

## MINUTES

### MONTANA SENATE 54th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN LARRY TVEIT, on February 9, 1995, at  
1:00 p.m.

#### ROLL CALL

##### Members Present:

Sen. Larry J. Tveit, Chairman (R)  
Sen. Charles "Chuck" Swysgood, Vice Chairman (R)  
Sen. Mack Cole (R)  
Sen. Ric Holden (R)  
Sen. Reiny Jabs (R)  
Sen. Arnie A. Mohl (R)  
Sen. Greg Jergeson (D)  
Sen. Linda J. Nelson (D)  
Sen. Barry "Spook" Stang (D)

Members Excused: None

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Connie Erickson, Legislative Council  
Carla Turk, Committee Secretary

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and  
discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

##### Committee Business Summary:

Hearing: SB 163, SB 205, SB 245  
Executive Action: SB 163 DO PASS AS AMENDED  
SB 205 TABLED

#### HEARING ON SB 163

##### Opening Statement by Sponsor:

SENATOR LINDA NELSON, SD 49, Medicine Lake, stated SB 163 would allow for HAM radio license plates to be combined with a veteran plate or handicapped plate. She said HAM radio plates should not be considered just personalized plates; they enable the public to recognize assistance personnel and explained that HAM radio plate owners often needed other insignia, such as disability plates to park in handicapped spaces. She maintained they would pay exactly what the current law required and all specific fees would

go to the currently designated places. She stated there was an amendment to the bill for clarification of the fees.

**Proponents' Testimony:**

**Dean Roberts, Administrator of the Motor Vehicles Division, (DMV)**, stated they did not oppose SB 163 since it would not create another plate type. He distributed (**EXHIBIT # 1**) which showed an example of the amateur radio plate. He stated SB 163 would allow the veterans symbol or handicapped symbol to be placed on the amateur radio plate. He explained this would not create a problem for the DMV or for the prison which manufactured the plates, as they would use the basic plate type. He reported there were currently 752 amateur radio plates issued and the fiscal note assumed the number of 2000 plates. He stated there were not 2000 amateur radio operators in the State of Montana and at most there may be 1,000. He attested that the DMV estimated less than 10% would obtain a combined license plate.

**Jim Jacobson, Montana Veteran's Affairs Division**, explained the primary source for funding for the Veterans' Cemetery as the veteran's license plates. He stated the Division supported SB 163 because it could help sell more veteran's plates.

**Hal Manson, American Legion of Montana**, agreed with Mr. Jacobson's testimony and expressed support for the Bill.

**Dick Baumberger, Disabled American Veterans**, stated support for SB 163.

**Ervin Davis, former Legislator, state government liaison for Amateur Radio Operators in the State of Montana**, stated he was a licensed operator with a HAM plate and his wife was handicapped and he would like to have a combined plate.

**Opponents' Testimony:**

None.

**Questions From Committee Members and Responses:**

**SENATOR GREG JERGESON** asked if SB 163 would conflict with his bill which would allow veterans to have personalized license plates? **Mr. Roberts** stated SB 163 would not conflict and the DMV supported his bill also.

**SENATOR MACK COLE** asked if SB 163 would create two different types of plates? **Mr. Roberts** replied either a veteran symbol or a handicap symbol could be combined with the HAM plate but not both.

**SENATOR CHUCK SWYSGOOD** inquired about the impact reflected on the fiscal note? **Dean Roberts** answered that the fiscal note included \$700 estimated by the Prison based on the assumption of the issuance of 2000 plates. He said they had assumed it would be a different plate type when they had prepared the fiscal note and it was actually going to be the same plate type as all other plates. He said the only cost would be a \$.35 silk screen cost. He stated he could not speak for the Prison but the DMV did not believe it would cost \$700; the DMV estimate was approximately \$100. **SENATOR SWYSGOOD** confirmed that the Prison already had the silk screen so it would only require extra time in manufacturing.

Closing by Sponsor:

**SENATOR NELSON** closed stating SB 163 was important to a lot of people.

HEARING ON SB 245

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

**SENATOR LOREN JENKINS, SD 45, Big Sandy**, stated SB 245 required a technical change on page 2, line 5; 10,000 lbs should be amended to read 11,000 lbs. He explained that during the previous legislative session the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) had introduced a bill which changed the way the Department enforced the weight limit on vehicle tires. He maintained that the intent of the Department's bill had been to reduce the damage done to the highway system. He said that bill had passed but was amended on the House Floor with an amendment which would cause serious problems to owners of two ton trucks, particularly farmers. He reported that the amendment lowered the allowable weight per inch of tire width from 600 pounds to 500 pounds because small trucks use 8 and 9 inch tires. He said that for 9 inch tires the result would be a reduction of gross weight of 2000-4000 pounds per axle. He maintained this effect was never intended and SB 245 would correct the problem as well as put a limit on the steering axle, which was a new concept in Montana. He said Montana treated steering axles the same as any other single axle and operators were allowed to put up to 20,000 pounds on the front of a truck. **SENATOR JENKINS** stressed overweight steering axles were very dangerous and could cause serious damages. He explained that SB 245 would require that steering axle weights conform to the manufacturer's rating on the tire. He reported that SB 245 would apply to all trucks and was the same as the federal rule which currently applied to commercial vehicles.

Proponents' Testimony:

Dave Galt, Administrator, Motor Carrier Services Division, read his written testimony (EXHIBIT # 2).

Ben Havdahl, Executive Vice President, of the Montana Motor Carriers Association, read his written testimony (EXHIBIT # 3).

Opponents' Testimony:

None.

