

August 27, 2008

To the members of the Surface Transportation Board:

As we've thought about how we would be impacted by the proposed purchase of the EJ&E rail line by Canadian National, we're struggling to see any positive, or even neutral impact this purchase would have on our family, let alone on our community. When negotiating contracts, there's always some give and take during the discussions. We have yet to see any significant giving from CN on the issues below that impact our family's daily lives.

Safety: Much has been said about CN's less than stellar safety record. With their inability to ensure that there won't be any derailments or hazardous material spills from their railway, along with the fact that this railway runs adjacent to schools, parks and playgrounds, the safety of our children is of great concern should this purchase go through. The railway in question runs right next to Barrington High School, and hundreds of children cross this track by foot, bike or car every school day. With a proposed 20 freight trains going up and down these tracks every day, the safe and timely crossing to and from school by the children of our community needs to be taken into consideration.

Traffic: Barrington's current traffic problems have long been documented due to the high volume of traffic that moves along Route 59 (both North and South) through the heart of town. Barrington is probably impacted more than any other town by this proposed purchase. With the EJ&E railway crossing over 3 critical roads in our town (US 14, Route 59 and Lake Cook Road), automobile traffic would be next to impossible, especially going North/Northwest/West of town.

Property Values: If people can't move through town, getting to parks, shopping, library and of course work, Barrington's long history of being a "great place to raise a family" will be no more, and thus the property values of those who call Barrington home will plummet. For the DEIS to state that the property values of those within 250 feet of the railway will have "only minor, negligible effects" is naïve, and doesn't begin to talk to the property value hit our entire community will take if a prospective buyer can't get through town. With the economy being in the state that it's in, our property values have already been significantly impacted. We cannot afford to have this proposed purchase impact them further.

We understand that this is a business decision, but as it impacts thousands of families in not only Barrington, but also several other suburbs, the impact to the families touched by this transaction must be taken into consideration.

We ask that you please tell Canadian National that they're going to have to find a different solution for the moving of freight in and around the Chicago area.

Sincerely,

Scott & Diane Hoffman

Scott and Diane Hoffman
780 S. Summit Street
Barrington, IL 60010