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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
Public Works and Capital Projects Committee

February 20, 2001

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Committee Chair Barbara Brenner in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

Also Present:
Marlene Dawson
Dan McShane

Absent:
None

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING RESOLUTION 2000-053, SUPPORT FOR SAFER HIGHWAYS (AB2001-070)

Jay Lawley, Washington Trucking Association, stated he was invited to discuss the resolution in opposition to lifting the current freeze on length and width restrictions. He would speak to concerns expressed in the resolution.

The trucking industry has accidents. However, their overall safety record is outstanding. It is only getting better. The accident rate of the professional truck driver is less than half of a passenger car driver. He submitted handouts that identify what longer combination vehicles are. They are a multi-trailer configuration that is over 80,000 pounds. Congress, in 1991, froze the states' ability to increase any truck lengths or weights on federally funded highways. Since they have been in operation, no state has rescinded the allowance of longer combination vehicles on the highways. In 1992, AAA funded a proposed ban on triple trailers in Oregon. It was overwhelmingly defeated because of the outstanding safety and productivity record that triple trailers have.

The Washington Trucking Association has no plans to go to the Washington legislature or the National Trucking Association to ask for a lift on the freeze. It is not a priority for them. His counterparts in Washington D.C. say that it is not likely to be an issue over the next several sessions in Congress.

Brenner questioned the problem with the resolution. Lawley stated that the resolution spreads misinformation. The resolution says that the end of the freeze would open the door to an increase in truck length and weight. That is not necessarily a bad thing. They are safe. They do not typically have a high weight cargo.

The resolution says that increasing the size of tractor-trailers would worsen an already severe national problem of deteriorating, crowded highways and bridges, raising the cost of maintenance and repair. That is not correct. It would take more

1 trucks off the highways by increasing productivity and making trucking more
2 efficient.

3
4 Brenner stated she was against triple trailers, but was not sure about more
5 weights. She asked for information showing that the extra weight would not cause
6 more damage to the road. Lawley stated that there are axle configurations from
7 two axles up to nine axles. The maximum allowed weight is per axle. For example,
8 the maximum allowed weight on one steering axle is 20,000 pounds. The
9 maximum allowable weight per axle without any special permit is 34,000 pounds.
10 Even if the federal government lifted the freeze, and Washington State increased
11 the total allowable weight that a truck could carry, the bridge formula would not be
12 changed. The weight would be spread out. The damage is caused when there is
13 more weight concentrated on a single axle or a single tandem axle.

14
15 Brenner asked if there could be a double trailer with more axles, which could
16 hold more weight. Lawley stated that was correct, up to 105,500 pounds in
17 Washington State.

18
19 Brenner asked if a triple-trailer would just spread the weight out. A truck
20 still couldn't have more weight than the law allows. Lawley stated that was correct.

21
22 Lawley continued to state that the fatal accident rate for trucks dropped by
23 31 percent over the last 10 years, while total mileage increased by 43 percent.

24
25 Crawford asked what that is attributed to. Lawley stated he attributes it to
26 truck inspections by policing agencies. There is federal and state money for truck
27 inspections. Driver training has gotten better. Trucking associations have done
28 education.

29
30 Dawson asked if increased drug testing is also a factor. Lawley stated it is.
31 The industry supported a ban on radar detectors and the restriction on the left lane
32 for trucks. They also supported not increasing speed limits.

33
34 Crawford asked Lawley to speculate on the purposes of this other group.
35 Lawley stated he didn't know. He hoped the motivation is of the most positive,
36 which is to make the highways safer. However, he believed that some of their
37 motivation comes from a funding of this organization by the railroad industry. He
38 has an outstanding relationship with Burlington-Northern and Union Pacific railways
39 in Washington State.

40
41 Hoag questioned what the safety record looks like and where the numbers
42 come from. Lawley stated the only true way to judge an accident record is per a
43 certain standard. In the trucking industry, the standard is per million miles
44 traveled.

45
46 Hoag asked if the record for a triple trailer is better than a double trailer.
47 Lawley stated the record for triple trailers is over twice as good. The common five-
48 axle tractor-trailer rig that one sees going down the highway has an accident rate

1 of 1.8 per million miles traveled. The triple trailer accident rate is .8 per million
2 miles traveled. Triple trailers are highly regulated where they operate. They can
3 only operate on special permits, on special highways, and under ideal weather
4 conditions. The trucking associations in those states, and the departments of
5 transportation operate a traveler information service for companies that operate
6 triple trailers. There are times in the winter when they issue a declaration that
7 triple trailers must get off the road.

8
9 Hoag stated that all those guidelines and regulations are because triple
10 trailers face different risks and more problems. She questioned whether those
11 added regulations would mean that they are inherently more risky. Lawley stated
12 not necessarily. There is a bigger safety concern with a triple trailer in a high wind
13 condition.

14
15 Hoag stated there would be more concern on ice. Lawley stated that was not
16 correct. The braking issues are the same for double trailers and triple trailers.

17
18 Hoag stated that she was hesitant to write regulation unless people prove it
19 is needed. If there are all those regulations in place, there would have to be some
20 concern. She asked for a fatality rate per accident. Lawley stated he didn't have
21 the information on the fatality rate. The Federal Highway Administration says that
22 their fatality rate has gone down over the last ten years by 31 percent.

23
24 Hoag questioned whether the accidents that occur have a higher rate of
25 fatalities. One of her concerns with a triple trailer is the amount of weight going
26 down that road and what it would take to stop that load. There is a difference
27 between having a fender bender and a fatality. Lawley stated he didn't have that
28 information.

29
30 Brenner questioned whether Washington State has a left lane restriction.
31 Lawley stated it does. It was passed three years ago, and affects all highways on
32 which there are three or more lanes in one direction.

33
34 Brenner asked the effect of the regulations in Washington State and the
35 United States on Canadian trucks. Lawley stated that the Trucking Association has
36 the same issue.

37
38 Brenner asked about the testing and training that Canadian truck drivers
39 have to have. Lawley stated that the testing and training is as rigid in Canada as it
40 is in the United States. The commercial driver training is as rigid. Trucks operating
41 in the U.S. from Canada are required to operate under the U.S. laws, including drug
42 testing and driver training.

43
44 Brenner asked if it is different if the owner is driving the truck. Lawley stated
45 it is not.

46
47 Hoag questioned whether Washington State would automatically have special
48 regulations or would have to implement special regulations if the federal

1 government lifted the freeze. Lawley stated that if Congress lifted the freeze, then
2 the state Department of Transportation and the State Patrol would have the
3 opportunity to discuss whether or not they want triple trailers to operate. The
4 decision would ultimately be made by the state legislature, which would look to the
5 other states that have the restricting regulations that those vehicles are required to
6 operate under.

7
8 Hoag asked if the triple trailers would be out there without special
9 regulations if the freeze was lifted. Lawley stated no. Washington State law does
10 not allow triple trailers.

11
12 Hoag stated that cars are only allowed to use the left lane to pass. Lawley
13 stated that trucks are under the same rules as passenger cars. It is not enforced.

14
15 Brenner stated she was told that it is not a rule yet. Drivers don't have to
16 move to the right unless it's posted. She's been told by the State Patrol that it is
17 not a state law.

18
19 Hoag stated that, because trucks have a slower speed limit, trucks shouldn't
20 be in the left lane unless they are passing.

21
22 Bob Wiesen, Douglas Road, stated that most triple trailers aren't allowed to
23 have a higher weight. There is less weight per axle and more brake surface per tire
24 on the ground. It has a better stopping ability, which is a shorter stopping distance
25 than the normal equipment. There is a statistic that fatalities on the Ohio Turnpike
26 are lower for that equipment. They operate in controlled, restricted corridors.

27
28 Brenner stated that triple trailers have more stringent driving requirements.
29 Wiesen stated that companies who run them put the best drivers on that equipment
30 and pay them a premium wage.

31
32 Brenner asked why not force the trucking industry to have those stringent
33 requirements on all drivers. Wiesen stated they have been. They are increasing
34 training and hiring restrictions. They can't get there overnight.

35
36 Colleen Pacheco, Washington Alliance for Safe Highways (WASH), stated her
37 organization is a coalition opposed to efforts to raise the size and weight of freight
38 trucks. There are many infrastructure, safety, tax, and environmental concerns
39 with heavier and longer trucks. They are one of 34 state affiliates of a national
40 highway safety organization called the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks. Both at a
41 national and state level, they work with law enforcement, health and safety groups,
42 truck drivers, unions, environmental groups, and others. She submitted a packet of
43 information and listed the coalition members.

