




Date: April 14, 1999

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Jerry Shultz, , Councilman, 9th District 

Subject: ITEM FOR THE APRIL 20, 1999 CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

On July 22, 1997, the Long Beach City Council adopted a resolution expressing opposition to lifting the existing restrictions on Mexican trucks and urging President Clinton to maintain the current U.S. policy on trucking. (Copy attached).

One of the concerns, at the time, was the desire of the trucking industry to increase the maximum allowable weight and length of trucks - to allow for triple trailer trucks.

If these larger trucks are allowed on our highways they not only will pose multiple safety hazards, but the damage to infrastructure will be, to say the least, costly.

The Coalition Against Bigger Trucks has requested the Long Beach City Council to oppose any legislation that would result in bigger and heavier trucks on California's roads. They have asked that we forward a letter expressing our opposition to Senator Barbara Boxer. A sample of that letter is attached.

I propose that we support the opposition and take appropriate action either to forward a formal letter or if necessary, refer to the State Legislation and Environmental Affairs Committee for study and expedient action.

attachments

35

OFFICE OF THE
CITY ATTORNEY
OF
LONG BEACH

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July 22, 1997

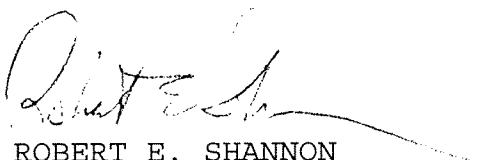
HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCILMEMBERS
City of Long Beach,
C a l i f o r n i a

Re: **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF LONG BEACH EXPRESSING
ITS OPPOSITION TO LIFTING EXISTING
RESTRICTIONS ON MEXICAN TRUCKS AND
URGING PRESIDENT CLINTON TO MAINTAIN
THE CURRENT U.S. POLICY ON TRUCKING**

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RECEIVED
CITY ATTORNEY
LONG BEACH, CALIF.

Pursuant to the request of the City Council at its meeting of July 15, 1997, the enclosed above-referenced resolution has been prepared for your consideration.

JOHN R. CALHOUN, City Attorney

By 
ROBERT E. SHANNON
Assistant City Attorney

RES:fl
Enclosure

1 RESOLUTION NO. C-

2
3 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
4 CITY OF LONG BEACH EXPRESSING ITS OPPOSITION
5 TO LIFTING EXISTING RESTRICTIONS ON MEXICAN
6 TRUCKS AND URGING PRESIDENT CLINTON TO
7 MAINTAIN THE CURRENT U.S. POLICY ON TRUCKING

8
9 WHEREAS, lifting the existing restrictions on Mexican
10 trucks entering California would pose an immediate threat to
11 highway safety; and

12 WHEREAS, recent federal studies report that trucks
13 entering the United States from Mexico are up to three times as
14 old, up to twice as heavy, and frequently out of compliance with
15 U. S. safety and environmental standards;

16
17 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long
18 Beach resolves as follows:

19 Section 1. That the Long Beach City Council hereby
20 expresses its opposition to lifting the existing restrictions on
21 Mexican trucks and urges President Clinton to maintain the
22 current U.S. policy on trucking.

23 Sec. 2. This resolution shall take effect immediately
24 upon its adoption by the City Council, and the City Clerk shall
25 certify the vote adopting this resolution.

26
27 I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was
28 adopted by the City Council of the City of Long Beach at its

John R. Calhoun
City Attorney of Long Beach
333 West Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, California 90802-4664
(310) 570-2200

February 2, 1999

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

We are writing to urge you to oppose any legislation that would result in bigger and heavier trucks on California's roads.

In recent months, some proponents of bigger trucks have called on Congress to relax federal highway safety standards by raising the maximum allowable weight and length of trucks. Others are calling this a "states rights" issue, and have said that the federal limits should be eliminated entirely.

Please oppose all these efforts to force motorists to share the roads with bigger, more dangerous trucks. The federal government has a clear responsibility to maintain minimum safety standards on the highways that our federal taxes pay to construct and maintain and on which all of us drive.

