

SESSION OF 2007

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 8

As Amended by House Committee on
Transportation

Brief*

SB 8, as amended, would:

- Double speeding fines in school zones on state highways (effective July 1, 2007);
- Provide for a 400-pound exemption from the maximum gross weight or axle weight limits for any vehicle or combination of vehicle equipped with idle reduction technology;
- Define “idle reduction technology” as any device or system of devices that (a) is installed on a heavy-duty diesel-powered on-highway truck or truck tractor; and (b) is designed to provide to such truck or truck tractor those services, such as heat, air conditioning or electricity, that would otherwise require the operation of the main drive engine while the truck or truck tractor is temporarily parked or remains stationary; and
- Add language to KSA 8-1911 (the gross weight limits for vehicles statute) that clarifies that a tow truck only be required to be registered in accordance with KSA 8-143 (the general vehicle registration statute).

The provisions pertaining to motor carriers would be effective upon publication in the *Kansas Register*.

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

Background

The original bill pertained to speeding fines in school zones. It was requested by Senator Journey who testified before the Senate and House Transportation Committees. In those committees, Senator Journey stated, among other things, that many cities in Kansas have doubled or tripled speeding fines in school zones. He also said that placing the fines in statute would create uniformity across the state. No conferees testified against this portion of the bill in either the Senate or House Transportation committees.

The House amendments pertaining to motor carriers were proposed by the spokesperson of the Kansas Motor Carriers Association. The first amendment regarding the weight exemption for idle reduction technology on trucks was a provision of the Federal Energy Bill signed by President Bush in August of 2005. According to the Federal Highway Administration, truck drivers idle their engines for a variety of reasons. For long hauls, the truck driver must have 10 hours of off-duty after driving 11 hours. Surveys have found that 70 to 80 percent of truck drivers cite heating or air conditioning of their rigs as the main reason for idling their trucks during their 10 hours off duty. By using idle reduction technology equipment, truckers can reduce emissions and save fuel. The other amendment pertains to heavy-duty tow trucks used to tow large truck and buses. The Kansas Motor Carriers Association conferee stated that since 1996 the Kansas Department of Transportation has been issuing special annual oversize/overweight permits for non-divisible loads which are within certain limitations established through rule and regulation without requiring the tow truck to be registered at the maximum allowable gross weight. He said that heavy-duty tow trucks have relied on these permits to allow the operators of these tow trucks to move disabled trucks, buses or truck tractors without fear of receiving an overweight citation. The amendment would add language to existing law that clarifies that a tow truck only be required to be registered in accordance with existing law.

The fiscal note on the original bill indicates that doubling the speeding fines in school zones would increase revenues. No information is available at the state level by which to estimate an accurate amount of the increased revenues that would accrue as a result of the legislation. Any accurate estimate also would have to account for the reduced incidence of infractions that could be expected to occur as a deterrent effect by doubling the fines.