



HOUSE BILL 672: STI and Ferry Tolling Revisions

2015-2016 General Assembly

Committee:	House Transportation, if favorable, Finance	Date:	April 26, 2015
Introduced by:	Reps. Tine, Shepard, Millis, Torbett	Prepared by:	Giles S. Perry
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H672-CSML-11		Committee Counsel

SUMMARY: *House Bill 672 (proposed committee substitute) amends the Strategic Transportation Investments Act (STI) to direct the STI prioritization formula workgroup to include specified criteria when revising the STI formula; redefines local input under STI, moves ferry replacement to the bridge program; and provides that ferry tolls shall be used for prioritized ferry vessel rehabilitation or replacement.*

CURRENT LAW: The Strategic Transportation Investments Act, S.L. 2013-183, (STI) enacted a new system for prioritizing State transportation construction projects. The Transportation Investment Strategy Formula, as part of the Act, directs DOT to rank transportation projects based on a criteria based formula. DOT is directed to continually improve the methodology and criteria used to score projects under the Act's prioritization system through a workgroup process.

G.S. 136-82 currently requires ferry toll receipts to be placed in a reserve account in the Highway Fund for use for ferry vessel replacement.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 672 (proposed committee substitute) makes the following changes

Sections 1 through 3 of the bill make change to the Strategic Transportation Investments Act (STI):

- **Section 1** requires the Prioritization 4.0 Workgroup, to include peak average daily traffic data in the Congestion formula, (ii) expand consideration in Multimodal formula given to projects abutting a multimodal terminal to include projects within a certain proximity of a multimodal terminal, and (iii) include the improvement of hurricane evacuation routes and procedures in the Safety formula.
- **Section 2** amends the STI Regional, Division, and Non-highway Projects prioritization formula criteria to redefine local input as the rankings identified by MPOs and RPOs, with input from the Division Engineers.
- **Section 3** amends the definition of a Division project under STI to exclude ferry replacement; and amends the definition of a Regional project under STI to exclude ferry rehabilitation.

Section 4 of the bill provides that DOT shall rename the "system preservation program" (fund center 1500/157839) the "bridge program." Funds allocated to this program shall be used for (i) improvements to structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges, (ii) ferry passenger vessel replacement projects, and (iii) ferry passenger vessel rehabilitation projects. The section provides that ferry passenger vessel replacement and ferry passenger vessel rehabilitation do not have to be outsourced.

Section 5 of the bill provides that ferry tolls and receipts shall be credited to the DOT bridge program in the highway maintenance program, and used for ferry passenger vessel rehabilitation or replacement.

O. Walker Reagan
Director



Research Division
(919) 733-2578

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Section 6 of the bill provides that the reserve accounts within the Highway Fund in which the proceeds from tolls collected on North Carolina Ferry System routes are credited under G.S. 136-82 shall be closed and the remaining unencumbered fund balance shall be transferred to the bridge program (Fund Code 84210 7839).

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act becomes effective July 1, 2015.