

03212 • 021108 • VLK.PCT2.60010.O.N.

A CONSORTIUM OF LETTERS FROM
STUDENTS AT BARRINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Allie Vlk #35
210 EAST Liberty Street
Monday, February 11, 2008
Barrington, IL
60010

Letter to Congresswoman Melissa Bean

The Canadian National Railway has purchased EJ&E railroad therefore increasing the amount of trains by 400%. They purchased EJ&E because it would cut time off of their shipping rates, but the outcome of this purchase is looking pretty bleak. This could be very hazardous to the community, and there are many cons to his transaction. Some of them include noise, delay of all vehicles, and safety hazards.

The first issue I'll address is the noise issue. I live on East Liberty Street, in town, which is considerably close to the tracks. As I write this, a train is rumbling by, rattling my whole room. After it passes, it takes me a moment to re-gather my thoughts, a start writing again. Sometimes this happens during the night, and I am awakened by an over zealous train engineer blasting his horn at 3:00 A.M. With all the rumbling, shaking, dinging, and horns, it is very unsettling; I find it very difficult to fall back asleep. I can handle it every once in awhile, but I don't know about four times as much.

Another issue is the delay of vehicles. What would happen if you were having a heart attack, and your ambulance got caught behind a train, which can sometimes last 11 minutes? Well you might die!!! What if someone was robbing your house? What if your child was 15 minutes lat to school everyday? School buses cross the track 400 times a day already.

Last but certainly not least, the safety issue. "With 72 derailments in 2004 alone, CN's record for rail safety is deplorable:

July 10th, 2005- two CN freight trains collided in Mississippi derailing 23 cars and releasing 15,000 gallons of diesel fuel that burned for 15 hours. Resulted in 4 fatalities, 100 evacuated residents, and property damages exceeding \$9.5 million, environmental clean-up costs totaling \$616,800 cause- CN crew fatigue"

That incident also is an environmental problem.

The CN railway purchasing EJ&E is a very bad idea, and I think that the people should have a say.



Mackenzie Hewes

Barrington Station Middle School

February 11, 2008

The Purchase of EJ and E Railway Co.

Canadian National Railways desires to buy the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railway Company. If they buy EJ and E, they will run approximately twenty trains through Barrington and other towns each day. My outlook is that we will not benefit in any way due to this purchase. Some of the issues our town will face are: traffic increase, a negative effect on our economy, questionable safety, and noise pollution, Therefore, CN Railways should not be permitted to purchase EJ and E Railway Company.

If twenty trains will pass through Barrington each day, traffic flow will greatly increase. Each train will be between five thousand feet and ten thousand feet long, and they will take an average of four minutes to pass. Because of this, many people traveling to work each morning will be blocked.

Our economy will be effected in a negative way. Three hundred and fourteen homes in Barrington (eight percent) are within three hundred feet of the railways. Noise pollution from the freight trains, and questionable safety will greatly lower property value for these homes. Fumes from trains will also impact the people and public buildings near the train tracks.

The safety of trains is open to discussion. Buses from Barrington's school district cross these tracks nearly four hundred times a day. Not only will this purchase increase potential danger for the buses, but it will cause the buses to arrive late if they get stopped in front of a train. In nineteen ninety five, a school bus tried to pass over train tracks, but because of traffic, the back of the bus was stuck on the tracks. When the train came down the track, the back of the bus was hit, and this resulted in injury and death. This purchase will also be hazardous to people who are driving to Good Sheppard Hospital also. Being stopped by the trains for four minutes could be fatal. Emergency vehicles also cross our tracks many times daily. This includes ambulances, fire trucks, and police cars. For a person having a heart attack or internal bleeding, four minutes could be the difference between life and death.

Another issue Barrington's citizens will face is noise pollution. This is highly inconvenient for those who have homes and businesses near tracks, and the trains will travel through environmental sensitive areas, such as the new citizens park. This park cost fourteen million dollars to build, and this purchase would have a vast negative effect on the area.

As you can see, the citizens of Barrington and other local communities should not allow Canadian National Railways to buy the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railway Company, because of: increased traffic, the negative impact on our economy, questionable safety, and noise pollution. The are a summary of the impact this purchase will have on our town, and it clearly effects us in a negative manner.

