

**PUBLIC MEETING**

of the

**ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

on

**ASSEMBLY, NO. 3018**

Held:  
November 22, 1983  
West Side School Complex  
Atlantic City, New Jersey

**MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Thomas F. Cowan, Chairman  
Assemblyman Wayne R. Bryant, Vice Chairman  
Assemblyman Jimmy Zangari

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Laurence A. Gurman, Research Associate  
Office of Legislative Services  
Aide, Assembly Transportation and Communications Committee

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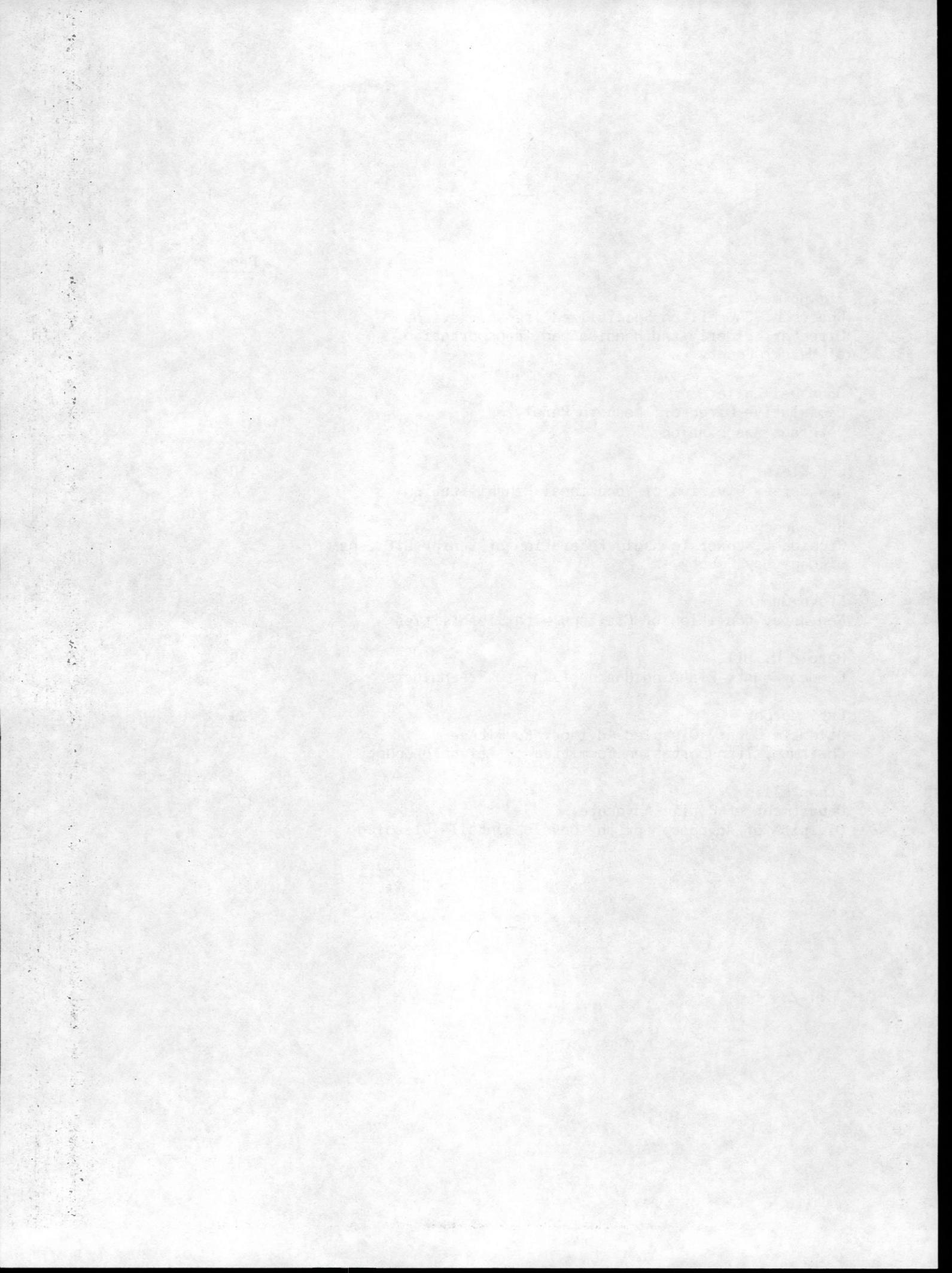
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R-27  
11/2/83/jmf  
Assembly Committee Amendments

to  
Assembly \_\_\_\_\_ Bill No. 3018 \_\_\_\_\_

Amend:

Page	Sec.	Line	
2	3	After line 13	Insert new subsections f. and g. as follows: "f. "Disabled" means any individual who, by reason of illness, injury, age, congenital malfunction, or other permanent or temporary incapacity or disability, is unable without special facilities or special planning or design to utilize mass transportation facilities and services as effectively as persons who are not so affected. g. "Geographic region" means one of the following regions of the State: the southern region encompassing the counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem; the central region encompassing the counties of Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset; and the northern region encompassing those counties remaining in the State."
2	4	1	Omit "of the New Jersey Transit Corporation"
2	4	12	After "subsidy" insert ", which may include but not be limited to private ride or taxi fare subsidy"
2	4	16	After "improvements" insert "that afford accessibility"
2	5	1	Omit "New Jersey Transit Corporation" insert "corporation"

Assembly Committee Amendments

to

Assembly Bill No. 3018

Amend:

Page	Sec.	Line	
3	5	8	After "." insert "Commencing on the first anniversary of the effective date of this act and annually thereafter, the corporation shall conduct at least one public hearing in each geographic region in order to gather information from interested parties as to the efficacy of the program."
3	6	6	After "shall" insert "include, but not be limited to information as to what transportation services will be provided, the methods that will be utilized to deliver these services, and the anticipated financial costs to be incurred from the implementation of the services and shall"
3	7	1	After "allocated" insert "by the corporation"
3	7	7	After "and" insert "no more than 10% of the total moneys allocated under this program shall be used"
3	7	17	After "program" insert ", except that during the first fiscal year no county shall receive less than \$100,000.00"
3	7	18	Omit "1 million during the first fiscal year" insert "300,000.00"
4	7	32	After "." insert "The governing body of an eligible county shall schedule a public hearing annually for interested parties to provide the governing body with any facts, materials, or recommendations that would be of assistance regarding the efficacy of the program established under subsection a. of section 4 of this act."

