

January 9, 2008

To: Surface Transportation Board

From: The Forster Family (Scott, Maureen, Kelly & Scotty)  
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Barrington, IL 60010  
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Re: Proposed Increased Freight Traffic on the EJ&E Tracks

We would like to share with you our concerns relating to the proposed freight increase on the EJ& E tracks. We live approximately ½ blocks from the tracks and would be greatly impacted by the increased traffic proposed by Canadian National.

Not only will the traffic increase be an economic blow to the town of Barrington and our real estate values, but we will also have safety and environmental pollution concerns.

With the increase in traffic we run an increased risk of being cut off from emergency services. The fire and police station is on the opposite side of the tracks. This could mean the difference between life and death for us. With trains averaging 3-6 minutes and 20 plus trains per day the risk of being cutoff from services is very real.

From an environmental view the increase in noise pollution is dramatic. Here the whistle at an average level of over 100 decibels 20 plus times per day versus 5 times per day will impact our health. Not only are we at risk for increased hearing loss but disrupted sleep which will lead to further health issues. You may say that's the risk of leaving by tracks but at a level of 5 trains per day we were fine about the noise but to increase the traffic by 4 times will negatively impact to our family.

Other safety issues involve our children who frequently cross the tracks to get to Citizen's Park and other town locations. Increased train traffic will bring an increased risk. Also we currently travel across the tracks 6 times per day and our children are on school buses crossing the tracks 2 times per day. At a minimum wait of 3 minutes per train (and an increase of 15 plus trains) our family is significantly increasing its commuting time and energy costs.

We truly hope the Surface Transportation Board denies the requests by Canadian National to purchase and increase the freight traffic on the EJ&E. There truly is an environmental and safety impact. Our quality of living in Barrington would be significantly reduced.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these comments with you.