

August 26, 2008

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

Re: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

As the STB considers Canadian National's proposed acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad, I ask that you take into account the concerns expressed in this letter. At the outset, I note that my husband and I are residents of Barrington, Illinois, and we have three young children attending school in the area. We both serve as attorneys to large corporations, and we can understand the facially appealing arguments for supporting the proposed acquisition. However, over the past months, it has become abundantly clear that the proposed acquisition would negatively impact the lives and safety of those in our community, damage the economic and environmental well-being of the community and lead to an unnecessary loss of life. In light of overwhelming evidence supporting these inevitable consequences of the proposed acquisition, I ask that you not approve the proposed acquisition.

There are many legitimate and significant concerns raised by Barrington area residents, businesses and municipal entities in opposition to the proposed acquisition, among them:

- Increase in air pollution
- Increase in noise pollution
- Dramatic increase in traffic congestion (which is already bad)
- Loss of business and reduction in tax revenues
- Decrease in home values
- Loss of the Metra commuter train route
- Adequacy of mitigation overtures

However, the concern which keeps me up at night is the issue of safety within our community. Barrington is an older community, and its emergency services were developed taking into account relatively minimal train traffic. The EJ&E train tracks run through the center of town, and the only area hospital, Good Shepherd, is on the opposite side of the tracks from the area's fire and police departments. To increase the number of trains by 400% – 600% will directly cause a delay in the delivery of fire, police and ambulance services to those living on the "other side of the tracks." Moreover, for those living on the same side as the emergency services, ambulance service to the hospital will be delayed. The increase in emergency response time is unacceptable and will

certainly lead to a loss of life as fire trucks are delayed in reaching burning homes, ambulances are delayed in reaching those in need of emergency medical help and ambulances are delayed in reaching the medical support only a hospital can provide. As we all know, minutes matter in the delivery of emergency services. The minutes being added to these emergency response times will, quite simply, take peoples' lives. Please give careful considerations to the comments by the fire and police departments and Good Shepherd Hospital.

The other significant safety concern relates to district school buses. School District 220's school buses cross the tracks 840 times per day, and two of those crossings have my child aboard. I recall a horrific accident involving a school bus crossing a railroad track in the nearby community of Fox River Grove many years ago, involving the brutal death of many children. With 840 crossings a day, the eventuality of a similar tragic event is hard to ignore. Please give careful consideration to the comments by School District 220.

I have often told my children that with power, comes great responsibility (the moral theme to one of my son's favorite movies, Spiderman 2). The STB has great power over the residents in Barrington relating to this proposed acquisition. I implore you to thoroughly investigate the issues involved and make a responsible decision that does not damage the livelihood, economic and environmental well-being and, most significantly, the health and safety of a wonderful family community. The responsible decision must be the one that does not value the financial interests of Canadian Northern over the safety and very life of Barrington area residents.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and those of other Barrington area residents.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan S. Rodriguez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Susan S. Rodriguez
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Barrington, IL 60010
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