



Legislative
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FISCAL NOTE

Drafting Number: LLS 19-0528
Prime Sponsors: Rep. McKean

Date: January 21, 2019
Bill Status: House Trans. & Local Govt.
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Bill Topic: REQUIRE TRAFFIC SIGNALS CYCLE YELLOW BEFORE GREEN

Summary of Fiscal Impact:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Revenue (<i>minimal</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

The bill requires traffic control signals to signal yellow before signaling green. The bill increases state and local government expenditures and potentially revenue beginning in FY 2023-24.

Appropriation Summary: No appropriation is required.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under HB 19-1072

	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2023-24
Revenue	-	-	-
Expenditures State Highway Fund	-	-	\$4,128,440
Transfers	-	-	-
TABOR Refund	-	-	-

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, traffic control signals (traffic lights) display a yellow signal before changing to a red signal to caution drivers and pedestrians that traffic will stop. This bill requires that traffic lights also display a yellow signal before changing to a green signal to indicate to drivers and pedestrians that traffic will soon be moving. The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.

Background

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is primarily funded from the State Highway Fund (SHF), which is comprised of federal funds, the state's share of the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF), and other various sources of revenue. The decision-making authority for the majority of state transportation revenue rests with the Transportation Commission, which is responsible for allocating funds from the SHF.

Federal regulations establish minimum traffic light standards. See Technical Note.

Data and Assumptions

CDOT maintains 900 traffic lights. It is indeterminate how many traffic lights are maintained by local governments.

State Revenue

To the extent that more penalties are assessed for failure to comply with traffic lights beginning in FY 2023-24, this bill is anticipated to minimally increase revenue to the HUTF, of which 65 percent goes to the SHF in CDOT. The bill may also minimally increase revenue to the Judicial Department from court fees and surcharges.

State Expenditures

In FY 2023-24, the bill will increase expenditures in CDOT by approximately \$4.1 million, as shown in Table 2 and discussed below. Funding from the SHF is allocated by the Transportation Commission, which will reallocate any funds that result from an increase in CDOT expenditures.

Table 2
Expenditures Under HB 19-1072

	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2023-24
Department of Transportation			
Labor and Equipment			\$2,098,440
Computer Programming			\$1,080,000
Public Education Campaign			\$950,000
Total Cost			\$4,128,440

In FY 2023-24, the bill will increase expenditures in CDOT by \$4.1 million. These expenditures are outlined below.

- *Labor and equipment.* To meet the requirements of the bill, it is assumed CDOT will need to update 900 traffic lights at a cost of \$2.1 million. It is assumed that each traffic light change requires a bucket truck, two technicians, and upgraded equipment. It is expected to take 8 hours of work for each light at a cost of \$300 per bucket truck, \$120 per hour for technicians, and \$1,500 for equipment. This fiscal note assumes that several traffic lights can be updated in one day.
- *Computer programming.* The bill will increase expenditures for CDOT by \$1.1 million to modify 900 traffic lights. It is expected to take 8 hours of work for each light at a cost of \$150 per hour.
- *Public education campaign.* The bill will increase expenditures in CDOT by \$950,000 to educate the public about traffic lights changes. These costs are based on expenditures for similar CDOT public safety campaigns.

Federal funding. In future fiscal years, if the Federal Highway Administration determines that the state is out of compliance with federal traffic safety regulations as a result of this bill, expenditure decreases or a reallocation of federal funds may occur in CDOT.

Local Government

Beginning in FY 2023-24, this bill will increase local government revenues and expenditures, as discussed below.

HUTF fine revenue. The bill may minimally increase local government HUTF revenue beginning in FY 2023-24. HUTF revenue generated by traffic fines is distributed to counties (26 percent) and municipalities (9 percent) for transportation needs.

Expenditures. Similar to the state, local government expenditures will increase to modify traffic lights. Because it is indeterminate how many traffic lights are maintained by local governments, increases will vary by jurisdiction and have not been estimated.

Technical Note

Federal law regulates traffic lights on all public roadways through the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD), with which states must substantially comply. State law requires CDOT to adopt regulations that correlate with and conform to the federal MUTCD. The current MUTCD does not allow a yellow signal to be displayed with the change from a red signal to a green signal.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect July 1, 2023, unless no referendum petition is filed.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties Information Technology Municipalities Transportation