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

SENATOR SWYSGOOD stated he had a problem limiting steering axle weights as the limit would affect people using the Primary and Secondary road systems where federal law did not apply. He addressed SENATOR JENKINS' concern that farmers were overloading front axles and SB 245 allowed 20,000 pounds per axle. SENATOR SWYSGOOD stated he was unclear how a truck loaded with grain could place 20,000 pounds on the front axle without overloading the rear axle. SENATOR JENKINS explained that some farmers built up the sides of their old boxes which used to have a weight distribution of about one-third in the front and two-thirds in the rear. He said some people have started using shorter boxes and building them higher, some as high as triple-tip-top, and loading the front to the top, thereby placing more weight on the front end.

SENATOR SWYSGOOD asked how many of those type of trucks were on the road. SENATOR JENKINS stated that in his area there were probably 10 or 15.

SENATOR SWYSGOOD argued that everyone should not pay the price for 10 or 15 people. SENATOR JENKINS replied the remainder of people were running over-the-road trucks. He explained that most two and one half ton trucks have a manufacturer's front axle rating between 5,000 and 7,000 pounds and most tires were rated at 6,500 pounds. He said that allowed 13,000 lbs. on the front axle.

SENATOR SWYSGOOD inquired about 8¼ tires? SENATOR JENKINS stated 8¼ tires would allow less weight.

SENATOR SWYSGOOD asked what GVW the owners were claiming on the trucks when they license them? SENATOR JENKINS replied the owners claimed as little as possible.

SENATOR SWYSGOOD stated the owners were in violation of the GVW law. SENATOR JENKINS stated most trucks were running from 26,000-30,000 pounds GVW. He said that if the trucks were running at 30,000 pounds, legally, the owner could only put

10,000 pounds on the front axle, so the tire size made no difference.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** clarified his point that if an owner wanted to build up the truck box, move the axle to the back of the frame and haul 40,000 pounds, 20,000 on front and 20,000 on back, the vehicle should be GVWed for 40,000 pounds. **SENATOR JENKINS** stated there were others with tandem axles that could GVW for 50,000 and most were at 46,000 pounds.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** stated that if the operator bought GVW for 30,000 pounds, but put 35,000 pounds on the truck the fine would be significant if he were caught. **SENATOR JENKINS** said that would be true if the operator was carrying that much weight.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** reasoned some operators must be carrying the weight if SB 245 sought to reduce the weight on the front axle. **SENATOR JENKINS** clarified his intention was to follow the tire manufacturer's recommended rating for the tires. He said the maximum axle rating limit was already being exceeded by 5,000 - 7,000 pounds, so the tire manufacturer's recommendation should be the maximum as it is on commercial trucks.

**SENATOR ARNIE MOHL** clarified the rating depended on the quality of tire bought. He stated the weight reduction to front axles would strongly impact concrete trucks and asked what would be done about them?. **Mr. Galt** stated he was not familiar with concrete trucks but tires could be purchased that would allow for the weight of the truck.

**SENATOR MOHL** stated the average truck on the highway, excluding concrete trucks, had little chance of being loaded with 20,000 pounds. He related having twenty some trucks and said he could not load their front axles over 15,000-16,000 pounds, except for his concrete trucks. **Mr. Galt** stated there were dump trucks that could easily put 20,000 pounds on the front. He added that 16,000 pounds was a lot of weight on a tire which was only rated at 10,000 pounds and he thought that was the point **SENATOR JENKINS** was trying to make.

**SENATOR BARRY STANG** asked what Sections 61-10-104, 106 and 110 were. **Ms. Erickson** explained 61-10-104 dealt with length, 61-10-106 with distance between axles, 61-10-107 with weight and 61-10-110 with federal law. The repeal of 61-10-105 necessitated some technical changes that were nonsubstantive.

**CHAIRMAN LARRY TVEIT** asked **Mr. Galt** what the weights were for 8-1/4-, 9-, 10-, 11-, and 12-inch tires? **Mr. Galt** stated an 800 tire was 500 pounds and 16,000 pounds on the axle, 8-1/4 would be 16,250, 8-1/2 would be 16,500 and it continued to increase by 500 pounds per 1/2 inch. He explained that currently the steering axle was exempt from inch tire weight so the steering axle on any truck in Montana could weigh 20,000 pounds. He said the only restriction on steering axles in Montana was by federal law. He

explained that if the vehicle fell under federal safety regulations, federal regulations mandate the weight may not exceed the manufacture's rating of the tires.

**CHAIRMAN TVEIT** asked what the weights would be under SB 245 for an 8-1/4 tire? **Mr. Galt** stated the ones he had checked were 10-11 inch tires and had found them to be 6200-6500 pounds per tire.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** asked about metric tires? He stated a low profile, metric tire measured less surface than its standard counterpart. **Mr. Galt** agreed regulating tire weights had been a nightmare since the introduction of the metric tire. He explained that after much discussion the Department proposed going by the manufacturer's nominal tire width stamped on most tires. He said they needed an enforcement mechanism if they were going to worry about tire width.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** insisted that if a driver got an officer who went strictly by the book in measuring, a metric tire could be found short 10 inches width and the officer could cut the driver's capacity by 500 pounds per inch tire width and that would have a tremendous effect. **Mr. Galt** stated that was part of the reason he had used the phrase in the wording of the Bill, that any axle with more than 11,000 pounds must have 4 tires. He said that if the axle had four tires then tire width did not apply.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** asked if a person would have to put four tires on a steering axle. **Mr. Galt** stated the steering axle was exempt. He said the only effect SB 245 had on the steering axle was to limit the steering axle to the manufacture's rated capacity of the tires. He referred to page 2, line 5, 'except for the steering axle all axles weighing over' amended to 11,000 'must have at least 4 tires or have wide-based tires'. He said that if the vehicle has wide-based tires it would be held to 500 pounds per inch tire weight. **Mr. Galt** referred to 61-10-105 dealing with determining the width of the tire. The tire chart stated that if the tire was a single duplex or wide-based the Department would go by the marking on the tire, which was the nominal tire width, which was what he wanted to do for all tires.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** asked if a person in Montana could legally carry 20,000 pounds on a steering axle? **Mr. Galt** stated that Montana adopted the Federal Code of Regulations which stated any vehicle over 26,000 pounds, except farm vehicles, could not exceed the manufacturer's rated capacity of the tires. He said the question remained why the Department did not currently support that? He said they did not enforce that regulation as vigorously as they should, but if this were put in state statute he expected they would enforce it more vigorously.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** asked if this Bill would affect helper axles and lift axles? **Mr. Galt** explained those as a three axle group that fell within the bridge formula which usually was a minimum of 8

feet. He explained that 8 feet on three axles would allow 42,500 pounds by the bridge formula. He said the pusher axle had to pick up a proportionate share of its weight. He said the two axles alone could haul 34,000 pounds and the proportionate share of the weight the push axle must pick up would be 8200 pounds.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** asked about the trucks that have two steering axles? **Mr. Galt** stated the steering axles, whether there was one or two, would be exempt under the section. He said steering axles had not been defined, but he considered them to be an axle that was movable and turnable and controlled the vehicle.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** stated this was where it got into interpretations and asked about helper axles that steer? **Mr. Galt** stated a helper axle that steers simply steers the same tires and was not steerable to control the steering of the vehicle. He maintained that the vehicle had to turn first, before that axle could steer. **Mr. Galt** stated that if it would help to have a definition of steering axles, he would work with the Motor Carriers Association to define it.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** stated he believed there could be a problem relating to axles that were actually steering axles and what would be considered exempt. **Mr. Galt** stated that language had always been in the inch tire width law.

**CHAIRMAN TVEIT** stated both steering axles steer, as both were hooked direct and did steer. He said one did not just trail behind the other; they were both steering axles with equal amounts of weight. **Mr. Galt** stated the inch of tire width laws have always exempted the steering axle except during spring breakup when a reduction applied. He said the tire width language had always been enforced on steerable tags and steerable trailer axles.

{Tape: 1; Side: B}

**CHAIRMAN TVEIT** asked for clarification as to the rated capacity on tires in regard to the grade of tire? **SENATOR SWYSGOOD** stated the grade depended on the price and the tire could be bought to go around the weight of the GVW's.

**SENATOR SWYSGOOD** said that with current law every axle was weighed across the scales. If the steering axle was 12,300 pounds, while the other axles were still within the 80,000 pound gross, would SB 245 require the weight to be taken off the front axle and move his fifth wheel back in order to carry that weight legally? **Mr. Galt** stated that even during spring break up, currently that would not require a bond at weigh stations, only a warning card would be issued. He said that if SB 245 were to pass, depending on the penalty, a violation would be a misdemeanor and the fine would be \$15-\$300. He said they would probably require the operator to make that correction.

Closing by Sponsor:

SENATOR JENKINS made reference to the trucks which were being equipped with tip-tops to shift the weight toward the front and stated he did not believe it would overload the front axle on the manufacturer's recommendation for tires. He said there were operators who were shifting the balance of the load toward the front of the truck and if a front tire blew out, it would be fatal. He said a majority of the testimony had stated that most trucks would not be loaded heavier than the tire manufacturer's recommendation for weight per tire and he agreed with that testimony. He said SB 245 may, however, stop those operators from piling the front end of the load until they were over the limit. He said it made sense that the tire manufacturer knew what was best for their tires and said SB 245 involved a little precaution and a little clean up of a mistake made the previous session. He said the amendments were a result of discussion on the Bill and the proponents felt them agreeable. He asked the Committee to at least clean up the language from the previous session's work and if they felt the front axle needed attention they might save a life.

HEARING ON SB 205Opening Statement by Sponsor:

SENATOR GARY FORRESTER, SD 8, Billings, stated SB 205 was an act to increase limits on oversize loads for certain motor vehicles, specifically cranes. He referred to page 1, line 12 and noted the overall length of a single truck would be increased from 45 to 55 feet. The purpose of the increase was to accommodate cranes which were over 45 feet in length. He said that current truck trailers could be up to 53 feet in length and the combination rigs were over 60 feet. He stated that the proponents would testify that new cranes over 45 feet in length were extremely movable and can be safely operated on the roads as do tractor-trailer combinations over 60 feet. He said SB 205 would increase from 9 to 10 feet the width of a reducible load on a truck. He said the purpose of the amendment was to allow the movement of crane booms which are 4-1/2 feet in width and laid on a flat bed with two booms side by side, which made them just over the allowable 9 foot width. He maintained that hauling only one boom at a time was an economic hardship, while hay haulers were allowed to haul loads 12 feet wide. He argued that if it were safe to haul hay then it would be equally safe to haul two crane booms.

Proponents' Testimony:

Doug Strong, owner, Strong's Crane, stated he had started to look into this regulation when he realized hay haulers were allowed to



haul 12-foot wide loads of hay. He stated the total weight of a boom section was about 1000-1500 pounds and by hauling the wider loads he could haul everything necessary to erect a 200-foot boom with one truck, while it currently requires three to four. He stated it would not create a weight violation or tear up the roads. He explained that a lot of extra expense was involved for jobs across the state and maintained that the crane could be hauled and turned sharper and cleaner than a semi-truck with a 40 foot trailer. He commented that SB 205 would not create a safety hazard.

**Carl Schweitzer, Montana Contractors' Association**, said they were present to support the Bill. He said that even though SB 205 was three pages long, only two lines of the Bill involved any real changes. He said that Page 1, line 12, increased the length of a single unit to 55 feet and page 3, line 7 increased the reducible load maximum width to 10 feet. He stated SB 205 would provide economic relief for several businesses and would be on a permit basis which required the Department to be notified. He said that perhaps an annual permit fee would be charged and may raise additional revenue for the State.

#### Opponents' Testimony:

**Dave Galt, Administrator, Motor Carrier Services Division, with the Montana Department of Transportation**, stated the Division did not have a concern with increasing the length to 55 feet as they currently issued permits for 55-foot lengths at the rate of \$75 a year. He said the reasons for permitting vehicles were to limit oversized, over statutorily-limited loads, which may be considered dangerous. He said the second purpose would be to raise revenue. He said the length increase would not be asking for anything which couldn't be done currently.

