

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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November 20, 2025

The Honorable Vince Fong
U.S. House of Representatives
243 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20003

The Honorable David Valadao
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jay Obernolte
U.S. House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Proposed Federal Increase to Commercial Vehicle Weight Limits – OPPOSE

Dear Kern Delegates,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our serious concerns with efforts to increase the federal commercial vehicle weight limits beyond the current maximum of 80,000 pounds and the potential impact those changes would have on our economy and local quality of life.

Kern County is not only one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country, it's also a critical link in the national food supply chain and broader logistics network. The safety and reliability of our roads are essential to moving crops from field to market and for moving other goods throughout the region. That's why we are urging your strong opposition to federal proposals that would allow 91,000-pound trucks on our public roads.

This proposal is not theoretical. It was introduced in the 118th Congress as H.R. 471 (Johnson, R-SD) and will possibly be introduced as part of the 2025 Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act. If enacted, the change would immediately permit significantly heavier trucks to operate across Kern County, trucks that our infrastructure was never designed to support. We get many trucks off Interstate 5, Highway 99 and 58, and the truth is trucks don't stay on the Interstate and Highways for the duration of their trip. They travel on local roads where our families work, live, and play. The consequences would be swift and severe, particularly for our farmers and food transporters.

Our agricultural economy depends on timely, safe, and efficient transportation. Heavier trucks would accelerate the deterioration of rural roads and damage critical infrastructure that farmers rely on

daily. A recent study¹ found that the vast majority of Kern County's local bridges cannot safely support 91,000-pound trucks. Replacing bridges with the highest daily truck traffic would cost an estimated \$70.5 million — an unfunded mandate that would fall directly on local taxpayers.

These crossings are vital arteries for transporting produce, livestock, and agricultural inputs. If even a handful of these bridges are compromised, it would disrupt farm-to-market routes, delay shipments, and increase costs for growers and distributors alike.

This is also a public safety issue. Heavier trucks have longer stopping distances, up to 22 feet more, and higher rates of braking violations, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. Even the Teamsters and the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) oppose these changes, citing risks to both truck drivers and the public.

We cannot afford to jeopardize the infrastructure that sustains our farms, feeds our communities, and distributes goods and services across the state and nation. Kern County, along with the National Association of Counties, strongly urges you to oppose any legislation that would allow bigger, heavier trucks on our roads. This is not about resisting innovation, it's about protecting lives, preserving infrastructure, and ensuring the continued flow of food from our fields to the nation's tables.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Leticia Perez', with a stylized, cursive script.

Leticia Perez, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
Kern County Public Works
Townsend Public Affairs

¹ [The Impacts of Heavier Trucks on Local Bridges: 2025 Update. March, 2025](#)