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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

October 27, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I strongly urge you to delay or defer your COVID-19 action plan for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to develop a rule requiring all private employers with 100 or more employees to be fully vaccinated, or have weekly testing, as a condition of work eligibility. As the Ranking Member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, I am deeply concerned that if OSHA promulgates a rule to implement your vaccine mandate proposal, our nation's supply chain and transportation network will suffer disastrous consequences.

As you have publicly noted in recent weeks, our transportation network is currently experiencing critical delays and workforce shortages. These constraints have contributed to bottlenecks at ports, terminals, distribution facilities, and freight hubs. This in turn has led to shortages of chassis, containers, warehouse space, and truck drivers. As a result, Americans are increasingly finding empty shelves in stores and are paying higher prices when products are available.

I have personally advocated for COVID-19 vaccinations and believe Americans should take advantage of these life-saving doses to protect themselves and their communities from COVID-19. However, I believe your effort to mandate vaccinations is misguided and will have direct and harmful repercussions across the economy — forcing untold numbers of workers off the job and unnecessarily exacerbating the challenges facing our transportation network. In addition to mass layoffs, American consumers across our economy would be forced to pay the price.

Stakeholders from numerous transportation subsectors are warning Congress of this impending disaster. Airline pilot unions, truck drivers and operators, major freight companies, and port representatives have all raised alarm about these mandates and the destructive impacts they would have on our supply chain. All Americans long for the end of this pandemic, but we cannot afford to gut our transportation network of tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of essential, good-paying jobs. I urge you to consider the clear and foreseeable costs of your

vaccine mandate, especially those placed on our transportation workers and American consumers, and to direct OSHA to cease action immediately on this Emergency Temporary Standard vaccine mandate rule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger F. Wicker", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roger F. Wicker
Ranking Member
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee