United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Environment and Public Works, U.S. Senate

July 2008

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Progress in Implementing the Program, but a Comprehensive Plan to Evaluate Program Outcomes Is Needed

GAO-08-789

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Highlights

Highlights of GAO-08-789, a report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Environment and Public Works, U.S. Senate

Why GAO Did This Study

In August 2005, Congress established the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program primarily to encourage children to walk and bicycle to school. GAO was asked to determine (1) the steps the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and states have taken to implement the program, (2) the extent to which FHWA and states have evaluated the results of the program, and (3) how the program is related to other surface transportation programs and some considerations for future reauthorization. GAO reviewed statutes, regulations, and guidance; analyzed program obligation data and funds awarded by states; and interviewed officials with FHWA, state departments of transportation, and local grant recipients.

What GAO Recommends

To enhance its oversight of the SRTS program, GAO is recommending that DOT (1) develop a comprehensive plan to monitor and evaluate the program and (2) formalize its efforts to work jointly with CDC and EPA in developing health and environmental outcome measures. To improve the effectiveness of the federal investment in the program, Congress should consider requiring a state or local match that will help encourage additional state and local investment in SRTS activities. DOT officials generally agreed with GAO's findings and said they are considering the recommendations, and they provided technical clarifications, which are incorporated as appropriate.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on GAO-08-789. For more information, contact Katherine Siggerud at (202) 512-2834 or siggerudk@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

FHWA and the states have implemented key aspects of the SRTS program. FHWA established a clearinghouse to provide technical assistance for SRTS programs and a national task force to study and develop a strategy for advancing SRTS programs nationwide. It also provided an interim report to Congress on its progress and developed program guidance that provides states with flexibility in implementing their SRTS programs. Although state-level implementation varies, states have made progress in implementing the program. Approximately 2,700 schools nationwide are participating in the program. As of March 31, 2008, states obligated almost $75 million in SRTS funding or approximately 18 percent of the total amount apportioned by FHWA since September 2005.

FHWA, in collaboration with the clearinghouse and the national task force, has taken significant steps to develop a framework for evaluating SRTS program outcomes, including developing standardized data collection forms. However, FHWA lacks a comprehensive plan to monitor and evaluate the full range of SRTS program outcomes. FHWA requests, but does not require states to develop and report information on program results. The Department of Transportation (DOT) could require states to develop and report such information by including language in its grant agreements. The Government Performance and Results Act requires agencies to measure performance toward the achievement of program goals and objectives. The clearinghouse has made an initial effort to talk with key stakeholders, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), about appropriate measures for health and environmental outcomes, but additional work is needed to determine the feasibility of developing these outcome measures.

The SRTS program broadens the federal transportation role in that it addresses concerns about bicycle and pedestrian safety of students, childhood obesity and inactivity, and traffic and environmental problems in the vicinity of schools, rather than primarily addressing broader concerns about the condition of surface transportation infrastructure or highway safety. Also, we note that while most federal funds for federal highway projects require a 20 percent match from state and local governments, a 100 percent federal share is established for SRTS projects or activities. GAO has previously reported that grants with federal matching requirements may promote relatively more state and local spending than nonmatching grants. Finally, the SRTS program incorporates some of GAO's principles for re-examining federal programs—such as sharing best practices—but the program has had more limited success in implementing performance accountability.

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Abbreviations

CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DOT	Department of Transportation
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FACA	Federal Advisory Committee Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
SRTS	Safe Routes to School
SR2S	California State-Legislated Safe Routes to School Program

GAO
Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

July 31, 2008

The Honorable James Inhofe
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate

Dear Senator Inhofe:

The 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) established the federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, the first Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) program designed primarily to encourage children to walk and bicycle to school. According to FHWA, in 1969, approximately 50 percent of U.S. children walked or rode bicycles to school, but by 2001, only about 15 percent of students did so. Additionally, the Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 20 percent of children and youth in the United States will be obese by 2010. Moreover, data from local communities show that approximately 20 percent of morning traffic can be generated by parents driving their children to school, and according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2005, motor vehicle traffic crashes were the leading cause of death for children ages 3 through 6 and 8 and over. Although the National Research Council's Transportation Research Board reports that transportation by school bus is the safest mode of school travel, it has also suggested that steps can be taken to improve the safety of students who walk or bicycle to school.

Congress mandated the establishment of the SRTS program in August 2005 to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. FHWA is responsible for administering the program,[1] which provides $612 million over 5 years to state Departments

[1]FHWA generally administers its programs through its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and division offices located in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. FHWA delegates much of its decision-making, program implementation, and oversight to those offices.

of Transportation to implement state SRTS programs and for infrastructure and noninfrastructure projects benefiting school children in kindergarten through eighth grade.[2] States are responsible for developing their own program administration structure and process for soliciting and selecting SRTS projects and activities.[3] As you requested, this report discusses (1) the steps FHWA and states[4] have taken to implement the SRTS program, (2) the extent to which FHWA and states have evaluated the results of the SRTS program, and (3) how the SRTS program is related to other surface transportation programs and some considerations for the future reauthorization of funding for the SRTS and other surface transportation programs.

To address the first two objectives related to the SRTS program implementation and evaluation, we reviewed the legislative history of the federal SRTS program and conducted a literature review of key health, safety, and environmental concerns the program is intended to address, including the relative risks of the available options for transporting children to and from school. We reviewed and analyzed key documents and data, including FHWA program guidance, the draft report from the National Safe Routes to School Task Force (i.e., the national task force), FHWA's reports that track obligated SRTS funds,[5] SRTS tracking reports from the National Center for Safe Routes to Schools (i.e., the clearinghouse) that contain information on SRTS amounts awarded by states[6] and the number of participating schools, and other information on the program. To assess the reliability of FHWA's data on SRTS funding apportionments and obligations and the data in the tracking reports from the clearinghouse, we reviewed related documentation and interviewed

[2]Infrastructure projects generally refer to construction projects while noninfrastructure projects generally refer to behavioral activities to encourage walking and biking to school (such as public awareness campaigns and student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety).

[3]The states may provide SRTS funding to state, local, and regional agencies, including nonprofit organizations.

[4]All references to "states" in this report include the District of Columbia.

[5]FHWA distributes SRTS funding through annual apportionments established by the statutory formula in SAFETEA-LU. Once FHWA has apportioned SRTS funds, they are available to be awarded by states. After the states have established project agreements with their grantees, the states may obligate the funds in accordance with each state's approved transportation improvement program.

[6]Amounts awarded by states include the amounts that state SRTS programs have announced they will spend on specific local SRTS projects or programs.

knowledgeable agency officials about the quality of the data. As a result, we determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report. In addition, we interviewed officials from FHWA; the clearinghouse; the national task force; and numerous national stakeholders familiar with health, safety, and environmental concerns and SRTS program design and implementation at the national level. Finally, we conducted four site visits—involving three states (California, Florida, and South Dakota) and the District of Columbia[7]—where we interviewed FHWA division officials, state officials, local grant recipients, and state and local level stakeholders and collected in-depth information to obtain views on the program's design, implementation, and results to date as applicable. To select states, we reviewed data on the coordinator status, application cycles, and number of local SRTS projects funded as of June 2007. To address the third objective regarding how the SRTS program relates to other surface transportation programs and some considerations for reauthorization, we assessed the extent to which the SRTS program has addressed several of the criteria and principles that we have developed in our prior work—including our reports on 21st century challenges—for re-examining government transportation programs. A more detailed discussion of our scope and methodology appears in appendix I.

We performed our review from August 2007 to July 2008 in accordance with generally accepted governmental auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Results in Brief

FHWA and the states have taken steps to implement the key aspects of the SRTS program and states have made some progress in awarding grants. As required by SAFETEA-LU, FHWA has established a clearinghouse to develop and disseminate information and provide technical assistance for state and local SRTS programs and a national task force to study and develop a strategy for advancing state and local SRTS programs nationwide. It has also provided an interim report to Congress on its progress and developed program guidance that provides states with flexibility in implementing their SRTS programs. Although state-level

[7]We conducted the interviews in California, Florida, and the District of Columbia in person and the interviews in South Dakota by telephone.

implementation varies, states have made progress in implementing the program. For example, all states have SRTS program coordinators, all but one state has started the process of awarding funds to grantees, and approximately 2,700 schools nationwide are participating in the program. In addition, the states awarded grants totaling about $222 million or 53 percent of SRTS funding apportioned by FHWA through March 31, 2008. With respect to spending these funds, states must take several steps before obligating awarded funds. As of March 31, 2008, states obligated almost $75 million in SRTS funding or approximately 18 percent of the total amount apportioned by FHWA since the first apportionment in September 2005. In awarding SRTS grants, states have funded activities such as sidewalk installation, sidewalk gap closures, bicycle and pedestrian education programs, and increased traffic enforcement in school zones.

