

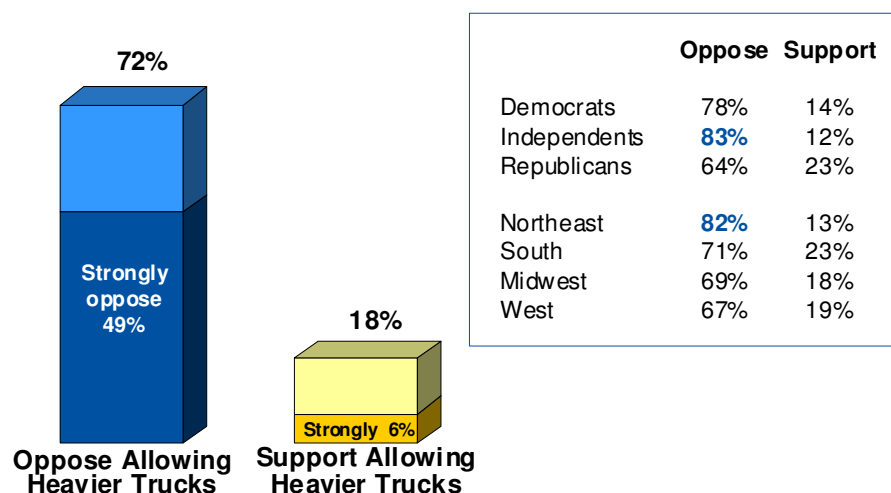
MEMORANDUM

TO: Coalition Against Bigger Trucks
FROM: Hart Research Associates
DATE: April 13, 2011
RE: National Survey Findings

On behalf of the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, Hart Research Associates conducted a national telephone survey from April 1 to 4, 2011, among a representative sample of 804 registered voters. The margin of error for this sample is ± 3.46 percentage points.

- Voters overwhelmingly and consistently oppose allowing bigger, heavier trucks on American highways.** Nearly three-quarters (72%) of voters say they oppose letting tractor-trailer trucks increase their load by allowing bigger, heavier trucks on highways; notably, the greatest intensity is expressed by those who strongly oppose this idea (49%). Conversely, only 18% of voters say they favor this idea. Disapproval of this approach is broadly shared, with more than 55% of voters in every major demographic audience saying they oppose allowing bigger, heavier trucks on highways. This includes voters by gender (66% of men and 77% of women oppose), region (82% of voters in the northeast oppose, 71% south, 69% Midwest, 67% west), area type (74% urban oppose, 73% suburban, 69% small town, and 71% rural), age (55% of voters 18 to 34 oppose, 73% of voters 35 to 49, 77% of voters 50 to 64, and 84% of seniors), and party (78% of Democrats, 83% of independents, and 64% of Republicans all oppose).

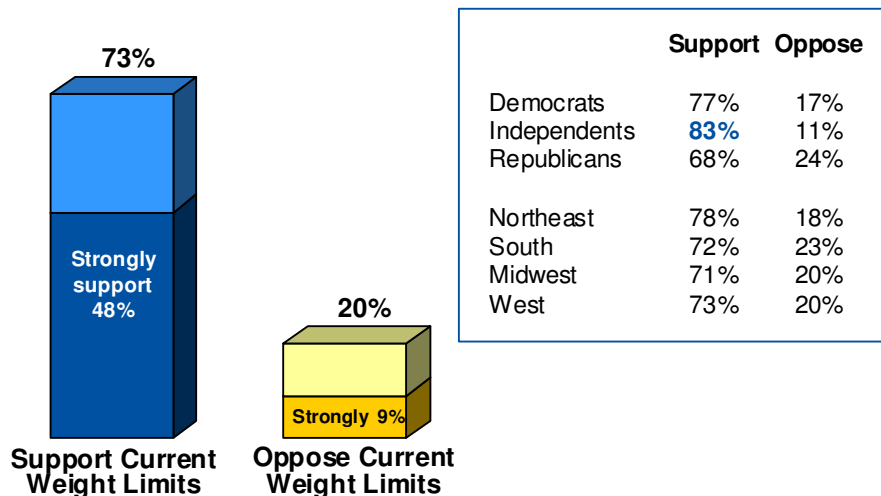
Opposition To Proposal To Allow Bigger And Heavier Trucks On Highways



Voters' primary concerns about this idea—volunteered prior to voters receiving any additional information about bigger, heavier trucks—are a greater number of accidents (54%), increased road damage (45%), additional traffic congestion (11%), tax hikes to pay for road damages (5%), and a higher rate of carbon emissions (3%).

