

September 20, 2008

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

I am a resident of New Lenox, Illinois, and attended a rally last week regarding the CN Railroad's purchase of the EJ&E Railroad. I have to admit that I had not paid much attention to the purchase until yesterday. I hope that I'm not too late to express my extreme concerns over this matter.

It is my understanding that if the purchase goes through, there could be an increase up to and possibly exceeding 28 trains per day going through my town, with the trains being anywhere from 1 to 3 miles in length.

There are so many concerns that I have:

1. This is a residential area and with that type of increase in train traffic, the amount of air pollution that will come from the trains as well as the cars that have to sit idling at the railroad crossing waiting for a 3 mile long train to pass, is unacceptable and dangerous. The increased noise and vibration from that many trains every day will make life miserable.
2. There will be an increase in train/car accidents. When the high school kids are running late for school, and the railroad crossing gates are coming down or are already down, they **WILL** try to beat the train to avoid being late for school for fear of getting a detention. They don't think of the big picture - that they could possible lose their life - they only think about getting to school before the bell rings - no matter the cost. Adults will do the same thing - even though they should know better.
3. The danger to our children's lives in front of our own homes will increase as people try to race the train to the next crossing by driving down side streets at higher rates of speed than allowed just to make it over the tracks before the train gets there.
4. Is there going to be a guarantee that the trains will not run during the peak periods of the day when people are leaving for work in the mornings and the school buses are picking up the children for school? If there is no guarantee, I can't imagine how many times the children will be late for school because of a train crossing being blocked. How many

people will be late for work because of a train crossing being blocked repeatedly? How many people could possibly lose their jobs because of this?

5. The fear that our very lives could be compromised because of the delay of police, fire trucks and ambulances, due to a railroad crossing being blocked by a passing (or even stopped) train, is very much a reality. What if it was someone you knew that lived on the other side of that train track, waiting for help, but dying because the emergency vehicles couldn't get past a train. This is completely unacceptable.
6. If there is an accident, and there is hazardous material on the train, the threat to our community could be catastrophic. That train track runs right next to thousands of houses, one of those being mine. Think of the lives that could be lost if there was a haz mat spill.
7. When the economy improves, the residential construction will pick up. The amount of automobile traffic will drastically increase. To have railroad crossings blocked for miles at a time will cause delays in every aspect of all of our lives whether we are New Lenox residents or someone passing through town.
8. In an effort to protect our residents, new firehouses and police stations will have to be built on the south side of the railroad tracks to insure safety to those who live there. This would be an incredible cost for the taxpayers to absorb. This is a direct cause of the purchase and the cost should be borne by CN Railroad.
9. The value of my home will significantly decrease due to the increase in trains, noise from the horns, vibration from the trains, added pollution from the cars idly while the trains pass. The train tracks run behind my home. I'm a single mom and have worked so hard for what I have, to help increase the value of my home. It's not fair that a foreign company can take that away from me.
10. CN states that the cost of the necessary mitigation should be paid for by us, the taxpayers. Why should the American taxpayers pay for these costs for a foreign company? This is a foreign company using American soil. There isn't enough money to cover improvements to our school districts let alone fund a foreign company's railroad.
11. Why can't CN Railroad build their railroad tracks 50 miles to the south in undeveloped areas? I understand that the railroads were here before some of the homes, but it was never anticipated that the train traffic would increase to these levels.
12. How does this benefit New Lenox? Will CN pay taxes for the benefits of using our land? Will it add jobs? It sounds like the only one benefitting from this sale is CN.

Please, this sale should not be allowed. It will have such a negative impact on our lives.

It seems that instead of us telling CN Railroad what the requirements are if they purchase this railroad, CN Railroad is telling us what to do. If this sale is allowed to go through, there have to be strict conditions placed on CN Railroad.

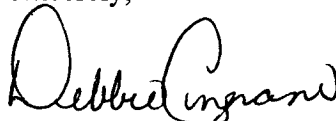
- A. It should be 100% CN Railroad's responsibility to create the grade separations (overpass/underpass). The Villages should indicate where the grade separations are needed. The Village is aware of the traffic flow, not CN. This cannot be CN's decision. They have already indicated that they don't see a need for any grade separations in New Lenox. And if any were needed, it would be completely the taxpayers responsibility - at a cost of over \$15 million dollars per grade separation. Again, we don't have the funds to improve our school districts. Where would we get the money to fund the grade separations?
- B. There must be grade separations in New Lenox. In the event of a medical emergency, the ambulances and fire trucks must be able to get to the other side of the railroad tracks. If someone is injured and needs to be rushed to the hospital, the hospitals are on the north side of the railroad tracks. There must be a grade separation to allow for this traffic.
- C. The residential growth in our area is increasing by leaps and bounds. Have you taken into consideration the changes that will be happening in our area over the next 20 years. You are only looking 5 years into the future. That's not reasonable. You have to plan further into the future.
- D. What about CN sharing the tracks with the commuter trains. With the increase in residential population, there will be an increased need for more commuter trains. CN must commit in writing to sharing the tracks with the commuter trains.
- E. There must be restrictions placed on the hazardous material that CN is allowed to transport through our neighborhoods.
- F. There has to be restrictions, in writing, to limit the amount of trains that are allowed to pass through our village every day. This cannot be left to the discretion of CN Railroad

I hope that my concerns are not falling on deaf ears. Our country cannot jeopardize our citizens' quality of life, safety and their homes for the sake of a foreign company.

When you make your recommendation, please vote no to CN.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns.

Sincerely,



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