

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 2467

To establish a program to award grants to entities that provide transportation connectors from critically underserved urban communities and rural communities to greenspaces.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. MERKLEY)) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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## A BILL

To establish a program to award grants to entities that provide transportation connectors from critically underserved urban communities and rural communities to green spaces.

*1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
*2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

**4 This Act may be cited as the “Transit to Trails Act”.**

**5 SEC. 2. TRANSIT TO TRAILS GRANT PROGRAM.**

**6 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:**

1 (1) CRITICALLY UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY.—  
2 The term “critically underserved community”  
3 means—

4 (A) a community that can demonstrate to  
5 the Secretary that the community has inad-  
6 equate, insufficient, or no park space or recre-  
7 ation facilities, including by demonstrating—

8 (i) quality concerns relating to the  
9 available park space or recreation facilities;

10 (ii) the presence of recreational facili-  
11 ties that do not serve the needs of the com-  
12 munity; or

13 (iii) the inequitable distribution of  
14 park space for high-need populations,  
15 based on income, age, or other measures of  
16 vulnerability and need;

17 (B) a community in which at least 50 per-  
18 cent of the population is not located within  $\frac{1}{2}$   
19 mile of park space;

20 (C) a community that is designated as a  
21 qualified opportunity zone under section  
22 1400Z-1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;  
23 or

24 (D) any other community that the Sec-  
25 retary determines to be appropriate.

1 (2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-  
2 ty” means—

3 (A) a State;

4 (B) a political subdivision of a State (in-  
5 cluding a city or a county) that represents or  
6 otherwise serves an urban area or a rural area;

7 (C) a special purpose district (including a  
8 park district);

9 (D) an Indian tribe (as defined in section  
10 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-  
11 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)) that  
12 represents or otherwise serves an urban area or  
13 a rural area; or

14 (E) a metropolitan planning organization  
15 (as defined in section 134(b) of title 23, United  
16 States Code).

17 (3) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means  
18 the Transit to Trails Grant Program established  
19 under subsection (b)(1).

20 (4) RURAL AREA.—The term “rural area”  
21 means a community that is not an urban area.

22 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
23 the Secretary of Transportation.

24 (6) TRANSPORTATION CONNECTOR.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “transportation connector” means a system that—

2 (i) connects 2 zip codes or communities within a 175-mile radius of a designated service area; and

3 (ii) offers rides available to the public.

4 (B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “transportation connector” includes microtransits, bus lines, bus rails, light rail, rapid transits, or personal rapid transits.

5 (7) URBAN AREA.—The term “urban area” means a community that—

6 (A) is densely developed;

7 (B) has residential, commercial, and other nonresidential areas; and

8 (C)(i) is an urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more; or

9 (ii) is an urban cluster with a population of—

10 (I) not less than 2,500; and

11 (II) not more than 50,000.

12 (b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

13 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish a grant program, to be known as the “Tran-

1 sit to Trails Grant Program”, under which the Sec-  
2 retary shall award grants to eligible entities for—

3 (A) projects that develop transportation  
4 connectors or routes in or serving, and related  
5 education materials for, critically underserved  
6 communities to increase access and mobility to  
7 Federal or non-Federal public land, waters,  
8 parkland, or monuments; or

9 (B) projects that facilitate transportation  
10 improvements to enhance access to Federal or  
11 non-Federal public land and recreational oppor-  
12 tunities in critically underserved communities.

13 (2) ADMINISTRATION.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ad-  
15 minister the program to assist eligible entities  
16 in the development of transportation connectors  
17 or routes in or serving, and related education  
18 materials for, critically underserved commu-  
19 nities and Federal or non-Federal public land,  
20 waters, parkland, and monuments.

21 (B) JOINT PARTNERSHIPS.—The Secretary  
22 shall encourage joint partnership projects under  
23 the program, if available, among multiple agen-  
24 cies, including school districts, nonprofit organi-  
25 zations, metropolitan planning organizations,

1 regional transportation authorities, transit  
2 agencies, and State and local governmental  
3 agencies (including park and recreation agen-  
4 cies and authorities) to enhance investment of  
5 public sources.

6 (C) ANNUAL GRANT PROJECT PROPOSAL  
7 SOLICITATION, REVIEW, AND APPROVAL.—

8 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary  
9 shall—

10 (I) annually solicit the submis-  
11 sion of project proposals for grants  
12 from eligible entities under the pro-  
13 gram; and

14 (II) review each project proposal  
15 submitted under subclause (I) on a  
16 timeline established by the Secretary.

