

# HOUSE BILL No. 6486

November 7, 2002, Introduced by Reps. Gilbert and Shackleton and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

A bill to amend 1949 PA 300, entitled "Michigan vehicle code," by amending sections 719 and 720 (MCL 257.719 and 257.720), section 719 as amended by 2002 PA 453 and section 720 as amended by 2002 PA 535.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:**

1       Sec. 719. (1) A vehicle unloaded or with load shall not  
2 exceed a height of 13 feet 6 inches. The owner of a vehicle that  
3 collides with a lawfully established bridge or viaduct is liable  
4 for all damage and injury resulting from a collision caused by  
5 the height of the vehicle, whether the clearance of the bridge or  
6 viaduct is posted or not.

7       (2) Lengths described in this subsection shall be known as  
8 the normal length maximum. Except as provided in subsection (3),

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1 the following vehicles and combinations of vehicles shall not be  
2 operated on a highway in this state in excess of these lengths:

3 (a) Any single vehicle: 40 feet; A CRIB VEHICLE ON WHICH  
4 LOGS OR TUBULAR PRODUCTS ARE LOADED LENGTHWISE OF THE VEHICLE:  
5 42.5 FEET; any single bus or motor home: 45 feet.

6 (b) Articulated buses: 65 feet.

7 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a  
8 combination of a truck and semitrailer or trailer, or a truck  
9 tractor, semitrailer, and trailer, or truck tractor and semi-  
10 trailer or trailer, designed and used exclusively to transport  
11 assembled motor vehicles or bodies, recreational vehicles, or  
12 boats, that does not exceed a length of 65 feet. Stinger-steered  
13 combinations shall not exceed a length of 75 feet. The load on  
14 the combinations of vehicles described in this subdivision may  
15 extend an additional 3 feet beyond the front and 4 feet beyond  
16 the rear of the combinations of vehicles. Retractable extensions  
17 used to support and secure the load that do not extend beyond the  
18 allowable overhang for the front and rear shall not be included  
19 in determining length of a loaded vehicle or vehicle  
20 combination.

21 (d) Truck tractor and semitrailer combinations: no overall  
22 length, the semitrailer not to exceed 50 feet.

23 (e) Truck and semitrailer or trailer: 59 feet.

24 (f) Truck tractor, semitrailer, and trailer, or truck trac-  
25 tor and 2 semitrailers: 59 feet.

26 (g) More than 1 motor vehicle, wholly or partially  
27 assembled, in combination, utilizing 1 tow bar or 3 saddle mounts

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1 with full mount mechanisms and utilizing the motive power of 1 of  
2 the vehicles in combination, not to exceed 55 feet.

3 (3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), the following vehicles  
4 and combinations of vehicles shall not be operated on a desig-  
5 nated highway of this state in excess of these lengths:

6 (a) Truck tractor and semitrailer combinations: no overall  
7 length limit, the semitrailer not to exceed 53 feet. All semi-  
8 trailers longer than 50 feet shall have a wheelbase of 37.5 to  
9 40.5 feet plus or minus 0.5 feet, measured from the kingpin cou-  
10 pling to the center of the rear axle or the center of the rear  
11 axle assembly. Before April 1, 2003, a semitrailer with a length  
12 longer than 50 feet shall not operate with more than 2 axles on  
13 the semitrailer. After March 31, 2003, a semitrailer with a  
14 length longer than 50 feet shall not operate with more than 3  
15 axles on the semitrailer. City, village, or county authorities  
16 may prohibit stops of vehicles with a semitrailer longer than 50  
17 feet within their jurisdiction unless the stop occurs along  
18 appropriately designated routes, or is necessary for emergency  
19 purposes or to reach shippers, receivers, warehouses, and termi-  
20 nals along designated routes.

