
Panel Meeting

of

ASSEMBLY LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT LEGISLATIVE PANEL

*“Testimony concerning the Bergen County Perspective of the
Hudson-Bergen County Light Rail Transit System”*

LOCATION: Freeholders' Conference Room
Bergen County Administration Building
Hackensack, New Jersey

DATE: October 8, 1998
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF PANEL PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Rose M. Heck, Chairwoman
Assemblyman Joseph V. Doria Jr.



ALSO PRESENT:

H.W. "Rusty" Lachenauer
Office of Legislative Services
Panel Aide

Phyllis Elston
Assembly Majority
Panel Aide

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN ROSE M. HECK (Chairwoman): I am going to welcome you to our Panel meeting and thank the County Executive for allowing us to use this room.

It is very appropriate that we are here, in Bergen, because this is -- this was the destination that we had planned seven years ago in the Bergen area when my Chief of Staff, Phyllis Eshton, was part of Cope. We discussed the idea of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line and light-rail in general for the State of New Jersey. I am very pleased to say that Assemblyman Joe Doria, our Minority Leader, and Assemblyman Alex DeCroce, who could not be with us today, have been very diligent in our pursuit of coming from Hudson into Bergen.

Today is a day when we are going to look at not the distant future of the Bergen piece, but look at the entire operation beginning here and now and moving in that direction. It takes time, but certainly, we have already given the heads up to the Governor and New Jersey Transit over the past five years. Bergen County will not be left out of this mix. Bergen County's population makes light-rail, the HBLRT cost effective, and it is a vital piece of the entire project. We will not settle for less than we anticipated long ago. We have no problem of phasing in the different areas. As Joe Doria, Alex, and I have spoken so many times, light-rail is not for just one county, it is for the entire State of New Jersey.

The beginning in Hudson and Bergen is just that. It is our intention to allow and to seek a way to transport people on public transportation throughout the entire state. This particular phase in Bergen is very important, but we are not sitting still on the Panel. We are even

projecting beyond Bergen County into Passaic and Paterson counties, bringing all of us a great mode of transportation -- a rebirth of transportation which will bring us to the Performing Arts Center, to the museums, and to so many job opportunities. I think it is an exciting time for us as we are entering the new millennium. We foresaw this, Joseph, years ago when we directed our energies and our attention on a project that everyone laughed about, and we stirred the entire United States when we got that \$1.2 billion dedicated to the State of New Jersey. We awakened the southern states because they were so upset that this little state of New Jersey was so aggressive in putting together the project for the 21st century.

Now here we are at the beginning, looking for the Bergen piece of the HBLRT and hearing little rumors that New Jersey Transit is beginning to hold back. Even the second phase of HBLRT has not been given the money to move ahead. I will tell you, at this particular point and time, that this Panel will not tolerate that attitude. We will not allow New Jersey Transit to again dictate. They have been taking vows for the past several years on their innovativeness of light-rail.

Let's go back to the history that we have with New Jersey Transit when all they wanted was bus transportation. We certainly proved that a negative with our move towards light-rail. We will not allow them to go backwards. We are going forward. There are studies being made, here in the State of New Jersey and here in the United States, that will join together the best of all worlds including freight and commuter rail and light-rail. We want to work in partnership with the big guys like CSX and Norfolk Southern. We also want them to know that we consider ourselves equal partners in the

business of transportation and will not be shoved aside because commuters, jobs, and quality-of-life issues are our issues. This Panel was empowered by Speaker Chuck Haytain and again empowered by Speaker Jack Collins, twice already. We intend to continue our quest, which is not the impossible dream, but a fact today.

I will ask Assemblyman Doria, who is also the Mayor of Bayonne, to speak to the issue of what has happened within his county and within his community.

Joe.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Thank you very much, Assemblywoman Heck.

I just want to say that Assemblywoman Heck's comments are appropriate, and I agree wholeheartedly with her. The importance of the Light Rail Panel, over the past seven years, has been to, really, act as an oversight over New Jersey Transit and over all those various entities that have been involved in the construction of the light-rail. I think we have a problem here of foresight and a problem of commitment on some individuals' parts at New Jersey Transit.

I was just recently informed -- and both Assemblywoman Heck, myself, and also Assemblyman DeCroce were suddenly told that, number one, the deadline dates for the completion for the first phase of the light-rail are not going to be met to Hoboken and, number two, that the likelihood of the second phase occurring is questionable. All of these impacts negatively upon the connections that are necessary to Bergen County. We have a commitment -- a bipartisan commitment -- that the light-rail will be completed through

Hudson County into Bergen County and that the Hudson Bergen Light Rail will be an important part of the economic vitality and future of the State of New Jersey, especially along this northeast corridor.

I agree wholeheartedly with our Chairwoman that this project is one of the most important for the state, and it is a model for the nation. The commitment that we have made on a bipartisan basis to the concept of design, operate, build, and maintain -- (indiscernible) is one of its kind in the country. It is a model. The 21st Century Corporation, and the work that they are doing, is a model for what should be occurring nationally. We have great opportunities in New Jersey, and we can't squander them away because there are some men who have no foresight, who are shortsighted, and who have personal axes to grind. We cannot go back to the concept of an elevated busway, as some people had originally designed, which are environmentally unsound, cost more to build, and in the end, just create more traffic. We need to continue forward with the type of project we are working on here. Those individuals at New Jersey Transit, or wherever they may be, who do not agree should get out of the way; otherwise, the light-rail train will run over them, and myself, Rose Heck, and Alex DeCroce will be driving that train.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's right.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: And that train is going to go into Bergen County. There is a commitment on all of our parts that it is going through Hudson into Bergen County. It is important for both counties-- I agree with Assemblywoman Heck to move into Passaic County and to complete the circle. This is to the benefit of all our citizens and, most of all, to the benefit of the economy of the area.

I have real difficulties when I am told that we know things that we don't know and that we have been informed about facts that we have never been informed about. I think that I speak on behalf of all of us that we're solidly behind the need to complete this on time and the need to make sure that the things are done properly.

This is a bipartisan effort. I know I speak for the delegation in Hudson County -- all my legislators in Hudson. I know Rose speaks for her's -- the Republicans up there. I know that the Democrats, both Assemblywoman Weinberg, Assemblyman Zisa, Senator Baer-- Everybody is in agreement on this. This is not a partisan issue. This has been done, totally, on a bipartisan basis and will continue to be done that way. The priority is the people and the needs that must be met. This is what we got to do. We got to do this now, and we cannot allow for the small-minded people who are trying to kill this project. I can't explain why.

Madam Chairwoman, I am behind you 100 percent. Whatever has to be done we will do it. I wanted to say that publicly--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I appreciate that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: -- so that there is no doubt in anyone's mind-- I am usually known for being blunt. There is no doubt in anyone's mind where I stand here. I stand right with the Chairwoman and with those who believe that this must be completed, must be connected into Bergen County, and must be done as quickly as possible.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

I am going to just reiterate the importance of the northeast corridor here in the State of New Jersey. Approximately seven or eight years

ago, Joe, when we saw those economic indicators saying that the Northeast was the slowest to recover from recession, we all agreed -- Alex, you, and I -- because he covers Morris County, Bergen, and Hudson -- that we were not going to let all the people in our counties, in our area to suffer again the recessions, the poverty, the loss of jobs. We would look to the future-- Absolutely, the population of Bergen -- and I think the County Executive will speak to that issue -- is such an important factor to all of us. We are looking towards not just light-rail, freight, commuter rail, we're looking to our ports as well.

