

## District Office:

24 South Des Plaines River Road  
Suite 400  
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016  
847-257-0450  
847-257-0452 FAX  
enekritz@repnekritz.org

## Springfield Office:

248-W Stratton Building  
Springfield, Illinois 62706  
217-558-1004  
217-557-7204 FAX  
www.repnekritz.org

**Elaine Nekritz**

State Representative • 57th District

## Committees:

Appropriations-Higher  
Education  
Elections & Campaign  
Reform (Chair)  
Environment & Energy  
Environmental Health  
Judiciary I - Civil Law  
Railroad Safety (Chair)  
Renewable Energy  
Commission on Government  
Forecasting & Accountability

TO: The Honorable Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board

FROM: State Representative Elaine Nekritz  
(847)257-0450  
Fax (847)257-0452  
enekritz@repnekritz.org

DATE: 12-04-07

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RE: STB Finance Docket No. 35087

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December 4, 2007

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams  
Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20423

Subject: *Canadian National Railway Co., et al – Control – EJ&E  
West Company, STB Finance Docket No. 35087*

Dear Secretary Williams:

I am pleased to write in support of the proposal by Canadian National Railway Company (CN) to acquire control over the EJ&E West Company. I believe this purchase will result in improved freight rail service throughout the Chicago region and will dramatically reduce train traffic through the district I represent in the north and northwest suburbs of Chicago.

In my role as Chair of the Illinois House Rail Committee, I have heard time and time again about the rail congestion problems plaguing the Chicago region. This congestion results in delays and other issues throughout the national rail system. If CN were to move much of its traffic to the EJ&E line, thus avoiding having to travel through the heart of the Chicago rail network, it could relieve some of the pressure on already overloaded facilities. This would also free up capacity for other carriers and reduce energy consumption.

I am particularly pleased to learn that there could be a substantial reduction of train traffic over the CN line through my district from the current level of about 19 trains per day to 2 trains per day. This will create excess capacity on the line thereby enhancing the prospect for more frequent commuter trains. Moreover, the transaction will reduce environmental impacts within my district, including air emissions, noise and grade crossing delays.

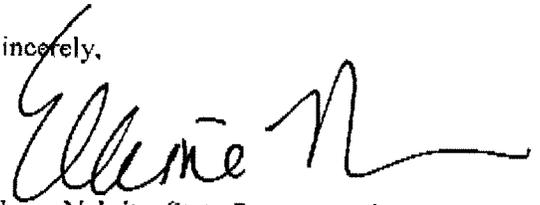
I recognize that as train traffic moves off of downtown Chicago rail lines, some communities along the EJ&E right-of-way will experience train traffic increases. I understand that the STB will be preparing an Environmental Impact Statement that will assess the impacts of this increased traffic. The STB can impose conditions, if appropriate, to mitigate those impacts. I have been told by CN that it is reaching out to those communities to identify these issues, and to assist these communities in addressing them as appropriate.

Honorable Vernon A. Williams  
December 4, 2007  
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However, these localized impacts, in my judgment, do not outweigh the significant overall environmental benefits of this transaction on the region, or the transportation benefits of the transaction for shippers in Illinois and around the country. I urge the Board to complete its environmental review process expeditiously, and to approve this transaction so that the residents of the 57th District and shippers from around the state and nation can enjoy the benefits it will bring.

Please enter these comments into the record of this docket.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elaine N.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elaine Nekritz, State Representative  
Illinois House of Representatives