

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS27465 / S1276

This proposed legislation would help make it safer for children walking and biking to schools, parks, and libraries. In addition, establishing and maintaining a Children's Walking and Biking Infrastructure Program would improve government efficiency and transparency. The infrastructure projects contemplated by this legislation would include projects such as sidewalks and crosswalks.

It requires the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) to establish and maintain a Children's Walking and Biking Infrastructure Program. The program, which would be collaboratively managed by ITD and the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC), would distribute funds to worthwhile projects via a competitive grant program. Proposed projects, which could be submitted by any of ITD's six districts and/or all local units of Idaho government, would be evaluated on four criteria: 1.) safety; 2.) mobility; 3.) proximity to a school, park, or library; and 4.) project readiness.

The Children's Walking and Biking Infrastructure Program would improve efficiency by already having a program in place when state sidewalk and crosswalk funding becomes available. State funding has been inconsistent over the years and has been distributed in different ways. This legislation would make it unnecessary to recreate the distribution process each time funding becomes available because the process would already be in place.

The Children's Walking and Biking Infrastructure Program would improve transparency by establishing criteria for the grants and preventing a "sidewalk to nowhere" scenario. Ultimately, the program would ensure that the best projects get funded and constructed.

FISCAL NOTE

There would be no impact to the General Fund because this proposed legislation does not increase staffing. It requires minimal up-front staff time to establish the program. Once the program is established, it is anticipated that no more than five percent of future funds will be needed to maintain the program.

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DISCLAIMER: This statement of purpose and fiscal note are a mere attachment to this bill and prepared by a proponent of the bill. It is neither intended as an expression of legislative intent nor intended for any use outside of the legislative process, including judicial review (Joint Rule 18).