

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 717 (Delegate Bronrott, *et al.*)

Commerce and Government Matters

Budget and Taxation

Transportation - Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

This bill requires a bicycle and pedestrian safety coordinator for each State highway engineering district, creates a Maryland Pedestrian Safety Program funded by the Highway Safety Operating Program, and directs the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to conduct a pilot project that focuses on child pedestrian safety.

The provision of the bill that establishes the pilot project is effective June 1, 2001.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures would increase by \$232,300 in FY 2002 only. Out-year expenditures reflect annualization, inflation, and one fewer contractual position. Revenues would not be affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	232,300	108,000	110,000	113,000	115,600
Net Effect	(\$232,300)	(\$108,000)	(\$110,000)	(\$113,000)	(\$115,600)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: Potential increase in revenues from State grants for pedestrian safety programs.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal. Nonprofit organizations associated with bicyclists may receive State funds to conduct safety awareness campaigns and other media events.

Analysis

Bill Summary: This bill requires the Secretary of Transportation to designate a district coordinator for each State highway engineering district who will: (1) consult with public officials and citizens regarding the needs of bicycle riders and pedestrians; (2) monitor the Department of Transportation's (MDOT) actions and the impact of MDOT's actions on bicycle riders and pedestrians; and (3) attend meetings held by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and training programs. There are seven highway engineering districts.

The bill directs the Director of Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to consult with the coordinators and district engineers to identify priority areas to receive funds for improving access to transportation facilities. It expands the membership of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to 21 members by including representatives from the Department of Planning, the Governor's Office for Individuals with Disabilities, and the community and requires MDOT to provide support for the committee. The bill terminates the terms of all committee members on October 1, 2001 and directs the Governor to appoint or reappoint members.

It also creates the Maryland Pedestrian Safety Program, funded by the Highway Safety Operating Program of the State Highway Administration (SHA) and any other moneys accepted for the benefit of the fund from any governmental or private source. The Secretary of Transportation must award grants from the program to counties, municipalities, and nonprofit organizations to: (1) educate drivers and pedestrians about ways to increase pedestrian safety; (2) enhance efforts to enforce State and local motor vehicle laws that protect pedestrians; (3) design or redesign intersections to increase pedestrian safety and access; and (4) enhance safe pedestrian access to transit facilities.

The bill requires the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to designate two counties, or Baltimore City and a county, as target areas for a pilot project that focuses on child pedestrian safety, particularly on school routes. The committee must develop an action plan that includes suggestions for improving the safety and encouraging the use of child pedestrian routes to schools and submit the action plan to the Governor and the General Assembly by June 1, 2002. The bill directs MDOT to provide staff and administrative support and implement the plan by September 1, 2002.

The committee must evaluate what benefits were achieved by the plan over a 12-month period and submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by July 1, 2003.

Current Law: The statewide 20-year Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan requires the Director of Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to propose long-term strategies for improving the State's highways to ensure compliance with the most advanced safety standards for pedestrians and bicycle riders. No special program is dedicated solely to pedestrian safety. The Governor appoints the 13 members of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee who represent State agencies and specific geographic areas.

Background: Chapter 670 of 2000 directed MDOT to develop a comprehensive approach to bicycle transportation planning, including the creation of a master plan. MDOT plans to complete the next phase of the plan during 2001 and will try to complete the master plan in 2002. It is also working on several programs for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including a safety awareness campaign for pedestrians and bicycle riders.

Major projects are funded through the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), while others are funded through programs such as neighborhood conservation. MDOT estimates that its capital program spent \$57.6 million in bicycle and pedestrian improvements during fiscal 2000. However, the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) notes in its budget analysis that neither the CTP nor the Maryland Operating Budget provides an estimate for these improvements. What portion of these expenditures directly relates to pedestrian safety is unclear.

Approximately 847 child pedestrians (age 0-16) were injured in Maryland in 1999, and 12 children were killed in pedestrian accidents. According to the Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy, elementary school-age children are at greatest risk for pedestrian injuries, often during after-school or early evening hours. The center is studying the environmental factors that make a particular neighborhood more risky for child pedestrians and designing a prevention strategy to protect child pedestrians in an urban setting. The center is focusing its study on Baltimore City, which has the highest percentage of pedestrian accidents in the State.

State Expenditures: TTF expenditures could increase by an estimated \$232,300 in fiscal 2002, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2001 effective date for district coordinators and the June 1 effective date for the pilot project. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring a consultant (for fiscal 2002 only) and two contractual employees and includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Future year expenditures reflect salaries for two contractual employees with 2.3% annual salary increases, 3.8% employee turnover, and 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinators: TTF expenditures would increase by \$82,300 to hire two contractals to provide engineering support for the bicycle coordinators. The State Highway Administration advises that it may need three contractual employees. DLS advises, however, that two contractual positions should be sufficient to allow the program to begin. Both SHA and the Mass Transit Administration have full-time bicycle and pedestrian coordinators, in addition to seven regional engineers whose duties include bicycle and pedestrian access.

The expanded membership of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee could be handled with existing resources.

Pilot Project on Child Pedestrian Safety: Transportation Trust Fund expenditures could increase by \$150,000 in fiscal 2002 only to implement the action plan and for other work associated with the pilot project. SHA advises that it would need to hire a consultant to help the committee prepare the action plan and evaluate its benefits. DLS advises that the Oversight Committee should be able to evaluate the benefits of the plan with existing resources and that the funds needed for the pilot project depend on the target areas chosen; a high-population area with more schools would require more resources than a rural area with fewer schools.

Legislative Services further advises that using existing studies by nonprofit research institutions could reduce expenditures and provide operational efficiency.

Pedestrian Safety Program: This program expands the use of existing TTF funds. SHA advises that it would give greater priority to grant applications from areas that have demonstrated pedestrian fatality or injury problems and that its next round of spot safety improvements will focus on increasing pedestrian safety. Approximately \$10.1 million has been allocated in fiscal 2002 for SHA's Highway Safety Operating Program. DLS advises that if State expenditures and programs directly tied to pedestrian safety are determined prior to awarding grants, duplication could be avoided.

Local Effect: The bill calls for State grants to be awarded to local jurisdictions and would provide additional revenue to those jurisdictions that apply. However, the bill also directs the Secretary to establish procedures for grant applications, which may dictate the level of funds that counties and municipalities can receive (i.e., they may be required to provide matching funds or meet other criteria).

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 420 (Senator Frosh, *et al.*) – Budget and Taxation.

Information Source(s): Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Ann Marie Maloney

Direct Inquiries to:
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510