



# Transportation Alternatives Program Improvement Act

## What is TAPIA »

The Transportation Alternatives Program Improvement Act, or TAPIA, makes changes to the TAP program to make it easier for states and local governments to efficiently and effectively access funding.

The original TAP amendment to MAP-21, sponsored by Senators Cochran (R-MS) and Cardin (D-MD) was predicated on the idea that local governments should have decision-making power over a small amount of federal transportation funding for local transportation priorities, such as bikeways and sidewalks. During the first two years of MAP-21 implementation stakeholders have identified small changes that would restore flexibility to the state, while increasing local control to communities.

## What TAPIA does »

### *Increases local decision making, and ensures a fair distribution of TAP funds*

» **The problem:** 50% of TAP funds go to a state run grant program, and 50% are distributed to communities based on population. Especially in small communities and rural areas, this means funding is often too small for more than one project.

» **The fix:** TAPIA changes the formula so that two-thirds of the funding is distributed by population, which ensures a fairer distribution of funding among communities of all sizes.

### *Addresses who can apply for Transportation Alternatives Funds*

» **The problem:** Non-profits and small Metropolitan Planning Organizations are ineligible to receive TAP funds. States have no flexibility to contract with qualified non-profits to run Safe Routes to School education programs; small MPOs can't complete their bikeway networks.

» **The fix:** TAPIA makes non-profits and small MPOs eligible recipients of TAP funds.

### *Creates an even playing field*

» **The problem:** MAP-21 subjected TAP projects to the same rules and regulations as large highway projects, posing additional challenges and higher costs for communities. This provision was inequitably applied only to TAP funds and for similar projects built under other highway funding programs.

» **The fix:** TAPIA ensures TAP projects are subject to the same regulations and safeguards as similar projects built under other highway programs.

### *Gives states and MPOs the ability to help rural and underserved communities*

» **The problem:** TAP requires each individual project meet a strict 20% local match (federal funds cover the remaining 80%). Some communities are unable to raise that local match.

» **The fix:** TAPIA allows states and MPOs to meet the 80/20 requirement across a group of projects, or across the entire program. This allows the state or MPO to reduce or waive the match for smaller, underserved or low-income communities.

## TO CO-SPONSOR, CONTACT:

» Lydia Collins (Sen. Cochran)  
Lydia\_Collins@cochran.senate.gov

» Mae Stevens (Sen. Cardin)  
Mae\_Stevens@cardin.senate.gov