

TRUCKING COMPANIES PUSHING EVEN LARGER TRUCKS

Big trucking companies and shipper groups are laying the groundwork for a massive campaign to allow triple-trailer trucks and other bigger rigs to run across the country.

The President of the American Trucking Associations (ATA) is calling for a huge increase in the federal truck weight limit and would also like to test the usage of longer combination vehicles (LCVS) like long double- and triple-trailer trucks on major lanes in the East. The ATA is also lobbying for uniform LCV weights and lengths in the West. In addition, there have been many attempts to increase truck size and weight in various states.

This is all part of a gathering effort by large trucking companies and shippers to include bigger rigs in the next federal highway bill. Big trucking companies and shippers say that we need bigger, heavier trucks running nation-wide because of high fuel prices, record amounts of cargo, and a shortage of truck drivers. These concerns are easy to understand, but the solution cannot come at the cost of safety.

The Michigan Alliance for Safe Highways is a non-profit, grassroots organization supported by the Michigan State Police Troopers Association that opposes increases in truck size and weight at all levels of government because bigger trucks are dangerous. Bigger and heavier trucks are more likely to be involved in fatal accidents, more prone to rolling over, and more difficult for drivers to control.

These decisions likely will not be made until 2009, but the success of CABT depends on groups like ours. We must make sure that our leaders know that bigger trucks make our roads more dangerous and that the vast majority of us are against them. Help us hold the line and keep ultra-long, and ultra-dangerous trucks off our highways.