

Rep. Gallagher: Introduces Safe Routes Act of 2019

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Mike Gallagher (WI-08) yesterday introduced H.R. 2453, the Safe Routes Act of 2019, alongside Reps. Sanford Bishop (GA-02), Joe Courtney (CT-02), Jared Golden (ME-02) and Jim Sensenbrenner (WI-05). The Safe Routes Act would allow logging trucks that meet state-determined legal requirements to travel up to 150 air miles on the Federal Interstate Highway System, which a pilot program has shown to greatly reduce both fatal accidents and fossil fuel usage by trucks. Click [HERE](#) for bill text.

"By allowing logging trucks to use federal highways, the Safe Routes Act of 2019 would not only reduce carbon emissions, but improve the safety of our roads," said Rep. Gallagher. "This bill is a win-win, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this common-sense legislation."

Statements of Support:

"The Safe Routes Act will allow log trucks to access the safer Interstate Highway System for a short distance at legal state vehicle weights and configurations. Nearly 30 states with viable logging sectors will realize the safety benefits of this legislation," said Deb Hawkinson, President of the Forest Resources Association. "The Wisconsin logging community and forest products industry across the nation will realize the safety and environmental benefits from this legislation immediately when passed and signed into law."

"On behalf of the members of the American Loggers Council, representing 36 states across the US with commercial timber harvesting and hauling activities, we would like to thank Congressman Gallagher for championing this effort to allow us to haul our already state legal weight limits for unrefined forest products along safer routes when access to the Federal Interstate Highway system is available. This will not only save lives in rural communities where we have been forced to travel due to differences between state and federal regulations, but will help us to ensure the safety of our drivers and log truckers as well. We applaud this bipartisan effort to make our routes safer for all of the motoring public," said Chris Potts, President of the American Loggers Council.

"The Safe Routes Act of 2019 is very simplistic legislation which will have an enormous, positive impact on safety for both pedestrians and truckers nationwide," stated Bruce Enstrom, President of the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association. "The Safe Routes Act of 2019 is straight forward legislation designed to give truckers a choice of routes by allowing state legal, short haul, commodity specific log trucks, access to the interstate highway system, avoiding populated areas where pedestrian activities are ongoing all hours of the day. We're very grateful Congressman Gallagher recognized these safety concerns and took action by introducing this legislation."

According to a [2018 Virginia Tech study](#), 96% of logging truck collisions occurred on city, county, or state roads where they encounter school zones, cross walks, intersections, stop signs, oncoming traffic, and railroad crossings. A [2018 University of Georgia study](#) found that 41% of logging truck collisions occurred within only 5 miles of the Interstate. The Safe Routes Act of 2019 would allow logging trucks to travel on the federal interstate for 150 air miles – enough to get them from the harvest site to the mill so that they stay off of backroads. The Safe Routes Act mirrors findings from a [pilot program](#) in 2009 authorized by Congress in Maine. The results of the pilot program showed that truck crashes decreased by 25%, fatalities decreased by 37%, and 10 fewer gallons of diesel fuel was used on average by trucks. The Safe Routes Act would reduce trucking fatalities and reduce carbon emissions.