

SB 94 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Transportation

Action Date: 05/06/25

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Engrossed.)

Senate Vote

Yeas: 4 - Meek, Pham, Starr, Weber

Exc: 1 - Gorsek

House Vote

Yeas: 5 - Boshart Davis, Helfrich, Mannix, McLain, Nathanson

Nays: 1 - Gamba

Exc: 1 - Evans

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Has minimal revenue impact

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/10, 5/5, 5/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to conduct a study and prepare a subsequent report on increasing vehicle weight limits for milk trucks, including assessments on infrastructure impacts, economic impacts, length as a factor for legal weights and alignments, and parking and staging infrastructure in the state for oversize loads. The amendment also requires a strategic implementation plan for a phased approach through a pilot program, as well as recommendations supporting informed evaluation of increasing maximum weight limits for divisible and non-divisible loads. The amendment requires a report to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) on the study by September 15, 2028. This section sunsets on January 2, 2029. The amendment further directs ODOT, following completion of the study, to establish a heavy vehicle pilot program to issue permits allowing commercial milk vehicles as heavy as 129,000 pounds to operate on approved routes. It allows ODOT to suspend or revoke permits for violation of the limitations and directs the Department to submit a report on pilot program results to the OTC and Joint Committee on Transportation by September 15, 2030. This section sunsets January 2, 2032. The measure takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Carrying heavier weights is more economical
- Would make Oregon competitive with other states that have enacted similar regulations
- Possible benefits to climate change mitigation
- Weight-limited routes cause delays and added costs
- Whether goal can be accomplished without legislation
- Limited number of routes could handle loads at higher weights
- Whether pilot program should be assumed or conditional on results of study
- What states like Washington and Idaho are doing in this regard

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment replaces the original measure.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 818 outlines the maximum allowable size of all types of vehicles that travel on public roads in the state. These limits are generally calculated by the number of axles of the transport vehicle, as

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well as the distance between the first and last axle on the vehicle. Violation of these statutory maximums is punishable as a Class A traffic violation, with fines determined by the amount of excess weight. Certain vehicles are exempted from these weight limits or are subject to a separate weight schedule than most vehicles; in addition, a vehicle operator may obtain a variance permit from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) that allows operation of vehicles that exceed weight, size, or other related requirements.

Senate Bill 94 A directs ODOT to study the potential effects of increasing liquid milk truck weight limits, directs the Department to implement a pilot program for milk trucks following the study, and requires periodic reports on both the study and the pilot program.