^{112TH CONGRESS} 1ST SESSION H.R. 1574

To amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, concerning length and weight limitations for vehicles operating on Federal-aid highways, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 15, 2011

Mr. MCGOVERN (for himself, Mr. WOLF, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. CAPUANO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

- To amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, concerning length and weight limitations for vehicles operating on Federal-aid highways, and for other purposes.
 - 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
 - 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

- 4 This Act may be cited as the "Safe Highways and
- 5 Infrastructure Preservation Act".

2 UNITS ON NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM.

1

3 (a) RESTRICTED PROPERTY-CARRYING UNIT DE4 FINED.—Section 31111(a) of title 49, United States Code,
5 is amended by adding at the end the following:

6 "(5) RESTRICTED PROPERTY-CARRYING
7 UNIT.—The term 'restricted property-carrying unit'
8 means any trailer, semitrailer, container, or other
9 property-carrying unit that is longer than 53 feet.".
10 (b) PROHIBITION ON OPERATION OF RESTRICTED
11 PROPERTY-CARRYING UNITS.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 31111(b)(1)(C) of
13 title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as
14 follows:

"(C) allows operation on any segment of the
National Highway System, including the Interstate
System, of a restricted property-carrying unit unless
the operation is specified on the list published under
subsection (h);".

20 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made
21 by paragraph (1) shall take effect 270 days after the
22 date of enactment of this Act.

23 (c) LIMITATIONS.—Section 31111 of title 49, United
24 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol25 lowing:

26 "(h) RESTRICTED PROPERTY-CARRYING UNITS.— •HR 1574 IH

"(1) Applicability of prohibition.—

2 "(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding sub3 section (b)(1)(C), a restricted property-carrying
4 unit may continue to operate on a segment of
5 the National Highway System if the operation
6 of such unit is specified on the list published
7 under paragraph (2).

"(B) APPLICABILITY OF STATE LAWS AND 8 REGULATIONS.—All operations specified on the 9 10 list published under paragraph (2) shall con-11 tinue to be subject to all State statutes, regula-12 tions, limitations, and conditions, including 13 routing-specific, commodity-specific, and con-14 figuration-specific designations and all other re-15 strictions, in force on June 1, 2008.

"(C) FIREFIGHTING UNITS.—Subsection
(b)(1)(C) shall not apply to the operation of a
restricted property-carrying unit that is used
exclusively for firefighting.

20 "(2) LISTING OF RESTRICTED PROPERTY-CAR21 RYING UNITS.—

22 "(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60
23 days after the date of enactment of this sub24 section, the Secretary shall initiate a proceeding
25 to determine and publish a list of restricted

1	property-carrying units that were authorized by
2	State officials pursuant to State statute or reg-
3	ulation on June 1, 2008, and in actual and law-
4	ful operation on a regular or periodic basis (in-
5	cluding seasonal operations) on or before June
6	1, 2008.
7	"(B) LIMITATION.—A restricted property-
8	carrying unit may not be included on the list
9	published under subparagraph (A) on the basis
10	that a State law or regulation could have au-
11	thorized the operation of the unit at some prior
12	date by permit or otherwise.
13	"(C) Publication of final list.—Not
14	later than 270 days after the date of enactment
15	of this subsection, the Secretary shall publish a
16	final list of restricted property-carrying units
17	described in subparagraph (A).
18	"(D) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall up-
19	date the list published under subparagraph (C)
20	as necessary to reflect new designations made
21	to the National Highway System.
22	"(3) APPLICABILITY OF PROHIBITION.—The
23	prohibition established by subsection $(b)(1)(C)$ shall
24	apply to any new designation made to the National
25	Highway System and remain in effect on those por-

tions of the National Highway System that cease to
 be designated as part of the National Highway Sys tem.

4 "(4) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUC-5 TION.—This subsection does not prevent a State 6 from further restricting in any manner or prohib-7 iting the operation of a restricted property-carrying 8 unit; except that such restrictions or prohibitions 9 shall be consistent with the requirements of this sec-10 tion and sections 31112 through 31114.".

