

I am pleased to support this legislation. I appreciate what the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Lipinski) mentioned in some detail on the floor, and I shall not repeat the pattern of illegal operations that we are seeing across the country.

What is important here is that we have legislation that for the first time is going to provide some real teeth, being able to take people who have a pattern of illegal operation in this country, in many cases they are unsafe and environmentally not sound, being able to take these operations out of service. There is an opportunity now to strengthen the provisions so that we make sure that the civil penalties that sometimes people are simply ignoring can in fact be enforced, and a pattern of offenses can result in a significant fine of \$25,000 and that they will be disqualified.

I do not think that this is an issue necessarily that deals with free trade or not. I think this is one area where people on both sides of NAFTA, for instance, can come together. This is simple, common-sense enforcement of our motor carrier laws, standing up for what is important for our motorists, for the environment. In fact, I think that people who had supported NAFTA have even more reason to stand up, because if we are not providing this type of enforcement, it makes a sham out of the representations that are made that are in good faith on this floor in bringing this legislation forward.

Last but not least, I like the notion of disarming people who are not appropriately operating vehicles in this country. I feel that if we take this philosophy further, I think nothing would solve the problem of repeat drunk drivers more than taking the cars away, selling them, getting their attention, the same way that taking these trucks out of service, taking these vehicles out of service will get their attention. It is a simple, common-sense approach that I think the American public would support, with broad application, and I hope that it will prove to be effective here and will be able to be used in other areas of making our highways safer and making sure that people obey our laws.