

August 22, 2008

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball,

I am writing in response to the draft environmental impact study relating to the above referenced docket. I strongly oppose the sale of the the EJ&E tracks to Canadian National but realize that trains have a place in our society. I have lived next to the tracks my entire life and did not hesitate to build my new home next to them knowing that there were a handful of trains per day. I would like the board to reconsider some of the items on the impact study so that a decision on the sale can be made or at least mitigation made before the sale can go thru.

I am a homeowner in Frankfort and the EJ&E tracks are approximately 150 feet from my property line. By admission of the STB and CN themselves, my quality of life will be adversely affected if and when this sale goes thru. In the draft statement there is recognition that my property value will go down when the trains go from 6 per day to 28 or more per day. If that is in fact true, the study needs to take a hard look at this issue and provide homeowners in the same situation with some kind of compensation or an offer to purchase the property at the very least by CN. The STB should limit the amount of trains to a reasonable number as a mitigating factor. I did not buy my home knowing there would be 28 trains per day running nor would I have bought in that location had I known. This is a foreign company coming in and ruining the quality of life of my family and neighbors and they should have to pay for it if they are to make profit from my loss.

The other issue that is not being addressed is the noise level and what CN should do before they run their monster trains who will make monster profit for them thru my back yard turning it into a virtual train yard. I would hope they, at the very minimum, would have to have some type of sound barrier erected to at least shield some of the noise which doesn't even begin to address the increased vibration we will feel nor the pollution we will be inhaling.

I also think the STB needs to take a more thorough look at the problem CN says it is going to relieve by purchasing the EJ&E tracks. CN has not commented on the use of the tracks they are going to be leaving in Cook County and the City of Chicago. What assurance is there that once the EJ&E are at capacity, that they won't go back to those tracks causing congestion once again in the city and around the suburbs?

The STB also refused to study alternative tracks that are further out from populated areas in the middle of farm land. Using these tracks would cost CN the same and not bother populated areas

with congestion, crossing issues, pollution, quality of life and so on. Please reconsider the decision not to look at this alternative which would make everyone happy.

My children ride buses that run across the EJ&E tracks every day to get to and from school. One crossing at 116th in Mokena does not even have gates. The STB plan is not to have CN upgrade this crossing so not only does my quality of life diminish, I will have to pay thru my real estate taxes to upgrade this crossing and any other crossing that needs upgrading thru my taxes so that this foreign company can run their monster trains thru my back yard so that my children can get to and from school safely.

I would also like some assurance that this sale is not going to affect Metra trains. As a commuter to downtown Chicago, I've experienced delays because of freight traffic. Please review this issue further so as to include what traffic will be like when the EJ&E tracks are at capacity and the City of Chicago tracks are again filled with US company trains that have leased the tracks from CN. CN has claimed that Metra will retain right-of-way but I have a hard time believing that when a commuter train comes upon a 2 mile long train that was there first so Metra will have to wait for it to finish passing.

Another issue that the draft report is minimizing is the hazardous material frequency. Frankfort's water is supplied thru a municipal well. God forbid if there is a hazardous material spill, all of Frankfort's water supply will be contaminated. This is simply not acceptable. Please review this further and place some type of limit on these trains.

It seems to me that CN wants to rush this sale thru so that these items will not be reviewed as thoroughly as they need to be and mitigation be put in place before anything happens. This is another situation where the big FOREIGN company is trying to profit from the small individual. Please take a more thorough look at these items.

Sincerely,



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