



Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association

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August 29, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Glenn Thompson
Chairman
House Agriculture Committee

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member
House Agriculture Committee

Dear Chairs Graves, Granger and Thompson and Ranking Members Larsen, DeLauro and Scott:

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) is the largest trade association representing the views of small-business truckers and professional truck drivers. OOIDA has 150,000 members located in all fifty states that collectively own and operate more than 240,000 individual heavy-duty trucks. OOIDA has long opposed efforts to increase the size and weight of commercial vehicles on our nation's roadways, and we hope that you will reject any efforts to do so through any single bill or as part of larger legislative negotiations on infrastructure, appropriations, or Farm Bill reauthorization. In particular, we are opposed to H.R. 3372, which would establish a five-year "pilot" program to allow heavier trucks on highways and H.R. 2948, the CARS Act, which would allow auto-haulers to run at heavier weights to accommodate electric vehicles (EVs).

Allowing for increased truck weights generally, as H.R. 3372 would do, benefits only a handful of large or specialized motor carriers while putting the rest of the industry, especially small businesses, at a disadvantage. Proponents of weight increases portray these new limits as completely optional and maintain that carriers won't have to haul at these weights if they don't want to do so. But inevitably these weights become the new standard as businesses and shippers seek out carriers that offer the increased capacity. Small trucking businesses would be pressured to increase their hauling capacity just to stay competitive, and these upgrades don't come cheap. A conservative cost estimate for a small carrier is \$10,500 per truck to upgrade an axle configuration to haul at 91,000 pounds. Unlike specialized or large carriers, who either possess the necessary equipment or could transition their fleets over time while maintaining business, smaller trucking companies and owner-operators would be forced to immediately modify their equipment at great cost just to remain viable. Unfortunately, previous

weight and length configuration increases have demonstrated bigger trucks don't lead to higher paychecks for professional drivers.

H.R. 2948 would give a handout to the EV industry at the expense of the rest of the trucking industry by allowing auto haulers to operate at increased weights to accommodate heavier EVs. Heavier trucks require additional safety considerations to operate and do greater damage to highways and bridges, no matter what they're hauling. This legislation would allow the EV industry to impose greater costs to infrastructure through increased wear and tear, at no cost to the EV industry itself.

The EV industry already benefits from federal support through tax incentives to purchase a vehicle and tens-of-billions of dollars of federal investment in charging infrastructure. Even worse, EVs contribute nothing to the Highway Trust Fund. EVs don't need any more special treatment.

EVs are by no means the only commodity that weighs-out before running out of space on a trailer. If Congress provides an exemption in this case, other industries will inevitably ask for their own carve-out as well.

Finally, and most importantly, increases to truck weight limits should not be pursued to address any alleged "driver shortage." Contrary to what is repeated constantly, there is no shortage of drivers or CDL-holders. The notion of a driver shortage is not supported by facts, data, or reputable research. Instead, there is a shortage of decent pay and satisfactory working conditions for drivers that generates exceedingly high levels of turnover within the industry and ultimately forces many truckers away.

In conclusion, OOIDA firmly opposes any efforts to increase weight limits for CMVs. These changes would harm, not help, small-business truckers and professional drivers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Spencer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Todd Spencer
President & CEO
Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, Inc.