(d) ENFORCEMENT.—The second sentence of section
141(a) of title 23, United States Code, is amended by
striking "section 31112" and inserting "sections 31111
and 31112".

15 SEC. 3. OPERATION OF LONGER COMBINATION VEHICLES 16 ON NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM.

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 31112 of title 49, United18 States Code, is amended—

19 (1) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as20 subsections (g) and (h), respectively; and

21 (2) by inserting after subsection (e) the fol-22 lowing:

23 "(f) NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM.—

24 "(1) GENERAL RULE.—A State may not allow,
25 on a segment of the National Highway System that

1	is not covered under subsection (b) or (c), the oper-
2	ation of a commercial motor vehicle combination (ex-
3	cept a vehicle or load that cannot be dismantled eas-
4	ily or divided easily and that has been issued a spe-
5	cial permit under applicable State law) with more
6	than one property-carrying unit (not including the
7	truck tractor) whose property-carrying units are
8	more than—
9	"(A) the maximum combination trailer,
10	semitrailer, or other type of length limitation al-
11	lowed by law or regulation of that State on
12	June 1, 2008; or
13	"(B) the length of the property-carrying
14	units of those commercial motor vehicle com-
15	binations, by specific configuration, in actual
16	and lawful operation on a regular or periodic
17	basis (including continuing seasonal operation)
18	in that State on or before June 1, 2008.
19	"(2) Additional limitations.—
20	"(A) Applicability of state restric-
21	TIONS.—A commercial motor vehicle combina-
22	tion whose operation in a State is not prohib-
23	ited under paragraph (1) may continue to oper-
24	ate in the State on highways described in para-
25	graph (1) only in compliance with all State

1 laws, regulations, limitations, and conditions, 2 including routing-specific and configuration-specific designations and all other restrictions in 3 4 force in the State on June 1, 2008. However, subject to regulations prescribed by the Sec-5 6 retary under subsection (h), the State may 7 make minor adjustments of a temporary and 8 emergency nature to route designations and ve-9 hicle operating restrictions in effect on June 1, 10 2008, for specific safety purposes and road con-11 struction.

"(B) Additional state restrictions.— 12 13 This subsection does not prevent a State from 14 further restricting in any manner or prohibiting 15 the operation of a commercial motor vehicle 16 combination subject to this section, except that 17 such restrictions or prohibitions shall be con-18 sistent with this section and sections 31113(a), 19 31113(b), and 31114.

20 "(C) MINOR ADJUSTMENTS.—A State
21 making a minor adjustment of a temporary and
22 emergency nature as authorized by subpara23 graph (A) or further restricting or prohibiting
24 the operation of a commercial motor vehicle
25 combination as authorized by subparagraph (B)

shall advise the Secretary not later than 30 days after the action. The Secretary shall publish a notice of the action in the Federal Register.

"(3) LIST OF STATE LENGTH LIMITATIONS.—

6 "(A) STATE SUBMISSIONS.—Not later than 7 60 days after the date of enactment of this 8 paragraph, each State shall submit to the Sec-9 retary for publication a complete list of State 10 length limitations applicable to commercial 11 motor vehicle combinations operating in the 12 State on the highways described in paragraph 13 (1). The list shall indicate the applicable State 14 laws and regulations associated with the length 15 limitations. If a State does not submit the in-16 formation as required, the Secretary shall com-17 plete and file the information for the State.

18 "(B) PUBLICATION OF INTERIM LIST.— 19 Not later than 90 days after the date of enact-20 ment of this subsection, the Secretary shall 21 publish an interim list in the Federal Register 22 consisting of all information submitted under subparagraph (A). The Secretary shall review 23 24 for accuracy all information submitted by a 25 State under subparagraph (A) and shall solicit

1

2

3

4

and consider public comment on the accuracy of the information.