FHWA, in collaboration with the clearinghouse and the national task force, has taken significant steps to develop a framework for evaluating SRTS program outcomes, including developing standardized data collection forms and a six-step process to assist state and local SRTS programs in preparing evaluation plans. However, these efforts focus on measuring program participation and potential safety outcomes and, therefore, do not fully address the evaluation of the multiple program purposes and potential outcomes of SRTS. FHWA recommends that states evaluate their SRTS programs, but it does not require them to do so. FHWA's program guidance requests that states gather and provide information to FHWA on the evaluation of safety benefits, behavioral changes, and other potential benefits including improved student health, improved air quality, decreased traffic congestion, and others. According to FHWA officials, they did not require states to evaluate their SRTS programs because they believed they lacked the statutory authority to do so. Nevertheless, we believe that the Department of Transportation (DOT) may require states to collect and report data relevant for evaluating the program and include that requirement in its agreements with grantees. The authority to make a grant implies authority to do those things that are reasonably required to administer the grant, including the duty to ensure that the grant funds are effectively used to carry out the purpose of the grant. This duty, in turn, may require the collection of data to measure performance. The Government Performance Results Act requires agencies to measure performance toward the achievement of program goals and objectives. Performance data allow agencies to share effective approaches, recognize problems, look for solutions, and develop ways to improve results. While it may be too early in the program to determine whether the voluntary nature of SRTS's evaluation component will provide a comprehensive picture of national SRTS results, officials from both FHWA and the clearinghouse told us they do not believe that the lack of an evaluation

requirement will hinder evaluation efforts. Some stakeholders, however, raised concerns about the lack of an evaluation requirement. For example, the director of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership—a network of nonprofit organizations, government agencies, schools, and professionals working to advance the SRTS movement in the United States—told us that gauging the performance of a $612 million program is important and will require data and analysis. While FHWA's guidance recommends that states gather and provide information on potential health and environmental outcomes, FHWA and the clearinghouse have not developed guidance and tools that states and local programs could use to assess those outcomes. The clearinghouse's director said the clearinghouse has engaged in initial discussions with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about developing appropriate outcome measures. Finally, program outcomes to date are limited, in part, because the SRTS program is in its early stages of implementation, but entities we interviewed were able to identify challenges to program implementation and program effectiveness. To improve DOT's ability to evaluate SRTS program outcomes, we are recommending that DOT (1) develop a comprehensive plan to monitor and evaluate the SRTS program and (2) formalize its efforts to work jointly with the clearinghouse, CDC, and EPA to explore the feasibility of developing health and environmental outcome measures. DOT is considering these recommendations.

The SRTS program broadens the federal transportation role in that it is the first[8] surface transportation program designed to address concerns about bicycle and pedestrian safety of children traveling to and from school, childhood obesity and inactivity, and traffic and environmental problems in the vicinity of schools, rather than primarily to address broader concerns about the condition of surface transportation infrastructure or highway safety. SRTS funding constitutes less than 1 percent of total highway funding authorized by SAFETEA-LU, although some SRTS activities can also be funded under a broad array of other surface transportation programs. While most federal funds for highway projects require a 20 percent match from state and local governments, SAFETEA-LU established a 100 percent federal share for SRTS projects or activities. We have previously reported that grants with federal matching requirements may promote relatively more state and local spending than nonmatching grants, thus reducing the likelihood that states will use the

[8]Although the SRTS is the first such federal transportation program, NHTSA previously funded two pilot SRTS projects in August 2000 in Marin County, Calif., and Boston, Mass.

federal funds to replace, rather than supplement, their own spending.[9] The national task force is considering including a recommendation in its forthcoming report that future SRTS legislation allow matching funds for infrastructure projects to stimulate state and local spending, while maintaining the 100 percent funding requirement for infrastructure projects that serve disadvantaged schools (following established guidelines for schools that participate in free and reduced lunch programs) or schools that are located in areas where child pedestrians are at a higher risk of deaths and injuries. Accordingly, we have included a matter for consideration by Congress in this report suggesting that Congress consider requiring a state or local match for the SRTS program that will improve the ability of the program to encourage state and local investments in SRTS activities while protecting low-income communities from being at a disadvantage when competing for SRTS funds. Finally, as Congress prepares for the reauthorization of surface transportation programs in 2009, we note that transportation stakeholders have expressed various views about the extent to which programs, such as SRTS, which are designed in part to address nontransportation goals, should be funded in the upcoming reauthorization. We have developed and reported criteria and principles for re-examining federal programs that can assist congressional decision makers and others in assessing the relative contributions of transportation programs that may expand the federal transportation role beyond those programs that represent traditional transportation goals.[10] Our work on the SRTS program shows that it addresses some of the criteria and principles, such as developing coordinated solutions to problems and sharing best practices, although, as noted above, the program has made limited progress in developing and implementing a framework for evaluating its performance outcomes which could limit FHWA's ability to report on how well the SRTS program is meetings its national goals and objectives.

Background

Prior to the establishment of the federal SRTS program, some states began implementing safe routes to schools programs in the late 1990's in response to concerns that declining rates of children walking and bicycling to school adversely affected children's health, child pedestrian and bicycle safety, and air quality around schools. In August 2000, NHTSA

[9]GAO, *Federal Grants: Design Improvements Could Help Federal Resources Go Further*, GAO/AIMD-97-7 (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 18, 1996).

[10]For example, see GAO, *21st Century Challenges: Reexamining the Base of the Federal Government*, GAO-05-325SP (Washington, D.C.: February 2005). GAO, *Surface Transportation: Restructured Federal Approach Needed for More Focused, Performance-Based, and Sustainable Programs*, GAO-08-400 (Washington D.C.: March 6, 2008).

implemented two pilot SRTS projects, the Marin County Bicycle Coalition and Walk Boston. Based on the experiences of the pilot projects and other local programs, NHTSA created a toolkit for communities to develop SRTS programs.

The federal SRTS program is also intended to address health, safety, and environmental concerns such as childhood obesity, bicycle and pedestrian safety while traveling to and from school, and air pollution and congestion around schools. Recent research shows that children are experiencing illness and other health problems associated with obesity, including Type II diabetes and hypertension,[11] and that obesity is on the rise due in part to a lack of physical activity. In an October 2005 report, we concluded that multiple factors affecting physical activity may contribute to childhood obesity.[12] Additional research suggests that organizations and individuals can employ measures to mitigate the safety risks when walking or biking to school. In its January 2007 report on traffic safety countermeasures, NHTSA cited a study in New Zealand which found that when parents walked children to and from school, the risk of injury was only 36 percent of the risk of unaccompanied children.[13] Other research also suggests that policies that increase the number of people walking or bicycling appear to be an effective way of improving the safety of people walking or bicycling because motorists adjust their behavior in the presence of multiple persons walking or bicycling.[14]

Studies have also shown that efforts to reduce traffic congestion near schools may affect air quality and health. FHWA has reported that to the extent that bicycling and walking displace motor vehicle trips, they reduce consumption of fossil fuels and the associated pollution and other

[11]See, for example, Office of the Surgeon General, *The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity 2001* (Washington, D.C., 2001) and Salinsky et al., *Obesity in America: A Growing Threat*, (Washington, D.C., National Health Policy Forum, July 2003).

[12]GAO, *Childhood Obesity: Most Experts Identified Physical Activity and the Use of Best Practices as Key to Successful Programs*, GAO-06-127R (Washington D.C.: Oct. 7, 2005).

[13]Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices*, (Washington, D.C., 2007).

[14]Peter L. Jacobsen, "Safety in Numbers: More Walkers and Bicyclists, Safer Walking and Bicycling," *Injury Prevention* (September 2003).

environmental damage.[15] In addition, a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that efforts to reduce downtown traffic congestion in Atlanta during the Olympic Games resulted in decreased traffic density, ozone concentrations, and asthma acute care events.[16]

SAFETEA-LU included several key requirements for the SRTS program. For example, SAFETEA-LU required FHWA to establish a national safe routes to school clearinghouse to develop and disseminate information and provide technical assistance, establish a national safe routes to school task force to study and develop a strategy for advancing safe routes to school programs nationwide, and submit a report to Congress by the task force describing the results of its study. The legislation also required each participating state to hire a full-time SRTS coordinator. FHWA requested that each state have a coordinator in place by December 31, 2005. Each state is also responsible for developing its own policies and procedures for soliciting and selecting projects for SRTS funding. SRTS programs can be implemented at different levels—at a single school, a cluster of schools, on a school system or regionwide basis, or in some cases, on a statewide level. In its program guidance, FHWA recommends SRTS efforts incorporate, either directly or indirectly, five components. These components are commonly referred to as the "five 'E's" and include: engineering (creating physical improvements); education (teaching children, parents, and the community about safe walking and bicycling behavior, expectations of safe driver behavior around schools, and safety skills for walking and bicycling); enforcement (ensuring traffic laws are obeyed); encouragement (promoting walking and bicycling); and evaluation (monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends).

FHWA provides SRTS funds to each state by formula based on the state's percentage of the national total of school-aged children in kindergarten through eighth grade, with a minimum allocation of $1 million in any fiscal year (see app. II for the projected funding by state).[17] The funds are not transferable, and they remain available until expended. The SRTS program

[15]Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, *Environmental Benefits of Bicycling and Walking: National Bicycling and Walking Study*, Case Study 15 (January 1993).

