



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**United Fresh Statement on the Release of the Fix America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act Text and Conference Report**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 2, 2015) - United Fresh Produce Association appreciates the effort by the House of Representatives and Senate to successfully reach agreement on a multi-year highway reauthorization bill. The two houses of Congress have been conferencing since before Thanksgiving to resolve their differences on setting federal policies for our federal surface transportation programs, also known as the highway bill. The conferees announced they had reached agreement on the \$305 billion, 5 year bill earlier this week.

"This is encouraging news for the fresh produce industry," said Robert Guenther, United Fresh's Senior VP for Public Policy. "Getting fresh produce to consumers quickly is critical to our members' success. And given that many fruit and vegetable commodities are shipped domestically almost exclusively by truck, having modernized, updated roads and bridges is a top priority for our industry. After more than 10 years since the last long-term reauthorization and 36 simple extensions of current policy, a full reauthorization is long overdue. However, it is disappointing to know that Congress did not include a proposal for national hiring standards for motor carriers to provide clarity and consistency for operators looking to hire carriers. We are also disappointed that Congress did not include a proposal to give states the option to increase truck weight limits on interstate routes within their borders, which we believe could safely improve efficiency. Conferees did, however include a modified version of language to require the collection of data on ports operations; this is a step in the right direction and will be helpful in assessing the impact of work stoppages such as those experienced at west coast ports earlier this year. Finally, we also recognize and appreciate the efforts to include a provision which will stabilize the federal crop insurance program and help ensure the availability of an important risk management tool for fruit and vegetable producers across the country. Because of this agreement, we encourage Congress to pass this conference report and urge the President's signature so that critical updates to our nation's transportation infrastructure can be realized."

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**About United Fresh Produce Association**

Founded in 1904, the United Fresh Produce Association brings together companies across every segment of the fresh produce supply chain, including growers, shippers, fresh cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. We empower industry leaders to shape sound government policy. We deliver the resources and expertise companies need to succeed in managing complex business and technical issues. We provide the training and development individuals need to advance their careers in produce. Through these endeavors, we unite our industry with a common purpose – to build long-term value for our members and grow produce consumption. Visit [www.unitedfresh.org](http://www.unitedfresh.org).