

March 31, 2021

The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chairman
The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

The Honorable Thomas Carper, Chairman
The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Chairman
The Honorable Roger Wicker, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation

Dear Members of Congress:

As the 117th Congress prepares to consider solutions for repairing and improving the nation's transportation infrastructure, we urge you to oppose any legislation that would increase maximum truck length or weight limits on federal highways. Our opposition extends to any legislation that would exempt individual states or commodities from federal truck weight or length limits.

Infrastructure discussions on Capitol Hill are taking place against the backdrop of a crisis in terms of the nation's roadways and bridges. This month, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) issued its latest Infrastructure Report Card, giving the nation's roads a grade of "D". This grade represents no improvement from four years ago, when the organization issued its previous report card. ASCE found that "over 40 percent of the (road) system is now in poor or mediocre condition" with a backlog in roadway maintenance topping \$786 billion.

The nation's bridges did not fare much better, with a "C" grade. Of the 617,000 bridges in the nation, 42 percent are at least 50 years old and 7.5 percent are structurally deficient. According to ASCE, the estimate for the nation's backlog of bridge repair needs is \$125 billion. "At the current rate of investment, it will take until 2071 to make all of the repairs that are currently necessary, and the additional deterioration over the next 50 years will become overwhelming," the report concluded.

As bad as the condition of our roads and bridges is today, the situation could be made worse. Allowing heavier or longer trucks as has been proposed would further deteriorate our highway system.

USDOT studied the impact of various longer and heavier truck configurations on the National Highway System (NHS) and found that the additional cost of the damage to both roads and bridges would add billions of dollars to our already strained system.

Increases in truck length and weight would have especially severe consequences for local roads and bridges. Local roads and bridges face significant damage because they may be older, not built to the same standards as interstates, or already in poor condition. This adds further pressure on state, county and local governments to find funds to repair these essential roadways, when there are not sufficient revenues procured today to cover the infrastructure maintenance costs.

For the above reasons, we ask that you reject any legislative language that would increase current maximum truck length or weight nationally or in individual states.

Sincerely,

American Public Works Association
National Association of Counties
National Association of County Engineers
National Association of Towns and
Townships
National League of Cities
The United States Conference of Mayors
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Owner-Operator Independent Drivers
Association
Truckload Carriers Association
Association of American Railroads
American Short Line and Regional
Railroad Association
GoRail
National Railroad Construction and
Maintenance Association
Railway Engineering-Maintenance Suppliers
Association
Railway Supply Institute
SMART Transportation
Coalition Against Bigger Trucks

cc: House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation