
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Review Advisory Council

- Alters the membership of the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC), which currently and under the bill consists of nine voting members, as follows:
 - Reduces the number of members appointed by the Governor from six to five;
 - Increases the number of members appointed by the Senate President from one to two;
 - Increases the number of members appointed by the Speaker of the House from one to two; and
 - Makes the Director of Transportation a nonvoting member.

Connect4Ohio Program

- Establishes the Connect4Ohio Program to be administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), for purposes of making the home-to-work commute easier for Ohio workers.
- Requires ODOT, TRAC, and the Public Works Commission to work together to prioritize the following projects:
 - Completing existing corridor projects, particularly those that benefit rural counties;
 - Eliminating traffic impediments along highways, particularly within rural counties;
 - Replacing at least one bridge in certain rural counties that have been identified as requiring replacement.
- Specifies that ODOT must use money appropriated for the program to fund the projects listed above, to provide funding at 100% of the project cost when appropriate, and to provide matching community funds that are required for TRAC approval of a project.
- Requires the ODOT Director to establish any necessary procedures or requirements for purposes of the program.
- Appropriates \$1 billion for the program and specifies certain amounts for particular aspects of the program.

Transportation Review Advisory Council

(R.C. 5512.07; Section 755.20)

The Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) consists of nine voting members (under the bill and current law). The bill alters the membership of the Council by doing the following:

- Reducing the number of members appointed by the Governor from six to five;

- Increasing the number of members appointed by the Senate President from one to two;
- Increasing the number of members appointed by the Speaker of the House from one to two; and
- Making the ODOT Director a nonvoting member instead of a voting member as under current law.

To effectuate the alterations to Council membership, the bill requires the following to occur not later 60 days after the bill's effective date:

- The Governor must remove one person from the Council who was previously appointed;
- The Senate President must appoint one additional person who serves the remaining term of the member removed by the Governor; and
- The Speaker must appoint one additional member to serve a five-year term from the date of appointment.

Under current law, the Council reviews the written project selection process for proposed new transportation capacity projects submitted to it by the Director. The Council may approve the process or make revisions to it.

Connect4Ohio Program

(Sections 411.10, 411.30, 513.10, and 755.30)

The bill establishes the Connect4Ohio Program, administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). The purpose of the program is to make the home-to-work commute easier for Ohio workers, particularly in rural areas of the state. For purposes of the program, a rural county means a county that does not contain a municipal corporation with a population exceeding 65,000 residents, according to the most recent federal decennial census.

As part of the program, ODOT, TRAC, and the Public Works Commission must work together to prioritize the following projects:

1. Completing existing corridor projects, especially those benefiting two or more connected rural counties;
2. Eliminating traffic impediments (e.g., traffic lights and stops) along highways, particularly along highways within rural counties; and
3. Replacing at least one bridge in each rural county with a population of 90,000 residents or less, with a preference given to bridges that have already had a general appraisal and that either ODOT or the county engineer have identified as requiring replacement.

The bill appropriates \$1 billion for the program, which ODOT must use as follows:

1. For funding projects that align with the program's priorities (at least \$200 million is allocated for the bridge replacement specified above);

2. Funding certain projects at 100% of the project cost, when appropriate, particularly for projects located in a rural county or that extend between two or more connected rural counties; and

3. Providing any necessary matching funds to receive TRAC approval for construction projects that are related to the program and its priorities (at least \$200 million is allocated for this purpose).

An additional 33% of the remaining appropriation (\$200 million) must be used for eligible rural county construction projects. Thus, leaving \$400 million not specifically allocated. The ODOT Director must establish any procedures and requirements necessary to administer the program.