Assembly Committee Amendments

to

Assembly Bill No. 3018

Amend:

Page	Sec.	Line	
4	8	10	Omit "15" insert "30"
4	8	10	Omit "on" insert "in at least two newspapers circulating in the specific geographic area in"
4	8	11	After "." insert the following sentence and subsection d. as follows:  "Notice of any hearing shall also be transmitted, at least 30 days in advance thereof, to every municipal clerk within the specified geographic area where the meeting will be held.  d. All public hearings held pursuant to this act shall be held at locations which are accessible to senior citizens and the disabled."
4	3	1	Omit "3" insert "9"
4	3	After line 6	Insert new section 10 as follows:  "10. The corporation shall prepare a comprehensive study designed to determine the feasibility of lowering insurance costs by means of the development of a State-wide insurance pool for transit vehicles, regardless of owner, that are utilized at the county level and for inter-county transportation services. The corporation shall submit the final report to the Senate and General Assembly Transportation and Communications Committees, or their successors, within 1 year following the effective date of this act."

Assembly Committee Amendments

to

Assembly Bill No. 3018

Amend:

Page	Sec.	Line	
4	10	1	Omit "10" insert "11"
4	10	4	Omit "20,000,000.00" insert "6,000,000 00"
4	10	5	After "act" insert "during the first fiscal year in which this legislation is enacted"
4	10	6	Omit "and in each subsequent fiscal year"
4	10	9	After "sum" insert "of \$20,000,000.00, and in each subsequent fiscal year there shall be appropriated to the corporation from the Casino Revenue Fund a sum"
4	10	9	Omit "20%" insert "15%"
4	11	1	Omit "11" insert "12"

**ASSEMBLYMAN THOMAS F. COWAN (Chairman):** As Chairman of the Assembly Transportation and Communications Committee, I welcome you here today to the Committee's meeting which has been scheduled to consider A-3018, a bill that I am sponsoring for the purpose of making public transportation more accessible to senior citizens and the disabled.

This session follows a series of public hearings that were held in the various regions of the State to consider this legislation. Our first hearing occurred on April 20 in Hudson County; a second hearing took place on May 20 in Gloucester County; and, a third hearing was convened on June 15 in Monmouth County.

This legislation implements a constitutional amendment approved by the voters in 1981 which allows revenues from casino taxes to be used for additional or expanded transportation services to seniors and the disabled.

Termed the "Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program," the legislation would assist counties to develop accessible feeder transportation services to fixed route transportation already available, as well as to provide monies to establish local transit services for seniors and the disabled.

The bill would also enable the New Jersey Transit Corporation, which would administer the program, to develop and maintain capital improvements needed to facilitate this program, and it would allow New Jersey Transit to give technical assistance to the counties. In accordance with the legislation, both the counties and New Jersey Transit would have responsibilities for coordination.

To be eligible for this program, the governing body of each county would develop a proposal that would be subject to approval by the Board of New Jersey Transit. Monies would be allocated to eligible counties based on the county's percentage of persons over sixty years of age out of the State's total elderly population, sixty years of age and over.

In accordance with amendments that I am proposing today, during the first year of the program, \$6 million would be appropriated from the Casino Revenue Fund. In the following fiscal year, an amount of \$20 million would be appropriated, and in each subsequent fiscal

year, fifteen percent of the monies deposited in the Fund in the preceding fiscal year would be appropriated. Seventy-five percent of the appropriation would go to the counties for feeder service, local transit service, and coordination, while the remaining twenty-five percent would be allocated to New Jersey Transit for capital improvements, technical assistance, coordination, and general administration. As provided in the amendments, no more than ten percent of the total monies allocated under this program shall be used by the New Jersey Transit Corporation for the general administration of the program.

I am concerned that there are many senior citizens and disabled residents of New Jersey who do not now have the public transportation available to them that they need to carry out such everyday functions as traveling to work or school, shopping, making visits to the doctor, and participating in social and recreational activities.

The voters of this State recognized the need for additional transportation services to the elderly and disabled when they approved the constitutional amendment in 1981. Through this legislation, I believe we are implementing the voter's mandate in the best and most efficient way possible.

As Chairman of the Assembly Transportation and Communications Committee, I invite any interested party to assist in providing information to this Committee that may be useful. Your involvement is most important and fully appreciated.

We do have a television program set up. Is it ready now? (affirmative reply) I think it might be advisable to have that at the first venture if you do have it ready. Maybe if you would give just a few introductory remarks concerning that, it would be helpful.

**J I M H O L M A N:** Excuse me, Assemblyman Cowan. My name is Jim Holman. I am the Chairman of the Council on Specialized Transportation, and the Director of the Elderly and Handicapped Transportation of Mercer County. I am here with the film service.

**ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN:** Okay.

**MR. HOLMAN:** The film was produced by the Department of Transportation, and it shows two counties in the State -- Ocean County

and Mercer County -- that have a lot of county involvement in paratransit. The film was made in November of 1981, and it was made for the purpose of showing to County Freeholder Boards what can be done and how the counties should support paratransit systems such as are being operated in Mercer County and Ocean County.

Although the film was produced by the Department of Transportation and it shows two counties, the Department of Transportation does not say that Ocean County and Mercer County are the role models to be followed. It says that Ocean County and Mercer County are County-operated systems with a great deal of County support.

The Council on Special Transportation is currently the only statewide organization directly concerned with the provision of transportation for the elderly and the handicapped. The Council is made up of providers of elderly and handicapped transportation, both public and private nonprofit, along with representatives of County Planning Boards. The Council on Special Transportation supports and endorses Assembly Bill 3018, and it makes the following recommendations:

I don't want to read them because they are in the bill, sir, but I would like to add the following:

The Council would like to see in the bill that no county match is required to draw down on casino revenue taxes. If that is a requirement, it is going to hinder a lot of counties from participating.

I have a statement that I will give after the film, but at this time, I would like to go to the film, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Okay. I think we will seat ourselves in the audience so that we can watch it.

(Mr. Holman shows film.)

