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17731 S. Richmond Road
Plainfield, Illinois 60586
September 16, 2008

Ms. Phillis Johnson-Ball

STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Surface Transportation Board

395 E. St., S.W.

Washington, DC 20423-001

RE: Community Impact of EJ&E Sale to CN

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

I am writing out of deep concern that the sale of the EJ&E Railroad to Canadian National Railroad (CN) will significantly impact the safety, quality of life and environmental well-being of my community, with no proven benefit to that community, the Chicago region or the United States. Accordingly, I request that the STB withhold approval of the proposed sale.

As you probably know, Plainfield has 16 at-grade railroad crossings, which currently add significantly to the gridlock in our rapidly-growing community. Public safety is at risk every time a lengthy train delays our public service vehicles. From my home, I must cross 3 sets of railroad tracks just to travel to downtown Plainfield. To get to our local hospital, it is a 45 minute trip by car, exacerbated by delays at railroad crossings. The same issues arise for our local police and firefighters, when minutes matter most. The proposed sale of the EJ&E tracks would quadruple the number and extend the length of trains running through our community.

We chose to move to Plainfield for the quality of life here. It is a lovely, family-oriented place, with fine schools and a growing economy. The railroad tracks are a fact of life here, as they are in most Illinois communities. However, there is a fine balance between an acceptable impact of trains on the community and the benefit derived therefrom. The increased traffic proposed by CN does not benefit this community. In fact, CN has failed to show that their proposal would benefit the Chicago region or even the U.S. Profits from their operations flow to Canada. Canadians are not shy about protecting their self-interest from the impact of U.S. operations (e.g., see attached Wall Street Journal article, "U.S. Natural-Gas Plan Riles Canada"). We should be no less protective of our national interests.

I know that the environmental impact of the proposed sale is currently under evaluation by your agency. Concerns about increased air emissions from vehicles idling at blocked railroad crossings, emissions from the diesel engines themselves, and stormwater contamination from the inevitable leaks and spills associated with railroad operations will hopefully be addressed. As you know, this is an air quality non-attainment area under the Clean Air Act. Why should we jeopardize the slow, costly progress that has

been made to improve air quality in this region for a commercial enterprise that has yet to show material benefits to this region or to our country?

For these reasons, I request that the STB exercise its authority to disapprove the requested sale of the EJ&E Railroad to the CN.

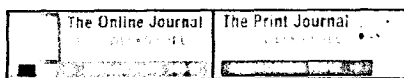
Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Susan J. Sonnenberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" and last name "Sonnenberg" clearly legible. The middle initial "J." is smaller and less distinct.

Susan J. Sonnenberg

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U.S. Natural-Gas Plan Riles Canada

Terminal Project Stirs Tension
 Over Politics, Environment, Economics

By JOHN J. FIALKA
 December 21, 2007, Page 16

ST. ANDREWS, Canada — When the people of this tiny seaside resort town learned that tankers filled with liquefied natural gas might some day sail near them toward proposed terminals in two Maine towns, they mobilized opposition to the plan from the highest levels of the Canadian government.

WATER FIGHT

- **Border Tension:** U.S. and Canadian officials are clashing over planned Maine liquefied natural gas terminals opposed by residents of a Canadian town.
- **The Dispute:** Canadian officials cite the area's dependence on tourism; U.S. officials protest that Canadian officials have no issues with a Canadian terminal 20 miles away.
- **Sign of the Times:** The dispute highlights growing U.S. LNG consumption and Canada's increasing importance as an energy supplier.

That isn't a surprise, given the opposition that has met proposed terminals for liquefied natural gas, or LNG, in many coastal towns in the U.S. Canada's opposition has drawn protests from the U.S. government. In part, U.S.

officials complain that Canada seems to have no problem with another proposed LNG terminal on Canadian soil 30 miles to the east of St. Andrews.

That facility, at St. John, New Brunswick, is being built by Irving Oil Ltd., part of a family-owned Canadian company. The destination for most of the gas from this facility, called Canaport, is energy-hungry New England, the same market the Maine terminals would serve.

Canadian opponents said the Maine terminals would put ugly tankers in a region dependent on tourism, would snarl sailing lanes and interfere with whale-watching, and point to a thus-far unprecedented accident or attack on tankers carrying potentially explosive cargo. They dispute assertions that the Canadian government is favoring Canadian terminals, saying the routes to the Irving Oil facility are safer and don't pass through tourist-heavy areas.

