

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7774

To amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, to codify and amend certain grant programs under which the Secretary of Transportation may issue grants for use in the provision of passenger ferry services, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 3, 2026

Ms. RANDALL (for herself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend titles 23 and 49, United States Code, to codify and amend certain grant programs under which the Secretary of Transportation may issue grants for use in the provision of passenger ferry services, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Federal Enhancement
3 and Revitalization of Reliable Infrastructure for Essential
4 Seaways Act” or the “FERRIES Act”.

5 **TITLE I—AUTHORIZATIONS**

6 **SEC. 2. FUNDING FOR PASSENGER FERRY SERVICES**

7 **GRANT PROGRAMS.**

8 (a) CONSTRUCTION OF FERRY BOATS AND FERRY
9 TERMINAL FACILITIES.—Section 147(h) of title 23,
10 United States Code, is amended by striking paragraphs
11 (1) through (5) and inserting the following:

12 “(1) \$160,000,000 for fiscal year 2027;

13 “(2) \$162,000,000 for fiscal year 2028;

14 “(3) \$164,000,000 for fiscal year 2029;

15 “(4) \$166,000,000 for fiscal year 2030; and

16 “(5) \$168,000,000 for fiscal year 2031.”.

17 (b) URBAN PASSENGER FERRY GRANT PROGRAM.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 5307(h) of title 49,
19 United States Code, is amended by adding at the
20 end the following new paragraph:

21 “(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In
22 addition to funds made available under section 5338
23 to carry out this section, there is authorized to be
24 appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this sub-
25 section \$200,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027
26 through 2031.”.

1 (2) APPORTIONMENTS.—Section 5336(h)(1) of
 2 title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking
 3 “\$30,000,000” and inserting “\$100,000,000”.

4 (c) FERRY FLEET MODERNIZATION AND SHIPYARD
 5 JOB CREATION GRANT PROGRAM.—

6 (1) AMENDMENTS TO IJA ELECTRIC OR LOW-
 7 EMITTING FERRY PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 71102
 8 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (23
 9 U.S.C. 147 note) is amended—

10 (A) by striking the section heading and in-
 11 serting “**FERRY FLEET MODERNIZATION**
 12 **AND SHIPYARD JOB CREATION GRANT**
 13 **PROGRAM**”;

14 (B) in subsection (a)—

15 (i) by striking paragraph (3);

16 (ii) by redesignating paragraph (2) as
 17 paragraph (3); and

18 (iii) by inserting after paragraph (1)
 19 the following new paragraph:

20 “(2) COVERED ENTITY.—The term ‘covered en-
 21 tity’ means a recipient or designated recipient eligi-
 22 ble for a grant under section 5307 or 5311.”;

23 (C) in subsection (b)—

24 (i) by striking “a pilot program to
 25 provide grants” and inserting “a grant

1 program under which the Secretary may
2 issues grants to a covered entity”;

3 (ii) by striking “of or” and inserting
4 “of, or”; and

5 (iii) by striking “from existing” and
6 inserting “from, existing”;

7 (D) in subsection (c)—

8 (i) by striking “pilot program” and
9 inserting “grant program”;

10 (ii) by striking “ensure that” and in-
11 serting “ensure that, to the extent prac-
12 ticable”;

13 (iii) in paragraph (1), by striking
14 “shall”; and

15 (iv) in paragraph (2), by striking
16 “shall”; and

17 (E) in subsection (d) by striking
18 “\$50,000,000” and all that follows through the
19 period at the end and inserting “\$140,000,000
20 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031.”.

21 (2) CODIFICATION.—Section 71102 of the In-
22 frastructure Investment and Jobs Act (23 U.S.C.
23 147 note), as amended, is transferred to appear as
24 section 5313 of title 49, United States Code.

1 (3) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for
 2 chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, is
 3 amended by inserting after the item relating to sec-
 4 tion 5312 the following:

“5313. Ferry fleet modernization and shipyard job creation grant program.”.

