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Chairman Clemens and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

The Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association (RRVSGA) writes in support of Senate Bill No. 2026 which relates to a governor's order authorizing excess limits regarding road trains.

RRVSGA represents the approximately 2,600 sugarbeet grower-owners of American Crystal Sugar Company. Our growers produce over 40% of the entire United States' sugarbeet crop each year, harvesting between 11.4 million and 12.3 million tons of sugarbeets each fall.

During harvest, growers deliver sugarbeets to 31 remote storage sites or directly to one of five sugarbeet processing factories in the Red River Valley. The sugarbeets which were delivered to remote storage sites, are transported later throughout the winter to the nearest factory.

Freight has become a significant challenge and cost to our growers. We currently utilize around 3,200 trucks during harvest on the farm and enlist the help of Transystems and their fleet of around 90 trucks to haul the sugarbeets to our factories. Both growers and Transystems struggle during harvest to find enough qualified help. Utilizing road trains in the future, may alleviate some of the labor shortage we face here in the Red River Valley.

It is important to begin looking at various options and creative changes to our entire freight system. Senate Bill 2026 opens the door and allows for an opportunity to explore alternatives on a smaller scale and in a more regulated environment while addressing concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to submit additional testimony. We are happy to answer any questions you may have and ask the Senate Transportation Committee to give SB 2026 a DO PASS recommendation.

Sincerely,

Harrison Weber
Executive Director
Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association

CC: Brian Ingulsrud
Vice President of Agriculture
American Crystal Sugar Company