112TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

H. R. 1574

To amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, concerning length and weight limitations for vehicles operating on Federal-aid highways, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 15, 2011

Mr. McGovern (for himself, Mr. Wolf, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, Mrs. Napolitano, Mr. Bachus, Mr. Nadler, and Mr. Capuano) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, concerning length and weight limitations for vehicles operating on Federal-aid highways, and for other purposes.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
- 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
- 3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
- 4 This Act may be cited as the "Safe Highways and
- 5 Infrastructure Preservation Act".

1	SEC. 2. OPERATION OF RESTRICTED PROPERTY-CARRYING
2	UNITS ON NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM.
3	(a) Restricted Property-Carrying Unit De-
4	FINED.—Section 31111(a) of title 49, United States Code,
5	is amended by adding at the end the following:
6	"(5) Restricted property-carrying
7	UNIT.—The term 'restricted property-carrying unit'
8	means any trailer, semitrailer, container, or other
9	property-carrying unit that is longer than 53 feet.".
10	(b) Prohibition on Operation of Restricted
11	Property-Carrying Units.—
12	(1) In General.—Section $31111(b)(1)(C)$ of
13	title 49, United States Code, is amended to read as
14	follows:
15	"(C) allows operation on any segment of the
16	National Highway System, including the Interstate
17	System, of a restricted property-carrying unit unless
18	the operation is specified on the list published under
19	subsection (h);".
20	(2) Effective date.—The amendment made
21	by paragraph (1) shall take effect 270 days after the
22	date of enactment of this Act.
23	(c) Limitations.—Section 31111 of title 49, United
24	States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
25	lowing:
26	"(h) Restricted Property-Carrying Units.—

1	"(1) Applicability of prohibition.—	
2	"(A) In General.—Notwithstanding sub-	
3	section (b)(1)(C), a restricted property-carrying	
4	unit may continue to operate on a segment of	
5	the National Highway System if the operation	
6	of such unit is specified on the list published	
7	under paragraph (2).	
8	"(B) Applicability of state laws and	
9	REGULATIONS.—All operations specified on the	
10	list published under paragraph (2) shall con-	
11	tinue to be subject to all State statutes, regula-	
12	tions, limitations, and conditions, including	
13	routing-specific, commodity-specific, and con-	
14	figuration-specific designations and all other re-	
15	strictions, in force on June 1, 2008.	
16	"(C) Firefighting units.—Subsection	
17	(b)(1)(C) shall not apply to the operation of a	
18	restricted property-carrying unit that is used	
19	exclusively for firefighting.	
20	"(2) Listing of restricted property-car-	
21	RYING UNITS.—	
22	"(A) In General.—Not later than 60	
23	days after the date of enactment of this sub-	
24	section, the Secretary shall initiate a proceeding	
25	to determine and publish a list of restricted	

property-carrying units that were authorized by
State officials pursuant to State statute or regulation on June 1, 2008, and in actual and lawful operation on a regular or periodic basis (including seasonal operations) on or before June
1, 2008.

- "(B) LIMITATION.—A restricted propertycarrying unit may not be included on the list published under subparagraph (A) on the basis that a State law or regulation could have authorized the operation of the unit at some prior date by permit or otherwise.
- "(C) Publication of final list.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall publish a final list of restricted property-carrying units described in subparagraph (A).
- "(D) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall update the list published under subparagraph (C) as necessary to reflect new designations made to the National Highway System.
- "(3) APPLICABILITY OF PROHIBITION.—The prohibition established by subsection (b)(1)(C) shall apply to any new designation made to the National Highway System and remain in effect on those por-

1	tions of the National Highway System that cease to
2	be designated as part of the National Highway Sys-
3	tem.
4	"(4) Limitation on statutory construc-
5	TION.—This subsection does not prevent a State
6	from further restricting in any manner or prohib-
7	iting the operation of a restricted property-carrying
8	unit; except that such restrictions or prohibitions
9	shall be consistent with the requirements of this sec-
10	tion and sections 31112 through 31114.".
11	(d) Enforcement.—The second sentence of section
12	141(a) of title 23, United States Code, is amended by
13	striking "section 31112" and inserting "sections 31111
14	and 31112".
15	SEC. 3. OPERATION OF LONGER COMBINATION VEHICLES
16	ON NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM.
17	(a) In General.—Section 31112 of title 49, United
18	States Code, is amended—
19	(1) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as
20	subsections (g) and (h), respectively; and
21	(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the fol-
22	lowing:
23	"(f) National Highway System.—
24	"(1) General Rule.—A State may not allow
25	on a segment of the National Highway System that

is not covered under subsection (b) or (c), the operation of a commercial motor vehicle combination (except a vehicle or load that cannot be dismantled easily or divided easily and that has been issued a special permit under applicable State law) with more than one property-carrying unit (not including the truck tractor) whose property-carrying units are more than—

