

1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CANADIAN NATIONAL
2 RAILWAY COMPANY ACQUISITION OF THE
3 ELGIN, JOLIET AND EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY
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9 STATEMENT OF:

10 STAN DOBOSZ
11

12 SEPTEMBER 10, 2008
13

14 INDIANA UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST
15 3400 BROADWAY
16 GARY, INDIANA
17
18
19

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2 councilman with the town of Griffith,
3 Indiana.

4 I would like to thank the
5 Surface Transportation Board for having
6 this public hearing at a site more
7 accessible to the people of Griffith,
8 Indiana.

9 My name is Stan Dobosz. I'm a
10 councilman in the town of Griffith. We
11 have filed our comments to the board many
12 months ago. Now we want the public to
13 voice their concern.

14 Also, I would like to thank the
15 STB for rejecting Canadian National's
16 request to approve the pending acquisition
17 of the EJ&E before completing the
18 environmental review process, which is
19 required by the National Environmental
20 Policy Act.

21 Yesterday I was in Washington,
22 D.C., and attended a hearing by the
23 committee on transportation and
24 infrastructure chaired by Chairman Jim

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1 oberstar. They were taking testimony on
2 HR 6707, the -- Taking Responsible Action
3 for Community Safety Act, TRACS. This bill
4 is cosponsored by Pete Visclosky of

5 Indiana; the effect on local communities
6 pertaining to public safety, grade crossing
7 safety, hazardous material transportation,
8 emergency response system, commuter rail,
9 and Amtrak.

10 The bill also requires STB to
11 reject a proposed acquisition if it finds
12 the transaction has adverse impact on
13 affected communities that outweigh the
14 transportation benefits of the transaction.

15 with the proposed sale and
16 increased railroad traffic, it appears the
17 town of Griffith will be the most severely
18 impacted community in Northwest Indiana.
19 There are no economic benefits for the town
20 of Griffith with the increased train
21 traffic.

22 This transaction would have an
23 adverse effect on property values. The
24 environmental impact, noise, vibration,

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1 whistle blowing, air quality will be
2 disruptive to those neighborhoods. A
3 derailment could be catastrophic to those
4 residents.

5 what is Canadian National's
6 history of safety conditions and
7 maintenance? what is the response time for

8 Canadian National's first responders?
9 Trains reported to be 8,000 feet long will
10 cut our town in two. In an emergency, the
11 delay in response time could double for our
12 police, fire department, and ambulance
13 service.

14 All three fire stations and
15 police stations are located on the west
16 side of the tracks. If crossings are
17 blocked, response time could double.

18 The town of Griffith, to protect
19 their citizens, would need to consider
20 building a fire station on the east side of
21 town; hire additional police to cover that
22 side of town, a solution we cannot afford.
23 Griffith has seven grade-level crossings.

24 The Broad Street crossing is a

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1 major north-south thoroughfare with 25,000
2 vehicles daily. It has been singled out by
3 the transportation board that it will be
4 seriously impacted by the proposed sale.

5 Delays at the Broad Street
6 crossing will only aggravate an already bad
7 situation, adding to serious air quality
8 situation, causing additional traffic
9 problems for our downtown area, which we
10 are trying to revitalize.

11 Once again, thank you for
12 holding this public hearing. Please listen
13 to the remarks by our citizens. They are
14 very concerned. I am also giving the STB
15 5,000 petitions signed by our residents.

16 Thank you.

17 (End of statement.)

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