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June 11, 2008

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

Re: Finance Docket no. 35087

Dear Ms. Quinlan,

As an Alderman for the City of Chicago, I am writing to express my support for a fair and timely review of Canadian National Railroad's proposed acquisition of the Elgin Joliet & Eastern Railway. I also encourage the U.S. Surface Transportation Board to strongly consider CN's timeline request for completion of the environmental impact study by November.

The protracted delays in completing the EIS are detrimental to the environmental and economic benefits that are expected to come from this acquisition. As a fifth term alderman, I understand all too well the negative impact of freight train congestion in Chicago. Many south side communities have long borne the brunt of pollution, traffic delays and safety concerns created by freight congestion.

While my primary focus may be on the positive impact of fewer trains in the communities I serve, I fully recognize that the entire region and nation will benefit from the smoother flow and expedited transport of freight through the Midwest. It is the bigger picture of improved freight transportation that must ultimately lead to the approval of the EJ&E acquisition.

It's important to point out that the EJ&E transaction is significantly smaller and involves far fewer parties than the last EIS prepared for a rail transaction, which took 11 months. Timely completion of the EIS should clear the way for the approval process to finish by December. The transaction's overall benefits cannot come soon enough for my community and for the region.

Sincerely,

Toni Preckwinkle
Alderman, 4th Ward