**Mr. Galt** stated the Department would not support increasing the width. He said that on page 3, the section being amended was their permit section and explained the statutory width in Montana as 8-1/2 feet. He said that any time that width was exceeded a permit was currently required. He said these permits were issued for nonreducible loads up to the width necessary for equipment, houses or whatever, and stated that the wider the load the more restrictions there were. He maintained that with reducible loads the limit was 9 feet and the Department currently sold about 1000 of those permits a year to the logging industry, to those moving PVC pipe, fence poles, etc. He stated that by changing the width to 10 feet it probably wouldn't affect the logging industry which already had a weight problem, but PVC haulers and other like loads could take advantage of the change. He explained that due to the number of narrow roads in Montana, the Department of Transportation had always taken a dim view of overwidth loads. He said the proposed width change would apply to any road in Montana and the Department felt that if it was a reducible load, it should be reduced to a least nine feet.

**Colonel Craig Reap, Montana Highway Patrol**, stated the Highway Patrol had opposed the 12 foot hay loads for safety reasons and opposed SB 205 for the same reason. He said Montana had many highways just over 20 feet wide and many bridges which were less than 20 feet wide and they felt frequent accidents would result at these locations. He said to increase the number of possible overwidth loads on the roads without permits would not be in the best interest of safety. He said the length increase would not be a problem as the Highway Patrol did not see a safety problem with those.

**Questions From Committee Members and Responses:**

**SENATOR MACK COLE** asked how many of these farm permits the Department issued? **Mr. Galt** replied he was not sure but guessed a couple hundred.

**SENATOR COLE** asked how many permits would be issued if SB 205 passed? **Mr. Galt** replied perhaps another couple hundred, maybe less.

**SENATOR RIC HOLDEN** asked if the boom was currently 10 feet wide when his company hauled it? **Mr. Strong** said it was not, each section was about 4-1/2 feet wide and they currently hauled the boom one section wide on a 40 foot trailer.

**SENATOR HOLDEN** asked about how often the boom would be moved across the State of Montana each year? **Mr. Strong** estimated the boom was moved ten times a year.

**SENATOR CHUCK SWYSGOOD** asked why his company did not stack the booms to move them? **Mr. Strong** stated they currently did stack the boom but if SB 205 were passed they could haul twice as many with one load.

**SENATOR GREG JERGESON** noted that if the booms were 4-1/2 feet wide, side by side that only came to 9 ft. **Mr. Strong** explained the load is wider due to brackets and such on the booms.

**SENATOR BARRY STANG** asked if the Department would currently issue a special permit to haul the booms side by side? **Mr. Galt** stated they would not.

**SENATOR REINY JABS** asked if the Department feared that if they allowed the crane haulers to be wider, then other industries would make the same request? **Mr. Galt** stated SB 205 would open the gate for anyone.

**SENATOR JABS** inquired if a flag car would make it safer? **Mr. Galt** stated the Department currently did not require a flag car in Montana, even for loads over 12 feet wide.

SENATOR JABS noted that if a flag car would satisfy the safety concerns it would certainly be cheaper for the business to run a flag car than another semi-truck. Mr. Galt stated the Department had considered requiring a flag car for loads over 10 feet wide. He said the Department could establish that by rule and have a hearing to see what the public response was.

Closing by Sponsor:

SENATOR FORRESTER noted there had been a lot of testimony regarding the safety hazards of 10 foot loads while a 12 foot nonreducible load was considered by the Department to be acceptable. He expressed hope that the Committee would look to a favorable consideration of the Bill.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 163

Motion: SENATOR NELSON MOVED THE AMENDMENTS TO SB 163, SB016301.ACE. (EXHIBIT # 4)

Discussion: SENATOR NELSON explained the amendment would ensure the fees continued to go to the places currently designated. She stated the bill provided for this but language clarification was needed.

Vote: THE MOTION TO AMEND SB 163 CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion/Vote: SENATOR STANG'S MOTION THAT SB 163 DO PASS AS AMENDED CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 205

Discussion:

SENATOR SWYSGOOD sympathized with the crane hauler's plight, but insisted the wider loads were a safety hazard and agreed the hay bale haulers should not have been allowed to widen their loads. He said that whether these loads were legal or not, he felt they were the most dangerous thing going down the road. He expressed that the privileges were afforded to them by mere virtue of being part of agriculture and it seemed safety had been thrown out the window. He stated it was unfair to allow agriculture to haul 12 foot loads but felt it would be a mistake to increase the width for everyone.

SENATOR MOHL expressed agreement that this Bill opened the door on all reducible loads with no end in sight. He expressed support for current law.

Motion/Vote: SENATOR STANG'S MOTION TO TABLE SB 205 CARRIED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE WITH SENATOR JERGESON VOTING NO.

Discussion:


CHAIRMAN TVEIT offered (EXHIBIT # 5) which was a letter sent to the Committee regarding SB 251. He stated that if there was enough concern by the Committee someone could try to bring the Bill up before next Tuesday's deadline. He stated that Jerry Noble had expressed concerns and wished for the material to be brought to their attention. He said the Bill had been presented with Jerry Noble stating the desire it be passed unamended, but there had been amendments presented.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: CHAIRMAN LARRY TVEIT adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.



SENATOR LARRY TVEIT, Chairman



CARLA TURK, Secretary

LT/cmt

SEN:1995  
wp.rollcall.man  
CS-09

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Page 1 of 1  
February 9, 1995

MR. PRESIDENT:

We, your committee on Highways and Transportation having had under consideration SB 163 (first reading copy -- white), respectfully report that SB 163 be amended as follows and as so amended do pass.

