

AN ACT concerning transportation.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Illinois Vehicle Code is amended by changing Section 18c-7401 as follows:

(625 ILCS 5/18c-7401) (from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 18c-7401)

Sec. 18c-7401. Safety Requirements for Track, Facilities, and Equipment.

(1) General Requirements. Each rail carrier shall, consistent with rules, orders, and regulations of the Federal Railroad Administration, construct, maintain, and operate all of its equipment, track, and other property in this State in such a manner as to pose no undue risk to its employees or the person or property of any member of the public.

(2) Adoption of Federal Standards. The track safety standards and accident/incident standards promulgated by the Federal Railroad Administration shall be safety standards of the Commission. The Commission may, in addition, adopt by reference in its regulations other federal railroad safety standards, whether contained in federal statutes or in regulations adopted pursuant to such statutes.

(3) Railroad Crossings. No public road, highway, or street shall hereafter be constructed across the track of any rail

carrier at grade, nor shall the track of any rail carrier be constructed across a public road, highway or street at grade, without having first secured the permission of the Commission; provided, that this Section shall not apply to the replacement of lawfully existing roads, highways and tracks. No public pedestrian bridge or subway shall be constructed across the track of any rail carrier without having first secured the permission of the Commission. The Commission shall have the right to refuse its permission or to grant it upon such terms and conditions as it may prescribe. The Commission shall have power to determine and prescribe the manner, including the particular point of crossing, and the terms of installation, operation, maintenance, use and protection of each such crossing.

The Commission shall also have power, after a hearing, to require major alteration of or to abolish any crossing, heretofore or hereafter established, when in its opinion, the public safety requires such alteration or abolition, and, except in cities, villages and incorporated towns of 1,000,000 or more inhabitants, to vacate and close that part of the highway on such crossing altered or abolished and cause barricades to be erected across such highway in such manner as to prevent the use of such crossing as a highway, when, in the opinion of the Commission, the public convenience served by the crossing in question is not such as to justify the further retention thereof; or to require a separation of grades, at

railroad-highway grade crossings; or to require a separation of grades at any proposed crossing where a proposed public highway may cross the tracks of any rail carrier or carriers; and to prescribe, after a hearing of the parties, the terms upon which such separations shall be made and the proportion in which the expense of the alteration or abolition of such crossings or the separation of such grades, having regard to the benefits, if any, accruing to the rail carrier or any party in interest, shall be divided between the rail carrier or carriers affected, or between such carrier or carriers and the State, county, municipality or other public authority in interest. However, a public hearing by the Commission to abolish a crossing shall not be required when the public highway authority in interest vacates the highway. In such instance the rail carrier, following notification to the Commission and the highway authority, shall remove any grade crossing warning devices and the grade crossing surface.

The Commission shall also have power by its order to require the reconstruction, minor alteration, minor relocation or improvement of any crossing (including the necessary highway approaches thereto) of any railroad across any highway or public road, pedestrian bridge, or pedestrian subway, whether such crossing be at grade or by overhead structure or by subway, whenever the Commission finds after a hearing or without a hearing as otherwise provided in this paragraph that such reconstruction, alteration, relocation or improvement is

necessary to preserve or promote the safety or convenience of the public or of the employees or passengers of such rail carrier or carriers. By its original order or supplemental orders in such case, the Commission may direct such reconstruction, alteration, relocation, or improvement to be made in such manner and upon such terms and conditions as may be reasonable and necessary and may apportion the cost of such reconstruction, alteration, relocation or improvement and the subsequent maintenance thereof, having regard to the benefits, if any, accruing to the railroad or any party in interest, between the rail carrier or carriers and public utilities affected, or between such carrier or carriers and public utilities and the State, county, municipality or other public authority in interest. The cost to be so apportioned shall include the cost of changes or alterations in the equipment of public utilities affected as well as the cost of the relocation, diversion or establishment of any public highway, made necessary by such reconstruction, alteration, relocation or improvement of said crossing. A hearing shall not be required in those instances when the Commission enters an order confirming a written stipulation in which the Commission, the public highway authority or other public authority in interest, the rail carrier or carriers affected, and in instances involving the use of the Grade Crossing Protection Fund, the Illinois Department of Transportation, agree on the reconstruction, alteration, relocation, or improvement and the

subsequent maintenance thereof and the division of costs of such changes of any grade crossing (including the necessary highway approaches thereto) of any railroad across any highway, pedestrian bridge, or pedestrian subway.

