



May 22, 2019

The National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) supports H.R. 2045, the Veterans' Education, Transition, and Opportunity Prioritization Plan Act of 2019. NWRA welcomes this as our industry works to address the challenges it faces from a shortage of commercial vehicle drivers, mechanics, and welders.

NWRA is the voice in the nation's capital for the private-sector waste and recycling industry that is essential to maintaining the quality of American life. The solid waste industry directly employs about 420,000 people as of early 2018 with a total payroll of more than \$21 billion. It is estimated that the private sector waste and recycling industry accounts for over one million jobs and generates nearly a quarter of a trillion dollars in U.S. GDP. The association's publicly traded member companies are among the largest components of the Dow Jones U.S. Waste & Disposal Index (DJUSPC).

Our members operate in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and can be found in most, if not all, U.S. congressional districts. Waste and recycling facilities number nearly 18,000 scattered throughout the U.S., mirroring population centers. Our nearly 700 members are a mix of publicly-traded and privately-owned local, regional, and Fortune 500 national and international companies. NWRA represents approximately 70 percent of the private sector waste and recycling market.

The waste and recycling industry has experienced a growing labor shortage over the past several years, particularly when it comes to hiring individuals with a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). The private sector waste and recycling industry has a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) fleet of more than 100,000 waste, recycling, and compost collection trucks and an even greater number of CDL drivers.

Driving for the industry offers numerous advantages such as rising wages, a five-day work week, set daily work schedules, and being able to return home at the end of each day's shift unlike long-haul drivers. Despite all this, our industry's companies are increasingly struggling to find enough CDL drivers.

By 2026, the solid waste collection industry will have 14,200 new jobs for collection drivers and riders; 1,900 new jobs for diesel service technicians and mechanics; and 300 new jobs for welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers. A tightening labor market with more job openings than potential qualified employees will only exacerbate the situation as demand for these positions grows. The provisions contained in H.R. 2045 can help alleviate this challenge.

NWRA asks that you support passage of H.R. 2045 when it is brought up for a vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darrell K. Smith".

Darrell K. Smith, PhD
President and CEO