



INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

Read their stories

Respect their choice

Protect their small businesses





Elizabeth Mason

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

Almost 3 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I wanted more freedom, better pay and at the end of the term to walk away with a truck that I know has been maintained correctly.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I would probably never see home in order to make enough money to survive.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Don't mess with people's livelihoods. We have enough to worry about with the drivers on the road, our load, maintaining our equipment and making ends meet.



Bambi Bealer

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Dart Transit And Mercer

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I began my trucking career in July 2012. 11.5 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I wanted to run my own business. I felt it was time for me to grow.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would be devastating. My family depends on my income and the flexibility that being an independent contractor provides. A ban or a restriction would limit both of those.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Not all independent contractors are the same. Although our name says independent contractor, we are not just “gig” workers, we are small business owners! Our business depends on these companies that we work with. We don't need or want any new legislation that will increase our costs!



Monalisa Christanti

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Ace Doran

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

10 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I can arrange my own schedule and pick my own load, decide where to go, and make money.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I immigrated to this country and started this company with my husband. If they were to ban us as independent contractors, it would make it unimaginably difficult to continue in this industry, essentially putting us out of business.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Leave good enough alone. This industry was doing fine, quit with the unfair litigation.



Nina Dixon

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Bennett Transport

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

6 yrs.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

My husband and I team drive, and we wanted to be able to make time for our grandchildren, family, and church activities. We have time for the things that are important to us. We can stay put for as long or short as we would like.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

We have invested heavily in our trucking business, and this would greatly impact our livelihood. Not only for my husband and I, but for our children and grandchildren.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

This blanket policy would hurt a lot of independent contractors that are also trying to take care of their households and families.



Tamara Crumb

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

18 months.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

Freedom to choose loads and the amount of home time. Also, the potential to make more money.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would likely prompt me to leave the trucking industry, if not leave over the road work for local trucking work.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Individuals are attracted to this work because they want a certain level of autonomy. Moving goods across this country is a necessary profession that powers our way of life. Everything is dependent on OTR trucking currently. The more pressure you put on the individuals that sacrifice to complete that work, the more they will leave the industry. Leave regulations for the corporate and company environments that want it.



Leigh Ann Dahlin

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
CRST Expedited

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I started my career in 2009 during the recession. Over the last 14 years I've built my own company! Becoming an independent contractor has truly changed the path of my life in so many positive ways that I never dreamed of.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I chose to become an independent contractor for the freedom and the money! It's ended up far more rewarding in so many other ways throughout my career.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Adding restrictions for independent contractors would be devastating for so many drivers and their families. We're so much more than just a "truck driver"! We're business owners with our focus on growth and betterment of our industry. My family depends on my businesses revenue for everything we're trying to achieve in life.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Independent contractors and truck drivers as a whole are drowning right now. We're in dire need of help and guidance from our policy maker's, and we need someone to protect us.



Mary Dryer

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
New Prime, Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I have been driving since 2014. I got my license around a month after I turned 21. I got hired about February 7, 2014, and started work a week later.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

My now-husband said at the time that it was easier working as an independent contractor under Prime. Although Prime has several programs, this one is what fits our lifestyle best.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would be devastating. My family depends on my income, and currently, my life has balance. I can take time off work when I want, where I want, and for whatever length of time I want, so long as I can financially justify it. Taking away this position or continuing to overregulate independent contractors is a castration of my freedom, as well as the freedom of many other women.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

More restrictions or complete banishment is just another way to fracture—if not eradicate—options as Americans to be able to continue with the pursuit of happiness while experiencing life and liberty as per our forefathers' vision without the restrictions of an overbearing government.