21 (b) Truck and semitrailer or trailer combinations: 65 feet,  
22 except that a person may operate a truck and semitrailer or  
23 trailer designed and used to transport saw logs, pulpwood, and  
24 tree length poles that does not exceed an overall length of 70  
25 feet OR A CRIB VEHICLE AND SEMITRAILER OR TRAILER DESIGNED AND  
26 USED TO TRANSPORT SAW LOGS OR TUBULAR PRODUCTS THAT DOES NOT  
27 EXCEED AN OVERALL LENGTH OF 75 FEET. A person may operate a

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1 truck tractor and semitrailer designed and used to transport saw  
2 logs, pulpwood, and tree length wooden poles with a load overhang  
3 to the rear of the semitrailer which does not exceed 6 feet if  
4 the semitrailer does not exceed 50 feet in length.

5 (c) Truck tractor and 2 semitrailers, or truck tractor,  
6 semitrailer, and trailer combinations: no overall length limit,  
7 if the length of each semitrailer or trailer does not exceed  
8 28-1/2 feet each, or the overall length of the semitrailer and  
9 trailer, or 2 semitrailers as measured from the front of the  
10 first towed unit to the rear of the second towed unit while the  
11 units are coupled together does not exceed 58 feet.

12 (d) More than 1 motor vehicle, wholly or partially assem-  
13 bled, in combination, utilizing 1 tow bar or 3 saddle mounts with  
14 full mount mechanisms and utilizing the motive power of 1 of the  
15 vehicles in combination, not to exceed 75 feet.

16 (4) The following combinations and movements are  
17 prohibited:

18 (a) A truck shall not haul more than 1 trailer or semitrail-  
19 er, and a truck tractor shall not haul more than 2 semitrailers  
20 or 1 semitrailer and 1 trailer in combination at any 1 time,  
21 except that a farm tractor may haul 2 wagons or trailers, or gar-  
22 bage and refuse haulers may, during daylight hours, haul up to 4  
23 trailers for garbage and refuse collection purposes, not exceed-  
24 ing in any combination a total length of 55 feet and at a speed  
25 limit not to exceed 15 miles per hour.

26 (b) A combination of vehicles or a vehicle shall not have  
27 more than 11 axles, except when operating under a valid permit

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1 issued by the state transportation department or a local  
2 authority with respect to a highway under its jurisdiction.

3 (c) Any combination of vehicles not specifically authorized  
4 under this section is prohibited.

5 (d) A combination of 2 semitrailers pulled by a truck trac-  
6 tor, unless each semitrailer uses a fifth wheel connecting assem-  
7 bly which conforms to the requirements of the motor carrier  
8 safety act of 1963, 1963 PA 181, MCL 480.11 to 480.22.

9 (e) A vehicle or a combination of vehicles shall not carry a  
10 load extending more than 3 feet beyond the front of the lead  
11 vehicle.

12 (f) A vehicle described in subsections (2)(e) and (3)(d)  
13 employing triple saddle mounts unless all wheels that are in con-  
14 tact with the roadway have operating brakes.

15 (5) All combinations of vehicles under this section shall  
16 employ connecting assemblies and lighting devices that are in  
17 compliance with the motor carrier safety act of 1963, 1963 PA  
18 181, MCL 480.11 to 480.22.

19 (6) The total gross weight of a truck tractor, semitrailer,  
20 and trailer combination or a truck tractor and 2 semitrailers  
21 combination that exceeds 59 feet in length shall not exceed a  
22 ratio of 400 pounds per engine net horsepower delivered to clutch  
23 or its equivalent specified in the handbook published by the  
24 society of automotive engineers, inc. (SAE), 1977 edition.

25 (7) A person who violates this section is responsible for a  
26 civil infraction. The owner of the vehicle may be charged with a  
27 violation of this section.

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1 (8) As used in this section:

2 (a) "Designated highway" means a highway approved by the  
3 state transportation department or a local authority with respect  
4 to a highway under its jurisdiction.