- "(A) the maximum combination trailer, semitrailer, or other type of length limitation allowed by law or regulation of that State on June 1, 2008; or
- "(B) the length of the property-carrying units of those commercial motor vehicle combinations, by specific configuration, in actual and lawful operation on a regular or periodic basis (including continuing seasonal operation) in that State on or before June 1, 2008.

"(2) Additional limitations.—

"(A) APPLICABILITY OF STATE RESTRIC-TIONS.—A commercial motor vehicle combination whose operation in a State is not prohibited under paragraph (1) may continue to operate in the State on highways described in paragraph (1) only in compliance with all State

laws, regulations, limitations, and conditions, including routing-specific and configuration-specific designations and all other restrictions in force in the State on June 1, 2008. However, subject to regulations prescribed by the Secretary under subsection (h), the State may make minor adjustments of a temporary and emergency nature to route designations and vehicle operating restrictions in effect on June 1, 2008, for specific safety purposes and road construction.

"(B) Additional State Restrictions.—
This subsection does not prevent a State from further restricting in any manner or prohibiting the operation of a commercial motor vehicle combination subject to this section, except that such restrictions or prohibitions shall be consistent with this section and sections 31113(a), 31113(b), and 31114.

"(C) MINOR ADJUSTMENTS.—A State making a minor adjustment of a temporary and emergency nature as authorized by subparagraph (A) or further restricting or prohibiting the operation of a commercial motor vehicle combination as authorized by subparagraph (B)

shall advise the Secretary not later than 30 days after the action. The Secretary shall publish a notice of the action in the Federal Register.

"(3) List of state length limitations.—

"(A) STATE SUBMISSIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, each State shall submit to the Secretary for publication a complete list of State length limitations applicable to commercial motor vehicle combinations operating in the State on the highways described in paragraph (1). The list shall indicate the applicable State laws and regulations associated with the length limitations. If a State does not submit the information as required, the Secretary shall complete and file the information for the State.

"(B) Publication of interim list.—
Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall publish an interim list in the Federal Register consisting of all information submitted under subparagraph (A). The Secretary shall review for accuracy all information submitted by a State under subparagraph (A) and shall solicit

and consider public comment on the accuracy of the information.

"(C) Limitation.—A law or regulation may not be included on the list submitted by a State or published by the Secretary merely because it authorized, or could have authorized, by permit or otherwise, the operation of commercial motor vehicle combinations not in actual operation on a regular or periodic basis on or before June 1, 2008.

"(D) Publication of final list.—Except as revised under this subparagraph or subparagraph (E), the list shall be published as final in the Federal Register not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this subsection. In publishing the final list, the Secretary shall make any revisions necessary to correct inaccuracies identified under subparagraph (B). After publication of the final list, commercial motor vehicle combinations prohibited under paragraph (1) may not operate on a highway described in paragraph (1) except as published on the list.

"(E) INACCURACIES.—On the Secretary's own motion or on request by any person (in-

1	cluding a State), the Secretary shall review the
2	list published under subparagraph (D). If the
3	Secretary decides there is reason to believe a
4	mistake was made in the accuracy of the list,
5	the Secretary shall begin a proceeding to decide
6	whether a mistake was made. If the Secretary
7	decides there was a mistake, the Secretary shall
8	publish the correction.".
9	(b) Conforming Amendments.—Section 31112 of
10	title 49, United States Code, is amended—
11	(1) in subsection $(g)(1)$ (as redesignated by
12	subsection (a) of this section) by inserting "or
13	127a(e)" after "127(d)";
14	(2) in subsection (g)(3) (as redesignated by
15	subsection (a) of this section) by inserting "(or June
16	1, 2008, with respect to highways described in sub-
17	section $(f)(1)$ " after "June 2, 1991"; and
18	(3) in paragraph $(h)(2)$ (as redesignated by
19	subsection (a) of this section)—
20	(A) by striking "Not later than June 15,
21	1992, the Secretary' and inserting "The Sec-
22	retary"; and
23	(B) by inserting "or (f)" after "subsection
24	(d)",

