

November 4, 2008



Ms. Anne K. Quinlan
U. S. Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Canadian National acquisition of the Elgin,
Joliet, & Eastern Railway.

Dear Ms. Quinlan:

I am writing to encourage the Surface Transportation Board to approve the CN acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway. This transaction has made good common sense to me as a way to ease rail congestion in Chicago since it was announced on September 26, 2007.

I am a commercial banker in central Illinois. Many of my customers are farmers, grain elevators, and fertilizer dealers who rely on CN for transportation service. Delays in rail deliveries have at times been big challenges for these businesses, though service has improved in recent years. I am sure you are aware of the vast quantities of fertilizer, grain and lumber that CN ships through the Chicago area.

The CN-EJ&E transaction is also attractive given our challenges with energy prices and energy independence. We all know that rail is the most energy efficient and environmentally friendly mode of transportation. Why would we seek to impede a private company seeking to improve the national rail network without the need for vast amounts of tax dollars? Compare this to the burdens placed on the public treasury and roadways by the trucking industry.

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I have read about the opposition of suburban homeowners to the transaction because they are worried about noise and the loss of the tranquility. This is just pure selfishness. Chicago residents have endured this disruption for years. When you buy a home near a railroad, you risk hearing and seeing trains! This opposition reminds me of rural homeowners who build a nice home only to complain about the noise and dust from farm operations in neighboring fields. Well...this land has been in crop production for over 100 years. What did you expect!

Finally, I am concerned about the amount of time this transaction has taken to wind its way through the federal bureaucracy. More the 13 months have passed since the acquisition was publicly announced. This is time CN could have used to make the required capital improvements in EJ&E and begin offering streamlined service. More broadly, I believe that slow regulatory responses have the affect of weakening the efficiency of businesses in America as they seek to compete in world markets.

Please approve the CN-EJ&E transaction as soon as possible.

Thank you for taking time to read and consider my comments.

Sincerely,



Brian D. McDowell
8 Valera Court
Monticello, Illinois 61856