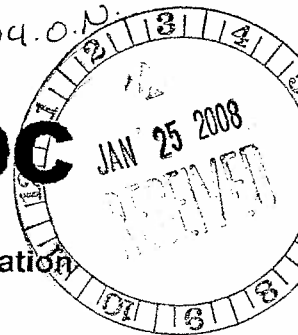


200 Potomac Blvd.
P.O. Box 523
Mount Vernon, IL 62864
(618) 244-3554
Fax - (618) 244-7533

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**JCDC**Jefferson County
Development Corporation**Fax**

To: Charles Nottingham **From:** Mary Ellen Bechtel - Executive Director
Fax: 202-245-0458 **Pages:** 3 with cover
Phone: **Date:** 01/24/08

Re: Finance Docket No 35087 Canadian
National Railway Company and Grand
Truck Corporation - control- EJ&E West
Company **cc:**

☒ **Urgent** ☐ **For Review** ☐ **Please Comment** ☐ **Please Reply** ☐ **Please Recycle**

Thanks
Eileen Williams
Administrative Assistant
Jefferson County Development Corporation
200 Potomac Boulevard
P.O. Box 523
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
Phone: (618) 244-3554
Fax: (618) 244-7533
email: admin@jeffcodev.org
www.jeffcodev.org

Surface Transportation Board

CN-EJ&E EIS - FD-35087

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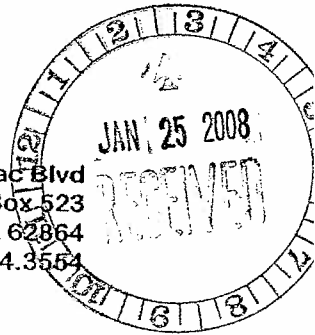
Cc: Original - too File

_____**FOR**



Jefferson County
Development Corporation

200 Potomac Blvd
P.O. Box 523
Mount Vernon, IL 62864
Office: 618.244.3554



January 24th, 2008

Charles Nottingham
Chairman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, S.W., suite 1220
Washington, D.C. 20423-001

Dear Mr. Nottingham,

I wish to go on record as being opposed to CN Railroads' Petition to the STB regarding Finance Docket #No. 35087, Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation – Control – EJ & E West Company.

This petition would result in stranding Amtrak and its users and therefore effectively eliminate the City of New Orleans which operates daily round trips between Chicago and New Orleans, and the Illini and Saluki, which is funded primarily by the State of Illinois, which together provide two daily round trips between Chicago and Champaign, Centralia, and Carbondale.

I support Amtrak's recommendation on the new route known as the "Grand Crossing Route" which would be an alternative should the Air Line Route be eliminated. However, no such route elimination should be granted until such time as the Grand Crossing Route can be fully funded and is completed.

Over 400,000 people use Amtrak into Union Station annually. Not providing access to Union Station would result in a serious economic set back for all of Illinois and would be of particular hardship to the thousands of students in the Champaign and Carbondale area who rely upon this service daily. There would also be significant negative environmental impact due to personal transportation, which would not doubt be used in lieu of more environmentally friendly Amtrak service.

Downstate communities such as Centralia who have 15,000 Amtrak passengers annually would be dealt an additional economic blow to its already struggling regional economy. This is a regional issue affecting all communities in proximity to Amtrak service points throughout the State of Illinois.

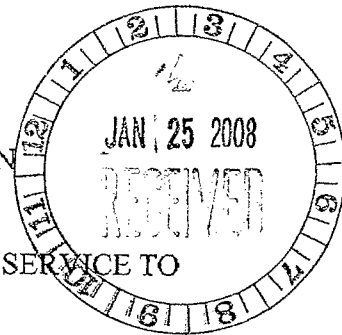
I therefore respectfully request that CN's position in this matter not be granted until such time that the acceptable heretofore mentioned alternative is in place.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Ellen Bechtel".

Mary Ellen Bechtel
Executive Director

JEFFERSON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
MOUNT VERNON, ILLINOIS
RESOLUTION
IN SUPPORT OF AMTRAK AND CONTINUOUS PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE TO
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



RE: Finance Docket No. 35087

Canadian National Railway Company and Grand Trunk Corporation

-Control-

EJ&E West Company

WHEREAS the Jefferson County Development Corporation exists to lead, coordinate, develop, and implement strategies to enhance economic development through business retention, expansion, and attraction and,

WHEREAS the vision of Jefferson County Development Corporation is to create a climate for economic growth and enhanced quality of life and,

WHEREAS public transportation is an important service for the residents of the region of Southern Illinois and Amtrak provides a vital transportation service for our residents and students, and

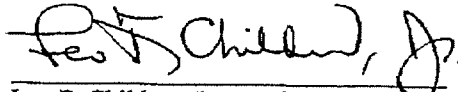
WHEREAS ridership on Amtrak has increased 57% since 2004 and we believe these increases will continue as the price of fuel increases, and

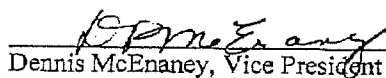
WHEREAS there would be a negative impact on our economy and the quality of life of the 40,000 residents in Jefferson County if we lost passenger rail service from Centralia, Illinois to Chicago, and

WHEREAS any decision that would allow any company to abandon any section of rail without a viable alternative route into Chicago would cause hardship for students and residents in Southern Illinois,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF THE JEFFERSON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION THAT WE SHALL SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL OF AMTRAK TO ASSURE AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE IS PROVIDED IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN CONTINUOUS PASSENGER SERVICE FROM SOUTHERN ILLINOIS TO CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

PASSED by the Jefferson County Development Corporation on the 24th day of January, 2008.


Leo F. Childers, Jr., President


Dennis McEnaney, Vice President