SEC. 4. TERMINATION OF DETERMINATIONS OF GRAND-2 FATHER RIGHTS. 3 (a) In General.—Section 127 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-4 5 lowing: 6 "(i) Grandfather Rights.— 7 "(1) GENERAL RULE.—After the 270th day fol-8 lowing the date of enactment of this subsection, a 9 State may not allow, on a segment of the Interstate 10 System, the operation of a vehicle or combination 11 (other than a longer combination vehicle) exceeding 12 an Interstate weight limit unless the operation is 13 specified on the list published under paragraph (2). 14 "(2) List of vehicles and combinations.— "(A) PROCEEDING.—Not later than 60 15 16 days after the date of enactment of this sub-17 section, the Secretary shall initiate a proceeding 18 to determine and publish a list of vehicles and 19 combinations (other than longer combination 20 vehicles), otherwise exceeding an Interstate 21 weight limit, that the Department of Transpor-22 tation, any other Federal agency, or a State has 23 determined on or before June 1, 2008, could be 24 lawfully operated within such State— "(i) on July 1, 1956; 25

1	"(ii) in the case of the overall gross
2	weight of any group of 2 or more consecu-
3	tive axles, on the date of enactment of the
4	Federal-Aid Highway Amendments of
5	1974; or
6	"(iii) under a special rule applicable
7	to a State under subsection (a).
8	"(B) Limitations.—
9	"(i) ACTUAL AND LAWFUL OPER-
10	ATIONS REQUIRED.—An operation of a ve-
11	hicle or combination may be included on
12	the list published under subparagraph (A)
13	only if the vehicle or combination was in
14	actual and lawful operation in the State on
15	a regular or periodic basis on or before
16	June 1, 2008.
17	"(ii) State authority not suffi-
18	CIENT.—An operation of a vehicle or com-
19	bination may not be included on the list
20	published under subparagraph (A) on the
21	basis that a State law or regulation could
22	have authorized the operation of the vehi-
23	cle or combination at some prior date by
24	permit or otherwise.

- 1 "(C) Publication of final list.—Not 2 later than 270 days after the date of enactment 3 of this subsection, the Secretary shall publish a 4 final list of vehicles and combinations described 5 in subparagraph (A).
 - "(3) Limitation on statutory construction.—This subsection does not prevent a State from reducing the gross vehicle weight limitation, the single and tandem axle weight limitations, or the overall maximum gross weight on a group of 2 or more consecutive axles applicable to portions of the Interstate System in the State for operations on the list published under paragraph (2)(C) but in no event may any such reduction result in a limitation that is less than an Interstate weight limit.
 - "(4) APPLICABILITY OF EXISTING REQUIRE-MENTS.—All vehicles and combinations included on the list published under paragraph (2) shall be subject to all routing-specific, commodity-specific, and weight-specific designations in force in a State on June 1, 2008.
 - "(5) Interstate weight limit defined.—In this subsection, the term 'Interstate weight limit' means the 80,000 pound gross vehicle weight limitation, the 20,000 pound single axle weight limitation

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1 (including enforcement the 34,000 tolerances), 2 pound tandem axle weight limitation (including enforcement tolerances), and the overall maximum 3 4 gross weight (including enforcement tolerances) on a 5 group of 2 or more consecutive axles produced by 6 application of the formula in subsection (a).". (b) Conforming Amendment.—The fourth sen-7 8 tence of section 127(a) of title 23, United States Code, is amended by striking "the State determines". 10 SEC. 5. NONDIVISIBLE LOAD PROCEEDING. 11 Section 127 of title 23, United States Code, is further 12 amended by adding at the end the following: 13 "(j) Nondivisible Loads.— 14 "(1) Proceeding.—Not later than 60 days 15 after the date of enactment of this subsection, the 16 Secretary shall initiate a proceeding to define the 17 term 'vehicles and loads which cannot be easily dis-18 mantled or divided' as used in subsection (a) and 19 section 31112 of title 49. 20 "(2) List of commodities.— "(A) IN GENERAL.—The definition devel-21 22 oped under paragraph (1) shall include a list of 23 commodities (or classes or types of commod-24 ities) that do not qualify as nondivisible loads.

