



Providing nonpartisan legal, research, and fiscal analysis services to the Minnesota Senate

S.F. No. 3943 - Wayside detector system requirement

Author: Senator Robert J. Kupec
Prepared by: Tim Greenfield, Senate Counsel (651/296-3801)
Date: March 12, 2024

S.F. 3943 requires the use of detector systems on mainline rail track to monitor trains for potential defects or unsafe movement. Effective January 1, 2025.

Subdivision 1 defines key terms, including “hazardous substance” and “wayside detector system.” A wayside detector system includes one or more electronic devices that (1) perform automated scanning of passing trains, rolling stock, and on-track equipment to detect defects or precursors to defects and (2) provide notification to individuals of that defect or precursor to a defect.

Subdivision 2 provides the requirements are applicable to Class I railroads, Class II railroads, or Class III railroads carrying hazardous substances at a speed that exceeds 10 m.p.h.

Subdivision 3 specifies placement requirements for wayside detector systems and requires the use of a hot bearings detector and a dragging equipment detector in the wayside detector system.

Subdivision 4 specifies response procedures for a potential defect, including the requirement of a lower travel speed upon a defect notification.

Subdivision 5 requires annual reports from railroads subject to this section to the Department of Transportation and specifies what must be included on the report about the railroad’s wayside detector system.