

1983

**PUBLIC HEARING**

before

**SENATE TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

on

"Electrification of the North Jersey Coastline Railroad"

Held:  
June 14, 1983  
Monmouth County Library  
Schremsbury, New Jersey

**MEMBER OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Senator S. Thomas Gagliano (Acting Chairman)

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Senator John P. Gallagher

ATTORNEY GENERAL JAMES M. COUGHLIN

MAR 7 1984

**AND**

Peter Manoogian, Research Assistant  
Office of Legislative Services  
Aide, Senate Transportation and Communications Committee

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**SENATOR S. THOMAS GAGLIANO:** (Acting Chairman) Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. We try to be on time; however, we are now about ten minutes late in getting started. I know that several of you have to make other connections and go on with your day, so we are going to start this hearing.

I have some opening remarks, but I guess before my opening remarks I have to extend to you the apologies of the Committee. Senator Walter Rand, the Chairman of the Committee, is in Trenton today. As you know, he is a member of the Joint Appropriations Committee, and the Joint Appropriations Committee is desperately trying to put a budget together.

Seated on my left is Senator John P. Gallagher, who is also a member of that Committee, and he will be leaving for Trenton in a few minutes. He was able to stop in because he lives over on this side of Monmouth County. Jack Gallagher has been able to stop in, but he is also going to the Joint Appropriations Committee meeting today.

My name is Senator Tom Gagliano, and I am a member of the Senate Transportation and Communications Committee. I have been a member of the Committee for almost six years.

As I said, unfortunately Senator Walter Rand could not be here so we are going to proceed, because there are many of us who feel that is the continuation of the electrification of the North Jersey Coast Line is an extremely important project. If there is anything we can do to focus attention on it and to keep things moving, we want to do it.

I hereby call this public hearing to order. We are here to consider the topic of the continuation of the electrification of the North Jersey Coast Line, from Matawan to Long Branch, and to consider the possible extension of the line, subject to the availability of funds, to other points south, such as Asbury Park.

In 1979, the Commuter Operating Agency, which was the predecessor of New Jersey Transit, made a decision to implement a phased extension of the electrification of the North Jersey Coast Line, first to Matawan, followed by an extension to Long Branch, as funds became available. The extension has been completed to Matawan, as you know, and on November 11, 1982, the Board of Directors of New Jersey

Transit unanimously adopted a resolution approving the concept of the extension of electrification from Matawan to Long Branch. It was also resolved that the existing design and engineering grant be transferred from DOT to New Jersey Transit in order that preliminary staff work could be initiated.

The New Jersey Transit staff also recommended that the extension of electrification be included in New Jersey Transit's seven year capital program for fiscal years 1984 through 1990. The cost of the twenty-nine additional multiple unit passenger rail cars needed for the NJCL, after electrification is completed, is included in the FY 1985 rail rolling stock acquisition items of New Jersey Transit's seven year capital program. Acquisition of these rail cars is expected to be scheduled to coincide with project completion. It should be noted that New Jersey Transit staff has concluded that of the various options considered, the extension of electrification to Long Branch will provide the greatest total passenger benefit and the greatest reduction of operating cost.

As you know, however, there is a transportation center planned for Asbury Park which will soon be constructed. The thought that Asbury Park should be considered, I guess was my idea. I fully realize that it will cost more money to go further south, but what we want, of course, is for the electrification to be continued. We are here this morning to hear testimony on the issue of whether we should go to Asbury Park or not. But, certainly it is extremely important to go to Long Branch.

Our schedule includes approximately twelve witnesses. We may have more. If there are additional persons who wish to testify and who have not already signed up with Peter Manoogian, the aide to this Committee seated on my right, please do so. We will be here until we complete the hearing. I will personally see to it, as will Peter, that each member of the Senate Transportation and Communications Committee has a copy of the transcript. We will also see to it that other key members, such as those who are members of the Appropriations Committee and the Assembly Transportation Committee, are made aware of the transcript. They will also be brought up to date on what has transpired here.

The first witness I would like to call is Jerome Primo, who is Executive Director of N.J. Transit. However, I am not going to call him at the moment. Instead, Jerry, with your permission I would like to call Aleathea Riley. I know her as "Pepper" Riley. Aleathea is a staff aide with the Public Works and Transportation Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. Pepper, I would appreciate it if you would take a seat at the witness table.

Before Aleathea testifies, Senator Gallagher, do you have any comments you would like to make?

**SENATOR JOHN P. GALLAGHER:** Thank you very much. I am sorry I have to run, but we do have to try and get the budget wrapped up today. We were supposed to do it Friday, but unfortunately some people wanted to push and shove a little bit more. Hopefully, we can conclude today so it can go to the Legislature and then on to the Governor.

I am very happy to be here because I think this is a very important project. I think going to Matawan was a great step, and people, such as Judge Labrecque and others who have worked so hard for it over the years, should be congratulated for getting it that far. But, as we all know, the majority of the people here in Monmouth County who utilize the rail, are below the Matawan station, and we should try to extend it as far as possible. I am happy to see that they have approved it, thus far, through to Long Branch. I believe that Red Bank, Little Clover, and Middletown are the areas where the majority of the riders come from, and we probably will see an increase in ridership should this type of better service be provided. This is something that most of the people on the rail have been looking forward to for many years.

I am here to listen. We have experts here today, so I will conclude with that. Thank you.

**SENATOR GAGLIANO:** Thank you very much, Senator Gallagher. Ms. Riley.

**ALEATHEA E. RILEY:** Senator Gagliano, Senator Gallagher, and members of the Committee, I am here on behalf of Congressman James J. Howard, Congressman from the 3rd District.

As you are all aware, Congressman Howard's Committee on Public Works and Transportation designated Asbury Park, in the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1978, as the site of the first publicly-funded Intermodal Transportation Facility in the nation. As an Intermodal Facility, all modes of transportation -- rail, bus, taxi, and rental car -- will be located at one central transportation hub. Having the Facility in place will provide an enormous convenience to the commuting public, and should promote greater coordination and fuel savings for the area's entire transportation system. The project will cost \$3 million -- \$2.4 million from the Federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration, and \$600,000 from New Jersey Transit.

The city officials of Asbury Park have assured the Congressman that the Transportation Facility has become a focal point for further urban renewal in the City. Its placement adjacent to the new Municipal Complex provides an economic anchor for the Asbury Park central business district. The Transportation Facility is viewed by both Federal and State officials as a primary station, one which will grow in regional importance upon its completion in mid-1984. As larger numbers of commuters begin to utilize the Asbury Park station, increased business activity is expected. Recent land and property sales in the vicinity of the Transportation Facility have shown a substantial increase in value. Prior to the announcement of the Transportation Facility, a piece of property sold for roughly \$75,000. After the announcement, the new owner is quoted a price for a vacant store as high as a quarter of a million dollars. Certainly, the effects of the Transportation Facility are already being felt throughout the City.

The Municipal Complex and the Transportation Facility represent an investment of over \$5 million in Federal dollars. In view of this Federal investment, it is crucial that electrification be extended to the City of Asbury Park in the near future. The terminus for electrification on the North Jersey Coast Line is now scheduled for the Long Branch Station. If plans are not now in place to extend electrification to Asbury Park, the State will, in effect, isolate the most modern Transportation Facility from the electrified portion of the North Jersey Coast Line. Moreover, the Asbury Park Transportation Facility would not be used to its fullest potential if electrification



is not extended to Asbury Park. Local officials fear that if plans for electrification are not begun now, they may never be drawn up. As dollars become increasingly scarce, plans to electrify south of Long Branch may be abandoned. Thus, the Asbury Park Transportation Facility could suffer the fate of being the coast's most modern and efficient station, assigned the role of a diesel service spur to the modern electrified line beginning in Long Branch.

As many of you know, the City of Asubry Park has begun energetic efforts to revitalize its beachfront area. A Redevelopment Authority has been created which will work with developers to renovate the Asbury Park beachfront. The famous Berkeley-Carteret Hotel is under renovation presently by a local shore area developer. The City envisions its future as a year-round recreational and residential haven. Efficient rail travel to Asbury Park will be essential to bring the City's plans to fruition. On the Federal level Congressman Howard has attempted to assist Asbury Park overcome many of the problems it faces. As Chairman of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee, he has worked very hard with some modest success to ensure that the State of New Jersey as a whole gets its fair share of transportation monies. Therefore, in a cooperative spirit, the Congressman urges you to include Asbury Park in your electrification plans.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Ms. Riley.

Senator Gallagher, do you have any questions?

SENATOR GALLAGHER: I have no questions.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Ms. Riley, I think that rather than asking you questions on your presentation, since you have certainly opened with a major issue, unless you have anything furtherto add, we will call on Mr. Primo next.

MS. RILEY: Thank you.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much. Thank you for attending, and give our best to Congressman Howard.

I will now call Jerome Primo. Jerry and I are old buddies when it comes to railroads.

**J E R O M E      P R I M O:** Good morning, Senators. It is a pleasure to have a chance to discuss improvements on the North Jersey Coast

Line, plans that we have forged together over the last many years, to provide first-class public transit for the many thousands of people who commute daily on this rail line.

