



The HDF Group

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Suite C-2
Champaign, IL 61820-7406

January 24, 2007

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

Dear Chairman Nottingham,

Our local Chamber of Commerce highlighted news reports that there may be significant changes to the Amtrak service for Champaign County, Illinois. As a not-for-profit organization located in the University of Illinois Research Park in Champaign, we are concerned about the trickledown effect of such an action for our community as a whole. The University of Illinois student population is often dependent upon this mode of transportation and, since we are affiliated with the University, this concerns us as we rely heavily upon our student intern workforce.

Our company also utilizes the transportation options provided by Amtrak to fulfill client contractual obligations that require staff members to be physically on-site a minimum of twice a week. The passenger train environment provides our employees the opportunity to engage in productive work during the commute, and thus minimizes the additional burden caused by this frequent traveling. We spend a minimum of \$2,500 annually on Amtrak tickets, and our Chicago-based account provides revenues of over \$800,000 to our area.

As we plan for our future, Canadian National's application does not adequately address the impact their actions will have for the residents and businesses along the Illinois Central Corridor, and only vaguely indicates that a new route for passenger trains will have to be found. We believe reliable and on-time passenger service is a pivotal issue, and that an adequate plan to address this issue should be a key component of the merger proposal.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Folk
President & Executive Director

Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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