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ROBBIE BROWN

39 Deer Point Drive, Hawthorn Woods, IL 60047

Phone 847/726-1244

Cell 708-404-0605

Fax 847/726-1227

E-mail: robbie.brown@comcast.net

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Phillis Johnson-Ball
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423
Ref: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

We live in Hawthorn Woods, Illinois about 3 blocks west of the EJ&E railroad line. We moved to this area about nine years ago because we were retiring with a fixed income, wanted quiet, serenity, safety, good public facilities (fire, police, hospitals, etc.) and stable or rising home values.

If the proposed purchase of the EJ&E railroad line by Canadian National is allowed to go forward, all that we cherish here in Hawthorn Woods will be destroyed along with dozens of communities along the EJ&E route! Consider the following:

- The cost to mitigate railroad crossings or to move public facilities, e.g. the fire station, will be horrific and well beyond our village's economic capacity. This means huge tax increases or assessments. Where's the money coming from? For those of us who are retired and on a fixed income, this spells disaster.
- Even now, we experience traffic congestion which is already impossible. With a 20 fold increase in railroad traffic, time commitments become unworkable while the quality of our living experience in the suburbs will be appreciably diminished.
- If our railroad tonnage increases 20 fold as promised, among all other considerations, safety issues become paramount. Not only will our exposure to potential rail accidents and toxic spills increase, but our children and citizens who walk to work or school could be potentially standing in the cold and snow waiting for a two mile long train to pass.
- Given our two main east west roads, Old McHenry and Gilmer, a 2 mile long train effectively blocks both major intersections thereby preventing quick access to our homes by fire, police and emergency vehicles. My wife and I are senior citizens. If either of us are having a stroke or heart attack, any time delay could cost us our life.

- With increased railroad traffic comes more noise, congestion, increased taxes, pollution and a general erosion of quality of life here. This translates into reduced home values and marketability. I know full well, as I am a retired real estate broker.
- If the Canadian National planned purchase of the EJ&E rail line is allowed to go forward, in a word, for the tens of thousands of us who live along the railroad corridor, it means that our beautiful homes, communities and way of life will be forever blemished and degraded.

On behalf of my wife and I and the thousands of residents of Hawthorn Woods who will be adversely affected, we urge the Surface Transportation Board to deny Canadian National's request to purchase the EJ&E railroad line.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. Brown".

Robbie Brown