



2003 ASSEMBLY BILL 743

January 9, 2004 - Introduced by Representatives AINSWORTH, ALBERS, GRONEMUS, GUNDERSON, HAHN, MUSSER, OWENS, PETROWSKI, PETTIS, SERATTI, SUDER, OLSEN and OTT, cosponsored by Senators SCHULTZ, HARSDFORF and BRESKE. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 **AN ACT** *to amend* 348.15 (3) (intro.), 348.16 (2) and 348.17 (1); and *to create*
2 348.17 (5) of the statutes; **relating to:** weight limitations for vehicles
3 transporting agricultural crops.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Current law imposes weight limits on vehicles based on the size of a vehicle. The Department of Transportation may authorize a vehicle to exceed the weight limit under certain circumstances, including authorizing a vehicle carrying crops from field to storage or to a processing facility when the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection determines that an agricultural emergency exists. The authorization to exceed the weight limit does not apply to vehicles operated on highways designated as parts of the national system of interstate and defense highways, except for that portion of USH 51 between Wausau and STH 78 and that portion of STH 78 between USH 51 and the I 90/94 interchange near Portage upon their federal designation as I 39.

Under this bill, a vehicle or combination of vehicles carrying certain agricultural crops from the field to initial storage or processing may exceed weight limits by not more than 15 percent without a permit from September 1 to November 31 of each year. This exception does not apply to vehicles operated on highways designated as parts of the national system of interstate and defense highways, except for that portion of USH 51 between Wausau and STH 78 and that portion of STH 78 between USH 51 and the I 90/94 interchange near Portage upon their federal designation as I 39.

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Because this bill concerns an exception to the vehicle weight limits specified in ch. 348, stats., the Department of Transportation, as required by law, will prepare a report to be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 348.15 (3) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 348.15 (3) (intro.) Subject to any modifications made by a 1st class city under
3 s. 349.15 (3) and except as provided in s. 348.17 (5), no person, without a permit, may
4 operate on a class “A” highway any vehicle or combination of vehicles unless the
5 vehicle or combination of vehicles complies with the following weight limitations:

6 **SECTION 2.** 348.16 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:

7 348.16 (2) Except as provided in sub. (3) and ~~s.~~ ss. 348.17 (5) and 348.175 and
8 subject to any modifications made by a city of the first class pursuant to s. 349.15 (3),
9 no person, without a permit therefor, shall operate on a class “B” highway any vehicle
10 or combination of vehicles imposing wheel, axle, group of axles, or gross weight on
11 the highway exceeding 60 per cent of the weights authorized in s. 348.15 (3).

12 **SECTION 3.** 348.17 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

13 348.17 (1) ~~No~~ Except as provided in sub. (5), no person, whether operating
14 under a permit or otherwise, shall operate a vehicle in violation of special weight
15 limitations imposed by state or local authorities on particular highways, highway
16 structures or portions of highways when signs have been erected as required by s.
17 349.16 (2) giving notice of such weight limitations, except when the vehicle is being
18 operated under a permit expressly authorizing such weight limitations to be
19 exceeded.

20 **SECTION 4.** 348.17 (5) of the statutes is created to read:

