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Barrington PARK DISTRICT

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Surface Transportation Board
CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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Dear Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball, **LDR**

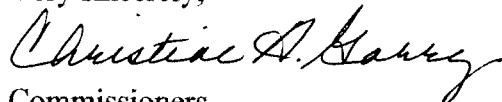
The Barrington Park District Board of Commissioners would like to express our profound concern regarding the continuing discussions by CN Rail to purchase the EJ&E line, to allegedly alleviate what they describe as "rail congestion" in the Chicago area. This by-pass clearly focuses on the financial benefits for their company and shows little to no concern for the human toll this transaction would take, should such a purchase actually become a reality. In various articles and correspondences the CN states that fewer communities would be adversely affected by the increase in trains through the area and that more communities would actually benefit. Is it then considered favorable to compromise the lives of a still significant number of people in order to be more profitable? The actual number of people whose lives will be in persistent peril will actually increase dramatically because of the increased traffic and safety issues, not to mention health and environmental impacts. For most, their way of life will be altered to such a degree that they may truly be in significant harm's way. This is just not acceptable and the lack of clear understanding by CN is not only disappointing but almost negligent. The vitality of the Village of Barrington will certainly be compromised but the health and safety issues cannot be minimized or ignored, and it is very unsettling to imagine that CN does not comprehend how its actions for pure financial gain can be considered more important than the human element.

The Barrington Park District has several sites that will be impacted to such a degree that liability issues come into play and safety for our patrons becomes of increasing importance. Two of our parks lie along the EJ&E tracks and should increased rail activity be an issue there may be times in peak hours of the summer that thousands of participants could be in danger, and potential transport to area hospitals or even immediate

emergency response to a given situation could be catastrophic or life-threatening. This callous disregard by CN to seriously consider these very legitimate concerns seems arrogant and condescending. The Park District has a swimming pool which in itself is usually at capacity with 1200 swimmers, ball diamonds, senior activities, camps with hundreds of children in attendance, concerts, picnic groves, and numerous additional activities, that during the summer months bring people in and out of the parks consistently. The mere discussion of trains running over 25 times during the day, bisecting major roads, is unacceptable. These are real concerns and are a high priority for the park district because unfortunately in the nature of our business it is not unheard of to have injuries on the ball fields or a potential drowning in the pool or a heart attack in the fitness center. An emergency vehicle, which is housed less than half a mile away, could literally not reach the pool or ball diamonds if a train was passing on the tracks or worst-case scenario, slowed or stopped on the tracks. It should be stressed once again that if someone or several were in imminent danger, the minutes it would take to find additional routes for transport could be the difference between life and death.

Several of our Park District commissioners attended the open house on January 9, 2008 and when CN officials were asked about what mediation they were considering to alleviate the impact on the Barrington community, not only were there no clear answers given, but the impression given was that no solutions were really even being considered. If CN were honest in their intentions and in their commitment to the communities, it seems that they would have given more reassurances to those in attendance. CN, "North America's Railroad" showed no indication that they were "working together for a better rail system, listening to the community." To contradict statements by CN President and CEO E. Hunter Harrison, there will not be reduced rail congestion, there will be more, there will not be a benefit to the environment, there will be a negative impact, there will not be fewer blocked crossings, there will be more, and the list goes on and on. This is truly about CN's financial gain and while CN has stated that our questions and concerns are important, there is little indication that our voices are being heard, and that is intolerable.

Very sincerely,



Commissioners

Christine H. Garry, President

Bill Knapik, Vice President

Linda Hovde

James S. Lundmark

Jon C. Stickney