



Professional Fire Fighters Association of Louisiana

AFFILIATED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

CHAD MAJOR
President

STACY BIRDWELL
Secretary-Treasurer

Surface Transportation Board
395 East St. SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Canadian Pacific Railway Acquisition of Kansas City Southern

#FD-36500

10/13/2022

Dear Director Gosselin:

The Professional Fire Fighters Association of Louisiana is an organization representing over 3,000 members across the State of Louisiana. Our mission is to protect the safety of the fire fighters and EMS personnel we represent and, more importantly, to protect our communities and the people of our great state.

The proposed mega-merger between Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern is alarming because of several safety concerns. Among the first responder community, there is fear the merger jeopardize safety by increasing the amount of time it takes fire fighters, EMS, and law enforcement to respond to emergencies.

Both the length and frequency of trains are of problematic.

The length of trains is predicted to double in most communities. The average freight train length has already been growing, increasing by about 25% since 2008. These mega-trains carrying Canadian oil are projected to be over two miles long. This increase will make the average 10-minute wait at at-grade crossings turn into a 40-minute delay. First responders cannot afford to wait at these at-grade crossings which in many cases especially in rural communities may be the only route. Just a few months ago, a home in Lockland, Ohio near the train tracks burned unabated while fire apparatus was blocked at a railroad crossing.

In many small towns in northwest Louisiana along the train route, fire stations and emergency service providers are located near at-grade crossings and their route of response requires responders to traverse the at-grade crossing.

These concerns regarding the merger magnified by increased call volume, decreased availability of personnel—career and volunteer---and lack of training in HAZMAT response in most communities.

There has been very little, if any, interaction between the rail roads and the first response community along the proposed routes. Communities need emergency planning in the event of a derailment, spill, and fire. Furthermore, first responders need additional training to be prepared to respond.

The Professional Fire Fighters Louisiana of Louisiana respectfully registers its opposition to this planned merge

Thank you for your consideration.

Chad Major, President