



Maryland Motor Truck Association

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HEARING DATE: March 6, 2024
BILL NO/TITLE: SB870 – Vehicle Laws - Electric Vehicles - Weight Limits
COMMITTEE: Senate Judicial Proceedings
POSITION: Support

Maryland Motor Truck Association offers its support for SB870, which would provide a 2,000 lbs. weight allowance for electric trucks similar to that allowed in federal law to help offset the lost carrying capacity created by the vehicle's additional weight.

Electric trucks weigh more than comparable diesel trucks due to the increased weight of their batteries. Consequently, electric trucks must reduce cargo loads to remain within legal weight limits (e.g., 80,000 lbs. for a five-axle tractor trailer). Reducing load capacity results in more trucks needed to deliver the same amount of freight. According to a December 2022 study by the American Transportation Research Institute, the lost carrying capacity for an electric five-axle tractor trailer is 13,800 lbs. This equates to one additional truck needed for every four deliveries, or roughly a 25% increase in truck traffic to carry the same amount of freight being delivered today.

In the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2019, Congress recognized this challenge and increased the federal gross, axle, tandem, and bridge weight limits for electric (and natural gas) vehicles on the Interstate Highway System by 2,000 pounds; however, this does not apply to state roads. SB870 would address this inconsistency.

It should be noted that the passage of HB652 would not prevent the state from posting a maximum weight limit on a specific roadway or bridge based on safety and engineering designs. Trucks would still be required to operate within those posted weight limits regardless of this legislation.

For the reasons noted above, MMTA asks for a favorable report.

About Maryland Motor Truck Association: Maryland Motor Truck Association is a non-profit trade association that has represented the trucking industry since 1935. In service to its 1,000 members, MMTA is committed to support, advocate and educate for a safe, efficient and profitable trucking industry in Maryland.

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