

January 17, 2008

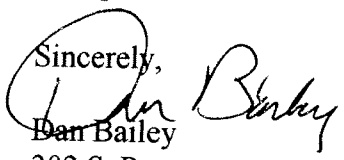
To all this may impact:

I want to oppose the acquisition of the EJ&E railroad right of way by the CNRR without a strong guarantee that the Metra Star line will be encouraged and facilitated. I do think that it makes sense for the rails to use this outer line to move freight. It is more efficient, cuts time, and reduces inconvenience for the local traffic. Yet the Star line is also a needed transportation improvement for our area. I understand that the CN would not allow passenger trains on the EJ&E tracks if this acquisition were completed. This is unacceptable. Starting up a passenger service should be a more gradual process without needing to put up front all the costs of laying new tracks for the service before it can start. This may be an insurmountable hurdle for Star service to begin.

In addition, I want to caution the public and regulatory agencies of the track record of the CN in facilitating the public good in its operations. I was a RR Engineer for the Wisconsin Central Railroad, WC that was recently acquired by the CN. During the hearings over allowing this acquisition, concerns were raised that the CN might abandon the local industries along the railroad afterwards. The WC had built its business and reputation as a railroad that would service and work with local industry. In fact, the WC helped local industry to grow and prosper by providing dependable service to local industry at a reasonable cost when the major railroads generally tried to get rid of small industry. The CN assured the regulatory agencies and the public that it would continue with the WC's commitment to the customers. Well working there what I saw was ignoring local industry providing less frequent less reliable service and increasing the costs. This worked together in a certain way so that when the railroad applied to the gov't to abandon a spur line or stop serving a customer they could just point to the decreased business (because they provided undependable service at increasing costs) and the resulting non profitability of that spur or branch line or servicing that industry. To keep the railroad both working for the local industry and profitable, management would have had to focus on and work to achieve this result. It would take effort. However, the CN bought the WC because it was a shorter route to move the goods it imports into the US heartland from Asia. To CN management the local business probably seemed an obstacle to higher profits. It seemed to me and other railroaders I talked with that the CN was doing all the right things if it wanted to get rid of all the local business in order to reduce its getting in the way of the more profitable long haul through freight.

The EJ&E RR and its right of way are very valuable assets for the Chicago region. Do not allow them to be diverted away from serving local needs to serve only as a short-term high profit center for CN Inc.

Sincerely,


Dan Bailey

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Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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