44
45 Regarding their funding, they are a citizens' network comprised of a diversity
46 of groups concerned about heavier and longer trucks because of the safety,
47 infrastructure, tax, and environmental concerns. They do receive a large
48 percentage of funding from rail suppliers. They accept that money to work on the

1 public safety and protection of the integrity of the infrastructure. They don't
2 discriminate. They take the money wherever they can get it.

3
4 Single trucks are allowed nationwide, in every state, to run at 80,000
5 pounds. A truck has to have at least a 48-foot long trailer. The Washington State
6 maximum length is 53 feet. A truck could also have twin 28-foot trailers. They are
7 also legal in every state. The longer combination vehicles are the doubles and
8 triples.

9
10 There are three different types of longer combination vehicles (LCV's). The
11 smallest is a rocky mountain double, which is a tractor pulling a 28-foot and a 48-
12 foot trailer. That is allowed in Washington State. The two largest LCV's are not
13 allowed in Washington State. They are the turnpike double, which is a double
14 trailer with two 48-foot trailers, and the triple trailer tractor. In 1991, there was an
15 LCV freeze put on, introduced through the Inter-Modal Surface Transportation
16 Efficiency Act. It says that those states that do not allow any configuration or any
17 particular type of configuration of the LCV's cannot introduce them. If they are
18 already operating, such as the rocky mountain doubles in Washington State, the
19 configuration cannot be changed, the weight cannot be changed, and the route
20 cannot be changed. There is a freeze in place. The freeze was re-authorized in
21 1997, and is coming up for re-authorization again in 2003. The American Trucking
22 Association has been very public in acknowledging that the goal is to expand usage
23 of all three types of vehicles across the country. The American Trucking Association
24 (ATA) submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation during their
25 last truck size and weight study that recommended allowing triple trailers and
26 longer doubles on all interstate highways west of the Mississippi River, excluding
27 urban area interstates not currently used, and current non-interstate routes used
28 by LCV doubles. She assumed the Washington Trucking Association is a member of
29 the American Trucking Association, which plans to expand routes. In Washington,
30 since the rocky mountain doubles are allowed, there will be attempts to allow
31 triples and longer doubles.

32
33 There is opposition in congress to lift the freeze. The Safe Highways
34 Resolution received about 138 co-sponsors in congress in the House of
35 Representatives. That shows the extent of the opposition in congress to allow
36 these trucks to get heavier and longer.

37
38 Her organization is opposed to the heavier and longer trucks because of
39 safety. The U.S. Department of Transportation said in its latest truck size and
40 weight study that LCV's have an 11 percent higher fatality rate than singles at
41 80,000 pounds. The reasons include poorer handling characteristics. There are
42 more trailers and more articulation points, so there is more whip and sway. The
43 California Department of Transportation did an operational efficiency study on these
44 triple trailers. The study ran the triple trailers with a full load on a 125-mile route
45 on flat terrain, through rolling hills on an interstate on a windless, sunny day. They
46 observed the third trailer swaying up to four feet in either direction.

1 There is an issue with rearward amplification. Whatever movement the cab
2 driver does, it is amplified by the time it hits the end trailer. It would be amplified
3 up to 200 percent at the third trailer.
4

5 There is an increased risk of the trailer separating because there is more
6 surface. There is an increased risk that the high wind will blow them out of their
7 lanes. There are more problems with the lack of speed. As the trucks get heavier
8 and longer, they can't accelerate and decelerate as fast as other trucks. They are
9 increasing the likelihood of runaways when it is going downhill. The University of
10 Texas put out a statistic that, when there is a 15 miles per hour speed differential,
11 there is nine times higher likelihood of an accident.
12

13 The trucks are incompatible with today's highway system. Because of their
14 lack of speed and acceleration issues, there are merging and lane changing
15 problems. A triple trailer is the same size as 12 passenger car vehicles. A longer
16 turnpike double trailer is five feet longer. When trying to merge on congested
17 freeways, it increases the risk of an accident.
18

