

# **GOVERNOR BATT, TRUCKING INDUSTRY RAP RAILROADS**

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**BOISE** -- Gov. Phil Batt joined industry and agriculture leaders Monday to focus the debate on heavier truck weights more directly on the reason they contend the change is needed -- Union Pacific Railroad.

The meeting in the governor's office was a show of support for legislation the Senate Transportation Committee will vote on Tuesday for a project allowing 129,000 pound trucks on selected highways to test the impact of increasing the weight limit from 105,500 pounds.

Among those joining him in decrying Union Pacific's service shortcomings since last year's merger with Southern Pacific -- which solidified what had been languid support from Batt for heavier trucks -- were Avonmore West's Williams, Amalgamated Sugar Co. President Alan Lipman, Boise Cascade Corp. Vice President John Holleran and Idaho Cattle Association President Judy Woodie.

Roy Eiguren, a Boise attorney representing both Amalgamated Sugar and Boise Cascade, said shortages of rail cars and locomotives had created "the worst railroad crisis in 25 years."

"The railroads in this country simply cannot deliver," said Jeff Williams, vice president of the Gooding cheese manufacturer Avonmore West Inc. "What the railroads need is a good dose of competition."

The governor blamed concerns about highway safety and possible damage to roadways from heavier trucks, as "untrue accusations," and "intense pressure from Union Pacific."

"The railroad has determined it will do everything it can to stop this legislation," Batt said.