

# Truck safety bills speed through Senate

By Tim Richard  
Staff writer

Sen. William Faust had a personal reason for forming a bipartisan team with Sen. Richard Fessler on truck safety.

"A couple, three years ago, a semi blew a tire, and it came back and hit me. The truck tire veered off the top of my car," said Faust, D-Westland. "It did \$1,000 damage to my new car. It was spooky," said Faust, who

drives 50,000 miles a year between his western Wayne County district and the Capitol in Lansing.

About the same time, AAA Michigan, the auto insurer, began drawing attention to the danger of car-truck accidents. Faust joined Fessler, R-Commerce, chairman of the Senate committee handling transportation, on a three-bill package.

"It's not well known in Michigan yet," said Fessler, "but some states

have a truck-driver shortage. You're getting younger, less-experienced drivers on the road."

THE SENATE last week gave 35-0 and 30-0 approval to their truck safety package (SB 700, 702 and 703) and sent it to the House. All Observer & Eccentric area senators supported them.

"We didn't anticipate the they'd go through that easily," said Faust in

the capitol corridor after the votes. "The Teamsters and the Michigan Trucking Association supported them. They recognized they had a problem."

AAA Michigan President Jack Avignone presented senators — starting with Faust and Fessler — 75,000 cards from drivers asking the state to get dangerous trucks and truck drivers off the road.

"From 1982 through 1985, Michi-

gan fatal accidents between trucks and passenger vehicles rose 41 percent while all fatal traffic accidents rose 10 percent," said Avignone.

HERE is an outline of what the bills will do:

- On highways with three or more lanes, restrict trucks of 10,000 or more pounds to the two right lanes.
- On roads with two lanes, restrict trucks to the right lane only except when passing, in emergencies and for making left turns. "We added that amendment on the floor," said Fessler.
- Require truckers to cover loose loads with tarpaulins.
- Improve safety inspections, particularly for brakes.
- Tighten driver testing.
- Increase penalties for overweight trucks by 50 percent and deposit assessments in a truck safety fund. The per-pound overweight as-

essments had not been increased since 1951.

- Require a \$10 fee for each domestic (Michigan) truck and \$5 for foreign (out-of-state) trucks for the truck safety fund.
- Use 30 percent of the fund (at least \$500,000) for truck driver safety education.
- Use the balance of the fund for special enforcement teams, spot inspections, research on truck accidents and improving local governmental truck safety enforcement.

FAUST STILL has more ideas for truck safety in the future.

"Michigan has the largest weight trucks in the nation. I would like to see that changed," he said. Faust also talks about equipping trucks with a "little black box" similar to the ones on aircraft. They would record how fast a truck was going and how long since its last repairs.

## State 5th in recycling paper

Third of six articles on recycling

May 1-7 was Michigan Recycling Week. Appropriately, today's column outlines the importance of recycling in the reduction of solid waste.

Recycling is the transforming or converting of used, scrap or waste materials into raw materials or new products.

This subsequent re-use of recyclable materials, such as glass, paper, metal, aluminum and plastic, from the solid waste stream has many advantages. Recycling:

- Reduces the amount taken to landfills
- Reduces the number of landfills needed in the future
- Saves land for better use
- Reduces potential pollution to air and ground and surface water
- Saves energy because it takes less energy to make products from recycled materials than from new materials
- Conserves our natural resources—many of which are non-renewable—by lessening the demand for these raw materials
- Creates jobs through new industries connected with recycling

RECYCLING has been done in Michigan for many years.



Terry Gibb

Michigan is the fifth largest user of secondary paper fiber in the nation. The American Paper Institute estimates one to two million Michigan residents are active recyclers, and still, 67 percent of the solid waste being landfilled is recyclable materials.

The Solid Waste Management Strategy is calling for a 70 percent reduction of landfilled solid waste with 25 percent of this reduction achieved through recycling.

THE FIRST STEP to recycling is source separation. All recyclable items, glass, paper, aluminum, metals, cardboard, newspapers, are separated out of the regular trash and separated into containers or banded.

The separated materials are then

taken to a recycling center where arrangements have been made to pick up these materials and return them to plants for conversion into raw materials and/or new products.

In some Michigan communities, the recycled items are placed out by the curb in designated containers for "curbside" pickup. While drop-off recycling centers have lower costs, curbside collection has a greater impact on solid waste because it is more convenient for participants and it can reduce the cost of solid waste disposal to the householder if a user pay collection system is adopted.

A user pay system is where the individual is billed for each bag or can of waste collected that is not recycled. No charge is made for pickup of recyclable items.

FINALLY, SUCCESSFUL recycling requires the use of these recycled products.

Unless we as consumers choose recycled products in the marketplace, the recycle cycle is not complete and recycling efforts are futile. This means that we must create a demand for products and packaging

that use recycled materials. This will help expand the markets for recycled materials in manufacturing and production.

During Michigan Recycling Week, look for the three-arrow recycle symbol on cards, stationery, boxes, cartons, glass and aluminum cans as you shop and choose these products.

There are tons of reasons to recycle!

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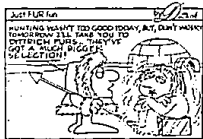
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