

After careful study I have signed the 1948 Motor Vehicle Safety Act because in general it represents a progressive step in the regulation of the use of our highways.

A major feature is more practical regulation of truck load limits and greater protection of the highways against the excessively heavy units which do the damage to them. While the axle load limit permitted has been increased from 18,000 to 20,000 pounds per axle, load concentration is guarded against by reducing from 36,000 to 32,000 pounds the load which may be carried on a tandem axle. The result is that a larger pay load may be carried but its distribution will be such as to reduce the damage to our roads.

Some adjustments in our weight regulations were needed to permit the orderly growth of our motor transportation industry and prevent its curtailment. Hundreds of our communities without direct rail service depend upon motor transportation for such vital shipments as fuel oil and gasoline, as well as for many other items. This legislation will increase the usefulness of the industry to those communities and to our people generally, while at the same time giving adequate protection to the highways.

The act brings for the first time our laws in line with recommended National Uniform standards for safety equipment on passenger cars, and accidents should be reduced if it is impartially enforced. Unfortunately it repeals the compulsory motor vehicle inspection laws, but I cannot veto this provision without vetoing the whole act, a step which I cannot take because of its many other benefits and advantages to the public. Rigid enforcement of the safety equipment provisions will make it necessary for every vehicle on the road to be in a safe operating condition, and I have asked for and received the assurance of the Highway Department that these provisions will be impartially and rigidly enforced.