

473 E. 161st Place
South Holland, IL 60473

The Honorable Anne K. Quinlan, Esq.
Acting Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423



RE: CN Railway Company / EJ&E, STB Finance Docket No. 35087

Dear Secretary Quinlan,

I am writing to express support regarding CN's intention to purchase the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railroad. I have lived in village of South Holland for more than 30 years, and have observed the effects of increased rail traffic on the former Grand Trunk Railroad line both before and after the CN purchased the Illinois Central Railroad, and more so since they consolidated their operations under the CN banner.

Waiting for trains has historically been an expected inconvenience for South Holland drivers. After the interchange connection track was built between the former GT and IC lines in Harvey, I have often found myself detouring around grade crossings blocked by slow-moving or stopped freight trains, usually choosing an alternate route rather than risk delay. It seems that the installation of some equipment necessary to expedite the movement of trains from the GT line into Markham Yard was never completed.

If the purchase is approved, the CN would be able to reroute some freight trains from their line through South Holland to the EJ&E line, thereby reducing local traffic congestion and delays. I also recognize that while my community benefits, other communities in the Chicago region will experience less desirable changes. It is no wonder that objections of a NIMBY nature are being voiced in public forums and elsewhere.

Therefore, I would also request that, as a condition of approval, the CN be required to invest in various improvements that will reduce the effects of increased train traffic on the affected communities. Two suggestions come to mind. Grade crossing separation, while expensive, is a permanent solution. Additional main tracks and sidings, all equipped with the proper signaling systems, would enable dispatchers to keep the trains moving, and also has a positive impact on the performance of the railroad.

I understand and appreciate the many challenges inherent in operating a Class 1 freight railroad because I have worked in the railroad industry as an electrical engineer for 35 years, first for the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad, and now for Metra (the commuter rail agency). Furthermore, I understand the financial savings inherent in moving goods by rail, and the difficulty of moving a large number of trains without delays. However, I am also a resident of a community that has put up with increasing congestion. Relocating some of that freight traffic will benefit not only South Holland, but the entire region. Cutting the amount of time that trains must idle, burn fuel, and block traffic will boost the quality of life for residents of South Holland and other communities adjacent to CN lines. It will give relief to frustrated drivers who must deal with the seemingly unpredictable trains.

I hope you will consider these factors, and support the CN's purchase of the EJ&E line, while providing direction that will mitigate the impact of increased rail traffic on the quality of life in those communities affected by the proposed change. Ultimately, the entire nation will benefit.

Yours truly,


Randall Bosma