So I am going to ask, at this time, that the gentlemen, that I have a great respect for, the County Executive-- I have known him for many years, even before he was mayor of Bagoda, and subsequently, the Assembly seat that I now have was filled by Assemblyman Schuber, now County Executive Schuber.

I invite you, Pat, to come forward and give your perspective for Bergen.

WILLIAM P. SCHUBER: Rose, thank you very much.

Rose and Assemblyman Doria: I wanted to welcome the Assembly Light Rail Transit Panel to Bergen County and to the County Administration Building.

I particularly want to take this opportunity to congratulate Rose Heck -- Assemblywoman Rose Heck for her leadership and tireless work on bringing light-rail transit from a concept to a reality and for being a very forceful advocate for transportation for Bergen. Rose, I thank you for that.

And, Joe, it is good to see you here. Joe is a former colleague of

mine, and he is a distinguished Minority Leader, now the Mayor of Bayonne, also. I worked with Joe, and I am delighted to see him here also.

I wanted to just, before I begin my remarks, which will be relatively brief, to indicate to you my full support of your statements this morning. And to indicate to both of you and to Alex that Bergen County stands behind you full force and with everything in our power that we need to do to make sure that New Jersey Transit continues to keep its promise to the people of Bergen County and that it does not break faith with the people of Bergen County over this particular issue, which is important to the economy of our state and the economy of Bergen and Hudson County.

I am here today, as you know, as a longtime advocate for light-rail transit in Bergen County. As the most populous county in New Jersey, our roads are busy with people traveling in nearly all directions at all times of the day. Unfortunately, our roads behave, at times, much like crowded supermarket lines rather than roads. Clearly something must be done to help us relieve the pressure we experience every day. And, of course, the County of Bergen, as you know, has been a longtime supporter, obviously, of reinvesting in our infrastructure, our roads, and our bridges with the help of the Board of Freeholders. Freeholder Bill VanDyke, my colleague, is here. He is a noted expert in transportation who will bring his perspective to this issue.

Also, with the onset of the beginning of the reconstruction of Routes 4 and 17, which are already underway-- The alternative issue to that is, of course, has always been, on some form of mass transportation that will allow our residents to get to and from their jobs, to the amenities that exist in this area, and to unlock the further economic potential of the region. Light-rail

offers us that opportunity. In essence, it becomes like an old technology made new. The old trolley lines that crisscrossed our counties in days of old have now, with updated technology, become an important aspect of providing us the means by which to provide a cost-effective mass transportation system in the modern era, as well as to unlock our economic potential.

Freeholder Bill VanDyke and I have long supported a new light-rail line -- going to the remarks that were alluded to in the opening with regard to a seamless transportation system -- across the entire County of Bergen over to Passaic County, that would cross Bergen on an east-to-west extension of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail. This we called the Cross-County Connector. The Cross-County light-rail line would serve as the spine of the system and be the mechanism to form connections with the existing commuter rail lines, regional highways, and other light-rail possibilities.

In addition to providing a means to employment, Bergen County's light-rail system will enable young families, seniors, and students alike with the opportunity to access New Jersey's cultural and art centers such as the Performing Arts Center, the Liberty Science Center, and the USS *New Jersey* which will be located in Bayonne. These and many other destinations throughout the state will be accessible right here from downtown Hackensack. As the heart of our county, Hackensack will be a major economic and transit hub. The city of Hackensack should receive the same opportunity for economic infusion and excitement for the future as other light-rail communities.

I am delighted that we are joined by the Mayor of Hackensack, Jack Zisa, who will testify shortly, who just recently testified on this very issue

before a Federal panel in New York -- to support him in this effort. The creation of new jobs and economic development is evident at locations throughout the state with light-rail service. Hackensack should be a part of that renaissance and will be a part of that renaissance.

Bergen County can only achieve our goals if it receives the support from the Federal government and through innovative public-private partnerships for which our Cross-County Connector is a leading example. Clearly the Bergen County portion of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail must be fully funded in order to complete the mission of connecting the riders and economies of Bergen and Hudson counties.

In furtherance of that, I would place a major emphasis on what Bergen County has called the so-called golden spike approach, which in a way, as you know from history, has borrowed from the way the nation's first continental railroad was coordinated and conducted. Our goal is to do everything necessary at the Bergen County end, including providing assistance to the rail construction group, to ensure that when the Hoboken-to-Weehawken leg's remaining problems are solved, including how to best design the rail-ferry terminal in Weehawken to serve the whole line, the stations in Bergen are ready to be opened at that time. We do not, and I emphasize this, we do not favor the idea that Bergen waits until Weehawken is reached before planning, engineering, and construction can proceed toward Bergen County.

We think the whole line benefits from this approach. This way, Bergen can receive Hudson-Bergen Light Rail riders from the south and send Bergen riders from the north on to the entire line at the earliest possible, and indeed, hopefully, the same, moment. Both legs, Bergen and Hudson, as does

the entire northern portion of the state's economy, benefit. It is important to point out here that Bergen and Hudson together supply nearly one-fifth of the jobs of the entire state -- just in our two counties.

Therefore, I am here, with the assistance of my colleague Bill VanDyke and the Board of Freeholders, and in furtherance of the support of the Mayor of Hackensack, Mayor Zisa, to support you, Rose and Joe and Alex, too, in the work you have undertaken here and to indicate that we stand fully behind you 100 percent to make sure that this line is completed in the way that it was promised and to seek your help to continue it as a seamless line across the northern part of the state, in particular the east-west connector. I will pledge my support and the support of our administration to the Panel, to the Governor, to N.J. DOT, and all of its agencies in the Federal government to make sure that Bergen County's share of the dollars to make the light-rail system a reality comes true for our residents.

I thank you for being here. I appreciate that, and I am indicating that Chet Mattson, the Director of the department of transportation of economic planning for the County of Bergen, is on your agenda after a couple of speakers and will fill you in a little bit more on the details on the map here (indicating) of the light-rail systems as previously been outlined.

I thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you, Pat. I appreciate it.

Freeholder VanDyke, I believe, is our next speaker. He has done so much in the area of transportation, as the County Executive said before.

You must feel very good these days with the drive and impact that

you have had on Routes 4 and 17 and light-rail in the area. So please give us your thoughts.

F R E E H O L D E R J . W I L L I A M V A N D Y K E :

Assemblywoman Heck and Assemblyman Doria--

Let me just comment on your comment, Rose. That would be the greatest day of my life when we cut the ribbon and put traffic on a new Route 4 and 17. It has been an exciting effort. It has been challenging. It is going to be extremely exciting.

I want to thank you for convening this session and for you and Assemblyman Doria for attending. I am totally excited about your opening remarks, both of you. I would totally agree with those remarks, and I would begin by saying I think we have a narrow window to accomplish what we are setting out to do. We have worked hard for the reauthorization of ISTEA, known as TEA-21. We have all been on the bandwagon trying to assure that our region receives the dollars that we saw under the initial ISTEA legislation. I think we have a rather comprehensive outlook -- a vision -- of what has to happen in order to retain the economic integrity of not only our county and our region, but our state. I believe that vision is somewhat lost statewide.

I am not here to make negative comments, but let me just probably do that. This may be Bill VanDyke's perspective and not necessarily Bergen's because I have not run this across Executive Schuber, who has been tremendously supportive and a real visionary, along with Chet Mattson, in this entire process.

