



Manufacturing Matters

TEXAS NEEDS RESPONSIBLE TRUCK WEIGHT REFORM SAFER, MORE EFFICIENT, BETTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

Texas manufacturers, which anchor our economy with good jobs and tax revenue, depend on truck shipments to meet demand for their products. Texas manufacturers sell their products worldwide and we are proud to be the No. 1 exporting state in the USA. Many of these exports eventually move through our seaports in ocean-going containers. While rail is often the first choice for shipment, more than 70 percent of freight is shipped by truck at one point or another.

Yet in Texas and across the country, the combination of record freight volume, mounting railroad bottlenecks, limited highway lane capacity, and truck driver shortages has created an unprecedented capacity crunch, which is straining manufacturers and our entire transportation network. If our coastal communities are to benefit from the recently expanded Panama Canal, the need for transportation solutions is more urgent than ever.

Legislation will be introduced this session that would allow more productive and safer trucks to travel on TXDOT pre-approved highway corridors for limited distances when trucks are equipped with additional axles and sets of brakes, rather than today's typical five-axle configuration.

This legislation would allow manufacturers to reduce the number of truckload trips, thereby reducing truck miles traveled, vehicle emissions, and potential risk for traffic accidents. The average shipper would see a reduction in truck usage of between 8-15%, with some shippers experiencing even greater efficiencies, depending on cargo.

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Truck weight flexibility with additional axles/brakes for road protection and traffic safety would also allow Texas manufacturers to catch up with our major trading partners, which have used these trucks for years, and with neighboring states, which already allow more productive trucks on state roads. It is also important to recognize that Texas ports will service the world's largest ships now that the expansion of the Panama Canal is complete, and we will

need advanced truck transportation to handle such freight increases.

More productive and efficient trucks would allow Texas manufacturers to become more competitive and, with fewer trucks on the road per ton of freight, would also improve both traffic congestion and air quality. This effort is an opportunity that Texas simply cannot afford to miss.