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## Operation Lifesaver, Inc. Awards \$220,200 for Rail Safety Public Awareness Campaigns in 12 States Across the U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 28, 2026 - [Operation Lifesaver, Inc. \(OLI\)](#), together with the [Federal Railroad Administration \(FRA\)](#) and the [Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh](#), awarded \$220,200 in competitive rail safety awareness grants to Operation Lifesaver programs in 12 states. The FRA contributed \$175,200 of the total grant funding.

Aimed at growing awareness and encouraging safe behaviors around tracks and trains, these grants will support a variety of crossing safety and trespass prevention public awareness projects. Many of the campaigns are scheduled to coincide with [See Tracks? Think Train® Week](#), September 21-27, 2026.

“We are excited to announce this year’s grant recipients. Operation Lifesaver state programs are leading the way in delivering rail safety education in communities across the country,” said **OLI Executive Director Rachel Maleh**. “Their innovative, community-based outreach helps people understand the importance of making safe choices around tracks and trains and saves lives. We’re grateful to the Federal Railroad Administration and the Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh for their continued partnership in supporting this lifesaving work.”

“FRA is proud to continue and strengthen its support of Operation Lifesaver, Inc.’s lifesaving mission, as preventable grade crossing and trespassing incidents remain a serious challenge across the nation,” said **James Payne, Staff Director of the FRA Grade Crossing and Trespasser Outreach Division**. “These competitive grants provide critical funding that empowers OLI state organizations to conduct highly effective public outreach, deterring the leading causes of rail-related deaths and injuries while raising awareness to reduce these tragedies.”

“Increasing the public’s awareness about grade crossings, trespassing and suicide are societal challenges for railways worldwide. In the USA, Operation Lifesaver has long been front and center in dealing with them through education and outreach. We are honored to stand as dedicated supporters of OLI’s lifesaving mission for the eighth consecutive year,” said **Henry Posner III, Chairman of the Posner Foundation and the Iowa Interstate Railroad**

Maleh added, “Everyone has a role to play in rail safety education. We encourage people to connect with OLI on social media, request a free rail safety education presentation, volunteer and explore resources at [oli.org](http://oli.org). Together, we can #STOPTrackTragedies.”

Projects funded by the FRA grants include:

- **California Operation Lifesaver** will implement a targeted rail safety awareness campaign during California’s Rail Safety Month (September 1-30, 2026) and See Tracks? Think Train® Week (September 21-27, 2026) connecting with communities in counties with high rates of trespassing incidents, grade crossing collisions and near-miss events. Using geofencing, connected TV (CTV), over-the-top (OTT) and digital radio platforms, the campaign will deliver educational advertisements and public safety announcements (PSAs) focused on trespassing and grade crossing safety to promote safer behaviors around railroad rights-of-way and reduce preventable incidents.



- **Illinois Operation Lifesaver** will deliver targeted rail safety education to schools, community organizations, civic groups and first responders, reinforcing prevention, compliance and shared responsibility around railroad tracks and trains through a multimedia campaign throughout Central Illinois to reduce pedestrian trespassing and vehicle-train collisions. The campaign includes placing billboard advertisements along major commuter routes from April through September 2026 and airing 15- and 30-second rail safety education spots on high school sports broadcasts statewide through June 2027. There will also be in-person training sessions to expand the pool of Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers (OLAVs) equipped to deliver rail safety education in schools and with civic groups and community organizations.
- **Indiana Operation Lifesaver** will conduct a statewide public awareness campaign encouraging behavior change around highway-rail grade crossings and trespassing to reduce rail-related incidents around tracks and trains. Targeted digital media messaging will reach motorists, pedestrians, commuters and younger drivers with key safety messages focused on crossing safety and trespass prevention featuring OLI's *The Risk is Real* Public Service Announcement (PSA).
- **Maryland Operation Lifesaver** will implement a targeted, data-driven public safety campaign to reduce rail-related deaths and serious injuries along some of the state's commuter rail corridors. The campaign will combine visual, audio, digital and in-person interventions, including station and ticket-machine messaging, multilingual PSAs, targeted social media outreach, in-person safety blitzes, and community presentations to reach residents, seniors and families along the Penn, Camden, and Brunswick Lines.
- **New Jersey Operation Lifesaver** will conduct a See Tracks? Think Train® campaign using moving billboard advertisements on delivery trucks across local, county and state roadways during September 2026. OLI banners and posters will be displayed on multiple sides of each vehicle, capturing the attention of drivers and pedestrians throughout the state.
- **North Carolina Operation Lifesaver** will conduct a comprehensive outreach campaign in five communities to reach unhoused communities along and near railroad tracks, working with the NC Coalition to End Homelessness, Continuum of Care agencies and Curtis Media to deliver rail safety education messages and materials. The initiative will combine digital messaging, radio spots, brochures and posters at shelters, food pantries and nearby retailers with distribution of essential items. Outreach will also include educating those who provide services, reinforcing crossing safety and trespass prevention for these high-risk populations.
- **Ohio Operation Lifesaver** will deliver high-impact rail safety education messaging targeting both drivers and pedestrians in and around Columbus and Cincinnati. The campaign will reach 11 counties in Central Ohio and seven counties in Southwest Ohio through a mix of CTV, streaming audio, retargeting display ads and radio, reaching audiences while they consume their preferred content.
- **South Carolina Operation Lifesaver (SCOL)** will implement a comprehensive in-person and online outreach campaign in Greenville and Spartanburg to reduce rail-related incidents at highway-rail grade crossings and along railroad tracks. Through the campaign, SCOL will sponsor a stage at the Greenville Jazz Festival, where safety messaging will be integrated through live announcements and audience engagement. Complementing these efforts, a robust social media and digital campaign will coincide with major community events, including See Tracks? Think Train® Week,



