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PUBLIC HEARING

before

ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS
AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Testimony Concerning Transportation Facilities and Services
In the Atlantic City Area

October 14, 1986
Casino Control Commission
Hearing Room
Arcade Building
Atlantic City, New Jersey

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman Newton E. Miller, Chairman
Assemblywoman Joann Smith, Vice Chairwoman

ALSO PRESENT:

Laurence A. Gurman
Office of Legislative Services
Aide, Assembly Transportation, Communications
and High Technology Committee

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New Jersey State Legislature

ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

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October 1, 1986

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

Assemblyman Newton E. Miller, Chairman of the Assembly Transportation, Communications and High Technology Committee, announced today that the Committee will hold a public hearing devoted to gathering data regarding the status of existing transportation facilities and services in the Atlantic City area and information concerning the need for any future transportation programs in the region.

The public hearing will be held on TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1986, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and continuing until 11:30 a.m., in the Casino Control Commission Hearing Room, which is located on the 2nd floor of the Arcade Building, Tennessee Avenue and the Boardwalk, Atlantic City.

Anyone wishing to testify at the hearing should contact Laurence Gurman, Committee Aide, at (609) 984-7381 for scheduling.

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ASSEMBLYMAN NEWTON E. MILLER (Chairman): I think what we'll do is we'll get started here, even though everybody hasn't shown up yet. But we do have an 11:30 deadline to be back up at the SEEDS convention, or conference. So, I think we'll get started and move along, and then as a crowd comes in we can maybe back up a moment and review some of the reasons, the whys and wherefores, as to why we're here.

First I want to thank all of you for getting up so early, coming on down, especially in this kind of weather. Summertime maybe you can enjoy it a little bit more, but, thanks for coming. I do want to thank the Society for the Economic Environmental Development group. I can't think of a better group to be sponsoring something like this, because we are all part of the same problem, and we're all sort of trying to find a solution to it, a resolution to it. So why don't we get right involved with the-- I know Jim-- Jim Morford, you've got to get back up to the convention, so why don't we get your comments, Jim, on the tape. Jim is the State Chamber of Commerce-- Is it the President of the State Chamber, Jim, in the--

J A M E S M O R F O R D: Well, thank you for the promotion, but Fred Westphal might take issue with that.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: I see. Well, I tried.

MR. MORFORD: That's okay, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Is it Secretary to the SEEDS group, is it?

MR. MORFORD: That's correct. Mr. Chairman, I'm James Morford, Vice President of the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, and Executive Director of New Jersey SEED, which as you mentioned, is beginning its annual two day governmental affairs seminar, down the street from here at The Sands.

I welcome the opportunity to address the Committee this morning with respect to transportation needs and concerns here in the Atlantic City area. New Jersey SEED has long been interested in New Jersey transportation; in the need for good public transportation systems, to get its workers to jobs, to move people around this very tightly populated State of ours. And Atlantic City currently seems to be a rather classic example of how not to do things, if you will. This is from an outsider's perspective, I grant you. I'm not part of, in any way, the Atlantic City, or Atlantic County government or any authority related to this county and city area. So from an outsider's point of view who looks at Atlantic City which has three roads coming in to it to the island, we have a major new industry in our state, employing many thousands of people in new jobs, a major tourist attraction in the world, yet we cannot adequately handle the transportation needs to bring people in and out of this city efficiently.

Indeed, one of the casino officials one time commented to me that there really isn't very much hope for a city administration that can't even coordinate its traffic lights. I think that's probably a good example of the sad state of affairs we see in this city with respect to public transportation.

Some years ago, New Jersey SEED expressed an interest in working with whomever -- authorities here in Atlantic County, representatives from the State Legislature -- to encourage whatever mechanisms needed to be put in place to expand the Pomona -- the NAFAC air facility out in Pomona, to better serve the growing transportation needs of this area -- I think at least three years ago. To date nothing has really effectively happened. The Federal government was willing to have that facility used for commercial air traffic. There is charter use going in and out of there now, but not in any way the kind of feeder line air transportation that could be so important to this area. Nothing has seemingly happened.

