

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 2592

H. P. 2060

House of Representatives, March 19, 1974

Reported by 6 Members from the Committee on Transportation in Report C and printed under Joint Rules No. 18.

E. LOUISE LINCOLN, Clerk

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
SEVENTY-FOUR

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

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 R. S., T. 29, § 1, sub-§ 9, repealed and replaced.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of section 1 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes, as amended by section 1 of chapter 360 of the public laws of 1971, is repealed and the following enacted in place thereof: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 The 8th paragraph of section 244 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is repealed and the following enacted in place thereof:

The following maximum length limits shall apply.

1. 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.

2. A combination of truck tractor and full trailer, or truck tractor and semitrailer shall not exceed $56\frac{1}{2}$ feet in length, including all structural parts thereof, permanent or temporary, except that the load on such vehicle combinations may extend beyond the $56\frac{1}{2}$ 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 and except when a load consists of forest products, the load and vehicle combination shall not exceed 65 feet overall.

3. 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 inserting after the first paragraph the following:

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

Sec. 4. R. S., T. 29, § 246, amended. The 5th paragraph of section 246 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes is repealed.

Sec. 5. R. S., T. 29, § 1652, repealed and replaced. Section 1652 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is repealed and the following enacted in place thereof:

§ 1652. Weight of commercial vehicles limited

1. 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 100,000 pounds. No vehicle having 2 axles shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 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 54,000 pounds; no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 4 axles shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 72,000 pounds; no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 5 axles shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 86,000 pounds; and no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 6 axles or more shall be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 100,000 pounds.

2. All 6-axle vehicles registered or operated under this section 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 officer and such evidence of a certified gross vehicle weight shall contain the vehicle identification number to which it applies.

3. One axle, or 2 axles less than 4 feet apart, shall be considered as a single axle unit; 2 or more axles within a distance of 8 feet or less shall be considered as a tandem axle unit; 3 or more axles within a distance of 12 feet or less shall be considered as a tri-axle unit; and if a single axle is closer than 8 feet to the nearest axle of a tri-axle unit, the total load on the 4 axles shall not exceed that allowed for a tri-axle unit. The vehicle shall be considered as having one less axle in determining the permissible maximum gross weight and this axle shall not be considered in distance between axle computations as specified in subsection 5.

4. All 3-axle trucks with the 2 rear axles driven and with brakes on the wheels of all axles, 4-axle trucks with 2 axles driven with a distance between extreme axles of not less than 22 feet and truck tractor, semitrailer and trailer combinations, hauling forest products or raw ore from mine or quarry to place of processing, may be operated at 15% in excess of the maximum gross and axle weights permitted upon payment of an additional license fee of \$25 per calendar month or fraction thereof for any of the months of December, January or February.

5. No vehicle shall have a gross weight imparted to any road surface of more than 22,000 pounds on any single axle unit, 42,000 pounds on any tandem axle unit and 54,000 pounds on any tri-axle unit and provided that:

A. No single axle of a tandem axle unit shall support more than 60% of the total weight supported by such tandem axle unit;

B. No single axle of a tri-axle unit shall support more than 40% of the total weight supported by such tri-axle unit;

C. There shall be at least 12 feet between the center of the axles of the nearest succeeding axle units; and

D. If there is at least 8 feet and less than 12 feet between the nearest axles of axle units, the gross weight permitted on the vehicle shall be reduced by 2,000 pounds for each foot of such distances less than 12 feet, measured to the nearest foot.

6. No vehicle shall be operated, or caused to be operated, when the load imparted to the road surface is greater than 600 pounds per inch width tire, manufacturer's rating.

7. No vehicle shall be operated, or caused to be operated, on the Interstate Highway System with a single axle weight in excess of 22,000 pounds; with a tandem axle weight in excess of 32,000 pounds or with an overall gross weight in excess of 73,280 pounds; except for those vehicles described as follows:

A. All 3-axle trucks with brakes on the wheels of all axles, hauling forest products or raw ore from mine or quarry to place of processing, may be

operated on the Interstate Highway System with a gross weight of 48,000 pounds with a distance between extreme axles of not less than 18 feet; and

B. All 3-axle trucks with brakes on the wheels of all axles, hauling construction materials, may be operated for a gross weight of 48,000 pounds on the Interstate Highway System with a distance between extreme axles of not less than 16 feet.

8. All truck and combination vehicles shall have adequate brakes on the wheels of all axles or shall be in compliance with Interstate Commerce Commission safety regulations.

Sec. 6. R. S., T. 29, § 1654, amended. The 3rd paragraph of section 1654 of Title 29 of the Revised Statutes is amended by adding at the end, a new sentence 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. 7. 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 Highway System with a gross weight in excess of 73,280 pounds.

Sec. 8. Study. The Joint Standing Committee on Transportation of the 106th Legislature is hereby directed 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 in other states, including, but not limited to, allowable types of vehicles, vehicle lengths and widths, allowable axle and gross weights and highway user taxes and fees paid for the use of public highways.

STATEMENT OF FACT

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