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The bill will facilitate increased vanpooling by permitting local governments to take advantage of federal transit dollars to leverage private capital investment. It permits vanpool providers to use their capital investment to qualify for the required local match of federal funds.

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capital investment to qualify for the required local match of federal funds.

The legislation also allows the vanpool provider to recoup the value of the local match from fare revenue collected over the useful life of the van. This pool of replenished capital must then be invested to expand vanpool services in the same community. This legislation will permit vanpools to receive similar treatment to other transit modes.

“Vanpooling is an important alternative to single passenger driving, and this legislation will encourage greater use of vanpooling by leveraging private capital,” Rep. Ellen Tauscher said. “Since the vast majority of passenger vans are only manufactured by domestic automakers, this bill will boost our economy at an important time. As a result of more vanpooling, we will conserve more than 750 million gallons of fuel over the next six years. This bill is a smart way to reduce congestion, protect the environment and boost the economy.”

“Americans deserve more choices in how they commute to work. Our bill would make vanpooling a more credible option for many more Americans, and it has the added benefit of encouraging the purchase of American made automobiles, in particular vans. I am also delighted to have the support of Ford Motor Company,” Rep. Rogers said.

“Many of the commuters in the Bay Area travel long distances to get to work and vanpools are an important option. It is more affordable than most other travel modes, reduces the number of cars on the road, and also reduces greenhouse gas emissions in the process. In an era where the general public is looking for innovative solutions to reduce public financing for transportation, this bill will provide improved public-private partnership opportunities for commuter vanpool programs,” Lynn Osborn, Overcashier, Program Manager at 511 Contra Costa, said.