Importantly, voters display stability and consistency in their opposition to bigger, heavier trucks. When asked about a proposal to ensure that tractor-trailer trucks do not expand beyond their current weight limit, voters closely mirror their earlier response, with 73% saying they favor the weight limit cap, and 20% saying they oppose it. This includes a similar subgroup breakdown, with more than two-thirds of voters in major subgroups supporting a cap on truck weight, including by gender, region, area type, age, and party.

Support For Proposal To Ensure Trucks Do Not Expand Beyond Current Weight Limits



- **Increased taxpayer burden and highway safety concerns are voters' top reasons for opposing bigger, heavier trucks.** Taxpayer burden and safety surpass all other reasons to oppose bigger, heavier trucks. After hearing a range of impacts that bigger, heavier trucks can cause, nearly half (49%) of voters say the increase in damage to highways and bridges that will cost taxpayers and motorists money is the most convincing reason to oppose them, while another 35% of voters cite safety as the most convincing reason.
 - **Increased taxpayer burden.** When voters hear a more detailed description of road damage done by bigger, heavier trucks, opposition grows to 84%, with more than two-thirds (66%) of voters saying they strongly oppose bigger, heavier trucks, which is a 17-point increase in intensity. Seven in 10 (74%, 69%) voters say messages related to taxpayer burden are very or fairly convincing arguments to oppose heavier trucks.

Even after describing opponent and supporter arguments on taxpayer burden and asking voters to choose between the two, voters overwhelmingly side with opponents of bigger, heavier trucks. Seventy-one percent (71%) agree that bigger trucks will cost taxpayers and motorists money, while just one in five (21%) agrees with supporters' argument that bigger trucks will help the economy by decreasing shipping costs, and will ultimately benefit consumers.

- **Safety.** Safer highway travel is the other major reason voters oppose bigger, heavier trucks. Three-quarters (75%) of voters find the message related to safety a very or fairly convincing argument against bigger, heavier trucks. Again, when asking voters to choose between opponent and supporter arguments, 78% of voters agree with opponents that bigger, heavier trucks will increase the amount of freight shipped on highways and make driving less safe. Only 16% agree with supporters that bigger, heavier trucks will make the roads safer by reducing the total number of trucks on the roads.

Appeal Of Arguments Opposing Bigger, Heavier Trucks On Highways

% saying each is a very or fairly convincing argument

- 75% **Heavier trucks** are more likely to be involved in **crashes** because increased weight leads to increased **brake problems** and **longer stopping distances**. Also, **collisions** involving heavier trucks with other vehicles are more likely to **involve fatalities**. *(62% very convincing)*
 - 74% **Heavier trucks cost taxpayers and motorists money.** Currently, tractor-trailer trucks do not fully cover their highway operating costs, because the fees they pay are not enough to pay for the damage they do to roads. Heavier trucks will **cause more road damage, cover fewer expenses, and cost taxpayers and motorists even more money.** *(54% very convincing)*
 - 69% **Tractor-trailer trucks** travel less than 10% of all vehicle miles, but they are **responsible for more than 50% of all road and bridge damage.** A 105,000 pound tractor-trailer truck does 13 times more pavement damage per mile than a truck that weighs 55,000 pounds. *(48% very convincing)*
 - 60% **Larger trucks will increase highway gridlock.** Currently, the average tractor-trailer truck has the congestion impact of three to four automobiles, and **bigger trucks will take up even more space** on the highways we all use. *(40%)*
 - 58% **Bigger trucks will actually lead to more, not fewer, trucks on the highway.** Experience shows that allowing bigger, heavier trucks increases, not decreases, the amount of truck transportation, because **bigger trucks encourage even more freight to be transported by highway,** instead of more cost-efficient alternatives like freight rail. *(40% very convincing)*
- **Voters' strong concerns about government spending, the deficit, and taxes—especially in the current political climate—are important context for the opposition.** More than four in five (84%) voters say government spending and the federal budget deficit is one of the most urgent or serious concerns for the future, a concern shared across party lines (76% of Democrats, 84% of independents, and 93% of Republicans). Nearly seven in 10 (69%) voters say the tax system and the way taxes and the tax burden are spread in the future is an urgent or very serious concern for the future, including 68% of Democrats, 66% of Republicans, and notably, 81% of independents.

It also is important to note that two-thirds (66%) of voters say allowing bigger, heavier trucks on the highways will have a negative impact on taxpayers in general. Voters' anxiety about taxes and federal government spending, combined with the knowledge that as trucks get heavier, they cover less of the road damages they cause, casts this debate in a uniquely personal context and fuels voters' strong opposition to bigger, heavier trucks.