



Virginia Transit Ridership Incentive Program – VTA SUPPORTS

[HB 142](#) – Delegate Delores McQuinn

Background: The Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) is a statewide grant program dedicated to improving transit's regional connectivity in urban areas with a population in excess of 100,000 and reducing barriers to transit use by supporting free or reduced fare programming for low-income populations.

The TRIP program (VA State Code § 33.2-1526.3) was created with the passage of the 2020 Transportation Omnibus Package (HB 1414 & SB 890), and it receives 6 percent of funds directed to the Commonwealth's Mass Transit Fund.

The Trip program was created with **25 percent** of the program funding directed to free/reduced fare programs and **75 percent** of the funding directed to regional connectivity projects.

However, due to Covid impacts and the reduction in commuting, there has been a decline in regional routes needs and a sharp increase in free/reduced fare programs across the commonwealth. Many frontline essential workers found themselves in need of free or reduced transit fares more than ever due to the pandemic financial strains.

During the first round of funding, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) received 10 applications for, and awarded grants for \$22.5 million in, free/reduced fare for low income recipients (over three years) and received 3 applications for, and awarded \$5.2 million in, regional connectivity grants (over 3-5 years). This left a \$65 million surplus over the Six-Year Improvement Plan (SYIP) for the regional portion of the program, but barely a \$1 million surplus in the free/reduced fare portion of the program with a few week-scored applications needing to be funded through a special CTB Priority Transportation Fund allocation.

Purpose: To better balance the TRIP program to allow for greater flexibility for current needs; *this bill does not require any additional state funding.*

Amends § 33.2-1526.3. Transit Ridership Incentive Program: Changes from a maximum of 25 percent to a minimum of 25 percent the amount of Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) funds to be used to support the establishment of programs to reduce the impact of fares on low-income individuals **and** to establish a floor of 25 percent to support regional transit initiatives. The Board (CTB) shall use its discretion in allocating the remaining funds available...

Status:

HB 142: Referred to House Transportation Subcommittee #2

For more information:

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