

**DISTRICT OFFICE**

4818 W 137th St Ste 2  
Crestwood Illinois 60445  
708-396-2822 Suburban  
773-291-1288 Chicago  
708-396-2898 Fax

**SPRINGFIELD OFFICE**

292-S Straton Building  
Springfield, Illinois 62706  
217-558-1000  
217-558-1091 Fax

e-mail robertbobnta@aol.com

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**Robert A. Rita**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE - 28<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

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January 7, 2008

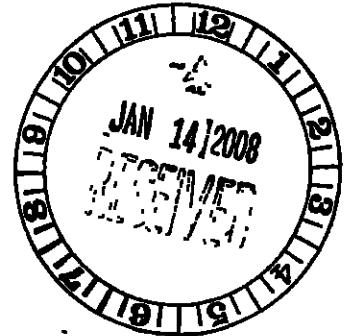
The Honorable Vernon A Williams  
Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, D C 20423

Re: Canadian National Railway Co, et al - Control - EJ&E  
West Company, STB Finance Docket No 35087

Dear Secretary Williams

I write this letter in support of the proposal by Canadian National Railway Company (CN) to acquire control over the EJ&E West Company because I have concluded that this transaction will improve rail service through the Chicago metropolitan area and that it clearly will have no adverse effects

I am particularly pleased to learn that there will be a substantial reduction of train traffic over the CN line through my district from the current level of about 4 trains per day to 0 trains per day on one segment and 6 trains to 0 trains on another segment. The acquisition will more efficiently link CN's rail traffic which comes into Chicago from surrounding states which will allow CN to reduce costs, improve service and provide faster transit times for its shippers. Moreover, the transaction will reduce environmental impacts within my district, including air emissions, noise and grade crossing delays. More significant for the national rail transportation network, removal of trains from lines through the center of Chicago will free up capacity for other carriers and reduce energy consumption and transit times for traffic moving through the Chicago gateway on CN as well as other railroads.



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I recognize that as train traffic moves off of downtown Chicago rail lines, some communities along the EJ&E right-of-way will experience train traffic increases. I understand that the STB will be preparing an Environmental Impact Statement that will assess the impacts of this increased traffic. The STB can impose conditions, if appropriate, to mitigate those impacts. I have been told by CN that it is reaching out to those communities to identify these issues, and to assist these communities in addressing them as appropriate. The major benefit to my constituents will be the reduced delays at grade crossings due to the reduction in the number of trains per day. This is a major benefit to the families which live in my district.

However, these localized impacts, which will be addressed fully in the STB's environmental review, in my judgment do not outweigh the significant overall environmental benefits of this transaction on the region, or the transportation benefits of the transaction for shippers in Illinois and around the country. I understand that some of the improvements which CN plans for its rail system are included in the goals of the CREATE project and this acquisition will advance many of the CREATE's objectives much more quickly. I urge the Board to complete its environmental review process expeditiously, and to approve this transaction so that the residents of the 28<sup>th</sup> District and shippers from around the State and Nation can begin seeing the benefits it will bring.

Please enter these comments into the record of this docket.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Rita  
State Representative  
28<sup>th</sup> District

cc: All Parties of Record