

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5825

As Passed Senate, March 13, 1995

Title: An act relating to bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

Brief Description: Enhancing bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Fairley and Kohl).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/21/95, 2/22/95 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 3/13/95, 34-15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5825 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Owen, Chair; Heavey, Vice Chair; Fairley, Kohl, Morton, Oke, Prentice, Rasmussen, Schow and Wood.

Staff: Robin Rettew (786-7306)

Background: Under current law, monies deposited into the rural arterial trust account (RATA), administered by the County Road Administration Board (CRAB), may only be used for the construction and improvement of major and minor collectors in rural areas, for the replacement of bridges funded by the federal bridge replacement program and for administrative expenses associated with the rural arterial program. The statute is silent about allowing rural arterial trust account funds to be used for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, although CRAB indicates they do use these funds to stripe bike lanes adjacent to rural arterials.

Under current law, statutes governing the use of the urban arterial trust account (UATA), administered by the Transportation Improvement Board, is silent about the application of UATA funds for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The statutes require that UATA funds be used to improve the urban arterial street system by improving mobility and safety.

The transportation improvement account (TIA), administered by the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), is for urban counties for multi-agency arterial improvement projects. Although the statute is silent about using TIA funds for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the TIB has approved through their internal rule-making process a dedication of 5 percent of their funding for "stand-alone pedestrian facilities." Based on TIB's 1995-97 budget request for the TIA, this would be approximately \$11.0 million. The TIB has not adopted similar rules for a bicycle program.

Project selection processes for RATA, UATA, and TIA programs are silent about alternative analysis and public participation.

Summary of Bill: RATA, UATA, and TIA monies are eligible to be used for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities may be sited away from roads.

Any project eligible for RATA, UATA, or TIA funding must demonstrate public support for the project, and the public must be afforded the opportunity to consider alternatives to the proposed project. Before any project is eligible for funding, there must be a finding that no reasonable alternative to construction such as access management or transportation system management is feasible.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The bill allows for more flexibility and greater choice. Local residences and businesses need better bicycle and pedestrian facilities. More local choice is provided and better coordination is allowed with local comprehensive plans. It helps to ensure the most efficient use of tax dollars and allows for alternatives to road improvements.

Testimony Against: There are no reasonable alternatives to road reconstruction projects. Consideration of access management, transportation system management, or transportation demand management does not make sense.

Testified: Senator Fairley, prime sponsor; Peter Lagerwey, Seattle Engineering Dept. (pro); Aaron Ostrom, ALT-TRANS (pro); Scott Merriman, WA Environmental Council (pro); Eric Berger, County Road Administration Board (pro with concerns); Chris Leman, Coalition of WA Communities (pro).