

2023 Policy Priorities



AGRICULTURAL
RETAILERS
ASSOCIATION

TRANSPORTATION & SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES

- Supply chain disruptions continue to cause major challenges for the ag industry.
- Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) requirements have increased operating costs on agribusinesses in the amount of \$6,000 - \$8,000 per driver and is a barrier to entry for individuals interested in obtaining a commercial driver's license (CDL).
- Freight rail is a vital link connecting thousands of U.S. manufacturers, farmers, and energy producers with consumers.

ARA Position

- Support Surface Transportation Board (STB) reauthorization and include provisions to address rising demurrage and detention costs to shippers while promoting increased competition.
- Support the "TRUCKS Act" that exempts employees of certain farm-related service industries from ELDT requirements and allows states to issue restricted CDLs to small businesses.
- Support expansion of the "Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program" by allowing more 18- to 20-year-old drivers to participate and create additional opportunities under the program.
- Support Hours of Service (HOS) legislation to eliminate "planting and harvesting" seasonal provisions and authorize a pilot program for farm supply transporters operating up to a 200-air mile radius.
- Support additional reforms to the Farm-Related Restricted CDL program.



www.aradc.org

FARM BILL

- Ag retailers and distributors are vital to the nation's food security success.
- These businesses must get the right crop inputs to their farmer customers at the right time, which is difficult in the short timeframe farmers have to plant.
- Retailers provide farmer customers with crop consulting services as well as custom pesticide and fertilizer application services.

ARA Position

- Preserve the crop insurance program, and similar important safety nets.
- Work with USDA-Risk Management Agency (RMA) to modify prevented planting dates to lessen potential impacts on the ag retail sector.
- Support codifying oversight of pesticide registrations and regulations at the EPA and state agencies.
- Maintain current acreage dedicated to Conservation Programs (CRP/CSP) and the protection of working lands.
- Support the statistical survey work carried out by the National Agricultural Statistical Service in support of the Conservation Effects Assessment Project administered by the USDA-NRCS.

AG LABOR

- Ag is dependent on a sustainable workforce now more than ever and the current H-2A ag guest worker visa program needs major statutory reforms if it is to be a workable solution for the ag industry.

ARA Position

- Support the establishment of a comprehensive immigration reform policy that provides for a new, usable ag guest worker visa program that secures borders, allows current farm workers to apply for legal status, and has a reliable verification system.



ECONOMIC GROWTH & TRADE

- Protect provisions of interest such as the fertilizer deduction for farmers' tax credit, stepped-up basis, like kind exchanges, and the Section 199 Domestic Production Activities Deductions.
- ARA supports the free, fair trade of ag products, equipment, and crop inputs.

ARA Position

- Support policies that promote free trade of ag products, equipment, and crop input materials (pesticides, fertilizers, seeds) to create opportunities to benefit American agribusinesses and farmers.
- Support and advocate for pro-growth economic policies that aid in our members finding a more business-friendly marketplace in which to operate.

ENERGY

- Continue work with industry coalitions to promote the development and use of all liquid fuels (oil, gas, biofuels, etc.) to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign sources of energy and related technologies.
- Support continued investment in biofuel research and the development of low-carbon emission technologies.
- Oppose any proposed cuts to the Renewable Fuel Standards, which would have a devastating impact on agriculture, rural economies while stifling investment in ethanol plants across the nation.

ARA Position

- Support federal energy policies to increase domestic natural gas production, to reduce U.S. manufacturing costs for crop input materials, and promote the development and use of renewable fuels.
- Oppose internal combustion engine bans/restrictions and electric vehicle mandates.

MODERN AG CROP PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES

- The federal government must make decisions based on sound science, peer-reviewed data, and by following a risk-based approach.
- Farmers need access to critical crop input supplies (pesticides, fertilizers, biostimulants, seed) and precision ag technologies.

ARA Position

- Protect farmers' essential tools (seed, pesticide, fertilizer, biostimulants, precision ag technology).
- Support codifying pesticide registration oversight and regulations at the EPA and state agencies.
- Pesticide registrations need to be based on sound science and risk-based, peer reviewed data.
- Invest in research and development to enhance crop yields and improve plant health.



AGRICULTURAL
RETAILERS
ASSOCIATION

Contact

Richard Gupton

Senior Vice President of Public Policy & Counsel
richard@aradc.org | 202-595-1699

Hunter Carpenter

Senior Director of Public Policy
hunter@aradc.org | 202-595-1705



4201 Wilson Blvd., Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22203
www.aradc.org