The Canadian Railway Acquisition

The Canadian Railway Company wants to buy the EJ & E railways. If the CN Railway Company did buy the EJ & E railways then there would be 20 trains going through Barrington a day rather than the 5 that go through now. I do not think that the EJ & E Railway Company should be sold to the CN Railway Company for many reasons. It could make going to school for Barrington students take a longer amount of time and it could be dangerous. Also the trains that would be going through Barrington could carry hazardous cargo that could contaminate the Barrington area. If a lot more trains were going through Barrington it would also decrease the property values of homes near the train tracks. To top all of that off there would also be an even larger amount of traffic congestion in Barrington than there normally is.

If the Canadian Railway Company bought the EJ & E Railways it would take longer for students to get to and from school, and it would be even more dangerous than it already is. 800 times a day buses cross the train tracks. If a bus is driving to one of the many schools in Barrington and it had to cross the train tracks to get there it could be late to school if it had to stop and wait for a train to pass by. This would result in the students missing some important information they could have learned if they were at school instead of on the bus waiting for a train. Also many students who walk to school have to walk across the train tracks. If one of these students have to walk across the train tracks where there is no railroad crossing and they were listening to music they could easily get hit by a train, resulting in serious injury or death.

Another reason that the CN Railway Company should not buy the EJ & E railways is that some of the trains that would go through Barrington could carry hazardous cargo. If this cargo

was to spill and leak into the area of Barrington it could pollute our environment. This could be dangerous to animals and people within the community.

If the CN Railway Company were to buy the EJ & E Railways and send more trains through Barrington every day, then the property value of homes near the tracks would decrease. Since there would be so much noise by these homes people would not want to buy them for what they are actually worth.

In Barrington there is already a large amount of traffic congestion. I do a lot of after school activities and I know from experience that a place in the middle of Barrington that normally takes 15 minutes to get to from my house would take 30 minutes to get there with traffic. If there were to be more trains going through Barrington that would cause more traffic and it would take me 45 minutes to get to a place that should really only take 15 minutes to get to. Not only would it be a large inconvenience for Barrington citizens it could also be the difference between life and death for a Barrington citizen. If someone in Barrington needed emergency help and an ambulance had to come or a fire truck was needed normally it would be there as soon as possible. If the emergency vehicle was going somewhere but had to stop and wait for a train to pass by then the patient could die while the vehicle was waiting for the train to pass by.

For all of these reasons I do not think that the CN Railway company should buy the EJ & E Railways. It would be unsafe for the community of Barrington.

Letter to Congresswoman Melissa Bean

By, Kate Scott

The Canadian National railroad wants to buy the EJ&E railway, then increase the number of trains on that track by 400%. This would cut time off of the shipping rates for the company, but this would cause many problems in the communities it will effect. It would cause safety and traffic issues in the communities. The worst change that the Canadian National Railroad could make is increasing the number of trains running through the communities.

The increased number of trains would cause many safety issues. Recently, there have been many train-related deaths. One occurring when two trains were coming from opposite directions while the guards just went up for a second, and a kid was crossing the tracks, and the other train hit him and he died. Other safety issues include trains carrying toxic items on the trains. We have no knowledge of what is transported in those numerous train cars we see already. Bad things could be being transported by us if there is 400% more trains coming by us.

The increase in trains could also add to the already treacherous traffic in the areas near the tracks. On a normal morning it takes some students ten minutes to get to school who only live a mile away. This is because of the heavy traffic from the few trains we already have running. The trains create long jams of cars and strange traffic blocks that can be dangerous. Also school buses, if too many trains are running, the school buses will be late to get kids to and from school. On average, 400 times a day

buses cross train tracks. Imagine a train stopping 1 out of 20 buses. That many buses would be at least 5 minutes behind schedule to pick up all of the children.

Having the Canadian National Railroad increase the trains by 400% is the worst change they could possibly make. It would cause safety issues, and traffic issues within the communities.

February 11, 2008

Letter to Congresswoman Bean

What would you do if a railway wanted to add 20 trains to your local system through your neighborhood? What if there were already many accidents and traffic jams without the added trains? By adding 20 more freight trains to the E and EJ railway system many people are at a higher risk of getting hurt from car accidents, getting somewhere late, getting effected by the location of the tracks, and some of the economic issues. I definitely think that we should not add more trains to the E and EJ railways.

