



SPONSOR: Sens. Venables & Cloutier
Reps. Hudson & Wilson
Sens. Blevins, Bunting, Connor, Ennis, Hall-Long,
Katz, Peterson, Sokola, Sorenson; Reps. Atkins,
Barbieri, Bennett, Brady, Briggs-King, Heffernan,
Hocker, Jaques, Manolakos, Mitchell, Miro,
Osienski, Ramone, D. Short

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY DELAWARE HOUSE ON MAY 12, 2011
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY DELAWARE SENATE ON MAY 10, 2011

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
146th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 13

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation has in recent years made a significant effort to provide facilities for walking and bicycling using monies provided through federal programs such as the Transportation Enhancement Program, the Safe Routes to School Program, and the Hazard Elimination Program; and
WHEREAS, the future of these programs with respect to federal funding is uncertain; and
WHEREAS, there are other types of federal funds that can be used for walking and bicycling; and
WHEREAS, funds from a wide variety of other State, local government, and private sources can be similarly used; and
WHEREAS, the General Assembly believes that the capital expenditures of the Department of Transportation for various transportation modes should be approximately proportional to the use of those modes in Delaware; and
WHEREAS, there are large gaps in our transportation system where it is difficult, or even dangerous, for pedestrians and bicycle users to travel; and
WHEREAS, safe routes for walking and bicycling are especially important for transit riders, young people, seniors, travelers with disabilities, and casual and inexperienced bicycle users; and
WHEREAS, walking and bicycling are cost-effective transportation options for providing people with the mobility and access they need for daily life; and
WHEREAS, safe options for reducing transportation costs can provide essential flexibility for Delaware families that may need to cut costs in their household budgets when faced with unexpected changes in their economic circumstances; and
WHEREAS, rising fuel prices are expected to make the availability of cost-effective transportation options even more important in the future; and
WHEREAS, safe, non-motorized, transportation options can serve as an inexpensive insurance policy for the Delaware economy to help buffer the effects of oil price shocks and can help to reduce our dependence on foreign oil; and
WHEREAS, safe and enjoyable walking and bicycling routes can attract tourists to the State of Delaware and can spur economic development; and

WHEREAS, Delaware is facing a public health crisis with nearly two-thirds of adults and almost 40% of children in Delaware classified as overweight or obese; and
WHEREAS, the life expectancy of this generation of Delawareans may be less than the previous generation for the first time in our history if these health trends are not reversed; and
WHEREAS, providing safe opportunities to walk and bicycle for transportation and recreation promotes physical activity, which helps maintain a healthy weight and prevent heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases.

NOW THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 146th General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the Delaware Department of Transportation shall be responsible for leading the effort, working in conjunction with the Counties and Municipalities, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and other State agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, to plan, prioritize and fund the timely construction and maintenance of interconnected systems or networks of walkways and bikeways with special focus on connecting centers of population with destinations such as workplaces, schools, residences, businesses, recreation areas and other community activity centers in order to provide safe, convenient, cost-effective and healthy mobility via walking and bicycling;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in these efforts the Department of Transportation shall create multi-use paths for pedestrian and bicycle user travel within and between cities and towns in Delaware on independent right-of-way outside of the right-of-way of existing roadways;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Transportation is requested to identify funds for strategic investments in creating and maintaining walkways and bikeways in addition to the funds provided for paving and other routine maintenance and separate from the funds provided to design and build general purpose road projects that include transportation facilities for walking and bicycling as required by Executive Order and the Department's "Complete Streets" policy or through such programs as Transportation Enhancements and Safe Routes to School;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Transportation shall report annually to the Bond Committee as part of its proposed capital budget regarding the progress that has been made in the previous year to design and construct interconnected networks of walkways and bikeways.

SYNOPSIS

This Senate Concurrent Resolution directs the Department of Transportation to expand its efforts to create contiguous systems or networks of walkways and bikeways within and between cities and towns in Delaware in order to provide travelers with the opportunity for safe, convenient, cost-effective and healthy transportation via walking and bicycling.

Author: Sen. Venables