And of course the sad state of affairs with respect to highways, roads, rapid transit, within the city itself. This summer, I had the distinct pleasure of going with representatives of the Monorail Study Commission out to Vancouver, as guests of the Canadian government and the UTDC -- The Urban Transit Development Corporation -- which built the Sky Train system that serves Vancouver. It is not a transit system to serve the World's Fair, or the Expo that took place out there this year, but is a system to serve Vancouver: a light rail, fully automated system. And it was a very impressive system, Mr. Chairman. A system that was built under budget, and under time, -- came in under the deadline date, -- finished earlier than planned, almost unheard of in these parts. And it was a very impressive system because it moved people in and out of the city of Vancouver with a great degree of efficiency.

And I was so impressed, that I wanted to come to this Committee today and tell you a little about that system, because it so evident to us, at least to the outsiders like me, that Atlantic City desperately needs a system something on the order of a light rail, rapid transit, automated, or whatever, system to move people from outlying parking areas into the city, reducing the automobile traffic congestion, moving people along this boardwalk complex of casinos efficiently, in a clean, efficient, well operated system. That can be done; that can be done if the will is there to do it; if some mechanism can be devised to create an authority that can supersede the petty politics of Atlantic City and perhaps even those of Atlantic County. Call it what you may, a Shore Counties Transportation Authority, a Pinelands Transportation Authority, some name that does not lock in with any of the current existing transportation authorities that just cannot do the job, because they have demonstrated over the years that they cannot do the job.

I'm sure you will hear this morning in testimony what wonderful plans and great grasp some of these authorities may have. But the proof of the pudding is obvious. We don't have a good system here in Atlantic City and in this county to move people. A loop light rail system around this city, and possibly, eventually, if we ever get the NAFAC airport facility working, a linkage out to the airport would do wonders for this area.

And that's really the message that I came to share with you today, Mr. Chairman. That it is possible. There are systems; there are communities. Vancouver certainly was an impressive example of a community that had the will, had the ability, to move ahead and to solve a problem. And, I would hope that your being here today is going to help this area learn that it can be done, and be given literally, the encouragement to move ahead with the help of the Legislature, whatever sources it requires. The private sector certainly is interested in supporting efforts to create a more effective transportation system in this community. And, for that, we thank you for the opportunity to express these views.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Thank you Jim. Do you have any questions? (negative response) Jim I think your thinking, sort of at least, parallels mine. Of course we are zeroing in, targeting in on the southern section of the Atlantic City area right now. But it's-- What you said about Atlantic City I think for the most part holds true. I think also it's just a part of the overall puzzle in this entire state that we have here. And I see so much that can be done in the State of New Jersey, if in fact we can just get our act together, and learn by our mistakes before we have more mistakes in this part of the state down here.

MR. MORFORD: That's right. I would add, Mr. Chairman, that I was so impressed with the system that we saw in Vancouver that-- And it has definite applications in a

number of areas in the state -- along the Hudson waterfront, perhaps the Newark Airport to the railroad station, a kind of rapid transit linkage that is needed. But it just seems that here in Atlantic City, which is crying out desperately for some intelligent life to appear and help bring about solutions that reasonable people can find to service this area--

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Very good. While you're there too Jim, I might just mention that the New Jersey SEED is a business and labor coalition, and they have built a reputation as a potent force for the responsible economic progress in our state. And I think that when you can get labor and management together for a common cause, there has to be something right here someplace along the line, and this is one of the few instances that I know of where an organization such as this, has what is usually opposing forces, working together. And I think John Spinager being the President of it, and Charlie Marciante being the Vice President, yourself in the Chamber, I think this bodes well for what we're trying to accomplish. I just appreciate the fact that you people have seen fit to sponsor something like this today. We were going to have a hearing down here anyway, but what an opportunity this is to get together with the right people to do this job. I do appreciate it.