Senator, you are right. It is getting hot, and I guess it is time to take a train again. I want, if I may, to take just a moment and provide a setting for that train trip to be a good one.

Our system-wide, on-time, train performance in the month of May was ninety-two and one-half percent -- that is ninety-two and one-half of the trains that were scheduled got to their destination within five minutes of anticipated arrival time.

The North Jersey Coast Line's quality of service is measured by on-time performance, and it was ninety-three point one percent, up slightly from our ninety-two point six percent rate in April.

The fact of the matter is, the commitment made by the State of New Jersey, several years ago, to upgrade service on the Coastline is being fulfilled, but not fully, and that is the subject of the hearing today.

We have prepared, Mr. Chairman and Senator Gallagher, material that I believe has been made available to you. This material includes -- we do have some extra copies for those who might have an interest in the subject -- a summary of the status of electrification to Long Branch; a summary of commitments, previously made and anticipated, to improve the capital facilities on this line; and a flyer, entitled, "Take a Free Ride on N.J. Transit," which is an example of one of our promotions. I might note that the five lucky people who will have the opportunity to get the free theater tickets train rides, etc., will be announced next Tuesday.

It also includes a description of the Coastline and a chronology of some milestones on the long road to upgrading this line. And, finally, it includes copies of our connections which are handed out to our bus riders throughout the State. These are custom tailored to each of our various train lines, and distributed this week are connections for the rail line.

Taken together, I hope that, along with this presentation, they will provide some good information as to where we stand on this important line.

A quick snapshot of the Coastline -- a quick profile: It is a long line with a lot of stations on it. If you get on in New York, you have an opportunity, if you are on a local, to stop twenty-five times at all the stations along the line. It is nearly sixty-seven miles to Bay Head. It is about fifty-six and one-half miles from Newark.

We carry a lot of people on this line. South of Rahway, where one might argue the Coastline fully begins, we have about ten thousand inbound riders, daily. Nineteen stations exist on that line, including the Monmouth station.

In terms of ridership by segment, it was important to us, as we thought about continued further investments on the Coastline, to reflect on where the riders are. And, Senator Gallagher is right on target, eighty percent of the riders currently get on this line from Long Branch on in -- more specifically about one-third of the riders get on between Avenel and Matawan. From Hazlet to Long Branch about forty-seven hundred and fifty people get on the train.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That's about fifty percent.

MR. PRIMO: It is close to fifty percent. Between Elberon and Asbury Park -- that is on the three stations that are beyond Long Branch, including Asbury Park -- as of now, the Elberon, Allenhurst, and Asbury Park stations take on about nine hundred passengers, or about nine percent.

Finally, on those stations south of Asbury Park -- Bradley Beach to Bay Head -- about eleven percent of the ten thousand daily inbound riders use this line.

Key stations are obvious. Freeholder Self is here and he knows about the seventeen hundred people a day that ride on the line out of the Middletown station. That is the busiest station on the line. Matawan is right about the same now, with the increases occasioned by the opening of electrification.

Red Bank has about thirteen hundred riders. Little Silver has about eight hundred a day. And, there are seven hundred and fifty in South Amboy.

So, those are the major stations on this line. But, particularly interesting to us is the snapshot of the line from Long

Branch on in. In fact, it is a compelling reason why we, as staff, recommended-- And, more important than our recommendation was the recommendation of the Board and the Governor, who took the position that we should extend the line to Long Branch.

Where are we right now with relation to the extension to Long Branch? We have the six million dollar engineering grant. We have, after some tedious discussions with DOT -- which were, frankly, more time consuming than we wished they would have been -- worked out an agreement to transfer full responsibility for electrification activities from the New Jersey Department of Transportation to N.J. Transit.

We have taken the position, and John Sheridan has concurred, that it makes sense to tie together the engineering responsibility with the operations. This is a crucial issue that was proven out on the extension to Matawan, and is lived out, on a regular basis, on the M & E work: We simply must marry our efforts. We think that under John's leadership we have made significant improvements in coordination on the M & E, but we believe that for the purposes of the North Jersey Coastline work, N.J. Transit is the right place to center the responsibility.

An engineering firm is scheduled, subject to concurrence by UMTA -- this is something that is before them now -- and we will be in a position to begin engineering work in July.

We have modified our seven-year capital program. That capital program will be presented to our Board of Directors on the twenty-first, for review and anticipated adoption. We have included fifty-seven million dollars to pay for the cost of this electrification extension to Long Branch. We believe, particularly with the "real world" expertise in operating know-how that is part of our rail operation, that we will be in a position to move through this engineering quickly, begin construction in 1984, and have, by mid-1987, service to Long Branch as a reality.

To put that investment into some kind of perspective, I would like to take a minute and make sure there is no misunderstanding about the commitment that N.J. Transit has had to date to the North Jersey Coastline. I think I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge something

that Dave Pindar consistently reminds me of, that N.J. Transit is largely a fact because of the passion and concern and commitment to public transit that is reflected in the activists in this county. I would like to think that we at N.J. Transit, and I personally, reflect a sensitivity to that very important commuter and citizen input. I think there is no greater evidence of that than in Judge Labrecque's work with us in his capacity as Chairman of the Monmouth County Transportation Coordinating Committee, and also our North Jersey Advisory Committee -- which has reviewed our capital program, I might note. It reviews it on a continuing basis, and there are many items they help us with.

What is the story to date on the Coastline? Two hundred thirty-four million dollars in public money has been committed to the upgrinding of this line. Of that amount, one hundred ninety-four and one-half million has come from our friends at the Federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration, and about thirty-nine and one-half million has come through State money. Seventy million of that two hundred and thirty-five million was for the actual electrification to Matawan. You know we had some tough problems with water tables and the like, and the bridges, but we think it is a problem that is behind us. We think the soil conditions are much better for this segment of the extension, and we will be able to do it for a more reasonable cost, as reflected in the fifty-seven million contained in our capital program.

Nearly one hundred and twenty-five million dollars has been committed to rolling stock. That commitment of one hundred and twenty-five million has taken the form of new diesel locomotives, and new cars for the line, not only with current ridership in mind but in anticipation of growth in ridership on this line, which is something that we are truly convinced is possible.

Signal work -- I know that Congressman Howard was particularly involved in working with the Federal Urban Mass Transportation Administration to secure approval. Signal work for the whole line to Bay Head, some thirty million dollars, has been committed.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: How long will that take, Jerry?

MR. PRIMO: That is going to be a two to three year project. Again, it is tied in with doing this work while we run the system.

What is in front of us -- we talked about two hundred and thirty-five million. We see a nearly ninety million dollar job still remaining. Of that amount, two-thirds of it, roughly fifty-seven million -- say sixty million in round numbers -- is for electrification to Long Branch. We have some work on rolling stock, but I want to assure you, Mr. Chairman -- and I know this is a matter of sensitivity and concern for Senator Gallagher -- of our cost consciousness, not just in our operating budget but in our overall capital budget. We are trying, as part of our real rolling stock plan, to better utilize our equipment, and to make diesel equipment that might be used here and on the Raritan compatible. And, we have done that. We have made it compatible with the diesel service out of Hoboken.

Likewise, we want to have electric trains that can operate on the M & E, that can operate on the northeast corridor, and that can operate down to Long Branch. We are trying to do some fixups -- some overhaul of our existing electrical cars. I guess what I am saying is, the net effect, we hope, is going to preclude the need to buy thirty new cars and to better use our existing equipment. It is good common sense. It is business sense. And, we think it is going to be an important factor in our continuing credibility.

We have programed in the range of eleven and one-half million dollars -- and I can assure you that there has been almost no project I have spent more time on lately than I did on this effort -- to purchase new equipment that would replace the aging GG-1's now on the line. I have have been in negotiation constantly with Amtrack. We have people meeting with Amtrack in Washington again today, seeking to reach a resolution to this, so we can get those GG-1's replaced with E-60's.

Finally, we have money that is programed for bridge repair. On this line, and perhaps on the Boonton line, we find ourselves confronted with either the potential, or the fact of having to invest heavily in bridge repair. That doesn't embarrass me, frankly, because we are building a line to last for 50 and 75 years. We are making an investment in a portion of New Jersey that not only has been strong in the past but which obviously contains the potential for even greater growth and vitality in the years ahead.

These numbers are sizeable numbers. They are huge numbers. When added up, they total three hundred and twenty-five million dollars. On an annualized basis, if we presume that these bridges, these trains, and the electrification is going to be with us for 40 or 50 years -- and I certainly don't have any problem with assuming that -- then we are investing in the future. As was just evidenced in Asbury Park, we are seeing development around the station that is crucial. It is long overdue and crucial to the vitality of the community.

Having mentioned Asbury Park, I guess that brings to a head the final question, which is whether we should now extend the line to Asbury Park. We looked at a whole set of options for electrification, leading to the Board's decision of several months ago. And, I think the material that I have made available will give you some sense of the background surrounding this.

