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Johnson - Ball

28 Greve Drive
Centralia, IL 62801
January 24, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087
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Charles Nottingham
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, S.W., Suite 1220
Washington, D.C. 20423-001

Dear Mr. Nottingham:

I wish to go on record as being opposed to CN Railroads' Petition to STB regarding Finance Docket #No. 35087, Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation - Control- EJ & E West Company.

This petition would result in stranding Amtrak and its users and therefore effectively eliminate the City of New Orleans which operates daily round trips between Chicago and New Orleans, and the Illini and Saluki, which is funded primarily by the State of Illinois, which together provide two daily round trips between Chicago and Champaign, Centralia, and Carbondale.

I support Amtrak's recommendation on the new route known as the "Grand Crossing Route" which would be an alternative should the Air Line Route be eliminated. However, no such route elimination should be granted until such time as the Grand Crossing Route can be fully funded and is completed.

Over 400,000 people use Amtrak into Union Station annually. Not providing access to Union Station would result in a serious economic set back for all of Illinois and would be of particular hardship to the thousands of students in the Champaign and Carbondale area who rely upon this service daily. There would also be significant negative environmental impact because personal transportation would have to be used in lieu of more environmentally friendly Amtrak service.

On a personal level, I take the train at least once a month to visit my grandchildren in Champaign. I am always amazed at the number of passengers taking advantage of the train especially the college students.

I therefore respectfully request that CN's position in this matter not be granted until such time that the acceptable alternative mentioned above is in place.

Respectfully,
Lynn James
Lynn James

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