



GEORGE CARDENAS

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September 23, 2008

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423
Ref: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

I am writing to you in support of the Canadian National Railway acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway (EJ&E).

As the alderman of the 12th Ward of the city of Chicago, the home to a predominantly Latino population, my top priority is to improve the area where my constituents live and work. From potholes to schools, our office works to address residents' concerns.

The 12th Ward is bisected by several railroad lines which convey freight, Metra commuter and CTA trains. These trains bring noise and pollution to our community. Our residents feel, hear and breathe railroad congestion every day. When freight trains idle, waiting for clearance to move ahead, the people of the 12th Ward feel the effects – more noise and noxious fumes.

The residents of the 12th Ward have a median per capita income of less than \$20,000/year, significantly less than the \$70,000-\$80,000 per capita income in the Barrington Hills and South Barrington. Many of my constituents lack health insurance or access to regular medical care. And, I expect that very few homes along the EJ&E lack for air conditioning in the summer unlike many residents of the 12th Ward. The lack of health care and proximity to idling trains without purifying air conditioning units jeopardizes the health of the people of Chicago and especially the 12th Ward. Given the advantages of the residents along the EJ&E, from an economic justice standpoint, shifting trains out of the densely populated center of Chicago to less populated area is the right thing to do.

I urge you to quickly approve the sale of the EJ&E to Canadian National so that my constituents can begin to see some relief and improvement in the air they breathe.

Sincerely,

George Cardenas
Alderman 12th Ward

Cc: U.S. Senator Richard Durbin
Mary Morrissey

