

MODAL EQUITY WITH TRUCKS

Achieving Fairness in Freight Transportation

Our Ask

- Oppose increases to truck lengths or weights – including pilot or state-level programs
- Require FHWA to finalize its cost allocation study
- Adopt a fair user-pay system with trucks covering their true cost, while protecting rail's safety, environmental, and economic benefits

The Problem

Congress is considering proposals to increase truck size and weight beyond the current 80,000 lbs / 65 feet. These changes would:

- Divert millions of carloads from rail to highway
- Accelerate taxpayer-funded road and bridge damage
- Worsen congestion, safety, and emissions
- Undermine short line railroads and regional supply chains

The Societal Impact of Bigger Trucks

Rail Diversion

- 91,000 lbs > 2.6 million carloads + 1.8 million intermodal units diverted
- 120,000 lbs with twin 33s > 7.5 million carloads + 8.5 million intermodal units diverted

Taxpayer Costs

- Trucks already underpay for infrastructure damage
- Since 2008, the Highway Trust Fund has required \$275 billion in General Treasury subsidies

Safety & Congestion

- Rail is 3–20x safer than trucking
- One train keeps hundreds of trucks off the road
- More trucks = more crashes, pollution, and congestion

Environmental Harm

- Shifting freight from rail to truck increases GHG emissions by 75%
- Trucks also generate harmful particulate emissions

Congress Must Take Action to Preserve Competitive Transportation

- Short lines reinvest 25-33% of annual revenue into infrastructure
- Even modest freight diversion can force closures, eliminating service and jobs
- Loss of rail service reduces competition, raises costs for shippers, and weakens supply chain resiliency