

SESSION OF 2018

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 391

As Recommended by Senate Committee on
Transportation

Brief*

SB 391 would authorize the operation of an emergency vehicle at a gross weight not exceeding 86,000 pounds and subject to maximum weights on axles of 24,000 pounds on a single steering axle, 33,500 pounds on a single drive axle, 62,000 pounds on a tandem axle, and 52,000 pounds on a tandem rear drive steer axle. The bill would define “emergency vehicle” for this purpose as a vehicle designed to be used under emergency conditions to transport personnel and equipment and to support the suppression of fires and mitigation of other hazardous situations.

Background

The bill was requested by a representative of the Kansas Department of Transportation, who testified as a proponent of the bill in the Senate Committee on Transportation hearing. No other testimony was provided.

As noted in KSA 2017 Supp. 8-1909 (which would not be amended by the bill), the general weight limit for a vehicle or combination of vehicles is 85,500 pounds, or 80,000 pounds if operated on the interstate system. Federal law, in 23 U.S. Code § 127, requires withholding of certain federal transportation funding if a state permits weight limits on interstate and “defense” highways other than the gross weight and axle load limits established in federal law. As noted in testimony, the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

(FAST) Act (P.L. 114-94), signed into law in December 2015, added an exception to the general weight and axle load limits that would be mirrored by the bill.

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, the League of Kansas Municipalities indicates it does not possess data on the weights of city emergency vehicles but estimates any fiscal effect on cities as a result of enactment of the bill would be negligible.