

519 Aberdeen Road
Frankfort, IL 60423
August 30, 2008

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

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

I am writing to you to express my dismay and heartfelt opposition to the recommendations made in the DEIS for the proposed Canadian National Railway Company acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company. What the CN is proposing is nothing less than a hostile takeover of the EJ&E AMERICAN railroad, and your DEIS falls far short of providing a comprehensive plan for safeguarding American interests, the American environment, and the health and safety of the American public.

I am extremely concerned that this sale will create unacceptable environmental and safety hazards for the taxpayers of my town and for the people of the many other towns directly endangered by this purchase. And the STB is proposing to allow these hazards to be created for American citizens by a Canadian railroad whose sole reason for making this purchase is to increase its own profitability.

Even more disturbing is the DEIS statement that there are only 15 grade level crossings that might need mitigation. Further, the DEIS asserts that CN should pay something like 5 to 10% of the costs of mitigation for the 15 crossings it has cited, because that percentage is typical in these cases. A foreign national railroad should NOT be allowed to benefit from "traditional" practices that were intended to encourage and benefit AMERICAN enterprise! Another major omission from the DEIS is any mention of the 10 or more at-grade crossings cited in the August 12 front page article in the Chicago Tribune entitled, "Monster Trains Coming Down the Tracks?". As the article points out, there are CLUSTERS of at-grade crossings in Barrington, West Chicago, and Frankfort which could become COMPLETELY blocked by a crash of ONE of CN's proposed TWO-MILE-LONG trains, any one of 28 TIMES PER DAY!

Such a crash would create an impossible situation for emergency responders of all types, causing unnecessary and unjustifiable injuries and/or deaths in the event of a spill of a hazardous chemical such as anhydrous ammonia. The fact that the DEIS makes NO mention of this INEVITABLE threat to the health and safety of American taxpayers—and by a Canadian railroad!—amounts to DERELICTION OF DUTY, and should be forcefully corrected in the final EIS. The STB should REQUIRE, as a condition of sale, that CN mitigate not just the 15 grade crossings that the DEIS identifies, but the 10 others identified by the Chicago Tribune. And the mitigation should NOT be at the rate of 5 to 10%, but MUCH CLOSER TO 100%! For CN to have offered mitigation totaling a mere \$40 Million, in the face of their acknowledged \$2 BILLION profit for one year alone, is APPALLING, shows a callous disregard for American lives, and must NOT be accepted by the STB. Even the CN representative who spoke at the DEIS hearing in Barrington, IL, on August 27 stated—on camera—that CN would be willing to work with communities affected by this proposed sale. TAKE HIM AT HIS WORD. MAKE THE CN PAY THE MITIGATION COSTS WHICH IT OUGHT TO PAY!

I am sure that the corporate executives at CN have performed their cost/benefit analysis, and I have a strong feeling that they have calculated that with their net 2007 profit of \$2 Billion, they can well afford to defend against whatever lawsuits would be brought when (not if) a hazardous spill occurs. But CN's profit-driven analysis should not dictate your decision in this matter. According to your own DEIS, the total number of train accidents on the EJ&E is projected to increase 28% when CN takes over this route. And, your DEIS states, the number of "major routes" for transporting hazardous materials will increase from 2 to 14. The DEIS also states that you expect AT LEAST one "significant spill" per year, "which could affect ground water or surface water supply sources." And yet the DEIS does not recommend that ANY of the 133 grade crossings on the EJ&E line be mitigated to minimize the harmful consequences from a hazardous waste spill. In fact, the only mitigation which is recommended for at-grade crossings is that at the 15 crossings which are cited as potentially suffering from greater road traffic congestion! To apply only that one standard—increased road congestion—is misguided at best, and negligent at worst.

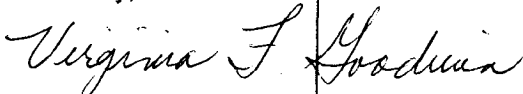
The STB's charge is not to facilitate the profit-making desires of foreign companies. The STB's charge is to

protect the environment from undue hazards which would result from this railroad purchase, and in the process to protect the welfare of US citizens and taxpayers.

REQUIRE the Canadian National Railroad, as a condition of sale, to use its abundant resources to properly address these environmental and safety issues, OR DENY THEIR REQUEST to buy the EJ&E. CN is not entitled to American taxpayer funding to mitigate the hazards which CN's "monster trains" will bring to Frankfort and other EJ&E towns. The CREATE program, not CN, deserves our support and our taxpayer dollars.

Thank you for your time and your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Virginia F. Goodwin". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Virginia F. Goodwin