



JOINT COUNCIL 32 DRIVE

DEMOCRAT REPUBLICAN INDEPENDENT VOTER EDUCATION



February 20, 2015

Sami Gabriel
President

Edward Reynoso
Political Director

Tim Kelly, Chair
Transportation Policy and Finance
559 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Chairman Kelly:

Teamsters Joint Council 32 opposes any legislation that increases truck size and weight limits traveling in Minnesota. As the largest Labor Union representing workers in the trucking industry, we feel that this legislation could create a gateway with potential catastrophic consequences for our members and the general public.

Our Union works tirelessly, in cooperation with hundreds of employers in the trucking industry, to create the safest environment for our drivers and the general public. In fact most employers, if not all, have safety committees in place to listen to the drivers themselves, unlike many of the studies that the proponents cite. Increasing maximum truck weights, according to the Multimodal Transportation & Infrastructure Consortium Study on "An analysis of Truck Size and Weight," clearly indicates that drivers themselves are weary of the increase. When asked, drivers overwhelmingly expressed concerns of the potential increase in truck weights. These are real statistics that cannot and should not be ignored!

Another issue is that our transportation infrastructure is simply not capable of handling such a weight increase without examining a sustainable method of paying for maintaining and strengthening our infrastructure. Recently, Governor Dayton's transportation task force, the Transportation Finance Advisory Committee, determined that Minnesota must make investments to keep our roadways safe and reliable for businesses. Making these investments will be difficult enough with roads declining at their current rate. Most engineers will tell you that adding thousands of pounds to each truckload will only accelerate damage to roads and bridges, decreasing road safety and increasing the burden on taxpayers to pay for repairs at a time when state and local governments are already having to do more with less.

While we understand that some organizations that load trucks may be in favor of increasing the maximum truck weight, as the largest Labor Union representing the professional men and women that would be required to drive this equipment, we believe the safety of the general public and our members is not an option, it should be paramount!

I respectfully ask that members put the traveling public's safety and the integrity of our infrastructure first and oppose this legislation. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Edward Reynoso
Political Director