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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **U.S. Custom Harvesters Support Legislation for Streamlined CDL Requirements**

**Sylvia, Kan.** (September 19, 2022) – U.S. Custom Harvesters has endorsed legislation introduced by U.S. Senator Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) that will remove burdensome government regulations and simplify the process of hiring CDL drivers, especially during a difficult labor market in the agriculture industry.

The legislation focuses on a law passed in 2012 called Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT), a federal safety training program. The final rulemaking went into effect this year and requires new drivers seeking a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to complete ELDT in addition to existing state regulations and requirements. ELDT training classes range from \$450 to \$8,500 and can take up to 20 days to complete. The additional time and financial investment from custom harvesters adds to the burden of finding a qualified workforce when there is a nationwide trucker shortage of 80,000 drivers according to the American Trucking Association.

Rounds' legislation, the Trucking Regulations Unduly Constricting Known Service-providers (TRUCKS) Act, will allow states to issue a new "Small Business Restricted CDL" so ELDT requirements will not affect small businesses with nine CDLs or less. The TRUCKS Act will allow states to exempt employees of agriculture-related industries, including custom harvesters, from ELDT requirements to obtain their CDL.

The TRUCKS act will protect small businesses from these constricting regulations so they can fill positions in a timely manner and remain competitive in the industry. "This legislation eases the burden on small trucking companies, agricultural producers, school districts and local units of government. It also gives power back to the states so they can decide their own rules of the road," said Rounds.

"We're appreciative of Senator Rounds for recognizing the burden of duplicative regulation on our industry. The additional time and financial investment required by ELDT creates obstacles for harvesters to meet the demand of farmers. We support safety measures, however, when each state has existing strict safety measures and regulations in place that our members comply with, ELDT is unnecessary bureaucratic red tape," said JC Schemper, USCHI board president and co-owner of Schemper Harvesting, a multi-generation family owned and operated custom harvesting business.

In addition to U.S. Custom Harvesters' endorsement, this legislation is supported by the Associated School Boards of South Dakota and is co-sponsored by the by Senators John Hoeven (R-N.D.), Roger Marshall (R-Kan.) and Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.).

"Custom harvesters across Kansas are overregulated by federal rulemakers who have never worked on a harvest crew," said Marshall. "The ELDT requirements for new drivers are burdensome to small trucking companies, and this legislation is a common sense reform to eliminate barriers for small

businesses, farmers, and custom harvesters crews who are already hard pressed to find an adequate amount of drivers.”

“Our legislation provides important regulatory relief and flexibility by allowing exemptions for agriculture, small businesses and state and local governments. This will help ensure farmers, ranchers and other small businesses, as well as school districts and other government entities have access to the reliable and affordable transportation services they need while ensuring safety on our road,” said Hoeven.

“With the current supply chain issues and shortage of truck drivers nationwide at a time of tremendous demand, the last thing the transportation industry needs is more overbearing, bureaucratic red tape placed on them by the Biden Administration,” said Cramer.

Click [HERE](#) for full bill text.

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ABOUT USCHI: U.S. Custom Harvesters, Inc. (USCHI) is an association of professional custom harvesters serving the needs of the American farmer. Established and chartered in 1983 in the State of Texas, USCHI serves as a link between the harvesters and the many groups of people they work with, such as farmers, businesses, State and Federal Government. This organization also works to educate its membership concerning safety, quality of workmanship, and information on equipment updates and exists to represent and promote the harvesting industry.