

Schlafly's diatribe against Mexican truckers misses the mark

by John H. Hill

Ms. Schlafly's recent diatribe against Mexican truckers misses the mark ("President opens border to Mexican trucks and drivers" Mar. 9, 2007). In her opinion editorial, she bemoans the demonstration program announced last month to allow U.S. truckers to compete in Mexico and change the way a limited number of Mexican trucking companies operate within the United States. Had she taken the time to learn the facts, she would have learned that this program will make our economy stronger, lower the cost of consumer products and maintain the highest possible standards of safety and security.

This demonstration project will allow trucks from up to 100 companies from each of our two countries to go beyond the miles-deep commercial zones that thousands of Mexican trucks that enter our country every day have been restricted to since 1982. We've put in place a tough safety program for this project. Mexican trucks and drivers will have to prove - through inspections, interviews, drug-testing, insurance from a US insurer, and detailed hours-of-service records - that they are just as safe as ours. They also will have to comply with all federal and state environmental, labor, and licensing rules. And we will visit every company and conduct an exhaustive safety audit before we allow them to participate in this project.

The bottom line is we cannot afford to let sensationalism and propaganda dictate international treaty obligations as passed by Congress. Nor can we allow baseless anxieties to intimidate us into economic stagnation. This program will allow for safe, regulated, and monitored commerce in a way that encourages job growth and expands economic opportunity. The American people need to hear the facts concerning this issue.

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