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Sacramento, Calif. – The California Cattlemen’s Association is pleased to announce California Gov. Jerry Brown signed CCA sponsored legislation, AB 1960 by Assemblymember Tom Lackey (R-Palmdale), into law on September 28, 2016. CCA appreciates the governor’s positive action on this bill, which is a priority for farmers and ranchers across the state.

AB 1960 brings necessary reform to the Basic Inspection of Terminals (BIT) program administered by the California Highway Patrol (CHP). Farmers and ranchers are currently required to participate in the BIT program if they operate a pickup with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 10,000 pounds. This requirement captures the majority of new three quarter- and one-ton pickups available or a pickup and trailer combination exceeding 40 feet in length regardless of weight. The program requires a BIT program officer to physically inspect vehicles, vehicle maintenance records and vehicle driving records at least once every six years or more frequently based on performance.

Enrollment in the BIT program requires an individual to pay an annual fee based on the size of the fleet beginning at \$130. Inspections are time-consuming and a minor violation could lead to further enforcement which may restrict an individual from operating a vehicle critical to farming, ranching or just the day-to-day activities required to be completed.

“Although the BIT program may be appropriate for California’s for-hire semi-truck fleet, regulating small family farmers and ranchers using pickups to haul small tractors, equipment or a handful of cows is simply unnecessary,” said CCA President, Billy Flournoy. “Most of these vehicles are also our personal vehicles; vehicles we use to do things like go to the grocery store and take our kids to school.”

AB 1960 provides an exemption which would exempt farmers and ranchers from the BIT program so long as the pickup and/or pickup and trailer combination is used solely in agriculture, used not-for-hire, the total gross combined weight rating of the pickup and trailer does not exceed 26,000 pounds and the pickup has a GVWR of less than 16,000 pounds.

“This small exemption will cut red tape for our state’s farmers and ranchers saving them time and money,” Assemblyman Tom Lackey (R-Palmdale) said. “In the midst of ever-increasing regulation for one of our state’s largest industries, this change in law will allow them to purchase newer and safer vehicles for use on their farms and ranches and focus more on their business. Thank you again to the California Cattlemen’s Association for their partnership on this bill.”

On behalf of California’s farmers and ranchers, CCA would like to thank Assemblymember Tom Lackey for authoring the bill. CCA would also like to recognize the bills’ co-authors, Senator Cathleen Galgiani (D-Stockton) and Assemblymembers Frank Bigelow (R-O’Neals), Bill Dodd (D-Napa) and the strong support provided by the Chair of the Assembly Transportation Jim Frazier (D-Oakley).

The bill will go into law January 1, 2017.

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Founded in 1917, the California Cattlemen’s Association (CCA) represents California’s \$3.05 billion beef cattle industry on legislative and regulatory affairs and remains the number one voice for the industry today. CCA is an affiliate of the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, which represents America’s cattle farmers and ranchers.