

SB 203 - Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Prod

Uploaded by: Grayson Middleton

Position: FAV



Educate. Advocate. Innovate.

Date: January 14, 2024
To: Members of the Senate Committee on Judicial Proceedings
From: Grayson Middleton, Government Affairs Manager
Re: SB 203 – Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products – **Support**

Delmarva Chicken Association (DCA) the 1,600-member trade association representing the meat-chicken growers, companies, and allied business members on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and Delaware supports SB 203 and urges a favorable committee report.

SB 203 would allow the inclusion of field-loaded farm products in an exceptional hauling permit and would increase the weight allowances of these products given they have the appropriate number of axles. These products include (but are not limited to) live poultry, grain, raw milk, and produce.

Farm-loaded products, including poultry, are currently subject to the same weight restrictions as other commodities. However, they cannot be properly weighed coming out of the field or poultry farms. These greater allowances will ensure that our third-party haulers are operating within legal limits while allowing for proper tracking and inspection for the Maryland Department of Transportation.

Aside from the obvious benefit of fewer trips for our haulers, this permit will also directly result in fewer emissions and less stress on Maryland roads. Fewer trips translate to less fuel usage and less carbon output. Finally, this bill requires commensurate axles with higher weights, so although the haulers may have more weight, the stress on roads will not increase.

This legislation is mutually beneficial to the environment, MDOT, and the regulated community, and as such, we urge a **favorable** vote on SB 203.

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at Grayson Middleton at middleton@dcahicken.com or 410-490-3329.

Sincerely,

Grayson Middleton

Government Affairs Manager

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Uploaded by: Lindsay Thompson

Position: FAV



Maryland Grain Producers Association
118 Dundee Ave, Chester, MD 21619
Lindsay.mdag@gmail.com (p) 443-262-8491
www.marylandgrain.com

Date: January 14, 2025

Senate Bill 203 - Vehicle Laws - Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

MGPA Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Grain Producers Association (MGPA) serves as the voice of grain farmers growing corn, wheat, barley and sorghum across the state. MGPA supports Senate Bill 203 which harmonizes exceptional hauling permits for field loaded agricultural products, milk and live haul poultry.

Senate Bill 203 increases the gross vehicle weight tolerance for trucks with five axles to 88,000 pounds and 95,000 pounds for trucks with six axles. This is for farm products as defined in § 10-601(c) which includes unprocessed grain. The bill also specifies that the farm products must be "field loaded" except for milk and live poultry.

Increasing the exceptional hauling permit gross vehicle weight tolerance provides flexibility and certainty to farmers who are harvesting and hauling grain directly out of the field without a mechanism to verify the weight before entering the roadways. Allowing for this increased tolerance will also take trucks off the road by allowing the same amount of grain to be hauled in less trips.

MGPA appreciates State Highway Administration's willingness to listen to and address farmers' concerns.

Thank you,

Lindsay Thompson
Executive Director

SB203 - Support - Maryland Motor Truck Association

Uploaded by: Louis Campion

Position: FAV

Maryland Motor Truck Association



NOTHING WITHOUT
TRUCKING 

HEARING DATE: January 14, 2025

BILL NO/TITLE: SB203: Vehicle Laws - Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products

COMMITTEE: Senate Judicial Proceedings

POSITION: **Support**

Maryland Motor Truck Association is a not-for-profit trade association serving nearly 1,000 member companies since 1935. Our members include numerous agricultural product haulers, including those delivering poultry, grain, milk, and much more.

MMTA offers its support for SB203, which would consolidate and harmonize the process for obtaining an exceptional hauling permit for all types of farm products, affirm that only milk products can use the Interstate system under these permits (in accordance with Federal law), and clarify the appropriate number of axles and minimum spacing requirements to ensure safe transport of these heavier loads.

For the reasons noted above, MMTA urges 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.

For further information, contact: Louis Campion, (c) 443-623-5663

SB203 - RMC Support Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Molli Cole

Position: FAV



50 Harry S. Truman Parkway • Annapolis, MD 21401
Office: 410-841-5772 • Voice: 410-841-5761 • TTY: 800-735-2258
Email: rmc.mda@maryland.gov
Website: www.rural.maryland.go

Susan O'Neill, Chair

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director

Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 203 – Vehicle Laws - Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
January 14, 2025

The Rural Maryland Council supports Senate Bill 203 – Vehicle Laws - Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products. This bill introduces an exception for vehicles transporting fluid milk products regarding the prohibition on driving vehicles with an exceptional hauling permit on the interstate highway system. It also modifies certain weight limits and tolerances associated with exceptional hauling permits. Additionally, it updates the preventive maintenance documents that individuals operating under an exceptional hauling permit must carry. Furthermore, it revises specific record-keeping requirements, and the application of certain administrative penalties related to exceptional hauling permits.

