

Remarks prepared for the STB Hearing on August 27, 2008

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Representing: Barrington Area Development Council (BADC)

My name is Joe Kelsch Sr. I am a director of the Barrington Area Development Council (BADC) and it's immediate past President.

BADC was founded 40 years ago with a mission to foster the development of the civic and service organizations necessary to the quality of life we now enjoy in the greater Barrington community. We played a significant role in establishing BACOG in the late 60's, followed by such notable organizations as Citizens for Conservation, Council on Aging, Good Shepherd Hospital, and many others. We continue to advocate for issues that improve the quality of life our residents expect — one now threatened by the pending CN acquisition.

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We recognize the significant role that the railroad played in the development of Barrington. Without the North Western, now Metra commuter service, we would not be among the most desired area communities in which to live. The CN acquisition would overwhelm our community with increased freight traffic—a condition that, if pre-existing, would have prevented the community from attaining the quality of life we now enjoy—one that is reflected in our home values and the tax base to support our excellent school system. That is the reality you must give priority to—the Barrington area is in large part what it is today because of its relative freedom from rail congestion!

Although our area contains a number of municipalities, we have developed into a cohesive community in terms of infra-structures-- including a unit school district, regional government COG, comprehensive land use codes, shared police and fire protection, an area hospital, youth, civic and service organizations, and church congregations-- that reach across the entire area. This cohesiveness would have been impossible without a reasonably efficient road system that connects our villages and ties them into the Village of

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Barrington-- as the commercial and civic hub of the area. All major area roads converge at the Village Center--and all intersect with the EJ&E. Any major increase in freight traffic would not only tie-up traffic far beyond what this already heavily burdened road system is facing, it would greatly disrupt the cohesiveness and quality of life issues I just cited.

We believe STB must give primary consideration to the concerns of our residents regarding these quality of life issues. And, while there may be economic benefits to the greater Chicago area from the proposed acquisition—they would largely accrue to CN at the expense of the communities located along the EJ&E.

STB has an ethical and moral responsibility to base its decision on what best serves the public interest—meaning “we the people”. You face a challenging task —what with the railroad lobby and other pressures to rule in favor of CN. In deciding you must be mindful of your responsibility to the citizens of this community. In doing so, your decision can be fair to all—but only if you require the CN and our Federal Government to assume full responsibility for the cost of

mitigating the identified road, traffic and safety issues—before any such acquisition can go forward. It is in your power to do so. If you believe you do not have such authority, then you must deny the acquisition request if you are to satisfy your ethical and moral responsibility to “we the people” of the communities negatively impacted.

Thank you for your attention.