

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5742

As Amended by House, April 17, 2023

Title: An act relating to codifying certain existing grant programs at the department of transportation.

Brief Description: Codifying certain existing grant programs at the department of transportation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, Lias and Lovick).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/20/23, 4/03/23 [DPS].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 4/5/23, 48-0.

Passed House: 4/17/23, 84-12.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Codifies the Rideshare Grant Program, Special Needs Grant Program, the Freight Rail Investment Bank, Freight Rail Assistance Program, and the Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Grant at the Department of Transportation.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5742 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Lias, Chair; Lovick, Vice Chair; Shewmake, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Holy, Assistant Ranking Member; Cleveland, Hawkins, Kauffman, Lovelett, MacEwen, Nobles, Padden, Randall, Valdez, Wilson, C. and Wilson, J..

Staff: Jenna Forty (786-7755)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background: Rideshare Grant Program. The Rideshare Grant Program has been included in the state transportation budget since the 2003-05 biennium. The rideshare or vanpool grant program provides support for transit agencies to replace or add rideshare vehicles.

Special Needs Grant. The Special Needs Grant Program has been included in the state transportation budget since the 2003-05 biennium. The Special Needs Grant Program provides support for transit agencies and non-profit providers of transportation. The appropriation is divided with 77 percent going to transit agencies and 23 percent going to nonprofit providers of special needs transportation.

Freight Rail Investment Bank and Emergent Freight Rail Assistance Program. The Freight Rail Investment Bank (FRIB) and Freight Rail Assistance Program (FRAP) have been in the current structure of project evaluation since the 2011 transportation budget, following the development of a cost-benefit methodology developed during the 2008 interim, and in accordance with legislative priorities established in the rail preservation program. The FRIB provides low-interest loans to publicly-owned railroads, port districts, rail districts and local governments. FRAP grants are available to both the public and private sectors.

Bicycle Pedestrian Grant Program. The Bicycle Pedestrian Grant Program has been included in the state transportation budget since the 2005-07 biennial budget. The program awards grants to local jurisdictions to eliminate pedestrian and bicyclist fatal and serious injury crashes, build connected low stress walk and bike networks, and increase walking and biking.

Program	2022 Supplemental Transportation Budget appropriations (<i>in thousands</i>)
Rideshare Grant	\$2,000
Special Needs - <i>current law and new law</i>	\$81,941
Freight Rail Investment Bank - <i>new loans</i>	\$5,098
Freight Rail Assistance Program - <i>new projects</i>	\$7,041

Summary of First Substitute Bill: Codifies the Rideshare Grant Program, Special Needs Grant Program, FRIB, FRAP, and the Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Grant Program at the Department of Transportation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: The special needs grant program is particularly important and the rideshare program is well established, it makes sense to codify these into permanent law. Change requested for the terms of FRIB loans from 10 years to 20 years. Codifying these grants recognizes the importance of these transportation programs. Please consider increasing funding for these programs. Bike ped program is an important part of the transportation budget and funds important infrastructure to keep bicyclists and pedestrians safe.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Claudia Kauffman, Prime Sponsor; Cynthia Stewart, League of Women Voters of WA; Vicky Clarke, Washington Bikes; Justin Leighton, Washington State Transit Association; Jim Hedrick, Port of Everett.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.

EFFECT OF HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

- Clarifies the time periods for which the maintenance of effort expenditure amounts must be reported and shown, for a transit agency to be considered eligible for a Paratransit and Special Needs Grant Program grant.
- Clarifies the time period of reported expenditure for demand response service and route deviated service, with respect to the prorating of the total grants to transit agencies.
- Provides that the purpose of FRIB, and of FRAP, is to support freight rail capital needs.
- Clarifies that FRIB and FRAP projects are to be evaluated using a cost-benefit methodology, and that the methodology must use the legislative priorities specified in the bill.