



**Personal Statement of Michael Beightol
President, Coyote Marsh & Associates, Inc.**

**Presented at the STB Scoping Session regarding the
Canadian National acquisition of the EJ&E Line and the resulting
dramatic impacts on Barrington, Illinois**

My name is Michael Beightol. I am the owner of a business based in North Barrington, Illinois. I have been a Barrington resident for the last 16 years. My wife and I are the proud parents of four children; our three youngest children are students in the Barrington school district.

We were originally drawn to the Barrington area from the City of Chicago due to Barrington's semi-rural nature. Our home – where my business is based – looks over a very serene setting of woods and marshland.

Over the years, the bucolic nature of our community has changed. We knew it could happen. Traffic is a primary issue, especially for my three children who cross the tracks a total of 10 times a day on their commutes to classes at Barrington High School and Barrington Middle School – Prairie Campus.

As an active member of the Barrington business community, I do all of my banking and business shopping in the central business district. I often meet clients for business meetings over meals at any number of restaurants in the Village of Barrington. I do this by choice because I am a fervent supporter of our central business district.

However, the proposed increase in freight traffic will force me to re-consider my loyalty to doing business in the Village's central business district. When traveling for business, increases in traffic congestion greatly diminishes my personal productivity. If the proposed purchase of the rail-line by Canadian National is approved – and the dramatic leap in freight traffic increases goes forward – my purchase decisions will be directed to communities elsewhere. I know I am not alone in this thought process.

Fundamentally, it makes absolutely no sense to see current freight traffic diverted from an existing, well-supported rail infrastructure to one that is woefully in need of attention.



Put another way, increased rail traffic should stay off the EJ&E tracks. Keep it in Chicago where the infrastructure, especially grade crossings, has been improved to the point where it doesn't cause the type of traffic tie-ups that we can only imagine will occur here in Barrington should this deal go through.

Nobody can begin to estimate the cost of making the grade changes that will be required to ensure the proper flow of traffic – including school buses and public safety vehicles – that would be required at the major grade crossings of Hwy 14, Hough Street and Main Street.

Nobody can also begin to understand the degradation to our environment from the increased freight train traffic, and the ensuring hundreds of cars left idling at the rail-crossings mentioned before, as well as rail crossings elsewhere in the community, including Cuba Road, Lake Zurich Road, Otis Road and Penny Road.

Our community is quite unlike others in the suburban landscape in that we have so many at-grade rail crossings. But like any other community, the citizenry is correct to raise the alarm of concern when such draconian changes to our town are proposed by powerful interests outside the community.

Barrington residents have historically come to the aid of others in need, whether it be through the many faith-based programs that support residents in the inner city of Chicago or the residents of Louisiana and Mississippi put in harms way by the devastating effects of Mother Nature.

Now, it's time for others – including the Illinois Congressional Delegation and the Surface Transportation Board – to come to the aid of Barrington and grind to a halt the threat presented by the Canadian National Railway.

Respectfully submitted by:

Michael Beightol
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