Alisa Sherbeck

**Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc.**

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I have been in the Trucking Industry since April 2017.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I chose to be an independent contractor with Prime Inc to have a sense of control over my career and to empower other women in the industry. Especially women of a certain age and those, including myself, who have been told that they “couldn’t/wouldn’t “ amount to anything in this industry and/or life.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

If there were a ban, I’m not sure I could go back to being a company driver. As an independent contractor, I enjoy the freedom & experience of running my own company and at least feeling as if I have some control over my career. As for restrictions, I would definitely have to weigh the pros & cons of those restrictions to make the best choices for myself.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Please don’t forget you are making policies for actual human beings! People with families. People who rely on this industry for their livelihood. We need policies that protect us and help us survive and even thrive out here on the roads of America. We need to be heard and valued for the services and goods we provide, not treated like second-class citizens. We need safe parking, safe rest break facilities, and access to accommodation.



Juanita Bowers

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Bennett Driveaway

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

24 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

This career allows me to control my own destiny.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would destroy my means of supplemental income.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

I wish they would realize that not everyone wants to be a company employee. I enjoy the freedom independent contracting provides. It's stress free and allows me to have an EXCELLENT work-life balance. I am a disabled veteran, and I can work as needed and I can take a week or two off to rest/recoup without the pressure to "get back to work."



Patricia C Farner

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I've been in the industry for a little over 3.5 yrs.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I choose to be an independent contractor because of the flexibility it gives me for home/work-life balance, as well as more say in what loads I take and where I go. I get to be a partner with Prime Inc., not just an employee. I enjoy the freedom that a partnership provides over an employee/employer relationship. Being an independent contractor gives me more say in how I run my business. Yes, there are more financial risks to being an independent contractor, however there is also more financial gain, and with that more freedom to choose how to run my business.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Restrictions or bans on independent contracting would potentially destroy my business, and therefore my ability to provide for my family. It would take away my choice for home/work-life balance, decrease my profitability, and would make me an employee, which takes away my freedom to conduct my business as I see fit.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Banning and/or placing restrictions on independent contracting would severely limit many people's ability to provide for their families, as well as their ability to be present for their families. Essentially, this would destroy a cornerstone of society—family. If I am made to be an employee, I will be at the mercy of a business to decide when I can be home with my son, meaning I could miss important events, instead of being afforded the right to decide and plan for time home around my family's important events.



Brenda Poole

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Bennett Transport

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

2 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I chose this career because it enables me to choose where I go and when.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I would be forced to work set hours and take loads to places and during times that may not work with my home life and other obligations.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

By being considered an employee, I would be under complete control of “employer” and no longer able to work the hours I set and may be forced to seek a different type of employment because of time restraints and obligations. I can work and help take care of elderly parents and grandchildren as an independent contractor on my schedule.



Deb Clark

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Bennett Driveway

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

39 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I'm my own boss. I get to choose when I work, where I go, and I am not subject to forced dispatch.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Forced dispatch would force me to look for a different job. I love the flexibility of my job, choosing my destinations, working around family obligations, and taking pride in my own business.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

In this country we have been free to make a name for ourselves, take pride in having our own business, and can excel in our chosen field. Forcing independent contractors to work for someone ultimately would be lower pay due to benefits companies would be forced to provide. We would be subjected to forced dispatch and lose the value of free enterprise. Independent contractors are the epitome of what the United States has always stood for. Taking pride in representing yourself, a good work ethic that propels you forward on the road to success, and being free to make your own choices have made independent contractors the backbone of this great nation!



Ardella Schaeffer

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

20 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I chose this career because of the freedom and ability to make more money.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I injured my shoulder while driving truck OTR and I have a weight restriction for my shoulder, so this is the only job that I can do and still do the job I love to do—and that driving.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Please don't take away our way of making a living.



Rasikhah Peoples

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I have been in the trucking industry since June 2022.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I have chosen to become an independent contractor mainly because of the freedom. No forced dispatch, I get to go home when I want to, and the pay is better. I also wanted to learn the trucking business hands on and start a foundation for myself in the industry.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

A restriction or a ban of being an independent contractor would impact my life tremendously. I NEED the home time to be with my family, certain areas that I deliver to can be potentially dangerous, and my bills would not stop based on my job title, so the revenue from being an independent contractor is a big deal.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Truck drivers are the heart of the world. Everything that we have in our homes was and still is transported by truck to our local facilities.