- 1 "(B) LIMITATION.—The list of commod-2 ities developed under paragraph (1) shall not be 3 interpreted to be a comprehensive list of com-4 modities that do not qualify as nondivisible 5 loads.
 - "(3) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall issue final regulations setting forth the determination of the Secretary made under paragraph (1). The Secretary shall update the regulations as necessary.
 - "(4) APPLICABILITY.—Regulations issued under paragraph (2) shall apply to all vehicles and loads operating on the National Highway System.
 - "(5) STATE REQUIREMENTS.—A State may establish any requirement that is not inconsistent with regulations issued under paragraph (2).
 - "(6) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—The purpose of this subsection is to promote conformity with Interstate weight limits to preserve publicly funded infrastructure and protect motorists by limiting maximum vehicle weight on key portions of the Federal-aid highway system.".

1	SEC. 6. WAIVERS OF WEIGHT LIMITATIONS DURING PERI-
2	ODS OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY.
3	Section 127 of title 23, United States Code, is further
4	amended by adding at the end the following:
5	"(k) Waivers During Periods of National
6	EMERGENCY.—
7	"(1) In General.—Notwithstanding any other
8	provision of this section or section 127a, the Sec-
9	retary, in consultation with the Secretary of De-
10	fense, may waive or limit the application of any vehi-
11	cle weight limit established under this section or sec-
12	tion 127a with respect to a highway route during a
13	period of national emergency in order to respond to
14	the effects of the national emergency.
15	"(2) Applicability.—Emergency limits estab-
16	lished under paragraph (1) shall preempt any incon-
17	sistent State vehicle weight limits.".
18	SEC. 7. VEHICLE WEIGHT LIMITATIONS—NATIONAL HIGH-
19	WAY SYSTEM.
20	(a) In General.—Title 23, United States Code, is
21	amended by inserting after section 127 the following:
22	"§ 127a. Vehicle weight limitations—National High-
23	way System
24	"(a) Non-Interstate Highways on NHS.—
25	"(1) In General.—After the 270th day fol-
26	lowing the date of enactment of this section, any

Interstate weight limit that applies to vehicles and combinations (other than longer combination vehicles) operating on the Interstate System in a State under section 127 shall also apply to vehicles and combinations (other than longer combination vehicles) operating on non-Interstate segments of the National Highway System in such State unless such segments are subject to lower State weight limits as provided for in subsection (d).

"(2) Existing highways.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), in the case of a non-Interstate segment of the National Highway System that is open to traffic on June 1, 2008, a State may allow the operation of any vehicle or combination (other than a longer combination vehicle) on such segment that the Secretary determines under subsection (b) could be lawfully operated on such segment on June 1, 2008.

"(B) APPLICABILITY OF STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS.—All operations described in subparagraph (A) shall continue to be subject to all State statutes, regulations, limitations and conditions, including routing-specific, commodity-specific, and configuration-specific des-

1	ignations and all other restrictions, in force on
2	June 1, 2008.
3	"(3) New Highways.—Subject to subsection
4	(d)(1), the gross vehicle weight limitations and axle
5	loading limitations applicable to all vehicles and
6	combinations (other than longer combination vehi-
7	cles) on a non-Interstate segment of the National
8	Highway System that is not open to traffic on June
9	1, 2008, shall be the Interstate weight limit.
10	"(b) Listing of Vehicles and Combinations.—
11	"(1) In general.—The Secretary shall initiate
12	a proceeding to determine and publish a list of vehi-
13	cles and combinations (other than longer combina-
14	tion vehicles), otherwise exceeding an Interstate
15	weight limit, that could be lawfully operated on a
16	non-Interstate segment of the National Highway
17	System on June 1, 2008.
18	"(2) Requirements.—In publishing a list of
19	vehicles and combinations under paragraph (1), the
20	Secretary shall identify—
21	"(A) the gross vehicle weight limitations
22	and axle loading limitations in each State appli-
23	cable, on June 1, 2008, to vehicles and com-

binations (other than longer combination vehi-

- 1 cles) on non-Interstate segments of the Na-2 tional Highway System; and
- "(B) operations of vehicles and combina-3 4 tions (other than longer combination vehicles), 5 exceeding State gross vehicle weight limitations 6 and axle loading limitations identified under 7 subparagraph (A), which were in actual and 8 lawful operation on a regular or periodic basis 9 (including seasonal operations) on June 1, 10 2008.
 - "(3) LIMITATION.—An operation of a vehicle or combination may not be included on the list published under paragraph (1) on the basis that a State law or regulation could have authorized such operation at some prior date by permit or otherwise.
 - "(4) Publication of final list.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall publish a final list of vehicles and combinations described in paragraph (1).
 - "(5) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall update the list published under paragraph (1) as necessary to reflect new designations made to the National Highway System.
- 24 "(c) Applicability of Limitations.—The limita-25 tions established by subsection (a) shall apply to any new