I go back to the days, probably 11 years ago, when I was first appointed to the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority to represent

Bergen County, when this light-rail project was, in fact, called Bergen-Hudson. It was our vision that it was going to start north and run south. The opposite, in fact, happened. I congratulate Hudson County. I and the TPA, Transportation Planning Authority, have been tremendously supportive in that effort. It is time for Bergen. It's essential to our county, it's essential to the working people, it's essential to the population centers that we give people an option in traveling. Even with the repair and the renovations of Routes 4 and 17, we still have a congestion problem. We can put up HOV lanes on superhighways, but people don't have an option. We have to take them down until people have that option. Light-rail and commuter rail offer that option. We should go back to the late 1980s when the Governor's Executive Transportation Committee, as I believe it was called, met with counties to establish priorities. Bergen's No. 1 priority was Secaucus Transfer. Bergen County has never been parochial. We have been regional in our outlook and our No. 1 priority was Secaucus Transfer because we saw that as the catalyst, as the hub to which all these lines would feed, and we could more efficiently and more easily move people.

I also had heard -- was convinced that because of a change of direction of the Hudson County light-rail and the saving of, perhaps, \$50 million -- was that the link was, at least, going to be extended to the Weehawken Ferry Terminal. Knowing that there is a substantial amount of revenue in the new TEA-21 legislation, that would provide a new terminal, and knowing that Bergen County has spent a lot of taxpayers money and a lot of our local aid money on the improvement of River Road to, at least, attempt to get vehicular traffic down to that (indiscernible) crossing, this was going to be

essential to bring that light-rail project at least to Weehawken. I am very much taken back by the fact that, as Assemblyman Doria reported, that Transit may now have another agenda.

My frustration over the years has been that basically New Jersey Transit controls the agenda. What they want to happen will happen regardless of what legislative effort or what the MPO organization defines as an agenda. That has historically been true. I am convinced that in my lifetime, we will not see passenger -- commuter rail on the Susquehanna which, in 1991, received \$55 million as demonstration funds in ISTEA. It has-- I serve on the advisory committee. We haven't had a meeting in two years. It is just on the back burner. I think that is unfortunate because that, along with the major investment study that is taking place with the West Shore-- I think that is the third time we are going through the study of that. It is essential to determining how we are going to effectively and most efficiently use rail to get our people more conveniently to their destinations.

I sincerely believe, and I am excited -- another little side bar -- by the fact that Assemblyman Doria is now Mayor of Bayonne because I think the opportunities for the use of MOTBY, the Bayonne Marine Terminal, is much enhanced. That is another whole segment. We talk about intermodal. We talk about our ports. I mean, we are involved in a tremendously complicated and convoluted planning for passengers and intermodal freight that are going to forever determine the future of this northern region. It's-- I think, as you have appropriately said, that the time is now. We have to plan. We have to receive the-- We've got to get the money.

I have to mention one other thing that frustrates me to a great extent. When I look over the 1999 Fiscal New Jersey Transit Capital Plan, I appropriately see \$50 million for bridges in connection with the Hudson County -- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail. That is appropriate. What I also see is \$50 million to begin another light-rail project from Trenton to Camden and Phase II to Glassboro. Now, in comparing the necessity for that with what we have up north, I don't believe the two can be equated. My problem has always been, and I will go back to the old Transportation Coordinating Committee which superseded the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority-- It was a very parochial, subregion, county-by-county, annual equity battle to get dollars for each particular county that was somewhat equitable. What I have attempted to do, and I think -- I have been applauded for and what ISTEA subsequently did and TEA-21 continues even to a greater extent, is to empower the MPO, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, in which the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority is one of, to regionally decide what is best -- what's in the best interest of the region. I think we have done that. I think Routes 4 and 17 is a prime example of what happens when counties get together and say, "Without coming together and agreeing on a massive project, we are never going to find enough money in any one county's drawer in any one given year to do a project." We came together and we decided that Routes 4 and 17 were the No. 1 priority that was recommended, and it is happening. I think it is outstanding.

I think the State of New Jersey has to also look at a statewide economic plan, a vision if you would, as to where we spend the money most efficiently. Perhaps South Jersey has to wait a period of time, because in order

to take advantage of what we are spending, the \$525 million I believe to date, for the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail -- in order to maximize that investment, we have to complete it. We have to allow Bergen and the D-bomb effort, if you would -- public-private partnerships take place to allow feeders to that investment.

To conclude my remarks, I would like to applaud your efforts, Rose. You have always been there. You have fought the battle. You continue to do that. I applaud you for that.

I applaud Assembly DeCroce and Assembly Florio -- Doria for their efforts.

Hopefully, in the near future, we can see a commitment to complete this project and to enhance our economic benefit.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you very much, Bill.

I want to say, and you know my approach has always been positive, I take the high road in getting our projects done. Joe Doria is of a same mind. I think we come from that background that if you want to do it, it can be done, and it will be done because we believe it will be done. We don't sit back and wait for other people to give us the wherewithal. We go out and get it. I think there are a lot of people out there who know us by reputation that if they push us, we push back and rather strongly.

So the point is that I believe that Bergen will get the dollars. I believe that the Governor has committed herself to this project in earnest, no matter what New Jersey Transit says. It is not an entity unto itself. It is

answerable to us. We, in the Legislature, control budgets. Budgets control New Jersey Transit. They will have to deal with us.

I believe that it is Bergen's time. The time is now. We will hear from the 21st Century people, and we will hear from New Rail Construction. It was our intent, at the very beginning, to put New Rail Construction together to be an autonomous body to circumvent New Jersey Transit. We were not successful in that particular venture, but New Rail Construction does, and will, exist. We will continue to push towards those goals. We will not be hampered by a bureaucracy who feels that it is a dictatorship. We will not allow that to happen under anyone's administration, under anyone's watch. We are determined to keep the State of New Jersey an economic, vital part of the United States. I think that all of us, in a bipartisan way, are, as Assemblyman Doria has said, not only in this Legislature, but in our Federal government -- we will work towards that end. We know that New Jersey has a marvelous history, that we are geographically blessed, and we will not allow ourselves to sink into the abyss without a big fight. We will go for the win. We will mobilize the troops, Bill. Just count on that.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Could I just follow up?

I just want to point out-- Two of the things that the Freeholder said, I think, are very appropriate. Number one, you had been informed -- I had received the same information -- that there was going to be money available, that out of this first phase, we would get to Weehawken because of the change in the route in Hoboken. That was said by New Jersey Transit to me. What you just said publicly was the same thing that was said to us, but now, seemingly, that has been changed, and I don't know where that is coming

from. Suddenly, in the last meeting I had, there was like a 180-degree turn as a result of-- I don't know what is occurring. So I just want to agree with you and say that is what we were told, and we don't understand why New Jersey Transit is changing its tune and where that \$50 million or thereabouts, whatever that number was to get to Weehawken-- Now suddenly -- where is it, and why has it disappeared, and why is there now a problem? -- to say that we can't even get to Hoboken on time, never mind go beyond Hoboken within the first phase.