19 The trucks also make drivers act more unsafe. Most people try to speed up,
20 slow down, and do whatever it takes to get around them. If it is a longer triple or
21 turnpike double, that is more span of truck that a car has to pass. In adverse
22 weather, a turnpike double can blind a passing motorist doing 55 with up to 16
23 seconds of splash and spray. That is a concern in the northwest.
24

25 The trucks leave a larger crash footprint. They are heavier and longer.
26 When they do crash, they fall over more lanes of traffic. There is an increased
27 likelihood of severe injury and death. Mr. Lawley stated that no state has rescinded
28 LCV's. She was only asking that they not be made heavier or more dangerous.
29 The Oregon effort to ban the triple trailers was not because the majority of the
30 population was happy with the triple trailers. Polls done before the referendum
31 showed that the majority of the population is opposed to triple trailers. However, it
32 was a matter of money. The trucking association spent \$4 million campaigning,
33 and AAA doesn't have that kind of cash.
34

35 The heavier singles have many of the safe handling characteristics that make
36 these trucks more dangerous. There is a strong statistical link between trucks with
37 a heavier weight and higher risk of fatalities. A University of Michigan study
38 showed that as weight is increased from 65,000 pounds to 80,000 pounds, the risk
39 of an accident involving a fatality by 50 percent. They also have a higher center of
40 gravity, making them more prone to rollovers.
41

42 Brenner stated she didn't understand why there would be a higher center of
43 gravity if there were more axles. Pacheco stated that a tractor pulling a single 53-
44 foot long trailer can't extend the length of the trailer. Instead, the weight is piled
45 higher in the trailer, raising the center of gravity.
46

47 Brenner stated they could load the trailers differently by loading the heavier
48 items at the bottom. That would still keep the center of gravity low. She

1 questioned whether they could retain a lower center of gravity by the way the
2 weight is packed in, by keeping the heavier items on the bottom. Pacheco stated
3 there would still be more goods in the trailer at the top, making a higher center of
4 gravity.

5
6 Brenner stated it would have more total weight, but the weight doesn't have
7 to be up at the top. They could redistribute the weight.

8
9 Pacheco questioned how a fully loaded truck with 80,000 pounds would be
10 packed.

11
12 Lawley stated the trailers are typically loaded so the goods would not be
13 moving around every time a truck hits a bump. It's just like loading a moving van.
14 They spread the contents of the trailer out if they can.

15
16 Brenner stated a moving van would have the heavier things on the bottom.
17 Lawley stated it is the same way in trucking. The center of gravity is not an issue.
18 A triple trailer has one more 28-foot trailer. They already allow two 28-foot trailers,
19 each with their own center of gravity.

20
21 Brenner questioned whether one truck with more weight than another truck
22 would automatically have a higher center of gravity. Lawley stated it wouldn't.

23
24 Pacheco questioned where the extra goods are packed if they can't increase
25 the container's size.

26
27 Lawley stated that even if LCV's are allowed, federal law prevents making the
28 vehicle heavier with the same configuration that is allowed now. They would have
29 to increase the spacing and add axles.

30
31 Wiesen stated that singles are limited to 80,000 pounds now. Those 80,000
32 pounds could be put in a trailer of any allowed length. If that weight is put in a 53-
33 foot trailer, instead of a smaller trailer, the center of gravity is lower. The only
34 reason to use a 53-foot trailer is if the load is toilet paper out of Georgia-Pacific.
35 The purpose of using longer equipment to haul the allowable 80,000 pounds is
36 because the goods are lighter and bulkier. Otherwise, there is no advantage.

37
38 *(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side A.)*

39
40 Brenner asked if a heavier weight would change the center of gravity.
41 Wiesen stated it wouldn't if the trailer was lengthened. Washington doesn't allow
42 more weight unless the trailer is lengthened.

43
44 Pacheco stated she disagreed. When the weight is increased, the trucks are
45 harder to steer and maneuver. An additional axle would be added, which requires
46 an additional brake. That does improve the braking capacity, but it does not
47 improve the braking ability when the likelihood of the brakes malfunctioning is very
48 high. Nationwide, 25 percent of all trucks on the road have maladjusted brakes.

1 That information is from the U.S. Department of Transportation's recent truck
2 weight and size study. That figure seems to be higher in different counties and
3 states. In Oregon, law enforcement says that one-third of all trucks on the road
4 have maladjusted brakes.

