



Rep. Elaine Nekritz

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1 AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 2623

2 AMENDMENT NO. _____. Amend House Bill 2623 by replacing
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Safe
5 Routes to School Program Act.

6 Section 5. Findings and purpose. Childhood obesity has more
7 than tripled over the past 30 years, creating a youth obesity
8 epidemic. Nearly 18 percent of children, and 21 percent of
9 adolescents, are obese, and 31.9 percent are obese or
10 overweight. Obese children are likely to become obese adults;
11 in fact, an obese older teenager has up to an 80 percent chance
12 of becoming an obese adult. Obesity causes, or is closely
13 linked to, numerous serious health conditions including heart
14 disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, unhealthy
15 cholesterol, asthma, sleep apnea, gallstones, kidney stones,
16 infertility, and as many as 11 types of cancers, including

1 leukemia, breast, and colon cancer. In addition to harming
2 individual health, obesity also negatively impacts the economy
3 by contributing to higher health care costs, higher
4 transportation costs, and lost labor market productivity. High
5 obesity rates can also impact military readiness.

6 The purpose of this Act is to improve the public health and
7 safety of children and communities through a reduction in
8 childhood obesity and collision injuries by supporting the
9 successful implementation of Safe Routes to School projects.
10 Safe Routes to School projects aim to improve children's health
11 and reverse the decline in walking and bicycling by funding
12 local projects that support biking and walking to school
13 through education, encouragement, and safer infrastructure,
14 such as new and improved crosswalks, sidewalks, and traffic
15 lights. The need for Safe Routes to School projects is
16 especially strong in low income areas, which typically have the
17 highest obesity rates, inferior pedestrian and biking
18 infrastructure, and higher traffic injury rates for people
19 driving, bicycling, and walking.

20 Safe Routes to School projects are having a significant
21 impact where implemented. The percentage of students actively
22 traveling to school by walking or biking, as estimated by
23 school administrators, is 60 percent higher overall in schools
24 participating in Safe Routes to School compared with schools
25 that do not participate, and in some schools, the number of
26 students walking or bicycling to school doubled in 3 years.

1 Safe Routes to School projects make it safer and more
2 convenient for everyone to walk and bike to destinations,
3 encouraging a more active and healthier lifestyle that
4 contributes to lower health care costs for the whole community.

5 Nothing in this Act is intended to prevent local or
6 regional jurisdictions from establishing additional or more
7 rigorous requirements consistent with the purpose of this Act.

8 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

9 "Demonstrated high need area" means either (1) a school or
10 project area in which at least 50% of the children are eligible
11 to receive free and reduced priced meals under the National
12 School Lunch Program; or (2) a census tract in which the median
13 household income is less than 80% of the statewide average
14 median based on the most current census tract level data from
15 the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

16 "Department" means the Department of Transportation.

17 "Safe Routes to School" or "SRTS" means programs and
18 initiatives that aim to increase the number and safety of
19 students walking or bicycling to school through education,
20 encouragement, and infrastructure improvements.

21 "Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects" means
22 planning or engineering projects, located within 2 miles of a
23 school, that support bicycling and walking to the school, such
24 as sidewalk improvements, traffic calming and speed reduction
25 improvements, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements,

1 on-street bicycle facilities, off-street bicycle and
2 pedestrian facilities, secure bicycle parking facilities, and
3 traffic diversion or calming improvements.

4 "Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure projects" means
5 projects that are designed to encourage children to walk and
6 bicycle to school, including public awareness campaigns and
7 outreach to press and community leaders, traffic education and
8 enforcement in the vicinity of schools, student education
9 sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and
10 environment, and funding for training volunteers and managers.

11 "Safe Routes to School projects" means both Safe Routes to
12 School infrastructure projects and Safe Routes to School
13 non-infrastructure projects.

14 Section 15. Establishment of Safe Routes to School Fund.
15 There shall be established in the State treasury a Safe Routes
16 to School Fund into which the Department of Transportation
17 shall deposit funds for use by the Safe Routes to School
18 Program and Safe Routes to School projects.

19 Section 20. Establishment of the Safe Routes to School
20 Program; staffing and technical assistance.

21 (a) The Department shall establish and administer a Safe
22 Routes to School Program, which will support increasing the
23 safety and convenience of school children walking or biking to
24 school and fund Safe Routes to School projects in local

1 jurisdictions.

2 (b) The Department shall allocate funds to maintain a
3 full-time position of Safe Routes to School Program
4 Coordinator.

5 (c) The Safe Routes to School Program shall:

6 (1) provide outreach, education, and technical and
7 application assistance relating to the Safe Routes to
8 School Program to local jurisdictions and schools; and

9 (2) ensure the timely award and obligation of funds to
10 Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects and Safe
11 Routes to School non-infrastructure projects.

12 (d) The Safe Routes to School Program shall develop and
13 periodically revise program guidelines for administration of
14 the Safe Routes to School Program that establish:

15 (1) a clear application process, including project
16 selection criteria;

17 (2) schedules and procedures;

18 (3) performance measures;

19 (4) student travel data collection procedures;

20 (5) program evaluation measures and procedures; and

21 (6) any other matters relevant to administration of the
22 Safe Routes to School Program.

23 Section 25. Mix of infrastructure and non-infrastructure
24 projects. The SRTS Program shall fund both Safe Routes to
25 School infrastructure projects and Safe Routes to School

1 non-infrastructure projects with no less than 10 percent and no
2 more than 30 percent of funds authorized in the Safe Routes to
3 School Fund reserved for Safe Routes to School
4 non-infrastructure projects each funding cycle.

5 Section 30. Demonstrated high needs areas.

6 (a) The Safe Routes to School Program shall develop a plan,
7 with specific goals and benchmarks, which are designed to
8 ensure that demonstrated high need areas receive technical
9 assistance, resources, and funding for Safe Routes to School
10 projects consistent with their need.

11 (b) The Safe Routes to School Program shall provide
12 demonstrated high need areas with pre-application assistance,
13 including application preparation assistance, planning grants,
14 and engineering consulting services, as needed.

15 (c) The Safe Routes to School Program shall identify
16 barriers experienced by demonstrated high need areas in
17 implementing Safe Routes to School projects and seek to
18 alleviate those barriers through procedural changes and
19 provision of resources and technical assistance.

20 Section 35. Non-state funding sources. Nothing in this Act
21 shall be construed to limit, restrict, or otherwise discourage
22 the allocation of federal or other non-State funds to the Safe
23 Routes to School Program or Safe Routes to School projects.

1 Section 40. Report to General Assembly. The Secretary of
2 Transportation, in consultation with the Safe Routes to School
3 Program Coordinator, shall submit to the General Assembly, no
4 later than 20 days prior to convening of each annual session of
5 the General Assembly, an annual report of the state and
6 progress of the Safe Routes to School Program, which shall
7 include but not be limited to:

8 (1) an accounting of all funds appropriated, awarded,
9 and obligated;

10 (2) a summary of all projects funded;

11 (3) an estimation of the benefits conferred by the
12 Program;

13 (4) a progress report on the plan, goals, and
14 benchmarks for demonstrated high need communities required
15 under subsection (a) of Section 30 of this Act; and

16 (5) any recommendations for legislative changes,
17 including proposals to improve program effectiveness.

18 Section 100. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
19 Section 5.866 as follows:

20 (30 ILCS 105/5.866 new)

21 Sec. 5.866. The Safe Routes to School Fund."