Lloyd Sholes