105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 975

To amend title 23, United States Code, to extend the bridge discretionary program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 27, 1997

Mr. BOND introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

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A BILL

To amend title 23, United States Code, to extend the bridge discretionary program, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Safe Bridges Act of 1997''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) bridges are important and necessary components of the surface transportation system of the United States;

(2) bridges are an important factor in the efficient movement of people and goods;

(3) properly maintained and constructed bridges help save lives;

(4) more than 25 percent of the bridges on the Interstate System are classified as deficient or in poor condition; and

(5) an investment of more than $5,000,000,000 annually is needed to maintain the bridges that are in existence as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. BRIDGE DISCRETIONARY PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.—Section 144(g) of title 23, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) DISCRETIONARY BRIDGE PROGRAM.—

''(A) SET ASIDE.—For each fiscal year, before any apportionment is made under subsection (e), the Secretary shall set aside $500,000,000 from the funds authorized to carry out this section.

''(B) USE OF SET ASIDE.—The amount set aside under subparagraph (A) shall be available for obligation in the same manner and to the same extent as the sums apportioned under subsection (e), except that—

"(i) the amount shall be available for obligation at the discretion of the Secretary;

"(ii) for each fiscal year, $8,500,000 of the amount shall be available to carry out section 144A;

"(iii) for each fiscal year, $12,500,000 of the amount shall be available to carry out section 144B;

"(iv) for each fiscal year, $15,000,000 of the amount shall be available to carry out section 144C; and

"(v) the remainder of the amount shall be available in accordance with paragraph (2).

"(C) OTHER STATE FUNDS.—Funds made available to a State under subparagraph (B) shall not be considered in determining the apportionments and allocations that the State shall be entitled to receive, under the other provisions of this title and other law, of amounts in the Highway Trust Fund.".

(b) HIGHWAY TIMBER BRIDGE RESEARCH AND CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM.—

(1) TRANSFER TO TITLE 23.—Section 1039 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (23 U.S.C. 144 note; 105 Stat. 1990) is—

(A) transferred to title 23, United States Code;

(B) redesignated as section 144A of that title; and

(C) inserted after section 144 of that title.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 144A of title 23, United States Code (as added by paragraph (1)), is amended—

(i) by striking the section heading and inserting the following:

"§ 144A. Highway timber bridge research and construction program";

(ii) in subsection (e)—

(I) by striking "of title 23, United States Code, for each of fiscal years 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997" and inserting "for each of fiscal years 1998 through 2003"; and

(II) in paragraph (2), by striking ''($7,000,000 in the case of fiscal year 1992)''; and

(iii) by striking subsection (f).

(B) The analysis for chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 144 the following:

''144A. Highway timber bridge research and construction program.''.

SEC. 4. INNOVATIVE HIGHWAY STEEL BRIDGE RESEARCH AND CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 144A (as added by section 3(b)(1)) the following:

''§ 144B. Innovative highway steel bridge research and construction program

''(a) RESEARCH GRANTS.—The Secretary shall make grants to other Federal agencies, universities, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and research or engineering entities to carry out research concerning—

''(1) the development of new, cost-effective highway steel bridge applications;

''(2) the development of engineering design criteria for steel products and materials for use in highway bridges and structures to improve steel design properties;

''(3) the development of highway steel bridges and structures that will withstand natural disasters;

''(4) the development of products, materials, and systems for use in highway steel bridges that demonstrate new alternatives to current processes and procedures with respect to performance in various environments; and

''(5) rehabilitation measures that demonstrate effective, safe, and reliable methods for the use of steel in rehabilitating highway bridges and structures.

''(b) TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION TRANSFER.—The Secretary shall take such action as is necessary to ensure that the information and technology resulting from research conducted under subsection (a) is made available to State and local transportation departments and other interests as specified by the Secretary.

''(c) CONSTRUCTION GRANTS.—

''(1) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall make grants to States for projects for the construction of steel bridges and structures on Federal-aid highways.

