

Public Hearings and Oral Arguments: Notice of Intent to Participate

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Docket #:	-35087 - -
Subject: *	OPPOSE CN PURCHASE OF EJ&E
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September 29, 2008

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

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 35087
Proposed Acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad by Canadian National

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

I am a resident of Frankfort, and I am formally **opposing** the proposed Canadian National Railway acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad.

I built my home in 2001 to accommodate life as a wheelchair-bound single mother, knowing that there was a rail line in my backyard but I also knew that there were only about six trains that ran on it per day. CN is proposing to increase the number of trains to twenty-eight per day. How am I supposed to cope with the increase in noise, vibration, pollution and inconvenience this increase will bring? Not to mention how this will impact the value of my home and my ability to sell it, particularly in the current economy.

Environmental Impact

Frankfort has nine residential subdivisions adjacent to the EJ&E. Three of our schools are located near these tracks. We have hundreds of over two hundred year old oak trees living near the tracks in Frankfort. If the CN purchase of the EJ&E is allowed to proceed, the sound, vibration and pollution of thundering, fuming freight trains every 51 minutes will be devastating. In addition the increased risk of a toxic spill due to the anticipated 600% spike in harmful chemicals hauling through town at 45 miles per hour begs the question, "Will the STB ensure that the final environmental impact study addresses the significant negative environmental impact to our community?"

CN Safety Record

It has been 25 years since the EJ&E tracks in Frankfort have received major repairs. That's one reason the experienced engineers go so slowly through Frankfort. Now the CN is proposing to increase the number of trains running through our community at significantly increased speeds on these old tracks. CN has already demonstrated a reluctance to implement Canadian safety measures, does the STB expect CN to honor US safety requirements? Please give CN's safety record your utmost priority when considering this purchase.

The Cost to US Taxpayers

The \$40 million CN has proposed to spend on infrastructure improvements is a drop in the bucket. Who will pay for the rest of the underpasses, grade separations and projected necessary infrastructure improvements that are needed to support projected population growth. Who will pay for the anticipated decline in property values? If the STB approves this transaction, then CN should be required to pay.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Owen
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Frankfort, IL 60423