

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Senator Helming Announces Signing of Bill Supporting Workforce Recruitment in Trucking Industry

Senator Pam Helming announced that legislation (S.5486) to help the trucking industry recruit more drivers has been signed into law. New York State will now allow 18 to 20 year olds to obtain a Class A commercial driver's license in order to drive tractor trailers.

According to the American Trucking Associations, the U.S. trucking industry faces a shortage of about 80,000 drivers. Previous state law let 18 to 20 year olds obtain a Class B commercial driver's license. A Class A commercial driver's license allows drivers to operate larger trucks such as tractor trailers.

Senator Pam Helming said, "Our trucking industry literally keeps our economy moving. It's relied upon by virtually every other industry, whether it's manufacturing, farming, restaurants, or retail. I was proud to help champion this bill to support our locally-owned trucking companies and help them recruit more truck drivers to a good-paying, reliable career. Connecting younger people to career opportunities like this is a key component of our workforce development efforts. Thank you to Wadhams Enterprises and Leonard's Express for their leadership and advocacy in making this change to state law, and for their continued investment in our region and state."

The new state law also includes safety provisions such as an extra 300 hours of required behind-the-wheel training.

Ken Johnson, CEO of Leonard's Express Inc. said, "Leonard's Express and Canandaigua Driving School are excited and pleased that drivers between the ages of 18 and 20 can now obtain their Class A commercial driver's license through newly-signed legislation. This law affords these young men and women the opportunity to join our industry at a younger age and to build careers that provide family-raising wages and benefits. The legislation is written so that these young drivers will receive the appropriate training to operate their vehicle safely and gain valuable experience from senior drivers. We sincerely appreciate Senator Helming's support of this legislation."

Tom Mulvaney, Corporate Recruiting Manager, Wadhams Enterprises said, “As a corporate recruiter I have seen firsthand the challenges with encouraging students to consider careers as professional truck drivers when they’re unable to start training until 21 years of age. Most would look for different careers. Enactment of this legislation now provides a career path upon graduation from high school. Important to trucking, it balances the needs of workforce development and safety, by requiring completion of a vigorous training and certification program before students will be eligible to obtain their commercial driver’s license. As a trucking company with multiple locations in New York state, we applaud the passage of this important legislation.”

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