MR. HOLMAN: My purpose, sir, in bringing the film and showing it is to demonstrate how the money will be used in the counties. There were a lot of questions when the bills were first introduced: Where was the money going to go? How was it going to be spent? Are we going to bring senior citizens to Atlantic City to gamble?

The film speaks for itself by showing how the money will be used. I have another brief statement.

While the elderly, the physically handicapped, and the economically disadvantaged make up that segment of society that is most in need of medical and social services, they are often denied access to those services because of lack of adequate or affordable transportation. Public transportation, while generally affordable, usually presents physical barriers to the handicapped and the elderly, and even when accessible, it often does not have the routes and schedules available to serve the specific needs of this target group.

Private carriers, while more flexible, pose economic barriers that keep them from being a viable transportation alternative. As a result, not only are our individuals denied access to services, but medical service providers and social service agencies find themselves unable to effectively serve their clients.

The system of transportation that would be provided with Casino Revenue Funds will help meet the mobility needs of the target population and assist service providers within the State of New Jersey to complete their missions and objectives.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you very much. You mentioned before the film something about making sure that we have something in the bill regarding matching funds from the counties. I don't see any real purpose for that because nothing in the bill at all mentions match in any way. It is a matter of the funding coming from the casino funds. I don't think it would serve any purpose, except maybe to stimulate some thoughts that may not want to be stimulated.

MR. HOLMAN: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you. It was a very excellent film, Jim. You did a very nice job.

MR. HOLMAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Next we have John Del Colle, the Legislative Director for the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association. John?

JOHN DEL COLLE: Good morning.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Good morning.

MR. DEL COLLE: My name is John Del Colle, and I am a Legislative Director. It is a pleasure to be here this morning.

The Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association appreciates this opportunity to present our testimony on A-3018, the "Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act." We also testified on this bill at a hearing in Jersey City last May, and we are still in complete support of its provisions and the proposed amendments to it.

Since that time, two additional hearings were held, and I did go to one other one. I think by now that everyone has had the opportunity to study A-3018 and to make recommendations through the hearing process for improvement.

I came a long distance, and I felt compelled to do that today because through my experience in the State, I have heard many discussions about the bill. Unfortunately, I have heard many statements which are based on misinformation and possibly a misunderstanding of the provisions of the bill. I always thought the bill spoke for itself; however, there have been many interpretations, and some people have expressed dissatisfaction with some of the provisions.

I think that the amendments that were drawn up will address themselves to the problems, and that is what I would like to discuss today.

Basically, the provisions in the amendments will add additional oversight. One is the definition of "disabled." We had some individuals whom I spoke with who felt that not all disabilities were covered under the program. I don't think it was the intent to exclude any group, but rather to ensure that any individual who was handicapped or elderly would be entitled to transportation service provided under this legislation.

The transportation program outlined in A-3018 gives each and every county a tremendous amount of flexibility to provide comprehensive transportation services. Throughout my involvement with this bill -- and it was from the original drafting of it -- it was always everyone's intention not to put restrictions on what kind of services a county may provide. It makes no sense to mandate a specific service when each county is different and has its own individual problems in providing an efficient, reliable service, especially since

there are twenty-one counties. In Section 4, the county may provide accessible transportation services using any mix of services such as fixed route, local fare subsidy, door-to-door service, taxi subsidies, or just about any service that they find would best meet their needs in the county and would also meet the criteria that will be developed in the program guidelines.

I have heard a lot of discussion about New Jersey Transit's role in the program. I would like to state for the record that not one cent of these casino funds will be spent on capital improvements or any type of bailout of NJT's transportation service. The original drafting of this bill concerned two specific programs. One was the county plan providing for coordination of existing service and development of new and expanded services. It seems everyone had no problem with this, and they were agreeable to this concept. They felt it would best address the many needs of our elderly and handicapped citizens.

The second part allocates funds to NJT to provide technical assistance and ensures that its existing mass transportation system will become accessible. The capital improvements contained in this bill were aimed directly at accessibility provisions. The amendments being proposed today will add the word "accessibility" to the capital improvements specified in Section 4. This is very important. From the very beginning, it was my understanding that these monies would be used for accessibility modifications or renovations to rail stations, bus stations, or to any vehicle, which would provide accessible mass transportation. Only the cost of the ramp, lift, platforms or any other accessibility feature would come from the casino funds. I think the amendments that were proposed have strong enough language in this area, and they will make sure that not one cent will be spent on any other provision, except those pertaining directly to the elderly and handicapped citizens.

The proposed amendments will ensure that proper oversight is maintained. The original bill was minus, I felt, strong language, although we thought of it, addressing the need for strict oversight of both county plans and the program guidelines, which would be developed by the New Jersey Transit Corporation. The amendments would mandate that the Corporation would hold an annual public hearing in each of

three geographical areas contained in the definitions. These hearings are imperative to ensure that every citizen throughout the State has the opportunity to voice their suggestions for improvements to the program, and to direct any criticism they might have at the Corporation.

The bill already contains -- and I don't know if people realize it -- a provision mandating that NJT must submit an annual report to the Legislature, which is only logical. This report would give the Legislature a status report on the transportation program, as well as making recommendations for improvement to the program. The annual report then in each of these geographical areas becomes much more significant since the Corporation will be able to draw information from the three public hearings that will be held. In addition to the public hearings and the annual report, the amendments would mandate that each and every county schedule an annual hearing on its own individual county program. This would give every individual located within the county the opportunity to make his or her feelings known about the effectiveness of the program.

It was not contained in the amendments but, just as an aside, every effort should be made obviously on the part of the county to get those individuals who are suffering from transportation problems to that particular hearing, or else it defeats the purpose of having it.

The flexibility granted to counties in providing a mix of services should be discussed at these annual hearings. The public needs to be involved on all three levels of hearings in order to ensure that the program is providing sufficient and reliable service throughout the area.

I have heard much criticism and concern over the effectiveness that this new program would have on existing services. It is my hope that the county plan would address itself to the existing service and the ways in which this service can be improved and coordinated with any other service developed. The existing service can either remain the same or it can be greatly improved to provide more service for the dollar. It is not the intention of this legislation to reduce, curtail or eliminate existing services already provided by the counties. The infusion of the new money should greatly enhance already

existing services, and no individual should complain about losing his or her existing service. That is a very important point.

