



**Please Co-Sponsor H.R. 1799: Make Roads Safer, Protect the Environment and Strengthen the Economy by Reforming Vehicle Weight Limits.**

June 11, 2009

Dear Representative,

**The Coalition for Transportation Productivity (CTP)**, an organization composed of more than 100 associations and companies, urges you to responsibly reform federal weight limits on interstate highways by supporting H.R. 1799, the Safe and Efficient Transportation Act of 2009. This legislation would increase the interstate weight limits for properly equipped vehicles in a way that improves safety, the environment and trucking industry productivity.

**H.R. 1799, the Safe and Efficient Transportation Act of 2009, would responsibly raise truck weight limits to allow American businesses to meet demand with fewer trucks—removing unnecessary trucks from the highway, reducing our carbon footprint and improving shipping productivity. The legislation would allow individual states to increase their interstate vehicle weight limits to 97,000 pounds—but only for vehicles equipped with a sixth axle.**

**H.R. 1799 allows for heavier—not bigger—trucks that meet current safety standards.**

- The required sixth axle would maintain braking capacity and the current distribution of weight per tire without changing the size of the truck.
- While the additional axle maintains vehicle safety performance and minimizes pavement wear, a user fee for six-axle units would fund vital bridge repair.

**Academic studies and empirical evidence illustrate the safety, environmental and economic benefits of H.R. 1799.**

**Safer Roads:** Accident rates among heavy vehicles are strongly tied to the vehicle miles a truck must travel to deliver a ton of freight. A proposal like H.R. 1799 would reduce the number of vehicles miles and the overall number of trucks needed to deliver a specific amount of freight, reducing hazardous vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) while cutting fuel and emissions by 19 percent for each ton carried.”

Tractor-trailers now travel twice as many miles as in 1982, when the current federal weight limit was set. More trucks must travel more miles to meet demand, increasing the chances of collision. Reducing the number of trucks needed to deliver a specific amount of freight would reduce VMTs and therefore make roads safer.

- Since the United Kingdom raised its gross vehicle weight limit to 97,000 pounds for six-axle vehicles in 2001, fatal truck-related accident rates have declined by 35 percent. More freight has been shipped, while the number of VMTs to deliver a ton of freight has

declined.

(Source: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/goodsbyroad/roadfreightstatistics2007>)

- A 2009 Wisconsin DOT study found that if a law like the Safe and Efficient Transportation Act of 2009 (H.R. 1799) had been in place in 2006, it would have prevented 90 truck-related accidents in the state during that year.  
(Source: [http://transportationproductivity.org/Transportation\\_Productivity/Studies/WisconsinDOT\\_TruckS\\_WStudy\\_1-1-09\\_final.pdf](http://transportationproductivity.org/Transportation_Productivity/Studies/WisconsinDOT_TruckS_WStudy_1-1-09_final.pdf))
- The Transportation Research Board determined that heavier vehicles with additional axles do not lose stopping capability as long as axle weight limits are not exceeded.  
(Source: <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/sr/sr267.pdf>)

**Cleaner Environment:** Vehicle weight limit reform will benefit the environment by reducing the number of trucks needed to ship America's freight—saving fuel and reducing green house emissions.

- A 2008 American Transportation Research institute study found that six-axle trucks carrying 97,000 pounds get 17 percent more ton-miles per gallon than five-axle trucks carrying 80,000 pounds, reducing carbon emissions.  
(Source: [http://www.atrionline.org/research/results/environmentalfactors/2008\\_atri\\_hpv\\_1\\_pager.pdf](http://www.atrionline.org/research/results/environmentalfactors/2008_atri_hpv_1_pager.pdf))
- The U.S. DOT estimates that raising the federal weight limit would save 2 billion gallons of diesel fuel annually and result in a 19 percent decrease in fuel consumption and emissions per ton mile.  
(Source: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/tswstudy/Vol3-Chapter10.pdf>)

**Stronger Economy:** The Safe and Efficient Transportation Act of 2009 (H.R. 1799) will allow American producers to consolidate goods and reduce the number of weekly shipments needed to move a specific amount of freight. The legislation will also help the U.S. improve its competitive edge, as American gross vehicle weight limits are among the lowest of industrialized nations.

- Raising the weight limit will spur investment in upgraded equipment, create jobs and transition the U.S. to a more efficient transportation network.
- Harmonizing weight limits with our major trading partners will ease the cost of moving U.S. goods into international markets and avoid costly freight consolidation at our ports and border crossings.

We urge you to support this legislation and allow our nation's transportation infrastructure to grow in a way that promotes highway safety and protects the environment. For more information, please visit [www.transportationproductivity.org](http://www.transportationproductivity.org).

Sincerely,

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**CTP members include the following associations and companies.**

Supporting Associations	Supporting Companies
American Frozen Food Institute Agricultural Transportation Efficiency Coalition (AgTEC) Alabama Forestry Association American Forest & Paper Association Black Hills Forest Resource Association Citizens Against Government Waste (CAGW) Colorado Potato Administrative Committee Colorado Timber Industry Association Florida Forestry Association Fresh Produce Association Food Marketing Institute Forest Resources Association Grocery Manufacturers Association Hardwood Federation Idaho Grower Shippers Association Idaho Potato Commission Intermountain Forest Association International Foodservice Distributors Association International Dairy Foods Association Kentucky Forest Industries Association Louisiana Forestry Association Maine Pulp and Paper Association Manufacture Alabama Michigan Forest Products Council Mississippi Forestry Association Mississippi Loggers Association Missouri Forest Products Association National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) National Black Chamber of Commerce National Confectioners Association National Industrial Transportation League (NITLeague) National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association National Milk Producers Federation National Potato Council National Private Truck Council National Taxpayers Union Northeastern Loggers Association North Carolina Forestry Association Northwest Food Processors Association Ohio Forestry Association Oregon Potato Commission Paper and Forest Industry Transportation Committee Shelf-Stable Food Processors Association Snack Food Association United Fresh Produce Association Virginia Forest Products Association Washington State Potato Commission Western Growers Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce Wisconsin Paper Council	AbitibiBowater Anthony Forest Products Archer Daniel Midland(ADM) Ball Brothers Produce Basic American Foods Boise Cascade LLC Boise Inc. Campbell Soup Company Claremont Forest Inc. Coca-Cola Company Con-way Dannon Dean Foods Deere & Company Delta Timber Company Domtar Flambeau River Papers Floyd Wilcox & Sons, Inc. (Wilcox Marketing Group) FMC Corporation General Mills, Inc. GPOD of Idaho Glatfelter Green Bay Packaging H-E-B Idaho Forest Group Idahoan Foods International Paper Kraft Foods, Inc Larsen Farms Longview Fibre Paper and Packaging Inc LP Corp. LyondellBasell Industries MillerCoors Modern Transportation Services MWV National Frozen Foods Corp Neiman Enterprises, Inc. Nestlé USA Nestlé Waters North America Newark Group NewPage Oldcastle Architectural, Inc. Potandon Produce Rayonier R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co. Safe Handling Inc. Schwan Food Company Simplot Smurfit Stone Container Corp Sun Glo of Idaho, Inc. Sunny D SuperValu Inc. Taylor Produce, Inc. Temple-Inland Total Transportation Services US Foodservice/Alliant Logistics Verso Paper Wada Farms Weyerhaeuser