

Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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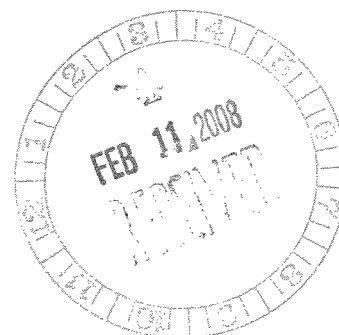
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February 11, 2008

Charles Nottingham, Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

HDR

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Dear Mr. Nottingham,

We wish to go on record as being opposed to CN Railroads' Petition to the STB regarding Finance Docket #No. 35087, Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation - Control - EJ & E West Company.

Granting this petition would result in stranding Amtrak and its users and therefore effectively eliminate the City of New Orleans, which operates daily round trips between Chicago and New Orleans. This proposal would also effect the Amtrak trains Illini and Saluki, funded primarily by the State of Illinois, which together provide two daily round trips between Chicago and Champaign, Centralia, and Carbondale.

We support Amtrak's recommendation on the new route known as the "Grand Crossing Route", which would be an acceptable alternative should the Air Line Route be eliminated. However, no such route elimination should be granted until such time as the Grand Crossing Route can be fully funded and is completed.

Over 400,000 people use Amtrak into Union Station annually. Not providing access to Union Station would result in a serious economic set back for all of Illinois and would be of particular hardship to the thousands of students in the Champaign and Carbondale area who rely upon this service daily. There would also be significant negative environmental impact due to increased use of personal transportation, which would not doubt be used in lieu of more environmentally friendly Amtrak service.

Downstate communities such as Centralia, which has 15,000 Amtrak passengers annually, would be dealt an additional economic blow to their already struggling regional economy. This is a regional issue affecting all communities in proximity to Amtrak service points throughout the State of Illinois.

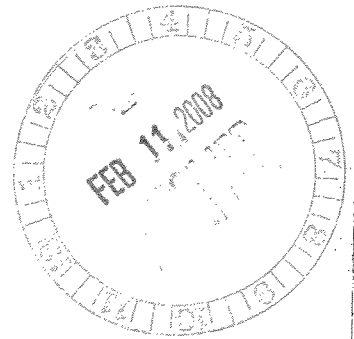
We respectfully request that CN's position in this matter not be granted until the Grand Crossing alternative is in place.

Respectfully,

Brian T. Courtney
Brian T. Courtney

Annette Courtney
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FAX 202-245-0458



ATTN.:

Phyllis Johnson-Ball, Environmental Filing,

STB Finance Docket No 35087

SENDER:

Brian T. Courtney

of PAGES:

2