

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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New Draft "A" of: H. P. 1789, L. D. 2261  
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

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ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

No. 2591

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H. P. 2059 House of Representatives, March 19, 1974  
Reported by 4 Members from the Committee on Transportation in Report  
A and printed under Joint Rules No. 18.

E. LOUISE LINCOLN, Clerk

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STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED  
SEVENTY-FOUR

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**AN ACT to Change Weights and Related Provisions for Commercial  
Vehicles.**

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Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

Sec. 1. R. S., T. 29, § 1, sub-§ 9, repealed and replaced. Subsection 9 of section 1 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes, as amended by section 1 of chapter 360 of the public laws of 1971, is repealed and the following enacted in place thereof:

9. Owner. "Owner," for the purposes of vehicle registration only, shall mean any person, firm or corporation holding title to a vehicle, any such person, firm or corporation that uses a motor vehicle in connection with the conduct of business in this State or any vehicle which is primarily domiciled in this State for a period in excess of 30 days and any common or contract carrier by vehicle operating under permit or certificate of the Public Utilities Commission who operates leased vehicles in this State which are registered in some other State for a period in excess of 30 days.

Any person, firm or corporation holding title to a vehicle or having the use of a vehicle who moves into this State, having given up their domicile in such other state, shall become an owner for the purpose of vehicle registration after a period of 30 days has elapsed, unless there is a registration reciprocity agreement in effect between this and such other state providing for a longer period of residing in either state as a prerequisite for vehicle registration. The period of time in any such reciprocal registration agreement shall take precedence over the above 30-day period.

**Sec. 2. R. S., T. 29, § 244, amended.** The 7th paragraph and the 8th paragraph, as amended, of section 244 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes are repealed and the following enacted in place thereof:

Only one trailer or semitrailer shall be drawn by a motor vehicle, except that combinations of truck tractor semitrailer and full trailer may be operated on the Interstate Highway System and on highways of 4 or more lanes on which the opposing lanes are physically separated and such other state or state-aid highways as may be approved by both the Commissioner of Transportation and the appropriate municipal officials, provided that such approvals shall not exceed a distance of 5 miles from the Interstate Highway System or highways of 4 or more lanes on which the opposing lanes are physically separated. Driveway, towaway operations, as defined by the Public Utilities Commission, may include a combination of saddlemount vehicles not to exceed 3 units in contact with the surface of the highway.

The following maximum length limits shall apply:

**A.** No vehicle shall exceed a length of 45 feet overall, including all structural parts thereof, permanent or temporary, and any load carried thereon or therein.

**B.** A combination of truck tractor and full trailer, or truck tractor and semitrailer, shall not exceed 56½ feet in length, including all structural parts thereof, permanent or temporary, except that the load on such vehicle combinations may extend beyond the 56½ feet by the usual bumper overhang of the transported vehicle in the case of a combination of motor vehicle and semitrailer exclusively engaged in the transportation of motor vehicles.

**C.** A combination of truck tractor semitrailer and full trailer shall not exceed 65 feet overall, including all structural parts thereof, permanent or temporary, and any load carried thereon or therein, except that total normal overhang of bumpers and hitch attachments, not exceeding 18 inches, may be allowed.

**D.** Fire department vehicles and disabled motor vehicles being towed to a repair facility are exempted from the above length restrictions.

**Sec. 3. R. S., T. 29, § 246, amended.** Section 246 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is further amended by adding at the end of the first paragraph, a new paragraph to read as follows:

A registration fee of \$15 shall be paid for each thousand pounds or portion thereof of gross weight a vehicle is registered for in excess of 73,280 pounds.

**Sec. 4. R. S., T. 29, § 1652, sub-§ 1, ¶ A, amended.** Paragraph A of subsection 1 of section 1652 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes, as amended by section 92 of chapter 622 of the public laws of 1971, is further amended to read as follows:

**A.** No vehicle or combination of vehicles shall be operated, or caused to be operated, on or over any way or bridge when the gross weight, actual weight of vehicle and load, exceeds ~~73,280~~ 100,000 pounds. No vehicle hav-

ing 2 axles shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds ~~32,000~~ 34,000 pounds; no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 3 axles shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 51,800 pounds ~~and~~; no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 4 axles shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 66,300 pounds ~~and~~; no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 5 axles shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 73,280 pounds; and no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 6 or more axles shall be so operated or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 100,000 pounds. The operation of the vehicle shall be prima facie evidence that said operation was caused by the person, firm or corporation holding the permit or certificate for said vehicle from the Public Utilities Commission.