The second issue, I think, is an important one, too. We have an agreement in Hudson County and in Bergen County that we want the light-rail. We have enthusiastic support from all the elected officials and from the general public -- majority, not everyone -- that we want the light-rail. The Trenton-Burlington Light Rail is in the mist of a great deal of controversy because there is opposition on the part of the citizens and some elected officials, too -- this light-rail line. Thus, I would think that before you deal with a controversial project, you should complete the project that the controversy does not presently exist in. That is going into Bergen County. I support, obviously, doing light-rail in the southern part of the state. I wouldn't oppose that. I think it is a good idea. We have had hearings down there. We are in support of the Light Rail Panel.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And we did pass the resolution supporting it.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: And we support them. But I think that if they are saying it is either one or the other, we have to begin to look at the situation giving the conflict down there and the fact that they are going to

be in litigation; whereas, up here we are moving ahead without having all the litigious problems that they have -- potentially have down there.

I think those are two very good points you brought up, Freeholder, and I just want to say that in both of those I agree with you.

FREEHOLDER VANDYKE: Could I have one more minute, Rose? (positive response)

Assemblyman, I thank you for those comments. It wasn't my intent to be negative this morning, but I think you have to look ahead knowing what has transpired in the past and, perhaps, correct that. The kind of things that you just mentioned are the kind of things that have been rampant with not only New Jersey Transit, but also the N.J. DOT. I am reminded of the fact that at the TPA, we were promised that the Atlantic City Tunnel and Route 29 around Mercer County was not going to affect our northern region. You can track better than \$200 million that came straight out of our hide in order to fund that. So I am a little bit shell-shocked by past experiences.

Let me just close on a positive note. What I think-- We talked a little bit about this inside. I think what has been lacking and what I have tried to promote at the Transportation Planning Authority is some kind of an educational program for the public and get the public excited about the fact that they are going to have a rail option and get them on board. The only public expression that we typically hear, and we heard it on Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, is the people that are affected by the corridor, that are affected by a route change come out en masse because it is going to affect their quality of life.

Let's take the example of the Cairn Connection -- Midtown Direct -- that was expected to carry 2500 passengers. It has been in the plans for 25 years. People pick at it and demonstrate it because it was going to affect their quality of life, and it was going to demise their property values. Within a year of it being put into place, at a cost of \$75 million, we now have 7500 riders, and property values are escalating astronomically along the corridor. We don't have enough train slots in Penn Station to accommodate the trains. That is a success story. I think that should be promoted. I think we have to do a better job of selling these projects to the public because I don't think they understand what we are trying to do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Let me assure you that when we hear the report from the 21st Century, we will see the timing of these things. I think we here in Bergen will have a perfect example, as will other areas, when the Hudson Line is going through its testing period and will be up and running because people think of it as the clang-clang trollies. It is not that mode of transportation. Light-rail is a modern means of transportation which will benefit so many.

I think, Joe-- I don't remember the exact numbers, but I know when we went on our last road trip in Hudson, in and around the area has improved to such a great degree--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: No question.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: The monies coming into Jersey City alone--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: The neighborhoods-- The cleanup that has been done along the old Conrail lines, along the right-of-way from

Bayonne into Jersey City, and they cut through Jersey City to the west side-- The type of cleanup that was done -- tons of material taken out by the 21st Century, cleaning the areas, getting rid of the rat infestation, the garbage so that it not only--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Home owners.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Home owners are very happy because it has cleaned up the areas. At first they didn't realize what it was going to do. It has cleaned up the areas that haven't been cleaned for 20 or 30 years. So there is a benefit to not only-- No-- Well, you have the transportation benefits, but their property values are going up just because of the cleanup, and the transportation access will go up. I see that already, beginning in Bayonne and in Jersey City along the right-of-way, that is presently taking place. So we'll continue--

I just want to add one other thing. The Freeholder and I agree on too much. The one-- But, again, I feel the same way about the Atlantic City Tunnel. I have spoken about that, and I said that was going to happen, and it is happening. You said it and I said it. I read your comments in the paper. I think, again, it is another example-- I am not-- I have been very supportive of Atlantic City my entire life in the Legislature, just as Assemblywoman Heck has. We have done a lot of good things.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Can I segue into the Italian happening this weekend -- the trade fair in Atlantic City?

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: That's right. There is a trade fair down there.

We're very supportive. The problem is that when you move money from one place to another, and they say they are not going to do it. That is the problem. They make commitments, and then they don't live up to them. I think that is all of our concerns.

I want to agree with you again because I think your comments are very well taken and well timed.

FREEHOLDER VANDYKE: Thank you for the opportunity.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you, Freeholder.

Chet, I believe you are next on the agenda, or would you like to--

C H E S T E R P. M A T T S O N: Mayor Zisa.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good.

Mayor Zisa, it is such a pleasure to have you here. Thank you for allowing us to be in your city.

M A Y O R J O H N F. Z I S A: Thank you, Assemblywoman Heck.

I certainly welcome Assemblyman Joe Doria to our fair city.

I would like to start by saying that I would be remiss if I did not begin with the remarks to acknowledge your decision, Assemblywoman Heck and the members of the Panel, to bring this public meeting to the city that probably demonstrates the need of this concept most. I am speaking, of course, of Hackensack, where I have the privilege of serving as the community's Mayor. Now, many of you speak of the city of Hackensack as the county seat. We tend to look at it here as the heart of this great county.

One does not have to be here as an elected official to recognize just how crucial it is that a Bergen cross-county line be established. One need only

be a resident or a person doing business in this, the most populous and economically busiest, county in the state. These residents and businesspeople know that we simply have to do a better job of addressing our transportation needs in an environmentally responsible manner. While the traffic on Routes 4, 17, and 80 may have the highest profile, I invite those not familiar with our city to view our internal east-west corridors, like Passaic and Essex Streets, during peak hours to see how local this problem has become. We find ourselves in a somewhat unusual situation. Often, as elected officials, we find ourselves struggling to find solutions to problems. Here, as we speak, I firmly believe that we have already found a significant part of the solution. The challenge that faces us is the means to that end, the completion for the Federal funding necessary to bringing this solution to reality.

As I sit here today contemplating how the establishment of a cross-county system will benefit this region, how, through a partnership effort of the city and county and state, it could provide a tremendous spur to the revitalization of the central business district of Hackensack, I must say that I believe that we are on the correct path. They're big questions. Hackensack, of course, takes them seriously. We'll look for answers as we continue the dialog.

Here is what we are all focusing on. We see light-rail as the missing technology at the inner-urban heart of our region. We see that it can be linked, successfully, to commuter rail, which links us to the outer reaches of our regions. We see that both can be connected into a regional highway system, something that doesn't happen much in our state and region. All modes benefit from this. We are highly attracted to the conclusion already

demonstrated that light-rail can deliver us cars every 15 minutes in both directions all daylong and into the evening. Travelers to and from our businesses and our population centers are not just peak-hour travelers, not since the arrival of service information -- since the arrival of our service information economy in such force. So neither the economy nor congestion are what they used to be. It's not just that we have more cars, it's that we have many more cars going to and from many more places at many more times of the day. We are highly attracted to the light-rail's capacity to bring people from our region into my city; people from New York City; people from Hudson County, Jersey City, Newark, Bayonne; people who more and more are trapped in the regionally derived congestion for which more autos and more roads are not the solution.