5
6 Brenner asked why the law enforcement agencies would have that
7 information. Pacheco stated she didn't know.

8
9 Brenner asked for information on how law enforcement would know by
10 stopping someone. Pacheco stated that sheriff offices work with state patrols to do
11 truck inspections. That question has been asked before.

12
13 In Idaho, there is currently an effort to increase the weights of doubles and
14 triples in that state right now. Along the I-90 corridor, all the sheriff offices have
15 said that about 90 percent of the trucks on the road have something operationally
16 wrong with them, including loose wheel nuts, cracked frames, and broken air
17 hoses.

18
19 Brenner questioned what being operationally wrong includes. Pacheco stated
20 it includes maladjusted brakes, loose wheel nuts, cracked frames, and broken air
21 hoses, and anything else that could make a truck less safe and that is not operating
22 or in good working order. Ninety percent of the trucks on the road have something
23 wrong with them.

24
25 Wiesen stated cars do, too.

26
27 Pacheco stated that if brakes are not in good working order, the truck is
28 going to take longer to stop. The heavier singles have problems maintaining speed.

29
30 Those are the issues why she is opposed to heavier single trailers and an
31 expansion of the longer double and triple trailers into this state. There are also
32 infrastructure concerns. If the weight is increased, an additional axle is added.
33 That does minimize the damage to the roads on main highways. However, trucks
34 use exit ramps, eat, sleep, and deliver goods. They go on county and city roads.
35 When there is a lot of stopping, starting, and turning, the infrastructure
36 deteriorates.

37
38 Brenner asked if the Whatcom County roads have weight limits. The trucks
39 wouldn't be on a county road if it is above a weight limit. Lawley stated that the
40 same limits apply to county roads.

41
42 Pacheco stated she works with many officials and truck drivers who recognize
43 that it is a matter of regulation and enforcement. The U.S. Department of
44 Transportation said that additional money would be required to reconstruct highway
45 intersections and interchanges if the longer trucks were allowed. The estimate is
46 \$4 billion in reconstruction costs for interchanges, intersections, and mainline
47 curves, not including any congestion related costs. A single truck right now has five
48 axles. A heavier single with six axles would require approximately \$855 million in

1 intersection and interchange reconstruction costs. For bridges, the issue is the total
2 weight of the truck, regardless of the additional axles. If LCV's were allowed
3 nationwide, it would add \$53 billion in new bridge reconstruction costs, plus an
4 additional \$266 billion in congestion related costs.
5

6 Brenner stated the argument was made that more weight allowed would
7 result in fewer trucks. She questioned whether the total reconstruction costs for
8 bridges should be calculated on the total weight overall per year. Pacheco stated
9 that putting heavier trucks on the road would not mean fewer trucks. Over the last
10 50 years, anytime the size and weight of trucks have increased, the volume of
11 trucks has also increased. According to the Federal Highway Commission,
12 combination truck travel has increased by more than 238 percent since 1970.
13

14 Brenner stated that is due to more population and goods. That would
15 happen anyway. Pacheco stated that if the population increased, the passenger
16 vehicles would increase the same rate. The amount of truck traffic increases faster
17 than the amount of passenger car vehicles. Right now, combination truck traffic
18 accounts for 4.8 percent of total annual vehicle miles traffic, versus 3.2 percent in
19 1970. In 1982, when Congress passed legislation requiring states to raise the
20 maximum allowable weight limits to 80,000 pounds, the total number of vehicle
21 miles traveled by combination trucks increased by 63 percent between 1982 and
22 1993. The number of miles traveled by passenger cars only increased 51.3
23 percent. Either way, population and consumption are growing. Truck traffic is
24 going to increase.
25

26 Brenner stated it isn't fair to say how much truck traffic has increased,
27 because it could be due to consumption. She questioned whether there is a way to
28 figure out how many trucks there would have been if the weight hadn't been
29 increased. There is still a certain volume that is moved. Pacheco stated that truck
30 traffic will increase, no matter the issue. It is about whether or not to allow heavier
31 and longer trucks on the roads.
32

33 Brenner questioned whether it is possible that the increase would be less if
34 they are allowed to carry more. She didn't understand the connection with the
35 numbers. Pacheco stated the numbers have increased historically. That increase
36 has happened in correlation with an increase in the size and weight, regardless of
37 the reason.
38

