

HB 181-FN-A - AS INTRODUCED

2025 SESSION

25-0163

06/08

HOUSE BILL ***181-FN-A***

AN ACT relative to making the state responsible for maintaining Opticom systems for fire and emergency on state roads and making an appropriation therefor.

SPONSORS: Rep. Proulx, Hills. 15

COMMITTEE: Public Works and Highways

ANALYSIS

This bill expands the department of transportation's responsibility to include the maintenance of traffic signal preemption technology and makes an appropriation therefor.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears ~~in brackets and struckthrough~~.
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT relative to making the state responsible for maintaining Opticom systems for fire and emergency on state roads and making an appropriation therefor.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Division of Operations and Traffic Signal Preemption Technology Maintenance. Amend RSA
2 21-L:10, II to read as follows:

3 II. Maintenance of department equipment ***and traffic signal preemption technology***
4 ***systems used for emergency vehicles, including the Opticom traffic control system.***

5 2 Appropriation; Department of Transportation.

6 I. The sum of \$1 is hereby appropriated to the department of transportation for the fiscal
7 year ending June 30, 2027, which shall be nonlapsing and expended for the purposes of funding
8 maintenance of the traffic signal preemption technology systems used for emergency vehicles. The
9 governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sum out of any money in the treasury not
10 otherwise appropriated.

11 II. The department of transportation shall include in its biennial budget request under RSA
12 9:4 funding for any administrative costs related to the maintenance of the traffic signal preemption
13 technology systems used for emergency vehicles.

14 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

**HB 181-FN-A- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT relative to making the state responsible for maintaining Opticom systems for fire and emergency on state roads and making an appropriation therefor.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding, nor does it authorize new positions.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	\$419,000	\$313,000	\$257,000
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	Highway Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$1	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			

***Expenditure = Cost of bill**

***Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill**

METHODOLOGY:

This bill states that the Department of Transportation shall become responsible for the maintenance of traffic signal preemptions systems for emergency vehicles effective July 1, 2025. The Department has provided the following assumptions for the proposed maintenance program and estimated costs:

- Due to existing signal maintenance workload and limited staff resources, efforts to bring existing signal preemption systems online and then to maintain them will require the addition of a fifth signal maintenance crew in addition to the existing four crews. A crew will consist of two (2) technicians, one (1) signal maintenance truck with aerial lift, and associated tools. This additional crew will have the same capabilities as the existing crews and will not be dedicated to signal preemption. Instead, all crews will have the capability of signal preemption work (critical so that any on-call technician can address preemption). However, the additional crew will allow for the increased workload of preemption to be distributed to the work unit without reducing capacity for existing workload.
- Emergency vehicle mounted emitters remain the responsibility of the emergency service agency since emitter choices, mounting, and initiation method varies from vehicle to vehicle. The Department would coordinate to ensure the emitters are compatible with the fixed portions of the preemption systems.

- The Department would only install Optical Infrared Strobe detection systems (Opticom or Tomar). Municipalities would be responsible for installing and maintaining more advanced system (i.e., GPS activation devices), if desired.
- The Department could potentially benefit from a consistent preemption system throughout the various signalized intersections to allow preemption for lower priority vehicles/tasks like transit, snow removal, and road marking, with emergency vehicles taking priority. Additional costs specific to these lower priority uses are not included in this analysis.
- The Department maintains 435 signalized intersections, all of which have or will have preemption systems. Preemption system replacement is approximately \$6,400 per intersection and has a 15-year life expectancy.
- Many signalized intersections have non-functional existing preemption systems or approaches, necessitating substantial initial investments for repairs.
- FY 2026 and FY 2027 will include an additional \$60,000 per year to make existing systems operational at all intersections. The restoration effort will be spread over two fiscal years.
- FY 2026 through FY 2028 (and beyond) will include an estimated annual equipment replacement of approximately \$100,000 per year as an ongoing cost.
- Due to Department staffing challenges that hinder its ability to maintain emergency preemption systems, additional personnel, a vehicle, and associated tools and equipment are required and included in the estimate starting FY 2026. Replacement vehicle and equipment are assumed to be necessary beyond FY 2028 and are not included.

The following is a summary of this bill's estimated costs:

Description	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Initial restoration of systems	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$0
Annual repair/replacement equipment costs	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Additional staff (2 technicians, salary & benefits)	\$144,000	\$152,000	\$156,000
Additional vehicle (\$110,000 in FY 2026), equipment and other crew costs	\$115,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Totals	\$419,000	\$313,000	\$257,000

It should be noted this bill provides only \$1 in funding and no authorization for new positions. The requirement in this bill for the Department to include funding for administrative costs related to the maintenance of the traffic signal preemption technology systems used for

emergency vehicles would not apply until the FY 2028 – FY 2029 biennium, since the agency budget requests for the FY 2026 – FY 2027 biennium were published October 1, 2024.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Transportation