[16]Michael S. Freidman, et. al., "Impacts of Changes in Transportation and Commuting Behavior During the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta on Air Quality and Childhood Asthma," *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA), vol. 285 (February 2001), pp. 897-905.

[17]FHWA deducts up to $3 million per year for administrative expenses to carry out the program.

is a reimbursement program; only costs incurred by states and local grant recipients after FHWA project approval are eligible for reimbursement. The federal share of the cost of a project or activity is 100 percent and states are not allowed to require a local match.

Eligible activities for funding under SRTS include infrastructure and noninfrastructure projects. SAFETEA-LU defined infrastructure projects as those that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school, including sidewalk improvements, traffic calming and speed reduction improvements, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements, on-street bicycle facilities, off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools. Construction, capital improvements, and traffic education and traffic enforcement activities must take place within approximately 2 miles of a primary or middle school (kindergarten through eighth grade). SAFETEA-LU defined eligible noninfrastructure activities as those that encourage walking and biking to school, including public awareness campaigns; provide traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools; and train managers and volunteers of safe routes to school programs. States must spend a minimum of 10 percent on noninfrastructure activities with a maximum of 30 percent.

Under SAFETEA-LU, SRTS infrastructure projects and noninfrastructure activities are subject to applicable Federal-Aid Highway Program[18] requirements in chapter 1 of title 23, including establishing project agreements between the state and the grantee and obtaining project approval from FHWA prior to incurring costs.[19] In addition, infrastructure projects under the SRTS program must comply with Davis Bacon prevailing wage rates.[20]

Finally, our series of reports on 21st Century Challenges suggest criteria for re-examining all federal programs and commitments—including SRTS

[18]Federal grant programs for highway infrastructure are collectively known as the Federal-Aid Highway Program.

[19]While SRTS projects are subject to applicable title 23 requirements as required by SAFETEA-LU, FHWA officials noted that, since 1996, they have allowed other types of low cost federal-aid highway projects to use state-approved procurement procedures for projects outside the right-of-way of a federal-aid highway.

[20]The Davis Bacon Act requires that laborers and mechanics employed on construction work performed on projects must be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on the same type of work on similar construction in the immediate locality as determined by the Department of Labor.

and other transportation programs—to assist in setting priorities and linking resources to results.[21] These criteria include clearly defining the appropriate federal roles, incorporating performance results into funding decisions, using best practices, and developing coordinated solutions to complex, cross-cutting challenges.

FHWA and the States Have Taken Steps to Implement Key Aspects of the SRTS Program

FHWA and states have taken steps to implement the key aspects of the SRTS program outlined in SAFETEA-LU. FHWA established the National Center for Safe Routes to School and the National Safe Routes to School Task Force, and provided an interim report to Congress on its progress. FHWA also developed program guidance that provides state departments of transportation with flexibility in implementing the SRTS program. States have taken steps such as hiring SRTS coordinators and initiating funding cycles to implement the SRTS program.

Federal-Level Implementation Addresses Key SAFETEA-LU Requirements

FHWA has taken steps to address the key requirements contained in SAFETEA-LU for FHWA's implementation of the SRTS program at the federal level, completing two requirements and partially completing a third requirement, as shown in table 1.

[21] GAO-05-325SP.

Table 1: Status of FHWA's Implementation of Key SAFETEA-LU Requirements for SRTS

SAFETEA-LU requirement	Status
Establish a national safe routes to school clearinghouse to develop and disseminate information and provide technical assistance	Complete
Establish a national safe routes to school task force to study and develop a strategy for advancing safe routes to school programs nationwide	Complete
Submit a report to Congress by the national task force describing the results of its study	Partially complete[a]

Source: GAO analysis of information provided by FHWA.

[a]DOT submitted an interim report in April 2006 to respond to this requirement and is working with the national task force on a more detailed report. As of May 2008, DOT did not have a target date for submitting a full report to Congress and the public.

In May 2006, FHWA established the clearinghouse, which has been developed and led by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill through a cooperative agreement between it and FHWA. As of February 2008, the total value of the cooperative agreement was approximately $8.1 million.[22] The clearinghouse offers a centralized source of information on how to start and sustain a SRTS program, as well as many other resources for training and technical assistance. Entities we interviewed generally indicated that the clearinghouse is a useful resource for garnering easy access to information.

In October 2006, FHWA established the national task force, representing health, safety, education, and transportation experts, under a 2-year charter that expires in October 2008. FHWA's legal counsel determined that the establishment of the national task force fell within the scope of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Under the provisions of FACA, federal agencies sponsoring advisory committees must, among other things, file a charter with Congress before the committee can begin operating; publish adequate advance notice of meetings in the *Federal Register*; open advisory committee meetings to the public (with some exceptions); make available for public inspection, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, papers and records, including detailed minutes of each meeting; and maintain records of expenditures. FACA also requires that committee membership be balanced in terms of points of views represented. The DOT selected the national task force members through

[22]This amount includes funding for two base years, three 1-year options, and modifications made in July 2006, November 2007, and February 2008.

an application process, using a variety of selection factors such as geographical distribution, gender, minority status, organization represented, and expertise. The national task force includes representatives from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Works Association, American Traffic Safety Services Association, Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Institute of Transportation Engineers, local law enforcement, education and metropolitan planning officials, the National Association of Regional Councils, the National Center for Bicycling and Walking, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, the State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association, and state and local SRTS program representatives. According to DOT, the national task force represents a cross section of agencies, organizations and individuals that are involved in SRTS activities and programs throughout the United States.

SAFETEA-LU required the national task force to submit a report to Congress by March 31, 2006, detailing the results of its work. According to FHWA, because of the steps required by FACA and the limited time available after SAFETEA-LU was enacted in August 2005, the national task force was not yet established and therefore could not submit a full report by the required date. Therefore, to address the statutory requirement, DOT submitted an interim status report to Congress in April 2006 detailing the actions FHWA took to implement the SRTS program nationwide and stating that the national task force would, at a later date, submit a more detailed report with recommendations for moving the SRTS program forward. According to minutes from its meetings, the national task force is in the process of developing a draft report covering such topics as program success, program challenges and opportunities, and national strategies for advancing SRTS, and it expects to submit the full report to DOT no later than September 30, 2008. As of May 2008, DOT did not have a target date for submitting the full report to Congress and the public.

FHWA Developed Program Guidance That Provides State DOTs with Flexibility in Implementing the SRTS Program

FHWA issued its SRTS program guidance on January 3, 2006 to coincide with its recommendation that states hire their SRTS coordinators by December 31, 2005. The guidance suggested that states consider the following objectives when structuring their program:

- enable participation on a variety of levels,
- make the program accessible to diverse participants,
- promote comprehensive SRTS programs and activities, and

- maximize impact of the funds. [23]

Each state is responsible for developing its own policies and procedures for soliciting and selecting projects for funding such as selection criteria, funding cycles, grant amounts, and time limits.

Given the flexibility the FHWA guidance provides states in developing policies and procedures, program administration differed across the states we visited or interviewed. Figure 1 provides a description of program characteristics of the states we visited or SRTS officials we interviewed by telephone. Program administration information was not available on a national level; therefore, the examples below are provided for illustrative purposes.

[23]According to FHWA officials, it conducted an extensive outreach effort in preparing the guidance by soliciting input from multiple program stakeholders including national bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations, a review team of officials from state DOTs, an FHWA field review team, and NHTSA.

Figure 1: Program Administration Characteristics of States We Visited or Interviewed

California		
Statewide advisory committee	Yes	*Because some California Department of Transportation districts believed they did not receive an appropriate share of California's SRTS funding, California is considering revising its project selection process to distribute SRTS funding to the districts based on their K-8 population, with district officials using a standard application to select SRTS projects within their district.
Application process to select projects	Yes	
Project selection is centralized at the state DOT headquarters	Yes*	
Application selection process is merit-based	Yes	
Projects selected	Yes	

District of Columbia		
Districtwide advisory committee	Yes	*Prior to the federal SRTS program, the District of Columbia had SRTS activities in place and initially decided to contract with its current service providers without using an application process. Subsequently, it developed a merit-based application process to select schools for comprehensive SRTS programming.
Application process to select projects	Yes*	
Project selection is centralized at D.C. DOT headquarters	Yes	
Application selection process is merit-based	Yes	
Projects selected	Yes	

Florida		
Statewide advisory committee	No	*The Florida DOT is decentralized and districts are generally responsible for selecting transportation projects. This agency sets aside some SRTS funds for administration and a few statewide projects and allocates the remaining funds to its districts based on their K-8 enrollment. The districts then use a merit-based application process to distribute funds within the districts.
Application process to select projects	Yes	
Project selection is centralized at the state DOT headquarters	No*	
Application selection process is merit-based	Yes	
Projects selected	Yes	

South Dakota		
Statewide advisory committee	Yes	*According to South Dakota DOT officials, the state's delay in implementing SRTS was a result of its initial desire to administer a state funded program, rather than use federal funds. The officials said there were other funding sources that could be used for infrastructure projects, and as a result, decided to focus initially on noninfrastructure projects.
Application process to select projects	Yes	
Project selection is centralized at the state DOT headquarters	Yes	
Application selection process is merit-based	Yes	
Projects selected	No*	

Source: GAO analysis of state DOT information.