Specifics on Asbury Park: We estimate the cost to be in the range of about thirty million dollars. That would be on top of the three hundred and twenty-five million, or so, that is the aggregate investment on the Coastline.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That includes everything, the diesel engines, the cars, the signals -- the whole thing?

MR. PRIMO: The whole thing.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Repairs to bridges?

MR. PRIMO: Absolutely.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That would be in the neighborhood of three hundred and twenty-five million dollars?

MR. PRIMO: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Now, on top of that, the added incremental cost of extending electrification from Long Branch to Asbury Park is in the order of thirty million dollars. I say that with some trepidation. Why? Because the worst thing that can happen to us at N.J. Transit is to put out a dollar figure and then have our heads chopped off when, after engineering occurs on any particular project, we find problems we didn't previously anticipate, and thus find the cost rise to fifty million dollars. Suddenly, we then have a sixty percent cost overrun and we don't know what we are doing -- and everything else that goes along with those kinds of events.

Having said that, I say thirty million is the best estimate available from our engineering people, based on what we now know.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That is approximately six miles, isn't it, Jerry?

MR. PRIMO: Yes, sir. It is five million dollars a mile. Senator, I remember a conversation you and I had after the Transaction Conference in Red Bank. We are looking at much lighter construction, for example, and a way to control our construction costs. That is where the expertise of the people who are a part of our Engineer Transit Rail Operations engineering team are going to come into play. I think we have nothing but pluses available to us by getting that "real world" expertise, and the cost-consciousness that has had to be part of these railroaders in years, past directly into the decision-making process.

Ridership: If we spend thirty million dollars, what do we get for it? As I indicated earlier, ridership is around nine percent. We carry eighty percent to Long Branch. If we went to Asbury Park, we would be carrying eighty-nine to ninety percent. So, it is fairly light at the three stations -- Elberon, Allenhurst, and Asbury Park.

There has been no greater champion of public transit funding on the Federal level than Congressman Howard. I don't know what the story is though, or what the prospect of our being able to draw in an extra thirty million dollars will be, on top of the eighty-nine million dollars I cited earlier that we still need to have made available to do the job on the Coastline. I am just not sure.

I might note that the extraordinary program made possible by the actions of the Legislature, as well as Governor Kean, his predecessor, and the Port of New York and New Jersey, creates a unique situation. We use TRANSPAC money as a local match for these projects. So, essentially, we are talking about all Federal money that goes into the implementation of these projects.

We have to take a look at increments of ten million dollars -- twenty million or thirty million -- in the context of our overall capital program. That capital program, at this point in time, contains the money to get the job done to Long Branch, but it does not contain a recommendation to continue the line to Asbury Park. One of the reasons



for this is, we estimated that the time savings wouldn't be that great. That is something we assessed and concluded was a factor.

In my own mind, if electrification is extended to Asbury Park, we need to ask the "what if" question. What if we go that far? Is it necessary to continue service to Bay Head? We have very expensive bridges, moveable bridges. I just had an opportunity in Belmar the other day to wait and admire other bridges as I waited because mine was up. Fine. It should be up when boats go through. Hopefully, it will always come down, Senator, and we can keep moving.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: On the same track?

MR. PRIMO: Yes, in the right direction. This is a key question. We have eleven hundred people now boarding south. "What are the incremental investments?" is a private sector question, and it is an appropriate public sector question that we have to ask.

A final issue -- and this is a tricky one, but an important one -- relates to our desire to get on with the project and get that assessment done as quickly as possible -- get the engineering done, get into construction, and into operation. We have to settle on a site for a yard. We think there is an appropriate site just south of the current train station in Long Branch. If we go further, if we go to Asbury Park, then we would have to conduct examinations, do environmental impact assessments, and the associated Federal reviews, State reviews, etc. That doesn't mean that it wouldn't be potentially possible to have a site in Long Branch now and, in an operational fashion, at some future time extend the line to Asbury Park.

That is an overview, Mr. Chairman. I hope it has been useful. By not including funding for this extension to Asbury Park now, I do not believe we are precluding forever and eternity an extension to Asbury Park at some point in the future. We intend to operate air-conditioned quality equipment on the Bay Head to Long Branch section. We intend to operate it on the whole section. We think that the one-seat ride that is going to be available from Long Branch on in is going to be a powerful inducement to added ridership. We think it fits right in with the initiatives that are part of the Governor's and John Sheridan's plan -- the whole plan to rebuild Long Branch as well. The Transportation Center is clearly going to be a

plus for Asbury Park. All in all, we think we are -- to use our own slogan -- moving in the right direction on this Coastline.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Jerry, just to go back to something you said, there is, I guess, a distinct possibility that the terminal, or the place where we would store the extra trains when they are not in use, could be in Long Branch. So, the terminus could be in Long Branch?

MR. PRIMO: Yes, sir.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: And, eventually, as funds permit, the electrification could go south to Asbury Park without the yard, as they call it, or the place for storage?

MR. PRIMO: I believe that is possible. That is an issue that we have to, in the next handfull of months, tie down. That decision is not going to be made by N.J. Transit quietly grinding away, but it will be made in consultation with our north Jersey Coastline Advisory Committee. We want to continue that deliberation and share the information.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay. As you see it, what is the status as far as funding is concerned, of UMTA providing funds for Long Branch? You said they were considering it now. How long do you think it will be before we get some kind of a piece of paper, or a resolution, or something which says, "Yes, UMTA agrees; we are going to Long Branch"?

MR. PRIMO: Well, we have an opportunity for UMTA to help us in two fashions. One is to let us get moving with six million dollars worth of engineering. And, the second is to approve the eighteen million dollars -- I believe that is the figure -- in our capital program for fiscal '84, which is exclusively dedicated to this project.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: To start construction?

MR. PRIMO: To start construction.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay. So, the twenty-four million dollars that we are looking at now--

MR. PRIMO: (interrupting) Six million is in hand, and we are just shuffling it. We are doing budget amendments. It is the eighteen million that is critical. And, I am sure they are not going to give us that money until we complete the engineering. We are going

to complete the engineering early in '84 -- in calendar '84. That leaves the Feds with six to nine months remaining in their Federal fiscal year, which ends on September 30th. Obviously, we would rather get that money sooner than later in fiscal '84.

I'm optimistic. I really am. I think this is a good project. It has stood the test of time. If it were a "dog", it wouldn't have been supported over the years. It wouldn't have the kind of passionate support that I know both of you share, and that so many of the others have.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Well, I think evidence of that is what has happened on the Matawan extension. The Matawan extension is very popular. The people that take the train love it. Unfortunately, all the trains are not express trains, but those who take the express really get outstanding service. So, I think that is certainly an indication of what might happen -- or, what will happen -- if we get down to Long Branch with it.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Do you have any questions, Senator Gallagher?

SENATOR GALLAGHER: Yes. I just want to ask a couple of questions. Jerry, just as a comment, I think you are going to find that because of the quality of life down in this particular area, we will probably return to the growth pattern we once had, and you will be picking up a lot more riders, provided they have this improved type of service.

Now, you mentioned fifty-seven million dollars, and then you mentioned eighty-nine million dollars. Am I correct in assuming that the total amount required to go to Long Branch is eighty-nine million, and that includes the bridges and the cars? What is in that eighty-nine million dollar figure?

MR. PRIMO: The eighty-nine million dollars is the last table in the hand-out which starts with, "North Jersey Coastline Electrification Status."

SENATOR GALLAGHER: Okay. That's fifty-seven million, plus all the other items.

MR. PRIMO: Plus all the other items, some of which includes line improvement that does not bear directly on getting to Long Branch -- for example, the bridges.

SENATOR GALLAGHER: Okay. But, this would be primarily--

SENATOR GAGLIANO: (interrupting) Which would have to be done anyway, is that what you are saying?

MR. PRIMO: Yes.

SENATOR GALLAGHER: Right.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Those improvements would have to be done regardless of whether it remained a diesel system or not?

MR. PRIMO: Absolutely.

SENATOR GALLAGHER: So, we are looking at eighty-nine million to Long Branch, plus thirty million, possibly, for Asbury Park?

MR. PRIMO: In round numbers, Senator, sixty million. Then there is another thirty million or so, for various improvements to the whole line. Then, there is another thirty million dollars needed in order to get to Asbury Park.

SENATOR GALLAGHER: When you say the whole line, you are talking about below Matawan?

MR. PRIMO: To Bay Head, yes. All the way.

SENATOR GALLAGHER: Okay.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Jerry, the question always comes up about the use -- and I am certainly not advocating this, but it is probably on the minds of some of the people here -- of dual capacity electric diesel engines. It always comes up, and I have always heard that it just doesn't work, and it wouldn't work here. But, I just thought that maybe you could put it to bed. Would you comment on that?

MR. PRIMO: We hope they can work. We want to test prototypes of these trains -- these dual powered locomotives -- here in New Jersey.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: We are going to try them?

MR. PRIMO: Yes. And, our capital program provides for some limited funding for these locomotives. They aren't available right now. We can't go out and buy these dual powered locomotives off the shelf. Our Assistant Executive Director for Development tells me that over the next three years we are hoping to spend about eighteen million dollars on these, but they won't be available until late in the '80's.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: They are not being manufactured now?

