
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; reports.** (a) There is established,
5 within the department of transportation, a safe routes to school
6 program that shall, among other things, enhance traffic safety
7 around Hawaii's schools, enable and encourage children to walk
8 and bicycle to school, and make bicycling and walking to school
9 a safer and more appealing transportation alternative.

10 Beginning July 1, 2024, the program shall be responsible for
11 developing and publishing goals and performance measures in
12 coordination with the safe routes to school advisory committee
13 and providing technical assistance to counties and community
14 organizations in support of projects and programs that advance
15 state and county goals.

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



1 (c) The department of transportation shall administer the
2 safe routes to school program and may plan, design, construct,
3 implement, and administer safe routes to school projects that
4 serve the purposes stated in subsection (a). For purposes of
5 this section, eligible safe routes to school projects may be
6 undertaken by the department of transportation, a county, or in
7 partnership with other public agencies or schools. The
8 department of transportation may expend funds from the safe
9 routes to school program special fund to implement this section,
10 including for staff labor and non-labor expenses, and the
11 central services assessment required by section 36-27. The
12 department of transportation may transfer funds from the safe
13 routes to school program special fund to a county for the
14 planning, design, construction, implementation, and
15 administration of eligible safe routes to school projects
16 undertaken by the county.

17 [~~e~~] (d) A county designated office, through the county
18 safe routes to school program coordinator, and in consultation
19 with the department of education, department of health, and
20 Hawaii Association of Independent Schools, shall provide safe
21 routes to school funds for school-based and community-based



1 workshops and infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects
2 that will reduce vehicular traffic and congestion, encourage
3 walking and bicycling, and promote health and safety around
4 Hawaii's schools.

5 (e) Any funds from the safe routes to school program
6 special fund allocated to a county to serve as matching funds
7 for a federal-aid project shall have the corresponding federal
8 funds obligated no later than two years after the date on which
9 the department of transportation initially transferred the
10 matching funds to the county for the project; provided that the
11 department of transportation may grant an extension to obligate
12 the funds for good cause shown.

13 (f) For any project undertaken by a county for which funds
14 are allocated from the safe routes to school program special
15 fund, the county shall expend all funds:

16 (1) Within four years from the date on which the
17 department of transportation initially transferred
18 funds for the project; or

19 (2) For federal-aid projects, within four years from the
20 date federal funds were initially obligated;



1 provided that the department of transportation may grant an
2 extension to complete the expenditure of funds for good cause
3 shown.

4 (g) Any funds allocated to a county under this section
5 that are not obligated or expended within the timeframes
6 required in subsections (e) and (f), including funds associated
7 with projects that are not completed, shall revert to the safe
8 routes to school program special fund and may be reallocated by
9 the department of transportation for other eligible safe routes
10 to school projects.

11 [~~(d)~~] (h) The department of transportation shall expend
12 funds from the safe routes to school program special fund in
13 coordination with the safe routes to school advisory committee
14 to be used for the implementation of the safe routes to school
15 program plan and projects pursuant to section 291C-6(b)(2) and
16 (3). No later than twenty days prior to the convening of each
17 regular session, each county shall submit to the legislature an
18 annual report on the status and progress of its county safe
19 routes to school program, including an accounting of all grants
20 provided through the program and a timeline for future grant
21 awards.



1 [~~e~~] (i) Implementation of the county safe routes to
2 school program shall take into consideration the need to:

- 3 (1) Fill a permanent, full-time position of safe routes to
4 school coordinator within the county designated
5 office;
- 6 (2) Maximize the participation of school officials and
7 stakeholder groups in the community;
- 8 (3) Work in conjunction with county designated safe routes
9 to school stakeholders and train volunteer
10 facilitators for school-based workshops and community-
11 based projects, including flexible training schedules;
- 12 (4) Train potential grant requestors and stakeholder
13 groups in federal and state requirements necessary for
14 procurement, contracts, design, and construction; and
- 15 (5) Allocate not less than ten per cent and not more than
16 thirty per cent of safe routes to school funds for
17 non-infrastructure-related activities or activities to
18 encourage walking and bicycling to school, public
19 awareness campaigns, student sessions on bicycle and
20 pedestrian safety, or other non-infrastructure
21 activities.



1 ~~(f)~~ (j) The safe routes to school advisory committee
2 established pursuant to section 291C-6 shall develop a
3 streamlined process for the safe routes to school program that
4 meets federal and state requirements, simplifies the grant
5 proposal application process, and expedites release of funding
6 after completion of school-based and community-based projects for
7 infrastructure and non-infrastructure.

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

15 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
16 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

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



Report Title:

Safe Routes to School; Department of Transportation; Counties;
Funding; Eligibility and Accountability

Description:

Requires the Department of Transportation to administer the Safe Routes to School Program. Amends the purposes for which funds of the Safe Routes to School Special Fund may be used for. Establishes deadlines for when funds from Safe Routes to School Special Fund that are allocated to the counties should be obligated or expended by. (HD1)

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