



# SENATOR JIM BEALL

## SB 152 Active Transportation Program Reform Act

### ISSUE

Over the last five years, the Active Transportation Program (ATP) has constructed many important bicycle and pedestrian improvements statewide. However, the program has also evolved into a complex, time-consuming, and costly program for project sponsors to navigate and for the state and regional agencies to administer.

Significant state resources in the form of Caltrans staff, California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff and commissioners are consumed by application review and project allocations for hundreds of small-scale projects that would make more sense to administer at the regional level. Meanwhile, funding levels for each of the state's metropolitan areas, where the funds are most needed, are highly unpredictable due to the majority of the funds being administered through a statewide competitive grant program.

In addition, despite huge demand for ATP funds, project savings and or ATP funds freed up from projects that missed deadlines are currently sent to the State Highway Account, rather than reinvested in further bicycle and pedestrian enhancements.

### BACKGROUND

The ATP program was established by the legislature to fund projects that increase active modes of transportation across the state including walking and biking, increase safety for non-motorized users, reduce greenhouse gas admissions, and enhance public health. SB 1 (Beall) infused an additional \$100 million in new funding and dramatically increasing the potential impact of promoting ATP projects across the state.

Currently the funds are distributed as follows:

- Statewide Competitive ATP - 50% to the state for a statewide competitive program

- Small Urban and Rural - 10% to the small urban and rural area competitive program to be managed by the state
- Regional ATP - 40% to the large urbanized area competitive program, with funding distributed by population and managed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) recently released a report reviewing the ATP program. The report identified several areas to improve the administration of the program, including many offered by this bill. It is time for a more rational approach that offers a simpler and more transparent application process, delivers bike and pedestrian safety improvements faster, and provides regions with a more predictable level of funding.

### THIS BILL

SB 152 would make the following changes to ATP:

- Expedite bicycle and pedestrian improvements by shifting the responsibility for administering the metropolitan portion directly to MPOs and eliminates the need for each individual project to be allocated by the CTC. This is similar to how MPOs administer federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) federal funds.
- Modify the share of funds distributed by formula as follows:
  - Increase regional share from 40-percent to 75-percent (similar to the share of funds provided to regions in the State Transportation Improvement Program).
  - Hold rural and small areas near harmless by increasing their share of dedicated funding from 10-percent to 15-percent, a similar proportion they received of overall ATP funding in the last four cycles, while still allowing these areas to compete for the statewide share.

- Reduce the state’s share from 50-percent to 10-percent and focus state share on transformative projects, consistent with the LAO recommendation.
- Increase reporting requirements from the regional agencies to CTC to determine the tangible benefits of the program and the impacts of the reforms.
- Allow bicycle and pedestrian counts to be paid for as part of a project’s costs so as to provide better reporting of ATP project benefits.

## **SUPPORT**

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Metropolitan Transportation Commission (Sponsor)

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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Estevan Ginsburg  
Office of Senator Jim Beall  
(916) 651-4015  
[estevan.ginsburg@sen.ca.gov](mailto:estevan.ginsburg@sen.ca.gov)