Signed: Sen. Tveit  
Senator Larry Tveit, Chair

That such amendments read:

1. Page 1, line 17.

Strike: "for the original registration"

Insert: "as provided in 61-3-422"

2. Page 1, line 19.

Strike: "fee"

Insert: "fees"

Strike: "original"

Insert: "the"

3. Page 1, line 20.

Strike: "is \$10, and the fee for each renewal is \$5"

Insert: "are the fees provided for in 61-3-332(10)(c) and in 61-3-422"

4. Page 1, line 20 and 21.

Strike: "original" on line 20 through "renewal" on line 21

-END-

Amd. Coord.  
Sec. of Senate

341644SC.SPV

MONTANA SENATE  
1995 LEGISLATURE  
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTE

DATE 2/9/95 BILL NO. SB 205 NUMBER 1

MOTION: Senator Stang Moved to  
Table SB 205.

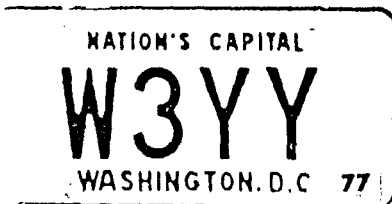
NAME	AYE	NO
LARRY TVEIT, CHAIRMAN	X	
CHUCK SWYSGOOD, VICE CHAIRMAN	X	
RIC HOLDEN	X	
LINDA NELSON	X	
MACK COLE	X	
BARRY "SPOOK" STANG	X	
ARNIE MOHL	X	
GREG JERGESON		X
REINY JABS	X	



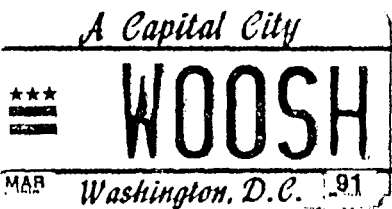
plate from 1954, the first year of sue in Indiana.



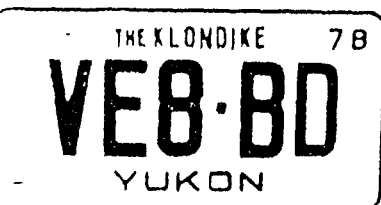
sample plate from the Kentucky MV, featuring the call sign of ARRL resident George Wilson III, W40YI.



range and rare license tags...1977 district of Columbia vanity ham ate...



an example of a 0-district plate with the 0 masquerading as an O...



..a 1978 Yukon plate...

After their short chat, the governor told the hams that they had proven their point and he would recommend to the DMV that Amateur Radio operators be allowed to have special plates with their call signs on them.

#### Negative Publicity

A Panama plate I received came with the owner's explanation that because of the unstable government there at the time, he decided to remove his ham plates from his car and replace them with a "garden variety" plate with only numbers on it. Some people there assumed that a ham plate signified involvement with the government, which could lead to serious problems.

The most difficult ham plate for a collector to get is one from the District of Columbia. There are many hams who work in DC, but few actually live there. Of the small number who live in DC, there are those who have company or government vehicles and can't have ham plates on their cars. Some rely on public transportation because of the parking problems at work and where they live. Some don't care to have a ham plate on their cars because a ham plate may indicate that there could be expensive radio equipment in the car.

#### Whoa—It's Not WO, it's W0!

The FCC's current policy of retaining call signs when amateurs move to another call district has created some problems. All states in the zero call district use the slant-bar zero (0) to make the number zero distinctive from the letter O. Many states outside the 0 call district use the number zero that looks exactly like the letter O. Therefore, a W0OSH from the 0 call district would end up with WOOSH in many states outside of the 0 call district. Some people might think this is a vanity plate for a speedy car.

One of the more unusual plates is from the Canadian Northwest Territories because it's in the shape of a polar bear. The Yukon plate isn't as distinctive, but finding one that isn't battered and bent from the severe winters is hard to do.

#### More Personal Than Your Name

Ham plates mean a special thing to many amateurs. There are many John Smiths in the US, but only one person in the world has any given Amateur Radio call sign. A ham call sign is even more personal than your name.

I've shown my ham plate collection at ARRL conventions and other ham gatherings. It takes up more space than a 50-state collection of QSL cards, but it sure brightens the walls!

The author's collection was featured in April 1990 Up Front in QST.—Ed.

SENATE HIGHWAYS

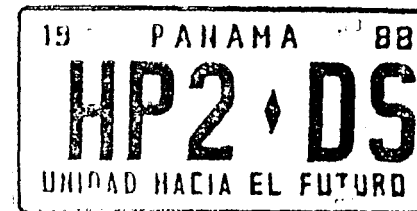
EXHIBIT NO. 1

DATE 2/9/95

BILL NO. 50163



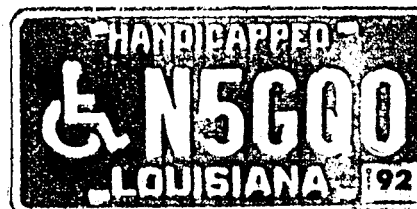
...a 1983 polar bear-shaped tag from the Northwest Territories.



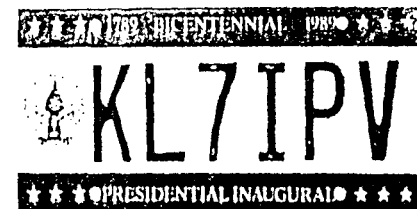
1988 plate from Panama.



A rare 1952 Canal Zone tag.



A 1992 Louisiana handicapped Amateur Radio call sign plate.



A Presidential Inauguration plate, legal in any state for the first three months of an inaugural year. This one is from George Bush's Inauguration in 1989.



SENATE BILL: SB 245

SPONSORED BY: SENATOR JENKINS

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY: DAVID A. GALT, ADMINISTRATOR  
MOTOR CARRIER SERVICES DIVISION

DATE: 2/9/95

MR CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, FOR THE RECORD MY NAME IS DAVID GALT AND I AM THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE MOTOR CARRIER SERVICES DIVISION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

CURRENTLY TRUCK WEIGHT IN MONTANA IS LIMITED IN SEVERAL WAYS.

