



Mark Wagoner
State Senator
2nd District

Committees:
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Health, Human Services
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November 10, 2008

Via E-Mail and
Ordinary U.S. Mail

Director James G. Beasley, P.E., P.S.
Ohio Department of Transportation
1980 West Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43223

Dear Director Beasley:

I hope all is well with you.

I write in strong opposition to the Ohio Department of Transportation's ("ODOT") increase of 3,536% over the next ten months for overweight-truck permits in Ohio. This dramatic fee increase will have an unacceptable impact on transportation and intermodal development in northwest Ohio.

As you know, the Port of Toledo has been the busiest inland port on the St. Lawrence Seaway since 2003. Great strides have been made to establish northwest Ohio as a key intermodal site for transportation development. ODOT's fee increase is a major hindrance to that development.

A key component of Toledo's intermodal development is its proximity to Michigan. As you know, Michigan allows for truck loads of up to 80 tons. These trucks are typically referred to as "Michigan Loads" and are a significant part of northwest Ohio's transportation volume. These Michigan Loads travel to Ohio along specialized routes in Lucas, Wood and Fulton counties, primarily those routes accessing the Port of Toledo and several Toledo-area manufacturers and two major steel plants.

Currently, the overweight-truck permit fee is \$55 per quarter to register these vehicles. ODOT has now increased this fee over the course of the next ten months to, by the end, \$500 a quarter - an increase of 3,536%! This will have an adverse impact in allowing for cross-border transportation of Michigan loads and, as a practical matter,

Director James G. Beasley, P.E., P.S.

November 10, 2008

Page 2

will cause the freight carried by these trucks to be delivered to other deep water ports in Michigan, such as the Port of Detroit or the Port of Saginaw.

I understand the predicament facing ODOT with increasing expenses while, at the same time, decreasing revenues. I also understand there has not been a fee increase over the past 15 years for overweight trucks and, as a result, a slight increase may be justified. But a 3,536% adjustment is simply too much and will have a deleterious impact on Northwest Ohio's transportation economy.

Moreover, I believe this fee increase may run contrary to the Governor's Executive Order 2008-045(4)(g), in which it is required that new regulations should not make Ohio a "less attractive place to do business." There is no question that ODOT's fee increase makes Ohio a "less attractive place to do business" for the transportation industry.

I ask that ODOT use its administrative discretion to reverse this fee increase as soon as possible. I understand that key stockholders are meeting to discuss this issue. I appreciate ODOT's willingness to listen and, on my part, I will work with ODOT in good faith to attempt to resolve this issue.

If, however, we are unable to reach a compromise that protects northwest Ohio's transportation economy, I will introduce legislation that will limit ODOT's ability to raise this fee by no more than 10%.

Thanks again for your time and cooperation on this matter. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to give me a call.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Wagoner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Mark Wagoner
State Senator for the 2nd District

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