In addition, the SRTS program stakeholders we interviewed generally said the federal program provides the appropriate level of flexibility. Those that said the federal program was not flexible generally cited difficulties in complying with the title 23 requirements as the reason. For example, several local grant recipients described the title 23 requirements as burdensome relative to the small scale of SRTS projects.

States Have Taken Steps, Such as Hiring SRTS Coordinators and Initiating Funding Cycles, to Implement the SRTS Program

States have made progress in implementing the SRTS program. As shown in table 2, as of March 31, 2008, all states had designated SRTS program coordinators, and only one state (Georgia) had yet to start its SRTS funding process. In addition, the number of participating schools increased substantially during the second year of the program's implementation—from approximately 300 through December 2006 to approximately 2,700 through March 2008, an increase of about 2,400 schools or 800 percent during that period.

Table 2: State Progress in Implementing SRTS Programs through March 31, 2008[a]

Implementation category	Number
Approximate number of participating schools	2,700
States with program coordinators	51
States that have started the funding process[b]	50
States that have awarded funds for local and/or statewide SRTS programs	46
States that have started a second funding cycle	26
States that have started a third funding cycle	6

Source: National Center for Safe Routes to School.

[a]Includes the District of Columbia.

[b]Includes meeting at least one of the following criteria: awarded funding, has a current open application process, or closed applications pending announcement of funding recipients.

States have also made some progress in awarding SRTS funds, according to data compiled by the clearinghouse. As shown in table 3, as of March 2008, states had awarded nearly $222 million or 53 percent of the $416 million apportioned by FHWA for SRTS through that period.

Table 3: Total SRTS Funding Awarded by States, by Fiscal Year

Time period	Cumulative amount apportioned by FHWA	Cumulative amount awarded by states[a]
Through fiscal year 2006	$147,030,000	Not available
Through fiscal year 2007	269,030,000	156,081,270
Through fiscal year 2008 (as of March 31, 2008)	416,030,000	221,721,516

Source: FHWA and the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

[a]Amounts awarded by states include the amounts that state SRTS programs have announced they will spend on specific local SRTS projects or programs. All funds awarded may not have yet been dispersed. In addition, data is not available through September 2006 because the clearinghouse's first tracking report covers the period through October 2006.

With respect to spending these funds, states generally must take multiple steps before obligating awarded SRTS funds such as developing a project agreement with the grantee, including the funds in the appropriate metropolitan planning organization's Transportation Improvement Program and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and as applicable, completing environmental clearances and preliminary

engineering studies.[24] As shown in table 4, as of March 2008, states have obligated approximately $75 million or 18 percent of the $416 million apportioned by FHWA for SRTS through that period.

Table 4: Total SRTS Funding Apportioned, Obligated, Unobligated, and Obligation Rate, by Fiscal Year

Time period	Cumulative amount apportioned by FHWA	Cumulative amount obligated by states	Cumulative unobligated balance	Obligation rate
Through fiscal year 2006	$147,030,000	$11,178,350	$135,851,650	8
Through fiscal year 2007	269,030,000	51,872,298	217,157,702	19
Through fiscal year 2008[a]	416,030,000	74,929,993	341,100,007	18[b]

Source: FHWA.

[a]This is as of March 31, 2008.

[b]The obligation rate shows a decrease, in part, because the fiscal year has not been completed.

While each state's SRTS program funds a unique list of specific projects, there are commonalities. During our site visits we found that SRTS activities taking place at the state and local level include both infrastructure and noninfrastructure activities such as sidewalk installation; sidewalk gap closures; traffic calming measures (traffic management techniques designed to slow cars); pedestrian and bicycle safety education programs; and increased traffic enforcement in school zones. On the basis of our site visits, some examples of some specific activities funded include:

- The Washington Area Bicyclist Association's "Street Smart" program, which was implemented in the District of Columbia, teaches children how to safely cross the street and intersection, the importance of wearing

[24]Transportation projects proposed for funding under title 23, including recipients of SRTS funds, must be programmed in a metropolitan planning organization's Transportation Improvement program and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. A transportation improvement program is a prioritized listing of transportation projects covering a period of 4 years that is developed and formally adopted by a metropolitan planning organization as part of its planning process. A statewide transportation improvement program is a statewide prioritized listing of transportation projects covering a period of 4 years.

bicycle helmets, how to make sure children and their bicycles are ready for a safe ride, the rules of the road, and how to safely control bicycles. The core of the program is a 1 week pedestrian and bicycle course taught in specific elementary schools. Kindergarten, first, and second graders are taught pedestrian safety, while third, forth, and fifth graders are taught bicycle safety. Officials from this association told us that they try to incorporate students with disabilities into their lessons and other activities, such as helmet fittings.

- The Florida DOT provided funding to Pinellas County to purchase speed feedback signs for 16 locations near schools. Two of the speed feedback signs have been placed at designated locations and the rest have been ordered, according to officials from Pinellas County. The signs collect traffic and speed data continuously that can be used to more effectively deploy law enforcement to problem areas and times. The county selected the locations in conjunction with the school district using criteria such as the current number of students walking or biking to school based on crossing guard counts, the type of roadways being crossed by students, traffic safety devices already in the areas, and areas with high levels of noncompliance with traffic rules based on citations issued by law enforcement. See figure 2 for a picture of the speed feedback sign.

Figure 2: Picture of Speed Feedback Sign

Source: GAO.

Significant Evaluation Efforts Have Been Made, but FHWA and States Do Not Have a Comprehensive Plan to Evaluate the Program

FHWA, the clearinghouse, and the national task force have made significant efforts to develop a framework for measuring program outcomes, including creating standardized evaluation forms and a six-step process to assist local SRTS programs in developing their evaluation plans. However, a more comprehensive program evaluation plan may further help FHWA to identify and target desired national and local outcomes. Although it is too early to comprehensively identify results to date, challenges to program implementation and overall program effectiveness have been identified, such as compliance with title 23 requirements and school siting policies.

Although Significant Efforts Have Been Made, FHWA and States Have Not Fully Developed Comprehensive Policies and Procedures for Evaluating Program Outcomes

SAFETEA-LU requires the Secretary of Transportation to report to Congress on the work of the national task force and on the uses of SRTS funds. FHWA's program guidance recommends that states evaluate their SRTS programs. The guidance requests that states gather and provide information on the evaluation of safety benefits, behavioral changes, and other potential benefits including "measurements of student health, air quality, congestion, and other metrics noted or implied by the legislative purposes of the program." According to the SRTS program manager, FHWA division offices are responsible for overseeing SRTS projects in their respective states. FHWA headquarters did not develop specific oversight guidance for SRTS projects since the program falls under the regular federal-aid process which FHWA division staff manage on a daily basis.

We have previously described challenges related to developing national evaluations of federal programs when (1) program goals are broad and general and (2) state or local agencies have been delegated the authority to determine how to carry out the programs to meet specific local needs.[25] When states and localities set their own short-term and intermediate goals, common measures to aggregate across projects are often lacking, so it is difficult to assess national progress toward a common goal. Additionally, such programs also tend to have limited federal reporting requirements. Therefore, little information may be available on how well a national program is progressing toward its national goals. Agencies facing these challenges generally have two options: (1) find common measures or (2) encourage locally tailored evaluations.

The clearinghouse, FHWA, and the national task force have taken steps to develop a framework for evaluation efforts that address both finding common measures and encouraging locally tailored evaluations. For example, the clearinghouse has undertaken multiple efforts to address program evaluation, including collecting national level data and developing evaluation guidance for local programs. The clearinghouse developed standardized data collection forms to collect national-level data on the number of children walking and bicycling to school, as well as parental attitudes toward these transportation modes. Using these forms, programs can either enter their own data into the clearinghouse's Web-based data entry system or send completed data collection forms to the clearinghouse for processing. In addition, state and local programs are able to use this information to generate other reports about their SRTS

[25]GAO, *Program Evaluation: Strategies for Assessing How Information Dissemination Contributes to Agency Goals*, GAO-02-923 (Washington D.C.: Sept. 30, 2002).

activities. As of May 1, 2008, data from 34 states had been either entered through the online system or processed by the clearinghouse. More than 17,000 parent surveys and 3,400 student tally forms (representing approximately 63,000 students) from about 230 schools were in the database.

In November 2007, FHWA modified its agreement with the clearinghouse to provide an additional $1.8 million to, among other things, evaluate SRTS program strategies and develop a safety monitoring program. The clearinghouse will use an expert panel and information from its tracking database to identify specific strategies to evaluate. It is currently in the process of identifying representatives to sit on the expert panel and will provide FHWA with three to six evaluation reports of specific SRTS strategies each year once activities are underway, including a 6- and 12-month report for the fiscal year ending in September 2009. These evaluation reports will concentrate on the 4 E's (education, encouragement, enforcement, and engineering) as they are implemented at the local level. In addition, the clearinghouse will establish a safety monitoring program—employing a comprehensive database of large-scale state and national crash databases and local program details—to develop and implement a process to monitor, document, and measure potential safety outcomes from SRTS programs. These outcomes will include crash reductions, fatality reductions, and parental perceptions of safety. The clearinghouse plans to develop an initial report by September 2008, conduct analysis of initial data by December 2008, and to subsequently provide annual reports.

