

SAFETY ADVISORY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

A G E N D A

June 24, 2009 - 6:00 P.M. - City Hall Conference Room - City Hall - City of Dover

Public comments are welcomed on any item and will be permitted at appropriate times.

When possible, please notify the City Clerk (736-7008 or e-mail at Tmcdowell@dover.de.us) should you wish to be recognized.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. Proposed Resolution No. 2009-05 - Delaware Alliance for Safe Roads - Truck Weight *(Tabled by Committee on March 24, 2009 to Allow Further Review)*
2. Briefing on DelDOT Projects - Gary Laing
 - A. West Dover Connector
 - B. South Governors Avenue Improvements
 - C. Water Street Railroad Crossover
 - D. North State Street Rebuild
3. Briefing on MPO Projects - *Juanita Wieczorek*
4. Briefing on City of Dover Projects
 - A. Wyoming Mill Road Project

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ACTION FORM

PROCEEDING: Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee

DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: City Clerk's Office
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PREPARED BY: Rebecca M. Rollison, Administrative Assistant

DATE SUBMITTED: 06-24-2009

SUBJECT: Proposed Resolution Proposing the Continuance of Existing Limits on Truck Size and Weight

RELATED PROJECT: N/A

APPROVALS: N/A

EXHIBITS: Draft Proposed Resolution 2009-05, Draft Letters to Senators Thomas R. Carper and Ted Kaufman, and Congressman Michael Castle, and Excerpts from Minutes of February 10, 2009 and March 24, 2009.
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EXPENDITURE REQUIRED: \$ N/A AMOUNT BUDGETED: \$ N/A
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FUNDING SOURCE (Dept./Page in CIP & Budget): N/A

TIMETABLE: Recommendation to Council - July 13, 2009

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adoption of Proposed Resolution/Approval of Letters of Support

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

At the request of the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, during their meetings of February 10, and March 24, 2009, members of the Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee considered a draft proposed Resolution in support of S.3021 Safe Truck and Operations and Preservations Act, which aims to maintain the current limit of 80,000 pounds for tractor trailer trucks on Interstate highways in place and establish a maximum length of 53 feet for trucks, both of which will improve safety and prevent excessive strain on the nations's roads, tunnels, and bridges and extend that to the National Highway System. This item was tabled on March 24, 2009.

Discussion and approval of such a Resolution would eliminate the dangerously large and heavy tractor trailer trucks from our roads while protecting our infrastructure and improving safety on our roads.

The proposed Resolution and draft letters of support are being provided for the committee's consideration.



SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO KEEP TRUCKS FROM GETTING BIGGER

SHIPA and STOP would protect our roads and bridges by capping the length of truck trailers, freezing the weights of trucks traveling on the National Highway System, and extending the existing freeze on Interstate operations of longer combination vehicles to the entire National Highway System.

Two nearly identical bills will soon be introduced in Congress to freeze the size and weight of trucks on our highways. The Safe Highways and Infrastructure Preservation Act (SHIPA), and the Safe Truck Operations and Preservation Act (STOP), will help preserve our roads and bridges by enacting the measures below.

Freeze the weight of trucks

Congress set 80,000 pounds as the maximum weight at which a truck can operate on Interstate highways. Yet, because of loopholes in the law, trucks routinely operate on Interstates and other highways above federal weight limits. This bill would extend the truck weight freeze beyond the 46,000-mile Interstate system to the entire 161,000 miles of National Highway System (NHS).

Extend the freeze on LCVs

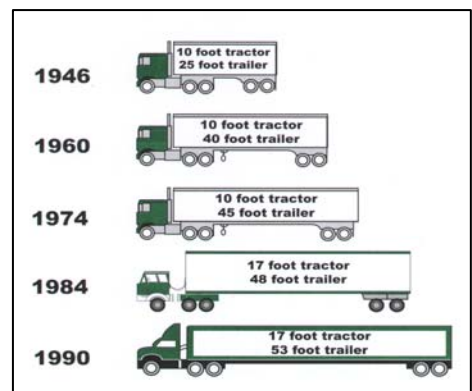
In 1991, Congress “froze” the operation of longer combination vehicles (LCVs) – long double and triple trailer trucks – on Interstates and stopped LCVs from spreading onto a larger share of the Interstate system. These bills extend this freeze to the entire NHS.