''(2) APPLICATIONS.—

"(A) SUBMISSION.—A State that desires to receive a grant under this subsection shall submit an application to the Secretary.

"(B) CONTENTS.—The application shall be in such form and contain such information as the Secretary may require by regulation.

"(3) APPROVAL CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall select and approve applications for grants under this subsection based on whether the project that is the subject of the grant—

"(A) has a design that has both initial and long-term structural integrity;

"(B) has an innovative design, product, material, or system that has the potential for increasing knowledge, cost effectiveness, durability, and future use of the innovation; and

"(C) uses practices and construction techniques that comply with all environmental regulations.

"(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of a research or construction project under this section shall be 80 percent.

"(e) FUNDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—From the funds reserved from apportionment under section 144(g)(1) for each of fiscal years 1998 through 2003—

''(A) $2,500,000 shall be available to the Secretary to carry out subsections (a) and (b); and

''(B) $10,000,000 shall be available to the Secretary to carry out subsection (c).

''(2) AVAILABILITY.—Sums made available under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 144A (as added by section 3(b)(2)(B)) the following:

''144B. Innovative highway steel bridge research and construction program.''.

SEC. 5. CARBON COMPOSITE BRIDGE RETROFIT RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 144B (as added by section 4(a)) the following:

''§ 144C. Carbon composite bridge retrofit research and demonstration program

''(a) RESEARCH GRANTS.—The Secretary shall make grants to other Federal agencies and to universities, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and research or

engineering entities, in the United States, to carry out research concerning—

''(1) the development of new, economical carbon composite highway bridge retrofit systems;

''(2) the development of engineering design criteria for carbon composite products for use in highway bridges in order to improve methods for characterizing carbon composite design properties;

''(3) deployment systems for the incorporation of carbon composites that demonstrate alternative processes for the seismic retrofit of bridges and the rehabilitation of structurally deficient bridge structures;

''(4) alternative carbon composite transportation system structures that demonstrate the development of applications for lighting support, sound barriers, culverts, and retaining walls in highway infrastructure; and

''(5) additional rehabilitation measures that demonstrate effective, safe, and reliable methods for rehabilitating highway infrastructure with carbon composites.

''(b) TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION TRANSFER.—The Secretary shall take such action as is necessary to ensure that the information and technology resulting from

research conducted under subsection (a) is made available to State and local transportation departments and other interests as specified by the Secretary.

''(c) CONSTRUCTION GRANTS.—

''(1) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall make grants to States for projects for the reconstruction or seismic retrofit of bridges on the National Highway System.

''(2) APPLICATIONS.—

''(A) SUBMISSION.—A State that desires to receive a grant under this subsection shall submit an application to the Secretary.

''(B) CONTENTS.—The application shall be in such form and contain such information as the Secretary may require by regulation.

''(3) APPROVAL CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall select and approve applications for grants under this subsection based on whether the project that is the subject of the grant—

''(A) has a design that has both initial and long-term structural and environmental integrity;

''(B) has a design that uses carbon composite materials;

''(C) has an innovative design that has the potential for increasing knowledge, cost effectiveness, and future use of the design;

''(D) will ensure the structural integrity of a major river crossing in the New Madrid region during a seismic event;

''(E) will extend the service life of a structurally deficient bridge by at least 15 years; and

''(F) uses bridge retrofit technology and material that are produced in the United States.

''(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of a research or construction project under this section shall be 80 percent.

''(e) FUNDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—From the funds reserved from apportionment under section 144(g)(1) for each of fiscal years 1998 through 2003—

''(A) $1,000,000 shall be available to the Secretary to carry out subsections (a) and (b); and

''(B) $14,000,000 shall be available to the Secretary to carry out subsection (c).

''(2) AVAILABILITY.—Sums made available under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 144B (as added by section 4(b)) the following:

''144C. Carbon composite bridge retrofit research and demonstration program.''.

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