The Impacts of Heavier Trucks on Local Bridges: 2025 Update

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Foreword

The impact of heavier and longer trucks on locally owned bridges is an important issue that needs to be explored on a national level by Congress. While counties have long known that heavier trucks increase bridge damage, this study update represents the continued work with local officials to quantify the real-world impacts. As counties have stressed, local officials, specifically county engineers, know their bridges better than anyone else.

The National Association of Counties (NACo) and the National Association of County Engineers (NACE) were grateful to the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks for conducting its original *Impacts of Heavier Trucks on Local Bridges* study. The *Impacts of Heavier Trucks on Local Bridges: 2025 Update* heightens our concerns and reaffirms what our officials already know – local bridges are put at risk by heavier trucks and the cost to repair and replace these bridges continues to rise.

As Congress begins its work to reauthorize the surface transportation bill, this research should be viewed as an important source for policymakers to utilize when considering legislation to increase truck weights. Like local governments across the country, counties have limited resources and means to cover the extra cost of heavier trucks. **In the end, these extra costs would fall on local taxpayers, creating an unfunded federal mandate.**

Using National Bridge Inventory data and the methodology developed with county officials, including the engineers who have personally designed, maintained and inspected these bridges, this research updates what was a longstanding gap in knowledge on the subject and reveals massive financial costs that would burden counties across the country.

Sincerely,

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INTRODUCTION:

We are pleased to present an important update to the research study titled *"The Impacts of Heavier Trucks on Local Bridges."*

The Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT), in coordination with CABT's Local Infrastructure Advisory Committee, released its original findings in 2023 to widespread acknowledgment of their important contribution to the ongoing debate on truck size and weight.

The original findings, as well as this update, show that heavier trucks are a significant threat to the nation's local bridges, as well as a burden to taxpayers.

This updated analysis provides a current view of the risks posed by heavier trucks to local bridges across the United States.

- The findings underscore the potential for significant budgetary consequences if Congress enacts legislation allowing heavier trucks without addressing the vulnerabilities of at-risk infrastructure.

- The updated data and cost estimates presented in this study offer essential insights for policymakers and infrastructure planners, urging careful consideration of the implications for the safety and longevity of our nation's local bridge systems.

KEY FINDINGS:

For years, legislation has been introduced and debated that would increase the current weight limit of 80,000 pounds to 91,000 pounds or above on interstates. These trucks would ultimately utilize state and local infrastructure. This report demonstrates that:

- Depending on the proposed heavier configuration, between 65,157 and 82,457 local bridges nationwide would be put at risk if Congress allows heavier trucks on the nation's highways.

- The cost of replacing these local bridges ranges from an estimated $70.6 billion to $98.6 billion, depending on the gross vehicle weight. This represents an increase from the 2023 finding of an estimated $54.6 billion to $78.4 billion, largely due to the increased cost of bridge replacement.

- These at-risk bridges represent a sizable portion of the nation's bridge infrastructure, located on local roads and highways that are critical for everyday transportation and commerce.

METHODOLOGY:

This update incorporates current bridge inspection data from the National Bridge Inventory and the latest cost estimates, providing a more up-to-date and comprehensive understanding of how heavier trucks would impact local bridge infrastructure. These updates are crucial, as they provide greater accuracy and a more current assessment of which bridges are at risk of being unable to safely accommodate heavier truck configurations.

Since the publication of the original study 2023, the inspection data for bridges across the country has been updated as local officials have conducted more recent inspections, offering a more precise snapshot of the current condition and load-bearing capacity of the 423,943 local bridges this report examines. Additionally, this update uses new cost data from the *"Bridge Replacement Unit Costs"* report from the FHWA that are two years more current, accounting for factors that have raised the cost of bridge replacement.

The methodology used in this updated study remains consistent with the original research, ensuring continuity of results.

Table 1: National Summary of Heavier Configuration Monetary Impact

Configuration	Local Bridges At Risk	Overall Cost
88,000 lbs. 5-axle	65,157	$70.6 billion
91,000 lbs. 6-axle	68,654	$78.7 billion
97,000 lbs. 6-axle	82,457	$98.6 billion

