



## IOWA PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS

P.O. BOX 2268 IOWA CITY, IA 52244



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

**Re: Canadian Pacific Railway Acquisition of Kansas City Southern**

**#FD-36500**

10/14/22

Dear Director Gosselin:

The Iowa Professional Fire Fighters is an organization made up of over 30 Locals with close to 1,700 members across the State of Iowa. Our objective is to serve the interests of professional fire fighters and professional EMS personnel in our state and to make sure that fire fighters and EMS workers in Iowa can safely and efficiently serve their communities.

The proposed mega-merger between Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern has created quite a bit of concern. Among the first responder community in Iowa, there is fear the merger will put people at risk by increasing the response time to emergencies and community members in need.

Both the length and frequency of trains are of concern, as both increases noted in CP's filings will create a bevy of issues in the case of an emergency within the community.

The length of trains is predicted to nearly double in most communities. The average freight train length has already been growing, increasing by about 25% since 2008. This increase will make the average 10-minute wait at at-grade crossings turn into a 40-minute wait. It goes without saying that in the case of an emergency, an extra 30 minutes can certainly be the difference between life and death. First responders cannot afford to wait at these at-grade crossings, and in many cases, might be the only route to the emergency. Just a few months ago, a home in Lockland, Ohio – just 400 feet from the tracks – sat in flames for eight times longer due to a train blocking the crossing the fire department needing to get through. A on-minute response turned into a 15 minute response, according to the Fire Chief.

In many small towns in Iowa, fire stations and emergency service providers are located near at-grade crossings and their route of response naturally requires responders to utilize the at-grade crossing. In many towns, there is no alternative route.

While we do not oppose the merger, we feel that safeguards need to be instituted. For the reasons previously stated, we feel that the rail roads should provide funding to train fire fighters (career and volunteer) along the proposed route, purchase necessary equipment, apparatus, and PPE for first responders.

In certain Iowa cities direct money from the railroads has already been provided. As the organization representing fire fighters and other first responders in Iowa, we encourage the Surface Transportation Board to direct that these funds MUST be used to enhance emergency response, training and fire fighter safety and not diverted to other uses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ryan Hanghian  
President