

**Subject** State rail safety inspection program

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## Overview

This bill modifies requirements of the state rail safety inspection program administered by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), including to:

- allow additional inspector and supervisor positions in the program, as determined by MnDOT and with railroad consultation no longer made necessary;
- broaden the scope of inspections that can be performed and make inspection categories permissive;
- modify the railroad assessment on railroads for the program to cover all programmatic costs to support up to six MnDOT inspector positions (increased from four under current law), not counting supervisors; and
- make technical and clarifying changes.

The bill also clarifies permissible uses of funds in a grade crossing safety account.

**Background.** MnDOT administers the state rail safety inspection program through a partnership with the Federal Railroad Administration that authorizes state inspection and enforcement of federal law on rail safety and standards. Funding for the program is provided through a proportionally allocated assessment on Class I and Class II railroads in Minnesota. Revenue from the assessment goes into a state rail safety inspection account, and is statutorily appropriated to MnDOT for the rail inspection program. An increase in the permitted staffing complement for the program has the effect of increasing the assessment on the railroads (to cover increased staffing and program costs), subject to assessment limits being set in the bill.

## Summary

Section	Description
1	<p><b>Program established; inspector powers and duties.</b></p> <p>Eliminates a cap on state rail inspection program positions, broadens the inspection categories, and makes the list of inspection categories permissive. Makes technical changes.</p>
2	<p><b>Railroad company assessment; account; appropriation.</b></p> <p>Revises the railroad company assessment calculation, including to allow for assessment of all program costs to support up to six state rail safety inspector positions (increased from four under current law), not counting supervisors. Makes technical changes.</p>
3	<p><b>Grade crossing safety account.</b></p> <p>Clarifies permissible uses of funds in a grade crossing safety account, to explicitly allow for associated administrative and program delivery costs of crossing safety projects.</p>



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