



# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

## FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 589

PRINTERS NO. 887

PRIME SPONSOR: Langerholc

### COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19
Motor License Fund	\$0	\$0

**SUMMARY:** Amends the Vehicle Code (Title 75) by providing a weight exemption for natural gas vehicles (NVG) to exceed the gross vehicle weight and axle weight limit; and incorporates changes in vehicle characteristics as required by changes in Federal law. This legislation would take effect in 60 days.

**ANALYSIS:** This legislation amends the Vehicle Code by providing a weight exemption for natural gas vehicles (NVG) to exceed the gross vehicle weight, and axle weight limit, by no more than 2,000 pounds; and incorporates changes in vehicle characteristics for emergency vehicles and auto, boat and trailer transporters as required by changes in Federal law.

**Weight Exemption - Natural Gas Vehicles:** This legislation allows for a vehicle that is operated by an engine fueled primarily by compressed or liquefied natural gas to exceed the gross vehicle weight limits and any axle weight limits, not to exceed a maximum of 2,000 pounds.

The weight exemption shall apply to all State highways and interstate highways as permitted under U.S. Code.

**Vehicle Characteristic Changes:** The legislation also amends the Vehicle Code to make changes in vehicle characteristics for emergency vehicles and auto transport vehicles that were part of the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) which took effect in early 2017:

- The FAST Act exempts all emergency vehicles from interstate highway weight restrictions up to a maximum gross vehicle weight of 86,000 pounds. The exemption in 23 U.S.C. states that weight distribution cannot exceed 24,000 pounds on a single steering axle; 33,500 pounds on a single drive axle; 62,000 pounds on a tandem axle; or 52,000 pounds on a tandem rear drive steer axle. Currently in PA, only fire apparatus have such an exemption.
- With regards to automobile or boat transporters and stinger-steered transporters, the maximum overall length is extended to 80 feet, exclusive of an overhang of not more than four feet on the front and six feet on the rear of the combination. Further, it permits cargo or general freight to be backhauled by the transporters as long as normal weight limitations are complied with.

**Pertinent Definitions:** The added definition of “towaway trailer transporter combination” is a provision that enables light-and medium-duty trailer manufacturers to deliver their products to dealers in combinations of two subject to existing size and weight limits and additional restrictions. This would include a trailer transporter towing unit and two trailers or semitrailers, with a total weight that does not exceed 26,000 pounds; and in which the trailers or semitrailers carry no property and constitute inventory property of a manufacturer, distributor, or dealer of such trailers or semitrailers.

A “trailer transporter towing unit” is defined as a power unit that is not used to carry property when operating in a towaway trailer transporter combination. The effect of this provision is to permit tandem trailer deliveries in combinations of up to 82 feet in length, and to supersede the prior state law length limitations for such combinations that date back to the federal Intermodal Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** This legislation would have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds.

**PREPARED BY:** Tim Rodrigo  
House Appropriations Committee (R)

**DATE:** July 5, 2017

*Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.*