MR. MORFORD: Well, we thank you, Mr. Chairman. We look forward to you and the other members of the Committee being able to join us later today, and tomorrow, and again share some of these ideas with business and labor leaders around the State. We're proud of this organization and what it has done, and what it can do in the future.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Thank you, thank you.

MR. MORFORD: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: At this point I think maybe what I should do, is to give you a little background as to why we're here this morning. This Transportation Committee, which I

chair and Joann Smith is a Vice Chairlady on, we got thinking about the transportation needs in the State of New Jersey. And I guess part of the reason for that is because I got wrapped up with that traffic up there in, the Turnpike, or the Garden State, or you name it, we have gridlock. Well, Commissioner Sullivan, more affectionately known as "Bo," came out with a \$2 billion plan to take care of the Turnpike, and according to the Commissioner, this is going to take us out to the year 2004. All of our intersections, all of our exits and entrances along that Turnpike, would be taking care of the traffic in 2004.

Now, my question to Bo was, "What happens in 2005? Do we buy more land? Do we go over? Do we go under? It's almost impossible to do that, so where do we go? How do we handle this? What happens?" And so we got involved a little bit into what are some of the solutions to the problem. I guess what it boils down to is that-- The Commissioner's charge is basically to move cars and move traffic, and to do that he needs macadam. Newspapers have come out and said "Well, why don't you spend the \$2 billion for public transportation?" Well that's not his charge. He can't do it. If he were to do it, he would probably be brought to court over it. On top of that he'd become involved in the bonds. There's a lot of legalities. So he doesn't have that-- But somebody has to do something to try to pull these pieces together.

Then you have the New York Port Authority and-- I don't know whether you realize it or not if you're not in the upper part of the state, but New York uses the New Jersey highways to stack up the cars, so they can drip, in sort of like an intravenous situation -- just a drip at a time, a car at a time, to get through the tunnels. If we were to put another tunnel under, for the cars, there's no place for them to go when you get to New York. We are having problems right now, they tell me at least, in trying to get a ferry slip over

in New York, to run ferry service over. Oh we can get one down around the Battery someplace, but that's not what they're looking for. Again, New York does not want our heavier influx of our people. They want to stabilize the flow of traffic moving in, coming in gradually, rather than all at one time. In fact, the busy hours have been changed from seven and eight in the morning, to from six to nine in the morning, in getting through the tunnels and the bridges. But where does it stop? How do we handle this thing?

If you can't put more tunnels in, you take the New Jersey Transit. They tell me that they need more platform space on their three platforms in New York. Nobody's going to build them. So, they can't add cars to the present trains because there's no place for the cars to park when they get there. Somebody should be doing something about another terminal in New York for the buses. When you run 16 to 18 hundred buses a day through the tunnels to get into New York, you've got to go someplace. But nobody's doing anything about it, because they don't want that traffic over there. Hold it back.

So we kind of figure over on this side of the river we have to do something to try to move people. At the same time, not move them over our roads any more than we are doing today. At the same time, take care of the problem that we have today, as best we can.

So, out of all of this, what it boils down to is that, I foresee the future as being one of, back to the good old trolley car days, the shuttle days, the railroad days, just to get the people out of cars, and onto a public means of transportation. Now you say, well okay fine, but you meet with the Port Authority, you meet with the Turnpike Authority, you meet with the DOT, and then you say, well now wait a minute, does the left hand know what the right hand is doing? Again, Bo Sullivan can give you an example on the Turnpike, under

Sullivan's charge. You go to Exit 8, and you get to Exit 8 all right. But try to get on 18 to go over to 1. It just backs up. So there has to be some coordination, someplace between all the authorities to see that the left hand does know what the right hand is doing. So that if Sullivan is going to build to 2004, what's the DOT going to do to take care of the flow of -- the overflow of the cars coming off the Turnpike into DOT area, or into New Jersey Turnpike area, or into the Port Authority area, or the Garden State? How is this being pulled together?

