

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2163

To authorize the Secretary of Transportation to make grants for certain streetcar projects, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 29, 2009

Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. KLEIN of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Transportation to make grants for certain streetcar projects, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fast Starts Act of
5 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Communities around the United States have
9 expended time and resources to utilize the Small

1 Starts program under section 5309(e) of title 49,
2 United States Code, for streetcar projects.

3 (2) A delay in authorizing grants under the
4 Small Starts program has created a backlog of
5 streetcar projects requiring attention outside of that
6 program.

7 (3) Streetcar projects create jobs during both
8 their construction and operation throughout the cor-
9 ridor in which the projects are developed.

10 **SEC. 3. GRANTS FOR CERTAIN STREETCAR PROJECTS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation
12 is authorized to make grants to States and local govern-
13 mental authorities to assist the financing of streetcar
14 projects in accordance with this section.

15 (b) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—To be eligible for a grant
16 under subsection (a), the State or local governmental au-
17 thority applying for a grant shall submit to the Secretary,
18 not later than March 1, 2010, an application certifying
19 that the streetcar project to be assisted by such grant—

20 (1) is supported by an acceptable degree of
21 local financial commitment;

22 (2) has met the environmental requirements
23 necessary to begin construction; and

24 (3) is a project with respect to which construc-
25 tion can begin not later than March 1, 2012.

1 (c) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make a
3 grant under subsection (a) with respect to a street-
4 car project only if the Secretary finds that the
5 project is—

6 (A) based on the results of planning and
7 alternatives analysis;

8 (B) justified based on a review of its effect
9 on local economic development, land use, travel
10 patterns, and greenhouse gas reduction poten-
11 tial; and

12 (C) supported by an acceptable degree of
13 local financial commitment.

14 (2) PLANNING AND ALTERNATIVES.—In evalu-
15 ating a project under paragraph (1)(A), the Sec-
16 retary shall analyze and consider the results of plan-
17 ning and alternatives analysis for the project. For
18 purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary shall com-
19 pare the project to a no build analysis to consider
20 project outcomes.

21 (3) PROJECT JUSTIFICATION.—For purposes of
22 making the finding under paragraph (1)(B), the
23 Secretary shall determine—

1 (A) the degree to which the project will
2 have a positive effect on local economic develop-
3 ment;

4 (B) the reduction in per capita auto travel
5 demand that will result from the completed
6 project, including related development, travel
7 pattern, and land use changes; and

8 (C) the reduction in per capita greenhouse
9 gas emissions that will result from the com-
10 pleted project, including related development,
11 travel pattern, and land use changes.

12 (4) LOCAL FINANCIAL COMMITMENT.—For pur-
13 poses of paragraph (1)(C), the Secretary shall re-
14 quire that each proposed local source of capital and
15 operating financing is stable, reliable, and available
16 within the timetable of the project.

17 (d) AMOUNT LIMITATION.—With respect to a street-
18 car project for which a grant is made under subsection
19 (a), the sum of the amounts of grants made under sub-
20 section (a) to assist such project may not exceed
21 \$60,000,000.

22 (e) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER FUNDING.—A street-
23 car project for which a grant is made under subsection
24 (a) is not prohibited from receiving assistance under any
25 other Federal program.

1 (f) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost
2 of a streetcar project, or portion of a streetcar project,
3 for which a grant is made under subsection (a) shall be
4 100 percent.

5 (g) STREETCAR PROJECT DEFINED.—In this section,
6 the term “streetcar project” means a new fixed guideway
7 capital project that is electricity and rail based.

8 (h) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the defi-
9 nitions contained in sections 5302 and 5309 of title 49,
10 United States Code, apply.

11 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
12 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
13 \$400,000,000 for fiscal year 2010.

14 (j) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—Amounts made
15 available to carry out this section shall remain available
16 until expended.

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