

**Statement of
CRH
presented by
Ryan Lindsey, Executive Vice President for Government Relations
before the
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives
on
“America Builds: How Trucking Supports American Communities”
March 26, 2025**

Chairman Rouzer, Ranking Member Holmes Norton, Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Ryan Lindsey, and I have the privilege to serve as the Executive Vice President of Government Relations at CRH. On behalf of CRH and the Shippers Coalition, I want to share our perspective on some important issues facing the trucking industry, including how we can safely increase reliability and efficiency in our supply chain.

CRH is deeply committed to helping this committee succeed in what may be a preeminent objective in the reauthorization of surface transportation programs – keeping costs down so that each program dollar can deliver more value in terms of new or improved roads and other transportation facilities.

As a member of the Shippers Coalition, we are honored to provide our perspective on ways the supply chain can be strengthened. CRH is one of the Coalition’s more than 80 members in the food and beverage, agriculture, manufacturing, and other industries. As shippers, the Coalition’s members are the ones who ensure critical goods are on store shelves, including milk, beef, laundry detergent, and bottled water.

CRH currently uses all modes of transportation to move our goods, and we need them all to perform well. As to trucking, we move thousands of truckloads of goods every single day, so my testimony will outline our efforts to increase capacity for over-the-road trucking while ensuring safety of the traveling public, our employees, and drivers.

CRH and its Logistics Network

CRH is the largest building materials company – crushed stone, cement, ready-mix concrete, hot mix asphalt, pipe and precast, as well as products you know and use in your backyard – and while you may not know us as CRH, you very likely know us as Riverbend Materials in Oregon, Apac/Mid-South Asphalt in Alabama, Shelly Companies in Ohio, Oldcastle Infrastructure in Washington, or Ash Grove in Kansas. Our 50,000 employees across 48 states and over 3,000 operating locations, help build the roads and bridges you drive on, deliver the water you drink, and craft the backyards you enjoy. CRH takes great pride in our local communities and takes very seriously our responsibility to not only ensure the safety of our employees and subcontractors, but also our neighbors.

To fill orders and operate each day, CRH operates an internal fleet of over 15,000 trucks, while also contracting thousands of outside haulers. Although we are the world's largest building materials business – what we really are is a logistics business made up of great people that (each day with the least disruption to the environment or the traveling public) desire to move various goods from point A to point B in the safest, most efficient way possible.

Logistics is critically important to our business, with trucking being at the center. Attracting, hiring, and retaining qualified professional drivers has always been a challenge and remains as such. Over time, our businesses across the country have crafted various programs to address this challenge. “Hire Veteran” initiatives, new driver mentor programs (where we provide a truck for CDL certification), partnerships with trade and vocational schools, and our “Second Chance” initiative to give those formerly incarcerated a chance at a meaningful profession, have all been beneficial, yet finding enough qualified drivers remains a challenge and I can confidently say there is a significant driver shortage in our country and we feel it at CRH. Today we have over 1000 professional driver job openings that we desperately need to fill.

Increasing Efficiencies on Our Roads

CRH supports and advocates for policies that will allow for the more efficient movement of goods while maintaining or improving safety. At a time like this, and as Congress is considering Surface Transportation Reauthorization, there are policies to consider that would not only improve our supply chain but do so without a budgetary commitment. With the current driver shortage, it is more critical than ever to ensure we have resiliency in our trucking system. We anticipate additional retirements with the “grey wave,” so it is more important than ever that Congress make sound policy changes that would have a positive and big impact. In CRH's view, these reforms should include enacting a Gross Vehicle Weight Limit Pilot Program, finding ways to make it easier to obtain a CDL, and allowing drivers 18-20 to participate in interstate commerce.

One such proposal is a pilot program to modestly increasing the GVW limit on the Interstate System from the current limit of 80,000-pounds to 91,000-pounds or the bridge formula limit, whichever is lower, for vehicles while operating in the program. This proposal would impose important conditions on participation that protect the public interest, including the addition of the extra axle, weight distribution requirements of the bridge formula, and per axle limits.

Right now, trucks are not being filled to capacity, and many are departing only three-quarters of the way full. Allowing additional weight means that these trucks will be filled up closer to capacity. So, for a given amount of cargo by weight, it can be carried by fewer vehicles; for example, four trips instead of five to carry the same amount of cargo. This means fewer trucks on the road and less miles in the system than otherwise would be the case. Fewer miles not only allow for the more efficient movement of goods, but it also means less exposure and more safety. We have found that CRH would be able to eliminate 20% of trips via truck if we are able to move to vehicles at 91,000-pounds. As evident by our current openings, this change would not eliminate positions, but rather make current trips more efficient.

Infrastructure materials are heavy, and their safe movement is a priority of CRH. The GVW pilot program legislation sponsored by Congressman Dusty Johnson (R-SD) and Congressman Jim Costa (D-CA) was reported favorably on a bipartisan basis by this Committee in the last Congress. This carefully constructed and well-vetted pilot program creates an opportunity to carry more goods on the Interstate System, in a highly responsible manner, which can include carriage of transportation infrastructure inputs, like we do. This can help keep down public costs, consistent with infrastructure protection, emissions reduction, and safety.

The current weight limit was set in 1982, and since that time there have been significant technological developments in trucks, including the standardization of anti-lock brakes. That weight limit might have been appropriate for that time and the technology of the day but that is not the case in 2025, particularly with the sixth axle and weight distribution requirements in the pilot program.

Finally, let me be clear, despite what others might say, nothing in the proposed GVW pilot program would change vehicle size laws or increase the authority for double or triple combination vehicles. The GVW Pilot Program proposal only concerns single combination vehicles and does not change vehicle size requirements. The bill also includes weight distribution requirements, namely the bridge formula and axle weight limits requirements, to protect pavements and bridges.

