



March 8, 2012

Bicycling and Walking Organizations Respond to MAP-21 Manager's Amendment

America Bikes, a coalition representing the nation's leading bicycling and walking groups, supports MAP 21, the bipartisan Senate transportation bill as amended by the manager's package. America Bikes is pleased the Senate bill incorporates the Cardin-Cochran amendment that ensures local governments, school systems, and metropolitan planning organizations access to much-needed funding to make walking and bicycling safe and accessible in communities across the country. We urge the Senate to quickly pass this much improved transportation bill.



If MAP-21 becomes law, this legislation would ensure that local governments and communities have a voice in the transportation decisions that affect their streets. As amended, MAP-21 requires state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) to make their Additional Activities funds available to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and local governments. Eligible uses for Additional Activities funds include Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and other uses. The state DOT will allocate 50% of the Additional Activities funds to MPOs and rural areas. MPOs will then hold a competitive grant process to award funds to projects in their areas. With the remaining Additional Activities funds, state DOTs will hold their own competitive grant process to support local projects. Local governments, school districts, public lands agencies, and others may apply for these funds from the DOT. These new safeguards in MAP-21 would ensure that communities of every size benefit from making their own localized transportation decisions for safe streets.



America Bikes thanks amendment sponsors Senators Cardin (D-MD) and Cochran (R-MS) for their advocacy for local governments. The coalition would also like to thank Senators Boxer (D-CA) and Inhofe (R-OK) for working with the amendment sponsors to incorporate the amendment.



The inclusion of Cardin-Cochran and other amendments—including one sponsored by Senator Udall (D-NM) to include bicyclists and pedestrians in planning decisions—makes a good transportation bill better. America Bikes supports further efforts to strengthen the Senate's transportation bill for walking and bicycling. In particular, we support Senator Klobuchar's (D-MN) amendment to reinstate the Recreational Trails Program and Senator Merkley's (D-OR) amendment to eliminate a provision making it illegal for people to ride bicycles on certain roads in national parks and federal lands.



It is imperative that federal transportation investments include walking and bicycling infrastructure. These facilities benefit American communities by increasing safety for all users, giving Americans more transportation choices, reducing congestion, and encouraging active transportation. We look forward to working with Senate leaders to advance MAP-21.