The proposed amendments should also quiet any fears people have concerning administrative costs on behalf of NJT. The amendments would only allow NJT to spend ten percent of its total monies on administrative costs. In other words, the money being allocated to NJT is to be used for technical assistance and accessibility modifications. Only a small part of the money will be used on administration, with the rest providing direct service to the elderly and handicapped community.

There is another provision in the amendments calling for a study to determine whether or not insurance costs of this transportation program could be reduced by development of a statewide pool. I think that this is only one area that could be addressed by some type of pool to reduce and lower the cost of operating the program. Other areas would be maybe a statewide driver training program or any kind of program that could be done on a statewide level and, therefore, reduce the cost to the county so that they don't have to waste money to provide training for somebody that everybody needs. It could be done in quantity, but it will still provide quality.

Since the original drafting of the bill, the Casino Fund has increased, and therefore, the percentages contained in the original bill need revision. It is my hope that this bill will be passed this session, and therefore, the \$6 million contained in the amendment will be more than enough to provide each county with enough "seed" money to begin planning their program. The first fiscal year of the program contains a figure of \$20 million, which is more than enough to continue the planning and also to begin purchasing any equipment needed to begin implementation of the county program. Thereafter, fifteen percent of the revenues deposited in the Casino Fund will be used specifically for transportation. I think that a source each year is definitely needed. If it is reduced, then we could have a problem with counties complaining later on that they have started to provide a service and it is no longer reliable or efficient because they don't have the money. I think that that fifteen percent is enough, and that with the

increased revenues each year, it will not only maintain the county program once it has been established, but it would provide an additional cost of living increase each year.

In closing, I would once again like to state the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association's support for the transportation program. I'm prejudiced, of course, but I feel it is a good program and a much needed program for our handicapped and elderly citizens. Without a doubt, one of the greatest complaints that I hear from our handicapped citizens is a lack of an effective, reliable transportation system. For those individuals living outside regular fixed-route service, there is absolutely no service available to them, except expensive, private van service. From the day that the Casino Fund was created, transportation has been designated as one of the major concerns, but yet little has been done in this area to help alleviate the problem. I believe strongly that the quality of life of our citizens would be greatly enhanced if we could provide them with the means to travel either to employment, recreation, shopping, or any other trip they so desire in leading an independent productive life.

I would just like to remind everyone here at this particular hearing that at the Jersey City hearing, testimony was presented by handicapped children from the A. Harry Moore School, which is located in Jersey City. This is a special education school which helps children overcome their handicaps and returns them to society and the main stream. One of the biggest complaints these young adults had was a lack of transportation to help them integrate into society.

I firmly believe that the transportation system outlined in A-3018 will go a long way toward providing them with this transportation. I am not saying that this program has all the answers. Obviously, it doesn't. But, I think it does address a very large segment of that population. It is my hope that the Committee today will report out A-3018 with the amendments, so that it may go to the full Assembly for quick action. As we all know, we are running out of time.

I appreciate the time and effort you have put into this and your sensitivity. I hope this moves along quickly now.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you, John.

Wayne?

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I have no questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: I think, John, I would certainly be remiss if I didn't commend you for the amount of time you put into the planning stages of this. We're going back almost two years now. Of course, there are some points that you've raised here today -- in particular, when you mentioned insurance and establishing a pool in a statewide fashion, because of what did come out in the testimony itself over the course of time, particularly in Ocean County, if you recall, where it was a big problem for many of the people.

Thanks again.

MR. DEL COLLE: Okay, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Mr. Lou Klein from the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation?

Good morning, Lou.

**L O U K L E I N:** Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Again, I thank you for the privilege of representing my Director, George Cizmadia, of the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Labor. As you know, we have testified before, both in Jersey City and in Monmouth County, with regard to the specific issues of A-3018 and its relationship to returning people to the workforce, or the possibility of returning people to the workforce, who have disabilities, and also the ramifications of disabilities.

I would like to just mention some of the factors that the National Health Interview Survey pointed out in 1980, which show that 10.37% of the urban population is disabled. With regard to the rural non-farm population, 12.75% are disabled.

Transportation is a key issue in getting people back into the workforce. We deal, in our particular program, with people from the age group of seventeen years old right up to senior citizenry.

Regarding the nonexistence of public transportation systems in the rural areas, rural isolation and low income are key factors that prevent someone from becoming an earning citizen. Disability, unfortunately, can result in total devaluation of citizenry population. The effects of that disability can isolate the individual

so that they can no longer participate in society. The value of democracy rests in the process of democracy -- the way in which we pass laws and the way in which we administer justice. The manner in which government deals with people is most important, and that is the key beauty of this particular ability to testify and to give input where necessary.

By the way, that quote is not my own; it is Senator J. William Fulbright's.

Transportation in a rural area, such as Cumberland, Gloucester, Ocean, Salem, and Burlington Counties, is important. The rural population has a tendency to be more conservative and more isolated, but more important, it is more tenacious with regard to traditional, religious, and work-oriented lifestyles. If an individual cannot receive appropriate medical services and participate in society because of an inability to get transportation to shopping, then that individual cannot fully enjoy the advantages of democracy.

This morning we saw a film which pointed out two transportation systems -- one in Ocean County and one in Mercer County -- both of which, I'm sure, every year worry about stable funding -- where their vehicles are going to be fueled and who is going to pay that price. The important factor with regard to that is that A-3018 gives the opportunity for stabilization to ensure that the disabled citizen or the senior citizen, in a given area, does receive the appropriate services that society has mandated that they receive. That includes health care, socialization, and of course, the ability to take someone into the workforce.

As John Del Colle indicated, there was good testimony by people from the A. Harry Moore School who wanted to participate -- disabled students who want to enter society. And, they want to enter it with dignity, which does not produce isolationism or the real danger of fatalistic attitudes which say, "I have no value." A-3018 does provide, in a very dynamic way, the appropriate direction and stabilized funding that is necessary to the senior citizen who is moving rapidly as our age groups move up.

One of the things that happens with age that we also face with the younger disabled population is the fact that vision and

arthritis affect the individual. As that movie pointed out this morning, turning the key starts you, but as your vision is affected and as arthritis sets in in our senior population, you have an inability to operate independently in many cases. Without appropriate transportation, you become an isolated individual who cannot continue in society.

I believe that the amendments that have been proposed do cover many, many bases. They do cover some of the questions that have been raised. They do an adequate job of doing that, and again, that is one of the beauties of democracy -- the fact that there has been input, there has been modification, and something has come forth.

I think in response to the needs, the bill does answer a specific need. I think there is great flexibility for the counties, and I think there is great flexibility for the grass root's political segment -- those sub-bases in the Freeholders who have the opportunity through this legislation, through this proposed bill, to document what their particular needs are in their population and their political sub-bases, so that they can help to come up with an appropriate program. But, the key factor is the funding that is available to provide the service -- the stabilized funding. In addition, there is the appropriate monitoring that the bill takes into account to make sure that appropriate services will be rendered to the appropriate population.

I think the bill leaves wide latitude with respect to the services that can be rendered -- a whole gamut of services that can serve not just the disabled population as such, but the senior citizen who needs that particular linkage with society. That linkage can disappear in those senior years. Of course, the most important factor is, in reality, that it does bring government into the place that government belongs. It allows services to be rendered. It allows the population to participate, not just in socializing events, but in government. It allows them to participate in the type of hearing that is here.

One of the things that you find is, there are probably people who are supposed to be here and who have indicated a sincere interest, but because of their own lack of transportation, they are delayed in

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trying to get here this morning. That is a key factor, that is a key element, and that is the beauty of this bill.

Our Division, through my Director, is strongly behind this bill. So is the Department of Labor. It does accomplish a specific purpose. It allows people to participate in the society that God gave them the right to participate in.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you, Lou. We certainly appreciate your testimony and the support of the Department of Labor. Thank you very much.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Next we have Alex Buono. (not present) Is there anyone who is not on the witness list and who would like to testify this morning? Yes?

**RUDY JESCHON:** My name is Rudy Jeschon.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Rudy Jeschon? Please come up.

MR. JESCHON: Good morning, Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Good morning, Rudy.

MR. JESCHON: Wayne, how are you this morning?

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Good.

MR. JESCHON: I am Rudy Jeschon, the President of the Lower Township Federation of Senior Citizens of Cape May County. We are an affiliate of the New Jersey Federation of Senior Citizens. I was called the other night by them to come to testify, because I live the closest.

Since I am a senior citizen, I know the needs of our senior citizens. I have a brother whose leg was amputated at the hip, so I also know the needs of the disabled.

I testified at the hearing in Deptford in May of this year, and we still feel strongly that this bill, A-3018, and its sister bill, S-3016, are a raid on the casino funds to refurbish a financially ailing New Jersey transportation system at the expense of the seniors and disabled.

I notice that there has been an amendment added to the original bill. First, you will take \$6 million from the fund to get the program started, then twenty percent for the first year, and

fifteen percent thereafter. With the increase in casinos and their anticipated profit, this fifteen-percent figure will eventually result in a tremendous amount of money being used for one program only at the expense of other much-needed programs for the senior citizens and the disabled.

The fiscal year 1984 budget anticipates \$157 million, and twenty percent of that for the next year would be \$31.4 million available in 1985 for transportation. We object to this yearly increase coming from the casino funds. The constitutional provision limits casino funds to be used solely and entirely for senior citizens and the disabled.

Article IV, Section 15 of A-3018 reads, "to enable the corporation to develop, provide, and maintain capital improvements to fixed routes and other transit services in order to make rail cars, rail stations, bus shelters, and other bus equipment accessible to senior citizens and the disabled."

We find that the general public riders will also benefit from this -- the spending of casino funds to do all the modernization, as stated in the bill.

How can you do all of this modernization and not have the general public, as riders, benefit from some of it? The general public will benefit from all of it -- the modernization of rail cars, rail stations, other bus equipment, and capital improvements to fixed routes. According to what we understand as far as the bill is concerned, New Jersey Transit will be the sole people responsible for these improvements.

Some of the provisions meet with our approval, such as better local planning by the counties in improving their senior and disabled systems. Our only objection is the use of the casino funds to subsidize New Jersey Transit. We feel that new programs, such as around-the-clock free fare for senior citizens and the disabled, and a reduction in drivers' licenses and car registrations fees, could put casino funds to a much more needed use.

Your Committee has two bills now, A-250 and A-1105, which would benefit seniors who do not live in urban areas and who depend upon their cars for transportation.

Before I conclude, at the hearing in Deptford, we told you that the people who do not live in urban areas -- I heard the other gentleman speak about that -- we live "out in the sticks," in plain English. There is no local bus transportation. You have to notify the county twenty-four hours in advance if you have to go to see the doctor. If you get sick and you can't get that help, you have to call a rescue squad. In the meantime, if you want to go to your doctor at your discretion, you use your own automobile.

The Lower Township Federation has been after the reduction in car registrations. I know that has nothing to do with this bill, but we feel that a new program, such as around-the-clock transportation, is what should be done. I know that the majority of the clubs in North Jersey are trying very hard to get around-the-clock free fares for senior citizens.

Thank you for allowing me to make my statements before your Committee at this hearing on A-3018.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you, Rudy.

MR. JESCHON: I talked to Wayne at one of his hearings after the Deptford hearing, and we explained our stand at that time. At the statewide meeting, I was advised that, if possible, they would like me to come to this meeting and testify on behalf of the New Jersey Federation of Senior Citizens and also our Lower Township Federation of Senior Citizens.

We have a wonderful system in Cape May County. It could be improved, but we have a fairly good system. Of course, we could always use something better, but we feel that according to the way the bill reads, New Jersey Transit will be the sole governing body in determining how this money will be spent for the improvements on their lines.

When you talk about stations and bus shelters, everybody uses those, not just the seniors and the disabled. The disabled can't even get out of the weather at some of these bus shelters. They can't get into the train stations because some of them are elevated. We feel that if the money would be spent directly where New Jersey Transit were not the sole governing agent for this money, this is a tremendous amount.

You have got two new casinos being built now. I just heard on the radio this morning that one of them is sure to open in 1985. Fifteen percent of their funds, their profit, is going to be an awful big chunk of money, and part of that could be spent on home health care. That is a much needed program in New Jersey. We have a lot of seniors who are in nursing homes, and they could be home in their own places if they had some help to take care of them occasionally.

Thank you very much for listening to me.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Can you wait just a minute, Rudy?

MR. JESCHON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Rudy, I think we've discussed this. The Chairman has gone to great extremes through these meetings to adjust this bill. I am not convinced, in looking at a lot of the amendments, that we have as much responsibility to senior citizens as we have to the disabled.

In order to address the disabled -- and I know the two bills you are talking about address the seniors -- they do not address the crushing problem of transportation for disabled people. We can do everything we can in terms -- not exclusively in terms of licensing and things like that -- but those who can't drive have to have a way to get to these various areas.

I think, also, what is being overlooked is that seventy-five percent of this is going to counties, and counties are going to devise their own plans. Only twenty-five percent is going to New Jersey Transit. I think it is important to understand that it is not a funnel of one hundred percent of this money that is going to New Jersey Transit. It is going to counties to provide those services which are most in need, whether it is in Cape May County or Cumberland County or in Camden County, to address not only seniors, but also the disabled.

Therefore, we cannot constantly ignore the pressing problem of our disabled citizens. They have as much right to casino revenue funds to provide adequate transportation as anyone else does. I would hope that it will not get into a battle where seniors citizens who are not disabled--

MR. JESCHON: Oh, no.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: (continuing) --who do not want to see a substantial amount of funds used to increase the viability of our disabled citizens. That is what I am hearing -- that this is, in some way, an infringement upon funds to be used exclusively for senior citizens. Clearly, the constitutional amendment was for both the seniors and the disabled.

MR. JESCHON: Positively not. I am in favor of that. I enjoyed watching that film.

In Cape May County, we have practically everything but the lift bus or van.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: That is an important, integral part for disabled people.

MR. JESCHON: That is what I stated.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Without the lift, you have then left them completely without recreation.

MR. JESCHON: I don't understand why you think we are against the disabled. I told you in the beginning that I have a brother, who for forty years, has had only one leg. He is a World War I veteran, and he had one heck of a time getting around on two crutches, especially on trolley cars and buses.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I am not saying that you are against it. I am saying the other two things, which could be dealt with by the New Jersey Legislature and which are not mentioned exclusively by this bill, in no way address that transportation need for disabled people.

MR. JESCHON: Yes, but the amendment said transportation -- health, welfare, and transportation. In 1981, we voted on that and approved it. A reduction in license fees and registrations would mean transportation for a certain amount of the population.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: They are not mutually exclusive. To do this does not mean that one cannot consider the other.

MR. JESCHON: Disabled people now get a reduction in car registrations, I understand.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Do they? It is news to me.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Not that I know of.

MR. JESCHON: Well, that is what I heard from a disabled man in our area.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: I come from a very heavy urban area, and I have yet to hear anyone yet looking for senior citizens' discounts around the clock. There are reports out now -- in the newspaper yesterday, I believe -- saying that 400 senior citizens are fearful of riding on mass transit. I heard that on the radio yesterday. Over two hundred of them, or fifty percent of them, are fearful of riding on mass transit today because of the crimes that exist. I don't know of any of them who would be riding at two o'clock or three o'clock in the morning. I know, I wouldn't myself.

MR. JESCHON: All I can tell you is what I was advised to say. George Hooper, if you know him -- he is the task force man for the New Jersey Federation -- and Mr. Zoppo from North Jersey -- the poor man is dead -- were both in favor of this two years ago. Mr. Zoppo tried to get a bill written in North Jersey by one of the Assemblyman, but it fell through. It never happened because the poor man died right here in Atlantic City while giving testimony on Medicare.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Again, this is the fourth hearing now. Actually, we have had three public hearings, and this hearing today -- actually it is a Committee meeting -- this is the first I have heard that, to be very truthful with you.

MR. JESCHON: We hope you will bear it in mind. I don't know if any of you come from the county where Gene Zoppo lived, but he was well-known in North Jersey. He was a United Auto worker for many years in North Jersey, and he started the ball rolling.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: I've heard the name.

MR. JESCHON: We had a hearing right here in Atlantic City with Congressman Hughes. The man walked out after giving testimony and dropped dead on the floor.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: You can at least take satisfaction in the fact that you were the one who said you wanted us to come further south, and the Chairman came to Atlantic City.

MR. JESCHON: Yes, I thank you for coming here, because you remembered that I did ask for that.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Well, we are not only interested in the urban areas, but we are also interested in the suburban areas.

MR. JESCHON: Right, thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: I want to meet all of the counties.  
Okay?

Next we have-- Steve, you're on the list here. You are welcome to come up now if you so desire. Do you want to wait, Steve, because there are some other people who have indicated that they would like to testify?

STEVE JANICK: I would be happy to wait.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Okay. Next we have Mr. Harold Hill from the Camden County Planning Board of Chosen Freeholders. Harold has been with us before, I think.

HAROLD D. HILL: Yes, in Deptford.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Right.

MR. HILL: Thank you, Assemblyman Cowan, Assemblyman Bryant, and Assemblyman Zangari. I have been before the Committee before, and I would just like to say that I have been working with the people in Camden County on this area of transportation for the elderly and the handicapped. We are in the infant stage of developing a system in our County.

Since we are optimistic, we took part in a study to find out how we can best coordinate our services so that they may be cost effective and beneficial to the majority of the population. The study had many recommendations for the County, and of those recommendations, for the County to really support the providers who are the municipalities and the social service agencies, we have seen that it would require more funding.

We feel that this bill would provide adequate funding to help the County support those agencies which are providing that type of transportation. This would help in the areas of additional staff, and maintenance. There are several problems in the area of maintenance. Municipalities have inconsistencies and some may go to a local garage. Some may have a Public Works Department do the maintenance. But, it is not a uniform form of maintenance in which taxpayers have provided a large investment for these vehicles. We would like to maintain them for as long as possible.

Also, the additional funds would help us to extend service. Seniors' or disabled persons' lives aren't pat between eight o'clock

and three o'clock during the day. Those are the hours during which most of these services operate. Weekend services and after-hour services are other things that we would like to provide the citizens with, because they also have social lives, as well as maybe just going to the doctor or to a nutrition program.

Driver training is another thing that the County would like to assist with. Just recently, there was a municipality -- one of the largest -- where Camden City had to shut down service for four days because they only have one driver, and they only have funds to fund one driver. So, trips had to be cancelled for four days out of a week. If the County had funds to support these providers, there would probably be additional back-up drivers. If you are going to provide a service and be consistent with providing that service, you can offset things that happen like that.

We would also like to provide things such as data-based management for scheduling maintenance and plugging into data for ridership so that we can monitor the levels of ridership for the different municipalities -- how many people are riding the most and which municipalities, so that we know who to provide with the most support.

We feel as though a system like this closes the gap on public transportation, and it is very, very much needed. Senior citizens and disabled people, as you just mentioned, are often apprehensive about public transportation because of the safety factor.

Camden County has a very large rural population in the southern part of the County, and we do receive funding for rural transportation. But, there is only one vehicle that operates in that part of the County, which covers three very large municipalities -- Gloucester, Winslow, and Waterford. Assemblyman Bryant knows the extent of that geographical area for one vehicle to cover all of those citizens.

I would just like to say on behalf of the County Planning Board and the Board of Chosen Freeholders that we support this bill, A-3018, and we hope that you will consider these things that I have mentioned.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you, Harold. Are there any questions? (no response)

Next we have Earl Murphy. Earl? I understand that you had a very long way to travel this morning, too.

**E A R L M U R P H Y:** Well, we appreciate you coming here. It made the trip very quick this morning. I'm just disappointed that we couldn't arrange better parking facilities. Had we known it beforehand, we would have.

**ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN:** I didn't realize that was you in front of the building when I pulled up behind you.

**MR. HILL:** Yes, I didn't want to get a ticket or be towed away.

I am Earl Murphy from the Atlantic County Disabled Advisory Committee. I appeared before you in Deptford before. As Chairman of the Transportation Committee of Atlantic County and the Disabled Advisory Board, we back this bill one hundred percent. We had a long discussion after we came back from the last hearing, and naturally, we were not too pleased with some of the things. But, after looking at the modifications of the bill, we feel that it is a start. Everyone may not agree with the amount of money, but we have got to begin somewhere.

We certainly feel that within Atlantic County -- our western part of the County -- yes, we are aware that transportation is a big problem. I don't know if many people are aware, but our casinos in the area -- and I would like to acknowledge one of them -- Caesar's -- when they decided to get rid of some of their smaller buses, rather than to totally junk them or sell them, they sold them to the County for one dollar. So, with the buses from Caesar's Casino, we were able to service more of the senior citizens, particularly those who live in outlying areas where there wasn't any transportation at all.

A lot of thanks goes out from us to Caesar's Casino for allowing us to have those buses in the County. The good members of our County offices saw this, and we do utilize them, so if you gentlemen, on your way out, see a Caesar's bus driving around on an off-street area, don't wonder what is happening. It is transporting senior citizens to and from the hospitals that we have in the area. They are not going to the casinos, as a lot of people feel is happening.

Our Transportation Committee, which I submitted to you as evidence before, is having a large number of people moving into the area. Of course, it does strain our facilities. With this type of bill, it will help us to provide better service in the County. To relate to you how we are going to do this, we are going to start in January to take a census, door-to-door, in Atlantic County to find out exactly the number of our senior and disabled population. We feel that we will be better able to service the people in the County through the results of this census.

It is a very large job, and I happen to be the Chairman of that Committee. I see this job during the year, 1984, being a tremendous task in order to do this particular thing. However, I think this will give us an overall insight into our transportation needs here in Atlantic County.

Whatever money that we do get from this bill, we certainly will appreciate. I think it will be well used.

In speaking on behalf of all of the disabled population and the senior citizens in Atlantic County, we certainly thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: It is a pleasure, Earl. Before you leave -- I assume you know Lou Klein. Did he leave?

MR. GURMAN: He went out for a moment.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: It might be advisable for you to contact him before you start your census. He might be of some advantageous help to you.

MR. MURPHY: Lou and I have a very good working relationship.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Okay. Thank you.

Next we have Ethan Ellis from the Department of Public Advocate, Division of Advocacy for the Developmentally Disabled.

E T H A N E L L I S: Good morning. It is good to see you again. I believe I spoke to you last at the Deptford hearing.

Our Department feels that your bill deals with a very complex issue in a very positive way. We are particularly impressed with some of the features of the bill -- letting our decisions be made at a county level, where the problems are most seriously felt and where solutions are most readily available. The bill, even with its

amendments, still deals with this problem in this positive way. We were also impressed that there was a coordinating mechanism that allowed transportation systems across counties to serve the needs of the senior and disabled citizens.

We were particularly impressed by the Legislature's recognition that the many problems in the transportation area of the senior citizens and disabled persons are shared in common. We were glad to see this program designed to meet both of their needs.

At that time, in Deptford, we made several suggestions that we thought might improve the legislation as it was written then. I'm pleased to say that you and the Committee staff have not only accepted a few of our suggestions, but you have improved the bill in ways that we couldn't even think of improving. It is nice to be humbled before those who really know how to write legislation.

Let me call your attention to a couple of things that I think are particularly positive in those changes.

First, it is nice to see someone who has been able to define someone with a disability in one paragraph. That is a great improvement over what the Feds do, and the definition seems to make a whole lot of sense without being too complex.

Many of the amendments are clarified. I think it is important that a piece of legislation, which is going to be used by folks who want to have a role in decision-making, be as clear as possible. Again, I commend you -- the Committee and the staff for those clarified amendments.

I'm glad to see that improvements are further defined by pinpointing the accessibility question, because there was some question as to whether improvement meant sprucing up the local railroad stations and things like that. I'm glad to see that that money will be targeted to other areas that impede the use of facilities by persons with disabilities. I'm glad to see that you continue to limit the amount of money that will go for administrative costs at the State level, because I think it is important that this money be used, wherever possible, for services, and not to pad the bureaucracy of which I am proud to be a member.

Since I don't get any money for coming out and saying that, I guess--

AUDIENCE AND COMMITTEE: (Laughter)

MR. ELLIS: I'm also extremely pleased that the funding for the bill has been scaled down during the first year and it won't be as significant during the planning period as it will be during the implementation period. I think it is important that bureaucrats, including myself, don't have money to say, "Well, we don't need it, but we do have money to spend when we do." I think that is a realistic improvement in the legislation.

It is also particularly nice to see that the provisions for extensive public hearings at both the State and County level have been retained and strengthened to ensure adequate public notice for the seniors and disabled citizens so that they can make their wishes known. It is nice to know that the hearings are held in accessible buildings, so that we can get here, and so that we don't have to sit outside in our wheelchairs and write notes on balloons and float the messages in front of the window.

As I mentioned, when I spoke to you in Deptford, the Public Advocate considers this a very worthwhile bill. We are particularly impressed because it is one of the first opportunities for the senior and disabled citizens to mutually benefit from an extended share of casino revenues. We think that is the way they wanted it when they passed the amendment to the Constitution which designated the casino funds for the senior and disabled citizens. Any activity that gets us to cooperate together, I think, is doing the public good.

You have got a lot of folks who you want to hear from, so I won't take any more of your time. Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you very much, Ethan. Does anyone have any questions? (no response) Thank you.

Next on our list is a fellow who has been here several times with us -- I think at all of our meetings -- Mr. Steve Janick from the New Jersey Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities. Steve?

STEVE JANICK: Good morning.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Good morning, Steve.

MR. JANICK: It is nice to be with you again. Once again, we would also like to indicate that we are very happy with the tenor of

the amendments that have been proposed, especially those that have been clarified in this bill -- the idea that 75% of this money is go into counties that will themselves determine what is appropriate for their own county. I think somehow that has gotten lost time and time again. They are exactly the difficulties that some have pointed out to us.

For example, from what we can see in the bill, Cape May County is allowed to present a plan that they must, in turn, develop themselves and have local hearings on that plan with input from senior citizens and disabled residents. That is then brought forward, and there is even a check and balance, so that if there are people who still disagree with that, it must again be brought out at a public hearing, not only in the county, but also at the State level. Even beyond that, at least once a year, there must be a regional meeting that takes into account what really goes on within that region.

We think that these are particularly strong public input provisions that lend a lot of credence toward Atlantic City, and Atlantic County is able to match its particular problems, and in fact, do one thing in one part of the County, and another thing in another part of the County in order to better satisfy the needs of those residents. This wouldn't stereotype Atlantic County into the same type of program that Cumberland County may have to come up with, or that Cape May may wish to expand upon.

It was exactly with these sort of thoughts in mind and how well Cape May had done on certain parts of its transportation -- that we hope their money will go to the expansion of the service space which they can build upon.

The types of monies that are spent, we hope, will be subject to public scrutiny, as they are at the both the county public meetings and the yearly regional meetings.

The one thing that I would also like to indicate, which is not thoroughly understood, is that the monies can be used, as I said, "for door-to-door type services, for fixed route service, and for local fare subsidy." That may mean that in certain counties where the bus system is something that people would like expanded -- half-fare programs or other supplementary-type fare programs under the bus system

-- that the county could well choose to make its choice in that matter. We're not ruling that out in this bill, but we don't demand that every county follow these same lines. It is up to what the people want in that particular area.

I think this is particularly good and noteworthy, because we're at least trying to reach out and identify a problem with difficulties. As we've discovered, what works in one county may be inappropriate. In fact, even within parts of counties a group of groups can form together with county sanction and develop what is best in that part of the county.

As I have heard recently, there are many counties that have multi-type systems. This bill actually allows the opportunity for that to take place.

We want to reiterate that we think that this grass roots' approach is very much in keeping with the spirit of the money being spent very wisely. The part that is being done with regard to New Jersey Transit for accessibility improvements must also go through the public hearing process, and it must also be part of that regional review each year. I do not want to see the money paid for anything other than the disability capital improvements that go to help disabled individuals utilize that transportation.

For example, as was brought up, in Cape May, if there is a particular New Jersey Transit vehicle that is utilized instead of the rail system, or if the PSRL comes back into existence -- there is a great deal of feeling for that, both within Atlantic County and Cape May County, and we would like to see that that is accessible. At that point in time, from what we can understand, that is going to be about one percent of the cost of bringing that line back into existence. If it is done at the time that the original construction is done, it is going to be very cost effective.

It is true that some people who are not handicapped are going to choose to walk up the ramp instead of the steps, but I don't think that we want to put up barriers to people who use the most convenient type of accessibility. One of the things that we have difficulty with in society is that we tend to equate an accessibility improvement with somebody in a wheelchair. Someone who has had a heart attack or who

has problems with arthritis -- even though these disabilities may not be apparent to us as we look at them -- has just as great a need for that ramp as does a person in a wheelchair.

The other thing that I think is interesting within this is the opportunity for coordination of vehicles. I would like to share with you from another standpoint -- the Jobs Training Partnership Act -- the fact that the local private industry councils have appealed to the Commissioner of Labor to bring to the attention of the Commissioner of Transportation the fact that this is a real problem for them -- getting people to jobs. It is my hope that this coordination may spark a model that can be used for other parts of the system, but not supported by casino revenues. It could be used as a model for coordination of transportation in our State, so that we can have a base for solving New Jersey's new jobs that are developing, which are not merely commuting to Philadelphia or to New York.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Thank you, Steve. Once again, we appreciate your comments. Is there anyone else in attendance who wishes to testify or wishes to address A-3018? (no response) If not, we have some amendments.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I move the amendments.

ASSEMBLYMAN ZANGARI: I second the move.

MR. GURMAN: Assemblyman Cowan?

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Yes.

MR. GURMAN: Assemblyman Bryant?

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Yes.

MR. GURMAN: Assemblyman Zangari?

ASSEMBLYMAN ZANGARI: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I move the bill as amended.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: I second it.

MR. GURMAN: Assemblyman Cowan?

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: Yes.

MR. GURMAN: Assemblyman Bryant?

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Yes.

MR. GURMAN: Assemblyman Zangari?

ASSEMBLYMAN ZANGARI: Yes.

MR. GURMAN: The bill is reported out favorably.

ASSEMBLYMAN COWAN: I would just like to commend everyone who appeared here this morning, as they have at our three previous public hearings. It has been enlightening to all of us, I'm sure, and what we thought was a good bill originally is even a better bill today. We thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

(Meeting adjourned)

