

Date of Hearing: April 9, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

AB 2615 (Carrillo) – As Amended March 21, 2018

SUBJECT: State highway system: parks and recreation: accessibility for bicycles and pedestrians

SUMMARY: Requires the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), to the extent possible and where feasible, to partner with the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and other appropriate public agencies in order to develop strategies and plans to maximize safe and convenient access for bicycles and pedestrians to any parks adjacent or connected to the state highway system.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Defines a "state highway" as any roadway that is acquired, laid out, constructed, improved, or maintained as a state highway pursuant to constitutional or legislative authorization and statutorily identifies all state highway system routes.
- 2) Specifies that it is the intent of the Legislature that the state highway system connect communities and regions of the state and that they serve the state's economy by connecting centers of commerce, industry, agriculture, mineral wealth, and recreation.
- 3) Prescribes certain powers and duties to Caltrans, including that it support the California Transportation Commission in coordinating and developing, in cooperation with local and regional entities, comprehensive balanced transportation planning and policy for the movement of people and goods within the state.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: The author states that many parks in California have physical barriers at their borders such as roadways or unsafe terrain that make it hazardous for people to safely enter. For example, in the case of Los Angeles State Historic Park, an adjoining highway makes it problematic for locals to access and enjoy the park easily or safely. Improvements like pedestrian bridges, sidewalks, and walkways would enable more people to partake in the park experience and do so in a manner that would not put their safety at risk.

Caltrans is charged with coordinating and developing, in cooperation with other public entities, comprehensive, balanced transportation plans. One plan recently adopted by Caltrans is "Toward an Active California," the State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan which lays out the policies and actions that Caltrans and its partner agencies will take to achieve Caltrans' ambitious statewide goals to double walking and triple bicycling trips by 2020. This plan includes two strategies relevant to the aim of this bill. First, Caltrans states that it will support low-stress or separated pedestrian and bicycle trail routes of statewide or regional significance for tourism, recreation, and utilitarian transportation. Second, Caltrans commits to explore joint funding of active transportation plans and programs with counties, tribal governments, transit agencies, parks and recreation departments, and other potential partners.

The author states that Caltrans often does not consider issues relating to safe park access when planning for transportation projects. This bill would make such considerations a more prominent consideration in infrastructure planning, and appears to be consistent with Caltrans' Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Writing in support of the bill, a group of park-supporting organizations suggests that this bill, in effect, creates a modified "Safe Routes to Parks Program," similar to the federal and state Safe Routes to School Program. Supporters write that this bill continues a long history of local parks and recreation departments and youth-serving organizations working in concert with state entities and local public works departments to promote the value of healthy and active lifestyles.

Double referral: This bill will be referred to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee should it pass out of this committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Outdoor Recreation Partners
California Park and Recreation Society
California Walks
Latino Outdoors
Mammoth Lakes Recreation
National Interscholastic Cycling Association
Outdoor Afro
Outdoor Industry Association
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
The Trust for Public Land
Wild Places
One private citizen

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Eric Thronson / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093