Freeze the length of trucks

Today, there is no federal limit on the length of semi-trailers. Over the years, trailer length has grown such that eleven states allow trailers over 53 feet¹ (the industry standard) and Wyoming even allows 60-foot-long trailers to operate. These bills will cap the length of truck trailers at 53 feet, but allow existing legal operations of trailers that exceed 53 feet to continue.

Improve enforcement of truck weight laws

Trucks often run illegally overweight because the profits from hauling the extra weight often exceed the fines levied by the states for overweight operations. This bill calls for a model fine schedule designed to recover as fully as possible all infrastructure, enforcement, and administrative costs of overweight operations and to act as an effective deterrent.



¹ The eleven states are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming.

WHY THESE BILLS ARE NECESSARY

Groups are lobbying to increase truck sizes and weights

The American Trucking Association is pushing to allow states to authorize single-trailer trucks up to 97,000 pounds. They also want to lift the LCV freeze and give states the power to authorize longer combination vehicles, which would allow the truckers to lobby for double and triple-trailer trucks across the country. Another group, Americans for Safe and Efficient Transportation, which represents big shippers, is lobbying Congress to approve “pilot projects” that allow 97,000 pound singles in six states. Additionally, bills have been introduced in the U.S. Senate that would authorize 97,000 pound singles on the Interstate system.

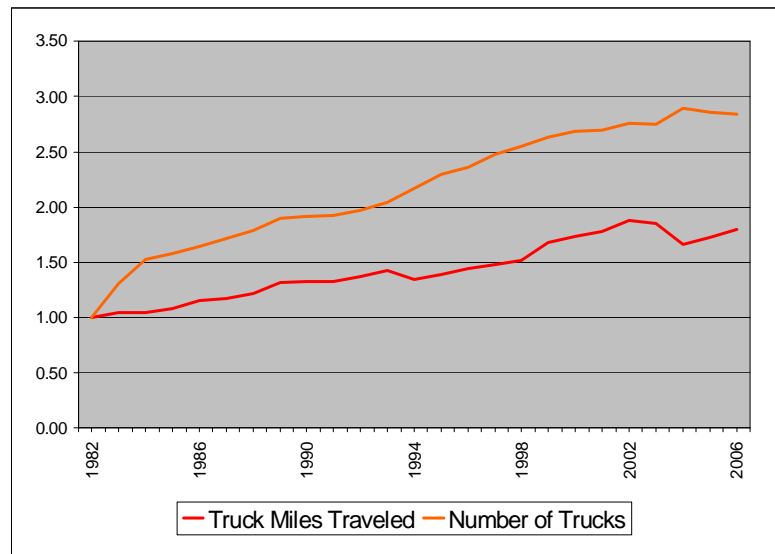
Our roads and bridges are overwhelmed and in disrepair

23,309 of the 116,145 bridges on the National Highway System (over 20%) are rated as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.² To make matters worse, a shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund (the national fund of fuel tax revenue that is set aside for transportation projects) is predicted for 2009.

Bigger trucks would make this problem worse

Proponents say that allowing bigger trucks on the roads will lead to fewer trucks on the road. They say it will not only reduce shipping costs, but also reduce highway congestion and so be better for the environment.

History shows that this is false, however. The number of trucks registered in the U.S. and the mileage traveled by trucks has gone up nearly every single year since Congress increased the federal weight limit in 1982. Bigger trucks end up diverting freight from other modes of transportation like railroads and causing even more highway congestion and pollution.



To add insult to injury, trucks over 80,000 pounds only pay for 50% of the damage they cause.³ Nationwide operation of LCVs would add \$53 billion in new bridge reconstruction costs, according to USDOT.⁴ In addition, there would be \$266 billion in lost time and extra fuel burnt by auto drivers stuck in traffic because of bridge work. Total bridge costs would be \$319 billion.

