



July 2, 2008

Surface Transportation Board

395 E. Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423
U.S.A.

Attention : Ms. Victoria Rutson
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis

Dear Madam Rutson,

**Subject : Canadian National Railway Co. Et al. – Control – EJ & E
West Company, STB Finance Docket No. 35087**

This letter is written in support of the proposed acquisition of the major portion of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Company (EJ & E) by Canadian National Railway. CN's acquisition of this rail service will greatly improve the service in the Chicago metropolitan area, to the benefit of the environment, the rail customers, Canadian National Railways, the railroads in the Chicagoland region and associated suppliers and industries.

I represent the Sentinel's Group of Companies, a major supplier of specialty chemicals and lubricants to all sectors of industry. Our clients are the who's who of the industry. Below are some of our clients:

- U.S.A. Department of Defense
- Kruger Pulp and Paper Mills
- Boeing
- Etc.
- C.P. Railways
- A number of railway lines in the U.S.A. and Canada (North America)

The current record high oil prices is a very strong and valid reason to expedite this transaction. Road transportation cost has risen between 30 and 35% in fuel surcharge only.

Road transportation has become very, very expensive, and almost environmentally prohibitive. The City of Chicago is a hub for North American rail traffic. The rail corridors in Chicago are heavily congested. It has been long recognized that action is needed to reduce rail congestion in the Chicago area. The acquisition proposed by CN will greatly help in the reduction of congestion by rerouting traffic from the highly populated and congested downtown area to the least congested EJ & E line in suburban Chicago.

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The acceptance of this proposal will make rail operations more efficient. The benefit will be enormous. The communities will have better rail service. CN and other railroads will be in a position to provide these benefits by this acquisition. This matter requires that STB, without any delay, as proposed by CN in its request for establishment of time limits for the environmental review, expedites the issuance of a final decision.

We support an environmental review to examine the impacts of moving train traffic off downtown Chicago rail lines to the EJ & E, particularly as some communities along the EJ & E right-of-way will experience train traffic increases. Over the last several months, STB's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) has been examining these issues and has provided opportunities for community residents and officials to comment on the transaction. Once the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been issued, it will give interested parties the opportunity to comment on this transaction. We are well excited about the tremendous overall and comprehensive benefits of the plan.

The Board is strongly urged to complete environmental review process expeditiously. The Board's approval of this beneficial transaction is in the public interest.

Your consideration of my views is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Yours truly,



Ralph Mikhael
Vice-President – Sales & Marketing
Industrial Division

CC: Mr. David A. Hirsh, Harkins Cunningham LLP