



ENERGY CONSERVATION THROUGH TRUCK WEIGHT INCREASE

Overview

Our nation's dependence on foreign oil coupled with the rising cost of energy—particularly diesel fuel—is crippling consumers and businesses large and small. There is no silver bullet to our energy crisis: conservation, efficiency, fuel diversity infrastructure and supply are all key aspects of any comprehensive energy policy. In the face of current and projected fuel prices, the need to increase truck weight limits translates into a very real and urgent conservation priority. Currently, many businesses are sending trucks on their routes without filling them to capacity because of unnecessarily restrictive weight limits. This increases the number of trucks on the road and a fleet's vehicle miles traveled, which in turn results in an increase in fuel consumed, in addition to more congestion.

Position

As an energy conservation measure, the forest products industry favors increasing the federal interstate national truck weight maximum from 80,000 lbs to 97,000 lbs with a sixth axle.

Allowing this increase will permit the same amount of freight to be transported on fewer trucks, reducing energy consumption. This measure would help decrease our dependence on foreign fuel and lead to needed fuel conservation.

Benefits

Locally:

- One large forest products company estimates that such a change would result in a weekly fuel savings from just one route at one mill of more than \$73,000 and a reduction of more than 139,000 lbs of CO2 emissions.
- Another small logging company estimates it would save 118 gallons of fuel a week, saving more than 6,000 gallons annually.

Nationally:

- There would be a decrease of approximately 2 billion gallons of diesel fuel used annually, resulting in a 19 % decrease in fuel consumption and emissions per ton mile¹
- Operating more productive trucks would allow fuel savings of 163 gallons per trip on deliveries between New York and San Francisco because of reduced trips.²
- The problem of congestion facing this nation has resulted in waiting periods on average of over 36 hours per motorist per year.³ More trucks on the roads increases all vehicle idling and fuel consumption.

Request

AF&PA urges Congress to enact increased truck weights by promoting the introduction of a conservation provision in energy proposals to change the maximum Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) on the Federal Interstate from 80,000 lbs to 97,000 lbs with additional axles.

1 Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study U.S. DOT 2000

2 Martin Labbe Associates 2001

3 Texas Transportation Institute

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