

SOUTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS GROWTH ALLIANCE

www.southcentralillinois.com

Counties of BOND - CLINTON - FAYETTE - MARION - WASHINGTON

February 11, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: Environmental Filing
STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

Following a lengthy discussion on January 30th regarding the proposed abandonment of the present Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway line that accesses Union Station in downtown Chicago, the membership of the South Central Illinois Growth Alliance, by unanimous vote, wish to be on the record as having expressed their opposition by Resolution 2008-01.

The South Central Illinois Growth Alliance is a coalition of elected and appointed officials, business and industrial leaders, members of the financial, educational, and economic development sectors, of the five counties of Bond, Clinton, Fayette, Marion and Washington.

The mission of the organization is a unified effort to attract new business, industry and employment opportunities to the region. However, the membership also reviews statewide issues, legislation and private enterprise regarding how it will affect our efforts and our citizens.

It is our determination that the plan being considered in its present form would be detrimental to not only our area, but all of central and southern Illinois from Carbondale to Chicago. The line that will be affected is the Amtrak line that serves some 400,000 passengers a year, many being college students and senior citizens.

We are therefore requesting the present proposal be tabled until a viable alternative is provided and constructed. We urge the STB to take into consideration the fact that the present route is probably the most time-saving route available which attracts the large and growing ridership, resulting in less pollution, significant energy savings and less traffic congestion.

If I can be of any further assistance, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Leonard E. Ferguson
Chairman

Enclosure

Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJL-EBL 107-25037

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RESOLUTION 2008- 01 A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO POTENTIAL CHANGES IN AMTRAK SERVICE ON THE CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN THE CITY OF CARBONDALE AND THE CITY OF CHICAGO

WHEREAS, Canadian National Railroad has submitted a request to the Surface Transportation Board to purchase the EJ&E Railroad and implement rerouting plans that impact travel times to Chicago's Union Station; and

WHEREAS, ensuring a strong transportation link between the City of Carbondale and the City of Chicago is vital to the continued economic health of the City, the downtown business district and surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, over 400,000 passengers ride these trains each year, and ridership is increasing (up 70% on the Chicago-Carbondale route over the past year due to increased service and higher gas prices); and

WHEREAS, the passengers would be forced to travel by other modes (primarily automobile), increasing energy consumption, pollution, and highway accidents and congestion; and

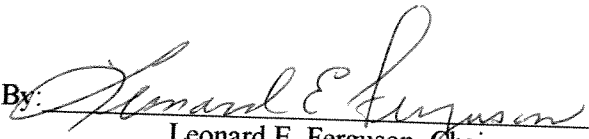
NOW BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SOUTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS GROWTH ALLIANCE, COUNTIES OF BOND, CLINTON, FAYETTE, MARION, AND WASHINGTON IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS as follows:

Section 1. That the South Central Illinois Growth Alliance opposes any changes to the existing Amtrak service between the City of Carbondale and the City of Chicago along the CN Railway line until such time as funding for construction of the Grand Crossing route can be finalized and until the construction itself is complete so as not to create delays for downstate communities and riders.

Section 2. That the SCIGA Chairman is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to:
Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

ADOPTED This 30th Day of January, 2008.

SOUTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS GROWTH ALLIANCE

By: 
Leonard E. Ferguson, Chairman


Witness