Cynthia Cunningham

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Bennett

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I've been in this industry for many years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I chose to be an independent contractor because it's great for extra money.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would put me out of business, and I wouldn't be able to be a contractor.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Before you make changes that affect so many, please do your homework and talk to the people that your policies would impact.



Mary Nielsen

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Bennett Truck Transport

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

17 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I enjoy driving, it has flexible hours, and I get to see our country.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I'll be out of a job.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

If you've never been a driver, how can you make policy on something you really don't understand? This is people's livelihood. This is how we support ourselves and our family. It has been working for years, why change it?



Jethel Camp

Owner-Operator

Truck Driver

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

9 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

Because I was told I couldn't do it, so I felt a certain type of way, like, "Oh you're challenging me?" Of course, other thoughts started floating—was this because I'm a woman? That was additional fuel to the fire already burning to create change. I chose to have a large family, and with that comes all types of responsibilities like paying for sports, gifts for friends, events, etc. Working a regular 9-5 and affording daycare just didn't make sense for me because the cost of day care for 1 is about \$1400 per month. So, I needed more money, and let me tell you, when I became an independent contractor, I completely changed tax brackets twice all on my own. I am able to be at home with my growing family at times that are most important, so I am very grateful for the opportunity.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Being forced to do something you don't want to do is not living. I feel like they would be stealing the American Dream and the ability to be self-sufficient and financially stable from me. They would be stealing the ability to purchase the necessities to live a long and prosperous life and robbing me of my ability to leave wealth and generosity behind for my family. Also, consumers should understand what a huge impact this would have on all inter- and intra-state trucking operations, as well as the products, goods, and services we rely on daily. It will be a domino effect, and lots of small businesses will feel it the most.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Listen to the people! We are the ones out there day and night choosing to proudly be independent contractors operating safely to ensure smooth delivery of essential goods and services! Independent contractors consciously choose to keep the economy rolling by getting in those trucks and going here to there.



Rebecca L Farris

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

5 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

Freedom and choose your home time and loads, and you can make your truck like you want it, decal etc.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I wouldn't be driving anymore, or I would have to become a company driver.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

I love trucking just like it is. I love driving for Prime inc. I hope to retire with them.



MISSOURI

Dee Sova

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I began trucking more than three decades ago and have driven more than 2.1 million accident-free miles, delivering the goods that Americans depend on. I'm proud to serve as an industry ambassador, working in my free time mentoring women truck drivers and supporting this vibrant, growing community.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

To most people, owning your own business is a way to become successful. For me, it was a mission – a lifeline to a brighter future for myself and my four daughters.

As a Black woman, I built a successful business and created a profitable path in an industry that had once belonged almost exclusively to men. As a single parent, I needed both flexibility, and the opportunity to provide for them. Being an independent truck driver empowered me to run my truck as my own small business. I love traveling on the job, the freedom to be my own boss, and the option to take my children with me on long hauls when I can.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I know how it would affect my life because it already has. I was living in California when the state assembly passed AB5. I could not afford to lose my business and the livelihood it provided my family, so in 2020, I packed up and moved to Missouri, where I continued as an independent contractor with Prime Inc.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Outlawing independent contracting nationwide would demote me from small business owner to company employee – affecting my hours, benefits, flexibility and overall ability to earn on my own terms. It would effectively kill the dream I worked so hard to build over so many years.

Independent contractors like me who choose to own our businesses should be supported as we pursue our dreams.



Whitney White

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
CRST

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I first started in the industry in 2007 driving with my late husband. Together we not only traveled the country, but we also had the opportunity to do it together and take our hometime in many different places. This allowed us to see many places most people do not get to see.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I enjoy running my own business and setting personal goals. I was driving with my husband for 14 years and when he passed away, I was encouraged to run my own business. I am extremely supportive of woman in an industry that has for many years been dominated by men. There are many opportunities in trucking for women to grow both personally and professionally. I have 3 grown sons who think that I am one strong woman! And I would have to agree!