5 (d) RURAL FERRY GRANT PROGRAM.—

6 (1) AMENDMENTS TO ILJA FERRY SERVICE
 7 GRANTS.—Section 71103 of the Infrastructure In-
 8 vestment and Jobs Act (23 U.S.C. 147 note) is
 9 amended—

10 (A) in subsection (a)—

11 (i) in paragraph (2)(B)—

12 (I) by striking the period at the
 13 end and inserting “; or”;

14 (II) by striking “served not” and
 15 inserting the following: “served—

16 “(i) not”; and

17 (III) by adding at the end the
 18 following:

19 “(ii) not less than 2 rural areas with-
 20 out regard to the distance between such
 21 areas.”; and

22 (ii) by striking paragraph (4);

23 (B) in subsection (b) by striking “establish
 24 a program to” and all that follows through the
 25 period at the end and inserting “maintain a

1 program under which the Secretary may pro-
2 vide competitive grants to States for the provi-
3 sion of a basic essential ferry service in rural
4 areas.”;

5 (C) in subsection (e) by striking “under
6 section 5336 or 5337 of title 49, United States
7 Code,” and inserting “under section 5336
8 (other than subsection (h)(1) of such section)
9 or 5337”;

10 (D) in subsection (f)—

11 (i) by striking the subsection heading
12 and inserting “AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-
13 PRIATIONS”; and

14 (ii) by striking “\$200,000,000” and
15 all that follows through the period at the
16 end and inserting “\$300,000,000 for each
17 fiscal years 2027 through 2031, of which
18 \$100,000,000 shall be derived from the
19 Highway Trust Fund (other than the Mass
20 Transit Account).”;

21 (E) by redesignating subsections (f) and
22 (g) as subsections (g) and (h), respectively; and

23 (F) by inserting after subsection (e) the
24 following:

1 “(f) PROPORTION OF FUNDS.—In carrying out the
 2 program under this section, the Secretary shall ensure
 3 that not less than 80 percent of the funds made available
 4 to eligible services under this section are provided to eligi-
 5 ble services described in subsection (a)(2)(B)(i).”.

6 (2) CODIFICATION.—

7 (A) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 53 of title 49,
 8 United States Code, is amended by inserting
 9 after section 5307 the following new section:

10 **“§ 5308. Ferry service for rural communities pro-**
 11 **gram”.**

12 (B) TRANSFER.—Subsections (a) through
 13 (f) of section 71103 of the Infrastructure In-
 14 vestment and Jobs Act (23 U.S.C. 147 note),
 15 as amended by paragraph (1), are transferred
 16 to appear as subsections (a) through (f) of sec-
 17 tion 5308 of title 49, United States Code, as in-
 18 serted by this paragraph.

19 (C) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis
 20 for chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code,
 21 is amended by inserting after the item relating
 22 to section 5307 the following:

“5308. Ferry service for rural communities program.”.

1 **TITLE II—APPROPRIATIONS**

2 That the following sums are appropriated, out of any
 3 money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and
 4 for other purposes, namely:

5 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

6 FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

7 HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

8 For an additional amount for “Highway Infrastruc-
 9 ture Programs”, \$500,000,000, to remain available until
 10 expended, to carry out the construction of ferry boats and
 11 ferry terminal facilities program under section 147 of title
 12 23, United States Code: *Provided*, That \$100,000,000, to
 13 remain available until expended, shall be made available
 14 for fiscal year 2027, \$100,000,000, to remain available
 15 until expended, shall be made available for fiscal year
 16 2028, \$100,000,000, to remain available until expended,
 17 shall be made available for fiscal year 2029,
 18 \$100,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be
 19 made available for fiscal year 2030, and \$100,000,000,
 20 to remain available until expended, shall be made available
 21 for fiscal year 2031: *Provided further*, That amounts made
 22 available under this heading in this Act shall be adminis-
 23 tered as if made available under section 147 of title 23,
 24 United States Code: *Provided further*, That the amounts
 25 made available under this heading in this Act shall be de-

1 rived from the general fund of the Treasury, shall be in
 2 addition to any other amounts made available for such
 3 purpose, and shall not affect the distribution or amount
 4 of funds provided in any Act making annual appropria-
 5 tions: *Provided further*, That up to 1.5 percent of the
 6 amounts made available under this heading in this Act in
 7 each of fiscal years 2027 through 2031 shall be for oper-
 8 ations and administrations of the Federal Highway Ad-
 9 ministration: *Provided further*, That the amounts made
 10 available under this heading in this Act shall not be sub-
 11 ject to any limitation on obligations for Federal-aid high-
 12 ways or highway safety construction programs set forth
 13 in any Act making annual appropriations.

