

1 SCOPING MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED CANADIAN
2 NATIONAL RAILWAY COMPANY ACQUISITION OF THE
3 ELGIN, JOLIET AND EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY
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9 STATEMENT OF:

10 EUGENE WILLIAMS

11 JANUARY 15, 2008

12 HOLIDAY INN

13 500 HOLIDAY PLAZA DRIVE

14 MATTESON, ILLINOIS
15
16

17 Surface Transportation Board

18 CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

19 Log and Distribution

20 Date Recd. _____

21 U.S. File No. _____ ✓

22 Scribe (initial). _____

23 STABCTG. _____

24 Co. Original - Job File

21 CHIMNIAK REPORTING & VIDEO

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23 HDR

24 REPORTED BY: Sharon A. Stuckly, 84-1640

1 MR. WILLIAMS: Eugene Williams. I'm
2 the mayor of Lynwood. And my address there is
3 21460 Lincoln Highway.

4 At present, and the way things are
5 laid out so far, I have to be against this
6 acquisition. And not that I would begrudge a
7 company trying to streamline or improve its
8 business or anything. I think that's all good.
9 I would like to see that happen for anybody for
10 anything that's out there. But when I think
11 about how that increased traffic will affect us,
12 I cross some of those tracks, one in particular
13 almost daily, and whenever we're stopped by a
14 train, it takes a little while and I think, well,
15 if I was sick and I was trying to get to the
16 hospital, I couldn't get across. And the same
17 problem comes up as you go to -- in Chicago
18 Heights trying to get to St. James Hospital. If
19 you are waiting on that -- if you are waiting on
20 that it's a miserable situation if it's an
21 emergency. And I think that would come up an
22 awful lot because looking at the charts and how
23 many trains would go by, we would have an
24 increase in our area -- it would be about -- I

1 think it would be about a little over 300
2 percent. I think it's like 320 percent, testing
3 my memory here. And if that's the case, a
4 gentleman that was near me just a little while
5 ago that's much better at math than me calculated
6 that would be a train running through our area
7 every 42 minutes. That would be miserable,
8 miserable situation for an awful lot of people.
9 And all I'm thinking about is just getting back
10 and forth to the hospital or going to the store
11 which might not be that far away.

12 In Lynwood, there's no -- there are
13 no stores -- major stores in our little town.
14 And you have to go someplace else. You are going
15 to cross tracks in one direction or another. You
16 can't get in or out because -- now, that being
17 said, I still don't mind if a company does well
18 and increases its bottom line, improve its
19 proficiency and all of that. So that suggests to
20 me that there must be some overpasses in this
21 plan that should have to be scheduled and built
22 that can avoid it because the noise isn't a main
23 factor with me. It may be with some people along
24 the way or along the entire route. That doesn't

1 bother me personally. It may bother some of the
2 people that I would represent. I'm not sure.
3 But if that were -- if we at least could get the
4 traffic back and forth and we take care of the
5 public safety issue, then maybe we can come up
6 with ways to handle noise if that's a problem
7 later on. But it's just getting back and forth.
8 I think that's important. So I wanted that out
9 there.

10 Plus I think it also runs the
11 potential of stopping some other positive
12 incentives that were -- we always thought that
13 there was going to be a Star Line, commuter rail
14 line that ran from -- I think Lynwood would have
15 been the last stop east before going into Indiana
16 because we're right at the border there, out west
17 to Joliet and then back north all the way up to
18 Waukegan. And that was supposed to help us with
19 an awful lot of economic development and growth
20 and to compensate for the growth that's been
21 projected will be coming in the next, I don't
22 know, 15 years I think is how far the study was
23 designed to cover. If that -- so if we suddenly
24 turn these tracks into a freight line that's got

1 trains running every 42 minutes, you can hardly
2 squeeze a commuter line on there, not safely and
3 maintain any kind of schedule.

4 With that being the case, I did pose
5 a question what about the Star Line, can we make
6 it go. And it was suggested that, yeah, but you
7 probably have to build a whole separate set of
8 tracks. That takes us into a whole separate type
9 of money and funding which would be so far off
10 it's kind of unimaginable that it would really
11 happen.

12 From that perspective, I started
13 trying to think, well, what would be lesser of
14 evils or how do we work in a way that everybody
15 wins. I would like the business to do well. I
16 would like to figure out how we can take care of
17 people because we will need people especially if
18 when we get the airport in Peotone or somewhere
19 in that area or if -- or if say that our state
20 legislators are talking about putting a casino in
21 the south suburbs.

22 If they do that, then you may want
23 that commuter traffic to be going back and forth
24 a lot easier and it seems to me now that we are

1 already -- seems to me we're already moving
2 freight through the area. Are we going to move
3 more and then people suffer because of it or kill
4 a potential benefit to the people that are in the
5 area and the job creation that we're trying to
6 do. So I'd the business to do well. But I'd
7 like to also keep our fingers crossed in hopes
8 that the other businesses that we are trying to
9 attract to the area will come too and will be
10 able to survive.

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