39 Brenner stated they may have seen an even higher increase in number of
40 trucks if the weight wasn't allowed to increase.
41

42 Pacheco continued to state that there is a recent report put out by the
43 Washington State Department of Transportation that says 25 percent of the bridges
44 in Washington are already in a state of needing repair. There is also a tax issue.
45 As trucks get heavier, they pay less than their fair share of taxes. A typical single
46 truck that weights 80,000 pounds with five axles pays 80 percent of the cost of the
47 damage it does to the roads. A typical triple trailer pays 70 percent. Heavier
48 singles, triples, and longer doubles are unsafe, a burden to the taxpayers, and

1 deteriorate the infrastructure. She asked the committee to stand by the resolution
2 it passed. She was not against truck traffic or truck drivers. She works with a lot
3 of truckers. There are many reasons why the trucks should not be allowed to get
4 heavier and bigger. There is a national strategy of the American Trucking
5 Association to work to get those triples and longer doubles on the highways. She
6 read a statement from a business representative with Teamsters Local 690 out of
7 Spokane. He could not attend the meeting today. If the LCV is raised, it will allow
8 unfettered regulation of the triples and longer doubles. The joint council of the
9 Teamsters in Oregon told her that if the freeze is lifted, they would see more triples
10 in that state. If they do, it would be hard to find highly qualified trailers. Many
11 people drop out of the triple trailer training program because of the safety aspects.
12

13 Lawley submitted the Washington State Commercial Vehicle Guide, which
14 outlines the legal truck combinations and weight. The guidance, which is state law,
15 says that if the federal government raises the freeze, triples would still not be legal.
16 The state legislature would have to take action to make any LCV legal. The federal
17 government, before the freeze, said it was a state issue. It would go back to being
18 a state issue.
19

20 Pacheco stated that in 1974, the American Trucking Association was pushing
21 for giving states the option to allow 80,000-pound singles to operate on those
22 roads. In 1982, it was mandated that every state must allow 80,000-pound singles
23 to operate. Right now, the strategy is to lift the freeze and give the states the
24 option. Every state is going to receive incredible pressure. Washington will not be
25 excluded from that pressure. Idaho is a bigger pro-truck state.
26

27 Brenner questioned the current limit in Washington State. Pacheco stated it
28 is 80,000 pounds for singles.
29

30 Brenner asked if lifting the freeze would raise the weight limit. Pacheco
31 stated that if the freeze is lifted, the state legislature could decide to raise the
32 weight limit. It would be a matter of time, within the next five years or so.
33

34 Brenner stated she thought the freeze didn't allow that in the states. Lawley
35 stated the states were grandfathered in. Every state is allowed 80,000 pounds.
36

37 Brenner questioned what the weight would go to if the freeze were lifted.
38 Lawley stated the weight would go to whatever the state decided. The freeze is
39 that no state may increase what it already allowed. Washington has a 105,500-
40 pound weight limit now on doubles.
41

42 Brenner asked about the heavier weights that are allowed in Canada and
43 Mexico. Pacheco stated that Canadian single trailers can run as high as 111,000
44 pounds. They've been trying to harmonize the size and weight, which usually
45 means increasing the weights.
46

47 Brenner asked how the United States could prevent Canada and Mexico
48 because of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Pacheco stated

1 they've targeted various corridors. The priority corridor is I-19. There are only two
2 states that have not raised their weights to at least 129,000 pounds. Idaho tries to
3 raise those weights every year. The Alberta Trucking Association has put a lot of
4 pressure on the governor in Idaho to raise the weights. If they succeed in Idaho,
5 they are going to push into Washington.

6
7 Brenner asked how they can interfere with NAFTA and GAT. Lawley stated
8 they aren't allowed to do that now. Even with NAFTA in place, it would be unfair for
9 the U.S. trucking industry to be allowed only 105,500 pounds if the Canadians
10 could come in and operate within U.S. commerce at a higher weight.

11
12 Pacheco stated that they have to adhere to U.S. rules and regulations. There
13 would be pressure to raise those rates.

