

Connected Transportation Research and Innovation Act of 2015, H.R. 3458
Section-by-Section of Major Provisions

The purpose of this bill is to provide support for a more innovative, intermodal transportation system that moves people and goods in a safer way with more efficient use of resources. The bill makes investments in long-term advanced research, workforce training, innovation grants at the state and local level, and environmental preservation. H.R. 3458 encourages and expands collaboration within the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) and between U.S. DOT and other Federal agencies to strengthen and prioritize transportation research. The authorizations for appropriations are the same funding levels as the Administration's GROW AMERICA proposal with additional funding for new programs to address critical research needs.

The *Connected Transportation Research and Innovation Act*:

- Authorizes the Federal Highway Administration to provide grants to State and local agencies for innovative research, development, technology transfer, including proof of concept activities, and deployment activities. [Sec. 103(2)]
- Authorizes the National Highway Institute to develop courses related to green transportation infrastructure. [Sec. 104]
- Authorizes U.S. DOT to conduct testing to determine whether wireless radio safety signals for connected vehicles can share the same spectrum, the 5.9 GHz band of spectrum, with Wi-Fi devices, such as cell phones and iPads, without interference. [Sec. 106]
- Authorizes a state grant program for research, development and demonstration of user-based alternative revenue mechanisms, including congestion pricing. [Sec. 108]
- Creates more flexibility in the University Transportation Centers (UTC) program to allow universities to participate in more than one consortium. The bill also emphasizes that the UTC program should conduct multimodal transportation research, provide more outreach to women and underrepresented minorities, and support more long-term, advanced research. [Sec. 202]
- Authorizes U.S. DOT's Office of Climate Change and Environment to conduct activities such as reducing vehicle miles traveled and reducing construction-related carbon emissions, as well as increasing efforts toward transportation systems resiliency and recovery. [Sec. 204(2)]
- Establishes the Advanced Transportation Research and Innovation Program which expands the Federal Highway Administration's Exploratory Advanced Research Program to be a Department-wide long-term research program for basic and advanced research. A 2014 Transportation Research Board report found that "applied research projects will not by themselves produce the transformations in transportation needed to meet emerging long-term global challenges, such as climate change and sustainability." [Sec. 205]
- Authorizes U.S. DOT to conduct a Smart Cities Transportation Planning Study to understand cities' rates of adoption of digital and information technology, as well as to assess future planning and infrastructure needs and to provide best practices for implementation.