

H. R. 2095
One Hundred Tenth Congress
of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

***Begun and held at the City of Washington on Thursday,
the third day of January, two thousand and eight***

An Act

To amend title 49, United States Code, to prevent railroad fatalities, injuries, and hazardous materials releases, to authorize the Federal Railroad Safety Administration, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SEC. 203. IMPROVEMENTS TO SIGHT DISTANCE AT HIGHWAY-RAIL
GRADE CROSSINGS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 201, as amended by section 105 of this division, is further amended by inserting after section 20158 the following:

**“§ 20159. Roadway user sight distance at highway-rail grade
Crossings**

“Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008, the Secretary, after consultation with the Federal Railroad Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and States, shall develop and make available to States model legislation providing for improving safety by addressing sight obstructions, including vegetation growth, topographic features, structures, and standing railroad equipment, at highway-rail grade crossings that are equipped solely with passive warnings, as recommended by the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation in Report No. MH–2007–044.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The chapter analysis for chapter 201, as amended by section 105 of this division, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 20158 the following new item:

“20159. Roadway user sight distance at highway-rail grade crossings.”.

SEC. 204. NATIONAL CROSSING INVENTORY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 201, as amended by section 203 of this division, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 20160. National crossing inventory

“(a) INITIAL REPORTING OF INFORMATION ABOUT PREVIOUSLY UNREPORTED CROSSINGS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 or 6 H. R. 2095—23

months after a new crossing becomes operational, whichever occurs later, each railroad carrier shall—

“(1) report to the Secretary of Transportation current information, including information about warning devices and signage, as specified by the Secretary, concerning each previously unreported crossing through which it operates or with respect to the trackage over which it operates; or

“(2) ensure that the information has been reported to the Secretary by another railroad carrier that operates through the crossing.

“(b) UPDATING OF CROSSING INFORMATION.—

“(1) On a periodic basis beginning not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 and on or before September 30 of every year thereafter, or as otherwise specified by the Secretary, each railroad carrier shall—

“(A) report to the Secretary current information, including information about warning devices and signage, as specified by the Secretary, concerning each crossing through which it operates or with respect to the trackage over which it operates; or

“(B) ensure that the information has been reported to the Secretary by another railroad carrier that operates through the crossing.

“(2) A railroad carrier that sells a crossing or any part of a crossing on or after the date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 shall, not later than the date that is 18 months after the date of enactment of that Act or 3 months after the sale, whichever occurs later, or as otherwise specified by the Secretary, report to the Secretary current information, as specified by the Secretary, concerning the change in ownership of the crossing or part of the crossing.

“(c) RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall prescribe the regulations necessary to implement this section. The Secretary may enforce each provision of the Department of Transportation’s statement of the national highway-rail crossing inventory policy, procedures, and instruction for States and railroads that is in effect on the date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008, until such provision is superseded by a regulation issued under this section.

“(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CROSSING.—The term ‘crossing’ means a location within a State, other than a location where one or more railroad tracks cross one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated, where—

“(A) a public highway, road, or street, or a private roadway, including associated sidewalks and pathways, crosses one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated; or

“(B) a pathway explicitly authorized by a public authority or a railroad carrier that is dedicated for the use of nonvehicular traffic, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and others, that is not associated with a public highway, road, or street, or a private roadway, crosses one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated.

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“(2) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The chapter analysis for chapter 201, as amended by section 203 of this division, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 20159 the following: “20160. National crossing inventory.”.

(c) REPORTING AND UPDATING.—Section 130 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(l) NATIONAL CROSSING INVENTORY.—

“(1) INITIAL REPORTING OF CROSSING INFORMATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 or within 6 months of a new crossing becoming operational, whichever occurs later, each State shall report to the Secretary of Transportation current information, including information about warning devices and signage, as specified by the Secretary, concerning each previously unreported public crossing located within its borders.

“(2) PERIODIC UPDATING OF CROSSING INFORMATION.—On a periodic basis beginning not later than 2 years after the

date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 and on or before September 30 of every year thereafter, or as otherwise specified by the Secretary, each State shall report to the Secretary current information, including information about warning devices and signage, as specified by the Secretary, concerning each public crossing located within its borders.

“(3) RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall prescribe the regulations necessary to implement this subsection.

The Secretary may enforce each provision of the Department of Transportation’s statement of the national highway-rail crossing inventory policy, procedures, and instructions for States and railroads that is in effect on the date of enactment of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008, until such provision is superseded by a regulation issued under this subsection.

“(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

“(A) ‘public crossing’ means a location within a State, other than a location where one or more railroad tracks cross one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated, where—

“(i) a public highway, road, or street, including associated sidewalks and pathways, crosses one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated; or

“(ii) a publicly owned pathway explicitly authorized by a public authority or a railroad carrier and dedicated for the use of non-vehicular traffic, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and others, that is not associated with a public highway, road, or street, or a private roadway, crosses one or more railroad tracks either at grade or grade-separated; and

“(B) ‘State’ means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico.”.

(d) CIVIL PENALTIES.—

(1) Section 21301(a)(1) is amended—

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(A) by inserting “with section 20160 or” after “comply” in the first sentence; and

(B) by inserting “section 20160 of this title or” after “violating” in the second sentence.

(2) Section 21301(a)(2) is amended by inserting “The Secretary shall impose a civil penalty for a violation of section 20160 of this title.” after the first sentence.