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SHEET METAL WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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DEWEY B. GARLAND
Director of Railroad and Shipyard Workers

August 19, 2008

Ms. Anne Quinlan, Esq.
Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

**Re: Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation –
Control – EJ&E West Company (STB Finance Docket No. 35087)**

Dear Acting Secretary Quinlan:

On behalf of the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association (SMWIA), I am writing to express our support for CN's proposed acquisition of the major portion of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company (EJ&E).

This transaction will improve rail operations in and beyond the Chicago area by allowing more efficient train operations and reducing congestion. Improved railroad operating efficiency is critical to maintaining and increasing railroad employment, shipper employment, and the state of the regional economy on which SMWIA members and our colleagues depend for their job security.

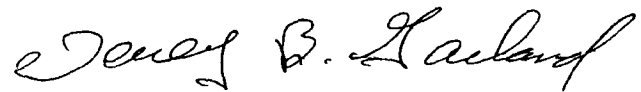
Chicago is a major rail transportation center. Unfortunately, the extensive freight rail operations in Chicago bring congestion on the rail lines and interference with vehicular traffic, particularly in terms of blocked crossings and train idling. CN's proposed acquisition of the EJ&E will alleviate these problems by moving trains off of CN's lines in the Chicago urban core, which will streamline remaining rail operations in the city and reduce vehicular interference.

The SMWIA supports this transaction and we urge the Board to complete its environmental review and approve the transaction. By approving this transaction expeditiously, the STB has the opportunity to take action that will make a real contribution to the enhancement of rail capacity and improved rail operations. A healthy and efficient rail industry benefits our economy and provides jobs, for rail industry

workers and our colleagues in other industries. The SMWIA recognizes that suburban communities located on the current EJ&E line will experience increased train traffic as a result, but CN is working with these communities to address these concerns. At the same time, even more communities in downtown Chicago will experience similar reductions in train traffic. We urge the STB to recognize the improvement to the quality of life that this transaction will bring to millions of people in the Chicago region, rather than focus primarily on a few affluent suburban communities.

Thank you for your consideration of SMWIA's views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Dewey B. Garland".

Dewey B. Garland
Director of Railroad and Shipyard Workers

DBG/pas

cc: Ms. Victoria Rutson, Chief – Section of Environmental Analysis
Richard Zeigler, General Chairman