TEANA Legislative Update 9/5/2018

First, I would like to say it is an honor to be able to chair the TEANA legislative committee once again. I would like to thank John Hudson for the leadership he has provided over the past few years. We have had several conference call meetings since I have been on board but, have not made the time to update the membership and, for this, my apologies.

Our last conference call was on Wednesday 9/5 and this newsletter will update you on the contents of this call. A big thank you to Irwin Shire who attended the FMCSA first public meeting in their attempt to revamp the CSA scoring system. Obviously by using the term “revamp” there is an admission of flaws in the system which has been our collations stance all along. Here is what was gleamed out of this meeting. The FMCSA is considering the “Item Response Theory” data method that is a recommendation of the National Academies of Sciences. This method would potentially replace the current data method. My first question (and possible yours as well) is what exactly is the IRT? The answer to this is we really do not know, the FMCSA has stated that they are hoping to run a trail test by the 3/4th quarter of 2018. My thought is that this an ambitious schedule but once it is out there, we may get some insight as to how it is pieced together. On this front, we will have to sit back and wait till more information is available.

There is a meeting scheduled for Monday 9/10 with Mr. Jim Mullins, the Chief Council for FMCSA. Attending this meeting will be Mr. Henry Seaton, Mr. Irwin Shire and several other members of our coalition organizations. Mr. Mullins joins the FMCSA after serving over a decade as the general council with Werner Enterprises. This will be an opportunity to introduce not only our organization to Mr. Mullins but also to gain some additional insight on FMCSA. Thanks go to Mr. Seaton for helping to arrange this meeting but also to Mr. Mullins for making the time to open a dialogue.

The FAST ACT that currently is in place driving FMCSA with regulation in regards to Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) program and its Safety Measurement System (SMS) is due to expire in December 2019. I know that seems like a while off but just ask yourself how quickly 2018 has passed us by. The key to this 12/2019 model is that if Fast Act expires with no replacement then we are back to the old CSA and the data is viewable to the public again. Understand that transparency in most cases is a good thing but. our argument has always been that transparency with flaw data is not! Listen to this quote from Mr Mike Daniels, with the National Academies that is advising the agency. “I wanted to emphasize that IRT will not fix flawed data, the data quality and transition to the IRT model are two important and distinct issues.

So, in summary, hold on, buckle up as the industry and your legislative committee works to steer us through this process. As always, if you have any issues either at your state or local level, that you deem we need to look into, please contact myself or any member of the committee. Once again I thank you for allowing me to serve as your chairman and I especially thank the members of the legislative committee for all the past, current and future input that you provide.

Steve