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## MAXIMUM TRUCK WEIGHTS

**House Bill 4503**

**Sponsor: Rep. Michael Switalski**

**Committee: Transportation**

**Complete to 4-23-99**

### **A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4503 AS INTRODUCED 4-20-99**

House Bill 4503 would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to require that beginning January 1, 2004, Michigan would adopt the federal truck weight standard, set forth in the United States Code. Under that standard, the maximum gross vehicle weight for the operation of vehicles could not be heavier than 80,000 pounds (40 tons), and also could not exceed any of the following: 20,000 pounds per axle; a tandem axle weight of 17,000 pounds per axle including all enforcement tolerances; or, an overall gross weight on a group of two or more consecutive axles (determined by applying an algorithmic formula developed by traffic engineers, which considers the number of axles, the number of sets of tandem axles, and the distance between the axles).

Currently, Michigan law controls the gross vehicle weight of a truck by restricting axle loadings. (It is argued that the weight axle approach does not cause as much pavement damage, because weight is distributed more uniformly over the pavement surface. This axle weight limitation, however, allows trucks to carry a heavier payload, provided more axles are utilized to carry the additional weight.)

Under current law, the Michigan Department of Transportation or a local road agency may, but is not required to, designate load maximums for highways or sections of highways in their jurisdiction. That voluntary standard is similar (but not identical) to that proposed by House Bill 4503: it prohibits vehicles weighing more than 80,000 pounds; and also prohibits more than 20,000 pounds on any one axle, a tandem axle weight of more than 34,000 pounds, or an overall gross weight restriction on a group of two or more consecutive axles (determined by applying the identical formula proposed in House Bill 4503).

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