

High Density State Transit Program:

Use Average Population Density, not Arbitrary 370 Persons per Square Mile

The New \$2 Billion Transit Set-Aside: Growing States and High Density State Program

The Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee mark included a 6.25%, \$2 billion set-aside from transit Formula Grants and Research funds to create two new transit funding sources called “Growing States” (\$1 billion) and “High Density States” (\$1 billion) Programs.

These new programs use two formulas to distribute the \$2 billion: 1) 15-year projected population ratio (50% of the funds); and 2) Ratio of population in states with density greater than 370 persons per square mile (50% of the funds).

All states qualify for the first portion, but only seven northeastern states that have more than 370 persons per square mile are eligible for the second portion (see Table 1): NJ, RI, MA, CT, MD, DE, and NY.

The 370 persons per square mile eligibility test is arbitrary in nature. Why should Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, California, Illinois, and Hawaii be excluded? These states include three fourths of the nation’s top twenty most densely populated urban areas.

Make states with above average population density eligible.*

Table 1: Comparison of High Density and Traditional Transit Formulas (as reflected in Senator Inhofe’s Amendment #605)

State	Population Density Persons per Square Mile**	Population Density Threshold	FY 2005-2009 High Density: 370 PPSM \$ millions	FY 2005-2009 High Density: Average of 50 States \$ millions	FY 2005-2009 Transit Formula Sect. 5307 & 5311 \$ millions
New Jersey	1,134		\$315.8	\$113.0	\$62.8
Rhode Island	1,003		37.9	13.9	2.6
Massachusetts	810		202.5	80.1	36.4
Connecticut	703		102.3	42.0	12.7
Maryland	542		126.7	60.7	20.6
New York	402		252.3	188.3	160.6
Delaware	401	370 PPSM	15.8	8.5	2.0
Florida	296		0.0	121.5	49.0
Ohio	277		0.0	103.2	28.9
Pennsylvania	274		0.0	107.6	47.0
Illinois	223		0.0	70.7	64.7
California	217		0.0	137.3	171.1
Hawaii	189	Avg Density (182 PPSM)	0.0	6.4	8.3
All Others	NA		0.0	0.0	386.5
Total			\$1,053.2	\$1,053.2	\$1,053.2

** PPSM = Persons per Square Mile

*Proposed Amendment

Section 6037 of H.R. 3, which adds a new Section 5340 to Chapter 53 of the United States Code, is further amended:

On page 981, line 4, strike “370 persons per square mile” and insert “the average of the population densities of each of the 50 States” in lieu thereof; and, line 11, strike “370” and insert “the average of the population densities of each of the 50 States”.



Metro