The Rural Maryland Council is dedicated to promoting initiatives that enhance the quality of life for farmers in Maryland. By focusing on innovative practices and sustainable strategies, the Council aims to boost the overall profitability and efficiency of agricultural operations throughout the state, ensuring a vibrant future for Maryland's farming community.

Currently, farm-loaded products, including poultry, must adhere to the same weight restrictions imposed on other commodities. However, accurately weighing these products at the source—whether from fields or poultry farms—can be quite challenging. The proposed adjustments to weight allowances will facilitate compliance for our valued third-party haulers, ensuring they operate within legal limits while enabling effective tracking and inspection by the Maryland Department of Transportation.

Moreover, these adjustments present not only the opportunity to reduce the number of trips required for our haulers but also to contribute positively to environmental sustainability by lowering emissions and minimizing wear on Maryland's roadways. By decreasing the frequency of trips, we can achieve a significant reduction in fuel consumption and carbon output. Additionally, this bill emphasizes the necessity of appropriate axle configurations to support the increased weights, thereby ensuring that while our haulers may transport greater loads, the overall impact on road infrastructure remains unchanged.

The Rural Maryland Council respectfully requests your favorable support of Senate Bill 203.

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) is an independent state agency governed by a nonpartisan, 40-member board that consists of inclusive representation from the federal, state, regional, county, and municipal governments, as well as the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We bring together federal, state, county, and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions.

“A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland”

SB0203 - SHA - LOS - Vehicle Laws - Exceptional Ha

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: FAV

January 14, 2025

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 203 – Vehicle Laws – Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports Senate Bill 203 and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

Senate Bill 203 will reduce the administrative burden for permit applicants and the State Highway Administration (SHA) as it relates to obtaining and issuing exceptional hauling permits for field-loaded agricultural products, defined in Transportation Article §24-113.2. Additionally, SB 203 increases the maximum gross weight of a vehicle operating under an exceptional hauling permit with at least five axles from 87,000 pounds to 88,000 pounds.

Under current law, the administrative requirements associated with the issuance of hauling permits for field-loaded agriculture products are excessively burdensome and difficult for the SHA to track and enforce. SB 203 would create a simplified permitting application and issuance process which reflects continuity with existing permits that have been vetted over extended periods of time for safety and renewal.

The SHA believes that the amendments proposed to Transportation Article §24-113.2 in SB 203 would promote compliance with permitting requirements for farm-loaded agricultural products, which improves the accuracy of hauling data and allows SHA to better document route and regional infrastructure usage. This data is critical for SHA’s asset management and system preservation program.

The Exceptional Hauling Permit would be inclusive of all field loaded farm products as defined in Agricultural Article §10-601(c). Farm products as defined in current statute include any agricultural, horticultural, vegetable, or fruit product of the soil, including livestock, meats, marine food products, poultry, eggs, dairy products, wool, hides, feathers, nuts, honey, and every product of farm, forest, orchard, garden or water.

Senate Bill 203 does not alter existing hauling permit fees. SHA anticipates a moderate increase in issued hauling permits; however, it does not expect a significant financial impact. Therefore, there are no anticipated impacts to revenues to the Transportation Trust Fund from the bill changes.

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Page Two

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant Senate Bill 203 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

William Pines, P.E.
Administrator
Maryland State Highway Administration
410-545-0400

Matthew Mickler
Director
Office of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090

SB 203 LOS 1-10-25.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Jones

Position: FAV



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Kevin Atticks, Secretary
Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

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Industry

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Maryland Department of Agriculture Legislative Comment Date: January 10, 2025

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 203
SHORT TITLE: **Vehicle Laws - Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products**
MDA POSITION: Support

Chair Smith and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

SB 203 simplifies and modernizes regulation of transportation of farm products to processors and markets. The hauling of agricultural products is an essential part of the success of farmers and the companies which process bulk agriculture commodities and supports the supply chain of the industry. The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) supports this legislation.