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

This is 100% my life and this would seriously affect all aspects of my life. I have dedicated most of my adult life to this industry. This would hinder my business and would force me into being a company driver making less money and changing my lifestyle. This will also take away my independence and security. I do not want to see independent contractors having to work under forced dispatch. Independent contractors do not want to lose their control over what they can do and where they can go, as well as the amount of money they can make.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

If the government forces us to become company employees, we will lose everything that we have worked so hard for. We will lose our small business, we will lose our ability to provide the lifestyle that we worked so hard for, and the freedom of setting our own destinations both financially and personally.



Yvonne Zarnitz

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
New Prime Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I've been in the trucking industry for 2 years. I started training with New Prime Inc in April 2022.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I need the flexibility to have control over my home time, taxes and expenditures, safety, driving locations, and schedule. Employee drivers do not usually have those options. I also did not want to buy or own a truck. I wasn't sure if I wanted to do it long-term, but I wanted to give it a real shot.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Restrictions or a ban on being an OTR independent contractor would be death to a freedom. Restrictions or bans could take away my choice to lease or buy a truck and what I could realistically afford at that time. It could take choices away on how to balance work and home time, create concerns for safety, and confusion about what could be deducted from taxes. Restrictions and bans could take a huge toll on my mental health by adding unnecessary stress.

As an OTR independent contractor, there are freedoms that employee drivers do not have. For starters, home time as an OTR employee driver is one day per week. This means for one week out, you get one day at home. That is only four days a month. Recently, I had to go home to take care of a loved one. I was home for close to three weeks taking care of her. I had enough in my emergency fund to take care of my fixed costs, so it didn't put me into debt. As an OTR employee there is no emergency fund to put money into, and I would not have been allowed to take this time off. How would I have been able to manage this? Usually when home, I take time to see a doctor or two to keep up with my preventive care. Then there is my support group, my friends, and family that keep me going. I do not want to be alone when I retire or lose

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my important relationships. My folks are getting older, and they are extremely important to me as well. I'll never get time back and it's imperative to create memories and have good times together.

Second, I lease my truck which I do not want to own. If I had to buy a truck, there would be a need for a large down payment which I don't have, and I would have to sell it down the road. Those are both headaches and struggles I can do without. Most truckers don't have a lot of money to put on a down payment. Leasing has allowed me to figure out if this career is the right fit for me and has given me a timeline to give my new career a serious trial.

Another fact is that I like to have control over my expenses and the money I work so hard for. I get paid more than a company driver so I can set aside more money for myself, including the emergency fund you do not get as an employee. I keep track of and control my expenses, write them off, and pay my taxes. I am the one who did the work after all so I want to keep as much money that I worked for as I can.

Finally, I set my own driving time. New Prime Inc.'s first policy is safety, but I feel less pressure when I am running my own business and setting my own rules. I will not drive if I am too tired, if there is ice or snow, or if I've been up all day waiting for a preplan. Occasionally, an overnight load comes in after I have been waiting for eight or nine hours. DOT has a 14-hour clock, but so does my own person. Those two clocks must sync. If they don't sync, I don't drive because it's unsafe. I have a future plan, so I do what I can to not put my life in danger.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Policy makers need to understand that independent contractor jobs are an incentive for individuals to work hard and make their own way in the world whether it is buying or leasing their vehicle. They need to have freedom of choice for their own personal lifestyle. Independent contractor jobs are for those who don't want to be under another's thumb yet want to contribute and carry their own weight. This includes having options on whether to lease or own their truck. Policy makers also need to understand that a person who feels like they have some control over their life choices is a positive step towards a healthy mental state. I have found that working for myself as a lease operator has made me feel successful, happy, and confident. Having the choice to be an OTR independent contractor and being able to lease means freedom.



