

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Transportation

BILL: SB 1310

INTRODUCER: Senator Rodriguez

SUBJECT: Railroad Safety

DATE: February 9, 2026

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Johnson	Vickers	TR	Pre-meeting
2.			ATD	
3.			FP	

I. Summary:

SB 1310 requires a governmental entity with jurisdiction over or maintenance responsibility for a road on which a railroad-highway grade crossing is being established, updated, or modified to install and maintain specified detection and monitoring equipment at each crossing.

The bill requires the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to adopt rules establishing standards and criteria for such systems and provides minimum technology requirements for such systems.

The installation and maintenance of such system may be funded through grants, state appropriations, public-private partnerships, or federal funds. The bill authorizes FDOT to provide incentives to support system installation.

The bill requires governmental entities with such systems to annually report specified data to FDOT. FDOT must biennially submit a summary of those reports to the Legislature.

This bill is expected to have a negative fiscal impact on state and local governmental entities. See Section V., Fiscal Analysis Statement for details.

This bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

In 2025, based on preliminary Federal Railroad Administration data, Florida ranked third nationally in highway-rail grade crossing collisions with 120 collisions, 22 deaths, and 48

injuries.¹ Florida also ranked fourth nationally in the total railroad trespassing casualties with 66 casualties, 51 of which were deaths.²

According to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), 88 percent of Highway-Rail Grade Crossing accidents that occurred between 2013-2022 involved stopping on the crossing, going around gates, not stopping, stopping then proceeding, or going through gates.³

Regulation of Railroad Crossings

Florida law defines the term “public railroad-highway grade crossing” to mean a location at which a railroad track is crossed at grade by a public road.⁴ As of 2025, Florida has 3,565 public at-grade rail crossings.⁵ FDOT regulates public railroad-highway grade crossings, including the issuance permits to open or close such crossings.⁶

Railroad companies must exercise reasonable care for the safety of motorists whenever its track crosses a highway. The railroad company is responsible for erecting and maintaining crossbuck grade-crossing warning signs at all public or private railroad-highway grade crossings.⁷

Upon reasonable notice from FDOT, every railroad company maintaining a public railroad-highway grade crossing must install, maintain, and operate traffic control devices at such crossing to warn motorists of approaching trains.⁸

The governmental entity with jurisdiction over the highway or street that crosses the railroad must install and maintain advance railroad warning signs and pavement markings.⁹

Persons approaching a railroad-highway grade crossing must exercise reasonable care for their own safety, the safety of railroad crews, and the safety of train or vehicle passengers.¹⁰

¹ Operation Lifesaver, *Collisions & Fatalities by State, Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Collisions - Top 25 States*, <https://oli.org/track-statistics/collisions-fatalities-state> (last visited February 4, 2026).

² Operation Lifesaver, *Trespassing Casualties by State, Top 25 States Ranked by Total Trespass Casualties*, <https://oli.org/track-statistics/trespassing-casualties-state> (last visited February 4, 2026).

³ FDOT, Florida Rail Safety Coalition, <https://www.fdot.gov/rail/programs/florida-rail-safety-coalition> (last visited February 3, 2026).

⁴ Section 335.141(1)(b), F.S..

⁵ Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Office of Freight and Rail, *Opening – Closure Program*, <https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/rail/programs/openclose/fro-rail-crossing-opening-and-closure-program-gameboard.pdf> (last visited February 3, 2026).

⁶ Section 335.141(1)(a), F.S.

⁷ Section 351.03(1), F.S. Such warning signs must comply with FDOT’s uniform system of traffic control devices.

⁸ Section 335.141(2)(b), F.S.

⁹ Section 351.03(2), F.S.

¹⁰ *Id.*

FDOT Rail Safety Initiatives

In 2024, FDOT established the Florida Rail Safety Coalition (FRSC) to enhance public rail safety. The FRSC consists of rail industry partners at local, state, and federal levels, including but not limited to subject matter experts and FDOT team members.¹¹

The FRSC has determined that driver and pedestrian behavior is the most critical and urgent rail safety issue.¹² In response, FRSC and FDOT have launched various safety-related campaigns such as the Be Rail Smart initiative, which focuses on accident prevention and educating the public about rail crossing safety awareness and proper procedure when approaching a rail crossing.¹³

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amend s. 351.03, F.S., to require, beginning January 1, 2027, that the governmental entity with jurisdiction over or maintenance responsibility for the highway or street on which a public railroad-highway grade crossing is established, updated, or modified, to install and maintain certain detection and monitoring systems at such crossing.

The bill requires FDOT to adopt rules establishing the technical and performance standards and criteria for the use of such systems. The rules must include criteria for prioritizing high-risk crossings for the installation of such systems. FDOT must also provide technical assistance to governmental entities during installation.

Detection and monitoring systems must include all of the following technology:

- Detection of pedestrians, vehicles, or other obstructions within the crossing area.
- Real-time analysis of conditions to identify potential safety hazards.
- Real-time transmission of warning of alerts to train crews and other authorized railroad personnel responsible for train operations.
- Coordination with, and compatibility to the extent practicable with, railroad safety systems, including positive train control systems.¹⁴

The installation and maintenance of these systems may be funded through grants, state-appropriated funds, public-partnerships, or federal funds. FDOT may provide financial assistance or incentives to governmental entities responsible for public railroad-highway grade crossings to support the installation and maintenance of the required systems.

¹¹ FDOT, Florida Rail Safety Coalition, <https://www.fdot.gov/rail/programs/florida-rail-safety-coalition> (last visited February 3, 2026).

¹² FDOT, *Florida Rail Safety Coalition Presentation*, November 14, 2024, https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/rail/programs/florida-rail-safety-coalition/frsc-presentation_2024-11-14.pdf?sfvrsn=d9e88546_1 (last visited February 3, 2026).

¹³ FDOT, Be Rail Smart, <https://www.fdot.gov/agencyresources/be-rail-smart/> (last visited February 3, 2026).

¹⁴ Positive Train Control is a system designed to prevent train-to-train collisions, over-speed derailments, incursions into established work zones, and movement of trains through switches left in the wrong position. Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), *Positive Train Control (PTC): Overview*, <https://railroads.dot.gov/research-development/program-areas/train-control/ptc/positive-train-control-ptc> (last visited February 3, 2026).

By October 1, 2027, and each year thereafter, each governmental entity responsible for a public railroad-highway grand crossing at which detection and monitoring system are installed must submit an annual report to FDOT containing data generated by such systems, including hazard detections, warnings or alerts issued, and any safety hazards prevented. By January 1, 2028, and biennially thereafter, FDOT must compile the reports from the local governmental entities and submit a summary report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Section 2 provides that this bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

Article VII, section 18 (a) of the Florida Constitution provides that a county or municipality may not be bound by a general law requiring a county or municipality to spend funds or take an action that requires the expenditure of funds unless certain specified exemptions or exceptions are met. Under the bill, governmental entities, including counties and municipalities, are required to install and maintain detection and monitoring systems at public railroad-highway grade crossings under their jurisdiction which are established, updated, or modified. They are not currently required to pay these costs.

However, the bill appears to meet an exception to the mandates provision specified in the Constitution because the bill applies to all similarly situated persons, i.e., all governmental entities with jurisdiction over a road with a public railroad-highway grade crossing, including the state.

However, the Legislature must declare that this bill fulfills an important state interest.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

State and local governmental entities responsible for railroad-highway grade crossings will incur costs associated with installing and operating the required safety systems. While the total cost is indeterminate, it is likely to be significant.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 351.03 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.