Safety

At CRH, safety is number one. The well-being of our employees, our subcontractors, our customers, and our neighbors take priority over all that we do. We would not advocate for something that we didn't believe could be done safely.

While we are proud of our ability to innovate around the current challenges facing our trucking fleet, we believe implementing a GVW pilot program would increase safety on our Federal Interstates because of the required addition of a sixth axle with an additional set of wheels and brakes. A United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) technical study found that the 91,000-pound six axle vehicle stops a foot shorter than the 80,000-pound five axle vehicle, the current configuration of most trucks on the road.

Additionally, trucks are already carrying heavier weights in other parts of the world. Canada, for example, allows weights up to 102,500-pounds on six-axle single combination vehicles¹ and such vehicles have been operating at such weights there for decades. CRH has been operating heavier than 80,000-pound vehicles in Canada and these trucks have to stop at the US border to unload weight because of the regulatory differences between the two countries.

Not only are other countries allowing higher GVW limits, over 40 states already allow heavier than 80,000-pounds off the Interstate System, on state and local roads. This means that heavier than 80,000 pounds GVW trucks are driving past schools, shopping centers, and churches, through the middle of your communities. A proposal like the state opt-in pilot program would

¹ <https://comt.ca/english/programs/trucking/MOU%202019.pdf>, pg. 14

help move heavier trucks onto the Federal Interstates, which the Transportation Research Board says are the safest and best suited roads for these types of vehicles.² This would help make our roads and communities safer.

The bill only concerns authority to operate on the Interstate System. Federal law regulates weight only as to the Interstate System (except short distance “reasonable access” must be provided to and from the Interstate Highway System to terminals and facilities for food, fuel, repairs, and rest). That is not authority to operate statewide or across local roads and bridges. Non-Interstate System roads are not subject to Federal weight regulation and nothing in the bill would change that. They would still be subject to State regulation as they are today.

And, most importantly, the pilot program is a state opt-in, and under the program, operators are restricted to Interstate System routes permitted by the State. States can be trusted to protect their infrastructure and take that into account in deciding whether to opt into the pilot program.

Further, under the pilot program, safety data would be collected regarding six-axle vehicles in the program operating at over 80,000 pounds and up to 91,000 pounds GVW if bridge formula compliant. Data to date is not as specific as would be required under this proposal.

Environmental Benefits

By allowing a given amount of cargo to be carried in fewer vehicles, this pilot program will help reduce congestion on roads, lower fuel consumption, and mitigate exhaust emissions compared to what otherwise would be the case.³ USDOT estimated that a 6-axle 91,000-pound configuration reduces CO2 and NOX emissions, with NOX being a particulate matter pollutant precursor.

Protecting Infrastructure Investments

As the Committee looks to fund surface transportation programs and protect the investments already made, CRH views itself as part of the solution. Many of the roads you and your constituents drive on have been built by CRH. We want to protect those investments in our communities and believe that the GVW pilot program would do just that.

Requiring the additional axle in the proposed pilot program would address concerns about the potential impact to our current infrastructure. The additional axle better distributes the truck’s weight. Studies have found that if weight is better distributed by axle, there is less stress on the road. USDOT found that moving to 91,000-pounds on six axles reduces the life-cycle pavement cost compared to the 80,000-pounds on five axles vehicle. Under this pilot program, vehicles would also have to meet the per axle weight limits.

² TRB Special Report 329, Renewing the National Commitment to the Interstate Highway System, at pages 42, 44, 184 and 194.

³ See USDOT Comprehensive Truck Size & Weight Limits Study Technical Reports, Vol. 1 “Technical Summary Report”, page 40.

Additionally, in order to operate under this pilot program, a vehicle would have to be Federal bridge formula compliant, the same way that a five axle 80,000-pound vehicle must be today. This pilot program would help bring trucks off state and local roads and bridges, where the individual state sets their own weight limits, back to the Federal Interstates where these trucks belong, further protecting our infrastructure investments.

Other Common-Sense Solutions

As mentioned, the trucking industry is grappling with a scarcity of drivers, a concern projected to worsen in the coming years. To offset this looming crisis, the industry must seek to recruit approximately one million new drivers within the next decade to fill the void left by retiring personnel and meet future needs. Accomplishing this crucial task requires measures that make it easier to recruit and retain drivers, including streamlining the commercial driver's license (CDL) process, among other reforms and incentives. The LICENSE Act would help remove barriers by streamlining burdensome licensing regulations by making permanent several waivers that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) implemented in response to COVID-19. Removing barriers for drivers entering the workforce is critical for goods to get to consumers, and we believe the LICENSE Act takes the right step in ensuring the process to get a CDL is streamlined while maintaining safety.

Another way the federal government should address the driver shortage is by continuing to support, at least through the reauthorization period, a clear pathway for new drivers to enter the industry by allowing individuals between the ages of 18 to 20-years old with a commercial driver's license to operate across state lines. Currently, many young adults entering the workforce after high school, who might be interested in the trucking industry, are opting for other careers because they cannot afford to wait until they are 21 to be hired. This results in the loss to trucking of a valuable talent pool. Furthermore, it is important that the legislation ensures vehicles used in the program for these young drivers are equipped with quality technology to protect drivers and ensure public safety.

In conclusion, CRH looks forward to working with Congress and this Committee to advance meritorious reforms to surface transportation policies that will help enhance and strengthen our supply chain while maintaining or improving safety. We take our role as partners in this endeavor seriously and look forward to the work we can achieve together.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to be here today and I will be happy to respond to any questions.