Patricia Graves

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Ace Doran

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

3.5 yrs.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

It's because of the freedom to do my own thing.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Salary, freedom of my schedule.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

It's been working so well for so many for so long, why change it?



Ingrid Brown

Owner-Operator

Truck Driver

Rollin'B LLC

Blackjack Express LLC

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

44 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I began driving a truck in 1979 when there were very few women drivers. All the women I knew were independent contractors running their own ICC/MC numbers because women in trucking were rare, and we were hired based on our proven performance and work ethic. We worked as independent contractors to get our start, to establish our presence, and become equals. Equality of pay, loads, and even service and equipment. I had to establish that I could be successful through experience, education, knowledge, and hard work to reach my goal. All due to my undying belief and passion for my career and success. I wouldn't be able to succeed or provide for my family a single mother without becoming an independent contractor. Being an independent contractor enabled me to raise my amazing, educated, successful daughters, care for my parents, and fight Melanoma Cancer. Owning my own company gave me the flexibility to meet the needs of my family.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Restrictions or a ban would take away my flexibility and decrease my income too. First and foremost, this would impact my health as I continue to drive and operate while being treated for Melanoma Cancer. If I wasn't an independent contractor, I could not afford to take time off for my infusions and the two days that follow.

Without my health, I can't continue on in my 44 year career that I fought for my place in as a minority. For the next 5 years, I would have regression to my success and livelihood.

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Taking away my level and means to contribute to my retirement would be devastating! Independent contractors depend on income and stability to accrue a safe retirement for when the time comes. The 44 years of time I dedicated to my career would be lost, and I wouldn't be able to pass that legacy on to my daughters.

But, I and thousands more independent contractors look beyond the money and freedom. We have pride to be an AMERICAN and I love to be able to own and operate my own small business.

These are just a few of the biggest reasons we all are and want to be independent contractors.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

I know without a doubt that if you take time to read my answers to the two prior questions, you'll see why getting rid of, removing, restricting, and banning independent contractors is no different than taking our lives and those in our lives apart. You'll not only have taken food off our table and the ability to care for ourselves and our loved ones, but you've also taken away a way of life people like myself. I am an Independent Contractor Professional Driver and Sole Principle Woman-Owned Business!! 44 years strong and 5.1 million safe driving miles... providing for my family and friends. Most importantly providing for you!! Small business companies take care of all of AMERICA.

Don't forget AMERICA MOVES BY TRUCK!



Tabatha Westcott

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

3 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

More freedom. To eventually have my own mini fleet.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I would not be able to progress as fast and I'd probably leave trucking after a couple years.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

These opportunities help women such as myself to become small business owners who come from situations where this otherwise wouldn't be possible. I was a military wife and stay at home mother to 3 sons for 20 years. At 40 years old, starting out in the working world, my options and time are limited. I had very little outside support. My company is what gave me the opportunity to become successful in such a short period of time.



Violet J Helferich

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Ace Doran Hauling
and Rigging

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

22 yrs.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

Freedom .

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I'd become a parolee that gets put on a tight leash.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Don't take our freedom away. I enjoy setting my own schedule, accepting my own loads.



Jeanette Lonergan

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Bennett family of companies-
Bennett heavy and specialized

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

33 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

Control our own ability to earn a vastly better living, be more responsible for the safe operation of our unit, and to implement excellence in the security of our equipment.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I'd choose to exit trucking. It would deeply reduce our ability to earn a living & provide a service that is invaluable, but I won't be forced into laboring for someone else when I've spent the better part of my adult life creating a life around my ability to choose how and when I'll earn a living.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

We are not replaceable. There's many who've exited the trucking industry due to extreme increases in detrimental policies that adversely affect them. If I wanted to be a company employee... I'd already be one.



