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Bipartisan Senate Bill Modernizes Truck Weight Regulation to Improve Shipping Efficiency & Global Competitiveness

Safe & Efficient Transportation Act (SETA) Lets States Raise Interstate Weight Limits for Specially Equipped Vehicles—Allowing Shippers to Safely Utilize More Truck Space

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 7, 2011) – The Coalition for Transportation Productivity (CTP), a group of more than 180 shippers and allied associations dedicated to responsibly increasing federal weight limits on interstate highways, today announced that key federal truck weight reform legislation known as the Safe and Efficient Transportation Act (SETA) has been reintroduced in the U.S. Senate by Sens. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Herb Kohl (D-Wis.), Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio). The bill number is S. 747.

Like identical companion legislation pending in the House of Representatives, SETA is a carefully crafted proposal that gives each state the option to selectively raise interstate weight limits from 80,000 pounds to up to 97,000 pounds. The higher limit applies only to vehicles equipped with six axles instead of the typical five. The additional axle does not affect truck size, but it does allow shippers to safely utilize extra cargo space while maintaining, or improving, all safety and handling characteristics.

“SETA is a narrowly drawn bill that enables companies to move a given amount of product in fewer vehicles without adding more weight per tire or increasing stopping distances,” said CTP Executive Director John Runyan. “SETA is supported by a body of data collected from academic, state, federal and international experts who have evaluated or experienced this proposal and support the logic of the six-axle, 97,000 pound configuration as the new workhorse standard for the American truck fleet. Even though higher productivity, six-axle trucks are undeniably safe and more efficient, SETA still puts the decision into the hands of state officials, who are best equipped to determine if the configuration makes sense in their states.

“Trucking is a driving force for our economy and plays a critical role in moving raw materials and products from the field and factory to consumers,” continued Runyan. “By making truck shipments more sustainable, SETA is projected to make highways safer, cleaner and more efficient.”

The American Trucking Associations (ATA) estimates that the trucking industry will haul 30 percent more tonnage in 2021 than it does today. If current weight restrictions remain the same, ATA estimates that our economy will require 18 percent more trucks on the road driving 27 percent more miles than they do now. SETA would help correct this imbalance by allowing

shippers to safely reduce truckloads, fuel, emissions and vehicle miles traveled for each ton of freight shipped.

The Safe and Efficient Transportation Act, H.R. 763, was reintroduced in the House of Representatives in February by Reps. Jean Schmidt (R-OH) and Michael Michaud (D-ME).

About the Coalition for Transportation Productivity

The Coalition for Transportation Productivity (CTP) is a coalition of more than 180 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, visit www.transportationproductivity.org.

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