MR. PRIMO: That is correct.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Are they anywhere? Are they being used in Europe or the Far East?

MR. PRIMO: There is no use in the U.S.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: So, if we do come up with a diesel electric engine, it will be a first?

MR. PRIMO: In this country. Their value is self-evident. We can make available direct service on the whole line, and that carries with it a terrific benefit for the riders through service.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: All right. I have no further questions. Jerry, are you going to be able to stay for a while?

MR. PRIMO: I shall.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Great. That's terrific.

MR. PRIMO: Thank you for the invitation and the chance to give you the status of the line.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you. Thank you for coming.

The next witness will be Frank A. Self, Deputy Director of the Board of Chosen Freeholders, Monmouth County, and Vice Chairman of the North Jersey Transportation Coordinating Committee. Freeholder Self.

**F R A N K     A.     S E L F:** First, Senator, it would be very remiss of me not to mention the fact that Jerry Primo has worked very closely with us, as he has with you and the Senate. And, one couldn't ask for a better person to work with on the North Jersey Transportation Corrdinating Committee.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I hope Mr. Primo heard that.

MR. PRIMO: I think I might move to Middletown.

MR. SELF: Also, I would also like to say that the efforts you have made on behalf of transportation for Monmouth County and for the State of New Jersey have been outstanding.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you.

MR. SELF: I am going to go back just a little bit in the history of last year. I am just going to give an overview because I wanted to direct my remarks only to the extension between Long Branch and Asbury Park, since I am assuming that we are going to take it to Long Branch anyway.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: One way or the other.

MR. SELF: I was happy last year, with the help of Judge Labrecque, to make the motion for the resolution by the North Jersey Transportation Coordinating Committee, asking for the extension of the line to Long Branch. At that time, we gave some testimony that we thought was logical. We approached the question of Middletown, where there are approximately two thousand riders each day, and we are only five or six miles away from Matawan. Then we go on to Red Bank and pick up another two thousand riders, and we are only talking about another four or five miles. Well, the crux of our argument, which I hope is now academic, was, we had done the hard part -- to Matawan. We had come across the swamps. We had come across the boggs and now we were on solid ground. As Jerry pointed out, and as our Committee estimated, we will have a much lower cost per mile on the extension to Long Branch. We will also pick up a lot more riders, as you know. So, with that I am assuming that we are going to get on with the Long Branch line, no matter what happens, but we are here only to discuss the possibility of extending this to Asbury Park.

I am also concerned with one other thing. I hope this doesn't delay the Long Branch decision. It is my information that the engineering studies would not delay anything. We are here to consider this, and we have lost about a year, which I keep yelling about. I just complimented Jerry, but I yell at him. I say, "We have lost a year and we do not want to lose the momentum we have gathered to put the electrification through to Matawan.

With that, I would like to address the singular question of the extension to Asbury Park. I would like to state that Monmouth County is a community where thirty-two percent of the total work force of one hundred and ninety-six thousand people work outside the country. These sixty-three thousand commuters have a mean travel time to work of approximately twenty-eight point five minutes. That is approximate. This travel time is second only to Ocean County in New Jersey. Of our commuting public, about eighteen thousand, three hundred and ninety-nine people use public transportation daily, and between nine and ten thousand are daily rail commuters. The rail commuter ridership in Asbury Park has had a steady decline, from over five hundred daily riders in the 1970's to approximately three hundred and fifty in 1981.

We are reaching a stage in the development of Asbury Park which will again see this City as a major activity center of Monmouth County. We basically have three urban centers here in Monmouth County. We have gotten past the Matawan area, that leaves the Red Bank, Long Branch, and Asbury Park area with commuter centers on the way. What I am addressing here is connecting up three urban centers to the Matawan section.

As I stated, the other urban centers in the Bay Shore area of Monmouth County are in Matawan, which has already benefited from the electrification; Red Bank, which is a community with a stable business center; and Long Branch, where recreational ocean front development and the soon-to-be-completed Ocean Boulevard will enhance the business potential. Asbury Park will soon have a multi-mode, three million dollar transportation center located next to the recently-completed Municipal Complex. This, combined with the anticipated redevelopment of the Convention Hall, the Berkely-Carteret Hotel, the boardwalk area, and the recently erected new residential dwellings is the start of the Asbury Park renaissance.

A long-standing County transportation goal is to have an integral transit system linking the urban centers. The four centers previously defined are already connected by the New Jersey Central line, and it would be a significant asset to have the line electrified with Asbury Park as the southern terminus.

Electrification to Asbury Park will be the spark of their renaissance in my opinion.

As you know, I am speaking from under several hats, but I think we have to look forward to the future. As was pointed out concerning the decline of useage to Asbury Park, I feel that if the terminus was taken to Asbury Park, it would not only go back to the four hundred and fifty or five hundred riders a day, but it would increase because it has been noted that in Matawan, once the Matawan Station was completed and the electrification began, people began using the train, people who would have used their cars. The ridership has been on the rise in Matawan. I also feel this will happen in Asbury Park. So, we have to look kind of jaundicely at the ridership figures at this time.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay. Thank you very much, Frank. I appreciate your being here. I also appreciate your statement.

I guess I can say that the Freeholder Board, if they were asked to vote on it today, would unanimously support electrification to Long Branch.

MR. SELF: Absolutely.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: The County government fully supports it, is that correct?

MR. SELF: That's correct.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: I want that in the record because, as I said, this record will be shared with the members of my Committee, the Assembly Committee, and also people who have something to do with the appropriations. There is a substantial part of this whole project which comes from the State government, as you know. So, as far as we are concerned, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders is totally for going to Long Branch.

MR. SELF: As you pointed out, sir, we have passed a resolution to that effect: The Freeholders are one hundred percent, unanimously, in favor of going to Long Branch. The Monmouth County Transportation Coordinating Committee, which Judge Labrecque and I are members of, has also gone on record as unanimously supporting the extension to Long Branch. And, the New Jersey Transportation Coordinating Committee -- it was pointed out that I am Vice Chairman of that Committee -- has also, without a dissenting vote, supported electrification to Long Branch.

My staff only took a "look-see" at what the assets would be of going on to Asbury Park, and after looking at that, I personally -- and Judge Labrecque will speak after I do -- can see the added asset of going to Asbury Park.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Director. We appreciate your being here.

MR. SELF: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Freeholder Clement Sommers. Good morning, Mr. Sommers. Thank you for being with us.

C L E M E N T S O M M E R S: Tom, I will try to be brief and not be repetitive because I think what you are going to hear today is the



testimony of people who are going to be supporting the shore line, not only to Long Branch but to Bay Head, if it were possible to do that. We understand all those restraints of course. But, I would like to add that the Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Monmouth County Planning Board have long been on record supporting not only electrification to Long Branch but anything that would improve mass transit to Bay Head. So, anything you and your Committee can do to improve it would certainly be appreciated by all the residents of Monmouth County.

I would just like to make a few brief observations. If electrification terminates at Long Branch, Elberon will probably become a backwater station, unless you come up with a plural type of engine, which is questionable at this time.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: But, we are working on it.

MR. SOMMERS: I understand that. I heard that. The reason is obvious. I doubt that very many people want to get on a train at Elberon and transfer to another train or another engine in Long Branch, probably a half mile down the track.

So, the same thing would probably occur if we could continue electrification to Asbury Park. It seems to me many people would drive past stations further south to get on that train, so they wouldn't have to go through the transfer process -- which is probably the only negative involved with the possibility that was raised a moment or two ago, about constructing the yard in Long Branch and then at some future time considering the possibility of taking the electrification to Asbury Park, which I am sure is feasible. This may, in the end, be the compromise that should be considered.

My reason for saying that is very simple. I would hate to see anything hold this project up. It is now scheduled for construction to Long Branch within the next year, and that is something that we certainly want expedited.

If it is going to take lengthy environmental impact studies to put a yard in Asbury Park, I think it would be better to find a compromise. And, as has been indicated earlier, that may well be continuing the electrification but retaining the yard in Long Branch.

Finally, I would like to say that I also agree with Henry Vicaro's involvement in the City of Asbury Park, and with his purchase

of the Berkely-Carteret Hotel and his attempted purchase of other things in Asbury Park. I do believe that Asbury Park probably has the best potential shot in the arm that it has had in years. I like to feel that any community development is only possible through a partnership of Federal, State, and municipal -- if you will -- funds, public funds together with private funds. It is kind of a domino theory where one supports the other. And, I think with private capital being expended in Asubry Park, anything that we can do as governmental agencies, would help that situation.

So, I would urge that a way be found to extend electrification to Asbury Park. Thank you.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Freeholder Sommers.

Our next speaker will be Judge Theodore Labrecque, who is Chairman of the Monmouth County Transportation Coordinating Committee.

**T H E O D O R E      L A B R E C Q U E:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for having this meeting here in Monmouth County, and giving us a chance, at the least inconvenience to us, to testify before this Committee. We have had other experiences where we went to Trenton and we had a very fine reception. But, this is a little icing on the cake, to be able to have it in our back yard.

