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Docket #:

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Subject: * CN aquisition of EJ&E line in Chicago Area
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Message: Surface Transportation Board

August 26, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in opposition to the proposed EJ&E Railway purchase by Canadian National Railroad. There are several reasons why it should not be allowed:

1. Canadian National is a multinational - 60% owned by Canadians will benefit. 75% of all CN traffic passes through Chicago.
 - a. It is a misnomer that the transaction will had economic benefit to the Chicago region - most of the freight will not even stop here but continue on the old IC lines to the Gulf of Mexico and Latin America.
 - b. In fact, the CN applications to federal regulators talk about job loss as a result of the deal.
 - c. CN also talks about working with communities - "but only doing their fair share"
2. Many towns, including Buffalo Grove and their Congressman like this transaction because they believe that it will reduce rail traffic in their regions.
 - a. The biggest worry should be Western Springs US Rep Dan Lipinski as he the only Illinois congressman that sits on the House Transportation Committee - which oversees the STB. He is making his decision because it is good for his community, but not for other. The views are not only opportunistic but short sighted Opportunistic in wanting to shed their problem on to us Short sighted in that they think CN traffic will decrease.
3. Rail operations: The staging locations for "interlocking" of other rail crossing seems inadequate and the STB just suggests the CN work with UP/Metra. The old EJ&E agreement calls for passenger traffic to have priority. Trains will be sitting in residential and public school areas causing safety and environmental hazards.
4. Safety:
 - a. Quite zones only address Barrington

- b. Further the EIS states that the Lake Zurich Rural Fire Protection is our service provider, they are far away.
- c. Safety is often referred to as a statistic. Increased trains in one area are supposedly offset by a decrease in another - even though the other region maybe presently more equipped to deal with the trains
- d. For almost all mitigation outcomes - they suggest fencing, signs and information material - only. This increased traffic is running adjacent to 3000 students at Barrington High School.
- 5. Transportation Systems (Highways)
 - a. The only intersection STB calls for road mitigation is Rt 59 and then they suggest that typically the railroad only pays for 5-10%. Lake-Cook road is not even mentioned and has no regard for the Barrington high school safety, foot/vehicle traffic.
- 6. The STB suggests that many communities already have pre-existing traffic congestion at rail crossings and thus the EJ&E should not be used as solely the cause. Historically, rail crossing have not been paid for by the railroads.
 - a. The message - the communities have to pay for their own mitigation (grade separation) of road/rail crossings.
 - b. Emergency services will be mitigated through "dispatching centers" with toll free numbers pp.
- 7. ES-28STB does not recognize Crab Tree Nature center as an environmentally protected area close to the tracks.
- 8. Noise and Vibration
 - a. The draft dismisses the Hawthorne Lake Outlet structure and the damage observed in 2003. In fact the report states that "vibration by even the heaviest trains rarely causes structural damage - even small cracks near windows is unlikely from freight trains. This is false.
 - b. The STB did do an analysis of a dam in Frankfort, IL that was 1,500 feet from the tracks to make their claim. This is not relevant.
- 9. Water Resources
 - a. While the report that certain areas had higher risk - they went on to say that "Spill events are rare and in the event of a spill - impacts would be limited by prompt cleanup. BY WHO? Also they say spills are too speculative to worry about.
 - b. They do not address such inaccessible areas as in Barrington Hills to get to clean up areas or the effects on the domestic water supply (wells).

Overall, the STB depends on mitigation efforts such as Operation Lifesaver (a non-profit group) and looks at existing problems and their potential further exasperation as problems that the communities themselves need to address on their own. Mitigation is largely dependant on signs and toll free phone numbers - a total farce.

Secondly, much of their data depend on the reduction of trains elsewhere. CN has never guaranteed such a reduction but has sold it to pit one community against another.

Finally, in the EIS it states that the public must be specific about any desired mitigation and the reasons why the suggested mitigation would be appropriate.

Summary of other concerns / comments of mine

Rush of the deal w/ US Steel - seems concocted

Hazard Spills

Community never intended to handle this type of line and thus developed accordingly unlike the pre-existing communities with rail traffic - to ask us to suddenly change is incomprehensible

Water shed

Schools - only concerned about schools within ½ mile and then suggest fences as only mitigation - a complete lack of sensitivity.

Emergency response - totally inadequate - dependent on "dispatch center"

Bridge safety

Proof of existing property de-valuation

Unit train vibration

142 crossings at \$50 million a crossing

Call out Lipinski not representing the good of all.

Frieght estimates are understated due to Canadian port building

Sincerely,

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