

final determination to withhold funds from a State under subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary shall give written notice to the State and shall provide the State an opportunity for a hearing on such determination.

S. 2658—VEHICLE WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS

1. It is clear, is it not that:

(a) S. 2658 and H.R. 14474 apply only to the Interstate System; and

(b) the States would not have to permit the operation of vehicles having the weight and dimensions set forth in those bills, but could establish lower limits?

*Answer:*

(a) It is clear that S. 2658 and H.R. 14474 would apply only to the Interstate System, and

(b) that the States would not be required to come up to the maximum specified limits but could do so at their option.

In this regard, Senate Report No. 1026 on S. 2658, stated:

"The committee most emphatically reaffirms that the responsibility for legal maximum allowable limits and control of sizes and weights of vehicles operating on the Interstate System, as well as on all the other road systems of the United States, rests with the individual States."

2. S. 2658, as passed the Senate, would increase the weights of vehicles permitted to operate on the Interstate System from 18,000 to 20,000 pounds on one axle, from 32,000 to 34,000 pounds on a tandem axle, and would change the overall gross-weight limit from 73,280 pounds to a weight determined by a formula based on the number and spacing of axles.

(a) As the bill is written, there is no maximum limit on the overall gross weight of vehicles which would be permitted to operate on the Interstate System. Does this present a danger to structures on the Interstate System?

*Answer:* The bill as written, with no maximum limit on the overall gross weight (or on overall length of vehicle or combinations) would present no danger to the H-20S-16 structures on completed sections of the Interstate System, since the equation controls permitted weight on axle groups in relation to their spacing.

(b) Do you think the bill should be amended to include a limitation on the maximum overall gross weight?

*Answer:* No, as per the preceding answer.

3. The bill as written contains no limit on the maximum length of vehicles. Would this create a problem with respect to negotiating on and off ramps at interchanges?

*Answer:* The omission of length control, as noted in 2(a) above, could pose operational problems on ramps with certain types of equipment.

4. The length of vehicles has a bearing on highway safety. Taking for example, an automobile travelling at 70 miles per hour passing a truck travelling at 60 miles per hour, if the truck is 65 feet long, the passing maneuver can be completed in 18.92 seconds and over a distance of 1,942.5 feet. If the truck is 98 feet long (the length of some combinations currently being operated), the time to complete the passing maneuver is 21.16 seconds and the distance will be 2,172.5 feet. The difference between the passing time and distance in this example is 2.24 seconds and 230 feet.

(a) Would this increase the potential safety hazards on four-lane highways?

*Answer:* The passing maneuver on four-lane divided highways with access control would not appear to have a significant effect on safety hazards.

(b) There is still a considerable mileage of two-lane highways on the Interstate System. Would the additional time and distance to complete a passing maneuver of a 98-foot long combination of vehicles unduly increase the hazards on these highways?

*Answer:* The longer combination would materially influence both safety and capacity on two-lane, two-direction highways, both adversely. In our opinion, such operation should be restricted to completed segments of the Interstate System or equivalent.

(c) During recent hearings of the Special Subcommittee on the Federal-aid Highway Programs, we heard considerable testimony about inadequate signing, particularly advance signing of exits. In a congested urban area with interchanges closely spaced, would this additional time and distance required to complete a passing maneuver create a safety hazard?

*Answer:* If exit signing is inadequate due to insufficient lead time, it does not appear that this deficiency would be made worse by the longer combination as contrasted to lesser vehicles hauling the same tonnage. Much of the criticism