14
15 Lawley stated that a large part of the argument against lifting the freeze is
16 focused on safety. Ms. Pacheco mentioned trucks that are not operationally sound,
17 they are out-of-service violations. When a law enforcement officer has a loose
18 wheel nut, a broken airline, or maladjusted brake, then the truck is taken out of
19 service immediately. Until the truck is repaired, it cannot move. The statistic of 90
20 percent may include a cracked windshield, a windshield wiper that doesn't work, or
21 a reflector that is broken off the side of the trailer. Almost every car on the road
22 has something that needs to be repaired. Out of service rates have gone down
23 over the past ten years. Regarding infrastructure, the same U.S. Department of
24 Transportation study estimates that the increased use of LCV's would reduce heavy
25 truck vehicle miles traveled by as much as 23.2 percent.

26
27 Brenner stated she would like each presenter to respond to the other's
28 comments in writing. If the weight was increased, there may be fewer trucks on
29 the road, even though the overall number of trucks may increase.

30
31 Crawford stated this is not the Whatcom County Council's issue. He will
32 move to rescind the resolution at the evening's meeting. He expected that both
33 speakers would decline the offer to continue the debate. Both sides of the issue are
34 pulling out statistics that contradict each other. They will not have a resolution.
35 The Council should focus on issues that are pertinent to the well being of the
36 citizens of the county right now. Let the regulatory issues regarding trucking,
37 which are regulated at the state level, be done there. The Washington Association
38 of Safe Highways can continue its lobbying effort without the Council's
39 endorsement. The Washington Trucking Association will continue its lobbying
40 efforts without the Council taking a position one way or another. He will suggest
41 that the County Council rescind the resolution and not have a position one way or
42 another. Get out of the discussion

43
44 Brenner stated she was not comfortable with the weight issue. She would
45 like to continue the support against the triple trailers and the longer double trailers.
46 She would support the motion to rescind for those reasons, but would like to have a
47 resolution not supporting the triple trailers. The Council has an obligation to lobby

1 state or federal government on behalf of the citizens of the county if they feel
2 strongly about something.

3
4 Wiesen stated the LCV's are operated in the county for the county's economic
5 benefit. For instance, Milkey Way hauling 105,000 pounds instead of 80,000
6 pounds reduces the number of trips to the Darigold plant in Seattle. It's the same
7 way with hauling grain into the county. That weight may be grandfathered in
8 Washington. However, that resolution would say that some other state couldn't do
9 what Washington is doing very successfully and safely. That should be up to the
10 states. The growth of trucking recently is because the railroads don't know how to
11 do their work.

12
13 Brenner stated this issue would come before the full Council.

14
15
16 **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**

17
18 **1. RESOLUTION DECLARING INTENT TO ACCEPT A PORTION OF ZANDER**
19 **DRIVE AS A COUNTY ROAD, DECLARING THAT SUCH ESTABLISHMENT**
20 **IS A PUBLIC NECESSITY, AND DIRECTING COUNTY ROAD ENGINEER**
21 **TO REPORT TO COUNCIL UPON THE PROJECT (AB2001-082)**

22
23 Mike Donahue, Traffic/ Development Engineering Manager, stated Zander
24 Road was developed in the 1980's. It was a private easement. The people got
25 together and donated the right-of-way to the County. The County accepted the
26 first part in 1997 or 1998. This is to finish off the last portion.

27
28 Brenner questioned whether the administration is supportive of this.
29 Donahue stated it is.

30
31 McShane moved to recommend approval.

32
33 Motion carried unanimously.

34
35 **2. RESOLUTION DECLARING INTENT TO ACCEPT A PORTION OF MCLEOD**
36 **ROAD AS A COUNTY ROAD, DECLARING THAT SUCH ESTABLISHMENT**
37 **IS A PUBLIC NECESSITY, AND DIRECTING COUNTY ROAD ENGINEER**
38 **TO REPORT TO COUNCIL UPON THE PROJECT (AB2001-083)**

39
40 Brenner stated that it seems like the administration is supportive of this.

41
42 Mike Donahue, Traffic/ Development Engineering Manager, stated it is.

43
44 McShane moved to recommend approval.

45
46 Motion carried unanimously.

1 **ADJOURN**

2

3 The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

4

5

6

7 _____
Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription

8

9

10 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

11

12

13

14

15

16 _____
Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barbara Brenner, Committee Chair

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18