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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1793**

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**State of Washington                      61st Legislature                      2009 Regular Session**

**By** House Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Williams, Goodman, Nelson, White, Pedersen, Roberts, Upthegrove, and Eddy)

READ FIRST TIME 03/03/09.

1            AN ACT Relating to alternative student transportation; and adding  
2 new sections to chapter 47.04 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 47.04 RCW  
5 to read as follows:

6            Concurrent with the federal safe, accountable, flexible, efficient  
7 transportation equity act of 2005, a safe routes to school program is  
8 established within the department. The purpose of the program is to:

9            (1) Enable and encourage children, including those with  
10 disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;

11            (2) Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing  
12 transportation alternative, encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle  
13 from an early age; and

14            (3) Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of  
15 projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic,  
16 fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

17            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 47.04 RCW  
18 to read as follows:

1 The department shall administer a competitive grant program for the  
2 safe routes to school program established under section 1 of this act.  
3 The following guidelines apply for the grant program:

4 (1)(a) The grant application process must include questions that  
5 assess the possible eligibility of a disadvantaged school. Primary  
6 variables that may define a disadvantaged school include:

7 (i) Exceeds the state median in the school's proportion of free and  
8 reduced-price meals;

9 (ii) Falls below the state median in the school's student scores on  
10 the Washington assessment of student learning; or

11 (iii) Past history of traffic collisions in and around the school's  
12 area.

13 (b) Grants awarded to disadvantaged schools must constitute at  
14 least fifty percent of the number of grants awarded.

15 (2) The department shall use grant funds to award noninfrastructure  
16 grants, which emphasize education, encouragement, and enforcement  
17 efforts, only if the grant applicant can establish that the current  
18 engineered infrastructure of the school provides adequate safe walking  
19 and biking routes within the relevant school walk boundary.  
20 Noninfrastructure grants awarded must constitute at least twenty-five  
21 percent of the amount of grants awarded.

22 (3) The grant application process must include questions that  
23 assess the strength of the relationships between schools, school  
24 districts, and corresponding municipalities.

25 (4) The department must attempt to make the grant application  
26 process as streamlined as possible.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 47.04 RCW  
28 to read as follows:

29 (1) The department shall provide information, resources, outreach,  
30 training, and program evaluation support to grantees awarded grants  
31 under the grant program described in section 2 of this act. The  
32 department shall contract with a nonprofit or a consortium of  
33 nonprofits that demonstrate an expertise in alternative transportation  
34 programs and policies, including implementation of the safe routes to  
35 school program.

36 (2) The department shall coordinate evaluation methods and findings  
37 with those of the national center for safe routes to school in order to

1 standardize program evaluation, measure Washington's progress to that  
2 of other states, and learn from safe routes to school programs across  
3 the country. Current measurement criteria from the national center for  
4 safe routes to school include:

- 5 (a) Number of children who walk and bike to school;
- 6 (b) Number of children bused to school;
- 7 (c) Reduced number of car trips to and from school;
- 8 (d) Awareness of the program; and
- 9 (e) Parent acceptance/attitude towards biking and walking.

10 (3) Additional indicators that the department may compile and  
11 report upon include:

- 12 (a) Personal health - general levels of physical activity, body  
13 weight;
- 14 (b) Traffic safety - vehicular crashes, number of traffic calming  
15 or other pedestrian-oriented traffic safety measures installed, number  
16 of miles of sidewalks and bike paths installed;
- 17 (c) Environmental health - reduced congestion and pollution,  
18 emissions levels and asthma rates;
- 19 (d) Student achievement - absenteeism, tardiness, grades, test  
20 scores; and
- 21 (e) Community aspects - leveraged funds from other sources, parent  
22 attitudes toward yellow school bus transportation, public transit to  
23 school, and driving.

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