So from the hearings we've had so far, everybody is doing their job. But, I don't see too much of the interlocking of these jobs. There is some; there is some. But I don't see it to the degree I think it should be. Now, how do you handle something like this?

Well, one of my fellow members of this Committee, Assemblyman Mazur, has a bill in to take the Turnpike Authority away from the Turnpike, and turn it over to the DOT. Well, I don't know whether DOT. would want it to start with and, legally, I don't think it can be done. I don't think that's going to be the solution to the problem.

So, we've sort of decided let's put the pieces together, and maybe what'll come out of this might have to be an umbrella group, a representative from each one of these different identities (sic), so that they can work together. I don't know how much authority they can have legally. But they can work together to try to pull these pieces together so that everybody knows what the other person is doing, and nobody can move until the other person has their plans set to tie- in to that plan. We can open up these main arteries-- What does it do to our second-- What's it do to the counties? What's it do to the cities? We dump it and run -- create the problem and let somebody else take care of it. And I think we've got to pull these pieces together.

Not only ties into roads and ties into rail transportation and bus transportation, but even in our airlines, even in the air transportation. Now I know we don't have any authority as far as the international airports are concerned, Newark or Teterboro or those places, but we do have an airport right out here in Atlantic City. Gee, if they can fly them into Las Vegas from around the world, why can't they fly them into Atlantic City, as a means? If they can run trains from New York down to Washington D.C., and we're going to take care of a train line from Philadelphia to Atlantic City, why can't they run from New York to Atlantic City? Why are we giving up all our rail right of ways? Why are we allowing these to be sold, or, why aren't we holding onto these things?

Because as the state develops, we're going to need some area to run tracks, to bring people from the outlying areas into the mainstream, to get them on rails, to send them on up. There's so much that can be done. People aren't going to come down the southern part of the state, to work up in New York, if in fact they can't get there by car because of the traffic. They have to get up and be on the road for two, two and a half hours, and that isn't going to work. But there's so much can be done for the development of the areas outside the metropolitan areas, if in fact we can get things moving.

And of course, where the SEED comes in, it's a labor situation as far as the construction is concerned, and where the management part comes in it's a profit motive if you will. But there will be construction, jobs, and so forth. So I think this whole thing ties in very nicely, ties in together.

As far as the Atlantic City area is concerned, I think this particular area has a lot of potential. I don't think it's even been tapped, as far as its growth, its future is concerned. Here we have a-- Atlantic City is known all over the world. And I see that you can't get into it that easily,

unless you take a bus from a shopping center someplace, and come down and do some gambling. It's kind of difficult what with the traffic problems. Again, if we can get-rail lines in, I would envision a railroad station someplace just on the outside of the main Atlantic or Pacific Avenue. I envision that as being a transfer point, trains coming in, a monorail coming down Atlantic and Pacific, to tie this whole thing together. I see a great future here, if we can just get our act together, and do what has to be done. But we can't just let one section develop without considering the other section, and how to tie these in together.

All right now, so we do move along. Don Vass, Don? Don is the Executive Director of the New Jersey Expressway Authority. Good morning.

D O N A L D V A S S: Good morning, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: And listen people. I'm taking my jacket off, it's hot in here. This is a very informal, formal meeting, or formal, informal meeting. So get comfortable. Yes Don?

MR. VASS: Well, I think I'd like to bring you up-- I appreciate the fact that you've come to Atlantic City to discuss our problems, and maybe there are some things I can add to -- not to the problem area -- but to digress a little and tell you what's been happening with the Expressway.

The Expressway, as you are aware, is a limited access highway that runs from Philadelphia to Atlantic City, and of course in reverse. It's approximately 44 miles long. There are two major toll facilities along the Expressway. One is at the Egg Harbor toll plaza, which is approximately milepost 17, which is a dollar toll, and there's a 25¢ toll in Pleasantville.

