

AMENDED IN SENATE JANUARY 22, 2026

AMENDED IN SENATE JANUARY 5, 2026

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 29, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 8, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 24, 2025

SENATE BILL

No. 667

Introduced by Senator Archuleta

February 20, 2025

An act to add Section 7615 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to transportation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 667, as amended, Archuleta. Railroads: safety: wayside detectors. The existing Federal Railroad Safety Act (FRSA) authorizes the United States Secretary of Transportation to prescribe regulations and issue orders for railroad safety and requires the United States Secretary of Homeland Security, when prescribing a security regulation or issuing a security order that affects the safety of railroad operations, to consult with the United States Secretary of Transportation. The FRSA provides for state participation in the enforcement of the safety regulations and orders issued by the United States Secretary of Transportation or the United States Secretary of Homeland Security, pursuant to an annual certification, and authorizes the respective secretaries to make an agreement with a state to provide investigative and surveillance activities. The FRSA provides that, to the extent practicable, laws, regulations, and orders related to railroad safety and security are required to be nationally uniform, but authorizes a state to adopt or continue in

force a law, regulation, or order related to railroad safety or security until the United States Secretary of Transportation, with respect to railroad safety matters, or the United States Secretary of Homeland Security, with respect to railroad security matters, prescribes a regulation or issues an order covering the subject matter of the state requirement. A state is additionally authorized to adopt or continue in force an additional or more stringent law, regulation, or order related to railroad safety or security, when necessary to eliminate or reduce an essentially local safety or security hazard, that is not incompatible with a federal law, regulation, or order, and that does not unreasonably burden interstate commerce.

This bill would require a railroad corporation to install and operate a network of wayside detector systems on or adjacent to any track used by a freight ~~train with~~ *train, require that each wayside detector system include a hot wheel bearing detector, and prescribe the maximum spacing specified* for individual detection devices along a continuous track. The bill would define “wayside detector system” to mean an electronic device or series of connected devices that scans passing freight trains and their component equipment and parts for defects. ~~The bill would require a railroad corporation to submit a wayside detector response plan to the Public Utilities Commission, as provided. The bill would require the commission~~ *Public Utilities Commission* to adopt rules ~~necessary and processes~~ *provisions* to implement these ~~provisions~~ *provisions*, including ~~establishing~~ *establishing* a penalty of not less than ~~\$25,000, \$25,000 for violating these provisions, as provided. The bill would provide that these provisions do not apply to a class II or class III carrier that has a speed limit of 10 miles per hour or less.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 7615 is added to the Public Utilities Code,
- 2 to read:
- 3 7615. (a) For purposes of this section, ~~“Wayside~~ *“wayside*
- 4 *detector system”* means an electronic device or a series of
- 5 connected devices that scan passing freight trains and their
- 6 component equipment and parts for defects, which *may* include,
- 7 but are not limited to, hot wheel bearings, hot wheels, defective
- 8 bearings that are detected through acoustics, dragging equipment,

1 excessive height or weight, shifted loads, low hoses, excessive rail
2 temperature, and poor wheel condition.

3 (b) A railroad corporation shall install and operate a network
4 of wayside detector systems on or adjacent to any track that is used
5 by a freight train with each train. Each wayside detector system
6 ~~to~~ shall include a hot wheel bearing detector and be located no
7 farther from the following distances from another wayside detector
8 system on a continuous track:

9 (1) For a class I carrier railroad, no farther than 10 miles.

10 (2) For a class II carrier railroad, no farther than 25 miles.

11 (3) For a class III carrier railroad, no farther than 35 miles.

12 (c) If a freight train is operating on a track between wayside
13 detector systems that do not comply with the spacing requirements
14 of subdivision (b), then it shall not travel faster than 10 miles per
15 hour and may only travel faster than 10 miles per hour after it
16 passes a wayside detector system that is in compliance with the
17 spacing requirements of subdivision (b) and has received a message
18 from the wayside detector system indicating that there are no
19 defects.

20 (d) ~~(1) A railroad corporation shall submit a wayside detector~~
21 ~~system response plan to the commission via an expedited Tier 3~~
22 ~~advice letter process. The commission shall adopt rules and~~
23 ~~processes to implement this section. The response plan rules and~~
24 ~~processes shall include, but not be limited to, both all of the~~
25 ~~following:~~

26 ~~(A) A process for freight train crews to receive alerts from~~
27 ~~wayside detector systems.~~

28 ~~(1) Minimum requirements for the wayside detector systems~~
29 ~~applicable to railroad corporations in the state and a process for~~
30 ~~railroad corporations to submit their wayside detector systems to~~
31 ~~the commission for review and approval.~~

32 ~~(B) Standards for~~

33 ~~(2) A process for freight train crews to receive alerts from~~
34 ~~wayside detector systems and standards for freight train inspections~~
35 ~~to be conducted following the receipt of an alert from a wayside~~
36 ~~detector system, including the obligation of a railroad corporation~~
37 ~~to ensure that railroad employees are aware of these standards.~~

38 ~~(2) The commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement~~
39 ~~this section, including establishing a~~

1 (3) A penalty of not less than twenty-five thousand dollars
2 (\$25,000) for each violation of this section by a railroad
3 corporation.

4 (e) This section shall not apply to a railroad track owned or
5 leased by a class II or class III carrier that has a speed limit of 10
6 miles per hour or less.

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