

Ms. Johnson Bell,

I'm writing to you to in hopes that my letter will help stop the sale of the EJ&E railroad tracks to Canadian National. If this sale goes through, it will directly and negatively affect both my family and my community.

How will this affect my family as well as the average resident in my neighborhood and community?

- My wife rides the Metra train to work daily. This sale could delay her train much more frequently because West Chicago has a rail crossing from the EJ&E rail line and the Union Pacific rail line in downtown West Chicago. How many times will her boss allow her to use, "I was late again because of freight train interference"? It could also adversely affect her evening commute home in the form of freight train delays and delays at the at grade crossings she has to pass.
- We use Smith Road and Powis Road to get to Route 59 and/or North Ave or to go west from our home to our places of work. Our chances of being delayed by several minutes will increase greatly with this sale. As I previously mentioned, my wife takes the local Metra train to work each day. If she has to account for the possibility of being delayed by a train each day for up to 10 minutes, that adds greatly to her daily commute and wastes our precious time.
- The school my children attend, Norton Creek, sits immediately adjacent to the rail line. The morning drop off of several hundred children is currently smooth and easy. However, if this sale goes through, traffic in front of the school will become backed up to the point of gridlock. Instead of the 5-10 minutes it now takes to complete dropping off my children at school, if this sale goes through, it might take 20-30 minutes!
- The crossing nearest to our house is an at grade crossing. Freight trains traversing that intersection currently blow their horns. Currently, there is an 11pm train that blows its horn. Everyone in our neighborhood can hear the horn even when our windows are closed. If the traffic on that line is increased to the projected amount, I fear that there will be trains passing and sounding their horns all through the night. I don't want to try to sleep through that.

Additionally, here are some eye-opening statistics recently released about what will happen if the sale of the EJ&E tracks to the Canadian National is approved:

- The average number of daily trains in our area (north of the Union Pacific tracks) will **increase from 4.4 trains per day to 24.4 trains per day**. South of the UP line, the **increase will be from 10.7 to 34.5 trains per day**.

- The Canadian National train lengths will be much longer than the current EJ&E trains, **up to two miles in length**. This means longer delays waiting for the trains to pass through the at-grade crossings.
- The projected increase in the volume of train traffic and rail-related operations will result in more, and longer, blockages of the at-grade crossings in West Chicago and the surrounding communities.
- Hazardous materials traffic on tracks in our end of town will **increase from 21 carloads per year to 265 carloads per year, an increase of 1,162%**. The increase south of the UP line will increase from **31 carloads per year to 301 carloads per year, an increase of 871%**.

Please use my letter and information to the best of your ability to stop the sale of the EJ&E rail lines to Canadian National.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian Otte", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

9/18/08

Brian Otte
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