My major concern about the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line has been this. Bergen's one designated stop, also serving as this 21-mile line's northern terminus and its greatest source of riders, lies outside of the reach of my county's 852,000 residents and our 550,000 jobs. Now my greatest enthusiasm for the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line is that a short spur to it from my city can be readily put in place. This spur, shown on the map, penetrates quickly and easily on existing track into the heart of my city and at the heart of my county's economy. Further, my own city of Hackensack embraces half of the population and half of the employment along its designated path. My second great enthusiasm is that we are, right now, preparing redevelopment plans in the heart of our downtown that can benefit from and help define and deliver benefits to the light-rail line. In conjunction, we are also preparing van services that can deliver people to the station. In

order for this plan to go forward, there is no question that it will take unity of purpose and teamwork on each level of New Jersey government, State, county, and municipal, with support from the Federal government. The necessary ingredients are here today.

Let me close with this thought. Let's work together to make sure that the light at the end of the tunnel is that of an oncoming light-rail system moving towards central Bergen County.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity. I hope I shared some of the concerns from Hackensack. And lastly, it is great to see bipartisan effort from good government. Good government is the answer. I thank you for permitting me to be here today.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Jack, before you leave the table, again my congratulations to you for having attended that meeting yesterday.

MAYOR ZISA: I'd like to just share that with you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I mean, what an honor, and of course, what an example of the need and the importance of the city of Hackensack. The county sees that you were invited to speak to the Department of Transportation of the United States.

MAYOR ZISA: I will share that with you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think that is wonderful.

MAYOR ZISA: I was given the opportunity Tuesday to testify before the U.S. Department of Transportation on behalf of elected officials. The State of New Jersey did so at the World Trade Center. It opened my eyes to something -- to a new world, the world of competition for this very money that we are faced with potentially losing to other modes or other reasons for

transportation needs. What I saw, before my eyes, was the fight brewing between freight and passenger. We are here for passenger, of course -- passenger service. The real fight is at a higher level for that very same money to be entered into the world of freight.

I commend you, Assemblyman Heck and Assemblyman Doria -- Assemblywoman Heck, I am sorry, and Assemblyman Doria on your efforts on bringing our transportation needs into the 21st century.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: As I said before, Mayor, I believe that we have to communicate to the freight companies that we are also a needed ingredient in the entire plan and scope of our transportation needs. The movement of people and goods is the way it is said. It is not goods and people, it is people and goods because, without the people, who would need the goods?

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Absolutely.

I just want to commend the Mayor and also agree that we have to come up with some type of balance between the freight and the passenger. Obviously, if you don't have the people to work and you don't have the access and mobility of people, then the freight issues become secondary. I have to agree with you totally, Mayor, that I can never understand why we weren't going into Hackensack. I think that the proposal, as it now stands to move and use existing rail lines to come into Hackensack, is essential to the success of the entire project as we go into Bergen County. It would be of benefit to everyone along the line whether it be Bayonne, the south, up through the remainder of Bergen County. Hackensack is the key to the entire process. Obviously, I think that the movement that we are making is the right

movement. We are supportive, and we will be working with you to make sure that this does happen.

MAYOR ZISA: I appreciate your efforts, Assemblyman Doria.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And we thank you very much for working with us and agreeing with us on a premise that we all have to work together, State, county, local, and the Federal government, and certainly all of the modes of transportation have to work together in partnership so that we, here in the State of New Jersey, become the biggest success story ever.

MAYOR ZISA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you again.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And now we have a person who has worked on our Light Rail Advisory Council. That is Chet Mattson, the Director of the Bergen County Department of Planning and Economic Development. After which, we will ask Dan Censullo, from New Rail Construction, and John Johnston to close out this Panel.

MR. MATTSON: Assemblywoman Heck and Assemblyman Doria: I, too, appreciate-- I vibrate to the fact that you are here. This is another good day for transportation in New Jersey.

I wanted to add only a few thoughts about four facets of this entire project. They all have been touched on, so they don't need much detail. One is that we are now talking about a transportation network. It's the light-rail that made that kind of a thought possible. Mayor Zisa commented about the fact that the inner region of New Jersey's economy -- I regard that as Hudson, Bergen, and Essex, where so many -- so much of the economic output of our

entire state resides-- I regard that inner region as what the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail was designed to knit together. In the middle of the early conversations about that, the consultants for the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail came up and pointed to the Vince Lombardi as a good spot to end this thing. One of the things that we said at the time was, "If the object of a person's trip from Bayonne and Jersey City is to find something at the end of the line, then what they will find, in the Vince Lombardi marshes, is a place to get a cup of coffee and to hail a cab to the economy to the west."

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: That's right.

MR. MATTSON: So anybody coming from the south will make the one trip. Maybe they will come back if they like the coffee, but that will be about the extent of it. It is getting-- It's making a network. What your work did was that it made it possible for me to point out to New Jersey Transit that the West Shore Commuter Rail Line passes within 200 feet of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line and the Vince Lombardi Center. They had a team of planners who were busy not paying attention to that. We made this small connection between the two and said what a neat--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Minor point, Chet.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: But typical.

MR. MATTSON: When we looked at their plans and saw the \$150 million solution that they put together upon our prompting, we discovered that it was going to be too expensive to do that connecting there. That is why we looked at sliding up the track just a bit to Ridgefield Park where the same connections can be made at much less expense and to much

greater economic benefit. We then were able to start thinking about a network.

A network is something that lets people in cars -- that is over 90 percent of all the people who go to work in New Jersey -- people in cars to get out of their cars and to get into options that are not available to them. When you can connect commuter rail and light-rail together, as we are now seeing you can do at many points along this network, then Transit becomes competitive with the car as the car becomes less competitive every minute.

The second point that I am after is also one that has been talked about. Let me finish the prior one just for a moment. For-- Until the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail entered our world, Transit was for people who walked or drove to the station, got on the train at 8:00 in the morning, went to Manhattan, worked, came home, and either were driven home or walked home. That portion of Transit is about 5 percent of the 20 percent of all people who make trips. Commuting is only 20 percent of the trips that people make in our state. Business makes trips all daylong into the night. People make trips all daylong. Light-rail, in two directions, makes it possible for us to address the 100 percent of the people who travel and not a portion of the 20 percent who travel. If you only focus on 8:00 in the morning and 5:00 at night, you miss about 85 percent of all the possible passengers you can serve. Light-rail opens that world.

The third point is about economic development. We are now-- The county is in a partnership, as Mayor Zisa mentioned -- he is such a terrific partner -- looking at how buildings can be built and redeveloped in Hackensack because the light-rail is coming and that the light-rail's station stops can be

chosen based on the best economic development opportunities. Commuter rail-- You stick the station down there and whoever benefits over the next 50 years will benefit. With light-rail, you can make the economic investment opportunity key to the places where economic development can happen. That is because light-rail can stop quickly and start quickly and doesn't have to stick its nose into the intersection as commuter rail trains have to do.

The last point is the one where we have tried to take a comprehensive approach to all this in Bergen County. The Freeholders were willing to spend \$1.2 million of their own money to get us to the kinds of conclusions that we can bring to you here today. We have been urged by both Commissioners Wilson and Haley to talk to the Raytheon people to make sure that whatever we are talking about provides an exact fit in the kinds of cars that we run, in the operations that we do, in the places where the cars stop, and in the success of the entire operation. This is something that we knew we had to do if the light-rail, when it arrives, finds a partnership with all of the other features that have to be in place to succeed. Secondly, we've talked not only with Hackensack, but with other municipalities. On October 29, Pat Schuber's Economic Development Corporation is holding a meeting where we are going to talk about economic development and light-rail and how they can work together for the business community in our county. The other partner that Commissioner Haley urged us to talk with, and we have, is with the Susquehanna Railroad. We now know that we can form exactly the partnership that we need with the Susquehanna so that light-rail and freight can occur on separate tracks in the same right-of-way. This is not easy to accomplish, but we have done it, and we know it will work.