5 (b) "Length" means the total length of a vehicle, or combi-  
6 nation of vehicles, including any load the vehicle is carrying.  
7 Length does not include safety and energy conservation devices  
8 including, but not limited to, impact absorbing bumpers, rear  
9 view mirrors, turn signal lamps, marker lamps, steps and hand  
10 holds for entry and egress, flexible fender extensions, mud  
11 flaps, or splash and spray suppressant devices; load induced tire  
12 bulge; refrigeration or heating units; or air compressors  
13 attached to the vehicle. A safety or energy conservation device  
14 shall be excluded from a determination of length only if it is  
15 not designed or used for the carrying of cargo, freight, or  
16 equipment. Semitrailers and trailers shall be measured from the  
17 front vertical plane of the foremost transverse load supporting  
18 structure to the rearmost transverse load supporting structure.

19 (c) "Stinger-steered combinations" means a truck tractor and  
20 semitrailer combination in which the fifth wheel is located on a  
21 drop frame located behind and below the rearmost axle of the  
22 power unit.

23 Sec. 720. (1) A person shall not drive or move a vehicle on  
24 a highway unless the vehicle is so constructed or loaded as to  
25 prevent its contents from dropping, sifting, leaking, blowing  
26 off, or otherwise escaping from the vehicle. This requirement  
27 does not apply to a vehicle transporting agricultural or

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1 horticultural products when hay, straw, silage, or residue from a  
2 product, but not including the product itself, or when materials  
3 such as water used to preserve and handle agricultural or horti-  
4 cultural products while in transportation, escape from the vehi-  
5 cle in an amount that does not interfere with other traffic on  
6 the highway. The tailgate, faucets, and taps on a vehicle shall  
7 be securely closed to prevent spillage during transportation  
8 whether the vehicle is loaded or empty, and the vehicle shall not  
9 have any holes or cracks through which material can escape. Any  
10 highway maintenance vehicle engaged in either ice or snow removal  
11 shall be exempt from this section.

12 (2) Actual spillage of material on the highway or proof of  
13 that spillage is not necessary to prove a violation of this  
14 section.

15 (3) A vehicle carrying a load, other than logs or tubular  
16 products, which is not completely enclosed shall meet either of  
17 the following requirements:

18 (a) Have the load covered with firmly secured canvas or a  
19 similar type of covering. A device used to comply with the  
20 requirement of this subdivision shall not exceed a width of 108  
21 inches nor by design or use have the capability to carry cargo by  
22 itself.

23 (b) Have the load securely fastened to the body or the frame  
24 of the vehicle with binders of adequate number and of adequate  
25 breaking strength to prevent the dropping off or shifting of the  
26 load.

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1           (4) A company or individual who loads or unloads a vehicle  
2 or causes it to be loaded or unloaded, with knowledge that it is  
3 to be driven on a public highway, in a manner so as to cause a  
4 violation of subsection (1) shall be prima facie liable for a  
5 violation of this section.

6           (5) A person shall not operate a motor vehicle carrying logs  
7 or tubular products on a highway unless the following conditions  
8 are met:

9           (a) If the logs or tubular products are loaded crosswise or  
10 at right angles to the side of the vehicle, the load of logs or  
11 tubular products shall be securely fastened to the body or frame  
12 of the vehicle with not less than 2 binders which are secured to  
13 the frame at each end of the load and pass over the load so that  
14 the frame and binders completely encircle the load.

15           (b) If the vehicle is a truck or trailer carrying logs which  
16 has a loading surface more than 33 feet in length and the logs  
17 are loaded crosswise or at right angles to the side of the vehi-  
18 cle, the vehicle shall be equipped with a center partition  
19 located approximately 1/2 the distance from the front to the rear  
20 of the loading surface of the truck or trailer. The center par-  
21 tition shall be either a center mounted hydraulic loader or a  
22 center set of stakes and shall be pinned, bolted, or otherwise  
23 securely fastened to the frame. The load shall be secured as  
24 required by subdivision (a) and, in addition, the 2 lengthwise  
25 tie downs shall be attached or threaded through the center parti-  
26 tion at a level not less than 1 foot below the load height.

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1 (c) If the logs or tubular products are loaded lengthwise of  
2 the vehicle, obliquely or parallel to the sides, with metal  
3 stakes and pockets, the load of logs or tubular products shall be  
4 secured as follows:

5 (i) With 2 tie downs from frame to frame for every tier.