"(C) LIMITATION.—A law or regulation 3 4 may not be included on the list submitted by a 5 State or published by the Secretary merely be-6 cause it authorized, or could have authorized, 7 by permit or otherwise, the operation of commercial motor vehicle combinations not in ac-8 9 tual operation on a regular or periodic basis on 10 or before June 1, 2008.

"(D) PUBLICATION OF FINAL LIST.—Ex-11 12 cept as revised under this subparagraph or sub-13 paragraph (E), the list shall be published as 14 final in the Federal Register not later than 270 15 days after the date of enactment of this sub-16 section. In publishing the final list, the Sec-17 retary shall make any revisions necessary to 18 correct inaccuracies identified under subpara-19 graph (B). After publication of the final list, 20 commercial motor vehicle combinations prohib-21 ited under paragraph (1) may not operate on a 22 highway described in paragraph (1) except as 23 published on the list.

24 "(E) INACCURACIES.—On the Secretary's25 own motion or on request by any person (in-

1

1	cluding a State), the Secretary shall review the
2	list published under subparagraph (D). If the
3	Secretary decides there is reason to believe a
4	mistake was made in the accuracy of the list,
5	the Secretary shall begin a proceeding to decide
6	whether a mistake was made. If the Secretary
7	decides there was a mistake, the Secretary shall
8	publish the correction.".
9	(b) Conforming Amendments.—Section 31112 of
10	title 49, United States Code, is amended—
11	(1) in subsection $(g)(1)$ (as redesignated by
12	subsection (a) of this section) by inserting "or
13	127a(e)" after "127(d)";
14	(2) in subsection $(g)(3)$ (as redesignated by
15	subsection (a) of this section) by inserting "(or June
16	1, 2008, with respect to highways described in sub-
17	section $(f)(1)$)" after "June 2, 1991"; and
18	(3) in paragraph $(h)(2)$ (as redesignated by
19	subsection (a) of this section)—
20	(A) by striking "Not later than June 15,
21	1992, the Secretary" and inserting "The Sec-
22	retary"; and
23	(B) by inserting "or (f)" after "subsection
24	(d)".

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 127 of title 23, United
4 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol5 lowing:

6 "(i) Grandfather Rights.—

7 "(1) GENERAL RULE.—After the 270th day fol-8 lowing the date of enactment of this subsection, a 9 State may not allow, on a segment of the Interstate 10 System, the operation of a vehicle or combination 11 (other than a longer combination vehicle) exceeding 12 an Interstate weight limit unless the operation is 13 specified on the list published under paragraph (2). 14 "(2) LIST OF VEHICLES AND COMBINATIONS.—

"(A) PROCEEDING.—Not later than 60 15 16 days after the date of enactment of this sub-17 section, the Secretary shall initiate a proceeding 18 to determine and publish a list of vehicles and 19 combinations (other than longer combination 20 vehicles), otherwise exceeding an Interstate 21 weight limit, that the Department of Transpor-22 tation, any other Federal agency, or a State has 23 determined on or before June 1, 2008, could be 24 lawfully operated within such State—

25 "(i) on July 1, 1956;

1	"(ii) in the case of the overall gross
2	weight of any group of 2 or more consecu-
3	tive axles, on the date of enactment of the
4	Federal-Aid Highway Amendments of
5	1974; or
6	"(iii) under a special rule applicable
7	to a State under subsection (a).
8	"(B) LIMITATIONS.—
9	"(i) ACTUAL AND LAWFUL OPER-
10	ATIONS REQUIRED.—An operation of a ve-
11	hicle or combination may be included on
12	the list published under subparagraph (A)
13	only if the vehicle or combination was in
14	actual and lawful operation in the State on
15	a regular or periodic basis on or before
16	June 1, 2008.
17	"(ii) STATE AUTHORITY NOT SUFFI-
18	CIENT.—An operation of a vehicle or com-
19	bination may not be included on the list
20	published under subparagraph (A) on the
21	basis that a State law or regulation could
22	have authorized the operation of the vehi-
23	cle or combination at some prior date by
24	permit or otherwise.