1. SINGLE AXLES ARE LIMITED TO 20,000 POUNDS
2. TANDEM AXLES ARE LIMITED TO 34,000 POUNDS
3. GROSS WEIGHT IS LIMITED BY THE BRIDGE FORMULA WHICH LOOKS AT THE NUMBER AXLES AND THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM.
4. AND FINALLY, BY TIRE WIDTH.

IN THE LAST LEGISLATIVE SESSION MDT ATTEMPTED TO PASS LEGISLATION WHICH LIMITED A CARRIERS ABILITY TO USE SINGLE TIRES, THEREBY REDUCING PAVEMENT DAMAGE. STUDIES BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES AROUND THE COUNTRY INDICATE THAT IMPROPERLY USED SINGLE TIRES ARE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO HIGHWAY RUTTING. WE TRIED TO PASS SIMILAR LEGISLATION LAST SESSION, BUT A FLOOR AMENDMENT, ELIMINATED OUR PROPOSAL AND SIMPLY CHANGED THE AMOUNT OF WEIGHT ALLOWED PER INCH OF TIRE WIDTH FROM THE PREVIOUSLY ALLOWED 600 POUNDS TO 500 POUNDS. AT THE TIME I THOUGHT THE NET EFFECT WAS ABOUT THE SAME AS WHAT WE WERE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH, *we didn't oppose it* SO THE AMENDMENT WAS PASSED AND BECAME LAW. THAT CHANGE IN 1993 WAS EFFECTIVE ON JANUARY 1, 1995 WITH A GRACE PERIOD OF ONE YEAR. DURING THE INTERIM WE DISCOVERED THAT IF THE 500 POUND LAW BECOMES EFFECTIVE IT WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON EVERY SINGLE AXLE 2 TON TRUCK. THESE

2 TON TRUCKS ARE SEEN ON ABOUT EVERY FARM IN MONTANA, AS WELL AS MANY SMALL BUSINESSES. THESE TRUCKS ARE DESIGNED FOR 8 TO 9 INCH TIRES. THE EFFECT OF 500 POUNDS PER INCH OF TIRE WIDTH ON THESE VEHICLES IS A REDUCTION IN GROSS WEIGHT OF 2000 TO 4000 POUNDS PER VEHICLE. THIS WAS NOT THE INTENT OF MDT WHEN WE BROUGHT THIS BILL BEFORE YOU LAST SESSION.

TO CORRECT THIS PROBLEM WE BRING ESSENTIALLY THE SAME BILL BACK BEFORE YOU TODAY. HOWEVER, WE HAVE STUDIED THE EFFECTS OF THE BILL OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS AND MADE SOME MODIFICATIONS. THIS BILL DOES SEVERAL THINGS:

1. IT STATES THAT ANY AXLE OVER <sup>11,000</sup>~~10,000~~ POUNDS MUST HAVE FOUR TIRES. AS AN OPTION TO FOUR TIRES A CARRIER MAY USE WIDE BASE TIRES AND BE LIMITED TO 500 POUNDS PER INCH OF TIRE WIDTH, BASED ON THE TIRE MARKING.

THE IMPACT:

- a) TWO TON TRUCKS WITH FOUR TIRES ON THE REAR AXLE-NO EFFECT FROM WHAT IS CURRENTLY ALLOWED.
- b) TRUCKS CURRENTLY IN USE WITH TRIDEM AND QUAD AXLE GROUPS AND WIDE BASE SINGLE TIRES----NO EFFECT.
- c) TRUCKS CURRENTLY USING SINGLE TIRES WILL BE REQUIRED TO USE WIDER TIRES IF THE AXLE WEIGHS OVER <sup>11,000</sup>~~10,000~~ POUNDS. THE NET EFFECT IS THE SAME AS THE 500 POUND CHANGE MADE IN 1993

2. PROVIDES AN EXEMPTION FOR BUSES. I AM CONCERNED THAT MANY PASSENGER BUSES IN USE WOULD BE ADVERSELY IMPACTED BY THIS LEGISLATION. SOME BUSES ARE DESIGNED TO RUN A SINGLE

EXHIBIT 2  
DATE 2-9-95  
1 SB 245

TIRE ON THE FIRST AXLE OF THE DRIVE AXLE GROUP AND THAT TIRE IS 12 INCHES WIDE. HOWEVER, THERE MAY BE INSTANCES IF YOU ADOPT THIS BILL WITHOUT THE BUS EXEMPTION, THAT WOULD CAUSE THEM UNDUE HARDSHIP.

3. THIS BILL ADDS A SECTION THAT FORBIDS THE STEERING AXLE WEIGHT TO EXCEED THE RATED CAPACITY OF THE TIRES. THIS MIRRORS A FEDERAL LAW THAT CURRENTLY IS IN PLACE. BUT THIS SECTION WILL APPLY TO ALL VEHICLES IN MONTANA, WHEREAS THE FEDERAL LAW HAS LIMITED APPLICABILITY.

SENATOR JENKINS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT MANY PEOPLE OVERLOAD THE STEERING AXLE BECAUSE OUR CURRENT STATUTE TREATS IT LIKE ANY OTHER SINGLE AXLE. THIS SECTION WOULD ENSURE THAT IF IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE HEAVY WEIGHTS ON THE STEERING AXLE, THE TIRES ARE ABLE TO HANDLE THE WEIGHT.

