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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/21/11

SPONSOR Hall LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB 466

SHORT TITLE Modify Gross Limits on Certain Vehicles SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Lucero

### REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY11	FY12	FY13		
	Indeterminable **	Indeterminable **	Recurring	Weight Distance Permits

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Revenue Decreases)

**\*\* Refer to Fiscal Implications**

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY11	FY12	FY13	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>		Moderate – High			Non- Recurring	General Fund/Capital Outlay

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD)

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Department of Public Safety (DPS)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 466 amends Section 66-7-410 NMSA 1978 of the Motor Vehicle Code to add gross weight limits for single vehicle loads with an overall length of no more than forty feet, containing a group of four to seven axles. Also added to that section is a formula for computing a total gross weight with a load on a group of two or more consecutive axles.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

According to the Taxation and Revenue Department:

There may be some decrease in overweight permit revenues. The bill relates to technical specifications regarding axle configurations and gross vehicle weights for vehicles not exceeding 40 feet in length. Presumably, the bill expands rather than lessens the allowed weigh limit for a certain type of load and axle configuration. It is presumed this would have the effect of eliminating the need for an overweight permit for such a load. The Department has no information regarding the type of loads addressed in the bill, whether such loads might be moving with overweight permits currently, or the frequency of such loads. The Department defers to any analysis by the Department of Transportation or the Motor Transportation Division of the Department of Public Safety.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) reports that there could be a fiscal impact. The department may have to analyze hundreds of bridges to determine if the bridges have adequate capacity and if load posting will be required. Bridges requiring posting will need signs placed at both ends of the bridge. Additional resources for bridge capacity analysis will be required. In addition, there may be a need for new shear and moment diagrams will need to be computed due to these changes in vehicle configurations, which will impact NMDOT's Overload software program, Bridge Load Rating Program and DPS-MTD's Oversize/Overweight Permitting Program.

There may be a need to modify or replace vehicle weigh scales at ports of entry. The Motor Transportation Program of the Department of Public Safety reports that current scales can't weigh this type of vehicle due to the configuration of the vehicle.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

DOT reports:

The bill allows increased weights on shorter trucks with multiple axles, which will have a negative impact on DOT's bridges, most notably, short span bridges and timber bridges. Short span bridges are defined as bridges having spans of less than 28' in length. These loads will not require a permit for excessive weight. It may require DOT to post many more bridges in an attempt to disallow short heavy loads from crossing bridges with inadequate capacity. New Mexico has several hundred short span bridges and timber bridges that will need to be analyzed for posting. The number of additional bridges that would require posting is unknown.

The bill will revise the allowable gross weights of vehicles and loads in the state of New Mexico. Current allowable gross weights were grandfathered as described in 23 USCA 127 (66-7-413.4). The bill will use Formula B (Federal Formula) to determine allowable weights for vehicles with an overall length up to 40 feet and having four to seven axles. A change to Formula B will significantly increase the allowable weights on short length vehicles with multiple axles (4 to 7 axles). The AASHTO Manual for Bridge Evaluation has an in depth discussion regarding Formula B compared to the typical design load (HS 20) and the typical posting vehicles used in the United States. The discussion concludes that allowing Formula B weights increases stresses on some bridges from the force effects of these vehicles by up to 50 percent over typical loads. DOT will have to add these vehicle configurations to the list of configurations currently used to determine if a bridge requires load posting. It could lead to a

significant increase in the number of bridges in New Mexico that are posted for load.

Altering the allowable gross weights (legal weights) of vehicles will have a significant impact on the road and bridge infrastructure in New Mexico. Allowed loadings will increase significantly for vehicles with closely spaced multiple axles such as cranes, drill rigs and newer drop axle vehicles. Short span bridges and timber bridges will be most affected by these changes. It is likely that many additional bridges will require a load posting. The bill, if passed, will compromise the structural safety of some bridges in New Mexico due to the inadequate capacity of short span bridges as described in the AASHTO Manual for Bridge Evaluation. In addition, the median age of New Mexico's bridges is over 40 years of age. Many of these bridges are nearing or past their design age. Allowing increased loadings on these bridges may accelerate their useable service life. It is DOT's recommendation that the State of New Mexico not change the allowable gross weight for vehicles as currently described by State traffic laws.

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