

REVISE WEIGHT LIMITS FOR TANDEM AXLE ASSEMBLIES

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Senate Bill 836 as enacted
Public Act 274 of 2018
Sponsor: Sen. Tom Casperson
House Committee: Transportation and Infrastructure
Senate Committee: Transportation
Complete to 8-27-18

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 836 would amend a section within the division of the Michigan Vehicle Code that governs the size, weight, and load of vehicles. Specifically, the bill would amend Section 722 of the Code, the section that establishes general weight or load maximums, as well as exceptions to the general weight and load maximums.

Section 722(2) authorizes the state transportation department and local authorities (i.e., county road commissions, cities, and villages), with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions, to *designate* certain highways, or sections of certain highways, for heavier loading under specific conditions. Section 722(3) authorizes higher loading maximums for a specific vehicle combination on *designated highways*.

Currently, Section 722(3) authorizes one tandem axle assembly of 16,000 pounds per axle if both of the following are met:

- There is no other axle within 9 feet of any axle of the assembly.
- No other tandem axle assembly in the combination exceeds a gross weight of 13,000 pounds per axle.

The bill would remove the second requirement for combinations with one tandem axle assembly of 16,000 pounds per axle—that no other tandem axle assembly in the combination may exceed a gross weight of 13,000 pounds per axle.

It is our understanding that the bill is intended to clarify provisions which have resulted in inconsistent enforcement of these specific loading maximums.

The bill would also exempt school buses from general requirements that vehicles' maximum axle loads and wheel loads be reduced during the spring months.

The bill would take effect 90 days after enactment.

MCL 257.722

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 836 would amend Section 722(3) to clarify the current requirement that only one tandem axle on a multi-axle vehicle combination can operate at 16,000 pounds per axle. The bill would effectively apply only to vehicle combinations with two sets of tandem axles and only to vehicle combinations operating on designated highways. [The Michigan Department of Transportation and many road commissions publish special maps for truck drivers showing highways designated for higher loading maximums as authorized under Section 722.]

The type of vehicle combination that is the subject of the bill is shown in the figure at the bottom of page 35 of the 18th Truck Driver's Guidebook.¹ The vehicle combination shown in the figure is a five-axle truck-tractor pulling a four-axle trailer with two tandem axles. The bill would not change vehicle weight or load limits or axle spacings shown in the figure.

It is our understanding that the bill is intended to clarify provisions that have resulted in inconsistent enforcement of these specific loading maximums.

The bill could reduce certain overload citations and related civil fine revenue. The amount of the revenue impact cannot be readily estimated.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

¹ <http://truckingsafety.org/Portals/0/GuideBooks/18th%20Ed%20TDGB.pdf>