

Pressure Building to Remove Logjam Over Truck Weight

ATLANTA — A legislative proposal will put pressure on the United States to bring truck weight more in line with its border neighbors, according to a state official.

David Galt, administrator of the carrier services division of Montana's Department of Transportation, said the bill could break the logjam of opposition to bigger trucks caused by the 1991 congressional freeze on increasing the federal weight limit and to expansion of routes for longer combination vehicles (5-10, p. 1).

The issue was discussed during his address May 17 at the National Tank Truck Carrier's annual meeting.

States would be allowed to raise the maximum truck weight from 80,000 pounds to 97,000 pounds under a proposal by congressmen Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) and Merrill Cook (R-Utah). The higher standard would put U.S. trucks more on par with the 96,000-pound restriction in Canada and 106,000-pound limit in Mexico.

The House Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee is charged with negotiating the trucking provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Its efforts to resolve the matter have been dampened by the 1991 freeze and a letter to then-Transportation Secretary Federico Pena from more than 200 members of Congress opposed to increasing truck weights.

The subcommittee is expected to receive recommendations this fall from a working group that it created to set uniform standards for trucks found in all three countries involved in NAFTA.

For the full story, see the May 24 print edition of Transport Topics.

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