



TRANSPORTATION NEWS CHICAGO

# Railroad merger OK blasted by suburban mayors, Illinois lawmakers

Metra, suburban mayors wary of more delays because of increase freight traffic in the Chicago area.

By David Struett | Mar 15, 2023, 3:52pm CDT

SHARE



Canadian Pacific will be allowed to merge with Kansas City Southern after a ruling Wednesday by the U.S. Surface Transportation Board. | AP file

Elected officials blasted the federal government's approval Wednesday of the merger of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern railways, calling it a disastrous decision that will slow commuter rail service, impede first responders and risk people's lives.

The merger could further tie up commuters using Metra's Milwaukee District-West Line as regulators expect the number of daily freight trains to increase from three to 11.

"To say we're disappointed is a gross understatement," said Frank DeSimone, village president of Bensenville. "They approved a 400% increase in freight traffic in our community."

DeSimone is part of a coalition of eight northwest suburban mayors who oppose the merger. The other villages are Elgin, Bartlett, Hanover Park, Schaumburg, Roselle, Itasca and Wood Dale.

---

RELATED

**Rep. Krishnamoorthi releases memo showing Canadian Pacific Railway dispatchers cause Metra delays**

---

Metra said it "remains concerned about the potential impact of this merger on our operations."

"We will count on the merged railroad's commitments and the [U.S. Surface Transportation Board's] oversight to make sure we can operate safely and reliably and continue to provide service that meets the needs of the residents of the Chicago area," the transit agency said.

The \$31 billion acquisition is the **first railroad merger in two decades**. Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern railways are the nation's two smallest railroads, but the merger creates the first railway linking Canada, Mexico and the United States.

U.S. Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, D-Ill., speaking with the coalition in Itasca, Illinois, on Wednesday, said the Surface Transportation Board "rushed through this decision without contemplating what we learned in East Palestine," referring to the **freight train derailment last month in Ohio** that spilled hazardous materials.

Krishnamoorthi, Sens. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., and Rep. Delia Ramirez, D-Ill., sent a joint statement blasting the merger.

The board "sided with corporations over our constituents," the lawmakers wrote. "We are deeply disappointed" and will "keep a watchful eye" on the regulator during the seven-year oversight period it has over the merger, they wrote.

The lawmakers have sent several letters to the Surface Transportation Board opposing the merger. In July, they urged the board to meet directly with Illinoisans to hear about impacts on the communities. ✕

In the wake of the Norfolk Southern derailment in Ohio, the lawmakers again advise a review of the expected increased traffic of hazardous materials.

---

RELATED

**Suburban mayors urge feds to slow railroad merger after Ohio derailment**

---

The Surface Transportation Board tried to allay the fears of the deal, saying Wednesday that studies show impacts will be minimal around Chicago.



“We very seriously took into account Metra’s concerns,” said Martin J. Oberman, chairman of the Surface Transportation Board.

“CP and Metra have been working on those lines for decades,” he said. “Having us monitoring [them] now, in a way that wasn’t before, if anything will improve Metra and CP’s ability to play together. And that’s what I expect. And if they don’t, we’ll make them.”

Oberman is a former Metra chairman and former Chicago alderman.

Oberman addressed complaints of several Chicago suburban mayors, who formed the Coalition to Stop CPKC, who worried the merger would increase blocked crossings and impede first responders. The mayors asked for \$9 million for overpasses to bypass those crossings.

Oberman said the fears are not warranted.

“The data showed it isn’t necessary. However, if a problem were to arise,” he said, “if there are blockings causing a serious public health problem, that’s why we have an oversight period.”

RELATED

**First major US railroad merger in 2 decades will go forward**

**Durbin, Krishnamoorthi call on federal board to delay merger between Canadian Pacific Railway and Kansas City Southern**

## Stories like these are powered by you.

At the Sun-Times, our mission is to spread reliable, independent coverage to our Chicago communities. Your support makes it possible for us to provide you — and your neighbors — with the stories that you care about and need to hear.

