

Mr. W. Douglas Buttrey
Board Member, Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington DC 20423-0001

May 5, 2008

RE: Acquisition of the EJ&E by CN Railway

Dear Mr. Buttrey,

I have lived in Lake Zurich since 1976 and have found it a wonderful community in which to raise my children and to remain long after they were grown. Of course, there has been growth and change in these more than 40 years but, for the most part, it has not negatively impacted the quality of life in the village.

Now, however, the proposal that the Canadian National Railway will merge with the EJ & E railroad and use their right of way for freight trains through many small communities is appalling in its ramifications.

One of the most troublesome may not even have been fully considered: this rail line goes on a diagonal which makes the congestion problems exponentially bigger. When I used to commute to Chicago by Metra from Barrington, only 6 miles from my house, I had to cross the EJ& E tracks three times to get to the station.

Please imagine this configuration with ambulance or fire engine traffic! On most other freight lines that run either N-S or E-W, there is usually the possibility of simply driving in the opposite direction of the movement of the train to find another open grade crossing. This simply doesn't work with the EJ& E tracks.

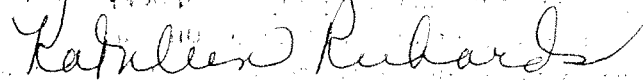
The current level of train traffic is bearable, although I certainly wouldn't want to be one of the folks who lives near those tracks. I'm more than a mile away and can easily hear the trains when they blow their horns going through town. And the CN proposes to increase the number of trains to 20 per day, but with no guarantee that's their top number.

And once that right of way is ceded to a foreign national, what kind of control can our government exercise?? There have been articles indicating that CN is less than trustworthy when explaining wrecks on their lines or breaches of safety regulations. What controls would the U.S. have to guarantee the safety of the inhabitants of the thousands of people who live along these tracks?

This is not just one small community crying "not in my back yard". This impacts every community this rail line passes through from Waukegan to Gary, eight in Lake County alone, according to the EJ&E system map.

I strongly urge you to exercise your veto over this proposed merger of the CN and EJ& E railways.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Richards
46 Golfview Road
Lake Zurich IL 60047