



HR1187

LRB095 20628 GRL 49155 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, On October 30, 2007, the Canadian National Railway  
3 Corporation, along with its wholly owned U.S. subsidiary, the  
4 Grand Trunk Corporation, filed an application with the U.S.  
5 Surface Transportation Board (STB) seeking approval to acquire  
6 the Elgin Joliet and Eastern West Company (EJ&E); and

7           WHEREAS, The proposed acquisition by Canadian National  
8 Corporation (CN) would involve shifting a significant amount of  
9 train traffic that currently moves over CN rail lines in the  
10 City of Chicago to sections of the EJ&E rail lines west and  
11 south of the City of Chicago, including a segment that runs  
12 through the counties of Will, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, and Cook;  
13 and

14           WHEREAS, The EJ&E runs through numerous "bedroom  
15 communities" that are homes to many residential neighborhoods  
16 and schools; with 133 grade-level crossings, some with no  
17 gates, along the rail line, these communities are not equipped  
18 with the rail crossing infrastructure to handle a massive  
19 increase in freight traffic, nor do they have the tax authority  
20 to build the infrastructure that is needed for these  
21 communities to remain viable for commuter lifestyles; and

22           WHEREAS, Some communities will experience more than 700%

1 increase in the quantities of federally designated hazardous  
2 materials routed through their municipalities; these dramatic  
3 increases will require significant financial investments by  
4 local emergency agencies to prepare for potential hazardous  
5 material spills, not to mention the increased health risk to  
6 residents in neighborhoods the EJ&E travels through; and

7 WHEREAS, These counties are experiencing exceptional  
8 population growth, including Kendall and Will Counties, which  
9 are two of the fastest-growing counties in terms of population  
10 growth in the nation; and

11 WHEREAS, With exceptional growth in rail traffic, concerns  
12 have been voiced regarding delays in emergency services, such  
13 as ambulances and fire-prevention vehicles, due to the  
14 significant increase of train traffic in these communities; and

15 WHEREAS, Increased freight traffic will inevitably cause  
16 delays in response to 9-1-1 calls due to blocked railroad  
17 crossings that are at grade level throughout the region; a fire  
18 doubles in size every minute, and a delayed response to a  
19 structure fire of 5 or more minutes could mean the difference  
20 between rescuing fire victims and fire fatalities, not to  
21 mention minimal property damage versus total destruction; and

22 WHEREAS, On top of these existing concerns with the

1 proposed EJ&E merger, some communities will experience freight  
2 train traffic every 35 minutes, which will cause significant  
3 increases in congestion and safety concerns; and

4 WHEREAS, Using the City of Barrington as an example, a  
5 total of 646 vehicles currently experience delays at the four  
6 main Barrington crossings on the EJ&E in a 24 hour period; it  
7 is estimated that under CN's operating plan, which was  
8 submitted to the STB in this acquisition's application, by the  
9 year 2010 3,397 vehicles will experience delays at the same  
10 four main Barrington crossings in a 24 hour period due to  
11 increased rail freight and road traffic; and

12 WHEREAS, CN's purchase of the EJ&E line could potentially  
13 harm the implementation of the STAR line, a planned expansion  
14 of commuter rail that will help more than a million suburban  
15 residents get to work faster as road congestion continues to  
16 snarl suburban roads; Metra planned to run the STAR line along  
17 the existing EJ&E tracks that CN is proposing to purchase;  
18 without access to the EJ&E tracks, the STAR line could be  
19 shelved indefinitely; and

20 WHEREAS, With 133 grade crossings, some with no gates,  
21 along the EJ&E, the needed investment in infrastructure  
22 improvements is prohibitively expensive; conservative  
23 estimates indicate that 50% of those crossings would need an

1 underpass/overpass built at an estimated cost of \$40 million  
2 per crossing; the necessary infrastructure improvements would  
3 amount to almost \$3 billion; therefore, be it

4       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
5 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
6 emergency response times in the affected areas would be  
7 significantly marginalized causing, in some cases, serious  
8 injuries or even deaths; and be it further

9       RESOLVED, That as a result of the EJ&E merger, the dramatic  
10 increase in hazardous material to be transported through  
11 residential and commercial neighborhoods that consist of  
12 millions of citizens, including hospitals and schools, pose  
13 grave consequences in the event of an accident; and be it  
14 further

15       RESOLVED, That the acquisition of the EJ&E by Canadian  
16 National Corporation should be denied by the federal Surface  
17 Transportation Board because of the health and safety hazards  
18 it will produce for the citizens of the affected communities;  
19 and be it further

20       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
21 presented to the Chairman of the Surface Transportation Board,  
22 the President of the Canadian National Railway Company, the

1 Chairman of the Will County Board, the Chairman of the DuPage  
2 County Board, the Chairman of the Grundy County Board, the  
3 Chairman of the Kane County Board, the President of the Cook  
4 County Board, the members of the Illinois Congressional  
5 delegation, the Administrator of the CREATE program, the  
6 Secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation, the  
7 Chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission, and the President  
8 and the Chairman of the Chicago Transit Authority.