

DETROIT NEWS

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Editorial Rebuttal

Mexican trucks get held to strict standards

Teamsters President James Hoffa claims to place a high value on truth, yet he continuously misstates the facts and conveniently disregards the facts that do not support his case ("Bush lets Mexican trucks menace America's roads," Aug. 8). He is misleading the public and denying U.S. truckers access to new markets and U.S. consumers' access to new savings.

The facts paint a very different picture of the significant safety and operational protections put in place as part of a historic effort to open Mexican markets to U.S. truckers and end needless inefficiencies that delay shipments and pollute the air along our southern border.

Under the Department of Transportation's Cross Border Truck Demonstration project, every Mexican carrier is thoroughly inspected and held to even stricter safety standards than U.S. and Canadian carriers: driver training; verification of a U.S. insurance policy; full compliance with hours-of-service regulations; vehicle maintenance; ability to communicate in English; and drug and alcohol testing. In fact, Mexican trucks and drivers have established compliance rates equal or better to those of U.S. trucks and drivers.

During the last few months, more American truckers have been able to profit from running shipments to and from Mexico than ever before thanks to the new access this program provides.

We have met and exceeded every requirement established by Congress, both safety and otherwise, for implementing our obligations under the North American Free Trade Agreement and in following legislative mandates to move forward with this program. As a result, we are supporting our economy by saving consumers' money, reducing shipping costs and giving U.S. trucking companies and drivers new opportunities.

At a time of surging goods exports, we could hardly choose a worse time to raise the cost of consumer goods, deny U.S. truckers new opportunities or embrace the myopic mythology of xenophobic protectionism.

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