Table 2: Monetary Impact of Heavier Configurations by State

State	88,000 lb. at-risk bridges	88,000 lb. replacement cost	91,000 lb. at-risk bridges	91,000 lb. replacement cost	97,000 lb. at-risk bridges	97,000 lb. replacement cost
Alabama	2,064	$1,447,854,759	2,235	$1,703,171,809	2,680	$2,208,340,919
Alaska	244	$361,379,635	248	$382,555,801	298	$430,005,902
Arizona	270	$485,888,784	284	$526,945,072	365	$675,200,634
Arkansas	1,982	$1,820,187,498	2,208	$2,138,504,375	2,712	$2,730,428,777
California	2,567	$6,947,799,925	2,841	$8,103,485,331	3,207	$9,252,971,026
Colorado	828	$1,103,148,171	851	$1,198,175,706	1,064	$1,474,271,481
Connecticut	216	$1,360,707,445	246	$1,531,421,423	336	$2,011,255,241
Delaware	63	$453,762,228	68	$473,490,769	83	$539,939,337
District of Columbia	11	$48,581,950	14	$92,434,306	15	$93,629,540
Florida	903	$2,215,086,877	991	$2,583,870,323	1,298	$3,785,280,203
Georgia	2,243	$2,313,956,924	2,390	$2,546,447,741	2,640	$2,795,196,357
Hawaii	227	$489,401,070	228	$518,026,794	261	$617,904,428
Idaho	570	$487,524,728	579	$533,818,534	674	$659,504,479
Illinois	1,004	$1,102,683,253	1,186	$1,405,380,701	1,548	$1,835,155,074
Indiana	2,068	$2,067,802,250	2,363	$2,473,734,678	2,988	$3,254,074,517
Iowa	4,730	$1,577,835,113	4,776	$1,661,253,597	5,273	$1,901,626,970
Kansas	5,861	$2,824,725,077	5,814	$2,993,590,107	6,661	$3,517,548,426
Kentucky	1,252	$1,006,869,928	1,253	$1,149,479,937	1,512	$1,436,724,033
Louisiana	3,144	$4,094,225,807	3,214	$4,316,716,072	3,631	$4,865,283,500
Maine	343	$901,918,062	353	$950,571,480	452	$1,242,261,366
Maryland	173	$439,216,448	190	$540,782,832	243	$843,068,855
Massachusetts	237	$2,077,806,853	266	$2,214,964,469	342	$2,525,830,389
Michigan	553	$555,387,514	568	$674,826,158	705	$859,002,802
Minnesota	680	$660,894,434	728	$779,390,758	944	$1,073,068,888
Mississippi	2,352	$1,491,759,654	2,459	$1,629,304,036	3,223	$2,344,765,547
Missouri	3,879	$2,081,991,188	3,886	$2,199,980,763	4,301	$2,448,630,720
Montana	916	$796,812,115	992	$938,884,442	1,197	$1,127,791,269
Nebraska	3,166	$1,612,148,168	3,272	$1,787,952,463	3,652	$2,135,765,125
Nevada	47	$113,301,818	51	$122,626,250	71	$208,945,259
New Hampshire	238	$647,733,718	243	$701,129,834	310	$918,462,373
New Jersey	332	$2,048,514,178	363	$2,291,923,078	440	$2,773,464,213
New Mexico	241	$328,992,703	258	$366,754,839	307	$457,771,062
New York	803	$1,578,200,976	851	$1,749,955,548	984	$2,015,042,040
North Carolina	1,259	$685,221,009	1,277	$749,125,049	1,597	$997,101,212
North Dakota	770	$397,119,030	768	$423,885,238	893	$565,281,462

State	88,000 lb. at-risk bridges	88,000 lb. replacement cost	91,000 lb. at-risk bridges	91,000 lb. replacement cost	97,000 lb. at-risk bridges	97,000 lb. replacement cost
Ohio	2,520	$3,418,936,021	2,636	$3,672,636,167	4,598	$7,266,326,449
Oregon	2,248	$4,791,256,294	2,333	$4,994,623,658	2,600	$5,396,577,669
Pennsylvania	1,035	$1,214,590,051	1,036	$1,335,609,298	1,221	$1,700,290,999
Puerto Rico	406	$681,171,626	398	$693,271,111	442	$744,756,590
Rhode Island	82	$534,739,793	88	$580,110,290	100	$652,312,546
South Carolina	1,825	$1,352,783,864	1,957	$1,527,687,971	2,314	$1,857,447,708
South Dakota	1,015	$716,546,325	1,019	$756,665,388	1,174	$929,388,405
Tennessee	2,090	$1,916,859,464	2,157	$2,028,612,280	2,584	$2,345,070,871
Texas	1,141	$529,164,810	1,827	$972,982,248	2,318	$1,365,872,670
Utah	249	$417,537,231	259	$486,296,352	310	$571,896,326
Vermont	393	$379,130,070	402	$412,141,987	454	$482,242,428
Virginia	803	$1,554,089,306	841	$1,788,244,178	1,039	$2,528,476,062
Washington	1,557	$2,421,967,182	1,617	$2,613,626,863	1,868	$3,018,453,043
West Virginia	412	$499,456,458	445	$574,842,777	554	$731,232,224
Wisconsin	626	$370,383,226	706	$458,343,462	866	$606,466,296
Wyoming	236	$173,999,580	262	$210,852,860	307	$253,713,942