

221004

BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

FINANCE DOCKET NO 35087

CANADIAN NATION RAILWAY COMPANY
AND GRAND TRUNK CORPORATION
-CONTROL-
EJ&E WEST COMPANY

**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS'
NOTICE OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE**

The Champaign County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors hereby provides its notice of intent to participate in this proceeding as a party of record. The Champaign County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors requests that the following persons be included in the Board's official service list for this proceeding, and that they receive copies of all filings and submissions made in the proceeding as may be appropriate.

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The Champaign County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has fundamental concerns with respect to Canadian National Railway Company's ("CN") recently filed application to acquire the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company ("EJ&E"). As proposed, the transaction would effectively eliminate a CN rail line critical to the operation of six daily Amtrak trains that provide essential services and significant environmental benefits to the residents and businesses within Champaign County.

The Amtrak trains that operate over CN's main line south of Chicago—the *City of New Orleans* and two state-supported Carbondale-to-Chicago round trips—currently use CN's Chicago subdivision and St. Charles Air Line (collectively the "Air Line Route") between Harvey, IL and a point just south of the Chicago Union Station. Both trains link Chicago to Champaign, Carbondale, Memphis, New Orleans and eighteen other cities. Ridership on the Carbondale-to-Chicago route alone has increased by 67.5 % in the last year since the State of Illinois funded a third daily roundtrip. According to CN's application, if the STB approves its acquisition of the EJ&E, CN freight trains currently operating via the Air Line Route will be rerouted onto the EJ&E and all freight operations north of Harvey will be eliminated. The ultimate result, and the cause for concerns, will be the abandonment of an unspecified portion of the 20-mile Air Line Route between Harvey and downtown Chicago over which Amtrak's trains operate.

Taking this into account, the Champaign County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is very concerned about the impact of CN's plans on the residents and businesses within Champaign County, Amtrak passengers, and other communities along the Chicago-to-New Orleans line. The Champaign County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is pursuing an explanation from CN on how it expects Amtrak trains will get from Harvey to Chicago Union

Station after CN reroutes its freight traffic off the Air Line Route Based on the information it is able to obtain from CN, the Champaign County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors will formulate its position in this proceeding

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated December 13, 2007

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify this 13th day of December, 2007, that I have caused the foregoing
National Railroad Passenger Corporation's Notice of Intent to Participate to be served by first-
class mail, postage pre-paid, on the following

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