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The Honorable Anne K. Quinlan, Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-001

Docket # 35087

Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation - Control-
EJ&E West Company

Dear Ms. Quinlan,

The CN projects rail traffic will increase from 15.7 to 39.5 trains per day on the rail segment that runs along Aurora's eastern boundary. This increased train traffic presents significant challenges to the quality of life of our residents and businesses. Until the following concerns are addressed, I oppose the CN as currently structured:

- Traffic Congestion: At-grade crossings along the EJ&E are strategic links within the region for the movement of residents, employees and goods. US Route 34 (Ogden Avenue) is a major state highway linking several communities and carrying approximately 45,000 vehicles each day. The increase in train traffic will only increase delay, congestion, and emissions at this intersection unless the CN is forced to grade separate the highest volume crossings along the line.
- Increased Train Traffic Noise: I am very concerned about the noise impacts based on increased train traffic. This includes engine noise and surface vibration. The city is also in the process of establishing a quiet zone and does not want to see the quiet zone status at risk due to this transaction.
- STAR Line: Communities have invested millions of dollars in support of Metra's Suburban Transit Access Routes (STAR) line. This commuter rail service will serve to decrease congestion in the region through intersuburban commuter rail. The CN acquisition should not impact the future of the STAR Line.
- Potential Costs to Communities and the State of Illinois: As proposed, communities will face enormous costs to offset the impacts of the increase in train traffic. The region's businesses and residents should not shoulder the costs of CN's operational efficiency.
- Impact on Emergency Service Response: The impact on the region's fire stations and hospitals will be significant, especially since Rush Copley Hospital is located just west of the Ogden crossing and Edward Hospital is located just east of the 127th St crossing.
- Increased Frequency of Hazardous Material Hauling: CN's estimate of 43 carloads per day growing to 380 carloads per day is a serious concern. The STB must ensure that the CN's safety programs can effectively manage any hazardous materials issues.

The impacts to residents and businesses along the EJ&E line are real and should not be dismissed through the consideration of this transaction. Please consider these concerns as a letter of opposition to the CN acquisition of the EJ&E as currently structured.

Sincerely,

Danielle Paul – 2443 Avalon Court Aurora, IL 60503
President, Wheatlands Homeowner Association, a 991 home community within a ½ mile of E&J
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