



October 7, 2009

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation strongly supports *SB 1892 – An Act relative to permits for overweight vehicles*. Passage of this bill would be in the best interests of both farmers and the general public.

Under current Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) provisions, vehicles are allowed to operate with farm plates provided they don't carry in excess of 60,000 pounds gross weight. This poses a problem for some farm operations, namely those involved in grain and forestry, which may operate vehicles rated to carry up to 80,000 pounds gross weight.

The current RMV provision are problematic in that they do not allow owners of these vehicles to use them to their full capacity of 80,000 pounds, despite being rated and safety inspected to carry this amount. Owners with a vehicle rated for 80,000 pounds can only carry 75% of what they would otherwise be able to move. This poses a number of detriments to farmers and foresters:

- Increased wear and maintenance costs on vehicles
- Increased fuel costs
- Increased labor costs paid to drivers - or for many farmers – time taken away from other farm activities

The limitation also results in increased traffic and engine emissions both of which are of concern to the general public.

This bill would simply raise the limit for farm vehicles to 80,000 pounds from 60,000 pounds. There is no downside for the Commonwealth or for the general public. Vehicles would still be required to be safety inspected and appropriately rated.

On behalf of more than 6500 farmers and farm families throughout the Commonwealth, The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation strongly urges the Committee to report favorably on this bill

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