

Bureau of Public Roads of the Department of Transportation. The Senate bill, as amended, also is consistent with the recommendations of the American Association of State Highway Officials.

Under the circumstances, we are not here contending for the more liberal standards contained in the original bills. Instead, we are here to endorse and to urge approval of the moderate improvements contained in the bill passed by the Senate.

Since there are some who seem to be under the impression that the proposed new Federal limits would be absolute—that every State would be forced to come up to the new Federal limits—it might be well to emphasize that the legislation would not require any State to do anything.

No State would be required to increase any weight or size limit and, in fact, each would remain free to even reduce its limits if it saw fit.

The legislation simply would establish a new set of standards as ceilings which States might allow on the Interstate System without loss of Federal road funds. It would, of course, continue to recognize higher limits already existing in some States, but would not permit such States to go any higher.

At the time the Federal limits were adopted in 1956, practically all States had single-axle limits at or above the 18,000 pounds provided in the Federal law, and tandem-axle limits at or above the 32,000 pounds provided in the Federal law. Therefore, there has been virtually no change in State limits on single and tandem axles since 1956.

The Senate-approved bill would increase the Federal limit on a single axle from 18,000 pounds to 20,000 pounds.

Exhibit No. 1 (p. 638) shows the current single-axle limit in each of the States. Twenty-six States already have single-axle limits above 18,000 pounds, since they had such limits on the "grandfather" date in 1956 and, in most cases, for many years prior to that date.

These 26 States which currently have limits higher than 18,000 pounds account for 40.6 percent of the Nation's total truck population. Fifteen of these 26 States have current limits above the 20,000 pounds proposed in the bill and, in many cases, have had their present limits for 30 years. The bill would not require these 15 States to cut back, but they could not go any higher than they now are without losing their Federal aid.

The 25 States which have been "frozen" at 18,000 pounds since 1956 have been denied any opportunity to come more nearly in line with the standards which many other States have enjoyed for years and which they find to be an essential ingredient in efficient motor truck operation, and important to their economy. The bill would make it permissible for these 25 States to come up to 20,000 pounds, but would not require any State to do so.

The Senate-approved bill would make a very modest increase in the tandem-axle limit—from 32,000 pounds to 34,000 pounds.

Exhibit No. 2 (p. 639) shows the current tandem-axle limit in each of the States.

Twenty-four States already have tandem-axle limits higher than 32,000 pounds. Eight of these 24 States have tandem limits of 36,000 pounds or more.

On the other hand, 27 States have been "frozen" at 32,000 pounds since 1956. These States, under the bill, would be permitted to move up