At the state and local levels, the clearinghouse has conducted Web-based evaluation training sessions for SRTS state coordinators and developed evaluation guidance for local SRTS programs. The guidance includes a six-step process to assist local programs in developing and implementing evaluation plans. These six steps involve identifying local objectives and determining what, how, and when to measure. The clearinghouse is also working to develop a safety index, requested by engineers and other local transportation professionals, to assist with identifying and prioritizing infrastructure improvement needs along school routes.

Although not mandatory, FHWA strongly recommends that states use the standardized collection instruments described above to help evaluate the SRTS program. States we visited or interviewed said their plans for program evaluation were still under development but each one indicated it would require grant recipients to use the standardized evaluation tools developed by clearinghouse. FHWA program guidance also stated that additional guidance will be provided in the future to evaluate program

success. In November 2006 and May 2007, FHWA's SRTS program manager sent an e-mail to the SRTS state coordinators recommending the use of the standardized forms, as well as additional guidance for entering the information into the clearinghouse's database. Moreover, the national task force is considering potential strategies and recommendations to improve performance accountability for its forthcoming report to Congress.

Considering SRTS' multiple program purposes and potential outcomes and varying SRTS activities and projects at the state and local levels, the clearinghouse, FHWA, and the national task force have made significant efforts toward establishing evaluation measures but challenges remain. FHWA did not require states to evaluate their SRTS programs because SAFETEA-LU did not contain an explicit requirement to evaluate the program. According to FHWA officials, the agency did not believe it had the legislative authority to require evaluation. However, we believe that federal and other agencies that have been given the authority to award grants have implied authority to do those things that are reasonably required to administer the grant, including ensuring accountability for the performance of the grant. In particular, federal and other government agencies are accountable for ensuring that the grant funds are used to carry out the purpose of the grant, a duty which in turn may require the collection of data to measure performance. We believe, therefore, that FHWA should have included language in its grant agreements that would have required the states to collect and report data relevant to appropriate performance indicators.

Stakeholders we interviewed had mixed views about whether the voluntary nature of SRTS's evaluation component will yield comprehensive national data on SRTS results. For example, officials from both the FHWA and the clearinghouse indicated they do not believe that the lack of an evaluation requirement will hinder evaluation efforts. In contrast, some SRTS stakeholders would prefer an evaluation requirement. For example, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, a network of nonprofit organizations, government agencies, schools, and professionals working to advance the SRTS movement in the United States, sent a letter to FHWA in June 2007 expressing concern that FHWA cannot do more than "strongly encourage" state DOTs to collect SRTS program data because the Partnership believes that gauging the performance of a $612 million program is important and will require data

and analysis.[26] A public health advisor from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, also stated that evaluation should not be an option for states because everyone involved with SRTS needs to know if the program is achieving its objectives.

While the clearinghouse's SRTS guidance includes an evaluation section and provides tools to assist local communities in evaluating their SRTS projects, these tools focus on safety-related measures and participation in SRTS activities, but do not address measuring potential health and environmental outcomes. The director of the clearinghouse told us the clearinghouse has engaged in initial discussions with CDC and EPA to identify opportunities to collaborate in many program areas, including developing appropriate outcome measures and methodologies.

Finally, although the clearinghouse's standardized data collection forms provide a method for reporting on how students get to school and parental perceptions about walking to school, neither FHWA nor the clearinghouse have issued guidance to states and local program recipients on reporting other potential safety, health, or environmental outcomes. The lack of reporting requirements could limit FHWA's ability to evaluate progress towards meeting the purposes of the program.

Developing reasonable outcome-based performance measures is a key re-examination criterion from our 21st Century Challenges work. In March 2008, we suggested that Congress should consider reexamining and refocusing surface transportation programs to, among other things, make grantees more accountable through more performance-based links between funding and program outcomes.[27] In addition, the Government Performance Results Act also requires agencies to measure performance toward the achievement of program goals and objectives. Performance data allow agencies to share effective approaches, recognize problems, look for solutions, and develop ways to improve results. We also reported that measures should represent performance that is within the grantee's sphere of influence and that can be achieved and evaluated within a specified time frame; grantees should have the necessary knowledge of the

[26]FHWA addressed a concern of the national partnership when it worked to include student travel data in the 2008 Household Travel Survey. The survey is a DOT effort sponsored by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics and FHWA to collect data on both long-distance and local travel.

[27]GAO-08-400.

measures and the ability to effectively implement them; and implementation should be phased in.[28] FHWA, the clearinghouse, and the national task force have made significant efforts to develop appropriate performance measures. However, the current gaps in the evaluation framework—the lack of an FHWA requirement for states to collect data relevant for evaluating the program, limited performance measures for potential health and environmental outcomes, and limited reporting requirements—could limit FHWA's ability to report on SRTS program outcomes.

Too Early to Comprehensively Identify Results to Date, but Challenges to Program Implementation and Overall Program Effectiveness Have Been Identified

FHWA's program guidance lists numerous possible outcomes, including, among other things, increased bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic safety; more children walking and bicycling to and from schools; decreased traffic congestion; improved childhood health; and increased community security. However, no outcome-oriented results to date at the national level have been identified.

National stakeholders, state coordinators, local grant recipients, and the national task force indicated it is too early in implementation to quantify results of the SRTS program. In lieu of outcome results, national stakeholders identified other initial program outcomes, as highlighted in table 5.

Table 5: Description of Selected Program Outcomes Identified by National Stakeholders

Results	Source	Description
Increased coordination	Safe Routes to School National Partnership	The SRTS program has helped build partnerships among cities, schools, and counties, as well as with other stakeholders including various state and regional agencies that serve on state advisory committees.
Institutional support for SRTS activities has increased	National Center for Bicycling and Walking Bicycle Transportation Alliance[a]	Federal support for SRTS activities legitimized efforts, encouraged additional support from law enforcement and school officials, and focused national attention on school transportation issues.

Source: GAO analysis.

[a]The Bicycle Transportation Alliance is a nonprofit organization in Oregon that works to create healthier, more sustainable communities by making bicycling safe, convenient, and accessible. It also serves as a technical advisor for Oregon's SRTS program.

[28]GAO, *Grants Management: Enhancing Performance Accountability Provisions Could Lead to Better Results*, GAO-06-1046 (Washington D.C.: Sept. 29, 2006).

Although results to date are limited, states we visited reported SRTS projects are underway. Table 6 illustrates examples of current SRTS activities in the state and local level programs we visited.

Table 6: Selected Federal SRTS Activities to Date in Visited States and Local Grant Recipients

Site	Description of SRTS activities
California	
Statewide	Funded 98 applications (out of approximately 500 to 600 applications) in the first application cycle.
City of Sebastopol, local grant recipient	Received an infrastructure grant for sidewalk gap closure and enhanced pedestrian crossing. Received a noninfrastructure grant to implement an SRTS education program in four elementary schools.
Marin County, local grant recipient	Received an infrastructure grant for six to eight blocks of sidewalk to complete a path of travel to school.
City and County of San Francisco, local grant recipient	Received two infrastructure grants, including traffic-calming measures, cross-walks with flashing beacons, and signalizing areas in the vicinity of two schools. One noninfrastructure grant for five elementary schools in the first year and an additional ten schools in the second year of a pilot program, including pedestrian and bicycle safety classes, walking audits, and Walk to School Day activities. Obtained a commitment from the San Francisco Police Department for increased traffic enforcement in the vicinity of the pilot schools.
District of Columbia	
Washington Area Bicyclists Association, contract service provider	Delivered education program to approximately 3,500 students between October 2006 and October 2007.
Florida	
Statewide	Funded 177 local SRTS projects and two statewide projects through the first application cycle.
Florida Department of Transportation, District 7	Completed two application cycles, funding 106 infrastructure projects and three noninfrastructure projects.
More Health, local grant recipient in District 7	Taught a total of 3,178 first grade students bicycle and pedestrian safety lessons as of December 2007.
Pinellas County and Pinellas Public Schools, local grant recipient in District 7	Installed two speed feedback signs near school zones. After installation, observed a 94 percent compliance rate within school zone speed limits.

Source: GAO analysis of information provided by states and local grant recipients.

The clearinghouse also developed overviews of state SRTS programs nominated for the 2007 James Oberstar Safe Routes to School award, recognizing exemplary initiation of a state program. In addition, the clearinghouse has compiled a list of SRTS case studies from programs that have used federal SRTS funding, as well as programs that received SRTS funding from other sources such as NHTSA and state and local governments. The clearinghouse both identified candidate programs for the case studies and prepared those summaries, as well as requested that

states and local programs submit a description of activities undertaken in their communities. Approximately 100 case studies at various stages of implementation were either written by the clearinghouse or submitted by states and local programs. The case studies featured activities such as:

- bicycle and pedestrian education programs,
- Walk to School Days,
- infrastructure activities including curb extensions and the construction of a trail to connect neighborhoods with an elementary school, and
- crossing guard programs and increased enforcement of school zone speed limits.