Pamela Wilday

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

9 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

It gave me and my husband the freedom to alternate our home time to share care for our daughter when she was growing up, and now, my husband's parents. On top of that, the income is far better than running as a company driver and pulled us out struggling to pay bills, and took us to now owning our home.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would take away my ability to drive because I count on being able to provide income and stay at home to split care of elderly parents with my husband. You don't have that freedom as a company driver.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

What we do is the American dream. Entrepreneurship, building a life for your family, not struggling day to day. We are no different starting up our businesses than Joe and Betty that opened your favorite pizza shop. We abide by the rules, we pay our taxes. This gives so many a way out of poverty, abusive relationships, etc. Let us do what we do in peace.



Kim Grate

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

Seven years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

Me and my husband wanted to make more money and choose what jobs we run.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Depending on the ban or restrictions, this job has changed a lot for me and my husband. It has given us more opportunities for our future.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

If I was speaking to the policymakers that decide on parking for trucks I would say we need way more parking. Open up closed weigh stations. We struggle daily to find a safe place to park. Safety is a big thing for my husband and me when driving and parked.



Kelly Hill

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

6 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I wanted the freedom of choosing my time off and also to manage my business with a partner. I wanted to have my own truck and to decorate it my way. When I was a company driver, I made less money and was unhappy. I don't think I would have continued driving if I had to stay with a company. People have lost track of the importance of happy workers. Happy drivers are safer as they value the industry and the career.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I have been a company driver before, and I have no interest in that again if the laws change. I will likely leave the industry. For me the laws being made don't keep us any safer, they just restrict our income and freedom. We work hard as it is and if they continue to restrict us, I believe that most of the truckers will decide to leave the industry, like me, or practice unsafe practices that will further hurt drivers.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Driving a truck safely is important and I agree with laws that affect safety. However, I agree that people who do the job of driving a truck deserve to decide when and how we run these loads safely. We deserve to have a good, stable income and make important decisions with our business partners. Laws affecting anyone should concern everyone. If truckers are important, I believe we are America and should pay attention to the things that affect us.

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If the government needs good, safe drivers, they need to start listening to our needs. Keep the pay fair, allow us the hours to run while away from our families to make money, and allow us a work environment that we are good with—owner operator is what we choose, and we believe that is a right.



Malissa Howell

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Fraley & Schilling

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

Almost 12 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

Freedom to choose where I go and what I do and when I do it. As well as to put more money in my pocket.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I would lose my home and many other important things in life as I can't make the kind of money I do now as a company driver. I would have to declare bankruptcy, and many other crazy things would happen in my life if I couldn't work as an independent contractor. It would start a snowball effect.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Leave independent contractors alone. We aren't being taken advantage of (at least not at Fraley & Schilling), and if you take away our right to work as independent contractors, it could cost us our whole livelihoods. I went from bringing home 1k-2k a week as a company driver to now averaging anywhere between 3k-10k—and that is all dependent on how hard I work, the ability to turn loads down, and pick loads that work best for me. My livelihood depends on me being an independent contractor. I can't afford to be a company driver again. You would cause me to lose my whole life if you did this, and many other independent contractors are in the same situation. Our bills are based on what we make now. No company out there can pay an employee what we make. If you are that concerned with independent contractors then do stuff to protect us so that we can keep working and making money. Don't do things to prevent us from being able to work as independent contractors.



Julie Newsome

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Ace Doran
Bennett Motor Company

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

4 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

To provide essential services to the community and public in a safe and responsible manner.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would drastically change mine and my spouse's life, as well as negatively impact all our family, children, and future generations.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Do not pass any such bill or legislation that will stop good, hardworking people from providing for their families and stop essential services from being provided to the public.



Megan Ayers

Owner-Operator, Truck Driver
Cottonwood Transportation &
Freight Inc. partnered with
Bennett Heavy & Specialized LLC

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

Started trucking in early 2017, so 7 fabulous years!

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I chose to become an independent contractor for the freedom to run my business my way.