1 "(C) PUBLICATION OF FINAL LIST.—Not 2 later than 270 days after the date of enactment 3 of this subsection, the Secretary shall publish a 4 final list of vehicles and combinations described 5 in subparagraph (A). 6 "(3) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUC-7 TION.—This subsection does not prevent a State 8 from reducing the gross vehicle weight limitation, 9 the single and tandem axle weight limitations, or the 10 overall maximum gross weight on a group of 2 or 11 more consecutive axles applicable to portions of the 12 Interstate System in the State for operations on the 13 list published under paragraph (2)(C) but in no 14 event may any such reduction result in a limitation 15 that is less than an Interstate weight limit. "(4) APPLICABILITY OF EXISTING REQUIRE-16 17 MENTS.—All vehicles and combinations included on

"(5) INTERSTATE WEIGHT LIMIT DEFINED.—In
this subsection, the term 'Interstate weight limit'
means the 80,000 pound gross vehicle weight limitation, the 20,000 pound single axle weight limitation

the list published under paragraph (2) shall be sub-

ject to all routing-specific, commodity-specific, and

weight-specific designations in force in a State on

June 1, 2008.

18

19

20

(including enforcement tolerances), the 34,000
 pound tandem axle weight limitation (including en forcement tolerances), and the overall maximum
 gross weight (including enforcement tolerances) on a
 group of 2 or more consecutive axles produced by
 application of the formula in subsection (a).".

7 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The fourth sen8 tence of section 127(a) of title 23, United States Code,
9 is amended by striking "the State determines".

10 SEC. 5. NONDIVISIBLE LOAD PROCEEDING.

Section 127 of title 23, United States Code, is furtheramended by adding at the end the following:

13 "(j) NONDIVISIBLE LOADS.—

"(1) PROCEEDING.—Not later than 60 days
after the date of enactment of this subsection, the
Secretary shall initiate a proceeding to define the
term 'vehicles and loads which cannot be easily dismantled or divided' as used in subsection (a) and
section 31112 of title 49.

20 "(2) LIST OF COMMODITIES.—

21 "(A) IN GENERAL.—The definition devel22 oped under paragraph (1) shall include a list of
23 commodities (or classes or types of commod24 ities) that do not qualify as nondivisible loads.

1	"(B) LIMITATION.—The list of commod-
2	ities developed under paragraph (1) shall not be
3	interpreted to be a comprehensive list of com-
4	modities that do not qualify as nondivisible
5	loads.
6	"(3) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days
7	after the date of enactment of this subsection, the
8	Secretary shall issue final regulations setting forth
9	the determination of the Secretary made under para-
10	graph (1). The Secretary shall update the regula-
11	tions as necessary.
12	"(4) Applicability.—Regulations issued
13	under paragraph (2) shall apply to all vehicles and
14	loads operating on the National Highway System.
15	"(5) STATE REQUIREMENTS.—A State may es-
16	tablish any requirement that is not inconsistent with
17	regulations issued under paragraph (2).
18	"(6) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—The purpose of
19	this subsection is to promote conformity with Inter-
20	state weight limits to preserve publicly funded infra-
21	structure and protect motorists by limiting max-
22	imum vehicle weight on key portions of the Federal-
23	aid highway system.".

4 amended by adding at the end the following:

5 "(k) Waivers During Periods of National6 Emergency.—

7 "(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other 8 provision of this section or section 127a, the Sec-9 retary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, may waive or limit the application of any vehi-10 11 cle weight limit established under this section or sec-12 tion 127a with respect to a highway route during a 13 period of national emergency in order to respond to 14 the effects of the national emergency.

15 "(2) APPLICABILITY.—Emergency limits estab16 lished under paragraph (1) shall preempt any incon17 sistent State vehicle weight limits.".

18 SEC. 7. VEHICLE WEIGHT LIMITATIONS—NATIONAL HIGH-

19 way system.

