



H.R. 4241: The Transportation Access and System Connection Act

Background »

In the 2012 MAP-21 transportation bill, Congress started moving the United States towards a performance-based transportation system. MAP-21 required performance measures that measure safety, congestion and pavement quality, but not a measure of how well the system connects people to destinations, such as jobs, schools, health care and grocery stores.

Until recently it had been difficult to measure such specific information. The private sector now offers these tools, and a few states are using them already. However, the data is expensive and not available to everyone. The Transportation Access and System Connection Act creates a pilot project to make that data available to five States and 10 metropolitan areas (including six smaller MPOs) to test how that data can be used to optimize transportation systems across modes and communities.

What it does »

- » Creates a pilot program for five states and 10 metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to have level-of-access data from residents' homes to jobs, schools, health care and grocery stores. The data will be provided using all transportation modes: biking, walking, transit and driving.
- » The U.S. DOT will provide a data set that measures accessibility for each area.
- » The States and MPOs will use the data and report back to the U.S. DOT how the data is used and will highlight how such data impacted transportation investments. U.S. DOT will report results back to Congress.
- » The funding for the pilot program will come from U.S. DOT administrative funds.

Why it matters »

- » The basic function of our transportation system is to connect people to destinations. We need a better way to measure how well our system does this — for all modes and all people.
- » Funding for transportation is limited, and ensuring we are connecting as many people as possible to their daily destinations across modes will optimize our investments.
- » This data provides information about all the trips people take- not just their commute to work. That will improve our planning process and will ensure we build communities and transportation systems that work for everyone.

To co-sponsor please contact »

The bill's original co-sponsors are Reps. Comstock (R-Va), Davis (R-IL), Esty (D-CT), and Lipinski (D-IL).

To cosponsor or to learn more contact:

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Why use Accessibility Data?

(Analysis done by State Smart Transportation Initiative)¹

Why » Accessibility data allows communities and planners to measure how well transportation projects will improve connectivity between residents and daily destinations such as work, schools, health care and grocery stores. Here's an example of how it was used in Madison, WI to understand the benefit of providing bike access U.S. Route 12/18.

The Problem » Residents that live north of Route 12/18 do not have safe bicycling or walking access to the areas south of Route 12/18, which offers many jobs and services. Improving connections opens opportunities for residents and for businesses.



The Model » This model uses Sugar Access² data on the number of households and destinations, and makes the following example:

- » Assumes nearby highway interchanges are not safely “bikeable.”
- » Assumes an average bicycling speed of 8.5 MPH
- » Takes into account biking conditions on roads such as traffic speed, number of lanes and type of roads

Results » The accessibility analysis shows that 5,692 households gain access to shops, jobs and other opportunities south of the Beltline Highway within a 15-minute bike ride.

The accessibility analysis shows that 21,105 households gain access to shops, jobs and other opportunities south of the Beltline Highway within a 30-minute bike ride.

1. The State Smart Transportation Initiative promotes transportation practices that advance environmental sustainability and equitable economic development, while maintaining high standards of governmental efficiency and transparency. To learn more visit www.ssti.us

2. Sugar Access is a program of Citilabs. Citilabs is a global provider of mobility analytics for businesses and government agencies. To learn more visit www.citilabs.com/software/sugar/sugar-access/