

Northern Ohio Truck Traffic Fact Sheet

August 11, 2004

Background:

The Ohio Turnpike is a very safe road with little or no congestion. However, many trucks avoid the turnpike. As a result, Ohio's rural routes have experienced an influx of truck traffic, causing safety and congestion concerns.

Truck Traffic:

- Truck traffic on Ohio's Interstate highways grew 54 percent between 1994 and 2002;
- Truck traffic on the Ohio turnpike was relatively static during this period.
- Rural routes in northern Ohio have been inordinately impacted by truck traffic:

<u>Route, County</u>	<u>1994 Trucks</u>	<u>2002 Trucks</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
SR 2, Ottawa	1,610	3,010	87%
US 20, Huron	2,530	4,420	75%
US 422, Geauga	630	2,310	267%

Safety:

- By their nature, rural two-lane roads are less safe than rural freeways, with crash rates two to four times greater.
- Many Northern Ohio roads have exceptionally high crash rates; of the ten-worst two-lane roads in Ohio, seven are routes in northern Ohio that trucks use to avoid the turnpike.

The Ohio Turnpike:

- Is a very safe road, with low accident rates.
- Has average volume of 9,400 trucks per day, much lower than Ohio's other Interstate highways, which routinely average 15,000 trucks per day.
- Diverting trucks to the Ohio Turnpike will have no discernable impact on the turnpike's traffic congestion.

Potential Incentives for More Trucks to Use the Turnpike:

- Increase truck speed limit to 65 miles per hour on the turnpike, and monitor for any negative impacts on traffic safety.
- Increase enforcement of truck weights on routes which parallel the Ohio Turnpike.
- On a trial basis, implement a toll reduction or rebate program, which guarantees debt quality for the turnpike's bond holders, while providing a meaningful toll reduction to truckers.