

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3661

To increase access to higher education and center-based Head Start programs by providing public transit grants.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 15, 2026

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER (for herself and Mr. McCORMICK) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To increase access to higher education and center-based Head Start programs by providing public transit grants.

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 “Promoting Advance-
5 ment Through Transit Help to Education Act” or the
6 “PATH to Education Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. INCREASING ACCESS TO EDUCATION THROUGH**
8 **PUBLIC TRANSIT GRANTS.**

9 Chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, is amend-
10 ed—

1 (1) in section 5307, by adding at the end the
 2 following:

3 “(i) PROMOTING ADVANCEMENT THROUGH TRANSIT
 4 HELP TO EDUCATION GRANTS.—

5 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

6 “(A) CENTER-BASED HEAD START PRO-
 7 GRAM.—The term ‘center-based Head Start
 8 program’ means a center-based Head Start pro-
 9 gram, including a center-based Early Head
 10 Start program, under the Head Start Act (42
 11 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.).

12 “(B) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term
 13 ‘eligible institution’ means—

14 “(i) a community college;

15 “(ii) a minority-serving institution;

16 “(iii) a Head Start agency, including
 17 an Early Head Start agency, that operates
 18 a center-based Head Start program;

19 “(iv) an area career and technical
 20 education school, as defined in section 3 of
 21 the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical
 22 Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302);
 23 or

24 “(v) a rural-serving institution of
 25 higher education, as defined in section 861

1 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
2 U.S.C. 1161q).

3 “(C) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term ‘eli-
4 gible recipient’ means a public transportation
5 provider that is eligible for assistance under
6 this section in partnership with 1 or more eligi-
7 ble institutions.

8 “(D) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.—
9 The term ‘minority-serving institution’ means
10 an eligible institution under section 371(a) of
11 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
12 1067q(a)).

13 “(2) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may make
14 grants under this subsection to eligible recipients to
15 enable those eligible recipients to carry out projects
16 described in paragraph (3) to better connect stu-
17 dents with transportation to eligible institutions.

18 “(3) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—An eligible recipi-
19 ent receiving a grant under this subsection shall use
20 grant funds to carry out 1 or more of the following
21 activities to better connect students with transpor-
22 tation to 1 or more eligible institutions that are
23 served by the eligible recipient partnership:

24 “(A) Adding bus or rail stops or routes
25 and complementary paratransit service that

1 serve eligible institution campuses and connect
2 to surrounding areas or other cities.

3 “(B) Increasing the frequency of service or
4 adjusting the time of bus, rail, or paratransit
5 routes to—

6 “(i) allow students of an eligible insti-
7 tution to get to and from their classes; and

8 “(ii) allow participants in a center-
9 based Head Start program, and their fami-
10 lies, to get to and from the Head Start
11 program.

12 “(C) Operating costs for service described
13 in subparagraphs (A) and (B), if such costs are
14 eligible under this section.

15 “(4) APPLICATION.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible recipient
17 that desires a grant under this subsection shall
18 submit an application to the Secretary at such
19 time, in such manner, and containing such in-
20 formation as the Secretary may require, includ-
21 ing information on the extent to which the pro-
22 posed projects using grant funds will improve
23 the availability of transit access for students of
24 eligible institutions and participants, and fami-

lies of participants, in center-based Head Start programs.

“(B) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to an eligible recipient whose partnership includes an eligible institution with respect to which more than 25 percent of students enrolled in that eligible institution receive a Federal Pell Grant under section 401 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a).”;

(2) in section 5311—

(A) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “and”;

(ii) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(iii) by and at the end the following:

“(C) there shall be set aside to carry out subsection (k)—

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

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

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

“(iv) for fiscal year 2030, \$4,000,000;

and

1 “(v) for fiscal year 2031,
2 \$5,000,000.”; and

3 (B) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(k) PROMOTING ADVANCEMENT THROUGH TRANSIT
5 HELP TO EDUCATION GRANTS.—

6 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

7 “(A) CENTER-BASED HEAD START PRO-
8 GRAM.—The term ‘center-based Head Start
9 program’ means a center-based Head Start pro-
10 gram, including a center-based Early Head
11 Start program, under the Head Start Act (42
12 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.).

13 “(B) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term
14 ‘eligible institution’ means—

15 “(i) a community college;

16 “(ii) a minority-serving institution;

17 “(iii) a Head Start agency, including
18 an Early Head Start agency, that operates
19 a center-based Head Start program;

20 “(iv) an area career and technical
21 education school, as defined in section 3 of
22 the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical
23 Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302);
24 or

1 “(v) a rural-serving institution of
2 higher education, as defined in section 861
3 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
4 U.S.C. 1161q).

5 “(C) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term ‘eli-
6 gible recipient’ means a public transportation
7 provider that is eligible for assistance under
8 this section in partnership with 1 or more eligi-
9 ble entities.

10 “(2) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may make
11 grants under this subsection to eligible recipients to
12 enable those eligible recipients to carry out projects
13 described in paragraph (3) to better connect stu-
14 dents with transportation to eligible institutions.

15 “(3) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—An eligible recipi-
16 ent receiving a grant under this subsection shall use
17 grant funds to carry out 1 or more of the following
18 activities to better connect students with transpor-
19 tation to 1 or more eligible institutions that are
20 served by the eligible recipient partnership:

21 “(A) Adding bus or rail stops or routes
22 and complementary paratransit service that
23 serve eligible institution campuses and connect
24 to surrounding areas or other cities.

1 “(B) Increasing the frequency of service or
2 adjusting the time of bus, rail, or paratransit
3 routes to—

4 “(i) allow students of an eligible insti-
5 tution to get to and from their classes; and

6 “(ii) allow participants in a center-
7 based Head Start program, and their fami-
8 lies, to get to and from the Head Start
9 program.

10 “(C) Operating costs for service described
11 in subparagraphs (A) and (B), if such costs are
12 eligible under this section.

13 “(4) APPLICATION.—

14 “(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible recipient
15 that desires a grant under this subsection shall
16 submit an application to the Secretary at such
17 time, in such manner, and containing such in-
18 formation as the Secretary may require, includ-
19 ing information on the extent to which the pro-
20 posed projects using grant funds will improve
21 the availability of transit access for students of
22 eligible institutions and participants, and fami-
23 lies of participants, in center-based Head Start
24 programs.

1 “(B) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants
 2 under this subsection, the Secretary shall give
 3 priority to an eligible recipient whose partner-
 4 ship includes an eligible institution with respect
 5 to which more than 25 percent of students en-
 6 rolled in that eligible institution receive a Fed-
 7 eral Pell Grant under section 401 of the Higher
 8 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a).”;
 9 and
 10 (3) in section 5336(h)—

11 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (3)
 12 through (5) as paragraphs (4) through (6), re-
 13 spectively;

14 (B) by inserting after paragraph (2) the
 15 following:

16 “(3) there shall be set aside to carry out section
 17 5307(i)—

18 “(A) for fiscal year 2027, \$1,000,000;

19 “(B) for fiscal year 2028, \$2,000,000;

20 “(C) for fiscal year 2029, \$3,000,000;

21 “(D) for fiscal year 2030, \$4,000,000; and

22 “(E) for fiscal year 2031, \$5,000,000.”;

23 (C) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated,
 24 by striking “and (2),” and inserting “, (2), and
 25 (3),”; and

1 (D) in paragraph (5), as so redesignated,
2 by striking “and (4)” and inserting “(4), and
3 (5)”.

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