About 40 percent of the case studies provided results to date including:

- increased student knowledge of bicycle and pedestrian safety procedures,
- increased participation in Walk to School Day events,
- increased numbers of students walking and biking to school,
- slower traffic in school zones, and
- increased parental involvement.

Evaluation efforts of other SRTS-related activities may also provide examples of potential measures and standards for further developing plans to monitor program performance. For example, in addition to the federally funded SRTS program, California administers a state legislated SRTS program referred to as "SR2S." Mandated studies in 2003 and 2007 of the California SR2S program found that the state-funded safe routes to school activities increased walking and bicycling among children.[29] The 2007 study also found that although the SR2S program increased walking and

[29]Only 10 schools were reviewed for the 2003 mobility study; the 2007 study used a representative sample of 125 of the 570 projects that received SR2S funding in the first three years of the program. Boarnet, et. al., *Safe Routes to School, Volume1: Study Overview and Summary of Results*, a report to the legislature (December 2003). Orenstein, et. al., *Safe Routes to School Safety and Mobility Analysis*, a report to the California legislature (University of California Berkley Traffic Safety Center, January 2007).

bicycling among children, the estimated effect varied greatly from school to school and varied depending on the method used to determine changes in physical activity (e.g., direct observations versus parent surveys). In addition, when the increase in the numbers of children walking and bicycling to school was taken into account, the SR2S program appeared to have had a net benefit in terms of safety (i.e., a decline in the numbers of children involved in crashes while walking or bicycling). Lastly, the study reported that a wide range of stakeholders—including parents, school boards, school officials and administrators, teachers, local communities and residents, and other involved parties—expressed satisfaction with the SR2S program.

Although overall results have not yet been identified, stakeholders we interviewed identified challenges to identifying and achieving SRTS program results, including challenges to implementation and overall program effectiveness, as shown in table 7.

Table 7: Key Challenges to Program Implementation and Overall Program Effectiveness Identified by National, State, and Local Stakeholders

Challenge	Description/example:
Challenges to program implementation	
Compliance with title 23	Federal funding requirements for funding allocations and construction of small SRTS projects mirror those for large state highway projects. Small SRTS grant awards can require considerable time and effort to administer. These requirements can deter some schools and communities from applying for funds due, in part, to compliance costs. Communities with limited experience dealing with federal contracting requirements also may face delays in project implementation. For example, one state coordinator told us that some local grant recipients had limited experience with title 23 requirements and were confused about how to comply with the requirements, which delayed their SRTS projects.
Data collection	State coordinators and local grant recipients have identified challenges to collecting consistent and reliable data. For example, using existing national and state data, it is difficult to identify the purpose of a pedestrian or bicycling trip (e.g., whether they were traveling to or from school) when an injury or fatality occurs.
Personal safety	Parent perceptions of safety can be a barrier in successfully implementing SRTS programs. For example, according to state DOT officials in Florida, three high profile child abductions in the Tampa metropolitan area had a tremendous impact on parents' safety perceptions of walking and biking to school.

Challenge	Description/example:
Challenges to overall program effectiveness	
Limited research linking SRTS programs with health outcomes	One study concluded that the current literature does not support a link between walking to school and reduced body-mass index or levels of obesity.[a] The National Center for Safe Routes to Schools acknowledged that health outcomes may be difficult to measure because health outcomes may result from multiple interventions (changes in diet, physical activities, etc.) outside of the SRTS activities and because the program is administered by transportation professionals who may lack expertise in measuring health outcomes.
Local school district attitudes and policies	Some communities have faced challenges in involving school districts in SRTS programs because school administrators are under pressure to achieve academic gains and are reluctant to participate in programs that do not directly address that priority. In addition, policies such as open school enrollment and magnet schools can reduce opportunities for students to walk or bicycle to school.
School siting	School siting policies can result in children living in communities outside of walking and bicycling distance to school.

Source: GAO analysis.

[a]Murray Lee, et. al., Health Impacts of the School Commute (forthcoming).

In addition to the challenges described above, communities will also need to address other related issues. For example, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership indicated some urban communities have a need to address negative safety perceptions caused by vacant lots or abandoned housing, but activities such as mowing vacant lots or demolition are not eligible. In addition, a local grant recipient in Florida noted that rural areas may have a greater need for projects to address safe routes to bus stops.

SRTS Program Broadens Federal Transportation Role and Overlaps with Other Surface Transportation Programs, but Has Successfully Applied Some Criteria for Addressing 21st Century Challenges

The SRTS program broadens the federal transportation role although federal funding for the program is relatively small. SRTS activities can be funded under other surface transportation programs, as well as state and local programs, but the lack of a matching requirement may limit the ability of the SRTS program to encourage additional state and local investment. Finally, as Congress prepares for reauthorizing SRTS and other surface transportation programs, it will need to consider the relative contributions of the programs in solving our nation's transportation problems and achieving federal goals.

SRTS Program Broadens Federal Transportation Role, although Federal Funding for the Program Is Relatively Small

The SRTS program is the first FHWA program designed primarily to encourage children to walk and bicycle to school. The program was established largely to address concerns about bicycle and pedestrian safety of children traveling to and from school, childhood obesity and inactivity, and traffic and environmental problems in the vicinity of schools, rather than primarily to address broader concerns about the condition of surface transportation infrastructure or highway safety. Accordingly, the program expands the federal transportation role into new areas. However, the budget authorization for the SRTS program under SAFETEA-LU constitutes less than 1 percent of the total highway program authorization under the legislation.[30] The SRTS program is one of several that address other societal and environmental goals. As we reported in March 2008, the federal role in surface transportation has expanded over the decades to include broader goals (e.g., civil rights, environmental protection, urban planning, and economic development); more programs; and a variety of program structures. We suggested to Congress that it consider re-examining and refocusing surface transportation programs to ensure that they are linked to federal goals and interests, have

[30]SAFETEA-LU authorized $612 million for the SRTS program for fiscal years 2005 through 2009, an amount that constitutes less than 1 percent of the $193 billion authorized for all highway programs during the same 4-year period under the legislation.

performance-based outcomes, use tools that emphasize the return on the federal investment, and ensure fiscal sustainability.[31]

SRTS Activities Could Be Funded from Multiple Federal and Other Programs, but the Lack of a Matching Requirement May Limit the Ability of the Program to Encourage State and Local Investment

The federal SRTS program provides funding for activities that, at least in part, could also be funded by a broad array of other federal, state, and local funding sources. For example, according to FHWA, some SRTS activities may be eligible for funding under six other federal surface transportation programs—including five programs administered by FHWA (Transportation Enhancements Program, the Surface Transportation Program, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, the Highway Safety Improvement Program, and the Equity Bonus Program) and one program administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA's Section 402 Traffic Safety program)—provided that transportation decision makers are willing to allocate such program monies toward SRTS activities. Furthermore, FHWA's program guidance for the SRTS program points out that numerous other federal, state, and local funding sources are available to complement the SRTS funds, including various transportation, health, recreation, physical education, law enforcement, and safety program funds. These include six state-funded SRTS programs that mirror the federal SRTS program in that they are designed to address similar objectives.

While some SRTS activities may be eligible to receive funds from these other federal transportation programs, the federal, state, and local officials we spoke with had varying opinions about whether funds from other federal transportation programs would actually be awarded for SRTS activities. For example, during our four site visits, three of the four FHWA division officials we interviewed said that it would likely be difficult for SRTS projects to obtain other DOT funding because they believed that federal and state officials had other priorities for those funds. On the other hand, three of the four state SRTS coordinators we interviewed said that SRTS projects could be successful in securing funds from other federal transportation programs, since such projects have been successful in doing so in the past. While opinions varied about whether SRTS activities would be a high enough priority to be awarded funding under the other federal programs, over two-thirds of the entities we interviewed in both the site visits and the national stakeholder meetings (23 of 34 entities) indicated that eliminating funding for the federal SRTS program would

[31] GAO-08-400.

adversely affect the momentum of the program and likely result in many SRTS projects being eliminated.

Generally, most federal funds for federal-aid highway projects must be matched by funds from other sources; state and local governments usually contribute 20 percent to the costs of a project. SRTS is an exception. SAFETEA-LU sets the federal share of the cost of a SRTS project or activity at 100 percent. We have previously reported that grants with federal matching requirements may promote relatively more state and local spending than nonmatching grants, thus reducing the likelihood that states will use the federal funds to replace, rather than supplement, their own spending.[32] Furthermore, we have concluded that, in some instances, the federal matching requirement should be revised upward for federal-aid highway program funds to increase the extent to which federal-aid highway program funds are used to supplement state highway funds rather than substitute for them.[33]

The national SRTS task force is considering including a recommendation in its forthcoming report that future SRTS legislation allow matching funds for infrastructure projects to stimulate state and local spending, while maintaining the 100 percent funding requirement for infrastructure projects that serve disadvantaged schools (following established guidelines for schools that participate in free and reduced lunch programs) or schools that are located in areas where child pedestrians are at a higher risk of deaths and injuries.

