



*Public Affairs*

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December 8, 2009

The Honorable James McGovern  
U.S. House of Representatives  
438 Cannon Building  
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Representative McGovern:

On behalf of AAA, I am pleased to offer our support for H.R. 1618, the “Safe Highways and Infrastructure Preservation Act.” AAA appreciates your sponsorship of this legislation.

As an organization serving more than 45 million members in the U.S., AAA places a high priority on safety. Our members have consistently ranked truck safety as one of their top traffic safety concerns over the years and we have historically opposed any increases in truck size and weights.

We understand the importance of a robust inter-modal transportation system that can meet both the personal and commercial demands necessary for the United States to remain globally competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. To that end, we support making freight mobility a national priority in the next federal transportation bill.

However, despite recent declines in large truck-involved crashes over the past several years, the number of deaths and injuries among passenger vehicle occupants remains high. In 2008, more than 4,000 people died and approximately 90,000 people were injured in truck-related crashes, with eighty-four percent of deaths occurring among persons other than occupants of a large truck.<sup>1</sup>

We recognize there will be a strong push in the next federal transportation bill to increase truck size and weight limits, specifically to a 97,000 pound gross vehicle weight rating (GWVR), six-axle configuration. While increased productivity and overall economic improvements are frequently cited as justifications for such a change, potential safety, enforcement and infrastructure impacts are often omitted from these discussions. Until key questions about these impacts are fully addressed, AAA will continue to oppose any change in current truck size and weight regulations and encourages Congress to focus on addressing the safety, enforcement and infrastructure implications associated with such a change.

Once again, thank you for sponsoring H.R. 1618. AAA appreciates your continued leadership on this important safety issue.

Sincerely,

Jill Ingrassia  
Managing Director, Government Relations and Traffic Safety Advocacy

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<sup>1</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Traffic Safety Facts 2008: Large Trucks. Washington, DC: USDOT; 2009. Available at: <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811158.PDF>