

# The Coalition for Transportation Productivity

*Making Roads Safer, Protecting the Environment  
and Strengthening the Economy  
Through Vehicle Weight Limit Reform*

Overview of The Safe and Efficient  
Transportation Act

By Lindsay Chason  
The Home Depot



# Mounting Pressures on US Manufacturers

- Congestion has tripled since 1982.
- Truck emissions standards and other rules continue to tighten.
- Diesel fuel price spikes will return with growing economy.
- International competition is more intense than ever.
- Driver shortage will continue to be a factor in years ahead.



## CTP Proposal – The Safe and Efficient Transportation Act (SETA) – H.R. 763 & S.747

- Gives States the authority to allow 97,000 pound, six-axle vehicles access to their interstate highway systems.
- Sixth axle maintains weight per axle, tire displacement and braking distance.
- Higher Heavy Vehicle Use Tax would be required to carry the heavier load. Earmarked for bridge repair.
- States or DOT Secretary could limit access on bridge-by-bridge or road-by-road basis.





**80,000 5-Axle – displacing 4444 lbs./tire**



**97,000 6-Axle – displacing 4409 lbs./tire**

**Trucks are the same size.**

## What about Braking Distance?

Vehicle Weight (lbs.)	Stopping Distance from 60 mph (in feet)	
	5-axle	6-axle
80,000	240	191
90,000	271	220
97,000	295	241

Source: Paul Johnson, Ind. Consultant, former Sr. Dir of Engineering, Meritor WABCO.



## Improved Safety

- Univ. of Mich. TRI Study – 2009
- Wisconsin DOT Study – 2009
- European Union Study – 2008
- UK Study – 2008
- National Acad. Of Sciences – 2002
- ...and many others



## Improved Safety

- Based on the findings of a 2009 Wisconsin DOT study, if a law like SETA had been in place in 2006, it would have **prevented 90 truck-related accidents** in the state that year.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin Truck Size & Weight Study, Cambridge Systematics, Inc., 2009



## Improved Safety

- The UK **raised** weight limits to 97,000 pounds for six-axle vehicles in 2001.<sup>1</sup>
  - Fatal truck-related accident rates declined by 35%.
  - More freight has been shipped.
  - VMTs have declined.

<sup>1</sup> Transport Statistics Bulletin: Road Freight Statistics 2007, United Kingdom Department for Transport, 2008



## Cleaner Environment

- Six-axle trucks carrying 97,000 pounds get **17% more ton-miles** per gallon than five-axle trucks carrying 80,000 pounds.<sup>1</sup>
- The U.S. DOT estimates that 6-axle rigs would save **2 billion gallons** of diesel fuel annually, a **19 percent decrease** in fuel consumption

<sup>1</sup>American Transportation Research Institute, Energy and Emissions Impacts of Operating Higher Productivity Vehicles, Alexandria, VA, September 2004.



## Improved Infrastructure

- The sixth axle ensures that no additional weight per tire results from the higher weight limits.
- SETA would cut the number of trucks on the road—saving \$2.4 billion in pavement restoration costs over 20 years (US DOT).
- Wisconsin DOT found savings from pavement wear reductions would exceed cost of added bridge maintenance.



# Impact of the Maine-Vermont Pilot Program

Hampden to Houlton, ME – Interstate v. Secondary Road Comparison

	<u>Route 2</u>	<u>I-95</u>
<b>Total Mileage</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>Travel Time</b>	<b>2 :55</b>	<b>2 :05</b>
<b>Intersections</b>	<b>270 +</b>	<b>32 controlled – access ramps</b>
<b>Traffic Lights</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Crosswalks</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Driveways</b>	<b>3000 +</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>School Crossings</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>



## What about Bridges?

- Maine Engineering Analysis suggests bridges can carry the weight of six-axle rigs.
- States retain right to exclude (post) bridges as necessary.
- Cumulative benefits far exceed additional bridge expense (WI Study).
- Proposed user fee increase goes to fund bridge repair.
- MN Study showed increase in bridge costs of \$50,000 annually.



## Charges by Opponents

- **Heavier trucks are not as safe.**
  - *The sixth axle maintains braking capability and weight-per-tire (TRB 2002).*
- **Allowing Heavier Trucks Won't Reduce Trucks**
  - *More trucks are coming with a growing economy, but our proposal will slow their rate of growth.*
- **SETA would put bridges at risk.**
  - *Our bill puts states in full control of implementation with DOT Secy. as backstop*
- **SETA would divert rail freight to truck.**
  - *May reduce rail earnings, but rail shipments will grow.*



## About CTP

The **Coalition for Transportation Productivity (CTP)** is a group of almost 200 companies and associations dedicated to safety and responsibly increasing the vehicle weight limit on federal interstate highways—but only for trucks equipped with an additional sixth axle.

**For more information contact:**

**John Runyan, Exec. Director**

**[www.transportationproductivity.org](http://www.transportationproductivity.org)**

