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Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 35087
Proposed Acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad by Canadian National

Dear Ms. Johnson-Ball:

I am a resident of Frankfort, and I am formally **opposing** the proposed Canadian National Railway acquisition of the EJ&E Railroad.

Environmental Impact

If the CN purchase of the EJ & E is allowed to proceed, the impact to surrounding schools, churches and neighborhoods will have devastating consequences. The sound and vibration of thundering, fuming freight trains every 51 minutes will be felt for miles along these tracks. Add to this, the noise and most concerning, the increased risk of a toxic spill due to the 600% spike in harmful chemicals hauling through town at 45 miles per hour begs the question, "Will the STB ensure that the final environmental impact study addresses the significant negative environmental impact to our community?"

The Cost to US Taxpayers

The \$40 million CN has proposed to spend on infrastructure improvements is a drop in the bucket. Who will pay for the rest of the underpasses, grade separations and projected necessary infrastructure improvements that are needed to support projected population growth. Who will pay for the anticipated decline in property values? If the STB approves this transaction, then CN should be required to pay.

Emergency Response

Minutes count when lives are at stake. With 28 trains a day, police cars and fire trucks will be forced to wait with their sirens blaring, and considering Frankfort's population is anticipated to top 55,000, the impact could cost lives.

Is Congestion Better in the Suburbs?

Moving Chicago's rail congestion to the suburbs is not an effective solution. Please consider that relocating this problem does not effectively address the issue.

CN Safety Record

It has been 25 years since the EJ&E tracks in Frankfort have received major repairs. Considering CN's reluctance to implement Canadian safety measures, and its employees' "culture of fear," does the STB expect CN to honor US safety requirements? Please give CN's safety record your utmost priority when considering this purchase.

Respectfully submitted,



Voice railway concerns

Just over one week remains for you to write to the Surface Transportation Board about the proposed 400 percent increase in train traffic in the Lincoln-Way area.

Sept. 30 is the last day that the STB will accept letters about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement concerning the proposed acquisition of the EJ&E railway by the Canadian National Railway. The proposal would increase the number of trains from six to 28 per day on the tracks that run east and west parallel to and between Laraway Road and U.S. 30. The proposal calls for more trains, longer trains, larger engines and 600 percent more hazardous materials than currently travel through our community.

The STB is the only government agency that will decide whether to approve the transaction, disapprove it or approve it with conditions. We believe that this three-person commission really wants to hear from you. Your opinion can have an impact on their decision.

You can view the draft EIS at www.stbfinancedocket35087.com. I hope that you find something to write about. We have provided a number of suggestions at our Frankforttrainstop.com Web site. If you have not found something to write about, consider this basic tax subsidy issue.

The draft EIS suggests that the STB will only require CN to pay 5 percent to 10 percent of the cost of overpasses and underpasses that are needed. They expect U.S. taxpayers to pick up the bill for the bulk of this cost. Why should U.S. taxpayers subsidize



Jim Holland

this exceptionally profitable foreign railroad that reported profits of more than \$2 billion dollars last year on revenues of \$8 billion? If the STB were to order the CN to pay for the overpasses and underpasses, the CN would likely find it cheaper to follow the suggestions of the CREATE organization that has made proposals to correct the rail congestion in Chicago, or they would find it cheaper to build a new railroad farther out in the country. Either program could completely solve the Chicago rail congestion problem for all railroads, not just this one foreign railroad.

The CN won't accept either program, because with the EJ&E purchase they believe that your taxes will pay for most of the required mitigation measures.

In addition, currently the draft EIS only projects traffic five years into the future, and that projected traffic does not justify any overpasses or underpasses in the Lincoln-Way area. Lincoln-Way communities routinely make road traffic projections 20 years or more into the future. Using the longer-term projections would justify overpasses or underpasses in the Lincoln-Way area and many more along the rest of the tracks. The overpasses and underpasses can be phased in as needed, but the key is

that the CN needs to pay for all of them, not we taxpayers.

It seems even more absurd for the taxpayers to help the CN when we consider one of their strategies. The CN recently built a new container port in Prince Rupert, British Columbia. This port is closer to China than ports in the United States. The CN hopes to run 200 car trains from this port, through the Lincoln-Way area to the CN intermodal terminal in Memphis. In effect, your tax subsidy for such items as overpasses and underpasses will help the CN take jobs away from U.S. citizens who work for West Coast ports and for U.S. railroads. In addition, your taxes will help subsidize the transportation of products made in China, making U.S. manufacturers less competitive.

The tax subsidy issue is one that all citizens can relate to and it can be corrected by having the STB order CN to pay for overpasses and underpasses instead of the taxpayer. We believe that if this is required, the CN will abandon the EJ&E acquisition and they will find more appropriate solutions to Chicago's rail congestion problem.

Between now and Sept. 30 you have a chance to speak up on this issue. Take a few minutes to write to the STB. Send your letter to:

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Jim Holland is the mayor of Frankfort.