Date of Hearing: August 10, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
Lori D. Wilson, Chair
SJR 16 (Caballero) – As Introduced May 7, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 29-5

SUBJECT: Vehicles: commercial driver's license revocation

SUMMARY: Urges Congress of the United States and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to review federal commercial driver's license (CDL) disqualification policies and consider reforms that allow greater flexibility for states and appropriate relief for drivers. Specifically, **this bill**:

Makes various findings and declarations related to cancelling CDLs as a result of changes made to federal regulations.

EXISTING LAW: Requires a person to have in their immediate possession a valid CDL of the appropriate class to operate a CMV, and prohibits the DMV from issuing a CDL to a person until the person passes a knowledge test and driving test for the operation of a CMV that complies with the minimum federal standards established by the federal Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-570) and Part 383 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and has satisfied all other requirements of that act as well as any other requirements imposed by this code. (Vehicle Code Section 15250)

Existing federal regulations:

1) Require a person to person to prove they are a citizen of the United States or that they are a lawful Permanent Resident to obtain a CDL or Commercial Driver's Permit.

2) Authorizes the following documents as proof of US Citizenship:

   a) Valid, unexpired US Passport;
   b) Certified copy of a birth certificate filed with a State Office of Vital Statistics or equivalent agency;
   c) Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) issued by the U.S. Department of State;
   d) Certification of Naturalization used by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS); and,
   e) Certificate of Citizenship issued by DHS. (Title 49 CFR 383.73)

3) Requires a Lawful Permanent Resident to file proof a valid, unexpired Permanent Resident Card. (Title 49 CFR 383.73)

4) Requires States to verify evidence of lawful immigration status for applicants domiciled in a foreign jurisdiction before issuance of a CDL. (Title 49 CFR 383.73)

5) Requires States to query SAVE to verify evidence of lawful immigration status. Prohibits a state from issuing a CDL to a person if SAVE does not verify their lawful immigration status. (Title 49 CFR 383.73)

FISCAL EFFECT: Uknown

COMMENTS: *According to the author*, "California's commercial truck drivers are the backbone of our supply chain and a critical workforce that keeps our state and our nation moving. In March of this year, a federal rulemaking targeting immigrant drivers disenfranchised 13,000 commercial drivers in California, stripping them of their ability to earn a living, provide for their families, and contribute the essential logistical services our economy depends on. This action threatens California's working families. Commercial truck drivers cross the country for weeks at a time, often working under dangerous weather conditions, away from their loved ones, to deliver the goods that sustain our communities. SJR 16 calls on Congress to take action to reinstate the displaced drivers who lost their ability to operate commercial vehicles following this federal rulemaking, and to recognize the substantial economic contributions these workers make to California and to the nation. This resolution is an important step to stabilize our supply chain, protect working families, and ensure that the drivers who keep our economy moving are valued and supported."

In April of 2025, President Trump issued an executive order establishing stronger federal oversight of CDL standards, including strengthening enforcement of English language proficiency requirements for commercial drivers and directing the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) to review how states issue non-domiciled CDLs.

In June of 2025 the FMCSA launched a nationwide audit of state issuance of non-domiciled CDLs to identify potential compliance issues.

On September 26, 2025, FMCSA announced an emergency action restricting eligibility for issuance and renewal of non-domiciled commercial learner's permits (CLPs) and CDLs. Under the rule: Non-citizens could only obtain non-domiciled CDLs if they meet stricter federal standards, including employment-based visas and mandatory federal immigration verification using SAVE.

According to FMCSA, California admitted to improperly issuing about 20,100 non-domiciled CDLs of the total 65,000 non-domiciled CDLs in the state, which the state has been directed to revoke and reissue under compliant procedures. Most of these CDLs had expiration dates that went beyond the individuals' legal time present in the United States. In response, DMV scheduled to cancel 17,400 CDLs on January 5, 2026 with a remaining 2,700 to be cancelled February 13, 2026.

On December 30, 2025, DMV made the decision to delay the cancellation of the CDLs by an additional 60 days.

On January 7, FMCSA took action to withhold federal highway funds from California for failing to meet federal compliance requirements, specifically:

- A previous withhold of around $40 million for failure to enforce English language proficiency standards. (49 C.F.R. § 391.11(b)(2))

- A determination to withhold approximately $158 million beginning fiscal year 2027 due to continued non-compliance in California's CDL program and up to $315 million if noncompliance continues. The federal government has underscored that withheld funds are not merely deferred but permanently lost if compliance is not achieved.

On March 6, 2026 the DMV canceled approximately 13,000 nondomiciled CDLs in compliance with the Trump administrations new regulations.

As of July 2026, California is continuing to challenge the federal funding loss of $158 million in federal court, which will take effect on October 1.

The California Federation of Labor Unions, *writing in support of this resolution*, argue "Commercial drivers form an invaluable part of the supply chain economy in California and across the country. Drivers serve communities nationwide by delivering essentials like food, fuel, goods, and medicine. They also provide critical logistical services that move vehicles, houses, and even people through bus and transit operations. The scope of their work is vast, and their role represents a revolutionary evolution in logistical capability.

The stakes for California are especially high. Roughly 60 percent of the nation's international imports enter the country through California's major ports. To meet this demand, the state permits logistics companies to employ non-domiciled drivers, drivers that live in other states but move goods all over the country, allowing these workers to earn meaningful livelihoods and support their families. The drivers affected by the recent enforcement action are legally present immigrants, many of whom have started their own trucking and logistics companies. The consequences extend across the economy. The loss of these drivers has weakened supply chains, slowed the delivery of goods, and contributed to rising fuel prices tied to reduced delivery capacity.

SJR 16 calls on Congress to take meaningful action by restoring the DMV's authority to make compliance determinations within the federal standard, as the state exercised prior to this rulemaking. It further urges Congress to formally recognize the substantial economic contributions these drivers make to California and to the nation. Reinstating this authority is not simply a matter of administrative process. It is a critical step toward stabilizing the supply chain, protecting working families, and ensuring that the workers who keep our economy moving are valued rather than displaced and economically abandoned."

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO
Teamsters California

Opposition

None on file

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