

# SENATE BILL No. 1525

September 18, 2008, Introduced by Senator GILBERT and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

A bill to amend 1949 PA 300, entitled  
"Michigan vehicle code,"  
by amending section 722 (MCL 257.722), as amended by 2006 PA 658.

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

1           Sec. 722. (1) The maximum axle load shall not exceed the  
2 number of pounds designated in the following provisions that  
3 prescribe the distance between axles:

4           (a) If the axle spacing is 9 feet or more between axles, the  
5 maximum axle load shall not exceed 18,000 pounds for vehicles  
6 equipped with high pressure pneumatic or balloon tires.

7           (b) If the axle spacing is less than 9 feet between 2 axles  
8 but more than 3-1/2 feet, the maximum axle load shall not exceed  
9 13,000 pounds for high pressure pneumatic or balloon tires.

1 (c) If the axles are spaced less than 3-1/2 feet apart, the  
2 maximum axle load shall not exceed 9,000 pounds per axle.

3 (d) Subdivisions (a), (b), and (c) shall be known as the  
4 normal loading maximum.

5 (2) When normal loading is in effect, the state  
6 transportation department, or a local authority with respect to  
7 highways under its jurisdiction, may designate certain highways,  
8 or sections of those highways, where bridges and road surfaces  
9 are adequate for heavier loading, and revise a designation as  
10 needed, on which the maximum tandem axle assembly loading shall  
11 not exceed 16,000 pounds for any axle of the assembly, if there  
12 is no other axle within 9 feet of any axle of the assembly.

13 (3) On a legal combination of vehicles, only 1 tandem axle  
14 assembly shall be permitted on the designated highways at the  
15 gross permissible weight of 16,000 pounds per axle, if there is  
16 no other axle within 9 feet of any axle of the assembly, and if  
17 no other tandem axle assembly in the combination of vehicles  
18 exceeds a gross weight of 13,000 pounds per axle. On a  
19 combination of truck tractor and semitrailer having not more than  
20 5 axles, 2 consecutive tandem axle assemblies shall be permitted  
21 on the designated highways at a gross permissible weight of  
22 16,000 pounds per axle, if there is no other axle within 9 feet  
23 of any axle of the assembly.

24 (4) Notwithstanding subsection (3), on a combination of  
25 truck tractor and semitrailer having not more than 5 axles, 2  
26 consecutive sets of tandem axles may carry a gross permissible  
27 weight of not to exceed 17,000 pounds on any axle of the tandem

1 axles if there is no other axle within 9 feet of any axle of the  
2 tandem axles and if the first and last axles of the consecutive  
3 sets of tandem axles are not less than 36 feet apart and the  
4 gross vehicle weight does not exceed 80,000 pounds to pick up and  
5 deliver agricultural commodities between the national truck  
6 network or special designated highways and any other highway.  
7 This subsection is not subject to the maximum axle loads of  
8 subsections (1), (2), and (3). For purposes of this subsection, a  
9 "tandem axle" means 2 axles spaced more than 40 inches but not  
10 more than 96 inches apart or 2 axles spaced more than 3-1/2 feet  
11 but less than 9 feet apart. This subsection does not apply during  
12 that period when reduced maximum loads are in effect pursuant to  
13 subsection (8).

14 (5) The exception to the loading maximums and gross vehicle  
15 weight requirements of subsection (12) under subsection (8) for a  
16 person hauling agricultural commodities applies only if the  
17 person who picks up or delivers the agricultural commodity either  
18 from a farm or to a farm notifies the county road commission for  
19 roads under its authority not less than 48 hours before the  
20 pickup or delivery of the time and location of the pickup or  
21 delivery. The county road commission shall issue a permit to the  
22 person and charge a fee that does not exceed the administrative  
23 costs incurred. The permit shall contain all of the following:

24 (a) The designated route or routes of travel for the load.

25 (b) The date and time period requested by the person who  
26 picks up or delivers the agricultural commodities during which  
27 the load may be delivered or picked up.

