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Subject: Docket # 35087, CN Purchase of the EJ&E

From: Mark A Hodge [MAH11@ntrs.com]

Sent: 08/01/2008 03:45 PM EST

To: rutsonv@stb.dot.gov

Cc: Judy@Biggert.com; mayorsoffice@aurora-il.org; AldermanKeith@aol.com; mmadigan@ilga.gov

Subject: Docket # 35087, CN Purchase of the EJ&E

Dear Ms. Rutson:

As a resident of a community that will be greatly harmed by the number of freight trains that would operate through the region if Canadian National Railway (CN) is allowed to purchase the EJ&E rail line, I urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that the interests of the residents of our region are protected against the negative impacts of this acquisition.

The Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) related to this transaction, which was recently released, outlines the monumental impact it will have on the quality of life of my family and fellow citizens. I am very concerned with the outcome of the DEIS which clearly highlights that the community will be facing significant issues related to general public safety, harmful environment impact, substantial increase in traffic gridlock, emergency response times negatively increased, and economic losses if this acquisition is approved. None of these issues are being adequately dealt with by the CN, which is why I am asking you to fully address these issues in the final EIS. In my personal opinion, the DEIS shows signs of sway toward the private interests of CN while diminishing the greater public interest and impact to the communities.

Additionally, in finalizing the EIS, please ensure the following two issues are fully and adequately addressed:

- CN's unwillingness to provide freight traffic projections beyond three years (a cut off that precedes the Phase 2 expansion of the major new port served by CN – the Port of Prince Rupert in western Canada). CN needs to provide capacity data and operational projections to 2020, at the very least. If the American Association of Railroads can demand taxpayer investments in rail infrastructure to accommodate a projected growth in rail freight of 88% by 2035, it is inconceivable that the CN cannot quantify its own long-range business projections involving the EJ&E.
- Due to the significance of the potential impacts to our communities and region, we must ask for a longer review period than 45 days to respond to the DEIS. Communities need 120 days for a due diligence review that can adequately examine the data used to arrive at the conclusions and to respond to the study's findings.

I urge you to please take into the consideration, first and foremost, the impact to the people of our community. The approval of the CN sale of the EJ&E will have an undeniable negative impact on the lives of the people in my community. As a home owner and tax payer who would be directly impacted, I am asking that you consider my concerns and those of others you have heard from during your final analysis. Please do not forget about the citizens who will have to live with the remains of such a significant increase in the frequency of freight train traffic through their communities.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Hodge

8/4/2008

Home Address: 2878 Coastal Drive, Aurora IL. 60503 (1/2 mile West of EJ&E freight train tracks)

CC: Mr. Dick Durbin , United States Senator - Assistant Majority Leader (Illinois)
Mr. Barack Obama, United States Senator- (Illinois)
Ms. Judy Biggert, Representative - Congresswoman, Illinois 13th District
Mr. Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives
Mr. Thomas Weisner, Mayor, City of Aurora Illinois
Mr. Leroy Keith, Alderman 9th Ward, Aurora Illinois

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