Polls have consistently shown that the vast majority of Californians strongly oppose any increase in truck size or weight. The basis for this overwhelming public opposition is twofold. First, bigger trucks are more dangerous trucks. They are more susceptible to rollover, jack knifing and braking problems. Second, longer and heavier trucks would add billions of dollars in new infrastructure costs because of the damage they do to bridges and roads. A huge portion of this cost will be borne by average taxpayers since trucking companies pay only a fraction of their fair share to repair the damage caused by bigger trucks.

Please help us keep our motorists safe and protect our highway infrastructure. Thank you very much for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

COALITION AGAINST BIGGER TRUCKS MISSION STATEMENT

The Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT) opposes efforts at all levels of government to make trucks longer and heavier. CABT includes public citizen organizations, state and local law enforcement agencies, senior citizens, highway safety, environmental and business groups. CABT opposes bigger trucks because they raise serious safety, infrastructure, environmental and economic concerns. **In order to protect public safety, the nation's infrastructure and the environment, CABT has embarked on a grass roots campaign to fight the efforts of bigger truck proponents to increase truck lengths and weights.**

Longer, heavier trucks present serious safety problems to the motoring public. Grim statistics support this contention: Each year, 5,000 people are killed in truck-related crashes and over 100,000 are injured. Today, almost all of these trucks are conventional, single trailer trucks or "18 wheelers." Now, bigger truck proponents want to place even bigger trucks on the road -- including triple and long double longer combination vehicles (LCVs) -- and heavy single tractor trailers weighing 100,000 pounds.

Bigger trucks also translate into greater damage to bridges and roads -- and it will be the average taxpayer, not the trucking industry, who pays the bill for repairs and maintenance. With tightening budgets at the federal, state and local levels of government, additional resources for highway maintenance and bridge reconstruction will be hard to obtain. In addition, the inevitable result of bigger trucks will be more pollution, higher taxes, more congestion and an unbalanced freight transportation system.

NEW 90,000 POUND CONCEPT VEHICLE BRINGS SAFETY, INFRASTRUCTURE RISKS

Coalition Against Bigger Trucks

September 1998

Freightliner and Wabash National, two market leaders in truck tractor and trailer manufacturing, have teamed to produce a new *90,000 pound* concept vehicle. The bigger truck uses a cabover tractor pulling a 58 foot triaxle semitrailer. Advocates of the new truck are trying to convince Congress to lift the current federal gross vehicle weight limit by *10,000 pounds*.

But safety advocates remain skeptical about claims that the proposed truck combines bigger size with new safety features.

- **The proposed safety “improvements” are unproven.** Even the Chief of Engineering for the American Trucking Associations (ATA) has said that the truck’s electronic braking system, for example, “adds great complexity and unproven hardware to the brake system” (Transport Topics 5/25/98). *Moreover, if the truck is eventually found to include new safety technology, shouldn’t it be used to make current trucks safer – not as an excuse for bigger trucks?*
- **The extra weight alone makes the truck less safe.** According to the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, “[T]he energy to be dissipated in a collision, and hence the damage done, increases with weight, and the probability of injury increases with the increasing disparity of weight in two-vehicle collisions.” In other words, the heavier the truck, the greater the damage it can cause in an accident.
- **The extra length threatens highway safety.** The length between the rear axles and the end of the trailer is longer than that of conventional trailers. The long rear overhang greatly increases *overswing* and *encroachment* into adjoining lanes of traffic that could cause serious safety problems.
- **The concept truck could cause more highway damage.** One option on the concept vehicle includes an electronically controlled “*lift axle*” in its final tridem set of axles. Whenever the axle is raised to allow the vehicle to turn in intersections, the load transfers to the other axles causing *more, not less pavement damage* than conventional 80,000-pound trucks. The truck’s weight and new configuration would also cause serious *bridge overstress*.
- **The concept truck will lead to even bigger conventional trucks.** Allowing the bigger truck’s 58-foot trailer to operate will increase pressure to allow longer trailers with conventional truck tractors. The result will be a move to longer overall truck lengths, which will cause safety problems in merging, lane-changing, intersection-clearance, and emergency maneuvers.