By adding the trains to the tracks people are going to be effected in at least one of the many way. First, the traffic in Barrington is already high at rush hour and with more trains coming by we are going to increase the number of car accidents in one day. And accidents cause more accidents making it absolutely unsafe for anyone to drive. Already, more the 800 District 220 buses go across the tracks in just one day. Each of those buses are at risk of getting in an accident. For example, a few years ago a bus was crossing a track in Cary. The streets were so jammed that the bus had no where to go except for the tracks. Since it was stuck there, the bus was hit by a train and 7 students died. We do not want that same thing to happen in Barrington or any where else for that matter, do we? Also, the trains take time to pass through the tracks making vehicles on the street delayed and maybe even late for something. One boy who goes on the bus every morning actually thought that the 20 new trains had already been added because of the traffic in the morning. Another kid said that he has waited for an

11 minute train to pass before, making him late for school. This doesn't always happen to kids though, many adults have been late for work because of all the trains.

Next, the location of the trains can be very harmful. The E and EJ railroads pass through many backyards of families. If these trains happen to be carrying dangerous or toxic items it could effect the family and be dangerous for children and adults. The items could fall into the yard and they could hurt the family. Though this is unlikely, you can never be to safe. Even though the trains will have some economic benefits there are also some issues with the items carried.

By adding 20 freight trains to the system on the E and EJ railways more people's lives are at stake. There are many serous risks of adding them. The trains could add to the amount of accidents happening in one day, the sum of time it takes to arrive somewhere, the amount of people being effected by the location of the track, and the contents in the train that could be harmful. Please take my idea into consideration. And know that if the trains were added many families in Barrington are at serious risk.

Thanks for your time,

Grace K.

Kaitlyn Murray

Letter to Congresswoman Bean

You're finally going to be on time for work, but then a freight train comes and it turns out you're 15 minutes late. I would be mad, there shouldn't constantly be trains running through the center of town. More trains means the average of accidents increase, possible toxic items in your backyard, and more traffic. There should most definitely not be 20 more trains running on the EJ and E railway.

With more trains running there are more accidents. When there is a lengthy train that takes about 15 minutes to get across an intersection, it causes frustration. Some people may do a U-turn, or go on residential roads to avoid waiting in bumper to bumper traffic for this extremely long train to pass by. When people are less careful that may result in accidents. Not only are the frustrated people at fault for the accidents, the trains are too! About two years ago at Cary Grove High school, 7 students died in a train accident. The bus had to stop over the tracks because there was not enough room to move forward. If there weren't as many trains crossing through town in the morning when the district buses are trying to get children to and from school, maybe this wouldn't have happened. Most buses in district 220 have to cross the EJ and E railroads at least 800 times a day. Because so many buses are trying to get the children to and from school on time, there might be even more devastating accidents in the near future.

On top of accidents, there is traffic that is already caused by the EJ and E railway. As I previously stated there are many students, and buses, that are affected by the trains. Some schools are already 20 minutes late to school and with even more trains there will be more and more delayed buses and late students arriving to school. Also, There are many people trying to get to work and are stopped because of the EJ and E trains. In 20 minutes a lot of cars cross the

EJ and E train tracks, but with more trains, all of those cars of those cars will be held back a mile from where the tracks are. It is said that there will only be 5-15 minute spans of when a train is not passing through the Barrington area. It will almost be a consecutive back-up problem. I'm positive that there will be many complaints about the traffic.

To add to this there are many trains running through peoples back yards. These trains may not be transporting safe items. These items could fall into your back yard and harm, you, your family, or your house. It is not guaranteed that there will be safe items being transported behind your house. This has happened previously and who's to say it will not happen again, and with 20 more trains that may possibly be running on the EJ and E railway I'm sure it will happen again. I personally wouldn't want toxic items being transported behind where I live. These items could be very harmful to you and there is no way that we could stop the CN to stop transporting those toxic items.

As you can see there are multiple reasons of why there should not be 20 more trains on the EJ and E railroads. There could be more accidents, more traffic, and toxic items in your backyard. If this company wants to merger with the railroad, then the well being of our community will suffer, and it is very likely that many lives will be lost.

Emma Hoffmann

BMS

The people of Canadian National railroads want to buy Elgin, Joliet, & Eastern railroads which travel through Barrington. When CN purchases EJ&E they want to send up to 15-27 more freight trains through the town of Barrington per day. Trains going through town will upset home owners, cause traffic, and produce a possible safety hazard.