The Monmouth County Transportation Coordinating Committee has been formed for ten years. We are now having our tenth birthday in December. And, one of the very first things that the Committee did when we were established by the Board of Freeholders and the Planning Board was to consider what was to be done with the New York and Long Branch Railroad. We unanimously went on record as endorsing the electrification of the line all the way to Bay Head. Today this seems like pie in the sky.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: It is five million dollars a mile.

JUDGE LABRECQUE: Yes. At that time it was a little bit different.

When I was on the bench, in 1968, I wasn't just looking at law books; I was looking at other things too. I followed the story in the paper about the bond issue, and the fact that it was going to take forty-two million dollars, plus a matching forty-two million Federal dollars to extend electrification to Bay Head. At that time it could

have been done for that amount. The delay took place following the bond referendum, and that is the reason why we have to spend so much today to get the same result.

Of course, to be fair, we have to consider the fact that the delay occasioned a lot of maintenance, which was delayed on the part of the railroad. So, today the cost of electrification up to Matawan, and the cost of electrification from Matawan to Long Branch, and the cost of electrification from wherever we go beyond Long Branch includes a lot of maintenance items, such as bridges that have to be rebuilt. They would have to be rebuilt anyhow. Signal systems have to put in, which would have to be replaced anyhow. Equipment has to be replaced, that would have to be replaced anyhow. So, all of the expense shouldn't be charged to the electrification. On the contrary, the electrification is going to cut down on the expenses from now on.

Now, although our Committee originally came out for electrification to Bay Head, in 1978 following the appointment of Commissioner Gambaccini, he had a meeting with this Committee, our Committee, and a committee of commuters, and he finally gave us a three-part plan, which he asked us to approve. When he asked us to approve it, he said: "This isn't going to prevent us from going further. This is what I can promise you now." He didn't want to promise us any rose garden; he just wanted to tell us what was "doable."

We agreed to and supported his plan, and his plan was very simple -- to get the electrification to Matawan, which didn't seem to be very difficult at the time; however, the fact that the swamps were in the way made it move very slow. To get some new diesel cars and locomotives -- about fifty cars with the locomotives to pull them -- was the second part of the plan. And, the third part of the plan was to complete the electrification to Long Branch. The commuters, our Committee, and the Planning Board all unanimously approved it. They have been working on it since.

I want to be the first one to pay tribute to New Jersey Transit, which was established after that, for following the course. Things are a heck of a lot better. Commuters are much more satisfied. Commuters are understanding. Commuters appreciate what this Committee

is doing. The commuters appreciate what New Jersey Transit is doing, and things are better. And, these are not manufactured figures; these are real figures.

As far as the advantage to electrification, so far everything has come to pass that we were promised. I recall that at a meeting of this Committee we talked about the advantage of electrification on the PATCO line down to south Jersey, and the fact that property values went up as soon as the electrification started. Rents went up. Stores that had been closed were opened up. There were new facilities -- rooms for rent and apartments for rent. People were willing to put their money into new dwellings in order to make room for new residents.

The same thing is happening in the Matawan area, even though it doesn't have a station right now. They won't have a station until -- I will predict that it will be the end of this year. But, they are building a very fine station there. It is going to be a service to the community, and it is going to be something that Monmouth County can point to with pride.

As I got the notice, it spoke of continuing the job to Long Branch. I say and our Committee has unanimously said this, that the first thing to do is to get down to Long Branch as soon as possible. We lost approximately one year since April 24th of last year, when the electrification to Matawan was first started. Now, this is not the fault of any specific person. A lot of jobs, such as this, encounter delays. But, we are very anxious on the Transportation Committee to get the job moving again, and to promote some momentum, because we know that when a job has momentum, even if it is only a little piece of it that is moving, other pieces of it fall into place and the job gets done. And, until we get to Long Branch, the job isn't done. We will never reap the benefits of what has been done so far unless we get to Long Branch. When we get there, eighty percent of the people who use the line will have available to them, through/one-seat service to New York -- and that is a heck of a goal to accomplish.

If we don't do that, if we don't go to Long Branch, if we find some reason for not going to Long Branch, we are just going to be saying, "We threw away the money by going to Matawan, because we can't get back the money that the State has spent, and that UMTA has spent by

going to Matawan; unless we go further and unless we can accommodate eighty percent on the line, at least, and give them good service, we threw away the money."

So, as far as Long Branch is concerned, our Committee says, "Get down there as fast as possible." We are glad to see there are some budget items this year that deal with it. Although some of those items would have to be spend anyhow, let's not kid ourselves. Nevertheless, the project is moving, and that is what makes us happy, and that is what is going to produce results and make the Jersey Shore, both in Ocean County and in Monmouth County, the way it had been years ago, when everybody was fighting to get down here, even though the transportation facilities were not so good.

Now, on the subject of getting to Asbury Park, our Committee, having endorsed going to Bay Head, has to endorse going to Asbury Park, assuming that the finances are available. Whatever I say about Asbury Park, just consider that I am only saying it in the event financing can be arranged.

Mr. Gambaccini explained to us, when he first became Commissioner, that financing can't always be counted on. But, we have found that regarding financing in Monmouth County, we have had some pretty good teams working on both sides of the political fence. They have been working together in order to help us get the financing. We owe them a great debt. I don't think we ought to completely rule out the idea that financing to Asbury Park is impossible.

I think it is going to give a boost to the shore if we do get to Asbury Park. And, I think if we do that, it is going to be a great boost to the county itself, and, incidentally, to Ocean County.

Now, I realize -- and we all have to admit -- that the number of riders from Asbury Park has gone down. There is no question about that. There is every reason to believe it. The town has gone down. They have suffered tremendously economically, and they are just beginning to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. There has been no real station there for how many years? I don't know. It is quite a few years. There is no railroad station there. There is nothing to bring people to Asbury Park. They had a beautiful station before; it was built before I was much inerested in transportation. But, that was

torn down, and the place is in a shambles. If they didn't have the municipal building in the middle of the town to give people a little comfort and a feeling of safety and security, there would be no reason to go by the railroad station. I would just prefer to go down to Allenhurst and take the train if I were staying there.

There are good reasons why the ridership has fallen off. We know the potential ridership that is available -- not only to bring people down to the shore in order to go to the beach, walk the boardwalk, and enjoy the amusements, but there is ridership in the opposite direction too. We live within forty-five miles -- on the average -- of the cultural center of the United States, New York City. There are all kinds of things that people down here want to go to, if they have good, convenient service. As it is now, until now they had no reason to believe they could make it. Many people use their cars because they think that is the only way to go; they are afraid. There is no reason to be afraid anymore. The people in Matawan know that they can get going at almost any hour of the day. People in Red Bank that I know, lawyers and businessmen -- because there is no train from Red Bank from 12:45 to 3:45 and from 3:45 to 5:00 -- drive to Matawan, park their car there and take the train from Matawan. There is always a train in between those hours that will get you there.

This has been a tremendous advantage to the shore, and the passengers that are being increased there are going to be further increased once the facility is completed.

Asbury Park has the same kind of situation. Business is going to be better in Asbury Park, there is no question about that. I realize that with an attractive transportation center, people are going to begin, once more, to accelerate their ridership.

Some of our people-- I found this out since I returned from my vacation. I have been on vacation and I just got back yesterday. But, some of the people I have spoken with are apprehensive about going to Asbury Park. They say, "Well, maybe they will use that as an excuse to tear up the line beyond Asbury Park." I say I don't think they will. I consider the people in New Jersey Transit to be very honest, sincere people, number one. I think it would be a very, very poor thing for them to do in the second place, because New Jersey Transit

has invested a substantial sum of money in the line below Asbury Park. Most of the rail between Bradley Beach, the next station, and Bay Head has been renewed with welded rail during the past five years. There is a pile of money that went into that line. They are not going to throw that away. They have taken the bridge from Brielle to Point Pleasant and they have completely rebuilt that in the last seven years. That is not going to be thrown away. And, besides that, I think something that is stronger than any financial reason why that line won't be abandoned below Asbury Park is the fact that we have a strong Transportation Committee in the Senate of New Jersey that won't stand for it. It will insist that the service the people of Monmouth County are entitled to will continue.

Now, I realize that even those things, while they may seem logical on paper or when spoken of, can be overcome. But, I believe that electrification will give such a boost to the shore that things will be going the other way and there will be more people riding and more reasons to continue beyond Asbury Park eventually. It won't happen in my time, but it could very well happen in your time. The track is there. The line is there. The number of bridges to be worried about outside of Shark River are nonexistent. The bridge in Red Bank has been fixed, wholly charged to electrification. The bridge over Morgan Creek has been fixed, wholly charged to electrification. So, we are in pretty good shape.

I think that good workmen, such as we have here in New Jersey Transit can make it go, if the initial money is available.

Now, some questions were raised about the cost of going to Asbury Park. I think the cost of about thirty million dollars might be a fair and accurate figure when speaking of the cost to Asbury Park. I have already talked about the objection that stated the ridership was light. The ridership is light because of the service. This is going to be better service, and we will get the same increase that we got in Matawan, at least.

