



Bicycle Commuter Benefit Act of 2019, HR 1507

What it is »

HR 1507, the Bicycle Commuter Benefit Act of 2019 extends commuter benefits to employees who choose to bike to work, similar to parking or transit benefits. The bill improves on the former bike commuter benefit originally passed in 2009, and suspended in the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2018.

The changes in the Bicycle Commuter Benefit Act of 2019 will make the benefit easier to use and more attractive for both employers and employees. An increased use of the benefit will both reduce transportation costs for employees and employers, and for the federal treasury.

What it does »

HR 1507, the Bicycle Commuter Benefit Act of 2019 will:

- » Reinstates the bike commuter benefit and extend that benefit to commuters using bikeshare and electric bikes.
- » Allow employees to use up to 20 percent of the parking benefit for bicycling expenses, so that employees can use the benefit in combination with the parking and transit benefit. This gives commuters more freedom to combine transportation modes.
- » Simplify the administration of the bike commuter benefit, allowing employees to use the benefit pre-tax, and saves employers from having to collect and record receipts.

Why it matters »

In 2017 the U.S. Department of Transportation released performance measures requiring states to set congestion mitigation and air quality goals for shifting transportation trips away from single occupancy motor vehicles. Offering incentives for employees to bike to work some or all of the time will help states meet these goals.

Investing in and encouraging bicycling can decrease congestion. A 2015 Report by Resources for the Future found that Capital Bikeshare cut neighborhood traffic congestion by 2-3% in Washington DC neighborhoods. A small change in traffic volumes, on the order of 2-3%, can result in significant decreases in congestion. Data from INRIX, a leading traffic analytics company, found that a 4% decrease in traffic volumes between 2007 and 2008, led to a nearly 30% decrease in traffic congestion nationwide.

Investing in and encouraging bicycling can improve air quality. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, transportation overtook power generation as the largest producer of greenhouse gas emissions in 2017. Bicycling is a GHG emission free mode of travel and multiple bikeshare systems have seen users report that they use bikeshare instead of a motor vehicle for trips, often in congested downtown areas.

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