As a result of the 1956 legislation, for more than 20 years nearly half of the States have been unfairly restricted in the use of their highway systems. The grandfather provisions of the 1956 act allowed 26 States to continue to permit axle-loads greater than the 18,000-pound limits, 15 of them allowing 20,000 pound limits. While 27 States were confined to the 32,000 pound tandem axleload level, other States were allowed limits as high as 34,000 pounds. In 1964, the Bureau of Public Roads reported that in 1963 the average tandem axle weight limit in the Northeastern section of the country was 36,290 pounds and in the Southeast 35,500 pounds. Thus, limits in the Northeastern States were higher than in other States more dependent upon highway transportation.

As long as the 1956 limitations remain in effect many States are denied the opportunity to apply new technology and techniques which they believe would result in significant advances in efficiency and economy, consistent with modern highway construction. States which have had limits "frozen" at 18,000 pounds axle weight since 1956 have been denied the opportunity to approach standards many other States have enjoyed for years and which are essential for efficient motor truck operations. In States permitting the higher limits, years of experience have demonstrated the practicability to have 36,000-pound tandem axleload limits. It is for this reason that I proposed the 36,000-pound limit in my bill.

However, I am also of the opinion that the formula for determining the maximum gross weight limits included in S. 2658 provides better controls than now exist because it directly relates the length of the vehicle and number of axles to the overall gross weight. Under this formula, longer and heavier vehicles could operate than now are permitted in several of the States, and less damage to the highway system would result than from operation of the short-wheelbase vehicles operating under the existing 73,280-pound gross-weight limitation.

Superior highway systems have been built since 1946 and are still being built. The greater capacity provided by these modern highways is not being fully utilized because of the outdated size and weight limitations. In 1946, the American Association of State Highway Officials suggested that as more modern roads were built it would be better to allow vehicles 102 inches wide—the 1946 limit was 96 inches—because of "* * * certain conditions inherent in the design of vehicles." The wider vehicle provides more adequate tire mounting, better spacing for cool running, adequate room for dual chains and for adequate springs, larger capacity brakes on an adequate frame and increased stability by increased lateral spacing of springs. The American Association of State Highway Officials revised its recommendations in 1964 to single-axle weight limits of 20,000 pounds and vehicle width of 102 inches, the same as the limits proposed in S. 2658.

Differences in size and weight limitations of the States resulted from varying needs of agriculture and industry and the peculiar requirements of each State for highway transportation. The characteristic mobility of this Nation's population could not have been achieved without adequate provision for transportation facilities. For historic and geographic reasons, the dynamic growth of the economy of the West was paralleled by the greatest growth in motor vehicle transportation. Commenting on the role of highways in economic de-