1 (c) A maximum speed limit of travel, if necessary.

2 (d) Any other specific conditions agreed to between the  
3 parties.

4 (6) The exception to the loading maximums and gross vehicle  
5 weight requirements of subsection (12) under subsection (8)  
6 applies to public utility vehicles that are owned or operated by  
7 public utilities under the jurisdiction of the Michigan public  
8 service commission, or are subcontracted by public utilities  
9 under the jurisdiction of the Michigan public service commission  
10 to perform electrical emergency public utility work, only under  
11 the following circumstances:

12 (a) For emergency public utility work on restricted roads,  
13 as follows:

14 (i) If required by the county road commission, the public  
15 utility shall notify the county road commission, as soon as  
16 practical, of the location of the emergency public utility work  
17 and provide a statement that the vehicles that were used to  
18 perform the emergency utility work may have exceeded the loading  
19 maximums and gross vehicle weight requirements of subsection (12)  
20 under subsection (8). The notification may be made via facsimile  
21 or electronically.

22 (ii) The public utility vehicle travels to and from the site  
23 of the emergency public utility work while on a restricted road  
24 at a speed not greater than 35 miles per hour.

25 (b) For nonemergency public utility work on restricted  
26 roads, as follows:

27 (i) If the county road commission requires, the public

1 utility shall apply to the county road commission annually for a  
2 seasonal truck permit for roads under its authority before  
3 seasonal weight restrictions are effective. The county road  
4 commission shall issue a seasonal truck permit for each vehicle  
5 or vehicle configuration the public utility anticipates will be  
6 utilized for nonemergency public utility work. The county road  
7 commission may charge a fee for a permit that does not exceed the  
8 administrative costs incurred for the permit. The seasonal truck  
9 permit shall contain all of the following:

10 (A) The seasonal period requested by the public utility  
11 during which the permit is valid.

12 (B) A unique identification number for the vehicle and any  
13 vehicle configuration to be covered on the seasonal truck permit  
14 requested by the public utility.

15 (C) A requirement that travel on restricted roads during  
16 weight restrictions will be minimized and only utilized when  
17 necessary to perform work using the public utility vehicle or  
18 vehicle configuration and that nonrestricted roads shall be used  
19 for travel when available and for routine travel.

20 (ii) If the county road commission requires notification, the  
21 county road commission shall provide a notification application  
22 for the public utility to use when requesting access to operate  
23 on restricted roads and the public utility shall provide  
24 notification to the county road commission, via facsimile or  
25 electronically, not later than 24 hours before the time of the  
26 intended travel. Notwithstanding this subsection or an agreement  
27 under this subsection, if the county road commission determines

1 that the condition of a particular road under its jurisdiction  
2 makes it unusable, the county road commission may deny access to  
3 all or any part of that road. The denial shall be made and  
4 communicated via facsimile or electronically to the public  
5 utility within 24 hours after receiving notification that the  
6 public utility intends to perform nonemergency work that requires  
7 use of that road. Any notification that is not disapproved within  
8 24 hours after the notice is received by the county road  
9 commission is considered approved. The notification application  
10 required under this subparagraph may include all of the following  
11 information:

12 (A) The address or location of the nonemergency work.

13 (B) The date or dates of the nonemergency work.

14 (C) The route to be taken to the nonemergency work site.

15 (D) The restricted road or roads intended to be traveled  
16 upon to the nonemergency work site or sites.

17 (7) The normal size of tires shall be the rated size as  
18 published by the manufacturers, and the maximum wheel load  
19 permissible for any wheel shall not exceed 700 pounds per inch of  
20 width of tire.

