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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

BETTINA POIRIER, STAFF DIRECTOR  
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July 14, 2010

The Honorable Daniel Inouye  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S 128, U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Transportation  
Housing and Urban Development  
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Chairman Murray:

As your Committee continues to develop the upcoming appropriations bills, I am writing to express my opposition to the inclusion of any provision in the Fiscal Year 2011 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies appropriations bill to change current law and permit overweight trucks on interstates. The Fiscal Year 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act contained two pilot programs allowing the states of Maine and Vermont to permit trucks over the 80,000 pound gross weight limit on all interstate highways. I oppose extending these programs.

As Chairman of the Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) I am working with my colleagues to move ahead with the next surface transportation authorization legislation, which we are calling Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21). As you know, EPW has jurisdiction over the construction and maintenance of our nation's highways, including regulations on truck weight. MAP-21 will guide surface transportation programs and policies for several years, and is the appropriate vehicle for any changes to truck length and weight limits.

I am opposed to permitting dangerously large and heavy trucks on the nation's highways. Longer and heavier trucks are hazardous because of their longer stopping distances, risk of rollover, and greater chance of the last trailer swaying into an adjacent lane. Big trucks also pose threats to America's infrastructure, causing significantly greater fatigue and damage to roads and bridges. We must focus our limited resources on protecting our critical infrastructure and improving safety on the highways.

I urge you to refrain from extending the pilot programs in Vermont and Maine, or making any additional changes to current weight restrictions. This is a complex issue that should be addressed by the authorizing committees that are in the process of drafting surface transportation legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer  
Chairman