

The railroads and Metra are responsible for the expense to install the safety equipment to maintain the train whistle Ban not the local, state or federal taxpayer.

This is another public bailout of private business.

I applaud the FRA ruling as an attempt to improve the safety at grade level crossings. However the proposal to blow train whistles is not the answer. The Proposed Rule for the Use of Locomotive Horns is simply blackmail by the FRA, (read the railroads and Metra) to force taxpayers to make the safety investment for the railroads, that should have been made all along by the railroads and Metra.

In order to keep train whistles quiet, taxpayers should not pay for the years of neglect to safety investment by Metra and the railroads around grade crossings.

For years the railroads and Metra have told us that grade level crossings were safe, because train/car fatalities were always the fault of the victim. Thus no improvements were ever needed. However, following the Metra train and school bus accident in Fox River Grove Illinois, where seven children were killed on October 25, 1995 and a rash of fatalities around safe crossings, the FRA, (read the railroads and Metra), realized that maybe conditions around their crossings were not entirely safe after all.

So armed with interpretive statistics about whistleblowing and the knowledge that whistleblowing is highly unpopular, the FRA set out to hold local communities hostage. To keep the whistles quiet and still attain the same level of perceived safety around crossings, the FRA proposes an alternative solution. Chicago area communities can invest about \$225 million in safety equipment; double gates, cameras and cop in the box measures that were vehemently argued by the railroads for years as not being needed. Now through a genius kidnapping plan the FRA, Metra and the railroads are going to make up for lost time by having the taxpayer bail them out by installing the much needed safety measures.

There should be no train whistles. If the installation of safety equipment makes the crossings as safe as whistle blowing, then let the railroads and Metra that are responsible for the safety of their passengers pay for it, not the taxpayer.