

Environmental
Review Process

Draft EIS

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Comments on the Draft EIS can be submitted in several ways:

- Written Comments
- Recorded Comments
- Electronic Comments

Written Comments: Written letters must be **postmarked by September 30, 2008**, to:

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423
Ref: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Recorded Comments: Comments may be recorded at any time during the comment period on the project hotline: **1-800-347-0689**.

Electronic Comments: Comments may be filed electronically on the Board's website, www.stb.dot.gov, by clicking on the **E-FILING** link. Please refer to STB Finance Docket No. 35087.

Here's my part...

To Phillis Johnson Ball,

I have several concerns regarding STB Finance Docket NO. 35087. The most obvious is the short term projections that the draft EIS used for its recommendations. New Lenox, Il is one of the fastest growing communities along the EJ&E railway. There are plans underway for malls and other commercial developments all over the area. It is neglectful not to consider the added traffic congestion that will be compounded by delays from up to 28 trains per day. None of our streets have overpasses to cross these tracks. There will be alot of impact on travel times and pollution as we and our projected "out of area consumers" sit in out cars waiting for so many trains to pass. There is no way to avoid them. To expect the residents to absorb the cost of road improvements in the future is unfair. Our taxes are very high here in this area of growing, working families. We

justify paying more for our children to go to good schools, but to pay for bridges that we wouldn't even need if CN took another route is like a double punishment. First, the delays, risks and pollution, and now we'll have to pay too?!

Also, there are several schools along these tracks. I am uncomfortable with the added risk of hazardous waste spills, as well as pollution so near to where children spend so much time. The schools also will have trouble with traffic for the busses. There is a safety concern at all of the crossings when you consider older students who drive and may be tempted to go around a gate to beat a train to get to school on time. These tracks also separate half of our town and those beyond ours from the nearest hospital. Emergency care is at risk with the possibility of so many trains and the length of these trains.

Along these tracks, within blocks, are some new assisted living and nursing homes for senior citizens. These people are bound to be disturbed, if not fearful, of the noise and vibration of so many trains every day. I'm sure the sound of the trains themselves and the whistles were not considered when these older people chose or were placed living in these places.

That also goes for the neighborhoods along these tracks. They are practically in some peoples back yards. When they purchased these homes they were figuring on 6 trains per day. To allow an increase as CN is proposing is unfair to these homeowners. Again, the hazardous waste and pollution is too close to homes, as well as the noise and damage from vibration. Property values in the whole area are bound to decrease as well with so many negative possibilities.

Sure, we'd want the trains to move quickly if they have to be here at all, but these tracks are old and I don't see them taking such an increase in traffic very well. There are bound to be safety concerns in that area.

As for our neighboring villages, Frankfort and Matteson are going to suffer many ill effects if this all goes through. Matteson's Cicero Ave. is already a congested commercial area. The residents are average income families. To increase train traffic without forcing CN to pay for the needed over/underpasses is irresponsible. The village is working to revive the area and this will make it less desirable.

I believe it would be in the best interest of all of the affected communities if CN were NOT allowed to acquire these tracks for their use. They should fix the problems getting through Chicago or chart another way that is not in the middle of so many towns. There is no benefit to the average community and the only affects we will feel are negative. Please do your best to stop CN from doing this. If that is impossible, please make sure that CN is the one to pay for all that is needed to keep their tracks safe and remove the negative impact they will be causing in so many communities. We should not have to lose on all counts.

Sincerely,
Paul D. Bertrand
Judith Bertrand
Matteson, Illinois
60443