February 16, 2015

Representative Tim Kelly

559 State Office Building

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

Re: HF 620

Dear Representative Kelly and Transportation Policy and Finance Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Minnesota County Engineers Association (MCEA) to express our concern that HF 620 **not be enacted** unless it is accompanied by a transportation funding package that contains significant new revenue. HF 620 would increase the state weight limits for permitted trucks without providing any additional funding for highway improvements.

As you are well aware, Minnesota has fallen behind in the upkeep of our highway infrastructure. Our highway pavements and bridges are deteriorating faster than we are able to repair or replace them. Allowing heavier trucks on our highways would make matters worse by putting increased strain on already deficient pavements and bridges.

Proponents of weight limit increases recognize our infrastructure problem, which has led them to suggest that posting bridges and redirecting truck traffic will solve the problem. However, some trucks will continue to run overweight regardless of posting, treating a posted weight limit as more of a suggestion than a rule. Enforcement of postings is also difficult because of limited resources. The State Patrol and local law enforcement agencies have many other priorities and many officers do not even have access to the equipment to weigh a truck that they suspect of being overweight. Increasing the number of weight postings to cope with higher weight limits will only make enforcement efforts that much more difficult.

While MCEA supports the safe, efficient movement of freight on our local highway systems, a significant increase in highway funding needs to accompany any increase in legal loads to ensure that our highway systems are adequately funded to meet these increased demands.

If you have any questions regarding our position on this important issue, please feel free to contact us at any time.

Sincerely,

John Welle

John Welle, P.E.

President, Minnesota County Engineers Association

Aitkin County Engineer

CC:

Members of the House Transportation Policy and Finance Committee

Speaker Kurt Daudt

House Majority Leader Joyce Peppin

House Minority Leader Paul Thissen