For more information on how you can help keep bigger, more dangerous trucks off our highways, please contact the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks:
(888)CABT123, cabtdc@aol.com, www.cabt.org, 1000 Potomac St, NW, Ste 402, Washington, DC 20007

BIGGER TRUCKS: BAD NEWS FOR U.S. TAXPAYERS

Coalition Against Bigger Trucks

September 1998

Public concerns about longer, heavier trucks have centered on potential safety impacts. But it's clear from the Highway Cost Allocation Study released by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) in August 1997 that there's an important tax and infrastructure issue, too.

According to the new USDOT study, it will cost U.S. taxpayers for every mile traveled by a bigger truck. That will mean more pot holes, higher taxes--or both.

Here's what the USDOT study found:

- **A typical triple trailer truck pays only 70% of its federal highway costs.** The most common triple trailer combination--registered at 110,000 pounds gross weight-- pays only 70% of its federal highway costs.

- **Long, heavy double trailer trucks pays as little as 80% of their costs.** Long, heavy double trailer trucks also underpay, covering about 80% of their costs on average. But at the 130,000 to 140,000 pound weights allowed in several states, long doubles pay only 60% of their costs.

- **Heavier single tractor trailer trucks underpay seriously as well.** According to the USDOT, a 90,000 pound six axle single tractor trailer truck covers only 60% of its costs, while a 100,000 pound six axle single tractor trailer truck pays 50%.

In general, the USDOT study finds that as registered weight goes up, cost responsibility ratios fall sharply -- that is, the big trucking companies making the profits pay less, and average taxpayers pay more.

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BIGGER TRUCKS MEAN BIGGER PROBLEMS ON OUR HIGHWAYS

Coalition Against Bigger Trucks

September 1998

Americans overwhelmingly oppose bigger trucks, especially longer combination vehicles (LCVs) -- *triple* trailer and long double trailer trucks. A July 1997 Parade Magazine survey found that 87% of respondents opposed trucks getting bigger, longer or heavier.

The main reason people oppose bigger trucks is their fear that bigger trucks are unsafe.

The worst safety problem with LCVs is their incompatibility with today's crowded highways. Because they're so big and so slow, LCVs have trouble merging or changing lanes in freeway traffic. Similarly, they have problems maintaining speed on upgrades, creating serious safety risks.

LCVs present a greater safety risk simply because they have more trailers. As a result, LCVs suffer from increased rearward amplification--the "crack the whip" effect.

LCVs are a disaster for the nation's infrastructure. National operation of LCVs would cost government agencies \$12.7 billion in bridge replacement and reconstruction costs. As those bridges are repaired, auto drivers will lose \$59 billion in lost time and extra fuel burnt.

LCVs will make our highway congestion problems worse. A single LCV has the same impact on highway congestion and traffic delay as 10 to 12 automobiles (or more than *twice* the impact of two conventional trucks).

Bigger trucks will cause faster highway deterioration. According to the June 1997, Volume 2 draft of the Department of Transportation "Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study", triples do *twice* the pavement damage of conventional trucks.

Triple trailer trucks pay even less of their highway costs than ordinary trucks. The 1997 Federal Highway Cost Allocation Study determined that triples at the most common operating weight pay only 70% of their federal costs.

Heavier single tractor trailers raise the same safety and infrastructure concerns as LCVs. According to the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, "[g]ross combination weight is the only vehicle characteristic showing a clear association with the overall fatal accident rate."

Heavier singles pay far less than their share of highway costs. According to the new federal study, six axle singles operating at 90,000 lbs cover only 60% of their costs. 100,000 lb singles pay a mere 50%. Allowing 97,000 lb single tractor trailers to operate nationwide would mean an additional \$13.8 billion in bridge reconstruction costs on the interstate system alone. Highway users would lose an additional \$56 billion in delay costs and fuel burnt stuck in traffic. Total costs would be nearly \$70 billion.

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