

Improving Transportation Alternatives



Will you make improving your constituents' access to the Transportation Alternatives Program one of your transportation priorities?

The original Transportation Alternatives program was predicated on the idea that local governments should have decision-making power over a small amount of federal transportation funding for local transportation priorities, such as bikeways and sidewalks. The changes listed below will make the program easier for local governments to access, and for states to implement.

Ensure fair increases of TA funds

<i>The Problem</i>	<i>The Fix</i>
Under the FAST Act, TA funding is limited to a dollar amount and does not increase even as other transportation programs increase.	Increase TA funding and change it to 10% of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.

Improve project applications

<i>The Problem</i>	<i>The Fix</i>
Small and mid-size cities don't always have the technical capacity to put together strong applications and navigate the implementation process.	Give States access to 5% of TA funds for technical and engineering assistance to local governments to help them produce strong applications, and to fund program staff to manage the implementation process.

Gives States flexibility

<i>The Problem</i>	<i>The Fix</i>
Several states would prefer to suballocate all of their TA funding to local governments, but under the FAST Act, all projects must go through a competitive process.	Allow states to sub-allocate 100% of their TA if the Federal Highways Administration approves of the plan, and that plan includes a mechanism to tracking projects funded by it.

Increases local control

<i>The Problem</i>	<i>The Fix</i>
Under the FAST Act, large Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) with a population over 200,000 can select projects, but can't obligate funds to start implementation of the projects. They already have the authority to obligate other surface transportation funds. Small MPOs, those with populations under 200,000 are barred from applying for funds due to a drafting error in MAP-21.	Give large MPOs obligation authority to improve project deliver, and makes small MPOs eligible to apply.