I think those things that I'd like to bring to your attention right now is that, in my opening remarks and by decree, we're a limited access highway. However, with the growth of Atlantic City in the casino era, there have been a

lot of things that have been transpiring that relate directly to the Expressway. And if I may -- and if I could put you in the right perspective -- if we can go from Atlantic City back to Camden, I can give you some ideas on what's transpiring.

At the base of the Expressway -- which is probably the catalyst for most of the transportation into Atlantic City, which includes the buses, the heavy trucks and certainly the passenger vehicles -- you recognize that all of a sudden you're dumping thirty million cars onto an island. But at the base of the Expressway, as you are quite aware, there's a consideration, in fact now, that the Convention Hall be built in that area. The commissioners have expressed extreme interest in this project, and are working cooperatively with the Atlantic County Improvement Authority to address and to assist them, both engineeringly -- with engineering, and possibly finance, with the ingress and egress to that Convention Hall. Initially there was some request for fly over ramps, according to the design, but since the design has changed, the fly over ramps may not be necessary. But we envision it, the base of that Expressway, a rerouting of networking, to access that Convention Hall, and a proposed casino -- not a casino, but a hotel, in that area.

I don't think the congestion is going to change in that area whatsoever, unless there is some re-networking of that -- those roads at Baltic, Mediterranean, Atlantic, and Pacific. However, on behalf of the commissioners of the Expressway, we certainly are going to do everything we can to help Atlantic City, the Atlantic County Improvement Authority, and DOT.

As we go back up the Expressway, as you're aware -- and I'll get into this in a second, -- we are in a construction stage, with a third lane coming eastbound from milepost, I think it's 30.5 eastbound, to the Pleasantville Toll Plaza. This addresses some traffic congestion we've had up in that

area in the past. But, what, in a CAFRA permit from the Garden State Parkway into Atlantic City, we have prompted some thinking on behalf of CAFRA, DOT, and Atlantic City, on behalf of the Expressway, to address a connector road from the Expressway to Route 30, which we all are familiar with, that the Route 30 connector ends up-- Route 30 ends up in the marina area. The marina area, from all indication, is the growth area. That's where we know that the Castle and Harrah's Marina are. So, the Expressway, in their request for a CAFRA permit for a third lane construction, CAFRA and DOT requested that we conduct a feasibility study of access from the Expressway to Route 30. That RFP has been finalized and approved by DOT and CAFRA, and we are probably, within the month, ready to go out and have that study conducted. I'm not sure what that study is going to say, because the areas that we certainly addressed in the beginning is the connective that runs close to Pleasantville and to Route 30, which is the closest point between Route 30 and the Expressway, which happens to be wetlands.

But I might say, that in that particular areas, I go back up the Expressway, there's a public/private joint venture, -- that I'm sure you'll hear about very shortly -- what's called the Gateway Project, which is a project of some 96 acres that have been determined by the Army Corps of Engineers and the DEP as uplands to build a proposed non-casino hotel and some retail, and act with their bus intercept parking lot. That particular area, would be ideal to pass through that area, as a connector to the Expressway -- from the Expressway to Route 30. We again are working very cooperatively with ACTA -- let me go back and say the Gateway Project is made up of three entities, four entities, excuse me. The public/private sector being the Boardwalk Associates being the private enterprise, ACTA, being the Atlantic County Transportation Authority interest in the bus intercept parking lot, and the city of

Pleasantville certainly looking at the rateables that will be affected by that project. It's moving along. They have designated land that would be available for this Route 30 connector, if it was to connect to that point.

As we go further up the Expressway, I guess the most major concern we might have after that, is the Atlantic City International -- well the International Airport, if we want to call it an international airport at this time. Back in 1982 the Expressway on its own, took into consideration the growth that was taking place there and the number of buses that were coming in, and created a full interchange at Route 9, so you would have full access to the airport, and you do at this time. However, there is a master plan in the works right now, to revamp the airport, and relocate various facilities such as the terminal and runways. There's a possibility that the access to the airport might change, and again the Expressway will work cooperatively with all the agencies to deal with that.