² *National Bridge Inventory*, Federal Highway Administration, 2007.

³ *Addendum to the 1997 Highway Cost Allocation Study*, Federal Highway Administration, 2000.

⁴ *Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study*, US Department of Transportation, 2000.

City of Dover



MAYOR AND COUNCIL

DRAFT PROPOSED COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 2009-05

A RESOLUTION PROPOSING THE CONTINUATION OF EXISTING LIMITS ON TRUCK SIZE AND WEIGHT

WHEREAS, the Dover City Council, acting in the interest of the health, safety and welfare of its citizens, is committed to protecting the safety of motorists and the taxpayers' investment in our infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the types of vehicles traveling on Dover's streets, highways, roads, and bridges particularly on DE-1, have a tremendous influence on the safety of all motorists and the types of vehicles traversing our streets affect the condition of our streets, with large trucks exerting more pressure than 100 cars. Thus, our streets wear out, weaken and deteriorate more quickly, necessitating more frequent repairs; and

WHEREAS, both Federal and State laws limit the gross vehicle weight of trucks operating on Interstate Highways and State roads to 80,000 pounds and State law prohibits longer combination vehicles ("LCVs"), which are double- and triple-trailer trucks with gross weights exceeding 80,000 pounds, from using Delaware State roads, and LCVs are likewise prohibited from Delaware Interstates by a 1991 Congressional "freeze"; and

WHEREAS, there is growing support from interest groups to remove this "freeze", thereby allowing longer and heavier trucks on Delaware Interstates as part of the reauthorization of the Federal Highway Bill, which also raises the Federal Interstate weight limit from 80,000 to 97,000 pounds; and

WHEREAS, the Dover City Council, concerned about the impact of larger vehicles on the Nation's Infrastructure and communities, urges the President and Congress to maintain current Federal truck size and weight limits and the condition of Dover's streets and the safety of its residents and visitors is of tremendous importance to the City Council, and any modification to increase the current limits on truck size and weight poses risks to both.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dover City Council supports the continuation of the existing limits on truck size and weight, thereby opposing longer combination vehicles (LCVs) and any increases in truck length, size or weight on City streets and on any of Delaware's highways, roads, and bridges.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council supports the maintenance of current limits on truck size and weight.

ADOPTED: *

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CARLETON E. CAREY, SR.
MAYOR

BEVERLY C. WILLIAMS
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Actions History:

March 24, 2009 - Tabled

February 10, 2009 - Introduced at Safety Advisory & Transportation Committee (deferred until March 24, 2009)

TIMOTHY A. SLAVIN
Councilman - 3RD District
Chairman - Safety Advisory &
Transportation Committee

City of



Dover

24 Hazel Road
Dover, DE 19901
(302) 677-0788 - Home
(302) 736-7006 - City Office

July 14, 2009

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
United States Senate
300 S. New Street
2215 Federal Building
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Senator Carper:

As a Councilman, and Chairman of the Safety Advisory & Transportation Committee, I place the highest premium on the safety of our citizen's and our infrastructure. I understand that there are proposals in Congress to increase the weight of commercial motor vehicles up to 97,000 lbs. I oppose such efforts and hope that you will co-sponsor the S.3021 (STOP) Act proposed by Senators McCaskill and Lautenberg and reinforce that these heavier and longer trucks are not welcome in Delaware.

The Senators' Stop Act of 2008 "Safe Truck and Operations and Preservations Act". would keep the current limit of 80,000 pounds for tractor trailer trucks that is currently on Interstate highways (@44,000 miles) and extend that to the National Highway System (161,000 miles) and establish a maximum length of 53 feet for trucks, both of which will improve safety and prevent excessive strain on the nation's roads, tunnels and bridges. Delaware has the obligation to protect the safety of motorists on its highways and to protect taxpayers' investment in the highway infrastructure. The recent collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minnesota has focused public attention nationally on the impact of heavy trucks on our highway infrastructure, especially bridges.

