



June 1, 2024

Dear OAB Member Stations:

Once again Angels on Track is asking for your participation to support our mission to eliminate dangerous railroad crossings. All crossings should be considered dangerous. With past hazardous derailments occurring in Ohio, all the more reason to make sure every crossing is protected with the safest protection, gates. We sincerely hope that you will consider playing our public service announcements. Previous support has resulted in hundreds of our Dangerous Crossing Reports being submitted by Ohioans concerned about existing hazards at/along railroad crossings in their community. Your participation will help us bring much needed attention to “bad crossings” throughout Ohio. Over the years Angels on Track has continued to work with state and local officials to improve dangerous railroad crossings. Our public service announcements help educate the public to be aware of existing hazards that are present at all crossings.

The Angels on Track Foundation® was established in 1997 as a result of a 1995 fatal train/car tragedy at Deerfield Avenue railroad crossing in Stark County, Ohio. Dennis and Vicky Moore, co-Trustees of the Foundation, lost their youngest son, Ryan and two of his friends as a result of this dangerous crossing. The crossing was only marked with a crossbuck sign and thick vegetation/trees blocked the view down the tracks. Between 1975-1995 collisions at this crossing resulted in at least eight injuries and seven fatalities. Gates were finally installed in November of 1995. No accidents have been reported since.

As a direct result of past Dangerous Crossing Reports (DCR's), the Ohio Rail Development Commission/PUCO has installed seventy six (76) sets of gates in: Union, Allen, Athens, Jackson, Tuscarawas, Crawford, Hancock, Seneca, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Portage, Butler, Lorain, Lucas, Medina, Richland, Clermont, Clinton, Huron, Licking, Hardin, Hancock, Champaign, Darke, Logan, Warren, Highland, Muskingum, Holmes, Ottawa, VanWert, Washington, and Wood counties. In addition to gates being installed at unprotected crossings, hazards such as sight obstructions, malfunctioning signals, activation failures, blocked crossings, rough crossing surfaces, etc., have been repaired or removed. In a letter dated May 31, 2007, Matthew R. Dietrich, Acting Executive Director, Ohio Rail Development Commission, stated “The ORDC would like to commend The Angels on Track Foundation for providing a mechanism by which concerns can be voiced regarding grade crossing issues. There is no substitute for direct input from local citizens who actually utilize the crossings. Your report affords us that opportunity.” While the State of Ohio selects which railroad crossings are improved, our DCR's identify the hazards and put those responsible on notice. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is also utilizing our reports to ensure federal mandates regarding signal and train operations across Ohio are being followed.

As well as developing a system to report dangerous crossings, the Angels on Track Foundation has awarded reimbursement grants to Ohio counties to install gates at seventeen (17) unprotected crossings.



These gate installations represent approximately \$500,000 in direct funding from Angels on Track for life-saving safety improvements.

When hearing of a railroad-crossing collision, most people immediately assume that it was “the driver’s fault” and that “someone tried to beat the train.” What many people don’t realize is that the majority of railroad crossings in Ohio and the United States are not protected with gates. A significant number have inadequate sight distance clearances and are obstructed by vegetation, trees, buildings or other structures that block the driver’s ability to cross the tracks safely. Even crossings protected with gates have been documented to malfunction or not activate properly. Court proceedings have also found railroad companies were negligent in not following required safety procedures.

Drivers and passengers have been killed or severely injured at many unsafe and sight-obstructed crossings throughout Ohio. Even “good drivers” weren’t able to see or hear an oncoming train before it was too late. The Foundation’s contention has always been, “How can you yield to something that you can’t see?” Because there are no federal mandates for clear lines of sight at railroad crossings, it is crucial that Ohio’s law regarding sight clearances be enforced. In 2003, the Ohio Legislature changed the law requiring the sounding of a train horn at “private” railroad crossings. Private railroad crossings are not regulated by state agencies and are often left with no advance warning devices, in particular, no gates or lights. Without advance warning (horn) from approaching trains and possible sight obstructions blocking a driver’s view, many lives will be put at risk. There are over 3,000 private railroad crossings in Ohio.

In addition to public service announcements and billboards across Ohio, the Foundation offers periodic newsletters, publications, and a website designed to address railroad safety issues. Foundation trustees also participate in various safety conferences, as well as give presentations to clubs and organizations across Ohio. A brochure has been attached.

Thank you for the opportunity to tell you more about The Angels on Track Foundation. Your support is greatly needed to help us educate about the inherent dangers that exist at ALL railroad crossings and to ultimately help prevent further loss of life. Don’t think because you are a good driver it can’t happen to you...it can.

Very Sincerely,

Vicky L. Moore, Trustee/Founder
The Angels on Track Foundation/Crossing To Safety ®
Bad Crossings Kill Good Drivers ®
Gate It – Or Risk It ®