

Other Submissions

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Docket #: -35087 --

Subject: * CN/EJ&E
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Group/Affiliation:

Message: I am writing to you today to express my concern over the Canadian National (CN) Railroad's proposed acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Railroad (EJ&E.)

As a resident of Joliet, IL, I commute daily to Aurora, IL where my work is located. Basically, I follow the tracks of the EJ&E railroad from my house to my work. Currently, the amount of rail traffic on the EJ&E line could be described as minimal on most days to a slight inconvenience on a few days of the year. Most of the area's current traffic tie-ups are unrelated to the railroad.

Canadian National's plan to purchase this rail line would more than triple the amount of rail traffic using the current EJ&E tracks. In addition to increasing the amount of rail traffic, CN has proposed running trains in excess of 10,000 feet. Increasing the amount of rail traffic and the length of the trains traveling on this line will pose a dangerous traffic situation for residents of Joliet, Plainfield, and Aurora, IL. Emergency vehicle response times will greatly increase in these fast-growing communities, parts of which already have limited access to hospitals without adding extra time for traffic tie-ups.

In addition to creating a dangerous situation for emergency vehicles, this also creates a huge traffic problem for other vehicles. Our schoolchildren will suffer greatly by spending more time on the bus and less in the classroom or in other school activities. Increased rail traffic will cause school buses to be late in dropping off children in the morning and picking up children in the afternoon, thus disrupting the learning environment of the school.

The areas of Joliet, Plainfield, and Aurora, IL have experienced a great amount of growth in the past 5-10 years, which has also made for a much higher traffic volume on our roads, many of which are still two lane roads. Currently these roads are very congested at all hours of the day and night, with semi trucks, passenger vehicles, buses, and other vehicles all sharing the same roads. Increasing train traffic would more than double an already-long commute for residents of these communities.

Also, this proposed increase in rail traffic could have a very negative effect on property values in these communities. Selling a house near a rail line with heavy traffic will be next to impossible. Many homeowners will see a significant drop in their home's value in an already unstable economy.

Increasing rail traffic also poses a great threat to our environment. With increased rail traffic comes increased pollution and noise, as well as the possibility of hazardous substances traveling through neighborhoods where we live, work, and send our children to school. Train derailments and accidents are more likely to happen with increased rail traffic as well.

I hope that you will take the time to consider these concerns when you are making your decision about this acquisition. Please consider the safety and health of the people living in these Illinois communities over the desire of a corporation to make money and expand its influence.

Thank you for your time.