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FD 35087

Janice Gonzales
1017 N Cedar Road
New Lenox, IL 60451

March 30, 2008

Surface Transportation Board
Re: STB Docket FD 35087
395 E. Street S.W.
Washington D.C. 20423-0001
Attn: Douglas Buttrey, Board Member

Docket

Re: Proposed Acquisition of EJ&E Railway by Canadian National

Dear Mr. Buttrey,

The purpose of this letter is to state my concerns with the acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad line surrounding Chicago by Canadian National (CN), and to ask that you hear my arguments.

The negative impacts that this acquisition will have on the surrounding suburbs of Chicago are many and varied. For the suburb of New Lenox, just east of Joliet, Illinois, the affects could be disastrous and life threatening. The path of this railroad cuts the southern section of New Lenox off from hospitals, police stations and all but one fire station.

The increase in freight traffic the acquisition will create will result in trains blocking most and sometimes all the north/south arteries of New Lenox every 50 minutes for a period of 20 minutes each train, provided the train is kept moving – longer if there are delays on the tracks or two trains traveling in opposite directions.

Imagine a loved one needing emergency care, having to wait 20 to 30 minutes for an ambulance to arrive and possibly getting delayed again, on the way to the hospital – because of the increased frequency and number of cars on the proposed CN railroad line. Or what if there were an emergency at your child's school and help could not get there for 20 to 30 minutes? These are just a few examples of the dangerous possibilities.

I know full well that corporations usually win over the common man. They have more money, clout and political influence. I also know that the magnitude of a proposal like this acquisition has much more far-reaching affects than just those on our village, both good and bad. I have little hope that this acquisition will be prevented. What I ask is for CN to accept responsibility for the eventual impact this project will have on New Lenox and to provide the means to keep our southern end of town connected and the people living there safe. Is this not reasonable?

The obvious, most financially sound and practical remedy appears to be the building of overpasses on the north/south arteries, thereby leaving emergency vehicles unimpaired. The CN proposal does not include this or any other provision for this remedy as pertains specifically to New Lenox. I believe this should be included in the provisions of the acquisition and that it is the burden of the CN. The CN will be the beneficiary over the long-term. The people of The Village of New Lenox have not the wherewithal to accomplish these improvements, nor does the Village have anything to gain, yet much to lose in CN's project.

My requests are these:

- Please review the terms of the proposed acquisition, noting CN's failure to provide adequate remedial construction in towns that will be negatively impacted.
- Ensure that, in the acquisition agreement, CN is required to provide and pay for the necessary over-passes where their trains sever north/south traffic in New Lenox before commencing operation. Also ensure that CN is held to such agreements for remedies and that their cooperation is enforced until completed and approved by a designated official who has no affiliation with CN.
- Review the environmental arguments that will eventually be presented. I have intentionally omitted my specific concerns about these for the sake of brevity but feel very strongly that our responsibility to care for the environment for future generations must begin NOW and by the corporate world as well as individuals.

I thank you in advance for the help you are capable of providing. My life's experience has left me with a cynicism that I was not born with. Please prove to me that there really is some justice in our country – in the true sense of the word. And let me know too, that our elected and designated officials won't turn their backs on the "little guy".

Your sincerely concerned citizen,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Janice Gonzales".

Janice Gonzales