Engineers are in accord that heavy trucks contribute to the deterioration of bridges. Allowing even heavier trucks will accelerate deterioration. The Department of Transportation (DOT) recently reported that 158,428 of the nation's 594,101 bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. In addition, one 110,000-pound triple trailer causes as much pavement damage as 13,981 mini-vans.

Heavy trucks on the road today, those weighing 80,000 pounds, only pay 80% of the cost of the damage they do to the highways. Our constituents, through federal taxes, are helping to subsidize bigger trucks in the amount of 1.9 billion dollars each year.

As a fellow servant of the people, I hope you will take my thoughts into consideration and co-sponsor STOP Act and oppose any efforts to increase truck size and weights on Delaware's roads and bridges.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Slavin
Councilman Third District

TAS/rmr

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P.O. Box 475 ♦ Dover, Delaware ♦ 19903

Community Excellence Through Quality Service

TIMOTHY A. SLAVIN
Councilman - 3RD District
Chairman - Safety Advisory &
Transportation Committee

City of



Dover

24 Hazel Road
Dover, DE 19901
(302) 677-0788 - Home
(302) 736-7006 - City Office

July 14, 2009

*The Honorable Ted Kaufman
United States Senate
1105 N. Market Street
Suite 2000
Wilmington, DE 19801*

Dear Senator Kaufman:

As a Councilman, and Chairman of the Safety Advisory & Transportation Committee, I place the highest premium on the safety of our citizen's and our infrastructure. I understand that there are proposals in Congress to increase the weight of commercial motor vehicles up to 97,000 lbs. I oppose such efforts and hope that you will co-sponsor the S.3021 (STOP) Act proposed by Senators McCaskill and Lautenberg and reinforce that these heavier and longer trucks are not welcome in Delaware.

The Senators' Stop Act of 2008 "Safe Truck and Operations and Preservations Act". would keep the current limit of 80,000 pounds for tractor trailer trucks that is currently on Interstate highways (@44,000 miles) and extend that to the National Highway System (161,000 miles) and establish a maximum length of 53 feet for trucks, both of which will improve safety and prevent excessive strain on the nation's roads, tunnels and bridges. Delaware has the obligation to protect the safety of motorists on its highways and to protect taxpayers' investment in the highway infrastructure. The recent collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minnesota has focused public attention nationally on the impact of heavy trucks on our highway infrastructure, especially bridges.

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As a fellow servant of the people, I hope you will take my thoughts into consideration and co-sponsor STOP Act and oppose any efforts to increase truck size and weights on Delaware's roads and bridges.

Sincerely,

*Timothy A. Slavin
Councilman Third District*

TAS/rmr

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July 14, 2009

1 *The Honorable Mike Castle*
2 *201 North Walnut Street, Suite 107*
3 *Wilmington, DE 19801-3970*

4 *Dear Congressman Castle:*

5 *I believe that Delaware's highways and byways should be maintained to a degree of excellence that*
6 *Delaware's citizens deserve. The maintenance of Interstates such as I-95 are vital to our region.*
7 *As both a Councilman and Chairperson of the Safety Advisory & Transportation Committee for the*
8 *City of Dover, I would like to express interest in your co-sponsoring Congressman Jim McGovern's*
9 *H.R. 3929 Safe Highways and Preservation Infrastructure ACT (SHIPA).*

10 *The SHIPA would keep the current limit of 80,000 pounds for tractor trailer trucks that is currently*
11 *on Interstate highways (@ 44,000 miles) and extend that to the National Highway System (161,000*
12 *miles) which will improve safety and prevent excessive strain on the nation's roads, tunnels and*
13 *bridges.*

14 *Our highways and bridges are vital to the residential and commercial interests of Delaware. We*
15 *have an obligation to protect the safety of motorists on its highways and to protect taxpayers'*
16 *investment in the highway infrastructure. The recent collapse of the I-35W Bridge in Minnesota has*
17 *focused public attention nationally on the impact of heavy trucks on our highway infrastructure.*

18 *Once again, thank you for your dedication to keeping our highways and roads safe. Please do*
19 *everything in your power to support the SHIPA Act and oppose weight increases of any kind.*
20