The dispute highlights tensions around LNG technology, which allows liquefied gas to be shipped in tankers from abroad to meet increasing gas needs in North America. Demand could go still higher if federal regulations are imposed on carbon-dioxide emissions from power plants. Last week, Exxon Mobil Corp. proposed building an LNG terminal 20 miles off the New Jersey coast — a proposal immediately opposed by some environmental groups.

It also highlights Canada's increasing role in meeting U.S. energy needs. It is the biggest source of U.S. imported crude. LNG terminals and other projects being proposed in the eastern half of the country are in part meant to meet growing energy demand in the U.S. Northeast.

The U.S. currently gets 3% of its gas from imported LNG, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. By 2020, the agency predicts demand for LNG will rise to 14% of total natural gas consumption. New England, which already pays among the highest prices for natural gas in the world, would gain if LNG replaced more expensive gas from pipelines.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government said it will block LNG ships from reaching the proposed terminals in Maine by enforcing sovereignty over a sea passage from the Atlantic that has been used by ships of both nations for over two centuries.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and other U.S. officials have told Ottawa that Canada's position violates the Law of the Sea Treaty, which gives such commercial shipments an irrevocable right of passage. The State Department said Canada shouldn't have the right to pick and choose which ships sail through those waters.

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Gregory Francis Thompson, Canadian minister of Veterans Affairs and Canada's point man in this fight, said moves by Irving Oil and other companies to build LNG terminals in Canada are unrelated to Canada's opposition to the U.S. terminals. "These are waters that are just too dangerous for this type of movement. We're just going to say no," said Mr. Thompson, who lives on the outskirts of St. Andrews.

Before tankers can get to U.S. terminals, they have to sail through Head Harbor Passage, a narrow strait between two Canadian islands in Passamaquoddy Bay. That could mean U.S. ships, escorted by armed guards to counter a possible terrorist threat, would interfere with Canadian boat traffic.

"They're carrying guns and they're telling us to leave. And we're in Canadian waters!" said David Welch, a St. Andrews city council member who runs a whale-watching business.

Mr. Harper, when campaigning as leader of the Conservative Party, promised New Brunswick that as prime minister he would bar LNG tankers from using Head Harbor Passage. After Mr. Harper became prime minister, the St. John Telegraph-Journal, one of the largest newspapers in the region, called for him to oppose the Maine terminals. "Where is the PM on LNG issue?" it asked in March 2006.

The St. John newspaper is owned by the Irving family, which also controls Irving Oil, the company behind the St. John LNG terminal. Jennifer<TH>Parker, spokeswoman for Irving Oil, says her company has never taken a position on the proposed U.S. LNG terminals and said that the Irving family's newspapers are held by a family-controlled entity that is separate from the oil company.

James C. Irving, the publisher of the St. John Telegraph-Journal, says his newspaper is simply following the news. "The issue the politicians see is sovereignty over Canadian waters. It's a big political issue," he said.

The U.S. developers backing the LNG terminals in Maine worry that the Canadian-inspired delay could destroy them. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission normally would rely on Canada's help to review navigation and safety issues before granting permits for the facilities. According to a State Department official, Canadian cooperation on issues related to the tankers stopped in fall 2006.

"Gas suppliers won't give assurance that we'll get supplies until we get permits. Until then every dollar we put in is at risk," said Brian Smith, project manager for the terminal being proposed by Quoddy Bay LNG LLC at Pleasant Point, Maine, which is just outside Eastport. Quoddy Bay is owned by closely held Smith Cogeneration Inc., of Oklahoma City.

The Quoddy Bay project, originally intended to be operational by 2010 will have the capacity to deliver as much as two billion cubic feet per day of natural gas. The second terminal is being built by closely held Downeast LNG Inc., which is being financed by New York equity-investment firm Kestrel Energy Partners LLC, and is expected to deliver 500,000 cubic feet per day.

In April, Michael Wilson, newly designated ambassador to Washington by Mr. Harper, wrote to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission saying a new Canadian study concluded that the LNG proposals posed safety and environmental risks that his government "cannot accept." Canada, he warned, would "use domestic legal means" to prevent tankers from passing through Head Harbor Passage.

The study, done by Senes Consultants Ltd., an Ottawa consulting firm, said tougher measures are needed to keep tankers from interfering with other traffic or running aground. But it also said Head Harbor Passage is "more than adequate" to handle LNG tanker traffic and that "it is possible to adopt an approach" that will minimize risks. Mr. Wilson said officials still see serious safety issues and will block shipments to U.S. facilities, even if FERC grants permits.

Write to John J. Fialka at john.fialka@wsj.com

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