



MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Special Committee on Highway Weight Limits

FROM: Matthew Stohr, WCA Legislative Associate
Daniel Fedderly, P.E., R.L.S., WCHA Executive Director

DATE: November 13, 2006

SUBJECT: Highway Weight Limits

Thank you for the opportunity to present the thoughts of county officials regarding this important issue. County officials view the Special Committee on Highway Weight Limits as an opportunity to shed light on an issue that has long been overlooked by transportation stakeholders and the general public. Further, county officials are hopeful that this committee works to provide much needed information for local and state transportation officials, which could assist them with their efforts to assess the current state of existing law as it relates to road weight limits.

The Wisconsin Counties Association and the Wisconsin County Highway Association feel strongly that before the committee recommends increasing the weight limits for certain industries, a concentrated effort should be made by the committee, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and other transportation stakeholders to do a comprehensive assessment of current law and its impact on state and local infrastructure. In particular, both organizations strongly urge the committee to examine the compliance rate of existing weight limits, especially the conditions set forth by 2005 Act 167.

The Wisconsin Counties Association and the Wisconsin County Highway Association concur with the statements and suggestions brought forward by the Wisconsin Troopers' Association in their September 22, 2006 letter to the committee. In their letter, the Troopers' Association suggested that the committee work to statutorily define "intermediary lumber" as mentioned in 2005 Act 167. The lack of a clear statutory definition for this term will likely amount to either inconsistent enforcement of 2005 Act

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167 across the state or no enforcement of 2005 Act 167. The Troopers' Association also highlighted the need for a substantial enforcement mechanism, such as paper enforcement, to effectively deter potential violators of weight limits. County officials agree with the Troopers' Association on this issue as well. To effectively deter potential violators, the law must consist of substantial penalties for violators and well-trained enforcement officials.

As you are aware, the last step in the enforcement process is the judicial system. For your information, please find enclosed a letter from numerous organizations to judges and district attorneys across Wisconsin, which respectively requests that they take the issue of weight limit violations very seriously. As you will see in this letter, all of the organizations feel strongly that it is important to fairly enforce the current weight limit laws.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Please do not hesitate to contact Matthew Stohr at the WCA office, 608.663.7188, if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.