

JAN 23 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that traffic safety
2 around Hawaii's schools must be strengthened to enable and
3 encourage children to walk and bicycle to school and make these
4 transportation alternatives more appealing to students and their
5 families. The legislature further finds that ensuring
6 sufficient funding for projects is a significant part of the
7 safe routes to school program. As such, Act 212, Session Laws
8 of Hawaii 2025, established the safe routes to school program
9 vehicle registration surcharge to be deposited into the safe
10 routes to school special fund to help pay for safe routes to
11 school project. As there is set to be an increase in the
12 funding for safe routes to school projects, the legislature also
13 finds that ensuring that safe routes to school funds are
14 appropriately spent is equally important.

15 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to clarify
16 eligibility and improve accountability for the use of safe
17 routes to school funds.



1 SECTION 2. Section 291C-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 "~~§291C-3 [State and county safe routes to school programs;~~
4 ~~coordinators; grants;]~~ Safe routes to school program; projects;
5 counties; allocation and expenditure of funds; unused funds;
6 reports. (a) There is established, within the department of
7 transportation, a safe routes to school program that shall[~~r~~
8 ~~among other things, enhance traffic safety around Hawaii's~~
9 ~~schools, enable and]~~ encourage and enable children to walk and
10 bicycle to school[~~, and make bicycling and walking to school a~~
11 ~~safer and more appealing transportation alternative. Beginning~~
12 ~~July 1, 2024, the program shall be responsible for developing~~
13 ~~and publishing goals and performance measures in coordination~~
14 ~~with the safe routes to school advisory committee and providing~~
15 ~~technical assistance to counties and community organizations in~~
16 ~~support of projects and programs that advance state and county~~
17 ~~goals.]~~ safely.

18 (b) [~~There is created, within the department of~~
19 ~~transportation, the position of safe routes to school program~~
20 ~~coordinator. The safe routes to school program coordinator~~
21 ~~shall provide a central point of contact for the safe routes to~~



1 ~~school program.]~~ The department of transportation shall
2 administer the safe routes to school program and may plan,
3 design, construct, implement, and administer eligible safe
4 routes to school projects. For purposes of this section,
5 eligible safe routes to school projects may be undertaken by the
6 department of transportation, a county, or in partnership with
7 other public agencies or schools.

8 (c) ~~[A county designated office, through the county safe~~
9 ~~routes to school program coordinator, and in consultation with~~
10 ~~the department of education, department of health, and Hawaii~~
11 ~~Association of Independent Schools, shall provide safe routes to~~
12 ~~school funds for school-based and community-based workshops and~~
13 ~~infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects that will reduce~~
14 ~~vehicular traffic and congestion, encourage walking and~~
15 ~~bicycling, and promote health and safety around Hawaii's~~
16 ~~schools.]~~ Any safe routes to school funds allocated to a county
17 shall be obligated within two years of the date of allocation
18 and expended within four years of obligation, unless an
19 extension is approved by the department of transportation for
20 good cause shown.



1 (d) ~~[The department of transportation shall expend funds~~
2 ~~from the safe routes to school program special fund in~~
3 ~~coordination with the safe routes to school advisory committee~~
4 ~~to be used for the implementation of the safe routes to school~~
5 ~~program plan and projects pursuant to section 291C-6(b)(2) and~~
6 ~~(3). No later than twenty days prior to the convening of each~~
7 ~~regular session, each county shall submit to the legislature an~~
8 ~~annual report on the status and progress of its county safe~~
9 ~~routes to school program, including an accounting of all grants~~
10 ~~provided through the program and a timeline for future grant~~
11 ~~awards.]~~ Any funds allocated to a county under this section
12 that are not obligated or expended within the timeframes
13 required in subsection (c), including funds associated with
14 projects that are not completed, shall revert to the safe routes
15 to school program special fund and may be reallocated by the
16 department of transportation for other eligible safe routes to
17 school projects.

18 (e) ~~[Implementation of the county safe routes to school~~
19 ~~program shall take into consideration the need to:~~



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1 ~~(1) Fill a permanent, full-time position of safe routes to~~
2 ~~school coordinator within the county designated~~
3 ~~office;~~

4 ~~(2) Maximize the participation of school officials and~~
5 ~~stakeholder groups in the community;~~

6 ~~(3) Work in conjunction with county designated safe routes~~
7 ~~to school stakeholders and train volunteer~~
8 ~~facilitators for school-based workshops and community-~~
9 ~~based projects, including flexible training schedules;~~

10 ~~(4) Train potential grant requestors and stakeholder~~
11 ~~groups in federal and state requirements necessary for~~
12 ~~procurement, contracts, design, and construction; and~~

13 ~~(5) Allocate not less than ten per cent and not more than~~
14 ~~thirty per cent of safe routes to school funds for~~
15 ~~non-infrastructure-related activities or activities to~~
16 ~~encourage walking and bicycling to school, public~~
17 ~~awareness campaigns, student sessions on bicycle and~~
18 ~~pedestrian safety, or other non-infrastructure~~
19 ~~activities.~~

20 ~~(f)]~~ The safe routes to school advisory committee

21 established pursuant to section 291C-6 shall develop a



1 streamlined process for the safe routes to school program that
2 meets federal and state requirements, simplifies the grant
3 proposal application process, and expedites release of funding
4 after completion of school-based and community-based projects for
5 infrastructure and non-infrastructure.

6 ~~[(g)]~~ (f) The safe routes to school advisory committee
7 established pursuant to section 291C-6 shall submit to the
8 legislature an annual report of the status and progress of the
9 safe routes to school program, including an accounting of all
10 grants provided through the program and a timeline for future
11 grant awards, no later than twenty days prior to the convening
12 of each regular session."

13 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
14 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

16 INTRODUCED BY: 



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Report Title:

Safe Routes to School; Funding; Eligibility and Accountability

Description:

Clarifies eligibility and improves accountability for the use of Safe Routes to School funds. Repeals the position of safe routes to school program coordinator. Repeals certain requirements for county programs.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

