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HOUSE BILL NO. 532

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 8, 2024

A BILL to amend and reenact § 33.2-373 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 1 of Title 33.2 a section numbered 33.2-121, relating to transportation projects; highway safety.

Patrons—Seibold, Clark, Henson, Maldonado, Martinez and Rasoul; Senator: Favola

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 33.2-373 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 1 of Title 33.2 a section numbered 33.2-121 as follows:

§ 33.2-121. School crossing zone projects; pedestrian safety.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, no transportation project shall be initiated in an established school crossing zone, as defined in § 46.2-873, unless the public body responsible for such transportation project completes a pedestrian safety-focused road safety audit of such project. Any recommendations made in such audit to improve pedestrian safety shall be incorporated into the project plan or such project shall be cancelled. The Department shall establish procedures for conducting a pedestrian safety-focused road safety audit.

§ 33.2-373. Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program.

A. The Board shall establish the Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program (the Program) to reduce motorized and nonmotorized fatalities and severe injuries on highways in the Commonwealth, whether such highways are state or locally maintained. The Board shall use funds set aside pursuant to § 33.2-358 for the Program.

B. Beginning in fiscal year 2024, the Board shall, after program administration costs, allocate the funds in accordance with its adopted investment strategy pursuant to subsection C as follows:

1. At least 54 percent for infrastructure projects that address a hazardous road location or feature and address an identified highway safety problem;

2. At least 29 percent for strategies and activities to address behavioral causes of crashes that result in fatalities and severe injuries; and

3. The remaining amount for eligible purposes under this section pursuant to the investment strategy adopted pursuant to subsection C.

C. The Board shall adopt an investment strategy to guide the investments of the Program. The strategy shall cover a period of at least five years and seek to achieve a significant reduction in the anticipated number of fatalities and severe injuries over the covered period and shall give priority to projects, strategies, and activities based on the expected reduction in fatalities and severe injuries relative to cost, including improvements that are widely implemented based on a high-risk roadway feature that is correlated with a particular crash type, rather than crash frequency.

D. *In administering the Program, the Board shall prioritize infrastructure projects that address a hazardous road location or feature or address an identified highway safety problem located in a school crossing zone as defined in § 46.2-873.*

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