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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle Weight (lbs.)</th>
<th>Stopping Distance from 60 mph (in feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-axle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97,000</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.¹

¹ 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 2001.¹
  - Fatal truck-related accident rates declined by 35%.
  - More freight has been shipped.
  - VMTs have declined.

Cleaner Environment

- Six-axle trucks carrying 97,000 pounds get 17% more ton-miles per gallon than five-axle trucks carrying 80,000 pounds.¹

- 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

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

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

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