First, if the trains come to Barrington it can produce a possible safety hazard. It will be very hard for emergency vehicles such as police cars, ambulances, and fire trucks to go to places where they are needed. If they get stuck behind a train, it could leave the person in need waiting. This wait can be dangerous maybe even deadly for the person in need. These freight trains can and will carry hazardous waste through our town. This creates an incredibly high possibility of a toxin spill. If the trains collide, derail*, or break apart we could have a catastrophe.

Second, traffic is another major topic. It will be almost impossible to get to work in Chicago through Barrington in the morning. Some people's jobs can't handle a longer commute. The buses to get to the schools go over many different tracks, most of the tracks are EJ&E. If these trains come to Barrington, the kids will not get to school on time and buses will get stuck. The freight trains are supposedly up to 40 minutes long. Which compared to Metra is HUGE!!!! Metra trains only take 1-5 minutes to pass. It is a big difference in length.

Third, property value is also important. The value of homes and property will decrease because of the trains. The reasons for the decreasing are the noise, the traffic, and the safety hazards. Barrington will look less appealing because of the traffic. Nobody wants to live in a town where they know they'll get stuck in traffic because of trains. The safety hazards will also

make our town less appealing. Some people who already own houses might not even want to live here.

In Conclusion, sending trains through our town is an all together bad idea. The trains will not only make our town less appealing but also less safe. Traffic, safety, and property value are 3 major problems that the trains will create. All in all, I do not believe these trains will be a positive addition to Barrington.

*72 trains derailed in 2004 on the CN railroad tracks. This is a sight that lists some more...

http://www.railserve.com/railnews/canadiannational_news.html

Letter to Congresswoman Melissa Bean

By: BMS Station 6th Grade Student

Canadian National should not buy EJ&E Railway. The biggest problem is the hazardous materials being transported. Canadian National thinks that buying EJ&E would be an easier and more economical way to ship goods. It is a more economical way to ship goods, but it is also harmful to the town of Barrington. If they buy EJ&E Railway there will be more delays in school buses, a lot more traffic, and ambulances would be stuck behind trains, hazardous materials being carried and more. CN should not buy EJ&E Railway.

Unsafe materials would be transported through the EJ&E Railway. There are houses only 9 feet away from the railroad. If there happened to be a gas spill, many people would be hurt. What if something heavy fell off of the train and hit an innocent child at play? That is the type of pain that could be caused to families all over Barrington. Canadian National should not buy EJ&E because of the perilous materials being shipped.

If Canadian National bought EJ&E there would be more delays in school buses. We already have too many delays in school buses. Just think how many delays we would have per day if there are 400% more trains coming through Barrington. If EJ&E was bought by CN, we would have to either buy more school buses so that if one of the Middle School buses got delayed, the Elementary buses wouldn't be delayed, too. Or we

would have to start schools at different times. EJ&E should not be bought because we would have more delays in school buses.

There would be a lot more traffic. At rush-hour, you can find yourself simply trying to get to McDonald's and stuck behind 7 or more cars while other cars are zooming by because of a train. Today, I was trying to get across the tracks for a try-out and we were stuck behind a 6-minute freight train. I was, you guessed it, late. Would you usually be able to get across the train-tracks if CN bought EJ&E? I don't think so. If CN bought EJ&E there would be too much traffic.

How many times do ambulances go across the railroad? There are probably a lot. What if one of those ambulances got stuck behind a 10-minute train and then the person whom they were rescuing died. What do you think the family of that person would say about that? Most likely, they would be very angry at Canadian National for indirectly killing their loved-one. EJ&E should not be bought by Canadian National because they could hold up ambulances.

EJ&E Railway should not be bought by Canadian National. If EJ&E was bought there would be more delays in school buses, hazardous materials being carried only 9 feet away from families, a lot more traffic, and ambulances stuck behind trains. Canadian National should not buy EJ&E.

Erica VanNest

BMS 6th Grade

February 11, 2008

CN Railway Dilemma

The Canadian National Railway wants to purchase the EJ&E Railway in order to cut time off the normal shipping rates. This will increase the number of freight trains going through our town by four hundred percent. Personally, I am against this purchase because it will affect us on multiple levels. It will affect the level of pollution globally, the amount of traffic in Barrington and neighboring communities, and the transportation to our local schools.

