

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6283

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to eliminating the expiration date for the Sandy Williams connecting communities program.

Brief Description: Eliminating the expiration date for the Sandy Williams connecting communities program.

Sponsors: Senators Nobles, Billig, Shewmake, Holy, King, Lias, Lovick, Wilson, C., Wilson, J., Valdez, Kauffman, Hawkins, Lovelett, Padden, Fortunato, Cleveland, Trudeau, Frame, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Saldaña and Stanford.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/22/24, 2/26/24 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Eliminates the July 1, 2027, expiration date of the Sandy Williams Connecting Communities Program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Donaghy, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Timmons, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Hutchins, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Low, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berry, Bronoske, Chapman, Cortes, Doglio, Duerr, Entenman, Griffey, Hackney, Klicker, Mena, Nance, Orcutt, Ramel, Ramos, Schmidt, Volz and Wylie.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Dent, Goehner and Walsh.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Beth Redfield (786-7140).

Background:

The Sandy Williams Connecting Communities Program was created in 2022 as part of the Move Ahead Washington package to increase safe and continuous routes for active transportation users in communities that have been bifurcated by current or former state highways.

The program was launched as a pilot for two biennia, 2023-25 and 2025-27, and is administered by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Projects selected under the program must prioritize areas with vulnerable or overburdened communities, adjacent to tribal lands, that are low income, and areas with crash experience of active transportation users. The program expires July 1, 2027.

Summary of Bill:

The expiration date of the Sandy Williams Connecting Communities Program at the WSDOT is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Highways and railroads and other human-made infrastructure are often significant obstacles in many communities, particularly those with a high percentage of BIPOC, immigrant, and low-income populations. Much of this disproportionate impact is the result of historic policies, such as redlining and underfunding of disadvantaged neighborhoods. This contributes to higher levels of chronic health impacts from air pollution and cardiovascular illness associated with physical inactivity, due in part to inadequate or missing infrastructure like sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, and parks. It also directly contributes to serious injuries and deaths on roadways, which not only affects BIPOC communities at higher rates, but also active mode users that are unable to afford motor vehicles for their mobility needs. Vulnerable users of roadways are suffering at demonstrably higher rates in crash data, resulting in shorter life spans and worse outcomes for the less privileged. Washington should be proud of having established this program. It

recognizes the need for a special focus on addressing infrastructure harms done to underserved communities.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Larry Leveen, ForeverGreen Trails.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.