



STODDARD / BERGEN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

188 NORTH MAIN STREET
STODDARD, WISCONSIN 54658



United States Surface Transportation Board
395 East Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

RE: FD 36500 – Canadian Pacific/Kansas City Southern Merger

To Whom it May Concern:

If approved, the pending merger of the Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern railroads would represent a significant shift in the overall freight transportation landscape in the United States. The factors impacting the flow of trade and commerce through the United States should be closely considered by the Surface Transportation Board as they consider the merger's prospects. But as a public safety official, my concerns with the proposal – and the review process to date – are not limited to economics.

I am both disappointed and concerned that the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the Surface Transportation Board has thus far failed to mention, let alone satisfactorily analyze, the merger's potential impact on public safety. As many stakeholders have already noted, the presence of additional Canadian Pacific trains – which average 1.5 to 2.25 miles in length – would profoundly impact communities that depend on at-grade railroad crossings.

Passing miles-long Canadian Pacific trains through my community's at-grade crossing will create unavoidable delays ranging from ten to 40 minutes. That's inconvenient for motorists trying to get to and from work or the school pickup line. But, as problematic as this is for all community members, it's a real and unacceptable public safety risk when considered through the lens of a first responder attempting to reach an emergency.

The purpose of the Surface Transportation Board's review of this proposal is to determine its economic viability and impact on the broader communities through which the new, merged railroad would pass. Failure to consider something as fundamental as public safety in the impact statement raises serious concerns about what will happen if the merger is approved.

I urge the Surface Transportation Board to reconsider the omission of public safety in the draft Environmental Impact Statement. Approval of the merger without adequate consideration of the public safety impact represents an unacceptable risk for the community I live in and serve and me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph W. Pfaff".

Joseph W. Pfaff

Fire Chief/NR AEMT
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