4. THIS BILL REPEALS SECTION 61-10-105 WHICH IS MONTANA'S OLD WEIGHT STANDARD. THE WEIGHT LIMITS IN THIS SECTION HAVE BEEN INCREASED BY SECTION 61-10-107 MANY YEARS AGO, BUT THIS SECTION WAS LEFT IN STATUTE BECAUSE OF THE TIRE SIZE CHART. SINCE THIS CHART DOES NOT DEAL WITH METRIC TIRES IT IS OBSOLETE. THIS BILL PROVIDES LANGUAGE THAT CLEARLY TELLS OUR OFFICERS HOW TO CALCULATE TIRE WIDTH OF METRIC TIRES AND WILL IMPROVE OUR ABILITY TO BE UNIFORM IN OUR ENFORCEMENT.

5. IT PROVIDES AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1/1/96 THAT COINCIDES WITH THE END OF THE GRACE PERIOD OF THE LAWS PAST IN THE 1993 SESSION.

IN ESSENCE THIS BILL CORRECTS AN IMPACT ON SMALLER TRUCKS THAT WE

DID NOT FORESEE DURING THE LAST SESSION. IT ALSO HELPS INCREASE SAFETY BY APPLYING A STEERING AXLE TIRE LIMIT TO ALL VEHICLES IN MONTANA. FAILURE TO PASS THIS BILL, OR IN SOME WAY MODIFY THE CURRENT STATUTE WILL CAUSE MANY SMALL TRUCKS TO REDUCE THEIR PAYLOAD, WHICH IS NOT WHAT MCS INTENDED. THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THIS BILL AND I WILL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS.

Statement to Senate Highways and Transportation Committee  
SB 245 - Date submitted February 9, 1995  
by Ben Havdahl, Executive Vice President  
Montana Motor Carriers Association

DATE 2/9/95BILL NO. SB 245

Mr. Chairman. Members of the Committee. For the record I am Ben Havdahl representing the Montana Motor Carriers Association.

MMCA is appearing as a proponent on SB 245, with the amendment offered by the sponsor. We would support changing the axle weight designated in the bill from 10,000 pounds to 11,000 pounds.

As you have heard, SB 245 would have required all axles in a truck combination carrying over 10,000 pounds, to have four tires. The steering axle tires on the vehicle cannot exceed the manufacture's rated capacity.

The bill provides for the use of "single" tires if they are wide based tires with a nominal width of 14 inches or more and the gross weight that could be carried on each tire, can not exceed 500 pounds per inch of tire width. The bill removes the 500 pound per inch of tire width standard for all tires except steering axle tires, from the law.

The amendment to 11,000 pounds is necessary because of the change in the law with passage of HB 294 by the last session establishing a 500 pounds per inch of tire width standard for all tires. HB 294 did not solve the problem for the few carriers who use special single tire truck trailer configurations.

The practice of using single tires, primarily on trailers by a for hire motor carrier in the State, is not a common or widespread practice. Some carriers hauling dry and wet bulky commodities such as wood chips as well as petroleum are using single tires. Some have converted to super singles.

A few liquid bulk carriers of petroleum products are mainly involved who use pup trailers equipped with single ten inch tires and have done so legally under prior statutory standard for tire width of 600 pounds. The change to 500 pounds per inch of tire width in the last session creates a problem for compliance by these carriers.

They have made a considerable capital investment in complete compliance with the law prior to the last session. SB 245, as introduced and without the amendment, would require these same carriers to make a large additional capital investment to be in compliance.

An example is Dixon Brothers Inc., a bulk petroleum transporter in Montana operating 40 vehicle combinations reflected on the attached sketch. I would cite his operation as an example of the inequity that SB 245, as originally introduced, will create in its actual application.

The sketches depict two combinations that transport liquid petroleum products, one liquid asphalt the other gasoline. It should be pointed out that both these units are operating at more than 3,000 pounds under the allowable gross weight determined by the formula in the law.

At 500 pounds per inch of tire width, the liquid asphalt unit in the sketch with single tires on the second trailer might not be affected because the axles on the second trailer are exactly 10,000 pounds each which would be the maximum weight allowed under the 500 inch per tire width standard. However if 100 pounds or even one pound is added to the asphalt unit on any or all axles, it would not be in compliance with SB 245 without the amendment.

The gasoline unit's second trailer, in the sketch, would be precluded from using single standard tires because of being over the 10,000 pound exemption by just a few hundred pounds, 100 on the first axle and 800 on the second.

This unit would not be in compliance with SB 245, without the amendment. The single tires would have to be changed to dual tires adding considerable tare weight to the trailers and reducing the pay load. The inner axles might have to be removed and dual tires placed on the two remaining axles or converted to super singles. All costing a lot of money.

Depending on how the change is made, the cost per trailer is estimated to be around \$4,800. And when 40 or 50 plus trailers are involved the cost becomes very considerable.


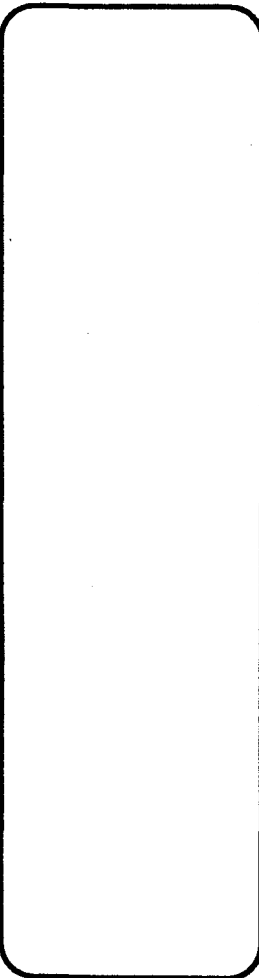
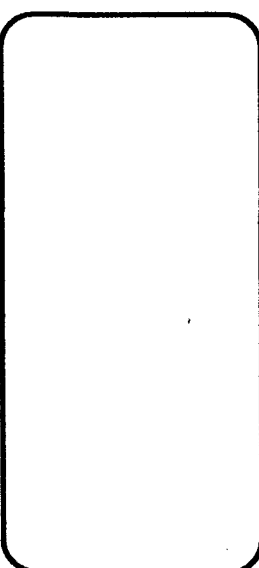
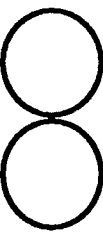
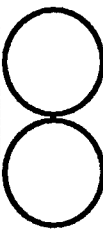
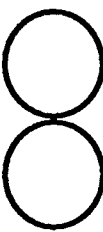

The example points out one practical problem in the application of SB 245, without the amendment. About half the fleet of trucks could be exempt and the other half would be precluded from operating as they are now operating.

