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Governor Christie Dedicates Union Rail Station In Honor Of Former Congressman Bob Franks

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

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Transportation Advocate Left A Legacy Of Service, Integrity and Results

Trenton, NJ – Joining family, friends and former colleagues today in honoring one of the Garden State's finest public servants, Governor Chris Christie officially dedicated NJ TRANSIT's Union Rail Station in honor of the late Congressman Robert "Bob" Franks (R-Union). Franks, who succumbed to cancer in 2010 at the age of 58, was instrumental in securing the federal funds which culminated in the planning, construction and current operation of this widely-used Raritan Valley Line station.

"Bob Franks was truly one of a kind: compassionate, principled and committed to delivering results for the people he served, whether in Trenton, Washington DC, or here in the streets of Union," said Governor Christie. "This station is the direct result of his leadership and determination to make life better for the New Jerseyans he represented and I'm honored today to dedicate this station with Bob's wife, Fran, and their three daughters: Sara, Abigail and Kelly."

Congressman Bob Franks served 13 years in the New Jersey General Assembly and eight years as a member of Congress, achieving a notable record of success as an advocate on transportation issues. As a member of the General Assembly, he wrote the law establishing New Jersey's Transportation Trust Fund and effectively advocated for numerous improvements to mass transportation.

"There is no doubt that New Jersey is a better place because of the work of Bob Franks," said Transportation Commissioner and NJ TRANSIT Board Chairman James Simpson. "His foresight in creating the Transportation Trust Fund has enabled our state to continue to expand our mass transportation network and provide a mechanism for the maintenance of our roads and infrastructure."

As a member of Congress, Bob Franks parlayed his deep passion for public transportation through his service on the powerful Budget Committee and Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. He also chaired the Railroads Subcommittee, and was an early proponent of leveraging transportation assets through transit-oriented development. This was specifically manifested in the construction of Union Station in Union Township.

"Using relationships that only Bob could forge, he became a forceful and incredibly effective advocate for federal transportation funds," said NJ TRANSIT Executive Director James Weinstein. "His enduring legacy is reflected in the growth of NJ TRANSIT's Raritan Valley Line and the entire rail network for that matter, and will forever be illustrated by a rail station that has now been dedicated in his honor."

A plaque was unveiled today by Governor Christie and the family of the late Congressman. The text of the plaque reads as follows:

*Union Station
Dedication to Congressman Bob Franks
1951-2010*

A noted transportation advocate, Congressman Bob Franks championed innovative transportation services and landmark projects that enhanced service quality and supported economic development across New Jersey and the

metropolitan region.

A New Jersey native, Bob Franks devoted two decades of his life to elected public service – 13 years in the New Jersey General Assembly and eight years as a Member of Congress. In Trenton and Washington, Bob Franks was a consistent, powerful voice for transportation. Among his achievements, he wrote the state law creating the transportation trust fund; led the formation of the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition – an advocacy group for transit riders along the Raritan Valley Rail Line and pushed for Union Train Station to be part of NJ TRANSIT's Capital Program.

Bob Franks was also an advocate for expanding parking lots and jitney services at commuter rail stations, bi-level train cars for NJ TRANSIT, the Lackawanna Cut-off project and the modernization and improvement of NJ TRANSIT's bus fleets.

During his tenure in Congress, Bob Franks served with distinction on the powerful Budget Committee and Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. Congressman Franks' key policy efforts were aimed to expand the economy and create private sector employment, reduce taxes, enact welfare reform, promote national defense, and advocate for Amtrak and initiatives that improved access to mass transportation.

Known for his unquestioned integrity and ability to work with those across the political aisle, Congressman Franks partnered with communities, including Union Township, to leverage transportation assets for transit-oriented development. He recognized Union Station as a necessity for the Township of Union, Kean University and the surrounding towns, companies and residents.

Bob Franks' tireless work and commitment to public service ensured that this facility would stand for generations. Union Station will therefore be dedicated to Bob Franks, as a tribute befitting one of New Jersey's most visionary and important transportation leaders.

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