

February 11, 2008

Phillis Johnson-Ball
Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT SCOPE OF EIS
Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball,

I am writing as a 24 year resident of the Village of Lake Zurich, IL to express me and my family's staunch opposition to Canadian National's (CN) proposed acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railway Company (EJ & E), which operates a rail line that cuts right through the heart of the Village of Lake Zurich and impacts the entire community and way of life for it's residents.

Lake Zurich is located along the EJ & E. Proposed CN rail traffic changes indicate that the current EJ & E average of 5.3 freight trains per day will increase to 20.3 freight trains per day as a result of the CN acquisition of the EJ & E. As a result we will have *a 289 percent increase in freight train traffic going through the developed and populated areas of Lake Zurich!!!*

After reviewing the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) draft scope of study, we urge you to disapprove *the proposed transaction in order to maintain the safety and quality of life in the Village of Lake Zurich and surrounding area.*

I list *the following negative impacts on our community for your consideration:*

- The proposed sale and additional delays caused by the increased train traffic will negatively impact public, vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Delays of up to 3+ hours per day (20.3 trains x 10 minutes per crossing, 203 minutes daily ÷ 60 = 2.38 hours per day of crossing delays) are projected at six at-grade crossings within and near the Village.
- Average train length of 10,000 feet will cause four of our at-grade crossings to be blocked to vehicle and pedestrian traffic for each train.
- Additionally, all major arterial roads near at-grade crossings adjacent to the Village will also be blocked by the trains.
- The added delay will increase emergency response times of the Village's emergency services personnel.
- It will also impact surrounding communities that must travel through our Village to transport patients to Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital via Old McHenry Road, Midlothian Road, Route 22, and Old Rand Road.
- The increase in time to respond to emergencies and access to a hospital will potentially cause loss life. Community School District 95 buses cross the Village's at-grade crossings 233 times per day.

- The delay caused by increased rail traffic will dramatically impact transportation of students within the school district and the added number of trains will increase the potential for a train/school bus conflict.
- Lake Zurich High School and May Whitney Elementary School directly abut the existing railroad tracks; a significant number of students historically cross the tracks at random points to access the school property while walking to school.
- Presently, at-grade crossings cause back-ups along East Main Street and South, Old Rand Roads. Due to the close proximity of the rail crossing to Route 22, while a train is present, the traffic queue quickly begins to lengthen and enters the Route 22 intersections. Increasing the number of trains, lengths of trains and the speed of trains will have impacts to these queues which may increase risk of accidents as well as, defeats the significant improvements and expenditure made to relieve traffic congestion and delays in downtown Lake Zurich and State Route 22.
- The proposed transaction will negatively impact our community including: noise, vibration, pollution, traffic congestion, emissions, storm water control and management, potential for impact to the lake and increase risk of potential spillage of hazardous materials. Freight trains are excessively loud and would disturb quiet neighborhoods throughout all hours of the day.

In conclusion, approval of the proposed transaction would be disastrous for the public safety, environment, local and regional transportation, existing and future planned land uses. Again, I urge you ***disapprove the proposed transaction in whole*** to protect and maintain the safety and quality of life in the Lake Zurich area.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Poynton
980 Old Mill Grove Rd.
Lake Zurich, IL 60047

CC: The Honorable Melissa Bean, U.S. Representative (8th Congressional District)
The Honorable Mark Kirk, U.S. Representative (10th Congressional District)