6 (ii) So that not more than 1/2 the diameter of the top log  
7 or tubular product extends higher than the stake tops.

8 (iii) With 2 cross chains per tier if the load extends more  
9 than 5 feet above the loading surface.

10 (iv) So that every 10 linear feet has not less than 1 tie  
11 down from frame to frame.

12 (d) If the logs or tubular products are loaded lengthwise of  
13 the vehicle, obliquely or parallel to the sides, with permanent  
14 metal gusseted bunks, the load of logs or tubular products shall  
15 be secured as follows:

16 (i) With 2 tie downs from frame to frame for every tier.

17 (ii) So that not more than 1/2 the diameter of the top log  
18 extends higher than the stake tops.

19 (iii) So that every 10 linear feet has not less than 1 tie  
20 down from frame to frame.

21 (E) IF THE VEHICLE IS A CRIB VEHICLE AND THE LOGS OR TUBULAR  
22 PRODUCTS ARE LOADED LENGTHWISE OF THE VEHICLE, THE LOGS OR TUBU-  
23 LAR PRODUCTS SHALL BE LOADED AND SECURED AS FOLLOWS:

24 (i) THE VEHICLE MUST HAVE SIDES, SIDEBARDS, OR STAKES; A  
25 FRONT HEADBOARD, BULKHEAD, OR FRONTGATE; AND A REAR HEADBOARD,  
26 BULKHEAD, OR ENDGATE, EACH OF WHICH ARE STRONG ENOUGH AND HIGH

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1 ENOUGH TO ASSURE THAT THE LOAD WILL NOT SHIFT UPON OR FALL FROM  
2 THE VEHICLE.

3 (ii) THE SIDES, SIDEBARDS, HEADBOARD, BULKHEAD, OR FRONT-  
4 OR REAR-END GATE THAT IS IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE ENDS OF THE  
5 LOGS SHALL NOT HAVE AN APERTURE LARGE ENOUGH TO PERMIT LOGS TO  
6 PASS THROUGH IT.

7 (iii) THERE SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 2 STAKES ON EACH SIDE OF  
8 THE VEHICLE PER TIER OF LOGS.

9 (iv) VEHICLES WITH PERMANENT STEEL GUSSETED BUNKS DO NOT  
10 REQUIRE CROSS CHAINS.

11 (v) VEHICLES WITH STEEL STAKES AND POCKETS REQUIRE CROSS  
12 CHAINS FOR EACH TIER IF THE LOAD EXTENDS MORE THAN 5 FEET ABOVE  
13 THE LOADING SURFACE.

14 (vi) THREE ADDITIONAL LIGHTS ARE REQUIRED ON THE UPPER REAR  
15 OF THE VEHICLE.

16 (vii) VEHICLES OVER 102 INCHES WIDE SHALL HAVE LIGHTS PLACED  
17 AT EACH STAKE ALONG THE LONGITUDINAL LENGTH OF THE VEHICLE.

18 (viii) NOT MORE THAN 1/2 THE DIAMETER OF THE TOP LOGS SHALL  
19 EXTEND HIGHER THAN THE STAKE TOPS WHEN LOADED.

20 (ix) TIE DOWNS ARE NOT REQUIRED IF THE FOLLOWING LOADING  
21 PROCEDURES ARE USED:

22 (A) THE DISTANCE BETWEEN A TIER OF LOGS AND A HEADBOARD,  
23 BULKHEAD, FRONT- OR REAR-END GATE, OR ANOTHER TIER OF LOGS DOES  
24 NOT ALLOW A LOG TO LOSE CONTACT WITH A SIDE STAKE IF A LOG WERE  
25 TO SHIFT FORWARD OR BACKWARD.

26 (B) EACH TIER OF LOGS SHALL BE LOADED TO THE SAME HEIGHT  
27 FROM THE STAKE TOPS TO PREVENT MOVEMENT.

