

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1500

As Reported By House Committee On:

Transportation Policy & Budget

Title: An act relating to eligibility for the rural arterial program.

Brief Description: Revising eligibility for rural arterial programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Mastin, Grant, Doumit and Kessler; by request of County Road Administration Board.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation Policy & Budget: 2/20/97, 2/24/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION POLICY & BUDGET

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 26 members: Representatives K. Schmidt, Chairman; Hankins, Vice Chairman; Mielke, Vice Chairman; Mitchell, Vice Chairman; Fisher, Ranking Minority Member; Blalock, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cooper, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Backlund; Buck; Cairnes; Chandler; Constantine; DeBolt; Hatfield; Johnson; Murray; O'Brien; Ogden; Radcliff; Robertson; Romero; Scott; Skinner; Sterk; Wood and Zellinsky.

Staff: Gary Lebow (786-7304).

Background: The rural arterial program, administered by the County Road Administration Board (CRAB), provides grant funds to reconstruct county rural arterial roads. At the time of the program's creation in 1983, county roads were comprised of major and minor collectors according to the federal functional classification system. Since 1983, the Department of Transportation has transferred approximately 309 miles of minor arterials to the county which, according to current statute, are not eligible for grant funds.

Current statute makes counties ineligible for the rural arterial program grant funds if road funds are diverted for anything other than proper county road purposes. Counties with populations between 5,000 and 8,000 are exempted from this requirement.

Summary of Bill: Minor arterials are added to the list of roads eligible for rural arterial program grant funds.

Counties with a population of less than 8,000 are exempted from the rural arterial program eligibility requirement of not diverting road funds to other uses.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Small counties do not have a large amount of privately owned property to generate enough taxes to operate minimal levels of government. Often times they need to use the county road levy to keep the courthouse doors open. These counties need the rural arterial program, especially in light of the winter storms of the past two years.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Eric Berger, County Road Administration Board.