

February 13, 2008

Anne K. Quinlan, Esq., Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
305 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

RE: Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Honorable Anne Quinlan:

The negative impacts to the communities in Chicago's western and southern suburbs caused by Canadian National's (CN) acquisition, construction and increased operations are expected to be vast. The environmental impacts of nearly 20 miles of new railway and increased operations could be significant; certainly, for those of us who live, work and play in an area where double-tracking is proposed, the negative impacts *will be* significant.

Thousands of children attend schools within a half-mile of the railroad tracks. The dozens of schools that are located along this alignment will feel the impacts of noise and vibration — likely during construction as well as when operations are increased. The list of nearby schools is long and includes Peterson Elementary School, Crone Middle School and Plainfield High School to name just a few. For some schools, the warning bells may be heard several times an hour — can we expect schoolchildren to focus, listen and learn in that environment? The noise and vibration heard throughout the day from passing freight trains, in some cases for 10 minutes each hour, will clearly disrupt concentration.

The issues caused by the numerous grade crossings amount to more than slight annoyances for these children and include poor air quality caused by vehicle delays and increased accident probability. Because land use is such that residences are separated from the schools by the railroad tracks, many children are crossing these tracks a minimum of two times each day.

My research has shown that 1) CN has frequent accidents and derailments and 2) due to the nature of the hazardous chemicals that CN transports, these accidents can be catastrophic. I am extremely concerned about the increase of hazardous chemicals combined with the double tracking. I fear that the probability for a tragic accident is high.

I understand that the Board will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); please do not rush this process as the impacts are significant. I look forward to the opportunity to review this document.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthiajc Said

Surface Transportation Board
CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

Log and Distribution

Date Recd: _____

By: _____

Submitted (initials): _____

STB ACT/For _____

Cc: Original - Job File