
CONSENT

Bill No: AB 525
Author: Lackey (R)
Amended: 5/15/25 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE: 14-0, 6/24/25
AYES: Cortese, Strickland, Archuleta, Arreguín, Blakespear, Cervantes, Dahle,
Gonzalez, Grayson, Limón, Menjivar, Richardson, Seyarto, Umberg
NO VOTE RECORDED: Valladares

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 71-0, 5/23/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Basic Inspection of Terminals program: agricultural vehicles

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill extends the exclusion of agricultural vehicles from being subject to the Basic Inspection of Terminals (BIT) program from January 1, 2026 to January 1, 2031.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Defines an agricultural vehicle as a vehicle or combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating or a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,000 pounds or less if all of the following conditions are met:
 - a) Is operated by a farmer, an employee of a farmer, or an instructor credentialed in agriculture as part of an instructional program in agriculture at the high school, community college, or university level;
 - b) Is used exclusively in the conduct of agricultural operations when operating in commerce;

- c) Is not used in the capacity of a for-hire carrier or for compensation;
 - d) The towing vehicle has a gross weight rating of 16,000 pounds or less; and,
 - e) Is used solely in intrastate commerce.
- 2) Requires the California Highway Patrol (CHP), in consultation with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), to report to the Governor and the Legislature, on or before January 1, 2022, regarding the impact of excluding an agricultural vehicle from the BIT program, including information about collisions involving excluded vehicles and any traffic safety issues associated with excluded vehicles.
 - 3) Establishes the BIT Program, which regulates the safe operation of certain vehicles by motor carriers. BIT requires CHP to inspect terminals on a performance-based inspection selection system.
 - 4) Requires the CHP to establish rules and regulations for motor carrier selection and inspection of motor carriers at terminals, and conduct inspections in order to regulate compliance with Motor Carrier Safety regulations.
 - 5) Specifies the BIT performance-oriented inspection cycle does not apply to nonspecified vehicles, also known as “j-trucks.”
 - 6) Requires carriers to ensure each regulated vehicle is inspected at least every 90 days, or more often if necessary to ensure safe operation.
 - 7) Defines terminal as any place a motor carrier is regularly garaged, maintained, operated or dispatched, including a private business or residence.
 - 8) Requires motor carriers to identify to CHP, all terminals from which regulated vehicles are operated.

This bill exempts agricultural vehicles, as defined, from the BIT program until January 1, 2031, as specified.

Comments

- 1) *Purpose of this bill.* According to the author, “AB 525 addresses an unfair burden placed on California’s farmers and ranchers, extending by five years an existing provision which exempts their agricultural vehicles from CHP’s Basic Inspection of Terminals (BIT) program. Small family farmers using pickup trucks and trailers to haul equipment, feed, or livestock—not for commercial hire—should not face the same costly and time-consuming regulations as large

trucking fleets. The BIT program's fees and inspections hinder producers' operations, while identical vehicles used for personal purposes (including hauling large campers or RVs) remain exempt. This bill recognizes the unique needs of rural agricultural communities. By extending this exemption, AB 525 keeps our farmers safe and productive, allowing them to upgrade to newer, safer vehicles without fear of unnecessary regulatory burdens. The exemption also frees up CHP resources to prioritize vehicle fleets with the greatest public safety implications, such as those which haul passengers and hazardous material."

- 2) *CHP BIT Program.* AB 2706 (Katz, Statutes of 1988) established the BIT program that CHP administers, requiring commercial trucking fleets to subject their vehicles, maintenance records, and driving records to CHP inspection at specified intervals. Subsequently, AB 529 (Lowenthal, Chapter 500, Statutes of 2013) expanded the BIT program to apply to a broader class of commercial vehicles. The BIT program helps to ensure the safe operation of regulated vehicles by motor carriers. Primarily, the intent of this program is to ensure CHP inspects truck terminals on a performance-based inspection selection system.

Effective January 1, 2016, the terminal inspection requirements changed from a time-based inspection system to a performance-based inspection selection system. Terminals selected for inspection are based on the California Performance Safety Score (CPSS). The CPSS is derived from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Safety Measurement System Behavior Analysis and Safety Improvement Category (BASIC) percentiles. Generally, carriers with a BASIC percentile at or above the Federal alert level will have all California terminals selected for inspection. Additionally, the prioritized inspection of terminals includes those never before inspected and those from which hazardous materials are transported.

- 3) *BIT and agricultural vehicles.* AB 1960 (Lackey, Chapter 748, Statutes of 2016), exempted agricultural vehicles from the BIT program. To assess "the safety impact of this exemption," AB 1960 directed CHP to "report to the Governor and the Legislature [by January 1, 2022] about the impact of excluding an agricultural vehicle" from BIT, including "information about collisions involving excluded vehicles and any traffic safety issues associated with excluded vehicles" and further included a sunset date of January 1, 2023 for this exemption. Upon release, the report concluded that "there is no reliable data available to analyze the safety impacts resulting from the exemption of

agricultural vehicles from the BIT Program” because “agricultural vehicles are not specifically required to be designated by special indicia or identifiers.”

The report also noted that CHP typically prioritizes BIT inspections for “schoolbus, passenger transportation, and...hazardous-material carrier[s]” as well as “Controlled Substance and Alcohol Testing (CSAT) inspections,” and that as a result of these priorities and “time-consuming...legislatively-mandated threshold inspections...motor carrier inspection personnel may not have the capacity to conduct non-threshold inspections of general commercial truck fleets.” Because state law requires CHP to prioritize BIT inspections for “those motor carrier terminals never previously inspected by the department” (CVC § 34501.12(c)(2)), and because agricultural vehicles have never been subjected to BIT inspection previously, allowing the current agricultural vehicle exemption to sunset may impact CHP’s ability to appropriately prioritize inspections for passenger vehicles, hazardous material haulers, and others.”

AB 2415 (Lackey, Chapter 209, Statutes of 2022) extended the agricultural vehicle exemption for three years as the author, at that time, noted more time is needed due to the delayed release of the abovementioned report and further need to evaluate the report’s findings upon release.

Per AB 2415, the agricultural exemption to the BIT program is set to sunset on January 1, 2026. This bill extends the BIT exemption for agricultural vehicles to January 1, 2031. At this point, there have been no known reported unintended consequences or safety concerns as a result of agricultural vehicles being exempt from the BIT program. Therefore, the sunset provision in this bill provides the proper safeguard to offer the Legislature the opportunity to reevaluate this exemption in five years.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 7/7/25)

California Cattlemen's Association
California Farm Bureau Federation
Western United Dairies

OPPOSITION: (Verified 7/7/25)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 71-0, 5/23/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Bryan, Chen, Lee, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Sanchez, Sharp-Collins, Wicks

Prepared by: Manny Leon / TRANS. / (916) 651-4121
7/9/25 16:03:27

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