This will make Maryland more competitive with neighboring states. The current weight limit in Maryland is 87,000 maximum gross pounds with tolerance on six axles. In Virginia, it is 90,000 pounds with 5 axles. In Delaware, it is 90,000 pounds with five or more axles. And, in Pennsylvania the maximum is 95,000 pounds with five axles or 107,000 pounds with six axles. The expansion of the maximum to 88,000 pounds with five axles in Maryland will make a significant difference for the agricultural industry, resulting in fewer truckloads for certain products and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from that reduction in truckloads.

This will benefit at least 129 truckers who are hauling raw milk from the state's 287 dairy farms to processing plants in the state. This legislation simplifies regulation of vehicles carrying fluid milk and other agricultural products. The Governor's Dairy Advisory Council for a number of years emphasized the importance of milk hauling in a viable dairy sector in the state, for example. Dairy farms in Maryland produced 846 million pounds of milk in 2023, a fresh perishable product that needs to be hauled to processors daily.

Other products, such as sweet corn and green beans, are routinely hauled from farms to canneries and frozen food processors. In total, Maryland farms produce more than \$3.3 billion in products that all need to be transported from locations throughout the state. The primary benefactors will be the dairy, grain, forestry, and poultry industries. MDA requests your consideration of a favorable report for SB 203.

If you have additional questions, please contact Rachel Jones, MDA Director of Government Relations at Rachel.Jones2@maryland.gov or (667) 408-0134.

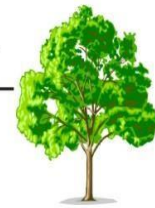
AFI's Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 203.pdf

Uploaded by: william miles

Position: FAV



ASSOCIATION OF FOREST INDUSTRIES, INC.



P.O. Box 501
Huntingtown, Maryland 20639

January 14, 2025

THE HONORABLE WILL SMITH, CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE MEMBERS, SENATE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 203 VEHICLE LAWS -- EXCEPTIONAL HAULING PERMIT – FARM PRODUCTS SUPPORT

The Association of Forest Industries (AFI) represents Maryland's forest products industry at both the State and local government level. For the last 2 years, AFI has been working closely with the Moore Administration on this issue. We commend the Administration for its willingness to submit Senate Bi8ll 203 for consideration by the 2025 Maryland General Assembly.

Bill Miles, Advocate (billmilesmd@comcast.net).

Enactment of Senate Bill 203 would strengthen the competitive standing of Maryland's forest industry with its counterparts in neighboring states. In those states, haulers of forest material from the field to the processors can carry more weight than Maryland haulers under existing State law.

At present when hauling forested materials from the field to the processors, the following represent regional-statutorily authorized hauling weights in comparison to Maryland: (1) Maryland @ 88,000 pounds with tolerance on six axles; (2) Virginia @ 90,000 pounds with 5 axles; (3) Delaware @ 90,000 pounds with five or more axels; and (4) Pennsylvania @ 95,000 pounds with a five axles or 107,000 pounds with six axles.



Closure of the Luke Paper Mill in Luke, Maryland in June 2019 after 131 years of operation, resulted in the loss of 675 jobs. To help mitigate the impact and help ensure the continued viability of Maryland's forest industry, a study was undertaken by the Western Maryland Resource Conservation and Development Council, aka "Maryland Economic Adjustment Strategy" in 2021. Senate Bill 203 is in lock step with the findings/recommendations of the 2021 EAS study.

<https://www.wmrcd.org/economic-adjustment-strategy-for-mds-forest-products-sector-summary-document-available-now/>

For the record, not since enactment of Maryland's nationally acclaimed **Sustainable Forestry Act of 2009** has – in the opinion of AFI – the General Assembly addressed an issue of such importance as Senate Bill 203. Notably, this historic Act declared the nexus between a sustainably managed forest – primary job of the forest industry via Best Management Practices (BMP's) – and a healthy Chesapeake Bay watershed. In many, many ways, trees are the answer.

§ 5-102 of NR underscores this healthy forest/healthy Chesapeake Bay watershed nexus:

THIS TITLE SETS FORTH MARYLAND'S VISION FOR SUSTAINING MARYLAND'S COVETED FOREST LANDS INTO THE 21ST CENTURY THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE CHESAPEAKE 2000 AGREEMENT AND THE 2007 FORESTRY CONSERVATION INITIATIVE.

https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2009rs/chapters_noln/Ch_175_sb0549T.pdf