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January 17, 2008

Charles D. Nottingham
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Suite 1220
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Chairman Nottingham,

FD 35087

Fast and dependable train service is important to me and to my community. It will become even more important as gasoline prices continue to increase.

The application submitted by the Canadian National does not adequately address the future of the passenger trains linking Chicago to Champaign, Carbondale, Memphis, New Orleans and 18 other cities.

These trains could experience longer travel times and increased delays as a result of this transaction. The cities along the route will be negatively impacted if the service quality deteriorates on this route. Also, since passengers connect between these trains and other trains at Chicago, deteriorated service on this corridor will impact passenger trains serving the entire country.

Therefore, I request that the Surface Transportation Board make the establishment of a new route, of like or better quality, a condition of the merger. Building a new connection at Grand Crossing, combined with enhancements to the Norfolk Southern track into Union Station, is the only viable solution.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Richard Harnish
Executive Director
Midwest High Speed Rail Association
P.O. Box 805877
Chicago, IL 60680
773-334-6758

Surface Transportation Board

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