

Subject: Opposition to SB17 - Concerns Regarding Increased Truck Weights

Dear Senate Transportation Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to Senate Bill 17, which proposes to increase the legal truck weight limits for agricultural vehicles hauling grain and other commodities. As a resident and worker in western Kansas, specifically in Thomas County, I have direct experience with the impact of heavy truck traffic on our infrastructure.

Our county highway system consists of approximately 120 miles of asphalt roads, which we are responsible for maintaining. This past year, we were able to complete only 12 miles of roadwork, which included a 1 ½ inch overlay. The cost of the asphalt portion of this project alone was \$1.6 million, entirely funded by county resources. A significant portion of the wear on our roads comes from agricultural trucks, many of which are already operating overloaded.

If SB17 were to pass, the additional weight on these trucks would only accelerate the degradation of our roads, leading to higher maintenance costs and potentially unsafe driving conditions. Our infrastructure is already stretched thin, and increasing truck weights would make it even more difficult to keep up with repairs.

Furthermore, I believe that the proponents of this bill should address the long-standing issue of unpaid ad valorem taxes, which have not been paid to counties for years. These funds are crucial for maintaining our road systems and supporting local infrastructure.

In closing, I strongly recommend that the legal weight limit be reduced back to 80,000 pounds to preserve the safety and integrity of our county roads. Allowing agricultural vehicles to haul a few more loads, while maintaining a manageable weight, would be a more sustainable solution for all involved.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Clair Schrock

Thomas County Road Supervisor