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Docket #: FD -35087 --

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State: * IL
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Group/Affiliation: Mattoon (Illinois) Chamber of Commerce
Message: Please see attached Resolution Opposing Changes to Existing Amtrak Service by the Mattoon (Illinois) Chamber of Commerce.

Surface Transportation Board
CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087
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BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

FINANCE DOCKET NO. 35087

CANADIAN NATION RAILWAY COMPANY
AND GRAND TRUNK CORPORATION
-CONTROL-
EJ&E WEST COMPANY

**MATTOON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS'**

**RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO
CHANGES TO EXISTING AMTRAK SERVICE**

MATTOON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
500 Broadway Ave.
Mattoon, IL 61938
Telephone: (217) 235-5661
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January 25, 2008

Resolution Opposing Changes to Existing Amtrak Service

WHEREAS, the Mission of the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce is to serve as a leading force in economic and community development while fulfilling the role as advocate for Mattoon's business community; and

WHEREAS, one of the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce's objectives is to encourage and support economic development environment in Mattoon by creating and supporting a business climate that enables local companies to prosper; and

WHEREAS, a positive business environment for Mattoon must include access to efficient, reliable passenger rail service; and

WHEREAS, Canadian National Railroad has submitted a request to the Surface Transportation Board to purchase the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railroad which are likely to have a negative impact on Amtrak travel times to and from Chicago's Union Station; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a strong and reliable transportation link between Mattoon and the City of Chicago is vital to the continued economic success of the local business community and the population of the greater Mattoon area; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak ridership from Mattoon has increased 70% in the last 5 years, and public demand for reliable, timely passenger rail service continues to increase; and

WHEREAS, a large number of students attending Eastern Illinois University in nearby Charleston, Illinois, and Lake Land College in Mattoon find reliable passenger rail service critical to their educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce supports continued Amtrak service and encourages more Amtrak destinations, reliability of passenger rail service from Amtrak, and increased frequency on Chicago routes; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce opposes any changes to the existing Amtrak service which increases route times and delays between the City of Mattoon and the City of Chicago along the Canadian National railway line until a new route of equal or better utility is implemented. In addition, we urge the Surface Transportation Board to fully consider the negative impact to Amtrak if any degradation of service or additional cost burdens were allowed by the proposed merger.

Duly adopted this 25th day of January, 2008.

The Board of Directors of the Mattoon Chamber of Commerce

/s/ Michael Pinnell

Michael Pinnell, President

/s/ Mary Wetzel

Mary Wetzel, Executive Director