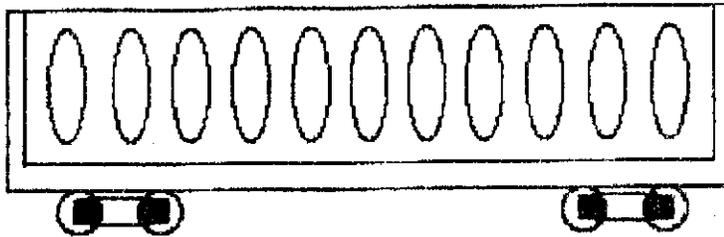


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HB 684

Gwynn Lumber & Reload Inc.

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February 14, 2005

House Transportation Committee
RE: HB 684
Hearing Room 172
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Honorable Chairperson Mendenhall;

House Bill 684 would allow for the use of heavier loaded trucks on Highway 93 from the Roosville border crossing into Eureka, MT. For some time now these requested weight limits have been allowed on Interstate-15 from the Sweetgrass border crossing to Shelby, MT. This was put together by, then, Governor Stan Stephens and the Alberta Government. The idea was to help with the transportation of Canola seed to and from markets in the US. In its original design it was a good idea. However it has spilled over to other commodities, such as lumber, and now creates an unfair competition balance. The sheer economics of being able to ship 1 rail car and having it transferred to 2 trucks, as opposed to 3 trucks, is all the difference it takes to attract new customers.

A point of interest that needs to be noted is that the same situation exists at the border crossing of Eastport Idaho, which is the next Port of Entry to the West. This, along with the Sweetgrass crossing, gives our customers better rail access through those Port of Entrys on each side of the Highway 93 corridor