

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FOR 2015

This year was a long session, with many bills proposed; only a handful of bills that impact the Motor Carrier Industry were passed. Here are the bills that were passed this legislative session:

House Bill 0070: – Steer Axle Weight Limits; EFFECTIVE: 03/13/2015

Due to the passage of HB0070, the steer axle will no longer be governed by 600 lbs. per inch width of tire limitation. The allowed steer axle weight will be determined by the manufacturer's load rating per tire or the load rating of the steer axle or twenty thousand pounds per axle, whichever is less. However, the 600 lbs. per inch width of tire limitation will still be applicable to all other axles in the vehicle configuration.

The Governor signed HB0070 on March 13th. The law became effective immediately upon his signature. <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2015/H0070.htm>

House Bill 0194a: – Weight Exceptions; EFFECTIVE: 04/01/2015

Due to the passage of HB0194, this legislation provided an exception to the specified weight restrictions for axles, bridges and gross vehicle weight limits for farm vehicles, vehicles that are operated to transport forest products and certain refuse or sanitation trucks. The legislation did the following:

Idaho Code 49-102 - Definitions

- Created a definition for "Agricultural Products".
"Agricultural products" means the following unprocessed products:
 - (a) Agricultural, horticultural, floricultural and viticulture products;*
 - (b) Fruits and vegetable products;*
 - (c) Field grains, seeds, hay, sod and nursery stock, and other plants, plant products, plant byproducts, plant waste and plant compost;*
 - (d) Livestock, dairy animals, swine, furbearing animals, poultry, eggs, fish and other aquatic species;*
 - (e) Other animals, animal products and animal byproducts, animal waste and animal compost; and*
 - (f) Bees, bee products and bee byproducts.*

Idaho Code 49-107 – Forest Products

- Created a definition for "Forest Products" as all products derived from trees.

"Forest products" means all products derived from trees including, but not limited to, saw logs, veneer logs, poles, cedar products, pulp logs, fence posts, wood chips and every form into which a fallen tree may be cut before it is manufactured into lumber or run through a processing mill or cut into cordwood, stove wood or hewn ties."

Idaho Code 49-123 – Farm Vehicle

- Inserted language into the current "Farm Vehicle" definition that would allow a designated agent's vehicle to be classified as a farm vehicle if used exclusively to transport agricultural products.
"A vehicle or combination of vehicles owned by a farmer or rancher, or by their designated agent, which are operated over public highways, and used exclusively to transport unprocessed agricultural, dairy or livestock products raised, owned and or grown by the owner of the vehicle to market or place of storage;"
 - *Currently Administrative Rule 39.03.01 defines a designated agent as an employee or relative of the farmer.*

Idaho Code 49-1001 – Allowable Gross Loads

- Modified Idaho Code 49-1001(10) by removing the exemption for refuse/sanitation trucks that allows up to four thousand (4,000) pounds on a single rear axle.

Idaho Code 49-1011 – Exception to Weight and Size Limitations

- Modified Idaho Code 49-1011(3) to state the following vehicles are allowed up to two thousand (2,000) pounds on a non-interstate highway in excess of any axle, bridge or gross vehicle weight limit established in Idaho Code 49-1001:
 - (a) Farm vehicles
 - (b) Vehicles that are operated to transport forest products
 - (c) Refuse or sanitation trucks that are operated by a city, county or state agency, or by a designated agent of the agency, to transport refuse.

The Governor signed HB0194 on April 1st. This law became effective immediately upon his signature. <http://legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2015/H0194E1.pdf>

House Bill 0312a: – Registration Fee Increase; EFFECTIVE: 07/01/2015

Due to the passage of HB0312a there will be increases registration fees for all vehicle types, passenger, motorcycle and commercial vehicles. It increases the state gas tax by seven cents. Through all the increases it is expected to create an additional \$96m to the department and local highway jurisdictions.

- Increases passenger car registrations annually by \$21 for each age grouping. This will also affect dealer loaner plates and motorhomes.
- Increases annual motorcycle registration fees by \$10.
- **Increases annual commercial vehicle registrations by \$25.**
- Adds an additional \$140 fee on top of registration fees for electric vehicles.
- Adds an additional \$75 fee on top of registration fees for hybrid vehicles.
- Increases the state tax on gas from twenty-five cents to thirty-two cents per gallon.
- Provides that all NEW revenue generated by the increases in fees shall be distributed 60% to the state highway account, and 40% to the highway distribution account. (This split only applies to the additional fees being collected; all other fees shall be distributed as provided by existing code.)

The legislation was delivered to the Governor's office for his signature on 04/16/2015. This law will become effective 07/01/2015 upon his signature.

<http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2015/H0312.htm>