

**CHRONOLOGY OF SELECTED
FEDERAL-STATE HIGHWAY LEGISLATION
AND TRANSPORTATION-RELATED ACTIVITY**

1880-2016

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contractors who bid on public contracts from basing their bids on the use of cheap labor recruited from foreign sources.

The Kansas Legislature imposed a ton-mile tax on common, contract, and private carriers. The tax was set at 5/10 mill per gross ton mile.

The Kansas Legislature shortened the total length limitation of trucks from 60 feet to 50 feet. A single unit, which could include the tractor, semitrailer, or a trailer, having dual tires with not less than 8-inch tread was permitted to operate with a limit of 28,000 pounds. Dual-tired axles (a single axle with 2 tires on each end of the axle) were permitted to support up to 18,500 pounds.

Kansas began licensing motor vehicle operators and chauffeurs (HB 61). New York had issued the first state driver's license in 1903; South Dakota became the last state to require such a license, in 1954.

AASHO released the first edition of *Standard Specifications for Highway Bridges*.

- 1932 The enacted federal Revenue Act of 1932 imposed a 1-cent-per-gallon tax on gasoline and a 4-cent-per-gallon tax on lubricating oils; a 3 percent tax on the manufacturers' sales price on automobiles, motorcycles, and buses; a 2 percent tax on trucks, parts, and accessories; a tire tax of 2.25 cents per pound; and a tax on inner tubes of 4 cents per pound.

Congress enacted the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932. Under the Act, Kansas received \$3.2 million for highway-related work. These funds were later converted to grants by the Hayden-Cartwright Act of 1934 and marked the beginning of various measures enacted by Congress to address problems brought about by the Depression.

AASHO recommended the first set of uniform truck size and weight regulations. The 1932 policy recommended a single axle limit of 16,000 pounds and a tandem axle limit based on the distance between the two axles.

- 1933 Congress increased the federal gasoline tax from 1 cent to 1½ cents through the Industrial Recovery Act. The Act also provided for grants to the states for highway construction. Kansas received over \$10 million for highways. A later sum of \$5.1 million was made available to Kansas in June 1934.

The Legislature lowered various motor vehicle registration fees.⁹ Motor vehicle registration fees were lowered from \$8 plus 50 cents per 100 pounds over 2,000 pounds to \$4 plus 25 cents per 100 pounds over 2,000 pounds. The schedule for trucks also was revised. The fees ranged from \$5 for 1,000 pounds or less of rated carrying capacity to \$50 for each ton or fraction thereof of rated carrying capacity over 5 tons.

The Legislature lowered the truck height limitation from 13 feet to 12 feet.

⁹ The law was passed to provide relief from the effects of the Depression. Governor Alf M. Landon recommended to the 1933 Legislature that all fees on automobiles be reduced. In a separate and special message to the 1933 Legislature, the Governor noted the public demanded action to reduce automobile registration fees. The Governor also recommended an increase on truck registration fees.

The Legislature passed legislation to improve connecting links on the basis of a street highway of the same width and comparable type as that of the state highway approaching a city. Prior to the act, state funds could be used to improve connecting links only 18 feet in width.

- 1934 The federal Hayden-Cartwright Act was enacted. It earmarked 1.5 percent of the apportionments for the federal aid system for planning purposes. It also prohibited states from diverting gasoline and motor vehicle taxes to nonhighway uses.

The Revenue Act of 1934 lowered the federal gasoline tax from 1.5 cents to 1 cent. The purpose of the Act was “to provide revenue, equalize taxation, and for other purposes.”

- 1935 Pursuant to the National Recovery Act, a loan and grant agreement was executed between the Bureau of Public Roads and the State of Kansas. It secured \$5 million to construct and improve Kansas highways, 30 percent grant money and 70 percent loan funds.

Congress enacted the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act of 1935. Kansas received \$4.9 million for highways and \$5.2 million for grade crossings. The state also received \$640,999 to rebuild and replace bridges damaged or destroyed by the floods of 1935.

The Legislature raised the mileage limit of the state highway system to the present 10,000.

AASHO issued the first edition of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*, designed to ensure uniform traffic signage across the country. (It has been administered by the Federal Highway Administration [FHWA] since 1971.) According to the FHWA on the occasion of the *Manual's* 80th anniversary, it “introduced America to the importance of pavement markings and adopted rules for the three-color traffic signal, one of the most underrated safety advances in roadway history. . . . Over time, the Manual has showed cities and towns the way to go when it came to traffic control devices used during various conditions, such as blackout conditions in wartime in 1942. In 1954, the MUTCD ushered in the modern “STOP” sign as we now know it: white letters on a red octagonal background, which replaced a similar version with a yellow background. The Manual set the bar for a variety of construction and maintenance operations in 1961; placed a new emphasis on signs near schools in 1971; and updated traffic control devices for highway-rail grade crossings and bicycle facilities in 1978.” The latest edition is its tenth.

- 1936 The Federal Aid Highway Act provided Kansas with \$3.3 million to fight the effects of the Depression.

- 1937 The Legislature reduced the total length limit on trucks from 50 feet to 45 feet. The height limit was raised from 12 feet to 12½ feet. The law also was revised to allow axle loads of 16,000 pounds where high-pressure tires were used and 18,000 pounds with low-pressure tires.

Also enacted was the Uniform Motor Vehicle Operators' and Chauffeurs' License Act, a major re-write of the state's driver's licensing laws. The bill covered topics including eligibility for a license; requirements for eligibility to drive commercial vehicles; examinations; and restrictions, suspensions, and revocations.