

NCGA Position

Title: Transportation Policy
Position Number: III-A-1

Date: 7/07
Expires:3/08

Background: Transportation issues are a significant factor in market development for corn and related products. We must aggressively work with the U.S. transportation leaders in the public and private sector to resolve transportation barriers that affect agriculture, both domestically and internationally.

Resolution/Position:

1. User Fees and Taxes
 - a) Support reasonable or equitable barge user and transportation fees and/or rates.
 - b) Support reasonable rail rates and support equitable allocations of rail cars to elevators.
 - c) Support reasonable costs of accessibility to the Surface Transportation Board.

2. Transportation Research
 - a) Support further research and development of a nationwide transportation network that is economically sound and will provide a foundation for our future agricultural transportation needs.
 - b) Encourage the federal government to identify economic consequences of the inefficiencies of our transportation infrastructure.
 - c) Have a long-term transportation strategy to address domestic and foreign markets. This strategy will be developed from a comprehensive study that includes present and future demand of markets and all modes of transportation.

3. Inland Waterways
 - a) Support the immediate modernization of the inland waterway transportation system with trust funds prioritized for replacing Locks 25, 24, 22, 21 and 20 on the Mississippi River and the LaGrange and Peoria Locks on the Illinois River to 1200 ft. structure, and extending guidewalls at Mississippi Lock and Dams 14 through 18; moorings at Locks 12, 14, 18, and 24; switch boats at Locks 11 through 13.
 - b) Support authorization and appropriations for design and improvement of the lock system.
 - c) Oppose using the Inland Waterway Trust Fund for operations and maintenance.
 - d) The federal government and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should repair, maintain, and upgrade the levee systems in the flood control districts to guarantee the continuation of commerce on the navigable waters of the Mississippi River Basin and the continued protection of personal property by the levee systems.
 - e) Encourage the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Upper Mississippi River Navigation Study group to fully realize the potential of production technology advancements to increase corn yields as well as potential for future foreign demand.
 - f) Support legislation that holds any environmental restoration projects to the same cost/benefit standards as flood control and navigation projects.
 - g) Encourage vigilant watch on the American Heritage Rivers Initiative policy.
 - h) Support management of the Missouri River that places the highest priority on economic uses of the river, i.e., power generation, flood control for agricultural land, navigation and irrigation. NCGA



- recognizes the recreation and environmental value of the river and will work with others to maintain and enhance recreational and environmental benefits.
- i) Oppose changes in the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Missouri River Master Manual that have a negative impact on agriculture because of reduced navigation or potential for spring rises.
 - j) Support increased funding for the Corp of Engineers for Streambank Stabilization and Channel Maintenance for the Missouri River.
 - k) All affiliated states will encourage their state legislature to support the lock and dam upgrades.
 - l) Support continued funding and operation of the Kaskaskia River Lock.
 - m) When flood control plans require the flooding of specific tracts of land to protect economic development in other areas, the landowners of the proposed sacrificial property should receive an annual flood easement payment and compensation for physical and economic damages in the event of actual flooding.
4. Rural Highways
 - a) Encourage state and federal funding for the building and upgrading of rural highways and bridges.
 - b) Encourage and fund heavier weight bearing limits for roads around and near intermodal rail yards to accommodate more efficient container shipping.
 5. Railroads
 - a) Support the retention and upgrading of the rail transportation system.
 - b) Review all rail and transportation mergers and consolidations.
 - c) Encourage the Surface Transportation Board to focus on shipper/receiver needs.
 - d) Support short line and regional rail projects that improve opportunities for efficient and economical movement of corn and enhance competition.
 - e) Due to the vast number of unlighted rural rail crossings, rail cars should be required to use highly reflectorized tape in the same manner required for trucks.
 - f) Support competitive and nondiscriminatory rate structure for short lines.
 - g) Support establishing state and federal matching loans or grants to upgrade short line rails needed to carry heavier weight.
 - h) Support immediate completion of the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern (DM&E) upgrade.
 - i) NCGA opposes any railroad establishing weight rules detrimental to, or singling out, agriculture. NCGA should work with any railroad to investigate and resolve the recent unequal and more expensive weight restrictions placed only upon bulk agricultural commodities.
 6. Support continued regulation of the anhydrous ammonia pipeline industry and oppose all efforts to deregulate this industry.
 7. Propose repeal of the Jones Act, or an exemption for bulk agricultural commodities and fuels.
 8. Support upgrades for grain export facilities.
 9. Repeal the 4.2¢ deficit reduction fuel tax, still in place on barges and railroads.
 10. We support efforts to improve and expand transportation for the movement of agricultural products by all forms of transportation.



11. The barge industry has been directly paying an inland waterway user fee for more than 30 years in the form of a fuel tax, and corn growers have indirectly paid this fee in the form of higher transportation costs. NCGA opposes efforts to create an additional user fee or lockage fee for the inland waterways.



NCGA Position

Title: Truck Regulations
Position Number: III-A-2

Date: 7/07
Expires: 3/08

Resolution/Position:

1. Encourage all states, Canada, and Mexico to establish uniform truck standards for safety, liability and cargo insurance for all vehicles operating for hire.
 - a) Work to ensure trucks and drivers that pass uniform standards are permitted to move freely across borders.
2. Support continuation of farm exemption of Commercial Drivers License (CDL) requirements. Support elimination of travel restrictions for farmers hauling their own farm commodities and equipment.
3. Oppose the application of transportation regulations relating to drivers of commercial vehicles such as the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for farmers transporting property for their farming operations.
4. Oppose withholding of federal transportation funds from states that do not impose additional regulatory burdens on farmers.
5. Support agreements allowing farmers hauling their farm products into bordering states to utilize farmer licensing and permitting.