Considerations in Reauthorizing SRTS and Other Surface Transportation Programs

As Congress prepares for the reauthorization of the surface transportation programs in 2009, it will need to re-examine the relative contributions of SRTS and all other federal surface transportation programs in solving our nation's transportation problems and achieving federal goals. As we have previously reported, many current federal surface transportation programs may not be effective in addressing such key transportation challenges as increasing congestion and freight demand because the federal goals and roles are unclear; many programs lack links to needs or performance; and the programs often do not employ the best tools and approaches.[34] At the

[32]GAO/AIMD-97-7.

[33]GAO, *Federal-Aid Highways: Trends, Effect on State Spending, and Options for Future Program Design*, GAO-04-802 (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 31, 2004).

[34]GAO-08-400.

same time, the funding outlook for surface transportation programs is uncertain. Without significant changes in funding mechanisms, revenue sources, or planned spending, the Highway Trust Fund—the major source of federal highway and transit spending—is projected to incur significant deficits in the years ahead.

Many transportation groups and stakeholders are currently examining reauthorization issues and articulating their views about national transportation priorities and the types of federal surface transportation investments that best address those priorities. All of these groups acknowledge a need for transportation programs that address the traditional transportation goals of improving mobility, safety, and the transportation infrastructure. However, some groups, such as "Transportation for America"—which is a consortium of 13 organizations representing diverse perspectives in transit, housing, aging, the environment, community development, and other issues—the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership, and the Center for Clean Air Policy, argue that future transportation investments must also be designed to enhance the economy, improve public health, protect the environment, and promote social equity to ensure sustainability and enhance the quality of life for all Americans. Other groups, such as the American Road and Transportation Builders Association and the American Highway Users Alliance, emphasize the need to protect federal surface transportation spending levels in the reauthorization process and prevent the diversion of federal highway revenues to nonhighway uses, so that the federal government can support the types of investments needed to enhance infrastructure capacity, highway safety, and congestion relief.

In our prior work, we have identified several principles that congressional decision makers and others can use in re-examining the relative contributions of all federal surface transportation programs, including the SRTS program. For example, in March 2008, we identified five principles to guide the assessment of options for restructuring federal surface transportation programs, as follows: (1) create well-defined goals based on identified areas of federal interest, (2) establish and clearly define the federal role in achieving each goal, (3) incorporate performance accountability for results into funding decisions, (4) employ the best tools and approaches to emphasize return on investment, and (5) ensure fiscal sustainability.[35] In addition, our prior body of work on 21st Century Challenges also provides additional criteria for re-examining all

[35]GAO-08-400.

government programs, including federal surface transportation programs.[36] In addition to the principles discussed above, the criteria include developing coordinated solutions to complex, cross-cutting challenges and targeting benefits to those most in need.

Our work on the SRTS program addresses the extent to which the program has addressed a few of these principles and criteria such as federal interest, coordination, targeting, best practices, and performance accountability. For example, the program expands the role and interest of the federal government by adding prevention of obesity and improving children's health to the Federal-Aid Highway Program. In addition, in designing and implementing the SRTS program, FHWA and the national task force encouraged coordination with many stakeholders, including other federal agencies. The national task force included representatives from public health, the transportation industry, education, law enforcement, and the bicycle and pedestrian community and FHWA's program guidance encouraged state DOTs to collaborate with all interested organizations and to leverage additional funds from related funding sources. With respect to targeting, as previously mentioned, the SRTS program has a provision under SAFETEA-LU—requiring the federal government to pay for 100 percent of project costs—that can protect low-income communities from being at a disadvantage when competing for funds since they do not have to provide matching funds to secure SRTS funding for a project. Furthermore, both FHWA and its SRTS partners (the national task force, the clearinghouse, the SRTS National Partnership, and NHTSA) have collectively taken a number of steps to identify and share best practices related to the program, including:

- disseminating the two publications "Safe Routes to School," a tool kit for implementing SRTS activities and "Safe Routes to School—Practices and Promises" both developed by NHTSA;
- sponsoring a national conference in 2007 to bring together practitioners and share lessons learned;
- promoting good principles for conducting an SRTS program, known as the "five Es", that include education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation;

[36]For example, see GAO-05-325SP.

- promoting and updating a national SRTS training course and the online SRTS training guide reflecting learned experiences;

- encouraging a unified evaluation approach using standardized data collection instruments to collect predata and postdata from local SRTS programs on the number of children walking and bicycling to school and parental attitudes toward these transportation modes; and

- developing draft strategies to further best practices, such as sharing operational successes, profiling creative SRTS approaches to inspire and advance SRTS programs nationwide, and providing standards for SRTS programs to ensure that funds are spent wisely.

Finally, the SRTS program has had more limited success in addressing the principles and criteria related to performance accountability. As discussed earlier in this report, FHWA encourages states to evaluate their SRTS program and the clearinghouse has developed some standardized data collection instruments to help collect basic information on program participants, but FHWA has not developed a comprehensive plan for evaluating SRTS program outcomes.

Conclusions

FHWA has made considerable progress in implementing the SRTS program. It has established the National Center for Safe Routes to School and National Safe Routes to School Task Force and successfully applied some criteria for addressing 21st Century Challenges. However, FHWA lacks a comprehensive plan for measuring the results of the program. Until a comprehensive plan is in place, it will be difficult to measure both national and local program outcomes and hold grantees accountable for their use of program funds. Developing these procedures is important as states complete more funding cycles and local grant recipients implement more SRTS activities. In addition, because some states have put SRTS program evaluations in place, FHWA will need to determine whether and how to incorporate these state evaluations into its overall evaluation effort. More importantly, as Congress prepares for the reauthorization of the federal surface transportation programs, comprehensive performance data will be critical in determining the relative contributions of the SRTS program. Furthermore, given that the SRTS program has expanded the federal transportation role into new areas, including childhood obesity and inactivity and traffic and environmental problems in the vicinity of schools, it will be important for FHWA and the states to try to evaluate whether the SRTS program has a positive impact in those areas. The clearinghouse has made an initial positive effort to talk with key stakeholders, including CDC and EPA, about appropriate measures for

health and environmental outcomes, but additional work is needed to determine the feasibility of developing these outcome measures. For example, it would be beneficial to formalize and enhance this emerging collaboration among the three federal agencies—DOT, CDC, and EPA—that have a common interest in SRTS outcomes. This collaboration may occur by forming a coordinating group that meets regularly, so that they can effectively work together to address the challenge of developing health and environmental outcome measures for the SRTS program. Finally, the SRTS program is unusual in that SAFETEA-LU sets the federal share of the cost of a SRTS project or activity at 100 percent, while most federal funds for federal-aid highway projects must be matched by funds from other state or local sources. Although some SRTS activities might be funded from multiple federal and other sources, the lack of a matching requirement may limit the program's ability to ensure that states use SRTS funds to supplement, rather than replace, state and local spending on similar programs. The national SRTS task force is considering including a recommendation in its forthcoming report to allow matching funds for infrastructure projects to leverage state and local spending, while protecting the ability of low-income areas to participate in the program.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To enhance the oversight of the SRTS program, we recommend that the Secretary of Transportation direct the Administrator, FHWA, to take the following two actions:

- Develop a comprehensive plan to monitor and evaluate the program. The plan should include the following three components:
  - an assessment of the extent to which states are currently evaluating the progress of their SRTS programs, and a determination of whether and how those state evaluations can be incorporated into FHWA's overall evaluation of the SRTS program;
  - a requirement that states collect data relevant for evaluating the SRTS program—which should be specified by FHWA—and that the required data be listed in grant agreements between the states and grantees;
  - reporting requirements and timeframes for FHWA's evaluation results; and
- Formalize collaborative efforts with the clearinghouse, CDC, and EPA to explore the feasibility of developing health and environmental outcome measures.

Matter for Congressional Consideration

To improve the likelihood that federal investment in the SRTS program will be used to supplement, rather than replace, state or local spending on similar activities, Congress should consider requiring a state or local match for the program, while possibly including provisions that would protect low-income communities from being at a disadvantage when competing for SRTS funds.

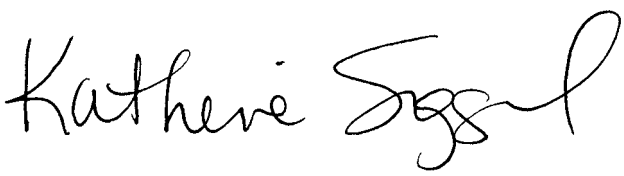
Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report to DOT for review and comment prior to finalizing the report. DOT generally agreed with the information and findings in the report and said that they are considering our recommendations. DOT noted that they thought it might be premature for the agency to add evaluation requirements at this time as part of a comprehensive plan. Nevertheless, we believe that since the SRTS program was established nearly 3 years ago, this is an appropriate time for DOT to develop a comprehensive evaluation plan. DOT also provided technical comments, which we incorporated, as appropriate.

