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SUSAN GARRETT

STATE SENATOR
29TH DISTRICT

Committees
Public Health (Chair)
State Government & Veterans Affairs
(Vice-Chairperson)
Appropriations I
Education
Human Services

December 5, 2007

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Secretary, Surface Transportation Board
395 E St. SW
Washington, DC 20423

221337

Subject: *Canadian National Railway Co., et al. - Control - EJ&E West Company, STB Finance Docket*
No. 35087



Dear Secretary Williams

I am writing in support of the proposal by Canadian National Railway Company (CN) to acquire control over the EJ&E West Company because I believe this transaction will improve rail service through the Chicago metropolitan area and will have no adverse effects on competition. I would also encourage the STB to complete its environmental review and approve the proposed transaction as soon as possible.

I am pleased that, with this sale, there will be a substantial reduction of train traffic over the CN line through my district from the current level of about 19 trains per day to two trains per day. This will create capacity for more frequent Metra trains and will reduce environmental impacts within my district, including air emissions, noise, and grade crossing delays.

I recognize that, as train traffic moves off of downtown Chicago rail lines, some communities along the EJ&E right-of-way will experience train traffic increases. I understand that the STB will be preparing an environmental impact statement that will assess the impacts of this increased traffic. The STB can impose conditions, if appropriate, to mitigate those impacts. I have been told by CN that it is reaching out to those communities to identify the issues and assist in addressing them.

However, these localized impacts, which I understand will be addressed in the STB's environmental review, in my judgment do not outweigh the significant overall environmental benefits of this transaction on the region, or the transportation benefits for shippers in Illinois and around the country. I urge the Board to complete its environmental review process quickly and to approve this transaction so that the residents of the 29th District and shippers from around the state and nation can begin seeing its benefits.

Please enter these comments into the record of this docket.

Sincerely,

Susan Garrett
State Senator, 29th District

cc. All Parties of Record