I love the challenge of running my day to day operations as efficiently & safely as possible. I take pride in saving every penny I can because every penny saved goes into my pocket.

I also relish the ability to choose my freight, and my off time. I love that I never have to miss special events with my family because I can pick my own schedule!

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Unfortunately, restrictions on or banning of independent contractors would absolutely affect my life. I would lose the hundreds of thousands of dollars that I have invested into my company. Not to mention, everything I have worked so hard to achieve would have all been a waste. I've struggled and worked very hard to build a future for my grandchildren. It would all fall apart if I could not continue operating my business.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

I understand the spirit of the DOL's regulation is to protect the people out here that are inaccurately classified as 1099 contractors. Those people

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should be classified as employees and receive the benefits that come with it. However, a blanket rule that doesn't account for those of us who have invested literally hundreds of thousands of dollars into our vehicles, safety equipment, accountants, etc. is negligible at best. As a contractor who owns all of my equipment, I am a true business owner. I can decide to stop my independent contractor partnership at any time and move to another partnership, taking all of my equipment, employees, and business assets with me. There should definitely be a delineated system (a litmus test, if you will) to make a differentiation between true business-owning independent contractors and company employees.



Latoshia Chambers

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Gillig, and New Flyer

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

11 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

It's the freedom to make my own schedule and more income as I work more when needed instead of only schedule time.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

I will not be able to afford my home nor any of my bills.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Please do not block us from making enough income to make a living. Passing this bill will cause a lot of us to have nowhere to live.



Tania Cruz

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Prime Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I've been in the trucking industry for 3 years this May.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

I wanted the business aspect of being an independent contractor, and also having more flexibility and say.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

That would mean that I'd have to close my business, and it would severely impact my personal finances as this is my main income.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

My message to policymakers would be to please consider and understand how greatly this would impact a lot of us in this industry as this is our main income for a lot of us women. We have sacrificed our time and families to be able to create and evolve in our businesses as independent contractors, and the consequences of a potential ban would greatly affect not only us but our families that also rely on us.



Wendy Lofton

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Houff Transfer, Inc.

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

5 years.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

All of our kids are grown and have moved on. I decided to join my husband, who has been trucking for 22 years. It is a great opportunity for us to spend time together doing something we both admire. We enjoy being able to have home time when we want/need it.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

Having just finished paying for our lease truck, I find it annoying to even consider taking the independent contractor classification option away from us. We contract with an outstanding company that is exceptionally good to its employees, and yet I prefer being an independent contractor because it works for me. If I were an employee, I would resent the fact that I couldn't make my own decisions about being away from home, or what I could or couldn't do with my own vehicle. The extra money that we make as independent contractors doesn't make us rich, but it basically pays me to do our bookkeeping and taxes and the administrative necessities of running a business.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

What are you trying to gain by doing this to 350,000 people? What does this do for you, us, or the economy? What's the real point? This is America! Find something important to focus your efforts on like homelessness or starving children. Independent contractors have made a conscious decision to do what we are doing, and we're given a choice to be an employee and STILL have the option to convert if desired.



Allison Janowski

Owner-Operator
Truck Driver
Landstar

How long have you been in the trucking industry?

I first got my CDL in 1998. My husband was US Navy for 28 years. When we had to move duty stations it was always easy to get employment if I had a CDL. It was the only certification that all 50 states would recognize and was easy to gain employment.

Why did you choose to become an independent contractor?

When my husband completed his military service we decided to buy a truck and go over the road.

How would restrictions or a ban on independent contracting impact your life?

It would stop us from trucking. We mainly haul government protective security freight. This freight requires a security clearance. We are owner operators that are leased onto Landstar. They provide our government security manager services and security clearance support.

What message would you like to send to policymakers?

Stop interfering with trucking for political reasons. We will not move freight if we are forced to be company drivers. Company drivers are told when to truck and how to truck. We also make more money owning and running our own trucking businesses. We have our own medical, dental, and retirement plans. We have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in our one truck operation.

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