We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees and to the Secretary of Transportation. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, this report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at http://www.gao.gov.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-2834 or siggerudk@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff that made key contributions to this report are listed in appendix III.

Sincerely yours,



Katherine Siggerud
Managing Director, Physical Infrastructure Issues

Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

To gather information related to all three objectives, we reviewed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the legislative history of the federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) SRTS program guidance. We also conducted a literature review to identify key health, safety, and environmental concerns the program is intended to address, including the relative risks of the different options to transport kids to and from school.

To identify the steps FHWA and states have taken to implement the SRTS program, we reviewed documentation describing SRTS implementation activities taking place nationwide, including the hiring status of the program coordinator, number of application cycle completed, and announced spending amounts for specific local and statewide SRTS projects. These documents included program tracking briefs from the clearinghouse which summarize key attributes from all programs, such as statewide spending and the number of schools participating in SRTS programs. In addition, we used data from FHWA on SRTS funding apportionments and obligations. To assess the reliability of the data in the tracking reports from the clearinghouse and FHWA's data on SRTS funding apportionments and obligations, we reviewed related documentation and interviewed knowledgeable agency officials about the quality of the data. As a result, we determined the data to be sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report. We also interviewed officials from FHWA, the clearinghouse, the national task force, and numerous national stakeholders familiar with health, safety, and environmental concerns, and SRTS program design and program implementation. These stakeholders were identified from a variety of sources, including the national task force membership list, contributors to SRTS program guidance, and a snowball sample approach in which key individuals were identified by those knowledgeable about SRTS. We also collected in-depth information from three states (California, Florida, and South Dakota) and the District of Columbia to obtain their views on the program's design, implementation, challenges, and results to date as applicable. To select states, we considered the coordinator status, status of application cycles, the number of local SRTS projects funded as of June 2007, and whether the state was previously involved in SRTS projects or related efforts. For balance, we selected two states with permanent coordinators that had completed at least one application cycle, funded local projects, previously been involved in SRTS projects or related activities, and had urban and rural grant recipients that we could interview in a single site visit and two other states that did not have permanent coordinators, had not completed an

application cycle as of June 2007, and had not funded local projects. During these site visits,[1] we interviewed FHWA division officials, state officials and local grant recipients, and state and local level stakeholders. We also obtained pertinent documentation such as copies of state applications and guidelines.

To assess the extent to which FHWA and states have evaluated the results of the SRTS program, we reviewed GAO standards for internal controls and performance evaluation to compare against FHWA's plans for monitoring program performance and measuring outcomes. In addition, we examined FHWA's evaluation methodology, including information from FHWA's program guidance, resources developed by the clearinghouse, and recommendations provided in the draft report from the national task force. These activities were supplemented by interviews with the FHWA Program Manager, the clearinghouse, and national stakeholders to garner more detailed information about evaluation efforts at the national level. As part of the site visits described above, we also identified evaluation plans at the state and local levels.

Lastly, to address the third objective regarding how the SRTS program relates to other surface transportation programs and some considerations for reauthorization, we spoke with agency officials and stakeholders described above and reviewed pertinent documentation to determine the extent to which the SRTS program is coordinated with other transportation programs that can potentially provide funding for SRTS activities. We also reviewed prior GAO reports on the economic aspects of federal matching requirements and GAO's body of work on 21st Century Challenges to identify criteria and principles for re-examining government transportation programs, including the SRTS program. We compared the practices of the SRTS program to some of these criteria and principles. Finally, we reviewed publicly available reports and other documents of various transportation groups to identify a range of views on national surface transportation priorities and the types of federal investments that best address those priorities.

We performed our review from August 2007 to July 2008 in accordance with generally accepted governmental auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained

[1]We conducted the interviews in California, Florida, and the District of Columbia in person and the interviews in South Dakota by telephone.

provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix II: SRTS Apportionments, by Fiscal Year

Dollars in millions

State	Actual 2005	Actual 2006[a]	Actual 2007	Actual 2008	Projected 2009[b]	Total
Alabama	$1,000,000	$1,313,659	$1,767,375	$2,199,717	$2,751,297	**$9,032,048**
Alaska	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Arizona	1,000,000	1,557,644	2,228,590	2,896,828	3,623,208	**11,306,270**
Arkansas	1,000,000	990,000	1,027,338	1,297,202	1,622,475	**5,937,015**
California	1,000,000	11,039,310	14,832,295	18,066,131	22,596,218	**67,533,954**
Colorado	1,000,000	1,254,403	1,679,463	2,119,802	2,651,342	**8,705,010**
Connecticut	1,000,000	998,325	1,332,573	1,617,319	2,022,862	**6,971,079**
Delaware	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
District of Columbia	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Florida	1,000,000	4,494,278	6,133,717	7,763,038	9,709,622	**29,100,655**
Georgia	1,000,000	2,578,305	3,499,747	4,487,050	5,612,178	**17,177,280**
Hawaii	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Idaho	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Illinois	1,000,000	3,729,568	4,934,826	6,049,154	7,565,980	**23,279,528**
Indiana	1,000,000	1,798,399	2,408,772	2,994,241	3,745,048	**11,946,460**
Iowa	1,000,000	990,000	1,084,775	1,339,951	1,675,945	**6,090,671**
Kansas	1,000,000	990,000	1,064,595	1,313,282	1,642,587	**6,010,464**
Kentucky	1,000,000	1,127,212	1,512,032	1,885,289	2,358,026	**7,882,559**
Louisiana	1,000,000	1,404,776	1,864,469	2,106,118	2,634,228	**9,009,591**
Maine	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Maryland	1,000,000	1,576,594	2,092,753	2,514,307	3,144,771	**10,328,425**
Massachusetts	1,000,000	1,752,904	2,293,605	2,771,492	3,466,445	**11,284,446**
Michigan	1,000,000	3,009,800	4,005,253	4,811,697	6,018,231	**18,844,981**
Minnesota	1,000,000	1,441,060	1,897,225	2,324,104	2,906,874	**9,569,263**
Mississippi	1,000,000	990,000	1,196,855	1,471,512	1,840,494	**6,498,861**
Missouri	1,000,000	1,620,703	2,146,792	2,646,419	3,310,009	**10,723,923**
Montana	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Nebraska	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,017,718	**5,007,718**
Nevada	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,152,500	1,441,489	**5,583,989**
New Hampshire	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
New Jersey	1,000,000	2,399,056	3,330,370	4,087,785	5,112,798	**15,930,009**
New Mexico	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,134,000	**5,124,000**

Dollars in millions

State	Actual 2005	Actual 2006[a]	Actual 2007	Actual 2008	Projected 2009[b]	Total
New York	1,000,000	5,114,558	6,894,554	8,280,423	10,356,742	**31,646,277**
North Carolina	1,000,000	2,333,556	3,175,243	4,050,525	5,066,196	**15,625,520**
North Dakota	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Ohio	1,000,000	3,295,093	4,339,214	5,299,892	6,628,841	**20,563,040**
Oklahoma	1,000,000	1,010,647	1,332,691	1,664,295	2,081,617	**7,089,250**
Oregon	1,000,000	990,000	1,242,468	1,543,621	1,930,684	**6,706,773**
Pennsylvania	1,000,000	3,345,128	4,430,549	5,436,148	6,799,263	**21,011,088**
Rhode Island	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
South Carolina	1,000,000	1,186,047	1,584,924	1,948,124	2,436,616	**8,155,711**
South Dakota	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Tennessee	1,000,000	1,596,222	2,158,074	2,700,824	3,378,056	**10,833,176**
Texas	1,000,000	7,009,094	9,408,067	12,114,991	15,152,828	**44,684,980**
Utah	1,000,000	990,000	1,063,690	1,365,995	1,708,519	**6,128,204**
Vermont	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Virginia	1,000,000	2,024,830	2,717,436	3,370,807	4,216,038	**13,329,111**
Washington	1,000,000	1,694,515	2,271,034	2,809,776	3,514,328	**11,289,653**
West Virginia	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
Wisconsin	1,000,000	1,554,314	2,048,636	2,499,641	3,126,427	**10,229,018**
Wyoming	1,000,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	**4,990,000**
All States	51,000,000	96,030,000	122,000,000	147,000,000	180,000,000	**596,030,000**
FHWA Admin Cost	3,000,000	2,970,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	**14,970,000**
Total	**$54,000,000**	**$99,000,000**	**$125,000,000**	**$150,000,000**	**$183,000,000**	**$611,000,000**

Source: FHWA.

[a]Due to a 1 percent across-the-board rescission of fiscal year 2006 funds, some allocations were less than $1 million.

[b]The apportionment for fiscal year 2009 was projected using the fiscal year 2008 factors. The official apportionment for fiscal year 2009 will be based on the latest available data; consequently, the actual apportionment for fiscal year 2009 may differ from the estimate presented here.

Appendix III: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Katherine Siggerud, (202) 512-2834 or siggerudk@gao.gov

Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Rita Grieco (Assistant Director) Derrick Collins, Colin Fallon, Bert Japikse, Brandon Wheeler, and Tracy Williams made key contributions to this report.

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