The point then-- The last point that I am after is that when you go into this, the way you have made it possible to do, you can do the kind of planning ahead of time that lets a golden spike approach succeed. You can be ready to go when the train arrives.

We are so happy you are here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you very much, Chet. You have been a great help to us in our projections.

Thank you very much for the maps. You know how much I love the maps. It makes it so clear. I think that the work that you've done, in conjunction with the county and the support of the County Executive and financial support coming from the Freeholders, has been so important to all of us in Bergen County. Jack, you will be the beneficiary of the initial pieces. As you can see, this is the never-ending story, and we will continue on and on until we connect the entire state. We're not going to stop in the north or the south. We have to go east and west as well. Each of us, in New Jersey, has a benefit to reap from the beginnings of light-rail and Hudson-Bergen.

I think it is important that each county do what Bergen County has done and what Hudson County has done, and that is, build a cohesive network of people and officials and business and industry to back us up and to become financially involved. That, I think, is a great example.

Don't you think, Joe--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: No question.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --that we have set for the other counties?

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I think that the model we're developing here is one that could be a model not only for other counties in New Jersey, but nationally.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I think -- how we can improve public transportation and make public transportation the engine for economic development and light-rail as being part of that and tying it together with other rail options and with the other intermodal connections of ferries and subway systems.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: All of that ties together.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Another piece-- I am going to ask John Johnston, of the 21st Century project, and Dan Censullo, the Director of New Rail Construction, to come forward.

Perhaps you can give us, John, an overview, in brief, of all the other benefits to women in business and education. I am not so certain of how far you have come with the light-rail education in the schools in Hudson County or how that is progressing. I do know you've had some graduates -- women in different parts of industry. I am not going to go beyond-- You know better than I, so please proceed.

DANIEL CENSULLO: Do you want to start with that portion, Rose, or do you want us to try to give you an update?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Whichever way you are comfortable.

MR. CENSULLO: Okay, fine.

Assemblywoman Heck and Assemblyman Doria: Thanks for the opportunity to give you this briefing. I appreciate it very much. This is my first Light Rail Panel meeting. I have been in this seat for about a little over two months, and every day I learn something new. Today I certainly learned not to sit on the tracks if Assemblyman Doria's hand is on the throttle and he feels that we are in the way. (laughter)

We feel rather positive and rather bullish about what has been accomplished on the initial operating segment of the light-rail system to date. This contract was awarded to 21st Century in November of 1996. In the 23 months that have gone by, over \$200 million of construction is in the ground. We feel very good about that. I would be remiss if, for the record, I did not mention the good work and the leadership of my predecessor, Frank Russo, in leading this effort and, of course, the leadership and support that the Panel has provided at the same time.

We are on a course that will see us, by March of 2000, initiate revenue service from 45th Street in Bayonne, the southern-most terminus of the system, to Exchange Place in Jersey City. Shortly thereafter, in the summer of the year 2000, we will be at the Pavonia-Newport Station through the Newport development with revenue service.

At this point in time, I think, it is important to note that one of the critical milestones we were seeking to reach is at our doorstep, and that is, the delivery of the first of the new light-rail vehicles. In January, these vehicles will be in Jersey City at the maintenance facility, and in February, we will begin to run them in revenue -- not in revenue service -- but will begin to commission them and shake them down. All through the year 1999 we will

continue that process with the remainder of the vehicles. In December of 1999, we will be running a demonstration service. We are pretty much on target with where we thought we would be. I think John can give you some additional details as to construction that is taking place as we are speaking here today.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Clarification.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Certainly.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: You said 45th Street. It is 34th Street, right?

MR. CENSULLO: I apologize -- 34th Street.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Okay. I just want to make sure that it's being built at 34th.

MR. CENSULLO: Absolutely right.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I didn't think you were going to start it about 10 blocks north.

MR. CENSULLO: Revenue service to 34th Street.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: 34th Street.

MR. CENSULLO: Absolutely right.

John.

JOHN C. JOHNSTON: Thank you.

Thank you, Assemblywoman Rose Heck and Assemblyman Joe Doria and County Executive, Pat Schuber.

This is about my third or fourth legislative committee, and I appreciate this opportunity to meet with you. The project that Dan has just mentioned is on schedule and construction is proceeding, I am pleased to say,

in all areas between 34th Street in Bayonne, Westside Avenue in Jersey City, and Newport. We're actually in all of the five construction areas. I can also tell you that the track is being laid on the main line to Bayonne between the Liberty State Park Station and 45th Street in Bayonne and on the western spur between Communipaw Junction and Pacific Avenue.

The main line tracks are in final alignment and elevation between the State Park Station and the Conrail flyover. I have had the pleasure of riding a ballast regulator the other day, and it looks really good, and I can't wait to start testing in February. We would like to arrange for the committee (*sic*) to join us on one of these rides so that you can actually see what you have got.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think I would like to do it before February. We were--

MR. JOHNSTON: No, no, no, no -- to ride this section now--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, okay.

MR. JOHNSTON: --not wait until the train comes. This is to see it from a ballast regulator.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Because we wanted to do the tour, and we couldn't. We were then kind of bumped because we were going to have a session today, but it's a bad day anyway. We would like to take the Bergen County group, the County Executive, and the County Executive of Hudson as well and make it a nice day so that we all get an overview of what is happening. I think Phyllis will be reaching out to you and coordinating that.

Thank you.

MR. JOHNSTON: Thank you.

In addition to the track which is being installed, ties are being placed between Johnston Avenue by the Science Center going over Jersey Avenue. Rail is now being welded down on Essex Street to come and meet the -- right through Essex Street and go down Hudson Street. We've also been welding rail in Area 2. We're going to start installation of the electrification next week. You will see the poles going up and then the brackets and the wire. The foundations are virtually complete all the way through to Exchange Place. The signal control houses and the substations, five of them, have been installed -- sitting on the foundations. We're waiting to get power to them.

Those people looking over the bridges will see all this happening, but we've also completed the platform construction of 45th Street, Danforth, Richard Street, Liberty State Park, Jersey City Medical Center, and MLK Drive. Platforms are under construction of 34th Street in Bayonne and at Liberty Harbor North. We'll shortly start as soon as we get DCA approval at Essex Street then later -- early next year it will -- Exchange Place.

The vehicles-- That is the first thing you mentioned, so I will go back to that. The first article, inspection and dynamic testing of the two prototype light-rail vehicles, is scheduled for October 28 to the 30 in Osaka, Japan. These vehicles will be delivered, as Dan said, to Communipaw Yard in January. Testing and commissioning will start in February between Wilson Street and the Conrail flyover. Six bodies for the remaining fleet, which is 27 cars, will be made in the five--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Are they all painted yet?

MR. JOHNSTON: I would imagine they are painted, Rose.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, do you?

MR. JOHNSTON: I don't want to talk about the colors here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I have a slight problem there, John. We'll talk about that later.

MR. JOHNSTON: Outside this committee meeting. Thank you. I think Henry Ford had the color you had in mind.

Six bodies for the final assembly plant in Hudson County and Harrison will be shipped from Osaka. They're probably on the high seas now and will be received in mid-November. We're building cars in -- 27 of them for the Hudson-Bergen and another 16 for the Newark City Subway. They're all being built in this shop where (indiscernible) had built cars before. We have refurbished cars, and we are now putting track down, so it can receive them.

