



Preservation
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THE BURNSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, INC.

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September 11, 2008

Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423
Re: Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson Ball:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Burnside Neighborhood Association, an organization that was founded in 2004 to benefit the south side areas of Chicago. Our organization's mission is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in the Burnside community—especially those who are least advantaged. It is absolutely essential that the Surface Transportation Board consider the positive benefits of CN Railway's proposed acquisition of the EJ&E Railway lines, something I don't believe was highlighted enough in the Draft Environmental Assessment. The regional rail system in the Chicago land area is broken. Currently, it is not capable of sustaining the area's needs for freight transit—let alone for any expected growth. And beyond the obvious growth factor, the current weaknesses in the railway system affect much more than just freight train traffic.

Additionally, urban areas such as Burnside have suffered for decades from pollution caused by idling trains that are not able to travel through Chicago in a timely manner. Many communities, such as ours, have borne the brunt of this congestion way too long. Families who may be of lower income have suffered in silence and this acquisition will bring the environmental justice to these communities while still maintaining Chicago as a major railway hub. The mostly privately funded plan that CN Railway has presented will overall mean positive benefits for the area. It will decrease the number of idling trains, which will result in much less traffic delays, as well as decreased fuel emissions.

As a member of one of the communities most positively affected by this proposal, I urge you to look at the big picture when considering the benefits that the CN Railway acquisition will bring to the area. It is the best solution for the region and must go forward. This solution is the only way the region will continue to prosper and move ahead as the most efficient and well-run transportation hub of North America.

Sincerely,

Jean Walker, President
Burnside Neighborhood Association