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July 16, 2008

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

Dear Ms. Quinlan,

As an Alderman for the City of Chicago, I am writing to express my support for the Canadian National Railroad's proposed acquisition of the Elgin Joliet & Eastern Railway.

The CN proposal is a balanced solution to the rail congestion in the Chicago metropolitan area. The freight train backups in the city have created pollution and traffic congestion for many years.

While I certainly welcome the limited train reduction in the 11th ward that the CN proposal will bring, I recognize that the regional benefit should be the primary reason for approval of the EJ&E purchase. Smoother rail service in the Midwest will result in improved freight transportation throughout the country. It will also help maintain Chicago's prominence as a freight transportation hub.

I strongly encourage the U.S. Transportation Board to approve the CN acquisition of the EJ&E Railway.

Sincerely,

James A. Balcer

Alderman James A. Balcer
11th Ward
Chicago, IL

JAB/dn