

We would appreciate, Mr. Chairman, having this supplemental statement made a part of the record.

Mr. HOWARD. Without objection, so ordered.
(Supplemental statement follows:)

TRUCK TRANSPORTATION AND HIGHWAY SAFETY

(Supplemental statement, testimony of American Trucking Associations, Inc.)

INTRODUCTION

Each time the question of truck size and weight comes to the forefront as a legislative matter the safety record of the trucking industry is questioned in such a way as to create fear of large vehicles. Generally, the accusations and questions are brought into testimony or public statements by well-intentioned people who are well informed on many matters but who have little or no understanding of highway safety and so rely on statements they have read in publications made by others who purportedly have knowledge of safety, without making any inquiry as to whether they are supported by factual statistics.

A recent speech made by a Federal official about trucks and truck safety, and widely publicized in newspapers around the country, is a prime example of the spread of so-called authoritative statements supported by a series of data which analysis revealed to contain several errors and discrepancies, in the light of other available information. The net effect of these errors was the presentation of an unjustifiably harsh picture of truck safety. The errors are listed, discussed and refuted in the following:

1. *Definition and extent of "heavy" truck operations.*

The presentation considered the operations of all trucks larger than 2-axle, 4-tire to be "heavy" in nature. On this basis, there were stated to be 6,000,000 "heavy" trucks, operating 10 percent of the Nation's motor vehicle miles. These data were then used to estimate total truck accidents and damage. The fallacy here is that a "heavy" truck is normally defined (by both the Census Bureau and by the Bureau of Public Roads) as a vehicle with a gross weight of more than 26,000 pounds. Units smaller than this are seldom found in intercity service. Further, when the Congress desired to place a special highway tax on "heavy" trucks, it imposed this levy on vehicles of more than 26,000 pounds gross.

Data are readily available on the extent of this equipment from the Supplementary Report of the Highway Cost Allocation Study (BPR, 1965).¹ This report shows that all trucks and combinations defined as "heavy" (regardless of type of service) account for 1.54 percent of total U.S. registrations (in 1964). In terms of total 1966 vehicle registrations, this amounts to 1,461,000 vehicles. Inclusion of commercial buses would raise the total to about 1.55 million. This is only one-fourth of the number used in the speech.

Operations, in terms of miles traveled, may also be ascertained for these trucks and combinations. Here, again, the Cost Allocation Study supplies the information. It shows that heavy trucks of over 26,000 pounds traveled 5.33 percent of all miles operated in the country. Applying this to the 1966 BPR total travel data yields 49.595 billion miles. The 5.33 percent figure is just over half of the 10 percent used in the speech data.

2. *Coverage and extrapolation of Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety Accident Data*

The data on fatal, non-fatal and property damage accidents were based on the material included in the 1965-66 motor carrier accident report of the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety. This document, whose preparation suffered from mechanical problems attendant on the shift of responsibility from ICC to DOT, covers intercity operations of large motor carriers. In all, operations cover (for 1966) 10.862 billion intercity miles. Based on the information developed above which show total heavy truck miles in the amount of 49.595 billion, this report represents only a 22 percent sample. If the information in the report were obtained from all types of motor carrier operations, such a sample would be more than adequate. This was not, however, the case. It cannot be assumed that the accident experience over the unmeasured 78 percent of the miles, much of it urban in nature, would be comparable to the data presented for intercity major for-hire carriers.

¹ Supplementary Report of the Highway Cost Allocation Study, House Document 124, 89th Congress, 1st Session.