17 (ii) REQUIRED ELEMENTS FOR  
18 PROJECT PROPOSAL.—A project proposal  
19 submitted under clause (i)(I) shall in-  
20 clude—

21 (I) a statement of the purposes  
22 of the project;

23 (II) the name of the entity or in-  
24 dividual with overall responsibility for  
25 the project;

1 (III) a description of the quali-  
2 fications of the entity or individuals  
3 identified under subclause (II);

4 (IV) a description of—

5 (aa) staffing and stake-  
6 holder engagement for the  
7 project;

8 (bb) the logistics of the  
9 project; and

10 (cc) anticipated outcomes of  
11 the project;

12 (V) a proposed budget for the  
13 funds and time required to complete  
14 the project;

15 (VI) information regarding the  
16 source and amount of matching fund-  
17 ing available for the project;

18 (VII) information that dem-  
19 onstrates the clear potential of the  
20 project to contribute to increased ac-  
21 cess to parkland for critically under-  
22 served communities; and

23 (VIII) any other information that  
24 the Secretary considers to be nec-  
25 essary for evaluating the eligibility of

1 the project for funding under the pro-  
2 gram.

3 (iii) CONSULTATION; APPROVAL OR  
4 DISAPPROVAL.—The Secretary shall, with  
5 respect to each project proposal submitted  
6 under this subparagraph, as appropriate—

7 (I) consult with the government  
8 of each State in which the proposed  
9 project is to be conducted;

10 (II) after taking into consider-  
11 ation any comments resulting from  
12 the consultation under subclause (I),  
13 approve or disapprove the proposal;  
14 and

15 (III) provide written notification  
16 of the approval or disapproval to—

17 (aa) the individual or entity  
18 that submitted the proposal; and

19 (bb) each State consulted  
20 under subclause (I).

21 (D) PRIORITY.—To the extent practicable,  
22 in determining whether to approve project pro-  
23 posals under the program, the Secretary shall  
24 prioritize projects that are designed to increase  
25 access and mobility to local or neighborhood

1 Federal or non-Federal public land, waters,  
2 parkland, monuments, or recreational opportu-  
3 nities.

4 (3) TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCE-  
5 DURES.—

6 (A) PROCEDURES.—In consultation with  
7 the head of each appropriate Federal land man-  
8 agement agency, the Secretary shall develop, by  
9 rule, transportation planning procedures for  
10 projects conducted under the program that are  
11 consistent with metropolitan and statewide  
12 planning processes.

13 (B) REQUIREMENTS.—All projects carried  
14 out under the program shall be developed in co-  
15 operation with States and metropolitan plan-  
16 ning organizations.

17 (4) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—

18 (A) IN GENERAL.—As a condition of re-  
19 ceiving a grant under the program, an eligible  
20 entity shall provide funds in the form of cash  
21 or an in-kind contribution in an amount equal  
22 to not less than 100 percent of the amount of  
23 the grant.

24 (B) SOURCES.—The non-Federal contribu-  
25 tion required under subparagraph (A) may in-

1           clude amounts made available from State, local,  
2           nongovernmental, or private sources.

3           (5) ELIGIBLE USES.—Grant funds provided  
4           under the program may be used—

5                   (A) to develop transportation connectors or  
6                   routes in or serving, and related education ma-  
7                   terials for, critically underserved communities  
8                   to increase access and mobility to Federal and  
9                   non-Federal public land, waters, parkland, and  
10                  monuments; and

11                  (B) to create or significantly enhance ac-  
12                  cess to Federal or non-Federal public land and  
13                  recreational opportunities in an urban area or  
14                  a rural area.

15           (6) GRANT AMOUNT.—A grant provided under  
16           the program shall be—

17                   (A) not less than \$25,000; and

18                   (B) not more than \$500,000.

19           (7) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—It is the intent  
20           of Congress that grants provided under the program  
21           deliver project funds to areas of greatest need while  
22           offering technical assistance to all applicants and po-  
23           tential applicants for grant preparation to encourage  
24           full participation in the program.

1           (8) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—The Secretary  
2 shall ensure that current schedules and routes for  
3 transportation systems developed after the receipt of  
4 a grant under the program are available to the pub-  
5 lic, including on a website maintained by the recipi-  
6 ent of a grant.

7           (c) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—

8           (1) REPORTS BY GRANT RECIPIENTS.—The  
9 Secretary shall require a recipient of a grant under  
10 the program to submit to the Secretary at least one  
11 performance and financial report that—

12                   (A) includes—

13                           (i) demographic data on communities  
14                           served by the project; and

15                           (ii) a summary of project activities  
16                           conducted after receiving the grant; and

17                   (B) describes the status of each project  
18                   funded by the grant as of the date of the re-  
19                   port.

20           (2) ADDITIONAL REPORTS.—In addition to the  
21 report required under paragraph (1), the Secretary  
22 may require additional reports from a recipient, as  
23 the Secretary determines to be appropriate, includ-  
24 ing a final report.

1           (3) DEADLINES.—The Secretary shall establish  
2           deadlines for the submission of each report required  
3           under paragraph (1) or (2).

4           (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
5           authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
6           \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year.

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