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Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

The draft EIS severely underestimates the impact of this acquisition on homes and businesses. This underestimation stems from a lack of any meaningful data to forecast the impact. The report references the presence of the EJ&E line since 1891, but fails to realistically evaluate the impact or more importantly the lack of impact from decades of the EJ&E operating with minor freight volumes. Failure to recognize the true impact of present EJ&E operations leads to defective conclusions in the EIS such as that at 4.6.4 - "Effects on community facilities would be minimal because communities have grown around the EJ&E line and adapted to its presence."

What the communities did was grow accustomed to, is a railroad that has virtually no impact on daily life. For at least four decades the EJ&E operated their rail line with next to no rail traffic and fostered an environment of a virtually non-existent rail line. Accordingly the communities through which it passes grew without any accommodation or concern for its trains. Getting stopped by a train in Lake Zurich is currently a rarity. I can go for months without it happening. Our communities were lulled into normal suburban development by an innocuous short haul rail operation. We are not equipped to handle its overnight conversion into a major trunk line and lack the infrastructure to handle it.

I agree wholeheartedly with the statement of the report at 4.6-6 that "Homes and businesses are often the biggest investment people have..." and "...Anything that might affect the value of these investments is a serious concern." As a result of decades of minimal EJ&E operations communities developed, good businesses grew and many people built high quality homes since for all practical purposes rail traffic imposed no appreciable burden. Homeowners and local proprietors had no reason to expect such a drastic change in EJ&E operations and built close to the tracks that will now bring day and night noise, vibrations and delays. This acquisition gives us the entire burden of a major freight line with no benefits such as public transportation.

Thus, the real depression in values to housing and businesses is closest to the case of building a new railroad where none existed before. Any finding that the past presence of the EJ&E lessens the impact of the CN acquisition plans completely ignores the EJ&E operations over the last decades when all of the major growth in our communities took place. Property Values will drop precipitously with the acquisition since the change it will bring is not incremental, but a dramatic step change that completely alters the nature of our communities.

