

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 955

To require the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Highway Administration to provide recommendations for reducing the number of very rural highway-rail grade crossing collisions, to authorize a public outreach and educational program to reduce such collisions, and to authorize grants to improve grade crossing safety.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 24, 2021

Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To require the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Highway Administration to provide recommendations for reducing the number of very rural highway-rail grade crossing collisions, to authorize a public outreach and educational program to reduce such collisions, and to authorize grants to improve grade crossing safety.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Right Track Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Collisions at nonsignalized highway-rail
4 grade crossings continue to lead to fatalities in very
5 rural areas.

6 (2) In States with extensive rail infrastructure,
7 additional information for protecting grade crossings
8 would be valuable to the general public, State and
9 local governments, and rail operators.

10 **SEC. 3. RECOMMENDATIONS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal
12 Railroad Administration and the Administrator of the
13 Federal Highway Administration, after consultation with
14 railroads, technology developers, manufacturers, relevant
15 State and local agencies, institutions of higher education,
16 and law enforcement agencies, shall jointly provide rec-
17 ommendations for reducing the number of collisions at
18 highway-rail grade crossings in counties with 10 or fewer
19 residents per square mile (according to the most recent
20 decennial census) to—

21 (1) the Committee on Appropriations of the
22 Senate;

23 (2) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and
24 Transportation of the Senate;

25 (3) the Committee on Appropriations of the
26 House of Representatives;

1 (4) the Committee on Transportation and In-
2 frastructure of the House of Representatives;

3 (5) stakeholders involved in consultations under
4 this subsection; and

5 (6) the general public.

6 (b) USE OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Administra-
7 tors shall use the recommendations referred to in sub-
8 section (a) to provide technical assistance to States seek-
9 ing to make rail safety infrastructure improvements.

10 **SEC. 4. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION.**

11 The Administrator of the Federal Railroad Adminis-
12 tration and the Administrator of the Federal Highway Ad-
13 ministration shall jointly conduct a public outreach and
14 educational initiative, in cooperation with Operation Life-
15 saver, to reduce collisions at public highway-rail grade
16 crossings in counties with 10 or fewer residents per square
17 mile that includes multimedia resources, including re-
18 sources that are not available online.

19 **SEC. 5. GRADE CROSSING SAFETY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.**

20 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Transpor-
21 tation shall use amounts set aside pursuant to subsection
22 (c) for grants to eligible recipients (as described in section
23 22907(b) of title 49, United States Code) to improve
24 grade crossing safety in counties with 10 or fewer resi-
25 dents per square mile. The Secretary shall prioritize the

1 projects receiving grants under this subsection in accord-
2 ance with the criteria set forth in section 22907(e) of title
3 49, United States Code.

4 (b) PRIORITY.—In selecting grant recipients under
5 subsection (a), the Secretary shall prioritize projects based
6 on the application of the hazard indices and accident pre-
7 diction formulae described in the Federal Highway Admin-
8 istration’s Highway-Rail Crossing Handbook

9 (c) FUNDING.—During each of the fiscal years 2022
10 through 2026, \$10,000,000 of the amounts appropriated
11 for grants under section 22907 of title 49, United States
12 Code, shall be set aside for grants authorized under sub-
13 section (a). The set aside required under this subsection
14 shall not overlap with the rural set aside required under
15 subsection (g) of such section 22907.

16 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date
17 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transpor-
18 tation shall submit a report to the Committee on Com-
19 merce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the
20 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the
21 House of Representatives that describes the implementa-
22 tion of this section.

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