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title 23, United States Code, is21 amended by inserting after section 127 the following:

22 "§127a. Vehicle weight limitations—National High23 way System

24 "(a) Non-Interstate Highways on NHS.—

25 "(1) IN GENERAL.—After the 270th day fol26 lowing the date of enactment of this section, any
•HR 1574 IH

1	Interstate weight limit that applies to vehicles and
2	combinations (other than longer combination vehi-
3	cles) operating on the Interstate System in a State
4	under section 127 shall also apply to vehicles and
5	combinations (other than longer combination vehi-
6	cles) operating on non-Interstate segments of the
7	National Highway System in such State unless such
8	segments are subject to lower State weight limits as
9	provided for in subsection (d).
10	"(2) Existing highways.—
11	"(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding para-
12	graph (1), in the case of a non-Interstate seg-
13	ment of the National Highway System that is
14	open to traffic on June 1, 2008, a State may
15	allow the operation of any vehicle or combina-
16	tion (other than a longer combination vehicle)
17	on such segment that the Secretary determines
18	under subsection (b) could be lawfully operated
19	on such segment on June 1, 2008.
20	"(B) Applicability of state laws and
21	REGULATIONS.—All operations described in
22	subparagraph (A) shall continue to be subject
23	to all State statutes, regulations, limitations
24	and conditions, including routing-specific, com-
25	modity-specific, and configuration-specific des-

ignations and all other restrictions, in force on June 1, 2008.

3 "(3) NEW HIGHWAYS.—Subject to subsection 4 (d)(1), the gross vehicle weight limitations and axle 5 loading limitations applicable to all vehicles and 6 combinations (other than longer combination vehi-7 cles) on a non-Interstate segment of the National 8 Highway System that is not open to traffic on June 9 1, 2008, shall be the Interstate weight limit.

"(b) LISTING OF VEHICLES AND COMBINATIONS.— 11 "(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall initiate 12 a proceeding to determine and publish a list of vehi-13 cles and combinations (other than longer combina-14 tion vehicles), otherwise exceeding an Interstate 15 weight limit, that could be lawfully operated on a 16 non-Interstate segment of the National Highway 17 System on June 1, 2008.

18 "(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In publishing a list of 19 vehicles and combinations under paragraph (1), the 20 Secretary shall identify—

"(A) the gross vehicle weight limitations 21 22 and axle loading limitations in each State appli-23 cable, on June 1, 2008, to vehicles and com-24 binations (other than longer combination vehi-

1

2

1 cles) on non-Interstate segments of the Na-2 tional Highway System; and "(B) operations of vehicles and combina-3 4 tions (other than longer combination vehicles), 5 exceeding State gross vehicle weight limitations 6 and axle loading limitations identified under 7 subparagraph (A), which were in actual and 8 lawful operation on a regular or periodic basis 9 (including seasonal operations) on June 1, 10 2008.11 "(3) LIMITATION.—An operation of a vehicle or 12 combination may not be included on the list pub-13 lished under paragraph (1) on the basis that a State 14 law or regulation could have authorized such oper-15 ation at some prior date by permit or otherwise. "(4) PUBLICATION OF FINAL LIST.—Not later 16 17 than 270 days after the date of enactment of this 18 section, the Secretary shall publish a final list of ve-19 hicles and combinations described in paragraph (1). "(5) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall update 20 21 the list published under paragraph (1) as necessary 22 to reflect new designations made to the National 23 Highway System. 24 "(c) Applicability of Limitations.—The limita-

tions established by subsection (a) shall apply to any new 25

designation made to the National Highway System and
 remain in effect on those non-Interstate highways that
 cease to be designated as part of the National Highway
 System.

5 "(d) LIMITATIONS ON STATUTORY CONSTRUC-6 TION.—

"(1) STATE ENFORCEMENT OF MORE RESTRIC-7 8 TIVE WEIGHT LIMITS.—This section does not pre-9 vent a State from maintaining or imposing a weight 10 limitation that is more restrictive than the Interstate 11 weight limit on vehicles or combinations (other than 12 longer combination vehicles) operating on a non-13 Interstate segment of the National Highway System. 14 "(2) STATE ACTIONS TO REDUCE WEIGHT LIM-15 ITS.—This section does not prevent a State from re-16 ducing the State's gross vehicle weight limitation, 17 single or tandem axle weight limitations, or the over-18 all maximum gross weight on 2 or more consecutive 19 axles on any non-Interstate segment of the National 20 Highway System.

