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**SFA****BILL ANALYSIS**

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House Bill 4154 (as passed by the House)  
Sponsor: Representative Tom Casperson  
House Committee: Transportation  
Senate Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 5-12-03

### **CONTENT**

**The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to require certain loading and tie-down procedures for, and extend the allowable length of, log-hauling crib vehicles, if allowed by Federal law.**

Currently, any single vehicle over 40 feet long may not be operated on a Michigan highway. Under the bill, a crib vehicle on which logs were loaded lengthwise of the vehicle could be up to 42.5 feet in length. The bill specifies that this provision would apply only if Section 127(d) of Title 23 of the United States Code were amended to allow crib vehicles to carry logs loaded in this manner. (Section 127(d) governs the operation of a "longer combination vehicle", which is any combination of a truck tractor and two or more trailers or semitrailers that operates on the Interstate System at a gross vehicle weight greater than 80,000 pounds.)

Under the Code, the maximum allowable length for truck and semitrailer or trailer combinations is 65 feet. If a truck and semitrailer or trailer combination is used to transport saw logs, pulpwood, and tree length poles, the maximum allowable length is 70 feet. The bill would set a maximum length of 75 feet for a crib vehicle and semitrailer or trailer designed and used to transport saw logs. If the vehicle were a crib vehicle and the logs were loaded lengthwise, the logs would have to be loaded and secured as follows:

- The vehicle would have to have sides, sideboards, or stakes; a front headboard, bulkhead, or frontgate; and a rear headboard, bulkhead, or endgate, each of which was strong enough and high enough to assure that the load would not shift upon or fall from the vehicle.
- The sides, sideboards, headboard, bulkhead, or front- or rear-end gate that was in direct contact with the ends of the logs could not have an aperture large enough to permit logs to pass through it.
- A minimum of two stakes on each side of the vehicle per tier of logs would be required.
- For vehicles with steel stakes and pockets, cross chains would be required for each tier if the load extended more than five feet above the loading surface.
- Cross chains would not be required for vehicles with permanent steel gusseted bunks.
- Three additional lights would be required on the upper rear of the vehicle.
- Vehicles over 102 inches wide would be required to have lights placed at each stake along the longitudinal length of the vehicle.
- Not more than half of the diameter of the top logs could extend higher than the stake tops when loaded.

The bill specifies that tie-downs would not be required if the following loading procedures were used:

- The distance between a tier of logs and a headboard, bulkhead, front- or rear-end gate, or another tier of logs did not allow a log to lose contact with a side stake if a log were to shift forward or backward.
- Each tier of logs would have to be loaded to the same height from the stake tops to prevent movement.

If these conditions were not met, one tie-down assembly that met the requirements of the Code and Federal regulations would be required for each tier of logs.

The loading and tie-down requirements would not apply unless Section 127(d) of Title 23 of the United States Code, were amended to allow crib vehicles carrying logs to be loaded in this manner.

MCL 257.719 & 257.720

Legislative Analyst: Julie Koval

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have no fiscal impact on the State or local government. Under current provisions of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the State is required annually to certify compliance with Federal truck length regulations. The state is subject to Federal sanctions for noncompliance, including the withholding of Federal highway funds. The provisions allowing an increase in the permitted length of certain trucks and truck-trailer combinations designed to transport logs would apply only if Section 127(d) of Title 23 of the United States Code, 23 U.S.C. 127 were amended to allow crib vehicles carrying logs to exceed the permitted length. Therefore, the State would not be subject to Federal sanctions, including the possible withholding of Federal highway funds, for noncompliance with truck length regulations.

Fiscal Analyst: Craig Thiel

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.