

**Statement of Michael J. Riley
President**

**MICHAEL J. RILEY
PRESIDENT**

**Motor Transport Association of Connecticut
Before
The Joint Committee on Transportation
March 6, 2009**

**Re: HB No. 6618 AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN AUXILIARY
POWER UNIT WEIGHT TOLERANCE EXEMPTION**

I am Michael J. Riley, President of Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC), a statewide trade association, which represents around 1,000 companies that operate commercial motor vehicles in and through the state of Connecticut. Our membership includes freight haulers, movers of household goods, construction companies, distributors, tank truck operators and hundreds of companies that use trucks in their business and firms that provide goods and services to truck owners.

MTAC SUPPORTS THIS BILL

The members of Motor Transport Association of Connecticut thank the Transportation Committee for raising this bill, which would provide a special exemption from the weight laws for truckers who install auxiliary power units.

Auxiliary power units (APU) are small diesel or propane-powered engines, or batteries, which are retrofitted onto large diesel trucks. APUs are used to heat or air-condition the cab, for the health and comfort of the driver. They serve a similar function in trailers where they are used to maintain the safety of perishable cargo. APUs can also help to run certain equipment, such as cement mixers, cherry pickers, or cranes, necessary for a vehicle to do its job.

Currently, many trucks must run their large diesel engine in order to do the things listed above. This idling can be costly and have undesirable environmental affects.



APUs can weigh as much as 400 pounds. Therefore, if a truck is operating at its maximum legal weight; the weight of an APU could eliminate the opportunity to carry up to 400 pounds of cargo. Acknowledging this problem, the federal government has agreed to lift the federally mandated maximum weight limits for the weight of an APU up to 400 pounds. States then are free to individually pass changes to their own weight laws. I have attached a spreadsheet listing 32 states have already provided weight tolerances for up to 400 pounds. We would like Connecticut to join them.

The federal government has also provided other incentives for truckers to install APUs. Specifically, when Congress passed the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, it included a provision granting federal excise tax relief to trucking companies, which purchase auxiliary power units for their vehicles. Section 206 of Division B of the legislation exempts any device or system which provides electrical power, air conditioning or heat to the vehicle ---while it is parked, without running the main engine---from the 12 percent Heavy Vehicle Excise Tax.

The recently passed stimulus legislation has provided funds to help truckers purchase and install APUs. DEP and we have been discussing how we can take advantage of this opportunity to save money and improve the environment.

Thank you for your consideration.