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## **The Eastern Transportation Coalition MBUF National Truck Pilot highlights the Importance of Understanding the Complexity of the User**

In the release of its report, “The Exploration of Mileage Based User Fee (MBUF) Approaches for All Users,” which includes the first ever National Truck Pilot, The Eastern Transportation Coalition (TETC) highlights the critical importance of understanding users and their complexities in the examination of alternative transportation funding approaches such as MBUF. This report represents findings on both the passenger and truck pilots conducted under a USDOT Surface Transportation System Funding Alternative grant awarded to the Coalition and its partners.

“America’s highways and bridges are the workplace of our nation’s trucking industry and the reliance on a well-maintained infrastructure to support safe and efficient movement of goods is critical to that industry and the supply chains and public that count on it,” said Dr. Patricia Hendren, Executive Director of The Eastern Transportation Coalition. “As we examine alternatives for transportation funding, we must allow for the complexities of different users, especially for the trucking industry, which has complex operating and regulatory environments, comprised of diverse fleets traveling significant miles across multi-state and multi-jurisdictional boundaries.”

This first National level Truck pilot, the second truck pilot undertaken by the Coalition, was conducted over a six-month period, and included 21 companies and 221 commercial motor vehicles, reflecting a diversity of operating environments including over the road, Less than Truckload (LTL) and agriculture. The pilot vehicles, primarily 5 axle, 80,000-pound class 8 trucks, traveled over 11 million miles across 48 states and Washington DC. Technology and research partner EROAD guided the pilot design and supplied reliable, accurate data from the vehicles involved in the study.

The identified five (5) key findings in the report, shared common themes between both trucks and passenger cars, while recognizing specific needs of each segment, in how MBUF can serve as a viable alternative for transportation funding, including:

1. Understanding the Complexity of the User Matters
2. Real-World Pilots Reduce Privacy Concerns
3. Leveraging Technology Creates Solutions
4. A Tiered Rate Based on MPG Doesn’t Work
5. Customized Outreach Needed to Move MBUF Forward

Truckers are heavy users and payers in the transportation system, paying many fees beyond fuel tax. In addition, the composition of trucking fleets and vehicles is diverse.

“This latest TETC pilot program makes significant strides toward addressing several of the trucking industry’s concerns with mileage-based user fees. In particular, the pilot identifies and

provides insight on an oft-ignored yet critical challenge: how to determine the most fair and equitable rates according to vehicle class. ATA looks forward to working with TETC as it continues to look for solutions to the many questions that must be answered before an alternative user fee system can be implemented,” said Bill Sullivan, Executive Vice-President, American Trucking Association.

“We commend The Eastern Transportation Coalition for taking seriously the apprehensions of small business truckers’ regarding mileage-based user fees (MBUF). Rather than assuming our nation is ready and willing to transition to an entirely new system of taxation with the flip of a switch, the Coalition has taken a more methodical and responsible approach. They clearly understand that the inherent complexity and diversity of our industry creates unique challenges warranting more extensive examination and real-world testing before policymakers can even consider replacing existing user fees with MBUF. Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) members rightfully remain wary, but we also appreciate the Coalition for their thoughtful and transparent approach that is mindful, rather than dismissive, of truckers and their very valid concerns,” said Todd Spencer, President, OOIDA.

A Motor Carrier Working Group, (MCWG) comprised of trucking companies, truck manufacturers, freight haulers, shippers, and related organizations, provided critical input and feedback as the pilot work was formulated and conducted. The clear guidance from the MCWG and industry partners is to keep rate setting simple and transparent and apply a consistent approach, as well as to build on the favorable experience with telematics to leverage technology as a solution to MBUF implementation.

To continue to explore the viability of a national MBUF system, the Coalition will operate additional pilot programs including a 2022 truck pilot that examines rate setting approaches, the feasibility of incorporating MBUF into existing IFTA and IRP frameworks and recruitment of additional pilot participants to encompass more industry sectors and fuel types.

The full report of the Coalition’s findings can be found [here](#).

#### ABOUT THE EASTERN TRANSPORTATION COALITION

*The Eastern Transportation Coalition (TETC) is a partnership of 17 states and D.C. focused on advancing the future of transportation by bringing public agencies together to develop innovative and implementable ideas, exchange best practices, test emerging technologies, and leverage data and tools to address operational, intermodal, and funding challenges. For more information on the Coalition’s work on mileage-based user fees, visit [www.tetcoalitionmbuf.org](http://www.tetcoalitionmbuf.org).*

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