

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1345

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a commercial truck safety pilot program in the State of Maine, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 2, 2001

Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a commercial truck safety pilot program in the State of Maine, 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 “Commercial Truck
5 Safety Pilot Program Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

1 (1) concerning commercial motor vehicles, pub-
2 lic safety should be the first priority of the United
3 States;

4 (2) the Federal vehicle weight limit of 80,000
5 pounds on the nonexempted portion of the Interstate
6 System within the boundaries of the State of Maine
7 has forced heavy tractor-trailer and tractor-
8 semitrailer combination vehicles traveling into Maine
9 from neighboring States and Canada to divert onto
10 smaller State and local roads that permit higher ve-
11 hicle weight limits under Maine law;

12 (3) the diversion of those vehicles is posing sig-
13 nificant economic hardships and safety challenges to
14 the small communities in which those roads are lo-
15 cated; and

16 (4) permitting those vehicles to travel on the
17 Interstate System would—

18 (A) reduce the net highway maintenance
19 costs in the State of Maine because the Inter-
20 state System, unlike vulnerable secondary
21 roads, is built to accommodate those heavier ve-
22 hicles; and

23 (B) enhance safety by resulting in fewer
24 heavy vehicles (such as tanker trucks carrying
25 hazardous material and fuel oil) traveling on

1 town and city streets in the State of Maine,
2 thereby reducing dangerous interactions be-
3 tween those vehicles and school buses and pri-
4 vate vehicles.

5 **SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF COVERED HIGHWAY.**

6 In this section, the term “covered highway” means
7 a highway on the Interstate System within the State of
8 Maine that was not exempt from section 127 of title 23,
9 United States Code, as of the day before the date of enact-
10 ment of this Act under the last sentence of subsection (a)
11 of that section.

12 **SEC. 4. MAINE PILOT PROGRAM.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the
14 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transpor-
15 tation shall establish a 3-year pilot program to improve
16 commercial motor vehicle safety in the State of Maine.

17 (b) WAIVER OF VEHICLE WEIGHT LIMITS.—Not-
18 withstanding section 127(a) of title 23, United States
19 Code, during the 3-year period of the pilot program—

20 (1) the State of Maine shall not lose, under sec-
21 tion 127(a) of that title, any apportionment to the
22 State by reason of noncompliance with any of the ve-
23 hicle weight provisions of section 127 of that title
24 applicable to the use of certain combination vehicles

1 weighing over 80,000 pounds on any covered high-
 2 way; and

3 (2) combination vehicles consisting of a 3-axle
 4 tractor unit hauling a single trailer or semitrailer
 5 that exceed 80,000 pounds gross vehicle weight and
 6 that were permitted to use non-Interstate System
 7 highways in the State of Maine under the vehicle
 8 weight laws of the State as of the date of establish-
 9 ment of the pilot program under subsection (a) shall
 10 be permitted to use any covered highway.

11 (c) DATA COLLECTION AND REVIEW.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—Under the pilot program,
 13 the Maine Department of Transportation shall—

14 (A) collect data on the effects of the waiver
 15 granted under subsection (b) (particularly the
 16 effects on accident rates involving heavier
 17 trucks);

18 (B) establish a safety committee to review
 19 the data; and

20 (C) establish rules and operating proce-
 21 dures for the pilot program.

22 (2) SAFETY COMMITTEE.—The safety
 23 committee—

24 (A) shall be chaired by the Maine Commis-
 25 sioner of Transportation (or a designee); and

1 (B) shall consist of representatives of State
2 agencies, safety organizations, municipalities,
3 and the commercial trucking industry.

4 **SEC. 5. PERMANENT WAIVER.**

5 At the end of the 3-year period of the pilot program
6 under section 4, unless the Secretary, with the advice of
7 the safety committee established under section 4(c), deter-
8 mines that the waiver under the pilot program under sec-
9 tion 4 has resulted in an adverse impact on highway safety
10 in the State of Maine and publishes the determination in
11 the Federal Register, the waiver described in section 4(b)
12 shall be deemed to be permanent.

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