Pollution is currently a major problem in both our community and the world. The United States of America is one of the greatest contributors to this problem. The more freight trains that go through this area, the more coal they will burn, which will create more unhealthy gases in Barrington's air. This will cause more health issues especially for those with asthma and older adults. The supplies and materials that the freight trains are carrying will also produce a problem because they might be carrying toxic and hazardous waste. This will cause a major problem if one of these cars is derailed. More than seventy-two freight trains were derailed in 2004, and with even more freight trains going through our town, there will be a higher risk of even more derailments. Local houses are as close as thirty to forty yards away. This will cause much more pollution in that area making the air even healthier for children and families. Also, if a train is derailed on one of these railways, it would be right in the backyards of local residents. Clearly, if we let Canadian National Railway purchase the EJ&E railroad, pollution in our community and the world will become even more of a concern.

Imagine how much traffic there would be if we let the Canadian National Railway purchase the EJ&E Railway. With the continuing increase of our country's population, traffic is already a growing issue. Adding four times as many freight trains to our traffic will simply make the situation even worse. The amount of traffic can become a life-or-death situation. For example, emergency vehicles, such as fire trucks and ambulances, need to get to their destination as quickly as possible, and they cannot afford to waste time waiting for a freight train to pass. Also, the signs and lights that surround each of the railroad crossings in Barrington, cautioning 'DO NOT STOP ON TRACKS', are helpful, but do not always work. About a year ago, a school bus was stopped by traffic on the tracks when a train came. The bus could not move to get off of the tracks and innocent lives were lost.

Local schools' buses pass over the EJ&E railroad tracks more than eight hundred times a day transporting children both to and from school. This may delay school buses from getting to their destination on time. Most freight trains only take six minutes to pass, but on the way to school one day, the children on a bus, on their way to school, said that the freight train took more than eleven minutes to pass making the children late for school. Some times freight trains will even stop in the middle of their crossing, and once started up again, it may take twenty minutes to clear the railway. Due to buses being late for school because of freight trains, the children on these buses are not getting the valuable learning time they have earned.

In conclusion, the purchase of the EJ&E railway by the Canadian National railway will increase the number of freight trains going through Barrington and other neighboring communities by four hundred percent. However, this will increase the amount of pollution both locally and worldly, the amount of traffic backup, and cause problems for the local school districts.

Personally, I am against this purchase and believe you should be too.

Monday, February 11, 2008

Morgan N. #24

Barrington IL 60010

Canadian National Railway Proposal

Currently, an important issue in Barrington is the Canadian National Railway's proposal to purchase the EJ&E Railway. The CN Railway plans to use the tracks to help transport goods and other materials to and from their main headquarters. I, like many other Barrington residents, do not approve of this proposed purchase made by the CN Railway. If the CN Railway purchases the EJ&E Railway, the increase in train traffic will have a great impact on schools' and residents' safety, local traffic, and even economics. Although the EJ&E Railway runs through 80 communities, Barrington will be most strongly affected.

The Canadian National Railway's projections indicate that the freight traffic would increase from five trains per day to twenty. That's a 400% increase! With so many trains passing by (about one per hour), the traffic in the Barrington area will be more congested. Passing trains could delay response times for emergency vehicles and make a difference in whether someone lives or dies. The increase in train traffic will also have an impact on Dist. #220 schools and the 9,000 plus students who attend them. Some schools may also have to start about eleven minutes late! Barrington school buses pass EJ&E tracks more than 800 times a day. Also, the high school is only 600 feet away from some of the tracks, and almost everybody who walks to school passes them.

The safety of Barrington residents is also an important thing to be considered. Freight trains carry a vast variety of items, some that could be potentially harmful to residents and the environment if it is accidentally spilled. Also, many homes are dangerously close to the tracks. Some families' backyards are just yards away from passing trains. With many children playing outside, they are at a greater risk. In addition, the CN Railway doesn't have the best record for train safety. For example, on July 10, 2005, two CN trains collided in Mississippi. The collision derailed 23 cars, releasing 15,000 gallons of diesel that burned for 15 hours. The result was four fatalities, one hundred residents evacuated, and millions of dollars in damage and clean-up work.

If the purchase does go through, than even the economy of Barrington could be strongly affected; especially for the homes near the EJ&E Railway tracks. With noisy trains passing by so frequently, the property value of the homes is sure to decrease.

The EJ&E Railway operates over 198 mainline miles around Chicago and has a massive impact on Barrington. A dramatic increase in trains will take a heavy toll on the local traffic, safety of schools and residents and the economics somewhat. Join me and many Barrington residents and don't let Barrington get sucked into that world of chaos!