Earlier this year, we made every Sun-Times story free online. We dropped our paywall because we believe that accessible news is important for everyone, not just those who can afford to pay for it.

Keeping Chicago connected and informed is no easy feat. This is hard work that costs real money and relies on consistent funding from readers like you. Becoming a member helps secure the future of local journalism. Your contribution of any amount makes a big impact.



Monthly		Annual		
\$5/mo	\$10/mo	\$15/mo	\$25/mo	Other

DONATE

**NEXT UP IN NEWS**

---

Chicago police issue alert after 10 armed robberies in Brighton Park, Back of the Yards over less than two hours

How a gun violence spike in 2016 created a movement of Chicagoans that is still building

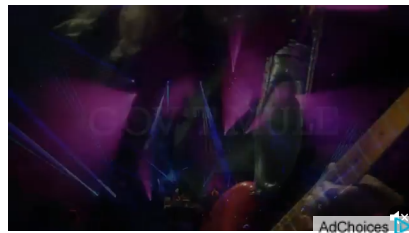
DEA's new Chicago boss Sheila Lyons: Will target fentanyl, an 'awful, terrible challenge'

Write-in ballots force Taliaferro into 29th Ward runoff — but La Spata ekes out reelection in 1st

Chicago-area expressway shootings increasingly caused by road rage, state police say

Banking fears spread to Europe, dragging down shares of big lenders

⚡ MOBILIZED BY KARGO



---

**MOST READ**

The curiosities of a freak crappie caught in northern Illinois



Bears look to RB Khalil Herbert as they move on without David Montgomery

Bears flock to Jalen Carter's pro day, leave with more questions than answers

Good get by Bears GM Ryan Poles ... now the real work begins

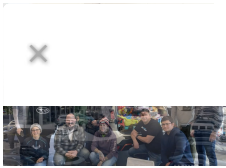
Northwestern's Peter Skoronski would 'look really good in a Chicago Bears uniform'

MOBILIZED BY KARGO



AdChoices

Sponsored Content



Illinois: Doctor Says Two Gummies (Before Bed) Can... latesthealthnews.net



How Long Does \$1 Million Last After 60? Fisher Investments



The Most Inappropriate Dress on The Golden... YourDIY



Totally Awkward Magazine Covers People Regret Ever... YourDIY



[Photos] This Red Carpet Moment Is Inappropriate 12Up

THE LATEST

SPORTS

Go & Show: Lake Michigan fisheries meeting & Illinois Taxidermist Assn. convention

For this Go & Show, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is holding an informational meeting on the Lake Michigan fisheries tonight in Des Plaines and the Illinois Taxidermist Association convention has public portions Friday through Sunday in Springfield.

By Dale Bowman | Mar 16, 2023, 9:31am CDT

CRIME

Chicago police issue alert after 10 armed robberies in Brighton Park, Back of the Yards over less than two hours

The robberies occurred between 6 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. Wednesday, often just two blocks apart. In each case, two to four robbers approached people on the street at gunpoint.

By Sun-Times Wire | Mar 16, 2023, 8:08am CDT

MOVIES AND TV

'Boston Strangler': Keira Knightley puts in the work as reporter on the trail of a killer

Period-piece specialist visits the more recent past in gast-moving crime drama

By Richard Roeper | Mar 16, 2023, 8:00am CDT

DEAR ABBY

Dear Abby: Why won't friend ever allow me to pick up the

The beneficiary of all this generosity feels like a charity case — and hesitates to

By Abigail Van Buren | Mar 16, 2023, 6:00am CDT

**CHICAGO**

**How a gun violence spike in 2016 created a movement of Chicagoans that is still building**

Over the last six years, support for community-based violence prevention has swelled in Chicago. It started with a “really shocking and enormous” increase in shootings.

By Patrick Smith | WBEZ | Mar 16, 2023, 5:30am CDT

\*

[About Us](#) • [Get Home Delivery](#) • [Work With Us](#) • [Media Kit](#) • [Terms of Use](#) • [Privacy Notice](#) • [Cookie Policy](#) • [Terms of Sale](#)

×