

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5486

As Passed Senate, March 12, 1997

Title: An act relating to eligibility for the rural arterial program.

Brief Description: Revising eligibility for rural arterial programs.

Sponsors: Senators Morton, Snyder and Prince; by request of County Road Administration Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/6/97, 2/18/97 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/12/97, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prince, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Goings, Haugen, Heavey, Horn, Jacobsen, Morton, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Rasmussen and Sellar.

Staff: Gary Lebow (786-7304)

Background: The rural arterial program, administered by the County Road Administration Board, provides grant funds to reconstruct county rural arterial roads. At the time of the program's creation in 1983, county roads were comprised of major and minor collectors according to the federal functional classification system. Since 1983 the Department of Transportation has transferred approximately 309 miles of minor arterials to the county which, according to the current statute, are not eligible for the grant funds.

Current statute makes counties ineligible for the rural arterial program grant funds if road funds are diverted for anything other than proper county road purposes. Counties with populations between 5,000 and 8,000 are exempt from this requirement.

Summary of Bill: Minor arterials are added to the list of roads eligible for rural arterial program grant funds.

Counties with a population of less than 8,000 are exempt from the rural arterial program eligibility requirement of not diverting road funds to other uses.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The small counties oftentimes have to use the county road levy just to keep the courthouse doors open. Given the major flood and storm damage that has occurred in the past two winters, the rural arterial program is the only thing keeping these counties afloat and allowing them to fix their roads.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Eric Berger, County Road Administration Board; Don Jackson, Columbia County Commission (pro).