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Docket #: -35087 - -

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 Message:

As Mayor of Buffalo grove I can tell you our Board has gone on record in support of CN purchase of EJE. because of benefits to our town and the region as a whole.

There are 60 plus towns which will see a reduction in rail congestion
 We have recently joined a coalition of other towns who likewise support the purchase the coalition is known as START (Solutions to Area Rail traffic)Over 23 towns have already joined together to show our support.

Buffalo Grove will benefit by seeing reduction of between 17 and 18 trains off of the North central line which is used for commuter rail service. Those freight trains create conflict with expansion of rail service by Metra and severely limits number of trains and times that trains can run. Reducing that conflict can lead to more effective use of a commuter rail line on which millions of dollars was spent but which cannot optimize the number of persons getting onto rail and off the roads. This obviously impacts entire region and towns along line where more people might be able to be encouraged to get off the roads and onto public transit.

We have lived with those 17- 18 trains for countless years and we have not received any mitigation funds from RR or government The fact that we have lived with those conflicts points to fact that some of the examples used by opposition have used worst case scenarios as opposed to typical day to day situations to try to make their arguments in terms of length of trains and time that crossing may be blocked. I believe some of those worst case examples are exaggerations to bolster their opposition. I don't not begrudge their attempts to get reasonable mitigation Whatever they get will be more than BG and other towns who have endured for these past many years.

The fact of the matter is that moving those trains to EJE which has been an underutilized rail line simply makes sense. Chicago area is a hub for freight and reducing that freight congestion in the core of the metropolitan area is logical. Freight will move more efficiently and quicker and cheaper which is good economic reasoning

itself since it will help reduce cost of goods to the ultimate consumer and get rid of some of the freight gridlock that effects core of the metro area. For years the CREATE program has been talking about trying to reduce freight congestion in region, but limited public funds have been available to accomplish this. This purchase contributes to reducing problem with private funds for public benefit

CN of course needs to cooperate fully with the RTA and Metra to enhance utilization of all lines and areas for public transit including the planned STAR line . CN has publically committed to cooperating to that end and needs to be encouraged to do so to the fullest so needed expansion and enhancement of public commuter transit can take place.

With regard to the suggestion by opponents that we have no guarantees from CN as to how long they will keep those trains off of our lines, ,even without guarantees, the efficiencies gained by more effectively utilizing the the EJE for better flow of freight in itself insures that their will not be any impetus to reintroduce increased freight back onto our lines . I would hope that the Surface Transportation Board looks at the big picture in terms of the overall benefit to region of this purchase. Even though some towns will see some increased freight traffic , that is traffic that many of us have lived with for years without mitigation. As neighbors we all need to share those burdens in terms of what is good for the region as a whole.

Elliott Hartstein

Mayor Buffalo Grove