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110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5161

To provide for the establishment of Green Transportation Infrastructure Research and Technology Transfer Centers, and for other purpose.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 29, 2008

Mr. WU introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Science and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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A BILL

To provide for the establishment of Green Transportation Infrastructure Research and Technology Transfer Centers, and for other purpose.

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 ''Green Transportation Infrastructure Research and Technology Transfer Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Transportation infrastructure contributes to the pollution of surface and ground water because it is comprised of impervious surfaces that concentrate contaminants which are introduced into the water supply during storms.

(2) Scientists and engineers have developed numerous technologies that can be incorporated into transportation infrastructure which control stormwater and mitigate nonpoint source water pollution.

(3) There has not been widespread implementation of green transportation infrastructure by governments or private industry because of technical, regulatory, and social barriers, such as lack of training and awareness for builders.

(4) The Federal Highway Administration, in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency, has the technical expertise and capacity to promote the use of green transportation infrastructure technologies by State and local governments and private industry through education and outreach and technical assistance programs.

SEC. 3. REGIONAL GREEN TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH CENTERS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subchapter I of chapter 55 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 5505 following new section:

"SEC. 5505A. REGIONAL GREEN TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH CENTERS.

''(a) GREEN TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.—The Secretary of Transportation shall make grants to nonprofit institutions of higher learning or consortia thereof to establish and operate university transportation centers to carry out research and development and technology transfer activities in the field of green transportation infrastructure.

''(b) OBJECTIVES.—The purpose of Centers established pursuant to this section shall be to—

''(1) generate innovative and cost-effective approaches to mitigating environmental impacts throughout the lifecycle of transportation infrastructure;

''(2) develop holistic approaches to integrating green infrastructure into existing wastewater management systems;

''(3) promote adoption of innovative green transportation infrastructure systems by State and local governments and the private sector; and

''(4) manage technology transfer programs to disseminate information on best management practices in the area of green transportation infrastructure to State and local governments and the private sector.

''(c) SELECTION OF GRANT RECIPIENTS.—

''(1) APPLICATIONS.—In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a nonprofit institution of higher learning or consortia thereof shall submit to the Secretary an application that is in such form and contains such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) MERIT REVIEW; PRIORITY.—Grants shall be awarded under this section on a merit-reviewed competitive basis.

''(3) REGIONAL CENTERS.—To the greatest extent practicable, the Secretary shall ensure that there is at least one grant recipient from each of the 10 United States Government regions that comprise the Standard Federal Regional Boundary System.

''(4) SELECTION CRITERIA.—Except as otherwise provided by this section, the Secretary shall se-

lect each recipient of a grant under this section through a merit-reviewed competitive process on the basis of the following:

"(A) Demonstrated expertise in transportation research and environmental impacts of transportation infrastructure.

"(B) Demonstrated research capacity and technology transfer resources.

"(C) Existing or proposed partnerships with State and local governments and private industry involved in transportation-related construction, environmental impact mitigation, or other areas related to green transportation infrastructure research.

"(D) Capability to provide leadership in developing national best management practices, regional best management practices, or both in the field of green transportation infrastructure.

"(E) Expertise in specific regional climate characteristics which impact the effectiveness of green transportation infrastructure technologies and practices.

"(F) Demonstrated ability to disseminate results of research and education programs

through a statewide or regionwide continuing education program.

''(G) The strategic plan the recipient proposes to carry out under the grant.

''(d) ACTIVITIES.—The types of activities the Secretary may support under this section include the following:

''(1) Research and development of innovative technologies, construction techniques, or best management processes that mitigate the environmental impact of transportation infrastructure, including—

''(A) assessments of the lifecycle environmental impact of local existing or planned transportation infrastructure;

''(B) integration of green transportation infrastructure elements into existing transportation or waste management systems; and

''(C) research, development, testing, and evaluation of new technologies or best management practices.

''(2) Establishment and operation of a regional technology transfer program to disseminate information on new technologies and best management practices to State and local governments, institutions of higher learning, and private industry in the region.

''(3) Study of the impact of State, local, and Federal regulations on the implementation of green transportation infrastructure technologies and practices. These studies shall include collaboration with appropriate Federal agencies to evaluate the effect of and possible changes to Federal and State regulations that impede implementation of green transportation infrastructure.

''(4) Public education campaigns to raise awareness of the benefits of green transportation infrastructure technologies, including activities to raise awareness and foster collaboration among regional governments, private industry, and other public and private stakeholders.

''(e) ANNUAL MEETING.—The Secretary shall convene an annual meeting of the Centers established pursuant to this section in order to foster collaboration and communication among Center participants and disseminate best management practices.

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

''(g) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'green transportation infrastructure' includes infrastructure that—

''(1) preserves and restores natural processes, landforms (such as floodplains), natural vegetated stream side buffers, wetlands, or other topographical features that can slow, filter, and naturally store stormwater runoff and floodwaters for future water supply and recharge of natural aquifers;

''(2) utilizes natural design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain water close to its source;

''(3) minimizes the use of impervious surfaces in order to slow or infiltrate precipitation;

''(4) minimizes lifecycle energy consumption, including during construction, maintenance, use by vehicles, and destruction and recycling; and

''(5) minimizes lifecycle air pollution.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for such subchapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5505 the following new item:

''5505A. Regional Green Transportation Research Centers.''.

SEC. 4. GREEN TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AMENDMENTS.

Section 504 of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)(ii)—

(i) by striking ''and'' at the end of subclause (V);

(ii) by striking the period at the end of subclause (VI); and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

''(VII) the use of green transportation infrastructure (as defined in section 5505A(g) of title 49) for environmental protection and mitigating environmental impacts of transportation construction.''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Institute shall coordinate the development of curriculum and courses with other Federal agencies with expertise in the course subject areas.''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(2)(A)(i) by striking ''and traffic safety countermeasures'' and inserting ''traffic safety countermeasures, and options with respect to green transportation infrastructure (as defined in section 5505A(g) of title 49)''.

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