



2021-11

THE NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION OPPOSES ANY INCREASE IN SIZE OR WEIGHT OF LARGE TRUCKS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) 2016 Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Limits Final Report to Congress recommended to Congress that no changes be made to the current size or weight of trucks on the roads today¹, and;

WHEREAS, the USDOT Final Report found that longer double-trailer trucks, Double 33s, took 22 feet longer to stop than the current twin 28-foot trucks on the road today², and;

WHEREAS, the USDOT Final Report found that 97,000-pound and 91,000-pound, six-axle trucks had higher crash rates than the current 80,000-pound, five-axle trucks on the road today in limited state testing³, and;

WHEREAS, the USDOT Final Report found that multi-trailer trucks and heavier trucks had higher out-of-service violation rates than 80,000-pound, five-axle trucks⁴, and;

WHEREAS, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) found in a 2016 study that a large truck with any out-of-service violation was 362 percent more likely to be involved in a crash⁵, and;

WHEREAS, according to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration the average cost per crash of a large truck with one trailer is \$97,574, and the average cost per crash of a large truck with two or three trailers is \$289,549, the highest among all crashes⁶, and;

WHEREAS, the FMCSA Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) determined that there were 4,967 fatalities in large-truck crashes nationwide in 2018⁷, and;

¹ USDOT; 2016. *Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Limits Study, Final Report to Congress*

² USDOT; 2015. *Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Limits Study, Highway Safety and Truck Crash Comparative Analysis Technical Report*

³ USDOT; 2016 *op. cit.*

⁴ USDOT; 2015 *op. cit.*

⁵ Insurance Institute for Highway Safety; 2016. *Crash Risk Factors for Interstate Large Trucks in North Carolina*

⁶ USDOT; 2007. *Unit Costs of Medium and Heavy Truck Crashes*

⁷ FMCSA; 2020. *Analysis & Information – Crash Statistics*

WHEREAS, the number of fatal crashes involving large trucks has increased by 42% between 2009 and 2017⁸, and;

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers with expertise conducting first responder efforts, truck safety inspections and crash investigations agree that longer and heavier trucks would be more dangerous to other drivers, damage the infrastructure, and harmful to communities, and;

WHEREAS, longer and heavier trucks would increase the risks to law enforcement officers on roadsides because of diminished steering and handling capabilities, and;

WHEREAS, any increase in the number or severity of truck crashes would increase demands on already short-staffed commercial vehicle enforcement and first responders, and;

WHEREAS, proposals to allow truck “road trains” are uniquely dangerous, with higher rates of trailer sway, off-tracking and increased severity of crashes, and;

WHEREAS, in 2015, Congress rejected legislation for both longer⁹ and heavier¹⁰ trucks with bipartisan support;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Sheriffs’ Association: (1) continues to oppose increases in truck size or weight at all levels of government; (2) given the limitations in national crash rate data, encourages federal and state authorities to work to improve the collection and reporting of weight and configuration data for commercial vehicles involved in fatal crashes and recommended by the USDOT; and (3) opposes increases in truck size or weight limits without clear and convincing evidence that it will not further endanger the motoring public.

⁸ USDOT; 2020. National Freight Strategic Plan

⁹ US Senate, November 10, 2015.

https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=114&session=1&vote=00304

¹⁰ US House of Representatives, November 3, 2015. <https://clerk.house.gov/evs/2015/roll588.xml>