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1	designation made to the National Highway System and
2	remain in effect on those non-Interstate highways that
3	cease to be designated as part of the National Highway
4	System.
5	"(d) Limitations on Statutory Construc-
6	TION.—
7	"(1) State enforcement of more restric-
8	TIVE WEIGHT LIMITS.—This section does not pre-
9	vent a State from maintaining or imposing a weight
10	limitation that is more restrictive than the Interstate
11	weight limit on vehicles or combinations (other than
12	longer combination vehicles) operating on a non-
13	Interstate segment of the National Highway System.
14	"(2) State actions to reduce weight lim-
15	ITS.—This section does not prevent a State from re-
16	ducing the State's gross vehicle weight limitation
17	single or tandem axle weight limitations, or the over-
18	all maximum gross weight on 2 or more consecutive
19	axles on any non-Interstate segment of the National
20	Highway System.
21	"(e) Longer Combination Vehicles.—
22	"(1) Prohibition.—
23	"(A) In General.—After the 270th day
24	following the date of enactment of this section,
25	a longer combination vehicle may continue to

operate on a non-Interstate segment of the National Highway System only if the operation of the longer combination vehicle configuration type was authorized by State officials pursuant to State statute or regulation on June 1, 2008, and in actual and lawful operation on a regular or periodic basis (including seasonal operations) on or before June 1, 2008.

- "(B) APPLICABILITY OF STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS.—All operations described in subparagraph (A) shall continue to be subject to all State statutes, regulations, limitations and conditions, including routing-specific, commodity-specific, and configuration-specific designations and all other restrictions, in force on June 1, 2008.
- "(2) Listing of vehicles and combinations.—
- "(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall initiate a proceeding to determine and publish a list of longer combination vehicles that could be lawfully operated on non-Interstate segments of the National Highway System on June 1, 2008.

- 1 "(B) LIMITATION.—A longer combination
 2 vehicle may not be included on the list pub3 lished under subparagraph (A) on the basis
 4 that a State law or regulation could have au5 thorized the operation of such vehicle at some
 6 prior date by permit or otherwise.
 - "(C) Publication of final list.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall publish a final list of longer combination vehicles described in subparagraph (A).
 - "(D) UPDATES.—The Secretary shall update the list published under subparagraph (A) as necessary to reflect new designations made to the National Highway System.
 - "(3) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUC-TION.—This subsection does not prevent a State from further restricting in any manner or prohibiting the operation of a longer combination vehicle; except that such restrictions or prohibitions shall be consistent with the requirements of section 127 of this title and sections 31112 through 31114 of title 49, United States Code.
- 24 "(f) Model Schedule of Fines.—

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1	"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consulta-
2	tion with the States, shall establish a model schedule
3	of fines to be assessed for violations of this section.
4	"(2) Purpose.—The purpose of the schedule of
5	fines shall be to ensure that fines are sufficient to
6	deter violations of the requirements of this section
7	and to permit States to recover costs associated with
8	damages caused to the National Highway System by
9	the operation of such vehicles.
10	"(3) Adoption by states.—The Secretary
11	shall encourage but not require States to adopt the
12	schedule of fines.
13	"(g) Definitions.—In this section, the following
14	definitions apply:
15	"(1) Interstate weight limit.—The term
16	'Interstate weight limit' has the meaning given such
17	term in section 127(i).
18	"(2) Longer combination vehicle.—The
19	term 'longer combination vehicle' has the meaning
20	given such term in section 127(d).".
21	(b) Enforcement of Requirements.—Section
22	141(a) of title 23, United States Code, is amended—
23	(1) by striking "the Federal-aid primary sys-
24	tem, the Federal-aid urban system, and the Federal-
25	aid secondary system, including the Interstate Sys-

- 1 tem" and inserting "the National Highway System,
- 2 including the Interstate System,"; and
- 3 (2) by striking "section 127" and inserting
- 4 "sections 127 and 127a".
- 5 (c) Conforming Amendment.—The analysis for
- 6 title 23, United States Code, is amended by inserting after
- 7 the item relating to section 127 the following:

"127a. Vehicle weight limitations—National Highway System.".

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