



# VIEW*S* & VISIONS

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## Trucking is BIG to West Virginia

Jan Vineyard, President  
West Virginia Trucking Association

Jan Vineyard is the president of the West Virginia Trucking Association. Her responsibilities include helping members increase their effectiveness and profitability, promoting business ethics and a positive image for the organization's members, assisting with government relations activities and lobbying and coordinating events, such as the annual Truck Driving Championship.

Ms. Vineyard was serving as the executive director of the West Virginia Oil Marketers and Grocers Association (OMEGA) when, in 2006, OMEGA entered into a joint venture with the West Virginia Motor Truck Association. She subsequently was named president of both organizations. Previously, from 1978 to 1993, she worked for Ashland Oil Inc., where she was involved in supplies, transportation and sales.

She serves as the chairman of the West Virginia Business and Industry Council, and is a member of the boards of directors for West Virginians For Better Transportation and the Petroleum Marketers Association of America. A registered lobbyist, she was named one of the Top Ten Lobbyists by *The State Journal* in 2005.

Ms. Vineyard earned an associate's degree in retailing and a bachelor's degree in business administration in marketing and transportation from Marshall University in 1978, attaining her MBA in 1987. She currently serves on the Marshall University College of Business Advisory Board.

Without Trucks, West Virginia Stops! That's one of my favorite sayings and truer words were never spoken. Here are top reasons why:

- Trucks Bring It! And by "it," I mean everything. Groceries, fuel, clothes, electronics, medical supplies, automobiles, heavy machinery, housing materials, etc. In other words, if you rely on it, wear it, consume it or depend on it, a truck brought it. Did you know that over 80 percent of U.S. communities depend solely on truck transport for their goods and commodities?
- Manufacturing relies on trucking. Raw materials, works in progress and finished goods move over land – typically from manufacturing plants to retail distribution centers. Trucks transported 67 percent of total manufactured tonnage in West Virginia, or 162,521 tons per day. More than 84 percent of communities depend exclusively on trucks to move their goods. Over the past 20 years (from 1988 to 2008), there has been a 47 percent increase in registered large trucks and a 65 percent increase in miles traveled by large trucks.
- As miles traveled have increased, the trucking industry's safety record has made enormous strides in the safety arena. Over the last 15 years, fatalities have fallen by 32 percent, even with a 50 percent increase in truck mileage.

Likewise, the industry's environmental record has witnessed historic improvements. Fine particulate emissions from on-road diesel trucks have been cut by more than half over the past decade. New trucks purchased today produce one-tenth the fine particulate emissions and smog-forming nitrogen oxide emissions of a similar truck manufactured just six years ago. Finally, today's diesel fuel – used in all on-highway equipment –

# Good stuff.



is virtually sulfur-free, an unprecedented effort to further improve the nation's air quality.

- The trucking industry provides jobs. There are 35,130 jobs in the trucking industry in West Virginia, or one out of every 16 jobs in the state.
- Trucking pays its way. Recent reports show the trucking industry in West Virginia paid approximately \$246 million in federal and state roadway taxes and fees. The industry paid 37 percent of all taxes and fees owed by West Virginia motorists, despite trucks representing only 15 percent of vehicle miles traveled in the state. A typical five-axle tractor semi-trailer combination paid \$7,453 in state highway user fees and taxes in addition to \$7,771 in federal user fees and taxes. These taxes were over and above the typical taxes paid by businesses in West Virginia.

Now that I've explained why trucking is important to West Virginia, let me list what is important to trucking:



### **Safety**

The trucking industry is committed to sharing the road safely with all vehicles. According to the West Virginia Public Service Commission, which governs West Virginia commercial fleets, we are at the safest level that we have ever been. The industry continues to make safety their number one priority.

### **The Economy**

When West Virginia does well, trucking does well. The key drivers of freight transportation are manufacturing, construction, mining and oil and gas.

### **Driver Shortages**

New hiring challenges are the result of both baby boomer retirements and industry growth. In fact, nationwide, the industry will need to add nearly 100,000 new people to the industry each year, on average, over the next 10 years. We must have a ready workforce.

### **Transportation Funding**

We clearly recognized the long-term importance of investing in infrastructure. We need safe highways and bridges to travel on daily and are willing to pay our fair share to do so. The trucking industry

supports state and federal government highway funding initiatives that efficiently and equitably raise revenues and provide us with the most bang for our buck. Therefore we continue to oppose tolling our interstates and/or privatization of existing highway infrastructure.

### **Government Regulations**

Federal rules govern commercial driver hours-of-service (HOS) changes, which decrease the driving and on-duty times without warrant. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, truck-involved fatalities fell in 2009 to their lowest level ever recorded. Since the first major HOS change in 2004, fatalities have fallen 33 percent. The industry is dealing with a new regulation, Compliance, Safety and Accountability (CSA) which is being implemented by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). These new regulations and their impacts and uncertainty are a significant issue for many in the trucking industry.

### **Fuel**

Fuel prices continued their roller coaster trend over the past year, and that volatility is a major concern. Fuel is a trucking

operator's second highest cost, behind driver wages and benefits. With little control over one of the industry's largest cost centers, it is not surprising that fuel issues remain high on our list of industry concerns.

In summary, the trucking industry is important in West Virginia and, as West Virginia goes, so goes the trucking industry. The West Virginia Trucking Association and its membership are committed to helping West Virginia succeed and, as such, we will be at the table for all of the major discussions regarding transportation funding, natural gas manufacturing expansion and job growth.