

By: Seliger

S.B. No. 1815

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to motor vehicle size and weight limitations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 622, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Subchapter K to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER K. AUTOMOBILE TRANSPORTERS

Sec. 622.151. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Automobile transporter" has the meaning assigned by 49 U.S.C. Section 31111.

(2) "Backhaul" means the return trip of a vehicle transporting cargo or general freight.

(3) "Stinger-steered" means a truck-tractor and semitrailer combination in which the fifth wheel is located on a drop frame located behind and below the rearmost axle of the truck-tractor.

Sec. 622.152. AUTOMOBILE TRANSPORTER BACKHAULS. (a) An automobile transporter that complies with the weight and size limitations for a truck-tractor and semitrailer combination under this subtitle may transport cargo or general freight on a backhaul.

(b) For purposes of Subsection (a), an automobile transporter is presumed to be on a backhaul if the automobile transporter is transporting cargo or general freight back over all or part of the same route.

Sec. 622.153. MAXIMUM EXTENDED LENGTH OF LOAD.

1 Notwithstanding Section 621.206, an automobile transporter that is
2 stinger-steered may carry a load that extends not more than:

3 (1) four feet beyond its front; and

4 (2) six feet beyond its rear.

5 SECTION 2. Section 622.902, Transportation Code, is amended
6 to read as follows:

7 Sec. 622.902. LENGTH EXCEPTIONS. The length limitations
8 provided by Sections 621.203 to 621.205 do not apply to:

9 (1) machinery used exclusively for drilling water
10 wells, including machinery that is itself a unit or that is a unit
11 mounted on a conventional vehicle or chassis;

12 (2) a vehicle owned or operated by a public, private,
13 or volunteer fire department;

14 (3) a vehicle or combination of vehicles operated
15 exclusively in the territory of a municipality or to a combination
16 of vehicles operated by a municipality in a suburb adjoining the
17 municipality in which the municipality has been using the equipment
18 or similar equipment in connection with an established service to
19 the suburb;

20 (4) a truck-tractor, truck-tractor combination, or
21 truck-trailer combination exclusively transporting machinery,
22 materials, and equipment used in the construction, operation, and
23 maintenance of facilities, including pipelines, that are used for
24 the discovery, production, and processing of natural gas or
25 petroleum;

26 (5) a drive-away saddlemount vehicle transporter
27 combination or a drive-away saddlemount with fullmount vehicle

1 transporter combination, as defined by 23 C.F.R. Part 658 or its
2 successor, if:

3 (A) the overall length of the combination is not
4 longer than 97 feet; and

5 (B) the combination does not have more than three
6 saddlemounted vehicles if the combination does not include more
7 than one fullmount vehicle;

8 (6) the combination of a tow truck and another vehicle
9 or vehicle combination if:

10 (A) the other vehicle or vehicle combination
11 cannot be normally or safely driven or was abandoned on a highway;
12 and

13 (B) the tow truck is towing the other vehicle or
14 vehicle combination directly to the nearest authorized place of
15 repair, terminal, or destination of unloading;

16 (7) a vehicle or combination of vehicles used to
17 transport a harvest machine that is used in farm custom harvesting
18 operations on a farm if the overall length of the vehicle or
19 combination is not longer than:

20 (A) 75 feet if the vehicle is traveling on a
21 highway that is part of the national system of interstate and
22 defense highways or the federal aid primary highway system; or

23 (B) 81-1/2 feet if the vehicle is not traveling
24 on a highway that is part of the national system of interstate and
25 defense highways or the federal aid primary highway system; [~~or~~]

26 (8) a truck-tractor operated in combination with a
27 semitrailer and trailer or semitrailer and semitrailer if:

1 (A) the combination is used to transport a
2 harvest machine that is used in farm custom harvesting operations
3 on a farm;

4 (B) the overall length of the combination,
5 excluding the length of the truck-tractor, is not longer than
6 81-1/2 feet; and

7 (C) the combination is traveling on a highway
8 that:

9 (i) is not part of the national system of
10 interstate and defense highways or the federal aid primary highway
11 system; and

12 (ii) is located in a county with a
13 population of less than 300,000; or

14 (9) a towaway trailer transporter combination, as
15 defined by 49 U.S.C. Section 31111, if the overall length of the
16 combination is not longer than 82 feet.

