

## Office of the Governor

### NEWS RELEASE

PO BOX 004  
TRENTON, NJ 08625

CONTACT: Jayne O'Connor  
609-777-2600  
Jim Berzok (DOT)  
609-530-2034

RELEASE: November 30, 1998

#### **I-80, I-287 HOV LANES OPENED TO ALL TRAFFIC**

Motorists using Interstates 80 and 287 rejoiced today when the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes officials met their demise at 6 a.m. when they were opened to all traffic.

Governor Christie Whitman marked the occasion, along with Transportation Commissioner John J. Haley Jr., by dismantling a ground-mounted HOV sign along the I-287 corridor.

"When programs do not work, we as policy makers need to be flexible so that we can best serve the public. I would like to thank all that were involved in this effort, especially Reps. Marge Roukema and Rodney Frelinghuysen. Without their support in Washington we would not have been able to accomplish the removal of these lanes without fear of penalty or repayment from the federal government," Gov. Whitman said.

Commissioner Haley also acknowledged the roles played by New Jersey's two senators and Rep. Bob Franks. "Clearly, without their support and that of Congressman Franks, who held a hearing on this issue back in the spring, we would not have been nearly as effective in eliminating what was causing massive headaches for all drivers on I-80 and I-287," Haley added.

Beginning on Friday over the holiday weekend, the NJDOT began removing overhead and ground-mounted signs along both HOV corridors. The I-80 HOV corridor, which opened in 1994, ran 10.5 miles from Route 15 in Rockaway Township to I-287 in Parsippany- Troy Hills. The I-287 HOV corridor covered a distance of 20.2 miles running from Bedminster to Parsippany-Troy Hills. It was completed in January 1998 and was one of the longest HOV lanes in the nation.

Earlier this fall, Gov. Whitman determined that the HOV lanes on I-80 and I-287 should be removed after reviewing a study conducted by the NJDOT. In that study, the NJDOT concluded that neither lane was successful in alleviating traffic congestion or improving air quality.