The amendment, changing the axle weight from 10,000 pounds to 11,000 pounds will resolve everyone's problem with the bill. We would urge your acceptance of the amendment and with it a do pass on this bill.

Thank you.

**Liquid Asphalt Units 91feet 8 1/2inches overall length**

**Actual Gross Weight - 119,500#    Allowable Gross Weight by Formula - 123,180#**

 11,500#		
 34,000 # 10" Dual tires (8 tires)	 34,000# 10" Dual tires (8 tires)	 20,000# 10,000 # per axle 10" Single tires (4 tires)
		 20,000# 10,000# per axle (4 tires)

**Gasoline Units 94 feet 11 1/2 inches overall length**

**Actual Gross Weight - 121,800#    Allowable Gross Weight by Formula - 124,870#**


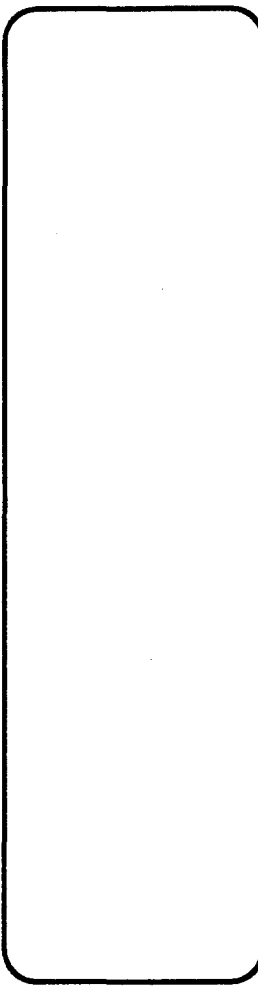
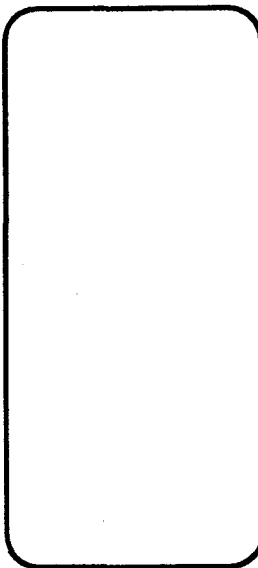




 11,800#		
 34,000# 10" Dual tires(8 tires)	 34,000# 10" Dual tires(8 tires)	 20,200# 10,100# per axle 10" Single tires (4 tires)
		 21,800# 10,900# per axle (4 tires)

EXHIBIT 3  
DATE 2-9-95  
SB 245

Amendments to Senate Bill No. 163  
First Reading Copy

Requested by Senator Nelson  
For the Senate Committee on Highways and Transportation

Prepared by Connie Erickson  
January 26, 1995

1. Page 1, line 17.

Strike: "for the original registration"

Insert: "as provided in 61-3-422"

2. Page 1, line 19.

Strike: "fee"

Insert: "fees"

Strike: "original"

Insert: "the"

3. Page 1, line 20.

Strike: "is \$10, and the fee for each renewal is \$5"

Insert: "are the fees provided for in 61-3-332(10)(c) and in 61-3-422"

4. Page 1, line 20 and 21.

Strike: "original" on line 20 through "renewal" on line 21



# TIRES

SENATE HIGHWAYS

EXHIBIT NO. 5

DATE 2/9/95

BILL NO. SB 251

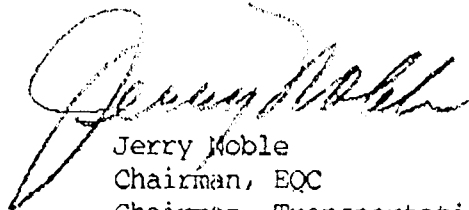
February 8, 1995

Senators Tveit, Swysgood and Senate Highway Committee Members

I am writing in regards to SB251. In less than forty five minutes, your committee tabled this bill! I need you to know that the DNRC spent \$ 16,198.00 on the collaborative. There was between 3500 and 4000 citizen and Departmental hours spent on this, including at times, the entire Hiway Commission Membership. Seventy (70) people were the average attendance, with a total of 261 different people attending. Is 45 minutes all these people deserve?

I feel the hearing we had was good, 12-15 people for and 1 against. I think that this deserves more consideration from your committee than we had.

Please respond. I do not intend to stop here.



Jerry Noble  
Chairman, EQC  
Chairman, Transportation  
Energy Collaborative

DATE 2-9-95

SENATE COMMITTEE ON Highway

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY: SB 163 SB 205  
SB 245

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PLEASE PRINT

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Check One

Name	Representing	Bill No.	Support	Oppose
ERVIN DAVIS	AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS OF MONTANA	SB 163	✓	
HAL MANSON	AMERICAN LEGION	SB 163	✓	
Dean Roberts	Dept of Justice MD	SB 163	✓	
Jim Jacobsen	MT VET AFF DIV	SB 163	✓	
Bud Schoen	Dept of Justice	SB 163	✓	
Dick Baumberger	Disabled Am. Vets	SB 163	✓	
Dave GALT	MDT	SB-205 SB 245	✓	✓
Doug Strong	Strong's Crane	SB-205	✓	
Chang Reap	MHR	SB-205		✓
Carl Schweitzer	MT Cont Assn	SB 245	✓	
Ben Hardman	MT Motor Drivers Assn	SB 245	✓	Amended

## VISITOR REGISTER

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY