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Phillis Johnson-Ball
STB Finance Docket No. 35087
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

I respectfully address to you, as representative of the Surface Transportation Board, my objection to the proposed Canadian National Railway (CN) acquisition of the EJ&E rail line.

This letter will focus mainly on safety issues. According to CN's own officials, this is not a good thing for Will County. Who is it good for? Canadian National Railway! The Canadian government has released a report showing 57% of CN's locomotives and 50% of train brakes were defective. Twenty-six percent of the crossings had safety issues. In Frankfort there are six grade crossings which would be public safety problems. CN basically says "too bad"; let the United States taxpayers pay for any changes necessary to make the crossings safe. They say nothing about making the trains safe. What happened to "cost of doing business"? Canadian National made a profit of over \$2 billion, that's billion with a B, last year. They should pay for any needed upgrades, including underpasses and overpasses. Their equipment should also be inspected for problems.

Under new federal regulations, poisonous chemicals, radioactive substances, explosives and other high risk materials may be routed on the CN/EJ&E tracks, raising the chance of an accident which could contaminate our water supply. School buses in Frankfort cross these tracks eight times per day. The village would be cut in half by these tracks impeding the response time for first responder and emergency services to reach their destination. In some cases they would be cut off from any road leading to the two hospitals servicing the area.

Will County is the fastest growing county in Illinois and among the fastest growing counties in the United States. With the high cost of energy and the need for conservation, plus the rate of growth in this area, this rail line would be better used as a commuter line linking the north, south, and western suburbs. The United States as a whole is sorely in need of public transportation.

I hope the Surface Transportation Board will take a "hard look" at the safety, quality of life, and environmental issues before making a ruling. This is not a good fit for Will County.

Respectfully yours,

Pat Thompson
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