Every rail carrier operating in the State of Illinois shall construct and maintain every highway crossing over its tracks within the State so that the roadway at the intersection shall be as flush with the rails as superelevated curves will allow, and, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission, shall construct and maintain the approaches thereto at a grade of not more than 5% within the right of way for a distance of not less than 6 feet on each side of the centerline of such tracks; provided, that the grades at the approaches may be maintained in excess of 5% only when authorized by the Commission.

Every rail carrier operating within this State shall remove from its right of way at all railroad-highway grade crossings within the State, such brush, shrubbery, and trees as is reasonably practical for a distance of not less than 500 feet in either direction from each grade crossing. The Commission shall have power, upon its own motion, or upon complaint, and after having made proper investigation, to require the installation of adequate and appropriate luminous reflective warning signs, luminous flashing signals, crossing gates illuminated at night, or other protective devices in order to promote and safeguard the health and safety of the public. Luminous flashing signal or crossing gate devices installed at

grade crossings, which have been approved by the Commission, shall be deemed adequate and appropriate. The Commission shall have authority to determine the number, type, and location of such signs, signals, gates, or other protective devices which, however, shall conform as near as may be with generally recognized national standards, and the Commission shall have authority to prescribe the division of the cost of the installation and subsequent maintenance of such signs, signals, gates, or other protective devices between the rail carrier or carriers, the public highway authority or other public authority in interest, and in instances involving the use of the Grade Crossing Protection Fund, the Illinois Department of Transportation. Except where train crews provide flagging of the crossing to road users, yield signs shall be installed at all highway intersections with every grade crossing in this State that is not equipped with automatic warning devices, such as luminous flashing signals or crossing gate devices. A stop sign may be used in lieu of the yield sign when an engineering study conducted in cooperation with the highway authority and the Illinois Department of Transportation has determined that a stop sign is warranted. If the Commission has ordered the installation of luminous flashing signal or crossing gate devices at a grade crossing not equipped with active warning devices, the Commission shall order the installation of temporary stop signs at the highway intersection with the grade crossing unless an engineering

study has determined that a stop sign is not appropriate. If a stop sign is not appropriate, the Commission may order the installation of other appropriate supplemental signing as determined by an engineering study. The temporary ~~stop~~ signs shall remain in place until the luminous flashing signal or crossing gate devices have been installed. The rail carrier is responsible for ~~the cost of~~ the installation and subsequent maintenance of any required ~~temporary stop~~ signs. The permanent signs shall be in place by July 1, 2011.

No railroad may change or modify the warning device system at a railroad-highway grade crossing, including warning systems interconnected with highway traffic control signals, without having first received the approval of the Commission. The Commission shall have the further power, upon application, upon its own motion, or upon complaint and after having made proper investigation, to require the interconnection of grade crossing warning devices with traffic control signals at highway intersections located at or near railroad crossings within the distances described by the State Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices adopted pursuant to Section 11-301 of this Code. In addition, State and local authorities may not install, remove, modernize, or otherwise modify traffic control signals at a highway intersection that is interconnected or proposed to be interconnected with grade crossing warning devices when the change affects the number, type, or location of traffic control devices on the track

