

Ms. Phyllis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423
Ref: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

As a resident of Lake Zurich, Illinois, I would like to state my strong opposition to the Canadian National Railroad's acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad, currently pending an environmental review by the U.S. Surface Transportation Board in Washington, D.C. This acquisition has absolutely no value for Lake Zurich and, in fact, will only degrade our quality of life and threaten our safety.

Canadian National has expressed no sincere interest in the environmental and economic needs of the Illinois communities that will be impacted by their operations. In fact, they have been less than cooperative with our local Lake Zurich officials. Repeated attempts at obtaining vital hazardous materials information for our public safety officials have been ignored by CN. CN's current lack of interest in the concerns of my Lake Zurich community bodes very poorly for any future cooperation, should the acquisition be approved.

In reviewing the EIS released by the STB, there is just cause for much alarm by all residents, businesses and industries paying property taxes in Lake Zurich. It is apparent that the STB and CN are attempting to expedite the approval and acquisition processes in advance of the upcoming Presidential elections and before our next President is inaugurated on January 20th. Why? Simply put, the terms of the current STB members will expire and newly appointed members by the next President could spell disaster for the CN RR. This matter is of such importance that it should be reviewed by newly appointed STB members who will be in office to face the consequences of their decision.

The Village President of Lake Zurich and the Board of Trustees have gone on record opposing the transaction, and I as a resident taxpayer strongly oppose this acquisition. My specific reasons are these:

- Community School District 95 buses cross the Village's at-grade crossings 233 times per day. Increased train traffic will dramatically impact transportation of students, and the added trains will multiply the potential for train/school bus accidents.
- Lake Zurich High School and May Whitney Elementary School directly abut the existing railroad tracks.
- Many School District 95 classrooms are located within a few hundred yards of hazardous rail cargo.
- The long-planned and much-needed commuter rail service, STAR Line, is slated to use the EJ&E tracks. The proposed CN transaction will jeopardize STAR Line's viability and effectiveness in making a positive impact on our region's traffic congestion and air quality.

The STB should not ignore our pleas for full consideration of mitigation measures to be paid for by CN:

Safety – Recently, and based on current train frequency, three separate accidents occurred in our area involving the death of children. Greater train frequency will increase the probability of additional accidents of this nature. In order to address this safety concern, the installation of barrier walls along the rail adjacent to residential and school property, pedestrian crossing bridges, and controlled access points should be provided at no cost to Lake Zurich.

Hazardous Materials Transportation – The Draft EIS does not address any resources or educational support programs from CN for local communities or emergency responders. Multiple attempts have been made by the Village fire officials to secure information on the types and quantities of chemicals that CN expects to be transporting on the line. However, no specific information has been provided. Local emergency service responders are entitled to receive response training, evacuation planning, and response and recovery resources--at no cost to Lake Zurich.

Transportation Systems – The intersections at Old Rand Road and East Main Street would experience traffic backing up over the tracks, especially around school times and during the AM and PM rush hours. CN should fund construction of overpasses and/or underpasses for the following at-grade crossings: Oakwood Road, East Main Street, Old Rand Road, and Cuba Road. The Village believes that mitigation for these at-grade crossings is appropriate and warranted.

In closing, I would encourage the STB to REJECT the Canadian National Railroad's acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad because of the catastrophic impact it will have in Lake Zurich and all of the other affected communities in the Chicago metropolitan area. I wish to thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Genie S. Lerch-Davis
605 Pheasant Ridge Drive
Lake Zurich, IL 60047