I can tell you that the most important thing is that construction of the system -- and the imbedded track through Essex Street has already started. That has been one of my things -- getting through the historic district, mitigating the community's fears.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You have been doing an outstanding job, John.

MR. JOHNSTON: I don't know about that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I really appreciate that.

MR. CENSULLO: John is -- he really is--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: He is a unique person.

MR. CENSULLO: May I comment a bit on the--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Certainly.

MR. CENSULLO: --second operating segment and the Hoboken piece that Joe mentioned?

Yes, Hoboken is not where we would like it to be, and that is really because of the change we had to make in the alignment. We have not received approval from the FTA on our EA yet. In fact, earlier this week, we received a letter that looks like it might add a month or two to the process of getting that approval. Our folks are working very closely with them in order to secure that approval.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Dan, you have to remember that you should not exclude the members of this Panel in your pursuit of that.

MR. CENSULLO: Absolutely not.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Because we relate to our Federal Senators and Congressmen. If we don't know that you are slowing -- that something is slowing us up, we cannot put our own little hand into this.

MR. CENSULLO: I intend to ask you for your support.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Certainly.

MR. CENSULLO: I appreciate that offer very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But we do communicate with them.

MR. CENSULLO: That and, of course, the funding for the second operating segment, which we all understand there is a difficulty in securing -- we're attempting to pursue that. I have spoken with you to that issue also.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: One of the questions that I have is that -- and the Freeholder brought it up earlier -- in the discussions of the changing of the route from the east side of Hoboken to the west side of

Hoboken, I understood that there was significant savings in money at that point--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: --which then could allow for continuation into Hoboken using the first phase money. Now it sounds like that is no longer true. I am wondering where that money disappeared to.

MR. CENSULLO: Let me comment on that.

First of all, the money has not disappeared. What-- In effect, 21st Century and New Jersey Transit are working together, against the backdrop of the changes of the alignment, to understand what moneys there are. Secondly, and more importantly, in the full-funding grant agreement that we got for the initial operating segment, we are restricted to construct only to a certain point. We cannot -- unless the full-funding grant agreement is amended, which we are seeking to do in seeking the additional funds for the SOS, we cannot extend and utilize IOS funds for the second operating segment. We need an amendment to that agreement.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: From FTA?

MR. CENSULLO: That's correct, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Haven't we put the amendment in yet?

MR. CENSULLO: No, that is what we are trying to do with the funding.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Dan, when we were at (indiscernible) the guesstimated savings on that switch from east to west in Hoboken was between \$50 million and \$80 million, if I am correct.

MR. CENSULLO: I-- Rose, I can't comment on that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That was a projection.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I know I take the conservative numbers -- same ones Freeholder VanDyke used -- \$50 million. The question is, why haven't we put in for the approval -- to get the approval from FTA to move forward?

MR. CENSULLO: Because, first of all, in order to move the SOS forward, we certainly need more than whatever that amount of money is.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: What's the SOS? Just for my--

MR. CENSULLO: Oh, I am sorry, the second operating segment, which means going from Hoboken up to the ferry and then through the tunnel to Tonnel Avenue.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: So the second phase--

MR. CENSULLO: Second phase.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: That's all the second phase?

MR. CENSULLO: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Up through North Bergen?

MR. CENSULLO: That's correct.

That also includes the grade crossing work in Secaucus Road and at Paterson--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Which the Department of Transportation is doing.

MR. CENSULLO: Well, no. That work was transferred to my office about a year ago.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: It has been transferred to New Rail.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And the costs--

MR. CENSULLO: Unfortunately--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And the costs?

MR. CENSULLO: And the monies did not come with the transfer.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: The monies did not come with the transfer?

MR. CENSULLO: That's correct. Only some monies. Only dollars associated with some property acquisitions.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think, if you would excuse me--
I think, Joe -- and, Rusty, if you make a note that this Panel should investigate on the dollars.

MR. CENSULLO: But that money that we're seeking--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Because that was supposedly in the Transportation Trust Fund when the initial Trust Fund was created. We have to find out where that money went. I agree with you.

MR. CENSULLO: The-- Because the vital nature of the crossovers to the work that we're doing in getting up to the ferry -- that work is now included-- The dollars are now included in the SOS funding from the FTA. There are some State monies associated with property acquisitions, and we have, in fact just today, I believe, or yesterday, issued the first contract for demolition on Secaucus Road.

When I say the monies were not transferred, all the money necessary to accomplish all the construction was not available. However,

monies were available to initiate the work, acquire property, and initiate construction, demolition, temporary roads, etc.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We need to know what -- exactly the numbers there. How much was transferred, how much had to be transferred, and where the other money went is something that we -- I am sure the Chairwoman will work on doing, and I will be helpful there. It sounds like there are some situations there that we were not aware of. That would be important for you to provide us with the information, so we can go back and try to find out exactly what is taking place there.

MR. CENSULLO: The funding for the -- as I said, the -- for those two crossovers -- that work is in the FTA package for the second operating segment. When we seek to secure funds for the second operating segment--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Wait a minute. I thought-- I am getting confused now. You are talking about the crossovers on Secaucus Road and the ones that take place--

MR. CENSULLO: Grade crossings. The grade separations.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: The grade separations.

You are saying that that money was in the second phase Federal money. I thought that was the State money originally.

MR. CENSULLO: I say we got some State money to initiate the work.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We were told about that.

Dan, I--

MR. CENSULLO: Some State money came over to initiate the work.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Dan, let me interrupt again. You were not part of the project-- When Joe was talking about this, it was like four or five years ago at the Appropriations Meeting. We were advised by New Jersey Transit that that was in the budget.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: That's right -- in the State budget, not the FTA money. That was State budgeted out of the Transportation Trust Fund.

MR. CENSULLO: Well, I don't know if it was 100 percent because, as I said, we did get some monies.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I think it was. Again I have to defer to the Chairwoman. I think it was.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That was what was reported to us at Appropriations.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: That's what we were told a few years ago. That is why I am asking the question. You are now saying we're applying to FTA, which means that's Federal money.

MR. CENSULLO: Some monies were appropriated to us to initiate the work, and the balance needs additional appropriation.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: From who?

MR. CENSULLO: Well, okay. Now what we're doing here is, as we seek authorization from the FTA for funds for the second operating segment, and that's -- we're in the process of doing that now, that would allow us the opportunity to supplement that full-funding grant agreement.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: But the question is, from who?

MR. CENSULLO: Well, let me just finish. From the FTA. We were--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: So Federal money.

MR. CENSULLO: We will also, at the same time, seek some additional State money.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: But the question-- You're not answering the question, Dan. The question is-- We were told all the money for the grade separations were out of the Transportation Trust Fund and that there was no Federal money involved. You're now saying, "Hey, they gave us some money. We have no idea what that some money is of the total amount. And now we're seeking Federal money. So we're using money that, otherwise, would be going for other parts of the light-rail."

MR. CENSULLO: May I just clarify that? We're seeking some Federal money, and we are seeking some additional State money.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Okay, but we need to know now the numbers to know exactly what happened and what--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: He can get back to us after.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We'll talk about -- discuss this further. I think we need some specificity on the actual numbers.

