

S 2784

Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2014

Congress: 113 (2013–2015, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Transportation and Public Works

Introduced: Sep 10, 2014

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (Sep 10, 2014)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/2784>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]

Party: Democratic • **State:** CT • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (3 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Sep 10, 2014 |
| Sen. Murphy, Christopher [D-CT] | D · CT | | Sep 10, 2014 |
| Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Sep 10, 2014 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|---|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee | Senate | Referred To | Sep 10, 2014 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Transportation and Public Works

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2014 - Reauthorizes appropriations to the Secretary of Transportation (DOT) for FY2015-FY2020 to carry out rail safety activities for the safe transportation of hazardous materials (hazmat).

Authorizes the Secretary to promulgate regulations or issue orders to require, in cases where two or more railroads jointly operate within a small geographic area, all such host railroads to develop uniform operating rules for all operations within the area.

Reauthorizes appropriations for the railroad safety technology grants program for FY2015-FY2020.

Directs the Secretary and the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission to coordinate to assess electromagnetic spectrum needs and availability for implementing positive train control systems.

Requires a working alerter in the controlling locomotive of each intercity rail passenger train.

Requires each Class I railroad carrier and each railroad carrier that provides intercity rail passenger or commuter rail passenger transportation to install inward- and outward-facing audio and image recording devices in all controlling locomotive cabs and cab car operating compartments.

Requires the Secretary to promulgate regulations to implement the requirement for a fatigue management plan.

Prescribes certain requirements for the operation of high-hazard flammable trains, including installation of wayside defective bearing detectors.

Directs the Secretary to require approval of each oil spill prevention and response plan submitted to the Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) (for tank cars) to ensure it meets all Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements.

Revises positive train control systems requirements.

Requires each Class I railroad carrier and each entity providing intercity or commuter rail passenger carrier transportation to develop and submit to the Secretary a plan for implementing a positive train control system by December 31, 2015, on its main line over which 20 or more tank cars loaded with petroleum crude oil are transported.

Authorizes the Secretary to award grants to private or nonprofit organizations involved in, or affiliated with, transportation by regional (Class II) railroads and shortline (Class III) railroads for research, development, evaluation, and training efforts to enhance rail safety practices and safety culture.

Requires the Secretary to conduct accident analysis and mitigation research on the safety risks of transporting energy products by rail.

Prescribes requirements for:

- repair and replacement of damaged track inspection equipment;
- high density commuter rail track, automated track geometry, and automated train control inspections; and
- the securement of unattended freight train and vehicle equipment.

Directs the Secretary to develop:

- an implementation plan for oversight of railroad safety risk reduction programs, and
- a long-range strategic human capital plan for the FRA.

Revises and increases civil penalties for violations of rail safety regulations, DOT orders, accident and incident reporting or investigation requirements, as well as employee hours of service and sleeping quarters requirements.

Requires reports to Congress on the progress of Metro-North Commuter Railroad in implementing certain directives and recommendations.

Repeals the requirement for an FRA study of the use of reports and studies.

Requires each Class I railroad carrier, each railroad carrier that has inadequate safety performance, and each railroad carrier that provides intercity rail passenger or commuter rail passenger transportation to establish a confidential close call reporting system.

Prohibits a freight train or light engine used to move freight from operating unless it has a crew of at least two individuals of which:

- one is certified as a locomotive operator, and
- one is certified as a train conductor.

Actions Timeline

- **Sep 10, 2014:** Introduced in Senate
- **Sep 10, 2014:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.