
DIGEST

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HB 394 Engrossed

2019 Regular Session

Carmody

Abstract: Provides for the Rail Infrastructure Improvement Program. Renames the existing program, provides for its purpose, modifies existing requirements, and adds additional requirements.

Present law provides for the Freight Railroad Intermodal Grant Program.

Proposed law modifies present law to rename the Freight Railroad Intermodal Grant Program to the Rail Infrastructure Improvement Program.

Present law provides that the program is made available for intermodal needs of state freight rail services.

Proposed law modifies present law to make the program available for rail improvement needs to maintain efficient rail service on the rail network and implement recommendations in the State Freight Plan and State Rail Plan.

Proposed law provides that eligible projects include but are not be limited to the following: (1) track, equipment, signaling, and right-of-way acquisition and preservation; (2) rail line relocation and improvement; (3) multimodal connector enhancements and supporting facilities; (4) highway-rail grade crossing and associated equipment improvements; and (5) planning, engineering, and design for selected projects.

Present law provides that funding is subject to, but not limited to, the following: (1) the availability of funds; (2) a comparative needs analysis of requested projects as determined by the department; (3) demonstrable public benefits to be achieved by the project; and (4) a 50% match provided from other sources by the successful candidate for a project.

Proposed law modifies present law by requiring the match be a minimum of 50% from sources other than the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF).

Present law provides that the grant program must be implemented no later than January 1, 1998, and continue for a period of 10 years after the date of implementation.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law provides that no TTF monies may be used for this program.

Proposed law repeals present law and provides that only new sources of revenue for the TTF may be used subject to annual appropriations as the department's share for a project under this program. Proposed law further provides that non-TTF monies may be utilized and appropriated under this program.

Present law requires the department to promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of present law which shall include but not be limited to the following: (1) project submission; (2) project evaluation, including but not limited to financial feasibility, benefit/cost analysis, and economic impact; (3) program administration; (4) prioritization of projects; and (5) distribution of funding.

Proposed law modifies present law by removing financial feasibility, benefit/cost analysis, economic impact, and prioritization of projects.

Proposed law requires the department to submit to the Joint Committee on Transportation, Highways, and Public Works, a prioritized list of projects for the ensuing fiscal year and a list of projects proposed to be commenced within the ensuing four years.

(Amends R.S. 48:388.1(A)(1), (2), and (3)(d), (B), and (D); Adds R.S. 48:388.1(E); Repeals R.S. 48:388.1(C))