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Kim Roach

Roach Family
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February 11, 2008

The Honorable Melissa Bean, U.S. House of Representatives
8th Congressional District
1622 E Algonquin Road, Suite L
Schaumburg, IL 60173

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Dear Representative Bean:

I am a 12 year resident of Lake Zurich, Illinois. My family of 5 lives in the Wicklow Estates subdivision on the north end of town. We are very concerned with the proposed purchase of the EJ&E railroad by CN and ask that you stop this transaction from happening.

The most important reason why this purchase should be prevented is because it's hazardous to children. School buses cross the tracks 233 times per day. The addition of 15 trains per day (currently we have 5 per day and CN estimates 20 per day) increases the potential for a serious bus/train collision. In addition, this increase in train traffic will cause more bus delays causing the children not only to be late for school, but leaving them exposed to sometimes dangerous weather conditions at bus stops.

Another increased danger to our children is the HAZMET material these trains are authorized to carry. The more trains, the more hazardous material is being carried through our village and the greater the risk for a hazardous material accident. Lake Zurich High School and May Whitney Elementary School back up directly to the train tracks. In addition, Lion's Park Baseball Field also backs up to the tracks. During the spring and summer, this field is used every day by the youth baseball league in our community. The park and soccer field in the Wicklow Village subdivision also back up to the tracks. The soccer field is used for the ELA soccer program which includes all kids playing soccer in ELA township. If there's a hazardous material accident on the tracks our children will surely suffer.

Although school age children are discouraged from playing near the tracks and from crossing the tracks, given the close proximity of the High School, elementary school, baseball diamond, park, and soccer field, chances are there will be children playing on or crossing the tracks at some time during the day. This, along with the increase in the number of trains, increases the risk of a child getting hit by a train.

In addition to negatively impacting our children, the CN purchase will negatively impact the traffic in Lake Zurich and its neighboring communities. Because the trains are so long, each train closes 4 main intersections at a time creating roadblocks for the entire town. This is extremely dangerous in the event of an emergency needing fire, ambulance or police services.

Because the trains cross so many intersections and block them for up to 10 minutes at a time, traffic will back up across main arteries and create safety hazards. These main arteries include Rte 22, Old Rand Road, Ela Road, Old McHenry and Midlothian Road.

Not only is this dangerous, it causes gridlock and paralyzes the community.

It causes employers/employees to be late for work; kids to be late for school, games and practices; and, parents picking them up late as well. I've seen cars turn around to beat out the train at another crossing further into town, only to find that crossing blocked too! Having this happen more times each day will only cause more accidents.

It's not only Lake Zurich that will suffer, but Barrington as well. There may be times where it's impossible to get anywhere in Barrington because of all the train traffic.

Please act to stop the CN purchase of the EJ&E Railroad as too many of your constituents will be negatively impacted. More importantly, please act to limit the number of trains authorized to go through communities such as Lake Zurich and Barrington.

Sincerely,


Kim Roach