

MEMBER COMMUNITIES

Bellwood
 Berkeley
 Berwyn
 Broadview
 Brookfield
 Cicero
 Countryside
 Elmwood Park
 Forest Park
 Forest View
 Franklin Park
 Hillside
 Hodgkins
 Indian Head Park
 LaGrange
 LaGrange Park
 Leyden Township
 Lyons
 Lyons Township
 Maywood
 McCook
 Melrose Park
 Norridge
 Northlake
 North Riverside
 Oak Park
 River Forest
 River Grove
 Riverside
 Rosemont
 Schiller Park
 Stickney
 Stone Park
 Summit
 Westchester
 Western Springs
 Willow Springs

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Brookfield Zoo
 Triton College

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Paul Gattuso
 Westchester

VICE PRESIDENT

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TREASURER

Roy F. McCampbell
 Bellwood

PAST PRESIDENTS

Daniel Pritchett
 Franklin Park

Harold J. Wiaduck
 Riverside

Patrick T. Rogers
 Lyons Township

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Richard F. Pellegrino

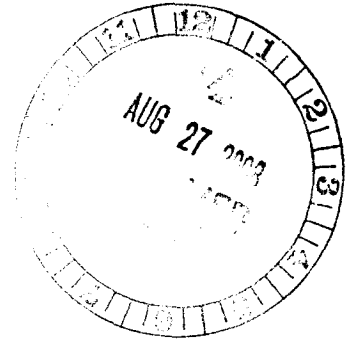
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W | C | M | C |
 WEST CENTRAL MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE

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 River Grove, IL 60171
 ph 708/453-9100 fax 708/453-9101
 www.westcook.org

August 5, 2008

The Honorable Anne K. Quinlan
 Acting Secretary
 Surface Transportation Board
 395 E Street S.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20423



Dear Acting Secretary Quinlan:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft EIS report for the proposed Canadian National Railway Company's acquisition of the Elgin Joliet & Eastern Railway. These are the official comments of the West Central Municipal Conference and the West Central Municipal Conference Transportation Committee. The West Central Municipal Conference (WCMC) is a regional council of government (COG) serving the communities of west suburban Cook County. The WCMC serves over 37 municipalities and townships, covering 200 square miles situated between the City of Chicago and collar counties surrounding Cook County. The residential population of more than 560,000 is diverse, both in terms of its economic, racial and ethnic composition and in its transportation needs.

The WCMC feels that the draft EIS must maintain a fair and balanced approach to determining the true impact of the acquisition. It is important that both the benefits and negative impacts be weighed evenly in this process. There are many communities within the region that will benefit from this acquisition due to the reduced rail traffic, a reduced number of accidents, an increase in air quality, an overall improved quality of life, increased economic efficiencies and several other areas. The arguments presented in opposition to the acquisition demonstrate the genuine concerns of the communities along the EJ&E route and it is our belief that these concerns were given due consideration in the draft EIS. The two strongest arguments posed by the opposition consist of the negative impacts to the local transportation network and the response for emergency responders. The draft EIS presents several strategies for mitigation in both circumstances. However, it is important to note that communities within our region have experienced the problems outlined in the draft EIS for the past several decades and have continued to co-exists with the freight lines.



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The WCMC believes requiring CN to shoulder the full financial burden of all the mitigation requirements would have a chilling effect on the economic viability of the purchase and on similar future railroad purchases. As in the CREATE program a public, private partnership would be ideal in dealing with the needed improvements. Improvements that are fiscally constrained and contextually sensitive would provide benefits both to communities, CN and the region and thus should be funded in a manor that splits the expense of improvements accordingly.

The WCMC would also like to express concern that no public hearings have been scheduled in our region. Again, if this acquisition is to be considered from a regional approach then voices from across the region should be given the opportunity to be heard.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the draft EIS report for the proposed Canadian National Railway Company's acquisition of the Elgin Joliet & Eastern Railway and to share our regional perspectives.



Paul Gattuso
 President, WCMC
 President, Village of Westchester

Richard Pellegrino
 Executive Director, WCMC

