

## Increases in Federal Legal Weight Limits Always Result in More Bigger and Heavier Trucks

Year	Total Number For-Hire Trucks	Legislative Action	Result
1974	390,000* for-hire trucks (1972 used as baseline)	Federal-aid Highway Act amendments authorize states to allow substantial increases in truck weight on Interstate highways and bridges. Increasingly, States allow bigger, heavier trucks.	Number of for-hire trucks jumps 40% to 546,700 from 1972 to 1977.
1982	725,700 for-hire trucks	Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) of 1982 pre-empts state size and weight restrictions, and enacts new, higher federal weight limits on Interstate system and on National Network (NN) of primary highways.	Number of for-hire trucks jumps by 33 percent from 1977 to 1982.
1987	796,100 for-hire trucks	Many states adopt STAA increases in axle and gross weight limits on state highways beyond the Interstate system and the NN, also increasing maximum truck width on more state highways.	Number of for-hire trucks jumps by 10 percent from 1982 to 1987; Total 95 percent increase in 15 years over 1972 baseline.
1992	889,200 for-hire trucks	More states adopt longer, wider and heavier trucks and trailers permitted by 1982 STAA on state highways beyond the Interstate and the NN.	Number of for-hire trucks jumps by 12 percent over 1987. Total increase of 128 percent in 20 years over 1972 baseline.
1997	1,059,400 for-hire trucks	States continue to allow more use of longer, wider, and heavier trucks on more state highways outside the Interstate system and the NN, and increasingly issue special overweight permits for extra-heavy trucks.	Number of for-hire trucks jumps by 19 percent over 1992. Total increase of 174 percent over 1972 baseline.
2002	1,280,200# for-hire trucks.	States continue to allow use of longer, wider and heavier trucks on more state highways outside the Interstate system and the NN, and increasingly issue special overweight permits for extra-heavy trucks.	Number of for-hire trucks jumps by 21 percent from 1997 to 2002. Total increase of 228 percent over 1972 baseline.
2010	Maine-Vermont Pilot Program&	Federal pilot program allows 6-axle trucks weighing 97,000 pounds to operate on portions of Interstate highways in both states.	Number of heavy 6-axle 100,000 pound trucks on portions of Maine Interstate nearly triples during pilot program, and total number of large trucks using Interstate jumps dramatically.

\*The total number of all registered trucks above 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, including trucks for personal use, private carrier trucks, and for-hire trucks, is far larger than the number of for-hire trucks in commercial transportation. Figures on for-hire trucks for 1974-1997 are from the Truck Inventory and Use Survey (TIUS) (later called the Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey (VIUS)), Bureau of the Census. Similar increases can be shown for truck tractor and for commercial trailer registrations since 1972. #For 2002, U.S. Census Bureau discontinues VIUS, only Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Statistics data available. &Data from Maine DOT and FHWA Pilot Program reports.