

September 30, 2008

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface transportation Board
395 E. Street SW
Washington DC, 20423

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball

Recently, many Americans spent a weekend watching Hurricane Ike take its toll on the Galveston and Houston Texas areas. Many of the residents vowed to rebuild their devastated properties and make them even better than they were before the storm. Although I wish them well in their endeavor, I couldn't help but see a parallel with the approaching Canadian National Railroad "Storm". Both the storm ravaged areas of Texas and the Barrington / Lake Zurich area will be forever changed by their "Storms", however, only one has the potential of being a better place afterward.

Like many residents building in the area in the late 1980's, I built my house next to a reasonably dormant railroad. Two 10 - 20 car trains passed each weekday and no train traffic appeared on weekends. We raised two children in our home along the tracks and never felt the need for a fence. The orange EJ&E engines chugging by were more a form of entertainment than a nuisance. They helped one to appreciate the wonderful silence of the area, as the train passed into the distance.

The years passed and more trains started using the tracks. First, it was a couple of Union Pacific coal trains, and later, one or two of the Canadian National trains. The CN trains were different then the ones we had seen in previous years from the EJ&E and the UP. The CN trains hauled many tanker cars containing, by their placards, hazardous and explosive materials. Although I was concerned, the relatively slow speeds of the trains and the low volume (2 a day) led me to believe that it was still safe to live along the tracks. I did tell my wife, that if a train ever derailed in our back yard, to gather up the kids and drive away as fast as possible. That's a heck of a thing to have to tell your spouse.

Now, the CN storm approaches. And it is almost a perfect storm. It threatens to make our homes and neighborhoods too unpleasant and unsafe to live in, at a time when it is almost impossible to sell them and leave. I've been at several of the meetings and open houses that the STB has hosted so I know you are aware of the many, many concerns of the residents and villages along EJ&E tracks. I believe they are all valid concerns.

I respectfully request that the STB not approve the sale of the EJ&E Railroad to the Canadian National Railroad. Approving this sale would be creating the perfect storm that many of the villages, towns and residents along the EJ&E will never be able to recover from.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Dwyer
5 Dunwick Court
Barrington, IL. 60010