Federal funding is uncertain. I say if we don't have Federal funding, then put it on the back burner and forget about it. We should just do the best we can to make Long Branch a showpiece for the county of Monmouth.

As far as time saving is concerned, the time saving can be estimated as minimal. I don't think it is minimal. I think those people are entitled to just as much consideration as any other portion of Monmouth County.

And, as far as having Asbury Park become the end of the North Jersey Coastline -- to have that happen would cause an upheaval that I wouldn't want to see happen.

In short, I think if the money is available, first and foremost, let's get on with the job of getting to Long Branch as soon as possible. Eighty percent of the people who use this line will be able to have a one-seat ride to New York City if we get to Long Branch -- eighty percent of them.

Next, if we can find the money, let's go to the natural terminal, which could be Asbury Park. And, at Asbury Park let's connect with that nice terminal that is going to be built there, and which has already been provided for, and give the people the service they are entitled to.

Now, the other item I would like to talk about is the terminal. We have to keep in mind one thing. This kind of terminal does not require diesel locomotives. These cars lay there on the track. Right now, at Matawan they lay there on the track and if the train is going to go out, you can hear the air pump going if you have good ears. But, outside of that, there is no annoying noise such as you find when a diesel locomotive is idling at Bay Head, for which we have had complaints.

So, three or four trains at a time -- or all that are needed to be laid up -- if they are going to be laid up in Long Branch as the main base, could be -- some of them -- left in Asbury Park. They could just be left on the siding there as the next train to go. That would be no problem.

The expense of doing that would be much less than starting a new terminal. A new terminal would be possible. I have in mind the track beyond Asbury Park, where there is a freight yard now within just a short distance. That could be used. But, either way, I don't think that is an excuse which should prevent an intelligent, alert staff at New Jersey Transit to come up with a way of doing the job.



One more thing I would like to talk about is the dual-powered locomotives. I have traveled around quite a bit, and, as Jerry says, there are none in the United States. General Motors, back in the '60's, developed one that they thought was all right. It was only good for one kind of electricity, direct current, six hundred volts. They never built any more. They are not even thinking of building any more. I have traveled in Europe. I have never seen any. There may be some scattered around, but I have never seen them. And, I think if it is going to take fourteen years to develop them, and then after that someone has to manufacture them -- let's hope that it comes eventually, but in the meantime let's not count on it. I think we have something now that is real and we don't have to spend anything to develop it.

I have traveled in Europe for the last seventeen days. I have seen trains. I have seen boats. Incidentally, I had a chance to ride on a Hovercraft. It seats seven hundred people and it travels between Dover and Calais. It sounded very good. I got to ride with the Captain in the Pilot House, and I asked him a question after we got along a little way. I said, "Where do you buy these?" He said, "They manufacture them on the Aisle of White." I said, "Does it take long to manufacture them?" He said, "Well, I know where there are four of them for sale now." So, I didn't ask him any more questions.

I tried to ride on a locomotive from Paris to Kiev, but the manager was away and the engineer didn't dare let me on, although he let me on while we were in the station.

I think we are on the way to doing a great job for Monmouth County, and we seek the support of this Committee in getting the job done, as far as Long Branch is concerned, and if the money is available, pressing on to Asbury Park.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Judge. I don't have any questions. I appreciate everything you have said. I basically agree with your comments.

I would now like to call Mr. Bobby Byrne as our next witness.

**R O B E R T        B Y R N E:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate the fact that you let me come up here so early. I am not going to take up anyone's time because I have to leave.

I wanted to make a statement on behalf of myself, Martin Chomsky, and Frank Pallone. Martin and I are the Assembly Candidates from the 11th District, and Frank is the Senate candidate from the 11th Legislative District. We respect everybody's point of view here this morning. As a matter of fact, we are in basic agreement with them. You mentioned before, Senator, the dual powered locomotives, and we are hoping that this would be put to rest. We do have some questions about that.

Basically, our questions are in the statement, and I really don't have the time to make a statement. I wish I did. But, if you have any questions concerning the statement, please feel free to call me. I put my telephone number and my address on your copy.

Without further ado, I would just like to enter these into the record. Thank you very much, Senator. I really appreciate it.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Mr. Byrne.

Our next witness will be Mr. George Floyd. Mr. Floyd, you will be representing the City Manager?

G E O R G E F L O Y D: Yes, that correct.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you.

MR. FLOYD: My name is George Floyd. I am the Assistant City Manager in Asbury Park. I have a prepared statement to read on behalf of the City Manager, Mr. Addeo.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, on behalf of the Mayor and City Council of Asbury Park, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on the continuation of electrification of the North Jersey Coastline Railroad from Matawan to Asbury Park.

As you know, the City of Asbury Park was fortunate enough to be designated as the recipient of an Urban Mass Transportation Administration grant, under the Urban Initiatives Program for the purpose of constructing a unique Intermodal Transportation Facility. The Federal grant of two point four million dollars is to be matched by six hundred thousand dollars from New Jersey Transit. The City is moving ahead with the plans for this facility. Once completed, this facility will represent the foremost building design and the most modern rail facility along the North Jersey Coastline.

With the recent termination of rail station ticket sales to the north and south of Asbury Park, City officials are led to conclude that in the near future, Asbury Park will become a viable regional rail and bus facility area. The vast amounts of money being spent on this project should certainly warrant the inclusion of Asbury Park in any electrification plans New Jersey Transit may have. This regional facility will have at least three hundred parking spaces for cars and should be able to handle commuters from surrounding communities. Parking could be expanded greatly, if the need arises.

Commuters at the Asbury Park Transportation Center will find it to be a centralized hub for public transportation which will offer convenience to the commuting public. Coordination of existing services at a single transfer point will make a public transportation system more efficient in its operation.

Current rail service consists of thirty-five stops per day, connecting Asbury Park with towns as far north as Newark, with terminus connections at Newark for New York and Jersey City PATH. The combined daily stops of several bus lines totals over two hundred per day in Asbury Park, and two-thirds of the bus trip stops are terminus stops in Asbury Park. The other one-third of the stops are along pass-through trips of different routes.

If electrification to Asbury Park is not provided in New Jersey Transit's electrification project, the State will be effectively eliminating Asbury Park from the main rail line to Newark and New York. If this becomes a reality, the most modern and efficient transportation facility along the North Jersey Coastline will be left on an obsolete rail line, serviced by antiquated diesel engines. The Asbury Park terminal is approximately five miles from the City of Long Branch. In view of the fact that UMTA has already invested roughly three million dollars in Asbury Park, it may make fiscal sense to provide additional funds to enable the extension of electrification to Asbury Park so that UMTA's and New Jersey Transit's investment in the Transportation Center is not a waste of taxpayer's money.

We sincerely request your cooperation in providing electrification to Asbury Park's new Transportation Facility. Thank you.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: MR. FLOYD, what is the current status of the Transportation Center?

MR. FLOYD: Demolition has begun on the project site. We should be receiving construction documents in about three months. We are targeting the spring of 1984 for completion of the Transportation Center.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Completion or construction? When will construction start? It is already out to contract?

MR. FLOYD: It is not out to contract yet.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: The demolition is out to contract?

MR. FLOYD: Right. They have started. They are about half way through the demolition. Demolition should be completed by the middle of July.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: And when do you expect to break ground for the actual construction of the new building?

MR. FLOYD: We are hoping in the fall.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Oh, then sometime in '84 it will be completed?

MR. FLOYD: Yes, that's right.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Very good. Mr. Floyd, I think you see the dilemma we have. Maybe I am reflecting the dilemma. A couple of years ago -- I guess three or four years ago -- the Commissioner at that time, Gambaccini, said, "As part of a three point program, if you will support us on this we will go toward electrification to Long Branch." It was agreed to by everybody. My Committee agreed, and I am sure that everybody in Monmouth County felt at the time that this was a great thing to happen: "If we can put these three points together, this is going to be terrific." Now we are about to try and put it together to go to Long Branch, and many of us suddenly realize that Asbury Park is building this Transportation Center and it is only five or six more miles; so, "why shouldn't we go there"?

Maybe you have sensed this in the testimony -- I think I have: The great concern is, if we look like we are not together on the issue, then we might waste another year or two in just discussing it. Do you know what I am saying?

MR. FLOYD: Yes.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Sometimes people at UMTA say, "We don't want to go for the extra money to Asbury Park, but on the other hand we don't want to come out with a determination that gets Asbury Park upset with us; therefore, we will continue to study it." That is really what I am worried about, and it is one of the reasons why we wanted to have this hearing today, because I think it is the kind of thing we have to face.

We would have to face all new environmental impact issues, possibly, if we go further south. So, I can certainly appreciate your position and the position of the Asbury Park Mayor and Council. Frankly, I agree. All logic tells me we should go to Asbury Park. But, I don't want to get into the position where we are delaying a much-needed project because we are giving the decision-makers a headache. Do you see what I am getting at?

