

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. We are glad to have both of you with us today.

Mr. KACHLEIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and honorable members of this committee. We do appreciate this opportunity of appearing before you on this very important piece of legislation.

I have presented to you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, a prepared statement which I asked be incorporated into the record. Knowing your desire to shorten the time of the hearing. I have made a summary statement which I shall give.

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. We appreciate it and your prepared statement will be made a part of the record at this point.

(The full prepared statement of Mr. Kachlein follows:)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGE F. KACHLEIN, JR., EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT,
AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

The American Automobile Association with 11 million motorist members opposes H.R. 14474 and other bills which would permit larger and heavier trucks on the Interstate System. These measures would present serious safety hazards to all highway users for the benefit of the operators of only 250,000 heavy trucks which would be able to take advantage of the heavier weights and increased sizes permitted. If enacted, such legislation would bring about substantial increases in cost to the construction of highways and bridges and accelerated depreciation in the expected life of such facilities, accompanied by substantial increases in maintenance costs.

AAA believes that truck combinations are already too large. The passenger car operator and our members in particular, intuitively fear sharing the same highway with such huge trucks.

Our member hates to pass them because he can never be sure of what lies ahead until he moves into the opposing lane of traffic. In rain or slush his windshield is invariably inundated beyond the capability of his wipers, restricting his forward vision and creating uncertainty as to safe passage.

He doesn't like to be followed by them for just as often as not they seem to be climbing up his rear bumper.

He doesn't like to follow them because they block his forward vision and they slow his travel speed on upgrades.

The motorist's intuitive fear of the heavy truck is well-founded. Whenever a truck and car collide it is the occupant of the car who is most likely to suffer injury or death.

A study by the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety in 1967 showed that almost half of the fatal and injury-producing accidents involving common carriers resulted from collision with an automobile. For every truck driver who died in such accidents, 38 others died.

Mr. Lowell K. Bridwell, Federal Highway Administrator, recently told the Private Truck Council that heavy commercial vehicles comprising 7% of the nation's registered motor vehicles and accounting for 11% of the total vehicle miles traveled were involved in 19% of the highway fatalities.

He noted that studies by the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety revealed that four out of every ten vehicles selected for inspection in road checks were ruled off the road temporarily. Brake defects were the major problem.

VEHICLE WIDTH

Legislation before the Committee would increase permissible width on the Interstate System from 96 inches to 102 inches, plus additional width necessary for tire bulge due to loads and safety devices.

Using figures of the Industry Advisory Committee, composed of the American Trucking Associations, Incorporated and suppliers, the 102-inch width could mean an over-all width across the tires of 106 inches. This does not include tire chains or flexible fenders. When such items are added we are really talking about an over-all width of 108 inches—a full twelve inches above the present statutory limit.

Don't forget. No traffic movement begins or ends on the Interstate. Other routes must be used as connectors. Sixty percent of the rural road mileage on state Primary systems in 1966 had traffic lanes less than twelve feet wide. A