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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

EDWARD JARRETT, CHIEF CLERK

June 9, 1966

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As your Committee begins its executive consideration of the Tire Safety and the Traffic Safety Bills, I wanted you to know the reasons why our Committee considered that a separate Tire Bill is essential.

It was the Committee's judgment that both industry and government have now progressed further toward the development of meaningful safety standards for tires than for automobiles and automobile equipment generally. We were, therefore, able to be far more precise in our legislative mandate to the standards-setting authority.

There now exist safe performance standards for new tires, promulgated by the industry, by the Vehicle Equipment Safety Commission and the General Services Administration (which is expected to issue more stringent standards in the near future). Existence of these standards made it feasible to direct the Secretary to establish interim safe performance standards, to be effective on or before July 31, 1967. Under the Traffic Safety Bill, there would be no assurance that the Secretary would establish performance standards for tires at all, and no comparable limitation on the time he may allow for any such standards to become effective.

The Tire Safety Bill directs the Secretary to prescribe "maximum permissible loads for each size of tires." This directive responds to disturbing evidence that many new cars, particularly station wagons, are being sold with undersized, inadequate tires. There is, of course, no specific provision in the proposed Traffic Safety Bill which would require the Secretary to establish maximum permissible loads.

The Tire Bill deals with the problem of tire safety and tire marketing as a whole. It does not stop with the setting of standards for new tires but directs the Secretary to establish standards for tire



retreading -- standards which are undoubtedly of great safety significance -- and prohibits outright the unsafe practice of tire regrooving.

Testimony presented to our Committee during our extensive hearings on a tire safety bill showed quite clearly the confusion that can result when individual States enact -- as indeed a number are now doing (two to become effective July 1 this year) -- their own conflicting tire standards.

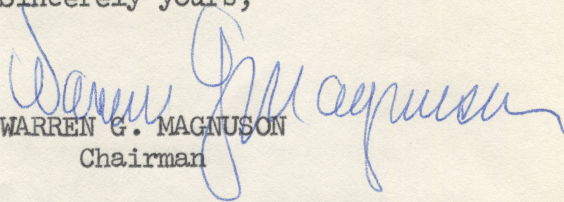
Again, quite apart from safety, the Tire Bill comes to grips with a problem which is deeply troublesome to tire consumers, confused and misleading tire nomenclature. The development of a quality grading system for tires designed to bring to an end such confusion is of major significance to consumers.

Finally, the Tire Bill directs the Secretary to require suitable labeling of tires and such information as the identity of the manufacturer, the actual size, the type of material and the number of plies and, further, provides for the marking of tires with a mark or symbol, indicating compliance with Federal standards.

I am hopeful that your Committee will consider these points in determining the necessity for early enactment of a separate and distinct Tire Safety Bill.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,

  
WARREN G. MAGNUSON  
Chairman

Honorable Harley O. Stagers  
Chairman  
Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C.