



OPPOSE HEAVIER TRUCKS

Congress should oppose provisions that increase the weight of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) on roads and highways.

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Federal law limits the weight of CMVs to 80,000 lbs. In the 118th Congress, two bills seek to make them heavier.

- HR 3372: wrongly called a ‘pilot’ program, increases truck weight to 91,000 lbs., ending federal law governing truck weight for up to 10 years.
- HR 2948: allows for increases to 88,000 lbs. for auto transporters.

Since 1982, **Congress has repeatedly declined to increase truck length or weight.**

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) examined the impacts of increasing current federal limits and agreed that **no changes to federal policy should be made.**

“Increasing truck weight limits to 91,000 pounds would negatively affect more than 4,800 bridges, incurring up to \$1.1 billion in additional federal investment” USDOT, MAP-21 Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Limits Final Report to Congress, 2016.

“An increase in allowed total gross truck weights from 80,000 to 91,000 pounds (but with no change in trailer length) is estimated to result in the diversion of 2.6 million annual railroad carloads and 1.8 million intermodal units from rail to road” Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT), Estimating the Rail-to-Truck Traffic Diversions Attributable to Increased Truck Size and Weight, 2020.

More than thirty national organizations, including law enforcement, fire and medical first responders, county and city administrators, mayors, labor organizations from rail and trucking, supplier organizations, safety advocates and more **oppose heavier trucks!**

ASLRRA urges Congress to stand against any increases in federal weight limits for CMVs, as these increases will:



Increase deaths and accidents



Damage roads and bridges at taxpayer cost



Disrupt supply chain efficiency



Lead to more, not less, trucks on the road



Harm the environment

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HEAVIER TRUCKS INCREASE RISK OF HIGHWAY ACCIDENTS AND DEATHS

The state of safety on our nation's roads is already terrifying and making the problem worse ought to be unthinkable. Fatal crashes involving trucks are on the rise. Heavier trucks will take longer to stop and will do even more harm when they collide with motorists. In 2021, 5,600 large trucks were involved in fatal crashes on our nation's highways, an increase of 13 percent from 2020.¹ If heavier trucks are allowed, these figures will only get worse.

HEAVIER TRUCKS DAMAGE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AT TAXPAYER COST

Heavier trucks would cause billions of dollars in infrastructure damage to roads and bridges that are primarily paid for by taxpayers. As vehicle weight increases, damage to roadways increases disproportionately.

HEAVIER TRUCKS DISRUPT THE REGIONAL AND U.S. SUPPLY CHAIN

Railroads – particularly short lines – compete aggressively with trucks to service shippers. CMV weight increases will give the trucking industry a competitive advantage and will shift freight from rail to truck in many communities, resulting in **loss of railroad service** as short lines operate on slim margins. A small reduction in freight can cause a catastrophic economic impact to a small railroad, even forcing a railroad out of business. As railroads shutter, and transportation options are reduced to one, heavier trucks will result in **increased transportation costs** and a **reduction in supply chain resiliency**. The public will experience **rising prices** with higher transportation costs being passed along to the consumer and **economic contraction** as local jobs and future regional economic growth are lost, including jobs at shippers that have been driven out of business by higher transportation costs.

HEAVIER TRUCKS ACTUALLY LEAD TO MORE TRUCKS ON THE ROAD

Those supporting heavier trucks argue that an increase in truck weight will mean more goods and freight will be able to move on the current number of trucks on the road. They say there will be no overall increase in trucks on the nation's highways. But that is not what will happen – studies demonstrate that heavier trucks actually lead to more trucks on the road. A recent study has shown that increasing truck weight from 80,000 to 91,000 pounds will divert 20.4% of U.S. freight rail carload traffic, or 2.6 million freight rail cars, over a 5-year period to roadways. An analysis of intermodal (combination of truck and rail service) indicates that an increase in weight will lead to 1.8 million more truckloads on our highways over the same period.²

HEAVIER TRUCKS HARM THE ENVIRONMENT

Moving freight by truck instead of rail increases greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent, according to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) data. Moving freight by truck also releases into the atmosphere non-exhaust emissions small enough to be inhaled, such as tire particulates and other toxic materials. According to the EPA, in addition to negative health impacts on the public, particulate matter can be carried over long distances by wind and then settle on ground or water, further damaging the environment.

¹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), *Traffic Safety Facts – Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities for the First Quarter, 2023*

² Mark Burton, *Appalachian Transportation Institute, Estimating the Rail-to-Truck Traffic Diversions Attributable to Increased Truck Size and Weight, 2020*