Sec. 5. R. S., T. 29, § 1652, sub-§ 1, ¶ O, additional. Subsection 1 of section 1652 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is further amended by adding a new paragraph O to read as follows:

O. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Title, as amended, or as may be subsequently amended, a combination of truck tractor semitrailer or truck tractor semitrailer and full trailer or truck tractor and full trailer having 6 or more axles with a distance between extreme axles of at least 37 feet may be operated for the maximum gross weight for which the vehicle is registered, provided that the maximum axle weights for such vehicle do not exceed 110% of the maximum axle weights allowed in paragraphs B and C for single and tandem axle weights, and further provided that the maximum weight for any 3 or more axle units within a distance of 12 feet or less, which shall be considered a tri-axle, shall not exceed 50,000 pounds, and further provided that such vehicle shall not be operated, or caused to be operated, with a maximum gross weight exceeding 100,000 pounds. Nothing contained in this paragraph shall permit, validate or in any way apply to the use of the Interstate System as defined in the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 by vehicles with weights carried on any one axle or tandem axle weights or in any case shall gross weights in excess of 73,280 pounds be allowed on the Interstate System. Any vehicle having 6 or more axles with a distance of less than 37 feet between extreme axles shall be governed by the allowable weights for 5-axle vehicles. All 6-axle vehicles registered or operated under the provisions of this paragraph shall not be registered or operated for a gross vehicle weight that exceeds the gross vehicle weight as certified by the manufacturer. Only a manufacturer of a vehicle chassis that meets federal standards as they apply to new vehicles, or their franchised dealer, shall be authorized to certify the gross vehicle weight of a vehicle. Proof of such certified gross vehicle weight shall be permanently affixed to the vehicle, or carried in or about the vehicle and displayed on demand of any police office and such evidence of a certified gross vehicle weight shall contain the vehicle identification number to which it applies.

Sec. 5. R. S., T. 29, § 1654, amended. The 3rd paragraph of section 1654 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding a new sentence at the end to read as follows:

In addition to the schedule of fines herein, any vehicle with 6 or more axles shall be assessed a fine at the rate of \$2 for each 100 pounds such gross weight exceeds 5,000 pounds beyond those limits established in section 1652.

Sec. 6. R. S., T. 29, § 1656, amended. The first paragraph of section 1656 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes is amended to read as follows:

No person shall operate, or cause to be operated, any truck, tractor, trailer ~~or~~, combination of truck tractor and semitrailer, **or truck tractor semitrailer and full trailer** with a gross weight that is more than 10% above that specified in the registration certificate for such vehicle for trucks of gross weight of not over 15,000 pounds and 5% for trucks of gross weight of over 15,000 pounds; provided that no motor vehicle of either a single unit or combined unit shall be operated on the highway with a gross weight that exceeds ~~73,280~~ 100,000 pounds, **except that no vehicles shall be operated on the Interstate System with a gross weight in excess of 73,280 pounds.**

Sec. 7. Study. The Legislative Council is authorized to direct the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation of the 106th Legislature to study motor truck transportation in the State of Maine and report its findings to the regular session of the 107th Legislature convening after January 1, 1975.

Said committee shall conduct a study to include, but not limited to, the role of the motor truck industry in the economy of the State of Maine and a review of trucking laws in other states, including, but not limited to, allowable types of vehicles, vehicle lengths and widths, allowable axle and gross weights and fees paid for registration.

#### STATEMENT OF FACT

This bill proposes to increase the length and weight limits for certain motor trucks, representing an effort to recognize the increased load carrying capacities and safety features of modern trucks. The weight limits included in this proposal may require the posting of some bridge structures that are not presently identified as limiting structures.