

INNOVATION IN SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT

QUICK SUMMARY: Establishes an in-state competitive grant program in which a panel compiled of representatives from state transportation departments, local governments, planning organizations, and other transportation/economic stakeholders select projects to receive funding set aside from federal transportation programs.

GOALS OF THIS BILL

- Increase the return on investment in the nation's surface transportation system
- Make our transportation system more reliable, safe, and efficient
- Increase input from local government and stakeholders on projects receiving funding
- To leverage federal highway dollars further through in-state competitions

PANEL MEMBERS

- At least 3 individuals representing the state DOT
- At least 3 individuals representing local governments in the state with one from a jurisdiction of 50,000 people, one from a jurisdiction of 50,000-1,000,000, and one from a jurisdiction of 1,000,000 or more (if applicable)
- At least 3 individuals representing metropolitan planning organizations and rural planning organizations
- One from each category and no more than 9 members representing the following groups (this group must be equal in numbers to the above members):
 - Local chambers of commerce
 - Transportation management organizations, travel/tourism boards, economic development organizations and other coalitions of employers and commerce
 - Local air quality boards
 - State safety boards
 - Transit agencies
 - Port authorities (if applicable)
 - Active transportation organizations
 - Public interest organizations
 - Labor unions
 - Tribal govts/coalitions (if applicable)

** Panel members should be geographically diverse*

FUNDING

The following percentage of federal dollars already given to states will be reserved for competitive, in-state grants:

- 10% of the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)
- 33% of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- 33% of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- 33% of the Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- 33% of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

**The bill exempts any funds already suballocated by states and preserves the use of these funds to projects currently eligible within each separate program listed.*

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

** This bill does not expand eligibility to entities that are not currently eligible for public funds. Private providers must partner with local governments to submit applications.* Eligible entities include:

- Local government
- Regional transportation authority
- Transit agency
- Tribal government
- Private provider of public transportation
- Port authority
- Joint power authority
- Local rail authority

TRANSPARENCY

- Requires states to publicly post the criteria/methodology used to select projects, the amount requested, the amount granted, and the source of non-federal funds.
- Requires states to submit reports to Congress and the U.S. DOT organizations represented on the panel, the amount of funds that have been obligated, and the amount used for administrative costs.

OPT OUT FOR STATES

- States that already have a competitive state program or directly suballocate more than 95% of their funds can be exempted from this program.