

HOUSE BILL NO. 298

INTRODUCED BY W. MCNUTT

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING A DEFINITION OF "STEERING AXLE" FOR THE PURPOSES OF GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT REQUIREMENTS; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-10-104, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 61-10-104, MCA, is amended to read:

"61-10-104. Length -- definitions. (1) A single truck, bus, or self-propelled vehicle, unladen or with load, may not have an overall length, inclusive of front and rear bumpers, in excess of 55 feet.

(2) (a) When used in a truck tractor-semitrailer combination, the semitrailer may not exceed 53 feet in length, excluding those portions not designed to carry a load, except as provided by 61-10-124. When used in a truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer or a truck tractor-semitrailer-semitrailer combination, the semitrailer and trailer or the two semitrailers may not exceed 28 1/2 feet each in length or 61 feet in combined trailer length, excluding those portions not designed to carry a load, except as provided by 61-10-124. Truck tractor-semitrailer, truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer, and truck tractor-semitrailer-semitrailer combinations are not subject to a combination length limit.

(b) A stinger-steered automobile or boat transporter may not exceed 75 feet in length plus a maximum 3 feet of front overhang and 4 feet of rear overhang, except as provided by 61-10-124. "Stinger-steered automobile or boat transporter" means a truck tractor-semitrailer combination that has a fifth wheel on a drop frame located behind and below the rear axle of the truck tractor and that is designed and used for the transportation of vehicles or assembled boats or boat hulls.

(c) All other combinations of vehicles may not have a combination length in excess of 75 feet, except as provided by 61-10-124. If the combination consists of more than two units, the rear units of the combination must be equipped with breakaway brakes.

(3) A motor vehicle may not tow more than one motor vehicle, and a motor vehicle may not draw more than three motor vehicles attached to it by the triple saddle-mount method (that is, by mounting the front wheels of one vehicle on the bed of another, leaving only the rear wheels of the vehicle in contact with the roadway), and this combination may not have a combination length in excess of 75 feet.

1 (4) A passenger vehicle or truck of less than 2,000 pounds "manufacturer's rated capacity" may not tow
2 more than one trailer or semitrailer, and this combination may not have a length in excess of 65 feet.

3 (5) (a) The length of a vehicle combination consisting of a truck or truck tractor and one pole trailer or
4 semitrailer hauling raw logs may not exceed 75 feet in overall length. As used in this subsection (5)(a), the term
5 "length" means the total length of the vehicle combination beginning at the front of the front bumper of the truck
6 or truck tractor and extending to the most distant end of the logs being hauled. A term permit for an overlength
7 vehicle combination, as provided in 61-10-124(2), does not apply to the vehicle combination described in this
8 subsection (5)(a). A vehicle combination exceeding 75 feet must have a trip permit.

9 (b) The maximum overhang of any log may not exceed 15 feet, except by special, single-trip permit.
10 Overhang is measured from the center of the rear-most axle to the most distant end of the logs being hauled.

11 (c) The provisions in subsections (5)(a) and (5)(b) do not apply to a vehicle combination hauling utility
12 poles.

13 (6) As used in this chapter, the following definitions apply:

14 (a) "Axle" means a transverse beam that is the common axis of rotation of one or more wheels and that,
15 to receive credit for allowable total gross loading, must be capable of continuously transmitting a proportionate
16 share of the total gross load to the roadway when the axle is in operation.

17 (b) "Combination length" means the total length of a combination of vehicles, such as a truck
18 tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination, measured from the front bumper of the motor vehicle to the back bumper
19 or rear extremity of the last trailer, including the connection tongues.

20 (c) "Combined trailer length" means the total length of a combination of trailers measured from the front
21 of the first trailer to the back of the last trailer, including the connection tongues and loads.

22 (d) "Length", except as provided in subsection (5)(a), means the total longitudinal dimension of a single
23 vehicle, a trailer, or a semitrailer. The length of a trailer or semitrailer is measured from the front of the
24 cargo-carrying unit to its rear, exclusive of safety or energy efficiency devices, air-conditioning units, air
25 compressors, flexible fender extensions, splash and spray suppressant devices, bolsters, mechanical fastening
26 devices, and hydraulic lift gates.

27 (e) "Rocky Mountain double" means a combination of vehicles that includes a truck tractor pulling a long
28 semitrailer and a shorter trailer.

29 (f) "Steering axle" means an axle that pivots at the hub to allow the wheel to follow the travel of the
30 vehicle. A steering axle is capable of being steered but need not always be connected to a steering wheel."

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