

Date of Hearing: May 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2015 (Wicks) – As Amended April 14, 2026

Policy Committee: Transportation

Vote: 13 - 1

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in consultation with the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and local authorities, to conduct a comprehensive study on the impact of third-party navigation applications on the state highway system and local street and road networks.

The bill requires the study to specifically analyze:

- Congestion displacement, analyzed by determining the extent to which third-party navigation applications shift congestion from state highways to local streets and the resulting changes in vehicle miles traveled.
- Local infrastructure impact, analyzed by determining the physical toll of increased traffic volumes associated with third-party navigation applications on local road pavement conditions, and related effects on maintenance costs.
- Safety metrics, analyzed by evaluating traffic safety on local roads affected by traffic diversion associated with third-party navigation applications, including changes in collision rates, near-miss incidents, and impacts on existing “slow streets” or pedestrian heavy zones.
- Emergency response, analyzed by determining the effect of traffic diversion associated with third-party navigation applications on the response times of police, fire, and emergency medical services.

The bill also requires Caltrans, by January 1, 2028, to submit the study to the relevant fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature and a report, based on the findings of the study, that includes policy recommendations for regulatory or legislative action to improve the alignment between third-party navigation applications and state and local traffic management goals.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

This bill creates significant new analytical work of Caltrans and, to a much lesser extent, CalSTA and local authorities. Caltrans is not able to provide a cost estimate; however, it describes the costs to comply with the bill as “significant,” because of what Caltrans describes as the bill’s “comprehensive nature” and “limited timeline for delivery.” Caltrans further asserts it

does not have in-house staffing or resources needed to perform this work and would likely need to contract with a specialized vendor in transportation and public engagement. (State Highway Account.)

**COMMENTS:**

Navigation apps are ubiquitous. Very often, such apps rely on crowd-sourced information fed in to the app by users, which the app uses to recommend less-congested routes back to those same users. Many times, the less-congested routes recommended by the apps are side streets that traverse residential and commercial districts. This phenomenon is sometimes known as “congestion displacement.” Bill proponent, Streets for All, contends congestion displacement “can have unintended consequences on local communities and the broader transportation system” by directing drivers to streets and routes “that may not be designed to accommodate increased traffic volumes, leading to safety concerns, infrastructure strain, and conflicts with local traffic management strategies.” The author intends this bill to lead to a better understanding of the effect of such apps on safety and related issues.

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