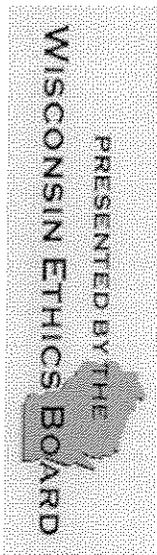


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as of Tuesday, February 17, 2004

2003-2004 legislative session

**Legislative bills and resolutions**

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Text, Sponsors and Analysis  
 Status and Fiscal Estimate  
 Lobbying Effort on this item

**Senate Bill 354**

traffic regulations and traffic control devices at railroad crossings, making appropriations, and providing a penalty. (FE)

Organization Profile	Interests	These organizations have reported lobbying on this proposal:		
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers	●	2/4/2004	↗	
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company	●	1/9/2004	↗	
Canadian National	●	1/9/2004	↗	
Soo Line Railroad Company dba Canadian Pacific Railway	●	1/9/2004	↗	
Union Pacific Railroad Company	●	1/9/2004	↗	
United Transportation Union	●	1/12/2004	?	

Place pointer on icon to display comments, click icon to display prior comments

Select a legislative proposal and click "go"

House  Assembly  Senate

Proposal Type

Vote Record

Committee on Transportation and Information  
Infrastructure

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**Date:** February 23, 2004  
**Bill Number:** Senate Bill 354  
**Moved by:** Senate Committee on Transportation and Information Infrastructure  
**Motion:** *Passage of Senate Bill 354.*

**Committee Member**  
Senator Mark Meyer

<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature: Mark Meyer

Vote Record

**Committee on Transportation and Information  
Infrastructure**

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**Date:** February 23, 2004  
**Bill Number:** Senate Bill 354  
**Moved by:** Senate Committee on Transportation and Information Infrastructure  
**Motion:** *Passage of Senate Bill 354.*

**Committee Member**  
Senator Roger Breske

<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Roger Breske*

Vote Record

Committee on Transportation and Information  
Infrastructure

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**Date:** February 23, 2004  
**Bill Number:** Senate Bill 354  
**Moved by:** Senate Committee on Transportation and Information Infrastructure  
**Motion:** *Passage of Senate Bill 354.*

**Committee Member**  
Senator Neal Kedzie

<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature:

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vote Record

Committee on Transportation and Information  
Infrastructure

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**Date:** February 23, 2004  
**Bill Number:** Senate Bill 354  
**Moved by:** Senate Committee on Transportation and Information Infrastructure  
**Motion:** *Passage of Senate Bill 354.*

**Committee Member**  
Senator Ted Kanavas

<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature:



Good morning Mr. Chairman and Committee members. My name is Ronald E. Adams, P.E.. I am the Director of the Bureau of Railroads and Harbors with the Department of Transportation.

I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 354.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to testify in support of this bill that, I believe, will increase transportation safety in Wisconsin. I am especially pleased to offer the support of the Department of Transportation to that of the Office of the commissioner of Railroads and the railroad company's serving Wisconsin for this bill.

There are 4,841 public highway/railway grade crossings in Wisconsin. Six hundred eighty-four are grade separated. One thousand eight hundred forty-five have automated warning devices installed. This includes those with flashing lights and those with both flashing lights and gates. The remaining 2,312 public at-grade crossings have passive warning devices. These include those with the familiar cross-buck sign and those with the cross-buck and a stop sign.

In 2002, there were 83 crashes at highway/railway grade crossings. These crashes killed 7 people and injured 31 people. Of these 83 crashes, 35 occurred at highway/railway grade crossings with active warning devices. Forty-eight of the 2001 crashes occurred at at-grade crossings with passive warning devices. Twenty of the crashes occurred at those at-grade crossings that had cross-bucks and stop signs. The remaining twenty-eight crashes occurred at those crossings with only the cross-buck signs.

Similar results occurred in the first 11 months of 2003 (the latest period that the Federal Railroad Administration has published data for) when there were 68 crashes at highway/railway at-grade crossings in Wisconsin. There were 3 fatalities and 30 injuries reported for the first eleven months. All three of the fatalities occurred at at-grade crossings with passive warning devices. Two of the fatalities occurred at at-grade crossings with cross-bucks and stop signs. The third one occurred at an at-grade crossing with only cross-bucks.

We believe, as do the Commissioner of Railroads and the railroads serving Wisconsin, that placing YIELD signs at those at-grade crossings with only cross-bucks that do not currently have Stop signs will improve safety at those crossings. We believe that like those crossings that currently have cross-bucks and stop signs, the combination of cross-bucks and YIELD signs will make the signs and therefore the presence of a crossing more visible to motorists. We also believe that since drivers are familiar with YIELD signs there will be better awareness of appropriate action to be taken by drivers.

We believe that the addition of YIELD signs and the accompanying changes in the Motor Vehicle Code are one small step that can be taken to improve transportation safety in Wisconsin.

The Department of Transportation is prepared to move forward quickly to provide the funds to the railroads so that the installation of the YIELD signs can proceed quickly after passage and enactment of this legislation.

Thank you for this opportunity to let you know of the Department of Transportation's support for this bill.



MEMBER:  
Environmental Resources Committee  
Health, Utilities, Veterans and  
Military Affairs Committee  
Joint Committee for Review of  
Administrative Rules

TO: Senate Transportation & Information Infrastructure Committee Members

FROM: Senator Robert Cowles

DATE: February 18, 2004

RE: Senate Bill 354, relating to traffic regulations and traffic control devices at railroad crossings.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of Senate Bill 354 which is aimed at improving traffic safety and clarifying the commissioner's authority at railroad crossings.

Under Senate Bill 354 operators of a vehicle would be prohibited from driving the vehicle on or across a railroad crossing that is posted with a yield sign if any train occupies the crossing or approaches so closely to the crossing as to constitute a hazard of collision.

Additionally, the bill also requires railroad companies to install and maintain a yield sign below the cross buck sign at any crossing at which the railroad is required to maintain a cross buck sign and that is not controlled by a gate, automatic signal, or stop sign.

The Department of Transportation would provide to the railroad companies one-yield sign for each location at which a yield sign is required to be installed. Funding for the signs and installation would come from the Hazard Elimination Fund, which gets its funding from the assessment on railroads.

This legislation was drafted with input from the Commissioner of Railroads, the Department of Transportation, and individuals representing the railroad industry.

I'd appreciate your support of Senate Bill 354.