



MINNESOTA SAFETY COUNCIL
Making Minnesota A Safer Place to Live

 Chapter of the National Safety Council

February 17, 2014

Representative Tim Kelly
335 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Representative Kelly and Transportation Committee Members:

On behalf of the Minnesota Safety Council, I am writing to share our concerns regarding SF 309 and HF 620, proposals to increase the weight limit for heavy trucks in Minnesota.

The Minnesota Safety Council was chartered by the State of Minnesota 86 years ago to promote traffic safety. We believe "accidents" are predictable and we work through education and training to prevent them. Even though great strides have been made in traffic safety, motor vehicle crashes remain an extremely high risk activity for all Minnesotans.

We are concerned that allowing even heavier trucks on our roads will make Minnesota less safe. We believe this for several reasons:

- In a crash, the difference in weight between the colliding vehicles matters. The larger the difference, the greater the impact. The current large trucks have a much higher fatal involvement rate than passenger cars. Even heavier trucks pose an even greater risk.
- Our roads are not designed to carry heavier trucks. Increased heavy truck operations will degrade our road surface. Well maintained roads are safe roads. A degraded road surface will contribute to unsafe driving conditions and we are already challenged to maintain our roads with existing load limits.
- Enforcement of commercial vehicle regulations will be more difficult if heavier trucks are allowed on State roads but not on the Interstate system. When there is a lack of consistency in regulations, it increases the odds that overweight vehicles will be able to slip through, further increasing our driving risk.

In light of the safety risks posed by these vehicles, we are asking you to oppose efforts to increase Minnesota's truck size and weight limits. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions regarding our position on this important issue. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Paul W. Aasen, President
Minnesota Safety Council
612-309-5440