



Minnesota County Engineers Association



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mncountyengineers.org

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AFFILIATED WITH

 Association of
Minnesota Counties

March 8, 2023

Chair Dibble and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee:

The Minnesota County Engineers Association (MCEA) appreciates the opportunity to offer comments on the four bills included on today's agenda relating to truck weights. Since overweight axle loads contribute tremendously to the degradation of roadway pavement, MCEA has a long-standing platform position supporting the retention of overweight/oversize vehicle permitting authority for individual county road jurisdictions and we oppose new exemptions and any increase in non-permitted truck weights.

SF894 and SF1025 both modify Minnesota Statutes Section 169.865, Special Farm Products Permit, allowing a road authority to require a permit if desired. Similarly, SF745 modifies Minnesota Statutes Section 169.8261, creating a Forest Products Special Permit, which also allows for a road authority to require a permit if desired. The fourth bill, SF843 allows for a weight exemption for septic tank trucks without requiring a permit.

MCEA has generally tried to work alongside the many different industries operating in Minnesota and on our statewide roadway system. Regardless of our desire for collaboration, we feel it is important to make sure the committee is aware of the sheer number of weight limit exemptions that are currently included in law and the complexity of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 169.80-169.881. Currently in statute there are exemptions for the following vehicles, including but not limited to:

- Implements of husbandry – section [169.801](#)
- Idle- and emissions-reduction technology and natural gas vehicles – section [169.824](#)
- Raw or unfinished forest products – section [169.8261](#) (*permit required from Commissioner*)
- Certain vehicles – section [169.829](#) provides several weight exemptions for certain types of vehicles:
 - Subd. 2, Tow trucks
 - Subd. 3, Utility vehicles
 - Subd. 4, Certain emergency vehicles
- Vehicles transporting milk – section [169.8295](#)
- Vehicles carrying bales of hay, straw, or cornstalks to exceed height or width – section [169.862](#) (*road authorities may permit*)
- Pulpwood – section [169.863](#) (*Commissioner may permit*)
- Special products: paper products, finished forest products, iron ore tailings – section [169.864](#) (*Commissioner may permit*)
- Special farm products: ag crops, livestock, food crops, fluid milk, seed/material used for or in livestock + poultry feed – section [169.865](#) (*road authorities may permit*)
- Canola-hauling vehicles – section [169.866](#) (*Commissioner may permit*)
- Soybean meal-hauling vehicles – section [169.8665](#) (*Commissioner may permit*)
- Road construction materials – section [169.869](#) (*road authorities may permit*)



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- Exemptions from spring load restrictions – section [169.87](#), subs. 4-7 provide various exemptions from spring load restrictions:
 - Subd. 4, Vehicles transporting milk
 - Subd. 5, Utility vehicles
 - Subd. 6, Recycling and garbage vehicles and portable toilet service vehicles
 - Subd. 7, Cargo tank vehicles transporting propane or dyed fuel oil

We will continue to work with our partners in the transportation industry when new exemptions are proposed and also continue to advocate for new, dedicated revenue for roads and bridges in order to combat the damage done by these heavier loads. We appreciate your attention to our concerns and are happy to be of assistance if you have any questions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,

Brian Pogodzinski, Houston County Engineer
President, Minnesota County Engineers Association

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