

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS21863

In 2003, the Idaho Legislature enacted legislation that created a ten year pilot project to test the effect of increasing the legal truck weight limits on a number of state highways in southern Idaho. Trucks were configured to increase gross weights from 105,000 pounds to 129,000 on 16 routes specified in the legislation. In 2005 and 2007, an additional 16 routes were added, totally 35 specific routes in the pilot project.

The legislation tasked the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) with evaluating the impacts of the pilot project routes on bridges, pavement and roadway safety. The legislation also tasked ITD with submitting reports to the Legislature on such impacts every 3 years to the Legislature. 264,169 pilot project trips were made by 1,359 trucks from 127 shipping companies between fiscal years 2004 to 2012. Main commodities hauled were sugar beets, hazardous wastes, aggregates, agricultural feed, coal and hay.

A final report on the project was made to the Legislature this past January. The report stated that it "did not observe any significant effect of the 129,000 pound pilot project trucks on pavements, bridges or roadway safety." Project participants reported substantial economic benefits associated with the pilot project, with one company reporting savings of over \$2.5 million during the pilot project and another reported trips reductions saving between \$70,000 to \$180,000 per year.

The legislation adopted in 2003 "sunsets" the pilot project, thus ending the routes on which 129,000 pound trucks can operate on. This legislation statutorily removes the sunset clause and provides that 129,000 pound configured trucks can continue to operate on the 35 specified routes.

FISCAL NOTE

There is no impact to the state general fund.

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