

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 846

S. P. 302

In Senate, February 13, 1981

Referred to the Committee on Transportation. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

MAY M. ROSS, Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator Redmond of Somerset.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

AN ACT Relating to Vehicle Sizes and Weights.

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

Sec. 1. 29 MRSA § 1652, sub-§ 1, ¶ A, first and 2nd sentences, as repealed and replaced by PL 1975, c. 237, § 4, is amended to read:

No vehicle or combination of vehicles ~~shall~~ may 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 ~~80,000~~ 100,000 pounds. No vehicles having 2 axles ~~shall~~ may 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~~ may 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~~ may be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 69,000 pounds; no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 5 ~~or more~~ axles ~~shall~~ may be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 80,000 pounds; no vehicle or combination of vehicles having 6 or more axles may be so operated, or caused to be operated, when the gross weight exceeds 100,000 pounds.

Sec. 2. 29 MRSA § 1652, sub-§ 2, ¶ B, first sentence, as enacted by PL 1975, c. 237, § 4, is amended to read:

No vehicle shall may be operated, or caused to be operated, with a gross weight exceeding 22,000 pounds on a single axle unit, 38,000 pounds on a tandem axle unit or ~~48,000~~ 56,000 pounds on a tri-axle unit, specifically excepting the Interstate Highway System as defined in the Federal Highway Act of 1956, where the tandem axle unit limit shall be 34,000 pounds; and provided that:

Sec. 3. 29 MRSA § 1655, first sentence, as amended by PL 1979, c. 226, is further amended to read:

The operation on the highways of any vehicle loaded entirely with firewood, sawed lumber, dimension lumber, pulpwood, wood chips, logs, soils, unconsolidated rock materials, bolts, farm produce, road salt, manufacturer's concrete products, building materials which absorb moisture during delivery originating and terminating within the State, or dump trucks, tractor dump trucks or transit-mix concrete trucks carrying highway construction materials; or any vehicle loaded with a majority of products requiring refrigeration, whether by ice or mechanical equipment, and on such vehicles when inspected by the Maine State Police, the number of the seal shall be recorded and the number of the new seal shall be recorded by the Maine State Police, the operation on the highways of any vehicle loaded with raw ore from mine or quarry to place of processing shall not be deemed to be in violation if the gross weight of such vehicle does not exceed 110% of the maximum gross weight for which such vehicle is then registered nor 110% of the maximum gross weight permitted for such vehicle by section 1652, and provided that the maximum axle loads for these vehicles do not exceed 24,200 pounds for a single axle unit, 46,000 pounds for a tandem axle unit and ~~54,000~~ 61,600 pounds for a tri-axle unit, except that 64,000 pounds shall be permitted on the tri-axle unit of a 4-axle motor vehicle hauling forest products until November 1, 1982.

STATEMENT OF FACT

Enactment of this bill will allow tractor-trailer units to operate with one additional axle 4 or more feet from adjacent axles. This bill will permit 6-axle units and will more appropriately distribute the weight of the vehicle.

A 6-axle unit will conserve a substantial amount of fuel. This is particularly true for agricultural trucks, forest product trucks and similar units that normally operate loaded in only one direction. This bill will increase the productivity of Maine operators and will help offset the current high rate of inflation.