I am writing concerning the proposed regulations on whistle bans. In reading through previous comments, I must sympathize with those who live near grade crossings which have heavy traffic. On the other hand, this legislation will FORCE local communities to install state of the art grade crossing equipment or grade seperate the crossings.

People have to understand that the railroads in most cases existed before the roads. Thus, it is the responsibility of the road owner (usually a city, town, or county) to provide protection of that crossing. To just issue a whistle ban without investing in grade separation is to simply ignore the issue and make the whistles go away. This is good for those who live near the tracks, but poor public policy. I hear comments that communities cannot afford the equipment required, the reality is that in most cases they can. Will they have to give reprioritize their spending do it, yes.

Taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society. I would urge that affected communities look at tax increment financing to help pay for part of the bill for upgrading crossings. If the whistles do lower property values, then ending them will increase the values. The government can recover, the gain by capturing the increase in value to pay for the crossings.

We are the only developed country that refuses to take proper steps to seperate rail and road traffic. I think these regulations will help the problem. States too must share part of the burden, by allocating some of their discretionary federal funding to grade crossing improvements in communities affected by the proposed regulations.

In short, I have sympathy for people who read the regulations and conclude they will have to listen to noise because their community can not "afford" the required equipment. That is most cases not an absolute truth.