MR. CENSULLO: And I can clarify that for you. I can do that for you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

MR. CENSULLO: So, in any event, once we work our way through that process, we will be in a position to move forward with 21st Century on the second operating segment, which we are committed to do in

New Rail Construction. Our schedule is to try to get to our board, in April or May of next year, with a recommendation to award the second operating segment, having cleared out the environmental issues at Hoboken and the funding issues associated with the SOS. That is our schedule.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: And that would take us to the tunnel?

MR. CENSULLO: That would give us authorization to proceed with 21st Century.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: To where?

MR. CENSULLO: We will do two things. We'll go to the ferry and -- Weehawken Ferry, and the second piece of that same authorization will take us through the Weehawken Tunnel.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Through the Weehawken Tunnel.

MR. CENSULLO: That's correct. And that is what we are attempting to do. And that's the schedule that we have internally set to move forward.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good.

MR. JOHNSTON: Rose, you did ask a question about women in construction, and we do have several graduating classes that have given us candidates. I can't tell you, at the moment, how many have been hired. However, you know that we've worked tirelessly on trying to get the -- meet the 38 percent goal of minority, 6.9 percent female. While we are getting close, we are not there. It is because of that that I formed a special task force, and both Assemblyman Doria and yourself have got representatives on that board. We did meet last week, and we've made inroads, and we divided up into different subcommittees, one of which, by the way, is to try and get money.

MR. CENSULLO: Right.

MR. JOHNSTON: But more importantly, I am personally looking for a change in the administrative act to permit some of this money to be used for training for permanent jobs and not just construction. I look at the permanent jobs as being construction. It's maintenance.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: No question that is important. I agree with that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And, John, the other piece is the education piece in the schools.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Before we go to that, can I ask John a question?

As it relates to the training program, I know we are running the one for the women now, which is good, and we should be doing that and moving forward. What are we doing to meet the other affirmative action goals as it relates to training for the permanent positions? I know there is a training program up here in Bergen. Are there any training programs specifically for minorities in Hudson?

MR. JOHNSTON: Hudson County has some money set aside beside what New Jersey is setting aside. We're trying to get local people from Jersey City to be trained in conjunction with New Jersey Transit on the Newark City Subway.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We should start moving that because that has not taken place. That way, we can start to deal with some of the problems you have in meeting these goals.

MR. JOHNSTON: Right, but I don't want to be ending up paying the bill and no evidence of work.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Well, I don't disagree with that.

MR. JOHNSTON: So we're going to start towards the end of this year.

To go back to your schools question, we are developing a program which is, initially, going to be slides for the schools. We're starting that next month. We didn't want to go around too early. The catenary will be installed and electrified probably towards the end of December. We need to go around and alert all the schools of the safety -- keep off the tracks and don't touch the bridges. The bridges will have protection shields and will be grounded. We're going to do that. When the vehicles come, we're going to use the vehicle to actually make a video.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Very good.

MR. JOHNSTON: We wanted to make a video that is more for light-rail. A lot of the information that's available for crossing protection -- what Transit has is more geared to commuter rail.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think while we are doing that, John, you're getting oriented to light-rail and safety, that it's not too early, when you are going into the schools, to encourage them as far as job opportunities are concerned. It is a little bit of a stretch, but we're doing that in our schools now with hands-on training, even at the grammar school level. I think it is very important.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: And let me just say-- I don't know who's putting this video together and who is doing the education, but let's get

somebody who knows something about education. We should be presenting it from a positive viewpoint and not from a don't do this and don't do that and don't go here and don't go there. Light-rail offers you these opportunities, and plus, you should be aware that as with all transportation, you look both ways when you cross the street. You shouldn't be crossing the light-rail tracks and doing that. It should not be begun as a negative -- watch yourself, this is dangerous. It should be begun as that this is an opportunity, this is something great, and you are going to have a light-rail here in their community. It's going to be something that will help you when you want to go to work. There is jobs available, and besides that, just like when you cross a street and you deal with a car, you have to know the rules of the road. I always get nervous about who puts these things together and what the emphasis is. So-called experts are usually bozos. So let us find people who really know what they are doing instead of those who claim they know what they are doing.

MR. JOHNSTON: That's why we're going to remake it. The other ones are too bloody, using a British expression here, to-- It really says what you say.

I have to thank you, Mayor, because you have given me an opportunity to make a presentation on your cable TV channel in Bayonne.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Yes.

MR. JOHNSTON: We're going to make presentations for the libraries and other places. We're going to cover this.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We can set up-- I am sure Jersey City can do the same thing. We can set up programs with community groups, and we can set up more Cablevision opportunities in both Bayonne and Jersey

City. I am sure, as you go further north, the same thing is possible. Just work with us, and we'll try to get that done because that is what they are there for. We can-- That's free-access stuff. All that is necessary is to get you or your people there to do it.

MR. JOHNSTON: That's right.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You know, with the economic development piece in mind, you may be able to get in touch with the Monopoly people and have them do a light-rail Monopoly game for you.

MR. JOHNSTON: I can tell you that, sitting in front of you today-- There is 40-odd years in this. I can tell you that it has come a long way -- this presentation to the public. One of the times I did-- The first time I did it, I had a ricksha -- bicycle ricksha -- with speakers on it, so we-- It's going to be much more high-tech than that, I can assure you.

MR. CENSULLO: Some people think the light-rail system is still a ricksha, but not many anymore.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, when they see it in action in Hudson County--

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Well, you know, I think some people think it is a railroad, and that is part of the problem. We don't need to use railroads because this is not a railroad. When you talk about the conflicts in South Jersey about light-rail, there are, totally, conflicts over railroads, not light-rail.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's right.

MR. JOHNSTON: This will be driven by bus operators, so it is -- like New Jersey Transit does it. It is an extension of a bus system.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Is there anything else you-- You've done a great job, John. We will be having another meeting in 1998, before we hit 1999. I think it should-- We should set that date up as soon as possible before Joe's calendar gets filled and mine gets filled.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: And let me say-- I think that we have been a little bit busy. I know you have and I have timewise. I think the Light Rail Panel should be meeting.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I think that when we don't meet, it seems like things happen that we have no knowledge of.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I agree. I agree. They think we're gone.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: They don't realize that we're both like bulldogs.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MR. CENSULLO: Thank you for your continued support.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I thank you very much. We will meet afterwards.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I just want to invite everybody-- If you want to have a hearing in Bayonne or come to Bayonne for anything--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think we should.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: I would be happy to host that--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Why don't we do that? Why don't we do that, Joe?

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Sure.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We might do that briefly before we go on the tour.

MR. CENSULLO: That would be perfectly-- Logistically, that would be great.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We'll come to Bayonne to do that. We can either do it in City Hall or--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I like that. We could have a Come-to-Bayonne game, Joe.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We can also do it on the Military Ocean Terminal in Bayonne.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, how fantastic.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: We can do that. We'll work with you in whatever you want.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you. Thank you very much.

MR. JOHNSTON: We're ready to cross the street and go down to the battleship. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's right.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: You know, that's two and one-half miles. A lot of people don't realize that the length of the peninsula, where the Military Ocean Terminal is, goes out two and a half miles into New York Harbor. It is not a short ride.

MR. JOHNSTON: We can even--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's good.

I thank all of you for attending this launching of the Bergen perspective. We will be moving very aggressively to get Bergen activated and in progress to meet the first and second stages of the HBLRT.

I thank you very much, and this meeting is adjourned.

ASSEMBLYMAN DORIA: Thank you.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)