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September 21, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
Atten: Charles D. Nottingham
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Canadian National Railway's purchase of the EJ & E rail line.

Dear Mr. Nottingham:

I am writing to you as the Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board to express my concerns with the proposed Canadian National Railway's purchase of the EJ & E rail line located just southwest of Chicago, IL. And to ask that you seriously consider denying this request because of the negative impact that the increase in the proposed usage of these tracks will have on the quality of life for those residents currently living in the communities that will be affected by the sale.

I have been a resident of the Plainfield/Joliet area in Will County, Illinois since 1996. Since that time the area surrounding these communities has seen an exponential growth of residential development; in fact during the last ten years, Will County has been part of one of the fastest growing housing markets in the nation. As you are aware part of the rail line currently controlled by EJ & E forms a horseshoe which circles around the Joliet and Plainfield communities before it makes its way east toward Chicago. As the result, these areas will be significantly impacted by the increase volume of rail traffic now being proposed.

My family's home is located in a subdivision that is just east of the EJ & E tracks. The district office for our local police department is located west of the EJ & E tracks and the fire department serving our community is located east of the EJ & E line. Likewise, the high school and several middle and elementary schools servicing our communities are only accessible by crossing the EJ & E tracks. Thus, if the Canadian National Railway's plan is approved and they significantly increase both the size and number of trains that are using this track, you are insuring that individuals who depend on vital governmental services; whether it be, access to schools, ambulance services, fire and police protection, will all be negatively affected due to the fact that almost all of the grade crossing affecting these communities are at ground level.

However, the potential impact of this sale is not limited to just delays which will be caused by the change in the track's usage. Keep in mind that Canadian National Railway's plans will significantly increase noise levels for residents in the area by adding additional rail cars as well as increasing the number of trains placed on these tracks. It has also been discussed that that train usage contemplated by the Canadian National Railway will result in tank cars carrying hazardous materials being transported on tracks which are literally within a couple of hundred feet of some residences; which in itself is a disaster waiting to happen.

Not only will the proposed sale impact our quality of life, it will also have a negative affect on our housing values which have already been significantly eroded by market conditions outside of our control, and to top it all off, it is my understanding that if this purchase does goes through, a major portion of the cost that will be necessary to improve the crossings will be borne by the local taxpayers. Thus, not only will we see our property values drop as the result of the increased use. Not only will we see the quality of our lives disrupted by the increased traffic, noise, potential hazards and delays caused by the longer and more frequent use of the tracks. But we will be

required to commit huge sums of tax dollars to improve and maintain the crossings . . . all without any economic benefit to the very homeowners it will impact. To address a serious problem that is affecting the Chicago area by knowingly and intentionally transporting the it to our communities is simply morally and ethically wrong.

It is my understanding that the Village of Plainfield was established before these tracks were ever laid. For years these tracks have seen limited use hauling coal and other minor freight. To approve of such a major change, knowing that IT WILL negatively impact homeowners who are struggling just to keep what they have, is wrong and I would ask that you reject the plan.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Britt
Michele J. Britt
Thomas M. and Michele J. Britt