



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Transportation

Office of the Director

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DATE: March 8, 2007

TO: Senate Committee on Business, Transportation and Workforce Development

FROM: Jack Evans, Legislative Liaison

SUBJECT: HB 2271 -- Definition of Registration Weight

INTRODUCTION

HB 2271 makes a necessary change in the definition of vehicle registration weight. It clarifies the difference between “combined weight” and “loaded weight” for purposes of vehicle registration, and thereby ensures that appropriate registration fees are collected for the Highway Fund.

BACKGROUND

Unlike a passenger vehicle, a vehicle with a registration weight over 10,000 pounds must declare the weight of the vehicle at registration. This registration weight is intended to be the “loaded” weight of a single vehicle, or the “combined” weight of a combination of vehicles along with their load. Registration fees for these vehicles are higher than passenger vehicle fees to account for the higher degree of wear and tear on Oregon roads caused by heavier vehicles.

During the 2005 Legislative Session, legislation raised the registration weight for passenger vehicles from 8,000 to 10,000 pounds. During the implementation of this measure, ODOT discovered that the statutory language dealing with heavier vehicles had been changed inadvertently in 1989 and omitted single vehicles with a “loaded” weight over 10,000 pounds from having to declare a weight for registration purposes.

As it now stands, the statute only references vehicles with a “combined weight” in excess of 10,000 pounds. Combined weight refers to the total empty weight of a combination of two or more vehicles plus their collective load. It does not include single vehicles. This oversight created a situation in which vehicles such as UPS or FedEx delivery trucks or other single heavy vehicles weighing over 10,000 pounds would not pay the higher registration fees as intended, but would be paying passenger registration fees.

Today there are approximately 26,000 vehicles that could apply for passenger registration, even though the loaded weight of the vehicle is over 10,000 pounds. In the worst case scenario, this would mean a loss in revenue to the Highway Fund of approximately \$6.5 million per year.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

This bill restores language in statute to include “loaded” weight in the definition of registration weight, so that these heavier single vehicles pay appropriate registration fees. It maintains the

requirement that a combination of vehicles, over 10,000 pounds, will also pay appropriate registration fees.

SUMMARY

Passage of HB 2271 ensures that heavier single vehicles pay appropriate registration fees without any loss to the Highway Fund. We ask your support for this measure.