

September 26, 2008

Phillis Johnson-Bell
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Ref: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Surface Transportation Board,

I would ask that the board opposes the Canadian National Railroad (CN) acquisition of the Elgin Joliet, and Eastern Railway (E.J and E.) for several obvious reasons:

1) Traffic congestion. Our community already has severe traffic problems. This increase in rail traffic would effect commuters getting to work, our children getting to school and impact several local (American owned) businesses. This would also put a major impact on the response time of emergency response vehicles. The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission predicts New Lenox will have a population of over 100,000 by 2030. With most of the growth south of the tracks and the hospital north of the tracks, this increase in rail traffic will definitely cost lives in future. Is just one life of an American citizen worth it to benefit a foreign company? With traffic congestion problems, presently with an estimated 25,000 citizens, with 100,000 citizens and increased rail traffic in 20 years this would be a definite inconvenience and danger to our community (presently and in the future.) Please do not make the mistake of not thinking into the future also.

2) Costs. Why put the financial burden on communities this is going to effect? With economic conditions the way they are, these communities that the acquisition would effect can not absorb the cost of underpasses and overpasses and any other cost that would occur. With many Americans losing their jobs, homes and struggling just to make it, we cannot afford higher taxes to benefit a foreign company.

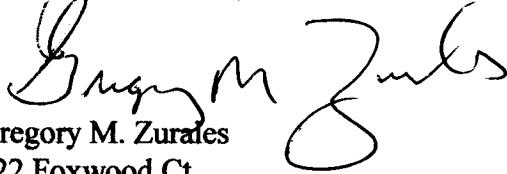
3) No economic benefit to our, or many of the surrounding communities this is going to effect. It will benefit the Port of Prince Rupert in Canada. With more containers going through that port it will surely take away some present and potentially future American jobs. Why lose American jobs to our Canadian counterparts? We need to help create more jobs in our country, not lose them to foreign competition.

4) Safety and pollution. The CN has a poor safety record. Why put American citizens (especially our children) at risk? School buses will have to cross tracks with a significant increase in traffic. With increased trains and increased population this will surely cause more risks for traffic accidents and more automobile / train collisions. More hazardous material through our community can cause a catastrophic disaster in the event of a rail accident. These trains come within a close proximity to schools, homes and playgrounds.

Also a hazmat leak could pollute the water of people who use well water.

The air quality would lessen. It would affect the forest preserves and the wildlife. An increase in noise pollution and vibration would also definitely contribute to lessen the quality of life for thousands of Americans.

I would like to state I lived (in Chicago) less than 1 ½ miles from Midway Airport (where the planes flew almost directly over my home) and near the Belt Railroad yard for 40 years. I tell you this so you do not think I am someone not accustomed to noise, trains, and traffic. Believe me when I say this community is not set up to handle this increased rail traffic. There are alternatives for the CN. It will cost them money (not American taxpayers) but with their huge profits, they will make it back in no time. One politician suggested they run track (I believe he said 150 miles) south of the populated areas. This makes sense. Please put the costs and inconvenience on them, not hardworking Americans. Please do not let the CN ruin our quality of life by running trains through our community. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory M. Zurales". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gregory" and last name "Zurales" clearly distinguishable.

Gregory M. Zurales
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