

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2021-144

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3 REQUESTING THAT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
4 CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON A HIGHWAY 278 BYPASS OF HISTORIC  
5 WASHINGTON STATE PARK.  
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7 WHEREAS, Historic Washington State Park located in Washington,  
8 Arkansas, was established as a period village modeled after Colonial  
9 Williamsburg, Virginia; and  
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11 WHEREAS, Historic Washington State Park has severely restricted  
12 vehicular access to the historic core of the Historic Washington State Park;  
13 and  
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15 WHEREAS, Highway 278 bisects Historic Washington State Park, hindering  
16 pedestrian circulation and creating the potential for pedestrian-vehicle  
17 accidents; and  
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19 WHEREAS, Highway 278 impacts the operations of Historic Washington  
20 State Park; specifically, both visitors and employees are sometimes required  
21 to cross the highway to travel across the Historic Washington State Park; and  
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23 WHEREAS, in 1974, the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism proposed  
24 a bypass to the west of Washington, Arkansas, for safe pedestrian circulation  
25 in Historic Washington State Park; and  
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27 WHEREAS, in 2017, state and local officials continued to express their  
28 concern about traffic and safety on Highway 278, and the State Highway  
29 Commission conducted a Highway 278 bypass feasibility study; and  
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31 WHEREAS, a bypass alternative and two other alternatives were developed  
32 by the State Highway Commission to address the identified need; and  
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34 WHEREAS, the State Highway Commission determined the bypass is a  
35 feasible way to address pedestrian safety and allow the Historic Washington  
36 State Park to proceed with future development; and

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WHEREAS, the bypass would provide minimal benefits to the state highway system; and

WHEREAS, the estimated cost of construction for the bypass is \$9.2 million; and

WHEREAS, the State Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission passed a motion at their April 22, 2022, meeting requesting that the Arkansas Department of Transportation update the 2017 feasibility study of constructing a Highway 278 bypass of Historic Washington State Park; and

WHEREAS, on April 27, 2022, the State Highway Commission has authorized the Arkansas Department of Transportation to reassess the need for and the feasibility of a bypass around Historic Washington State Park,

NOW THEREFORE,  
BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the House Committee on Public Transportation conduct a study to determine how to provide the funds needed for the Highway 278 bypass of Historic Washington State Park.

Respectfully submitted,  
  
Representative Danny Watson  
District 3

Prepared by: DTP/DTP