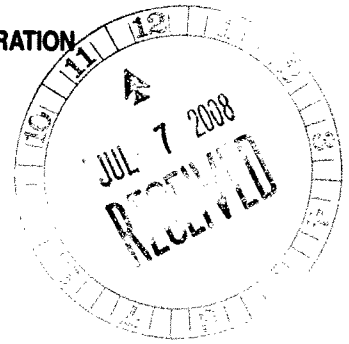


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EIGHTEENTH STREET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Comprehensive Development for the Greater Pilsen Area



The Honorable Anne K. Quinlan
Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Secretary Quinlan:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Canadian National Railroad's proposed acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company. Eighteenth Street Development Corporation (ESDC) supports the acquisition because of its positive impact on rail congestion regionally and in our community.

As a non-profit community development corporation working in the Lower West Side, Pilsen, Heart of Chicago, University Village and Tri-Taylor community since 1976, we have endeavored to encourage economic investment in these neighborhoods. Over the last decade, we have seen a rebirth in commercial and residential development. We hope that this investment will continue.

The rail congestion that threatens Chicago's position as a transportation hub also holds ongoing implications for the communities we represent. Idling trains waiting for clearance to proceed, pass within feet of nearby homes and businesses – making the properties less desirable and marketable.

Under the CN proposal to acquire the EJ&E, rail congestion in our community will be significantly reduced. In addition, we believe that rail congestion as a whole threatens jobs and economic vitality of the Chicago economy and must be addressed. CN offers a privately-funded proposal that will begin to address the problem of congestion.

The Eighteenth Street Development Corporation urges the Surface Transportation Board to support the Canadian National Railroad's acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company.

Sincerely,

David Betlejewski
Executive Director