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TO: Surface Transportation Board

FROM: Charles A. Westcott
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DATE: August 27, 2008

SUBJECT: Acquisition of EJ & E Railway Freight Line by Canadian National Railway

I do not believe the impact of the proposed acquisition of the EJ&E freight line by Canadian National Railway will have on the multitude of communities along the freight line has been adequately or seriously addressed by your Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure costs necessitated by the 400% increase in freight traffic that would have to be borne by federal, state and local agencies is hardly considered in the draft EIS. The \$40 million that CN has indicated it would contribute to mitigation is insignificant, as it represents perhaps 5% of the eventual mitigation costs to be borne by U.S. Taxpayers. Costs in the Barrington area alone could realistically reach \$100 million.

The issue of public safety has likewise received insignificant consideration in the EIS. Emergency fire, police and medical service would be gravely impacted by the increased highway congestion created by the longer and more frequent blocking of grade crossings. This is most evident in Barrington where the EIS does not seriously recognize the significance of the US Route 14 or Lake-Cook Road grade crossings in creating massive highway back-ups, especially during critical commute periods.

I implore you to reevaluate and realistically assess the impact of this increased freight traffic through all the affected communities. They would experience increased tax costs, decreased emergency response, increased hazards at grade crossings, decreased property values and an overall deterioration of their quality of life. I do not believe these are things we should be compelled to endure for the profit and convenience of a foreign corporation?

Charles A. Westcott