



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

March 21, 2016

Jerry Whitehead, Chairman
Idaho Transportation Board
3311 W. State St.
P.O. Box 7129
Boise, ID 83707-1129

Dear Chairman Whitehead,

As you know, on March 15, 2016, I signed Senate Bill 1229 (S1229) into law, authorizing the Idaho Transportation Board to issue permits for trucks up to 129,000 pounds gross weight to travel on Idaho's interstate highways.

I appreciate the Legislature's thoughtful consideration of this bill. I also applaud the Transportation Board's transparent, safety-focused, data-driven and inclusive public process in implementing its 2013 precursor – Senate Bill 1117 (S1117).

It took an act of Congress, championed by our Idaho delegation, to enable Idaho's consideration of S1229. And it took the Transportation Board's responsible implementation of S1117 – and the work of the Right Truck for Idaho Coalition, the agriculture industry and other stakeholders – to open the door to this important change. I believe applying to our interstate highways the kind of transparent public process being used on state routes will help ensure successful implementation and improved competitiveness with adjacent states that already allow heavier trucks on their stretches of interstate.

Once again, I strongly encourage the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and the Transportation Board to apply consistent and objective standards for trucks up to 129,000 pounds that seek to use our interstate routes. Similar standards also should be used by ITD and all interested stakeholders as they enter into negotiated rulemaking on the broader issue of truck safety on all Idaho roads. Separate and apart from implementation of S1229, that process also must be public, transparent and inclusive, and it should encompass the same types of factors used in considering and designating new 129,000-pound routes on Idaho's State highways.

Indeed, the negotiated rulemaking process, in concert with the Idaho State Police, must go beyond truck weights to include all relevant, professionally established and widely accepted technical and operational standards. Our goal must be making our highways safer for all motorists by insisting that all trucks, of every weight and classification, are configured, maintained and driven in ways that maximize public safety.

What I wrote three years ago in signing S1117 remains true today. In an increasingly integrated and competitive world, safe and efficient transportation of goods and raw materials along our corridors of commerce is critical to our economic growth and prosperity. I am more convinced than ever that Idaho has the will and the wherewithal to adopt and maintain the best available practices, technology and oversight to advancing those goals. I expect that confidence to be rewarded with positive results going forward.

As Always – Idaho, "Esto Perpetua"

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C.L. Butch Otter".

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho