



Environmental Impact Statement

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CN | EJ&E

Voicemail Transcript

Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Canadian National Railway Company Acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company
STB Finance Docket No. 35087

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F. Name	Thomas	L. Name	Benjamin		
Title	Business			Dept	
Address	20366 Leah Road				
Address 2					
City	Deer Park	State	IL	Zip	

Transcript:

I have been a resident of Deer Park, Illinois for 34 years. Deer Park shares a common border with Barrington and we are part of the school district 220, where our children go to school. We also share a common threat coming from the proposed purchase of the EJ&E Railroad by the Canadian National Railroad. This is no small threat to us. With this purchase, the CN, Canadian National, will increase rail traffic through our area by 400% with much longer freight trains, up to two miles long, on these tracks. This added rail traffic will have a major impact on our area that can never be fully mitigated. Of major concern is our safety, with the increase of rail traffic, on the scale CN is proposing, our access to our local hospital, Good Shepard Hospital, will be significantly compromised since the two crossings my family must get to the hospital might very well be blocked simultaneously for an undetermined length of time. This could well be a life or death issue, why is Good Shepard access not considered in the draft environmental impact study? The same holds true for all emergency vehicles trying to get through or around the Barrington area. On school days, there are over 840 school bus crossings, plus the normal pedestrian auto traffic trying to get to and from the schools. Traffic congestion will be a nightmare with three major roads going through the center of Barrington having to contend with five grade crossings, including three belonging to the EJ&E. A 400% increase on the EJ&E tracks would make it impossible to get around Barrington, especially with the longer monster trains CN proposes to run on the EJ tracks. The study confirms the risk of rail accidents on our tracks of this purchase, so why is Canadian National's dismal safety record not considered in the draft report? Residents of Barrington will be paying the price for more accidents with our lives. A recent accident causing a chemical spill by CN should be reason enough to pay closer attention to this proposal. Why did the study minimize the risk of hazardous materials spills that could easily contaminate our water supply? We get our water from shallow aquifers. The economic impact on our community would be devastating, shopping patterns change, where businesses will suffer, tax revenue is lost, and real estate values will depreciate. The future of the STAR Line will be in question and the CREATE overall rail plan for metro Chicago will have to be reworked. To this day, CN has not addressed mitigation expenses, factually or fairly, why should the US taxpayer pay for the benefit of a foreign company or any private company that will impact an area in such a severe way? Is this now a nation where big business can trample over people just so that they can increase their profits at our expense? Barrington was on the map long before EJ was built, we have lived with trains, built our town and lives around the current train traffic. We get to our schools, we ____, we do business and shop, we worship, we receive emergency services, and we live together moving about as a community. The proposed purchase by CN will affect our lifestyle with a severe impact on safety, economy, environment, and future growth. I urge you to consider the well-being of the people you serve and not give in to a huge foreign company with a large lobbying effort that will add nothing to the State of Illinois, but will only use us as a corridor for their delivery of foreign products from the new Port of Prince Rupert in British Columbia to Memphis, Tennessee. If this purchase takes place, a beautiful village and its surroundings will be devastated and for what? A freight yard? Thank you very much.