Euphoria, Artisphere, Fall for Greenville and a Swamp Rabbits hockey game, ensuring consistent and targeted delivery of critical rail safety information.

- **Washington Operation Lifesaver** will conduct a multifaceted rail safety education campaign in and around Seattle during June and July 2026 targeting residents and the surge of visitors attending FIFA World Cup matches at Lumen Field, a venue adjacent to busy freight, passenger and commuter rail lines. The campaign will combine digital media, social media, static advertising on Sound Transit commuter trains and in-person outreach by volunteers at passenger stations, while bringing awareness to higher-risk crossings in Seattle and highlighting Emergency Notification System (ENS) Sign Awareness Day.

The Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh grant fully funded these additional state campaigns:

- **Connecticut Operation Lifesaver** will conduct a targeted advertising campaign in September 2026 educating residents, commuters and drivers about railroad track safety along the state's busy commuter and freight rail corridors. The campaign will use precision audio, streaming video, display ads, geofencing and podcasts – leveraging demographic, location and interest-based targeting – to maximize reach, reinforce rail safety messages and increase OL brand awareness.
- **Minnesota Operation Lifesaver** will educate people where they live, work and travel through a comprehensive, data-driven rail safety education program emphasizing crossing safety and trespass prevention as well as transit and rural rail safety education outreach and crossing awareness along active rail corridors in urban and rural areas. The project will combine targeted digital outreach and strategic in-person engagement partnering with Metro Transit, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Toward Zero Deaths with campaigns included during ENS Sign Awareness Day and See Tracks? Think Train® Week.
- **Missouri Operation Lifesaver** will launch a statewide rail safety education campaign to reduce incidents and fatalities around tracks and trains. The campaign will reach residents and visitors through broadcast and digital media and in-person awareness events with a special focus on the Kansas City and St. Louis areas, two of the nation's largest rail hubs, during the FIFA World Cup games in June and July. Campaign activities are designed to reduce incidents and fatalities around tracks and trains and will reach residents and visitors as well as the farming community through the Brownfield AG network during See Tracks? Think Train® Week, Missouri Farm Safety Week and through the month of September.

The approved grants were awarded through a competitive process, with selection based on criteria such as the defined safety need, the number of highway-rail collisions and trespass incidents in the state and how the proposal leverages federal funds with private partnerships.

### About Operation Lifesaver

[Operation Lifesaver, Inc. \(OLI\)](#) is a national #RailSafetyEducation nonprofit dedicated to stopping track tragedies through public awareness and education campaigns as well as a national volunteer network that gives free presentations encouraging safe behavior near tracks and trains. [OLI](#) supports the efforts of 47 state programs and the District of Columbia in sharing the rail safety education message. Visit [oli.org](#) to learn more, take a rail safety pledge, request free presentations, volunteer and explore OLI's virtual library of rail safety education materials. Follow OLI on social media via [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Pinterest](#), [X](#) and [YouTube](#).