17 SECTION 3. Section 622.952, Transportation Code, is amended
18 to read as follows:

19 Sec. 622.952. EMERGENCY [~~FIRE DEPARTMENT~~] VEHICLE. (a)
20 The weight limitations of Section 621.101 do not apply to an
21 emergency [~~a~~] vehicle [~~owned or operated by a public, private, or~~
22 ~~volunteer fire department~~].

23 (b) The weight of an emergency [~~a fire department's~~] vehicle
24 may not exceed the greater of:

25 (1) [be heavier than] the manufacturer's gross vehicle
26 weight capacity or axle design rating; or

27 (2) including all enforcement tolerances, a:

- 1 (A) gross weight of 86,000 pounds;
- 2 (B) single steering axle weight of 24,000 pounds;
- 3 (C) single drive axle weight of 33,500 pounds;
- 4 (D) tandem axle weight of 62,000 pounds; or
- 5 (E) tandem rear drive steer axle weight of 52,000
6 pounds.

7 (c) In this section, "emergency vehicle" means a vehicle
8 designed to be used under emergency conditions:

- 9 (1) to transport personnel and equipment; and
- 10 (2) to support the suppression of fires and mitigation
11 of other hazardous situations.

12 SECTION 4. Section 622.955(c), Transportation Code, is
13 amended to read as follows:

14 (c) The weight increase under Subsection (b) may not be
15 greater than 550 [~~400~~] pounds.

16 SECTION 5. Sections 623.071(a), (c), and (c-1),
17 Transportation Code, are amended to read as follows:

18 (a) The department may issue a permit to allow the operation
19 on [~~a person to operate over~~] a state highway of [~~superheavy or~~
20 ~~oversize~~] equipment that exceeds the weight and size limits
21 provided by law for the movement of equipment [+

22 ~~[(1) is used to transport cylindrically shaped bales of~~
23 ~~hay] or a commodity that cannot reasonably be dismantled~~ [, and

24 ~~[(2) has a gross weight or size that exceeds the limits~~
25 ~~allowed by law to be transported over a state highway].~~

26 (c) The department may issue an annual permit to allow the
27 operation on a state highway of equipment that exceeds weight and

1 size limits provided by law for the movement of:

- 2 (1) an implement of husbandry by a dealer;
- 3 (2) water well drilling machinery and equipment or
- 4 harvesting equipment being moved as part of an agricultural
- 5 operation; or

6 (3) [~~superheavy or oversize~~] equipment or a commodity

7 that:

- 8 (A) cannot reasonably be dismantled; and
- 9 (B) does not exceed:
 - 10 (i) 12 feet in width;
 - 11 (ii) 14 feet in height;
 - 12 (iii) 110 feet in length; or
 - 13 (iv) 120,000 pounds gross weight.

14 (c-1) The department may issue an annual permit that allows

15 a person to operate over a state highway or road a vehicle or

16 combination of vehicles transporting a load that cannot reasonably

17 be dismantled that exceeds the length and height limits provided by

18 law, except that:

- 19 (1) the maximum length allowed may not exceed 110
- 20 feet; and
- 21 (2) the maximum height allowed may not exceed 14 feet.

22 SECTION 6. The change in law made by this Act applies only

23 to an offense committed on or after the effective date of this Act.

24 An offense committed before the effective date of this Act is

25 governed by the law in effect on the date the offense was committed,

26 and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose. For

27 purposes of this section, an offense was committed before the

S.B. No. 1815

1 effective date of this Act if any element of the offense occurred
2 before that date.

3 SECTION 7. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.