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1           (x) ONE TIE DOWN ASSEMBLY THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
2 THIS ACT AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS IS REQUIRED FOR EACH TIER OF  
3 LOGS UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

4           (A) THERE IS A DISTANCE LARGE ENOUGH BETWEEN A TIER OF LOGS  
5 AND A HEADBOARD, BULKHEAD, FRONT- OR REAR-END GATE, OR ANOTHER  
6 TIER OF LOGS TO ALLOW A LOG TO LOSE CONTACT WITH A SIDE STAKE IF  
7 A LOG WERE TO SHIFT FORWARD OR BACKWARD.

8           (B) EACH TIER OF LOGS IS NOT LOADED TO THE SAME HEIGHT FROM  
9 THE STAKE TOPS TO PREVENT MOVEMENT.

10          (F) ~~(e)~~ The tie downs, cross chains, stakes, and other  
11 materials used to secure loads of logs or tubular products as  
12 required under subdivisions (a) to ~~(d)~~ (E) shall meet the fol-  
13 lowing minimum requirements:

14           (i) Chain shall be of steel and shall be of a strength not  
15 less than 5/16 inch in diameter "transport", which is embossed  
16 with a grade stamp representative of grade 70, or not less than  
17 3/8 inch in diameter "high test", which is embossed with a grade  
18 stamp representative of grade 40. Chain shall not be repaired by  
19 welding, wire, or cold shuts.

20           (ii) Wire rope shall be of improved plow steel and not less  
21 than 3/8 inch in diameter.

22           (iii) Webbing strap shall be not less than 3 inches in width  
23 and shall have a minimum breaking strength of 14,000 pounds.

24           (iv) Metal stakes shall be of sufficient strength to hold  
25 and contain the load.

26           (v) Connecting links and hooks shall be at least as strong  
27 as the tie down material used.

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1           (6) Subsection (3) shall not apply to a person operating a  
2 vehicle to transport agricultural commodities or to a person  
3 operating a farm truck or implement of husbandry transporting  
4 sand, gravel, and dirt necessary in the normal operation of a  
5 farm. However, a person operating a vehicle to transport agri-  
6 cultural commodities or sand, gravel, and dirt in the normal  
7 operation of the farm who violates subsection (1) or (4) is  
8 guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to the penalties pre-  
9 scribed in subsection (10).

10           (7) Subsection (3)(a) shall not apply to a motor vehicle  
11 transporting items of a load which because of their weight will  
12 not fall off the moving vehicle and which have their centers of  
13 gravity located at least 6 inches below the top of the enclosure  
14 nor to a motor vehicle carrying metal which because of its weight  
15 and density is so loaded as to prevent it from dropping or fall-  
16 ing off the moving vehicle.

17           (8) Subsection (3)(a) shall not apply to motor vehicles and  
18 other equipment engaged in work upon the surface of a highway or  
19 street in a designated work area.

20           (9) A person shall not drive or move on a highway a vehicle  
21 equipped with a front end loading device with a tine protruding  
22 parallel to the highway beyond the front bumper of the vehicle  
23 unless the tine is carrying a load designed to be carried by the  
24 front end loading device. This subsection does not apply to a  
25 vehicle designed to be used or being used to transport agricul-  
26 tural commodities, to a vehicle en route to a repair facility, or  
27 to a vehicle engaged in construction activity. As used in this

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1 subsection, "agricultural commodities" means that term as defined  
2 in section 722.

3 (10) A person who violates this section is guilty of a mis-  
4 demeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$500.00 or impris-  
5 onment for not more than 90 days, or both.

6 (11) As used in this section:

7 (a) "Cross chain" means a chain which extends through the  
8 load of logs or tubular products and is connected at each end to  
9 a side stake.

10 (b) "Logs" means sawlogs, pulpwood, or tree length poles.

11 (c) "Tie down" means a high strength material which is used  
12 to secure the load of logs or tubular products to the frame or  
13 the bed of the vehicle.

14 (d) "Tier" means a vertical pile or stack of logs or tubular  
15 products.