approach leg or legs of the intersection or the timing of the railroad preemption sequence of operation until the Commission has approved the installation, removal, modernization, or modification. Commission approval shall be limited to consideration of issues directly affecting the public safety at the railroad-highway grade crossing. The electrical circuit devices, alternate warning devices, and preemption sequences shall conform as nearly as possible, considering the particular characteristics of the crossing and intersection area, to the State manual adopted by the Illinois Department of Transportation pursuant to Section 11-301 of this Code and such federal standards as are made applicable by subsection (2) of this Section. In order to carry out this authority, the Commission shall have the authority to determine the number, type, and location of traffic control devices on the track approach leg or legs of the intersection and the timing of the railroad preemption sequence of operation. The Commission shall prescribe the division of costs for installation and maintenance of all devices required by this paragraph between the railroad or railroads and the highway authority in interest and in instances involving the use of the Grade Crossing Protection Fund or a State highway, the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Any person who unlawfully or maliciously removes, throws down, damages or defaces any sign, signal, gate or other protective device, located at or near any public grade



crossing, shall be guilty of a petty offense and fined not less than \$50 nor more than \$200 for each offense. In addition to fines levied under the provisions of this Section a person adjudged guilty hereunder may also be directed to make restitution for the costs of repair or replacement, or both, necessitated by his misconduct.

It is the public policy of the State of Illinois to enhance public safety by establishing safe grade crossings. In order to implement this policy, the Illinois Commerce Commission is directed to conduct public hearings and to adopt specific criteria by July 1, 1994, that shall be adhered to by the Illinois Commerce Commission in determining if a grade crossing should be opened or abolished. The following factors shall be considered by the Illinois Commerce Commission in developing the specific criteria for opening and abolishing grade crossings:

- (a) timetable speed of passenger trains;
- (b) distance to an alternate crossing;
- (c) accident history for the last 5 years;
- (d) number of vehicular traffic and posted speed limits;
- (e) number of freight trains and their timetable speeds;
- (f) the type of warning device present at the grade crossing;
- (g) alignments of the roadway and railroad, and the

angle of intersection of those alignments;

(h) use of the grade crossing by trucks carrying hazardous materials, vehicles carrying passengers for hire, and school buses; and

(i) use of the grade crossing by emergency vehicles.

The Illinois Commerce Commission, upon petition to open or abolish a grade crossing, shall enter an order opening or abolishing the crossing if it meets the specific criteria adopted by the Commission.

Except as otherwise provided in this subsection (3), in no instance shall a grade crossing be permanently closed without public hearing first being held and notice of such hearing being published in an area newspaper of local general circulation.

(4) Freight Trains - Radio Communications. The Commission shall after hearing and order require that every main line railroad freight train operating on main tracks outside of yard limits within this State shall be equipped with a radio communication system. The Commission after notice and hearing may grant exemptions from the requirements of this Section as to secondary and branch lines.

(5) Railroad Bridges and Trestles - Walkway and Handrail. In cases in which the Commission finds the same to be practical and necessary for safety of railroad employees, bridges and trestles, over and upon which railroad trains are operated, shall include as a part thereof, a safe and suitable walkway

and handrail on one side only of such bridge or trestle, and such handrail shall be located at the outer edge of the walkway and shall provide a clearance of not less than 8 feet, 6 inches, from the center line of the nearest track, measured at right angles thereto.

(6) Packages Containing Articles for First Aid to Injured on Trains. All rail carriers shall provide a package containing the articles prescribed by the Commission, on each train or engine, for first aid to persons who may be injured in the course of the operation of such trains.

(7) Abandoned Bridges, Crossings, and Other Rail Plant. The Commission shall have authority, after notice and hearing, to order:

(a) The removal of any abandoned railroad tracks from roads, streets or other thoroughfares in this State; and

(b) The removal of abandoned overhead railroad structures crossing highways, waterways, or railroads.

The Commission may equitably apportion the cost of such actions between the rail carrier or carriers, public utilities, and the State, county, municipality, township, road district, or other public authority in interest.

(8) Railroad-Highway Bridge Clearance. A vertical clearance of not less than 23 feet above the top of rail shall be provided for all new or reconstructed highway bridges constructed over a railroad track. The Commission may permit a lesser clearance if it determines that the 23 foot clearance

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standard cannot be justified based on engineering,  
operational, and economic conditions.

(Source: P.A. 93-604, eff. 11-21-03.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
becoming law.