

July 23, 2008

Ms. Victoria Rutson
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

RE: Docket # 35087, CN Purchase of the EJ&E

Dear Ms. Rutson:

As a resident of a community that will be greatly harmed by the number of freight trains that would operate through the region if Canadian National Railway (CN) is allowed to purchase the EJ&E rail line, I urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the interests of the residents of our region are protected against the negative impacts of this acquisition.

It is my understanding that the Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) on this transaction will be released shortly. This document will let the region know what we can expect in the way of public protection from your agency. I am very concerned that my community will be facing significant issues related to public safety, environment, traffic gridlock, emergency response times, and economic losses if this acquisition is approved. None of these issues are being adequately dealt with by the CN, which is why I am asking you to fully address these issues in the EIS.

Additionally, in finalizing the DEIS, please ensure the following two issues are fully and adequately addressed:

- CN's unwillingness to provide freight traffic projections beyond three years (a cut off that precedes the Phase 2 expansion of the major new port served by CN – the Port of Prince Rupert in western Canada). CN needs to provide capacity data and operational projections to 2020, at the very least. If the American Association of Railroads can demand taxpayer investments in rail infrastructure to accommodate a projected growth in rail freight of 88% by 2035, it is inconceivable that the CN cannot quantify its own long-range business projections involving the EJ&E.
- Due to the significance of the potential impacts to our communities and region, we must ask for a longer review period than 45 days to respond to the DEIS. Communities need 120 days for a due diligence review that can adequately examine the data used to arrive at the conclusions and to respond to the study's findings.

(over)

Additional Comments:

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Name: O J Meador
Address: 13447 Cranbrook Cir.
Aurora, IL 60502

CC: Illinois Congressional Delegation

Ms. Victoria Rutson

Additional thoughts:

1. Diehl Road is the main access to I 88 eastbound from my home in Aurora. With the three-fold increase in train traffic-this will only delay access to I 88.
An overpass/underpass at this intersection would alleviate the congestion, but who is to pay for this? CN must agree to pay for this overpass as well as one on Liberty St.
2. However, the rail tracks run just behind the new Metea High School in Aurora just south of Diehl Road, so the additional noise level will interfere with classroom communication. CN must also pay for a sound barrier wall behind the High School.
3. The overpass at North Aurora Road is in need of repair. I can see the structure is old and should be replaced. Who is going to pay for this so more CN trains can use the tracks? CN must agree to pay for this overpass as well as any other structure deemed necessary.

In summary, to retain the quality of life we now enjoy the above cost considerations need to be reviewed and reconsidered. To reiterate:

- Overpass/underpass at both Diehl and Liberty
- Sound barrier behind Metea High School
- Reconstruction of the overpass at North Aurora Road

I do not think it's the obligation of our community to pay for access to roads and noise deterrence so the CN can triple the use of an existing set of tracks. CN needs to be charged with this cost, not the taxpayer.

It's time we stand up for and demand that our communities have rights and these rights need to be respected-a rubber stamp of approval is just not acceptable.