21 (8) Except as provided in this subsection and subsection  
22 (9), during the months of March, April, and May in each year, the  
23 maximum axle load allowable on concrete pavements or pavements  
24 with a concrete base is reduced by 25% from the maximum axle load  
25 as specified in this chapter, and the maximum axle loads  
26 allowable on all other types of roads during these months are  
27 reduced by 35% from the maximum axle loads as specified. The

1 maximum wheel load shall not exceed 525 pounds per inch of tire  
2 width on concrete and concrete base or 450 pounds per inch of  
3 tire width on all other roads during the period the seasonal road  
4 restrictions are in effect. This subsection does not apply to  
5 vehicles transporting agricultural commodities or public utility  
6 vehicles on a highway, road, or street under the jurisdiction of  
7 a local road agency. **EACH LOCAL ROAD AGENCY SHALL POST ON ITS  
8 WEBSITE THE DATES WHEN THE SEASONAL RESTRICTIONS DESCRIBED UNDER  
9 THIS SUBSECTION ARE IN EFFECT.**

10 (9) The state transportation department for roads under its  
11 jurisdiction and a county road commission for roads under its  
12 jurisdiction may grant exemptions from seasonal weight  
13 restrictions for milk on specified routes when requested in  
14 writing. Approval or denial of a request for an exemption shall  
15 be given by written notice to the applicant within 30 days after  
16 the date of submission of the application. If a request is  
17 denied, the written notice shall state the reason for denial and  
18 alternate routes for which the permit may be issued. The  
19 applicant may appeal to the state transportation commission or  
20 the county road commission. These exemptions do not apply on  
21 county roads in counties that have negotiated agreements with  
22 milk haulers or haulers of other commodities during periods of  
23 seasonal load limits before April 14, 1993. This subsection does  
24 not limit the ability of these counties to continue to negotiate  
25 such agreements.

26 (10) The state transportation department, or a local  
27 authority with respect to highways under its jurisdiction, may

1 suspend the restrictions imposed by this section when and where  
2 conditions of the highways or the public health, safety, and  
3 welfare warrant suspension, and impose the restricted loading  
4 requirements of this section on designated highways at any other  
5 time that the conditions of the highway require.

6 (11) For the purpose of enforcing this act, the gross  
7 vehicle weight of a single vehicle and load or a combination of  
8 vehicles and loads ~~—~~shall be determined by weighing individual  
9 axles or groups of axles, and the total weight on all the axles  
10 shall be the gross vehicle weight. In addition, the gross axle  
11 weight shall be determined by weighing individual axles or by  
12 weighing a group of axles and dividing the gross weight of the  
13 group of axles by the number of axles in the group. For purposes  
14 of subsection (12), the overall gross weight on a group of 2 or  
15 more axles shall be determined by weighing individual axles or  
16 several axles, and the total weight of all the axles in the group  
17 shall be the overall gross weight of the group.

18 (12) The loading maximum in this subsection applies to  
19 interstate highways, and the state transportation department, or  
20 a local authority with respect to highways under its  
21 jurisdiction, may designate a highway, or a section of a highway,  
22 for the operation of vehicles having a gross vehicle weight of  
23 not more than 80,000 pounds that are subject to the following  
24 load maximums:

25 (a) Twenty thousand pounds on any 1 axle, including all  
26 enforcement tolerances.

27 (b) A tandem axle weight of 34,000 pounds, including all



1 maximums as set forth in this subsection.

2 (13) As used in this section:

3 (a) "Agricultural commodities" means those plants and  
4 animals useful to human beings produced by agriculture and  
5 includes, but is not limited to, forages and sod crops, grains  
6 and feed crops, field crops, dairy and dairy products, poultry  
7 and poultry products, cervidae, livestock, including breeding and  
8 grazing, equine, fish, and other aquacultural products, bees and  
9 bee products, berries, herbs, fruits, vegetables, flowers, seeds,  
10 grasses, nursery stock, mushrooms, fertilizer, livestock bedding,  
11 farming equipment, and fuel for agricultural use. The term does  
12 not include trees or lumber.

13 (b) "Emergency public utility work" means work performed to  
14 restore public utility service or to eliminate a danger to the  
15 public due to a natural disaster, an act of God, or an emergency  
16 situation, whether or not a public official has declared an  
17 emergency.