14 FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

15 TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

16 For an additional amount for “Transit Infrastructure
 17 Grants”, \$1,250,000,000, to remain available until ex-
 18 pended, to carry out the passenger ferry grants program
 19 under section 5307(h) of title 49, United States Code:
 20 *Provided*, That \$250,000,000, to remain available until
 21 expended, shall be made available for fiscal year 2027,
 22 \$250,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be
 23 made available for fiscal year 2028, \$250,000,000, to re-
 24 main available until expended, shall be made available for
 25 fiscal year 2029, \$250,000,000, to remain available until

1 expended, shall be made available for fiscal year 2030, and
2 \$250,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be
3 made available for fiscal year 2031: *Provided further*, That
4 the amounts made available under this heading in this Act
5 shall be derived from the general fund of the Treasury,
6 shall be in addition to any other amounts made available
7 for such purpose, and shall not affect the distribution of
8 funds provided in any Act making annual appropriations:
9 *Provided further*, That the amounts made available under
10 this heading in this Act shall not be subject to any limita-
11 tion on obligations for the Federal Public Transportation
12 Assistance Program set forth in any Act making annual
13 appropriations: *Provided further*, That not more than two
14 percent of the amounts made available under this heading
15 in this Act shall be available for administrative and over-
16 sight expenses as authorized under section 5334 and sec-
17 tion 5338(c) of title 49, United States Code, and shall be
18 in addition to any other appropriations for such purpose.

19 FERRY SERVICE FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

20 For competitive grants to States for eligible essential
21 ferry service as authorized under section 5308 of title 49,
22 United States Code, \$1,250,000,000, to remain available
23 until expended: *Provided*, That \$250,000,000, to remain
24 available until expended, shall be made available for fiscal
25 year 2027, \$250,000,000, to remain available until ex-

1 pending, shall be made available for fiscal year 2028,
 2 \$250,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be
 3 made available for fiscal year 2029, \$250,000,000, to re-
 4 main available until expended, shall be made available for
 5 fiscal year 2030, and \$250,000,000, to remain available
 6 until expended, shall be made available for fiscal year
 7 2031: *Provided further*, That amounts made available
 8 under this heading in this Act shall be derived from the
 9 general fund of the Treasury: *Provided further*, That
 10 amounts made available under this heading in this Act
 11 shall not be subject to any limitation on obligations for
 12 the Federal Public Transportation Assistance Program set
 13 forth in any Act making annual appropriations: *Provided*
 14 *further*, That not more than two percent of the amounts
 15 made available under this heading in this Act shall be
 16 available for administrative and oversight expenses as au-
 17 thorized under section 5334 and section 5338(c) of title
 18 49, United States Code, and shall be in addition to any
 19 other appropriations for such purpose.

20 FERRY FLEET MODERNIZATION AND SHIPYARD JOB

21 CREATION GRANT PROGRAM

22 For competitive grants for the Ferry Fleet Mod-
 23 ernization and Shipyard Job Creation Grant Program as
 24 authorized under section 5313 of title 49, United States
 25 Code, \$500,000,000, to remain available until expended:

1 *Provided*, That \$100,000,000, to remain available until
2 expended, shall be made available for fiscal year 2027,
3 \$100,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be
4 made available for fiscal year 2028, \$100,000,000, to re-
5 main available until expended, shall be made available for
6 fiscal year 2029, \$100,000,000, to remain available until
7 expended, shall be made available for fiscal year 2030, and
8 \$100,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be
9 made available for fiscal year 2031: *Provided further*, That
10 amounts made available under this heading in this Act
11 shall be derived from the general fund of the Treasury:
12 *Provided further*, That the amounts made available under
13 this heading in this Act shall not be subject to any limita-
14 tion on obligations for transit programs set forth in any
15 Act making annual appropriations: *Provided further*, That
16 not more than two percent of the amounts made available
17 under this heading in this Act shall be available for admin-
18 istrative and oversight expenses as authorized under sec-
19 tion 5334 and section 5338(c) of title 49, United States
20 Code, and shall be in addition to any other appropriations
21 for such purpose.

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