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April 4, 2024

Cynthia T. Brown  
Chief, Section of Administration  
Surface Transportation Board  
Office of Proceedings  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423

Re. Docket No. 36744, *Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation-Control-Iowa Northern Railway Company.*

Dear Ms. Brown:

The reason(s) for this letter is to protest/oppose the proposed acquisition and control of the Iowa Northern Railway by Canada based, Canadian National Railway Company or CN.

Stated Reason(s): The negative potential impact to agriculture and the long-term direction of food production including supply chains in the United States. The definition of control.

A recent support statement submitted to your office by Omaha, Nebraska based Scoular Inc. states: *"We are excited that the acquisition would provide single-line pricing from both grain elevators and processors to destination markets."*

To date, I've not seen any information from the Canadian National Railway either real or imagined of whether a statement like this would actually happen if this proposed acquisition were to happen. This includes real-world issues such as rate design, service intervals, carload equipment availability and continuing industry issues involving precision scheduled railroading.

Meanwhile, I believe that some facts foreshadow this proposed acquisition of the Iowa Northern Railway and the impact to agricultural and food production in the United States. These are:

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- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation owns and/or controls over 53.8 million shares or 7.25% of Canadian National (CN) stock. This is followed on by another 39.3 million shares that are owned or controlled by Microsoft Corporation. It is said that Bill Gates either directly or indirectly controls over 9.00% of the Canadian National (CN).
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has and continues to invest in the John Deere Corporation, it is said that they control between 6-9% of the total shares of this leading manufacturer of agricultural equipment in the United States.
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation owns and/or 268,750 acres of farmland and potential uses of farmland across 19 states. This includes large holdings in Nebraska, Illinois and Louisiana and regions that are not only agricultural processing regions but are also served by the railroad operations of the Canada based Canadian National Railway (CN).

It is on the basis of agriculture and food production that I base my protest/opposition to the proposed acquisition. I question whether this proposed transaction is a vertical integration of capital and strategy instead of being in the interest(s) of a vital commodities needed to sustain life.

I respectfully ask that your office work towards better information and clarification of these issues before this proposed acquisition under FD 36744 is allowed to proceed.

Sincerely,

Steven Connolly

Certification:

I certify that a copy of this exact submission has been sent to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation at 500 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, North, Seattle, Washington 98109 by U.S. Mail, Regular Delivery.

CC. Parties of Record.