21 *Sincerely,*

22 *Timothy A. Slavin*
23 *Councilman Third District*

24 *TAS/rmr*
25

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Excerpt from Safety Advisory & Transportation Meeting of March 24, 2009:

Proposed Resolution No. 2009-05 - Delaware Alliance for Safe Roads - Truck Weight

During their meeting of February 10, 2009, members reviewed proposed Resolution No. 2009-05 - Delaware Alliance for Safe Roads - Truck Weight, proposing the continuance of existing limits on truck size and weight, as well as letters to Senator Thomas R. Carper and Congressman Michael Castle. At the request of the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, members considered a draft proposed Resolution in support of S.3021 Safe Truck and Operations and Preservations Act, which aims to maintain the current limit of 80,000 pounds for tractor trailer trucks on Interstate highways in place and establish a maximum length of 53 feet for trucks, both of which will improve safety and prevent excessive strain on the nations's roads, tunnels, and bridges and extend that to the National Highway System. In order to review the material further before taking a position or developing a recommendation for City Council, the item was deferred until March 24, 2009.

Mr. Slavin moved to table the item, seconded by Mr. Davis and unanimously carried.

Mr. Leary stated that this item should be discussed with Mr. Wright from the Delaware League of Local Governments (*City Clerk's Office Note, Mr. Wright stated he had no prior knowledge of this item; however, he would address it at the April League Meeting*).

Excerpt from Safety Advisory & Transportation Meeting of February 10, 2009:

Proposed Resolution No. 2009-05 - Proposing the Continuance of Existing Limits on Truck Size and Weight - Delaware Alliance for Safe Roads - Truck Weight

Members were provided a proposed Resolution (No. 2009-05) proposing the continuance of existing limits on truck size and weight, as well as letters to Senator Thomas R. Carper and Congressman Michael Castle. At the request of the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, members considered a draft proposed Resolution in support of S.3021 Safe Truck and Operations and Preservations Act, which aims to maintain the current limit of 80,000 pounds for tractor trailer trucks on Interstate highways in place and establish a maximum length of 53 feet for trucks, both of which will improve safety and prevent excessive strain on the nations's roads, tunnels, and bridges and extend that to the National Highway System.

Discussion and approval of such a Resolution would eliminate the dangerously large and heavy tractor trailer trucks from our roads while protecting our infrastructure and improving safety on our roads.

Ms. Kristin Siegel, representing the Delaware Alliance for Safe Roads, presented members with information regarding the safety and financial impacts of larger, heavier trucks. She advised members that the main objective of the Alliance is to keep trucks from getting any heavier and/or longer and have been successful since 1994. She informed members that the large trucking companies are pushing for an increase in the truck size and weight from 80,000 lbs. to 97,000 lbs., which equates to an 8½ ton increase per the single tractor-trailer trucks. These companies also have been pushing for longer combination vehicles, such as the double and triple trucks.

Ms. Siegel advised members that the Alliance is concerned about these issues due to two (2) public policies issues, as follows: 1) infrastructure damage caused by heavier trucks, particularly bridge deterioration; and 2) trucks paying their fair share for the damages they are causing. She advised members that one (1) 80,000 lb. truck causes as much damage as 8,860 automobiles.

Ms. Siegel urged members to approve the proposed Resolution and request their members of Congress to oppose any of these efforts to increase these truck sizes. She stated that Congressman McGovern is introducing legislation known as “SHIPA” (Safe Highway Infrastructure Preservation Act) and a similar legislation is being submitted to the Senate known as “STOP” (Safe Trucking Operation Preservation Act).

Responding to Mr. Davis, Ms. Siegel indicated that if the trucking companies agreed to pay their fair share for the use of the roadway, it would affect the concerns of the Alliance. She advised members that, based on an in-house study, an extra \$5 per mile would be required. To her knowledge, the companies have agreed to pay an extra .10¢ per mile, which is not near enough.

Mr. Link indicated a need to review the material further before taking a position or developing a recommendation for City Council.

Since there was no motion, Mr. Leary indicated that this matter would be reconsidered by members during their next meeting (March 24, 2009).