

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to railroad crossing safety; creating
3 s. 351.38, F.S.; providing legislative findings and
4 intent; providing definitions; requiring the
5 Department of Transportation to conduct a statewide
6 study on advanced detection and monitoring systems at
7 railroad crossings; specifying the scope of the study;
8 requiring the department to consult with specified
9 entities; requiring a report to the Governor and
10 Legislature by a specified date; providing an
11 effective date.

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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15 **Section 1. Section 351.38, Florida Statutes, is created to**
16 **read:**

17 351.38 Railroad crossing safety technology study.—
18 (1) The Legislature finds that improving safety at
19 railroad crossings is critical to protecting the lives of
20 pedestrians, motorists, railway workers, and the general public.
21 Advanced detection and monitoring systems utilizing technologies
22 such as sensors, high-resolution cameras, and data analytics may
23 provide a reliable means to enhance situational awareness and
24 reduce collisions at railroad crossings. The Legislature further
25 finds that additional analysis is necessary to evaluate the

26 effectiveness, feasibility, costs, and implementation of such
27 systems. It is the intent of the Legislature to direct the
28 Department of Transportation to study these technologies before
29 considering any statewide requirements for their deployment.

30 (2) As used in this section, the term:

31 (a) "Advanced detection and monitoring system" means a
32 system capable of detecting and classifying objects such as
33 pedestrians, vehicles, or other obstructions at or approaching a
34 railroad crossing using technologies including, but not limited
35 to, sensors, high-resolution cameras, and data analytics.

36 (b) "Public railroad-highway grade crossing" has the same
37 meaning as in s. 335.141(1)(b).

38 (3) The Department of Transportation shall conduct a
39 statewide study on the potential use of advanced detection and
40 monitoring systems at public railroad-highway grade crossings in
41 this state. The study must include, but is not limited to, an
42 analysis of:

43 (a) Available and emerging advanced detection and
44 monitoring technologies applicable to railroad crossings.

45 (b) The effectiveness of such technologies in improving
46 safety outcomes, including collision prevention and hazard
47 mitigation, based on available data from pilot programs,
48 deployments in other jurisdictions, or academic research.

49 (c) Technical and operational considerations, including
50 interoperability with existing railroad safety systems and
51 operating protocols.

52 (d) Costs associated with the deployment of advanced
53 detection and monitoring systems, including installation,
54 operation, maintenance, and long-term lifecycle costs.

55 (e) Potential funding mechanisms, including federal funds,
56 state funds, grants, or public-private partnerships.

57 (f) Criteria for identifying higher-risk railroad
58 crossings where such technologies may provide the greatest
59 safety benefit.

60 (g) Legal, regulatory, and operational considerations
61 related to the deployment and oversight of advanced detection
62 and monitoring systems.

63 (h) The respective roles of this state, local governments,
64 and railroad owners in the potential implementation of such
65 systems.

66 (4) In conducting the study, the Department of
67 Transportation shall consult with, as appropriate:

68 (a) Railroad owners and railroad industry representatives.

69 (b) Local governments with jurisdiction over public
70 railroad-highway grade crossings.

71 (c) Transportation safety experts and academic
72 institutions.

73 (d) Federal agencies or national organizations with
74 expertise in railroad safety.

75 (5) By December 1, 2026, the Department of Transportation
76 shall submit a report of its findings and any recommendations to
77 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
78 the House of Representatives. The report may include potential
79 policy options for legislative consideration but may not
80 recommend mandatory installation or upgrade of railroad
81 crossings.

82 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.