



ASSOCIATION OF  
**OREGON COUNTIES**  
EST 1906



February 5, 2026

House Committee On Transportation  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: HB 4007 Milk Truck Pilot, Cost and Administrative Concerns**

Chair McLain, Vice Chairs Boshart Davis and Gamba, Members of the House Committee On Transportation,

The Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors (OACES), an affiliate of the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC), represents Oregon's 36 county public works agencies and road departments across the state. County roads are a critical component of Oregon's integrated road system and are responsible for over 60% of Oregon's non-federal road network, over 32,000 total miles, and 3,400 bridges.

The maximum allowable weight for a seven-axle vehicle is 80,000 pounds. Some exemptions are made for public service vehicles and special cases where a permit is required. HB 4007 proposes to make a new pilot program to add an exemption of up to 129,000 pounds on certain routes for the dairy industry. We recognize and appreciate the proponents' collaboration with ODOT and counties to narrow the scope of HB 4007 to a pilot program. Nevertheless, the pilot still faces many administrative process challenges and issues that need resolution, and it remains very costly. From a practical administrative standpoint, it is important to emphasize that any policy regarding overweight trucks should be incorporated into a variance permit as part of a study. It should not be an outright exemption from all size and weight limitations, which is what the current language of HB 4007 appears to mandate for a pilot program.

County road officials from across the state support the transportation of milk and milk products, one of Oregon's vital industries. Engineers and maintenance crews work diligently to allow businesses to haul loads safely and efficiently from farm to market. However, county bridges simply were not designed to safely transport a 129,000-pound truck, a 61 percent increase over existing legal limits. Milk has no magical properties that make it safer to transport over bridges that will collapse under repeated strain. Milk was, somewhat controversially, reclassified as a non-divisible load under the FAST Act (2016). This reclassification was intended to adjust federal restrictions on the transportation of milk and milk products and hand regulatory responsibility to the states, depending on their infrastructure, permitting, and available bridge maintenance and replacement resources. The FAST Act did not create a mandate for states to allow for the transportation of increased weights. While the trucking industry certainly benefits from increased efficiency and economic gains, the Idaho study pointed out a critical concern: greater crash severity is associated with heavier weights. The study examined national research available and noted the following with regard to safety: *"Regarding Safety, with some consistency, heavier trucks were associated with less crashes due to fewer trucks needed, but higher crash severity."* Page 5, Idaho Department of Transportation's 129,000 Pound Pilot Project Report to the 62<sup>nd</sup> Idaho Legislature. The study notes challenges in their small sample size, route changes, and ability to sort out pilot vehicles from study vehicles. These issues could and should be considered thoroughly and addressed in any Oregon study.

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Heavy trucks cause wear and tear to the transportation system; few facilities are more impacted than county roads and bridges. If passed, HB 4007's pilot program could route oversized trucks over roads and bridges in counties with a significant dairy industry and shorten their lifespan. Even if there are a small number of bridges that can accommodate a 61 percent increase over design standards, the repeated strain would necessitate constant reevaluation as the roads and bridges rapidly deteriorate. This process comes at a cost to county road departments and inevitably results in restrictions. Additionally, large culverts, while not load-rated, pose additional concerns and may collapse under the increased weights.

Counties simply can not afford to replace or repair bridges to meet even current weight requirements. A total of 987 county bridges have become restricted for heavy trucks. Many of these load-rated bridges are located in farming areas, impacting local businesses' ability to deliver products to market, or in forested areas, which jeopardize wildfire response efforts and evacuation routes. In some regions, up to 45% of county bridges have been restricted.

County road departments are neutral with concerns on HB 4007, which would result in unfunded expenses for additional bridge analysis. It would also threaten to destroy roads, bridges, and culverts that counties simply cannot afford to replace. We urge you to support sustainable funding for road and bridge operations, maintenance, safety, and preservation to meet the needs of the existing transportation system.

County road officials are grateful for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 4007 and are eager to work with business partners such as the Tillamook County Creamery Association and Darigold to find solutions and funding for road and bridge improvements that support the efficient movement of their farm-to-market goods.

Sincerely,

**Brian Worley**

County Road Program Director  
Association of Oregon Counties  
Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors

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