

15795

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 am also a retired Municipal Police Officer, but also have 5 years of experience as a Railroad Special Agent. I have seen first hand, the devastation of derailments, chemical spills and over all problems that increased railroad traffic causes to suburban communities.

Environmental Impact

If the CN purchase of the EJ & E is allowed to proceed, the impact to surrounding schools, churches and neighborhoods will have devastating consequences. The sound and vibration of fuming freight trains every 51 minutes will be felt for miles along these tracks. The quiet neighborhoods along the main line will be adversely affected. The noise and most concerning, the increased risk of a toxic spill due to the 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?"

I for one as a Railroad special Agent have seen first hand what devastation a derailment can cause. Communities along the main lines have been wiped out due to disastrous derailments along the Union Pacific Lines in past years. When I was a Special agent I lived closer to main lines in the Oak lawn Illinois area, where trains departed from Chicago's Norfolk Southern Yards. All through the night, every hour on the hour, I could hear the massive consists of trains High-balling from the yard all the way past my home. These trains would also have to use their required warning signal, as required by the DOT, at every crossing along the way. I would be able to hear those air horns for 20 minutes at every crossing along the train's path.

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. I have seen first hand the old infrastructure in railroad properties. Some of the poor conditions of bridges, overpasses, track and equipment is almost mind boggling. Railroads for decades have ignored repairs and let infrastructure decay.

Emergency Response

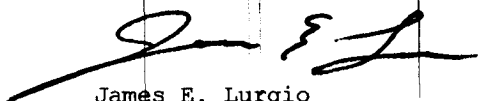
Minutes count when lives are at stake. With 28 trains a day, police cars and fire trucks will be forced to wait with their sirens blaring, and considering Frankfort's population is anticipated to top 55,000, the impact could cost lives. As a Municipal Police Officer, I have also seen first hand the affects of delayed emergency response

caused by blocked crossings. When lives are at stake, any delay could have disastrous results.

CN Safety Record

It has been 25 years since the EJ&E tracks in Frankfort have received major repairs. Considering CN's reluctance to implement Canadian safety measures, and its employees' "culture of fear," does the STB expect CN to honor US safety requirements? Please give CN's safety record your utmost priority when considering this purchase.

Respectfully submitted,



James E. Lurgio
728 Lincoln Lane
Frankfort Illinois 60423
815-469-4617