

PROCLAMATION

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Illinois Commerce Commission

Whereas, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2021, it also marks the 150th anniversary of addressing rail safety concerns in Illinois that started with the Commission's predecessor, the Railroad and Warehouse Commission of 1871; and

Whereas, railroad expansion, contraction, and mergers followed, as did changes in regulation, oversight, and transportation in general with the advent of the automobile in the 1920's, with subsequent expansion of the highway network further fostered by the construction of the Interstate System in the 1950's; and

Whereas, the changes and complexities brought on with growth may vary, there is one constant that has remained since the initial tracks were set and first intersected with a highway – the need for rail safety; and

Whereas, today the ICC retains its jurisdiction and mission to provide for safety at public highway-rail crossings and rail safety overall in Illinois with its Crossing Safety Improvement, Inspection, Railroad Worker Safety, and Outreach & Education Programs; and

Whereas, Illinois has 7,595 public highway-rail grade crossings and 2,667 highway-rail bridges. There are also 323 pedestrian grade crossings and 104 pedestrian bridges. Nationally, Illinois is second only to Texas in the total number of highway-rail crossings. With 53 railroad companies operating on approximately 7,400 miles of railroad track, our rail system is the country's second largest, including the nation's largest rail freight hub in Chicago with approximately 1,200 trains per day; and

Whereas, in 2020, Illinois ranked fourth in the United States with 84 crashes at public highway-rail crossings. This is a significant improvement from nearly 50 years ago when there were over 850 crashes per year. Inspection programs, education and enforcement, and state and federal funding programs provided for this decrease in Illinois and around the country; and

Whereas, in 1955, the State of Illinois passed legislation creating the Grade Crossing Protection Fund to assist local agencies in paying for safety improvements at highway-rail crossings on local roads and streets. Funding levels have increased since 1955, and today \$42 million is provided annually towards crossing safety improvements at public highway-rail crossings. The array of projects completed, and now planned, include warning device upgrades, bridges, traffic signal interconnects, highway approaches, crossing closures, surface renewals, and research and development. With this funding, there is an opportunity to improve upon our infrastructure and address safety concerns at public highway-rail crossings into the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Karen Darch, President of the Board of Trustees for the Village of Barrington, Cook and Lake Counties, Illinois, do hereby celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Illinois Commerce Commission and the 150th anniversary of addressing rail safety concerns in Illinois and supports the continuing efforts of the ICC and its mission to provide for safety at public highway-rail crossings and rail safety in the State of Illinois.

Dated this 13th day of September, 2021



Karen Darch
Village President