



Coalition for Transportation Productivity  
Making Roads Safer - Protecting the Environment - Strengthening the Economy  
[www.transportationproductivity.org](http://www.transportationproductivity.org)

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## **CTP Applauds Progress of First Federal Truck Productivity Advancement in 30 Years**

*'American Energy & Infrastructure Jobs Act' Allows States to Safely Improve Highway Efficiency with Single-Trailer Trucks Equipped with Six Axles*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (Jan. 31, 2012)** – [The Coalition for Transportation Productivity](http://www.transportationproductivity.org) (CTP), a group of 200 shippers and allied associations dedicated to safely and responsibly increasing the federal vehicle weight limit on interstate highways, today praised the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for including a carefully crafted truck weight reform proposal in the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act—a bill to reauthorize and modify federal transportation programs. Among other policies to improve the economy and create jobs, the legislation reforms the federal vehicle weight limit by giving states the authority to permit safe, yet more productive, single-trailer trucks on interstate highways within their borders.

Specifically, the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act proposal allows states to opt into a higher federal (interstate) vehicle weight limit for single-trailer trucks equipped with six axles rather than the typical five. The required sixth axle maintains all braking and handling characteristics at the new limit of 97,000 pounds—enabling shippers to safely utilize truck space that remains empty at the current 80,000-pound federal weight limit. This proposal will reduce the truckloads, fuel and vehicle miles necessary to meet demand. Further, participating states will have full authority to exclude these trucks from operating on any route or bridge.

“The American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act recognizes that states need the ability to create safer, greener, more efficient shipping on their interstate highways,” said CTP Executive Director John Runyan. “Truck capacity has dropped by 16 percent since the recession started, and the 30-year-old federal vehicle weight limit compounds the problem by forcing many trucks to travel when they are only partially full. Now is the time to correct this inefficiency and help American shippers and manufacturers invest more funds in growth and job creation.

“More than 90 percent of states already employ higher weight limits on state roads and bridges,” continued Runyan. “We applaud Chairman Mica for giving states the ability to carefully set more productive weight limits interstates, just as they do for state roads.”

Truck weight reform would also make American companies more competitive in the global marketplace. A recent study by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) compared truck productivity among developed nations and found that U.S. tractor semitrailers are the least productive, due to highly restrictive vehicle weight limits. Leading truck productivity expert John Woodrooffe, who helped author the OECD study and heads truck research at the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, commented on the truck weight reform proposal contained in the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act:

“Current American truck weight regulations impose a significant competitive disadvantage in transport efficiency and results in significantly higher fuel use and emissions for a given freight task,” said Woodrooffe. “In North America alone, U.S. tractor semitrailer productivity trails Canada by 43 percent and Mexico by 52 percent in terms

of cargo weight capacity. The proposed limit of 97,000 pounds represents a relatively modest increase that will help reduce the competitive gap our country is facing.”

The truck weight proposal contained in the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act is based on federal legislation known as the Safe and Efficient Transportation Act (SETA). The bill was first introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Reps. Michael Michaud (D-ME) and Jean Schmidt (R-OH) as H.R. 763. Identical companion legislation, S. 747, was introduced in the U.S. Senate by Sens. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Herb Kohl (D-Wis.), Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio).

**About the Coalition for Transportation Productivity**

The Coalition for Transportation Productivity (CTP) is a coalition of about 200 shippers and allied associations dedicated to addressing the safety, economic and environmental challenges facing our nation’s freight transportation network through carefully crafted truck weight reform. For more information, and to read supportive studies and data, visit [www.transportationproductivity.org](http://www.transportationproductivity.org).

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