MR. FLOYD: Yes.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: So, when you return to discuss it with the City Manager, the Mayor, and the City Council, I hope you will convey that.

Basically, I think we all agree that, subject to the availability of funds and approval, we could go to Asbury Park with it tomorrow.

MR. FLOYD: I think the Mayor and Council would agree also, in that they wouldn't want to do anything to jeopardize or delay the electrification to Long Branch.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you. I appreciate that.

I believe our next witness will be a young lady who has devoted the last several years, along with her colleagues and friends, to the problems of the commuters on the North Jersey Coastline, Ms. Arlene Stump of Shrewsbury. Arlene?

**A R L E N E        S T U M P:** Senator, on behalf of our Mayor and Council, and as a Councilwoman from Schrewsbury, I would like to welcome you to my community. I would also like to thank you for convening this hearing on the extension of electrification.

Unfortunately, David Pindar, who is Chairman of the Shore Community Coalition, and on whose behalf I present my testimony, was called away on business this morning, and, regretfully, he could not attend this hearing. He asked me to speak on his behalf.

I think this is a perfect time to reaffirm the Shore Commuter Coalition's commitment to the extension of electrification from Matawan to Long Branch. Because of delicate lead times and critical and fine-line funding issues, we feel it most appropriate to forge ahead to the completion of this project, as was originally proposed and passed by the New Jersey Transit Board of Directors -- which is from Matawan to Long Branch.

We think that once the extension is accomplished, completed, and in full operation, perhaps -- and I guess I say this with a degree of uncertainty -- any further extension should be fully explored with a degree of caution. I think that Mr. Primo brought to light some questions and some concerns that we best look at now.

First and foremost, I think we always have to keep in mind the fact that we are doing this to provide the best service possible to not only the riders on the North Jersey Coastline, but also we are trying to encourage ridership in Monmouth County itself. I think we have to look at something that is feasible, something that does encourage ridership, but also something that is financially justifiable.

I may be hearing mixed feelings here, and I express a concern at this point. I believe Ms. Riley made a statement on behalf of the Congressman. If I misunderstood the statement, I would like to be corrected, but the signal I heard is that we should change the priority from Matawan to Asbury Park. If this, in fact, is what I understood her to say, I have to express a concern on behalf of our group, because this could be the wrong thing to do at this point in time, in that it could jeopardize something that is extremely delicate.

N.J. Transit had a hand-out enclosed in their new rail paper this morning. It is Attachment C, included in the narrative description of the North Jersey Coastline. It is a timetable, and it shows electrification and the milestones. It begins in 1962, and it doesn't really bring us up to date, because here we are in 1983, which is twenty-one years later. If consideration is now going to be given to the extension to Asbury park, what is going to happen to this timetable? Saving sixteen minutes from Newark to Long Branch is, to me, making strides. I don't think we have a feel for what kind of time

we are going to be saving if we extend it to Asbury Park at this point in time.

I am not saying we should completely lock out the idea of Asbury Park. What I am saying is, we should be looking towards getting to Long Branch now, and not rearranging priorities so that we are going to suffer another great setback and perhaps never see getting to Long Branch reach fruition at all.

I would like to thank you on behalf of the Shore Commuter Coalition, Senator. You held very critical meetings. You spearheaded a unique thing that had never happened before, which was getting all interested parties together on a bi-monthly basis, bringing in people from N.J. DOT, bringing in contractors, bringing in commuter groups and other concerned parties, and keeping a lid on any problems by using a forum where people could voice concerns and iron out difficulties before they became full-blown problems.

I would ask, and certainly welcome, that you conduct the same kind of meeting on a regular basis, so that we could all become involved again in seeing that this does happen. I just think that we cannot now jeopardize this. We have to forge ahead. We have to see this thing through. And, I think this is a perfect vehicle by which to do it. If N.J. Transit has difficulties, or if there are other problems and concerns, before they get to a point where they are too big to deal with, I think this certainly would be the vehicle to use in order to make this a successful venture. I certainly would appreciate it if you would consider doing this. I know that you have given of your time before, and I know it is very selfish of us to ask you to do it again. But, I think that with the success of your participation in the extension to Matawan, I certainly would welcome your involvement once again -- as I am sure others would -- by conducting something on a timely basis, at your convenience, and just generally bring everything out into the open and deal with problems as they arise.

I have to say that if what I am hearing this morning is true, I am truly upset, and on behalf of the Shore Coalition, I know they are too. I don't want to block out Asbury Park, but I think we are concentrating energies and we are shifting priorities at a time when we cannot afford to. We have put too much into Matawan. I truly feel

that to change priorities at this point in time could jeopardize the entire electrification program, which I would not want to see happen.

Let's get to Long Branch first. If it is feasible, if we can encourage ridership, if the funding is available, if it makes good common sense, fine. But, let us not, at this point in time, shift priorities and jeopardize the total project.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Ms. Stump. I think what you have said is appreciated by all. I tried to say it before; I see this as a upcoming dilemma which I think we do have to handle. We have to hit it head on.

As far as your comment on our bi-monthly meetings at the Matawan Railroad Station, I can remember standing around that circular radiator in the middle of winter and having our meetings, and I think we did accomplish a few things there. I think it is a good vehicle to use in order to get all the input that the commuters gave, and also the local mayors, councilmen, town managers, and everybody else. So, I would be glad to do it. I would be pleased to start it, and if N.J. Transit is listening, maybe we can, Jerry, set up a meeting in the next two months. I do not know if your project manager is still going to be Bob Kieth, but whoever your project manager is, if he or she would get in touch with me, we would be glad to start that again.

MS. STUMP: Thank you very much, Senator.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: We are just going to have to find a central location. Probably the Red Bank Station or the Little Silver Station would be a good place to start.

Okay. The next witness is Mr. Herman Huber, who is the former President and member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the Red Bank Area Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Huber.

**H E R M A N        H U B E R:** Mr. Chairman, I am here as the past president of the Red Bank Chamber of Commerce. I am speaking on behalf of the Red Bank Chamber of Commerce. I wish to make this statement.

The Red Bank Area Chamber of Commerce, in keeping with its purposes of advancing the commercial, industrial, civic, and general interests of the Red Bank area, is grateful for this opportunity to make public its views concerning the need for electrification of the North Jersey Coastline south of Matawan.



Incorporated fifty-five years ago, in 1928, the Chamber represents more than three hundred individual and business firms interested in the orderly growth and development of Red Bank and the surrounding communities of Fair Haven, Little Silver, Rumson, Shrewsbury, and Tinton Falls.

We are here today to publicly urge New Jersey Transit and the Department of Transportation to complete the next planned segment of the electrification of the North Jersey Coastline south of Matawan to Long Branch, without further delay.

It is our opinion that continuing electrification of the line to points south of Matawan is even more necessary today than it was when the plan was originally conceived years ago.

Jammed highways, despite increased fuel costs, are evidence that mass transportation must be improved to attract users to the line.

We believe that the Coastline passenger in the most densely populated state in the Union should be accommodated with the fastest, most efficient mass transportation feasible.

We also believe that the taxpayers' investment in electrification should be protected. It is questionable whether the State will derive full benefit from the presently-completed electrification unless it is extended.

Further, in the interest of improving the environment, there can be no question that electrification will certainly improve the environment in areas adjacent to the railroad tracks.

The Red Bank Area Chamber of Commerce urges any public official who has a responsibility and/or obligation to oversee the maintenance and improvement of this part of New Jersey's public transportation system to do whatever is required to ensure the completion of the line's electrification.

Extension of electrification to Long Branch and Asbury Park will assure direct electrical transportation to approximately eighty percent of the line's present commuters and would attract additional riders who have avoided the present inconveniences of the lines.

The Chamber looks forward to future development, and with it increased population in our area in the not too distant future. As a result, our commercial and retail establishments can reasonably expect to benefit, and the economy of our area flourish.

We would be very disappointed if our expectations were not met because of a lag in transportation progress which offers nothing more than the present antiquated, slow, inefficient service. Much of the future growth of our area is dependent on the action taken now. It should not be delayed.

I might add, Mr. Chairman, that throughout the hearing this morning I have heard very little, or nothing, of the energy crisis which we endured recently. There is no question but that mass transportation is the answer to any energy situation -- that is to say, by utilizing the most for the "buck". And, an improvement of this nature will certainly counteract that which has to come around again. There is no question about it. It is just a matter of time before this oil glut we have at the present time will diminish and we will be faced once again with a very serious problem. Mass transportation improvements made now will help to cope with that situation.

I thank you very much for this opportunity.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you, Mr. Huber. I think that is an excellent point. Maybe many of us who are somewhat devoted to mass transportation forget to mention that as we deal with other issues that seem to be more pressing. But, the bottom line is, just as you said, it is going to be so much better for all of us to get more people to use mass transportation. It will save time eventually, and it will certainly save energy. Thank you very much.

MR. HUBER: Thank you.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Mr. Erwin McFarland, who is with the New Jersey State Legislative Board of the United Transportation Union, and an old friend and colleague who has been to many of our meetings in Trenton over the years. Erwin, it is nice to have you here. We appreciate your presence.

