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August 11, 2023

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chairman, Senate Commerce, Science,
and Transportation Committee
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman, House Transportation and
Infrastructure Committee
1135 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member, Senate Commerce, Science,
and Transportation Committee
425 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, House Transportation
and Infrastructure Committee
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker, Chairman Graves, and Ranking Member Larsen,

The National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) has a long history of opposing any legislation that would increase the legal size or weight limits of trucks because of the serious safety risks inherent in allowing bigger trucks on our nation's roads and bridges. Representing over 90,000 EMS practitioners nationwide, NAEMT is concerned with motorists' safety and the safety of our members who put their lives at risk every day in response to roadside emergencies.

EMS professionals are in a unique position to evaluate the consequences of increasing the size or weight of trucks on the road today. The heavier the truck and the longer the truck, the larger the crash footprint and the more severe the crash. It comes down to the basic law of physics. Increasing the mass of a vehicle will increase the odds of more severe crashes and more deaths and injuries.

The size and weight of a truck also affects the safety of first responders as they treat crash victims on the roadside. Bigger trucks are more difficult to control and take longer to stop. While it may seem to be common sense for drivers to slow down near the scene of a crash, this is not always the case. Of ongoing concern to our members is the inability of larger trucks traveling at high speeds to slow down in a timely manner, especially during inclement weather. Increasing the size and weight of trucks only makes this inherently dangerous situation worse.

We agree with the recommendation made by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) in its 2016 Truck Size and Weight Limits Study – there should be no increases in the size or weight of trucks.

NAEMT requests your support for the safety of the public as well as our first responders, and asks that you oppose efforts to increase the size and weight of trucks on our roads, including any legislation or amendments allowing heavier and longer trucks as “pilot projects”, which will have the effect of subjecting American motorists to a laboratory of more unsafe conditions on our Interstates, highways and streets. We would ask that you oppose H.R. 3372 and H.R. 2948, both of which would introduce significant weight increases for commercial trucks on our roads. H.R. 3372 would create a nationwide pilot project with weights of up 91,000 pounds that would put motorists and emergency professionals on the road at significant risk.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Bailey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Susan Bailey, MSEM, NRP
President, NAEMT