

September 10, 2008

To The Service Transportation Board

Ref: STB Finance Docket No. 35087,

My name is Bernard Parks and I am an E, J, &E employee. I fully support the purchase of the E, J, &E Railway by the Canadian National Railway. In my opinion, the sale has far more benefits to the region than it has negatives. Some of these benefits are; speeding up the Chicago rail system, eventual increase of employment, and Improved Interstate Commerce.

I have sat back and read all the articles in the newspaper and visited the Surface Transportation Board website daily and I feel that I have enough information to develop my take on the situation based on fact as well as personal opinion. I do not intend to offend anyone with my point of view, but it is just that all the same, my view.

I do not believe the STB should allow politicians to strong-arm the outcome of the decision that needs to be made. Under the STB's own decision, this was ruled a "minor transaction". Therefore, a full Environmental Impact Study should never have been initiated. I believe that Politics influenced the STB into a full study with its big voices and waiving fists, as well as upper class communities' screaming "not in my backyard". The fact is, the railroad tracks and their operations were put in place before many of these communities were established.

My opinion also comes from my childhood background. When I was a child, I was raised with several different railroads running through our community. I also lived in what was known as a "middle/upper class neighborhood". I learned early on that the railroad industry was an essential part of our nation's economy. Progress is vital to our current economy.

Being employed by the railroad, I fully understand these community's frustrations with being stopped by trains, and the increased emergency response times associated with at-grade crossings. However, the CN has stated their willingness to negotiate mitigations with the effected communities to limit these problems. Diverting CN traffic to the E, J, &E lines will help ease congestion in the Chicago land area which ultimately will speed up Interstate Commerce throughout the nation.

Finally, viewing all of the information, I believe that this deal is a large step in the right direction. I fully support the CN's purchase of the E, J, &E and hope the STB will agree that this acquisition has more benefits all around than it has disadvantages.

I thank you for your time and for allowing me to state my opinion on this matter.

*Bernard Parks*

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