21 "(e) LONGER COMBINATION VEHICLES.—

22 "(1) PROHIBITION.—

23 "(A) IN GENERAL.—After the 270th day
24 following the date of enactment of this section,
25 a longer combination vehicle may continue to

1	operate on a non-Interstate segment of the Na-
2	tional Highway System only if the operation of
3	the longer combination vehicle configuration
4	type was authorized by State officials pursuant
5	to State statute or regulation on June 1, 2008,
6	and in actual and lawful operation on a regular
7	or periodic basis (including seasonal operations)
8	on or before June 1, 2008.
9	"(B) Applicability of state laws and
10	REGULATIONS.—All operations described in
11	subparagraph (A) shall continue to be subject
12	to all State statutes, regulations, limitations
13	and conditions, including routing-specific, com-
14	modity-specific, and configuration-specific des-
15	ignations and all other restrictions, in force on
16	June 1, 2008.
17	"(2) LISTING OF VEHICLES AND COMBINA-
18	TIONS.—
19	"(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60
20	days after the date of enactment of this section,
21	the Secretary shall initiate a proceeding to de-
22	termine and publish a list of longer combination
23	vehicles that could be lawfully operated on non-
24	Interstate segments of the National Highway
25	System on June 1, 2008.

"(B) LIMITATION.—A longer combination 1 2 vehicle may not be included on the list pub-3 lished under subparagraph (A) on the basis 4 that a State law or regulation could have au-5 thorized the operation of such vehicle at some 6 prior date by permit or otherwise. 7 "(C) PUBLICATION OF FINAL LIST.—Not 8 later than 270 days after the date of enactment 9 of this section, the Secretary shall publish a 10 final list of longer combination vehicles de-11 scribed in subparagraph (A). 12 "(D) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall up-13 date the list published under subparagraph (A) 14 as necessary to reflect new designations made 15 to the National Highway System. "(3) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUC-16 17 TION.—This subsection does not prevent a State 18 from further restricting in any manner or prohib-19 iting the operation of a longer combination vehicle; 20 except that such restrictions or prohibitions shall be 21 consistent with the requirements of section 127 of 22 this title and sections 31112 through 31114 of title

23 49, United States Code.

24 "(f) MODEL SCHEDULE OF FINES.—

1 "(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consulta-2 tion with the States, shall establish a model schedule of fines to be assessed for violations of this section. 3 "(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the schedule of 4 5 fines shall be to ensure that fines are sufficient to 6 deter violations of the requirements of this section 7 and to permit States to recover costs associated with 8 damages caused to the National Highway System by 9 the operation of such vehicles. 10 "(3) Adoption by states.—The Secretary 11 shall encourage but not require States to adopt the 12 schedule of fines. 13 "(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply: 14 "(1) INTERSTATE WEIGHT LIMIT.—The term 15 16 'Interstate weight limit' has the meaning given such 17 term in section 127(i). 18 "(2) LONGER COMBINATION VEHICLE.—The 19 term 'longer combination vehicle' has the meaning 20 given such term in section 127(d).". 21 ENFORCEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS.—Section (b)22 141(a) of title 23, United States Code, is amended— 23 (1) by striking "the Federal-aid primary sys-24 tem, the Federal-aid urban system, and the Federal-25 aid secondary system, including the Interstate Sys-

1	tem" and inserting "the National Highway System,
2	including the Interstate System,"; and
3	(2) by striking "section 127 " and inserting
4	"sections 127 and 127a".
5	(c) Conforming Amendment.—The analysis for
6	title 23, United States Code, is amended by inserting after
7	the item relating to section 127 the following:
	"127a. Vehicle weight limitations—National Highway System.".

 $[\]bigcirc$