**ERWIN McFARLAND:** Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: We appreciate all you have done to keep things moving too.

MR. McFARLAND: Well, railroading is my livelihood and I certainly try to do everything to keep it moving. I am charged with the responsibility of representing the conductors and trainmen in the State of New Jersey. I would like to point out that we do have one

problem. First of all, we are in favor of this extension of the electrification. As a matter of fact, we have been on record for many, many years to try to get it all the way to Bay Head. However, we have not been successful in that effort. But, we are moving in increments.

The one problem I have, Executive Director Primo alluded to today. He said he was anticipating building a yard in Long Branch. This causes me grave concern -- and that is, I believe there should be some appropriation of money for train crew facilities within these yards. Because within a very short period of time, these yards become dilapidated. I might point out to you the Bay Head Junction Yard. The facilities in Bay Head Junction Yard are deplorable. We have the Harrison Yard, which is a storage facility for train equipment, and that is in a deplorable condition.

I would like to see Long Branch considered as a yard facility, but with the proper facilities for the engine and train crews, so that it would not deteriorate the neighborhood.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Mr. McFarland, in a situation like that, or even in a situation such as we have now in Matawan, with Matawan being the present terminus, how many members of train crews would you say are out there waiting for their next job -- or coming off the job -- and in need of a place to go in order to check in their money, or do whatever else they have to do?

MR. McFARLAND: At the present time, we have approximately fifteen ticket collectors that detrain at Matawan and wait for another connecting train back to New York or Newark. Sometimes these people lay over for two or three hours, and they have nothing, because there is no facility there. They roam the streets. That is one of the points I am making: If we are going to continue to move down on this railroad line, there should be facilities for these people, for shelter if nothing else.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: They can stay aboard the train.

MR. McFARLAND: That is if the train is there.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: They can stay on the train they came in on if the train stays there. Okay. Mr. Primo, I think you heard that comment and you probably have it under advisement already. That is a good point, Erwin, we appreciate it. Do you have any other points?

MR. McFARLAND: No.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: No negatives? Your union is totally in favor of electrification?

MR. McFARLAND: We are totally in favor of it. As I said before, we have been on record for many years, hoping that we could go to Long Branch. However, as funds are made available, then we will progress further.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. McFARLAND: But, we are definitely in favor of this project.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much. Doctor Lorenzo W. Harris, member of the City Council of Asbury Park, and the Committee to Save Asbury Park. Good morning, Doctor, how are you?

**DOCTOR LORENZO HARRIS:** Mr. Chairman, Senator Gagliano, and your aide, first of all I want to thank you very much for allowing the City of Asbury Park to present its position today. Earlier, you heard the remarks prepared and presented by Mr. George Floyd, who is the Assistant to the City Manager of the City of Asbury Park. I would just like to make a brief additional comment.

Asbury Park is a city that has a potential ratable base of some two hundred million dollars. Due to vacancies in warehouse space and vacancies in our business community, presently we are down some eighty million dollars in our ratable base. The proposed electrification of the North Jersey Coastline to include Asbury Park would enhance the facility that we are proposing, which is now in the process of being constructed. It would enhance this as becoming the transportation hub that it has all the potential to be.

Mr. Floyd indicated to you the number of bus stops and the number of train stops that are made there presently. And, this enhancement, therefore, indicates that the amount of money which would be invested to extend this line for electrification would be a meaningful investment. It is just not doling out money. It is not just satisfying someone's redundant idea for an enlarged railroad system. The money that would be recouped at the county, State, and Federal level, through increased business activity, taxes on personal business and corporate income, indicates that the money used for the electrification would be like bread upon the waters. There would be an

opportunity to not only recoup this money through the methods I have just mentioned, but it would also improve the quality of life for those who are now living in the area. It would most certainly update a rail system that should come into the 20th Century.

I want to thank you very much for this opportunity to appear before you. We hope that you would give due consideration to this investment which we feel, very confidently, will pay for itself many times over in the years ahead.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Dr. Harris. I appreciate your testimony. Are there any other persons who wish to testify on this issue of extending electrification? Yes, sir?

M. L. FLETCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am M. L. Fletcher, Monmouth County Transportation Coordinating Committee. I only want to emphasize and address the situation as a whole. I have been on the Committee since its initiation in 1973, almost ten years. I want to admonish the ones who are keeping the record here today to get the true concept of what the Coordinating Committee has done in the last ten years.

Most of you who rode the train between Bay Head and Newark ten years ago only went twenty or thirty miles an hour, because the train rocked so bad it wouldn't stay on the rail. My first priority, when I was appointed to the Board by the Freeholders, was to devise a solution to the problem we were having with transportation, mainly with trains. That was our first resolution, initiated at our first meeting almost ten years ago -- that we get the trains rolling consistently.

What I want to say will only take a couple of minutes. You heard the statements of Freeholder Sommers, Freeholder Self, and Judge Labrecque. I don't want to paraphrase them, nor be repetitive, but what they said is the consensus of your problem, and it is also the consensus of what needs to be done in the future. I cite especially the statement of Judge Labrecque because he has enormous and gigantic information on rail and bus transportation. The problem lies within what we have already put our hearts and minds to. The Resolution that we have forwarded to the Committee, to legislators, and to Senator Howard is the consensus of what we need. In that way, we hope to get Asbury Park, especially, and Bay Head back on the agenda for good transportation.

This will help Ocean County and it will certainly be an asset to Monmouth County. Thank you.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you very much, Mr. Fletcher. I saw one other hand. Would you come forward and identify yourself, please?

**A R T H U R     L.     R E U B E N:** My name is Arthur L. Reuben, and I am Planning Director and Transportation Coordinator of Somerset County, and past Chairman of the County Transportation Association, State of New Jersey. We, in our area, have had our dealings with both of these questions, both the electrification on the Gladstone Line, and the question of having dual-powered locomotives.

I would just like to say a word for what I believe is the integrity of the staff at New Jersey Transit with relation to operating cost. They are extremely concerned about this question because they know they have to approach the Legislature. They have to campaign the Federal government concerning this question, and this is probably the most critical question facing transit in the State of New Jersey. So, their advocacy of a program of electrification is, I think, based upon these considerations.

At the same time, there is a lot developing within the whole question of electrification and dual-powered locomotives that neither New Jersey Transit nor anyone else in this country seems to have a comprehension of. I think over the next few years we are going to get that kind of experience, as to what the costs are going to be in relation to operating costs. And, I think we will have a better evaluation of this.

But, to wait for that few years to go by is probably criminal. This is a problem that goes back to the 1968 bond issue that the State of New Jersey passed, and it was then delayed by indecision which allowed the cost to escalate. I think we now have a New Jersey Transit organization that can properly evaluate the cost of electrification, so the horrendous overruns in cost that we suffered on the Erie-Lackawanna electrification will no longer be necessary.

So, I would hope to see both of these programs move forward, with relation to both the electrification to Long Branch, and the question of the head-end power and dual-powered locomotives that I would hope to see tried out first on the Raritan Valley Line. (laughter) Thank you very much.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: That will be right after we do it. Thank you very much.

I believe we have one other person who would like to testify.

**C A R L     T U R N E R:** My name is Carl Turner. I am a planner with the Planning Department of the City of Long Branch. I would just like to briefly state, on behalf of the Mayor and the Council of the City of Long Branch, that, as in the past, Long Branch is still one hundred percent in favor of electrification coming at least as far south as the City of Long Branch. Thank you.

SENATOR GAGLIANO: Thank you, Carl.

If there are no other persons who wish to testify, I will announce that the hearing on the extension of electrification south of Matawan of the North Jersey Coastline will be ended for this morning.

As I said at the beginning of this session, the transcript will be supplied to the various members of the Legislature who are directly involved with this. We will also be happy to forward copies of the transcript to our Congressional Delegation from the Monmouth County area. Also, if any of you are interested in receiving a copy of the transcript, if you will contact my office I will be pleased to obtain a copy of the transcript for you.

I think our next step is to see how quickly we can move with respect to the engineering for the southern direction of the North Jersey Coastline. We will try to keep in touch with Mr. Primo and Mr. Sheridan and his staff on the proposed construction schedule -- the actual construction schedule -- and, of course, the funding will come through the Urban Mass Transit Administration.

I appreciate everybody being here today. I think this is one of the most important issues we face from a transportation standpoint, certainly in Monmouth County.

We have all seen it. Monmouth County is developing at probably a more rapid rate than we expected. I see it. I have to go cross county on many occasions. The traffic is getting heavier and heavier. The Parkway is accommodating more and more traffic. I do think, as Mr. Huber has suggested, that the next time we have any kind of crunch, with respect to fuel, people will be calling and saying, "When can I take a train?" and, "How come it is not there?" and, "How

come it is not comfortable?" and, "How come it is not electrified?" -- and all of that. So, we have to anticipate those problems, and we have to move forward as quickly as we can.

In response to Ms. Stump's suggestion, I will be glad to have meetings from time to time to keep everybody up to date. So, thank you again for coming, and have a good day.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)