

September 30, 2008

Dear. Ms. Johnson-Ball and members of the STB - Charles Nottingham, Frances Mulvey and Douglas Buttrey:

I am writing to you as a very concerned citizen who has been a long-time resident in the Barrington, IL area. I have been closely following the CN acquisition attempts of the E J & E railway lines and felt it necessary to express my opinions. I have attended many meetings and have received information on both sides of the argument. It's probably not necessary to rehash every single problem issue with the DEIS as you are no doubt aware of these from the copious replies received, ranging from our congressional leaders all the way down to average citizens such as myself. Therefore I'd like to briefly point out a few of the glaring issues with the DEIS from my viewpoint:

Safety - in many of the towns affected, the dramatic increase in freight traffic would significantly and adversely affect every community along the railway, literally cutting off necessary services (police, fire, ambulances, etc) from operating in a timely and efficient matter. Barrington in itself has proven what a tremendously adverse impact the additional trains would have on these services in its community alone. The DEIS has downplayed the life and death impact of the increased train traffic, plus has minimized other increased risks such as hazardous spills. This in itself should be enough to delay or deny any deal until proper studies can be completed and necessary measures taken. Putting business over lives of individuals simply cannot happen.

Environment & Lifestyles - the main problem with the DEIS is that it has left out way too much, or has generalized too many important factors in its process. Besides the safety issues as already mentioned, contradictory data on air emissions and fuel use has been used in this report, plus the noise assessment methodology used is outdated. Of equal economic importance are issues such as residential housing, local businesses and tax impacts - which have been virtually ignored. In terms of congestion, CN may view longer waits at train crossings as simply an inconvenience, but they also affect safety and the way people run their lives. The DEIS has been substantially flawed in its review of affected crossings. Additionally, some of the existing rail lines (Metra, STAR) may be significantly disrupted - this was not adequately covered in the DEIS report.

"The Real Good" for the region - CN argues on an economic platform and stresses that it will significantly decrease traffic in a majority of the Chicagoland area with rerouting to the E J & E lines. The benefit to the region has been accepted without proof, and to date it seems like the taxpayers would be paying the vast majority of mitigation costs. Also, it has been noted that the decreased traffic in Chicago is really only temporary as the railways will likely fill up to capacity again in a short amount of time. How does that benefit the region? No review of other alternatives has been offered in the DEIS.

Additionally, I am personally shocked at CN's blatant uncaring attitude towards the affected communities, actually to the point where destroying towns really doesn't seem to matter. I run my own business and understand that "business is business", but at what cost? CN has repeatedly demonstrated - both here and in their native Canada - that they have little regard for anything outside of increasing revenue. This simply cannot take precedence over the lives and

welfare of millions of American citizens.

It was disappointing to hear the news that HR 6707 did not receive the 2/3 majority vote to pass the House of Representatives. However, it is still important to note that the MAJORITY - over 58% - did vote in favor of it and feel that the interests of hometown Americans are more important than the special interests of Big Rail. I am confident that all members of the STB will find, upon the necessary further detailed reviews, that the proposed CN acquisition will do SIGNIFICANTLY more harm than good to the region.

Your job cannot be an easy one, and despite all the negativity you may have been receiving, understand that what you are doing is appreciated. I sincerely thank you for your time and due diligence on this matter.

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