The next thing that we do-- As we go back out the Expressway westbound, we come to our service plaza area. And we are in the process right now of relocating a State Police facility, which has limited access in the whole facility right now out in Hammonton. We will be relocating our State Police facility right in the middle of the Expressway, so it can have both access to east and westbound lanes, which certainly will add expedient response for the State Police. That's a project right now that's in around \$800,000.

Further out the Expressway I think we might consider two other areas. One is -- and I can't give you the right nomenclature, but I'm sure you're aware, that there's a proposal in, a feasibility study being conducted at this time, to look into the connection between the Delaware Memorial Bridge and the Atlantic City Expressway. Again at Fleming (phonetic spelling), is the-- Conducting the feasibility study, I'm not quite sure, although I should be a little bit

more aware of what's going on in that project, but that's to circumvent the present Route 40 congestion and connect directly to the Atlantic City Expressway. There also is some talk about connecting the New Jersey Turnpike, and possibly some way of addressing I-95 to the Atlantic City Expressway. Certainly those are projects that we would like to see to come to fruition.

The third lane project itself is -- you might be well aware of -- is that was a \$20 million -- \$28 million project that addressed the third lane from -- as I mentioned before -- from milepost 30.5 eastbound to the Pleasantville Toll Plaza. We're approximately-- Thirty five, fifty five percent of the work has been completed at this time. We expect to have completed that project, hopefully -- which was considered a two-year project -- to be done in 18 months. We're ahead of schedule. We're within budget, and it did expeditiously help out summer traffic in the area of the Hammonton and Egg Harbor Toll Plaza.

There is an existing problem that I'd like to bring to your attention, and we're again working very cooperatively with the Garden State Parkway. Seasonally the Garden State Parkway, which historically has had a problem at the Somers Point Bridge, which backs up traffic in the summertime some eight and ten miles, which affects the traffic flow onto the Expressway. If you could envision coming eastbound on the Expressway and getting to Exit 7, which is the interchange from the Garden State Parkway, and approximately forty percent of our traffic exits there going to the Cape May-Wildwood area. Then you run into the back of traffic on that Garden State Parkway which consequently gives us problems of backup on the Expressway. I think that problem can be addressed, but I don't think it's an interim solution. I think it's a long-term solution and we have to work that out with the Garden State Parkway and cooperatively with the Expressway.

If I turn my hat around I'm also the Mayor of the city of Linwood, which is a local city here. And say to you that within the last year or so -- from another perspective -- I'm delighted to see the DOT, ACTA, Atlantic City, Atlantic County, The Federal Government, and committees such as yourself, recognize the magnitude of the transportation problem here in Atlantic City. It's not limited, as you mentioned a minute ago. It's a multi-modal transportation problem. I'm not quite sure that we all have our hats on straight at this time to address all the issues. But you certainly, in your initial statements, have hit the areas that are of concern and that's air, rail, and ground transportation. But we have three main corridors: the White Horse Pike, the Black Horse Pike, and the Atlantic City Expressway.

But we've got three other areas that we should be concerned with, and that's Bader Field, the International Airport, and the marina area, because -- as my opening statement indicated -- you funnel all the traffic into a dead end street. What you really want to do, in my personal opinion, is to be able to let the traveling public go where they want to go, without having to come directly into Atlantic City. And if they want to go to the airport, and if they want to exit the airport, those are the areas they're going to go to. They're going to go to the airport, they're going to go to the White Horse Pike, they're going to go to the Black Horse Pike, they're going to go to the Expressway, and they're going to go to the International Airport.

I'm delighted to see Helen Walsh from the Atlantic County Transportation Authority is on board. She is doing an extremely excellent job of bringing us all together. My statements when I used to talk about transportation was at one time there was an Atlantic City Master Plan for Transportation. There was an Atlantic County Transportation Master Plan. There was an FAA Transportation Plan. There was

an Expressway Transportation Plan. There was a DOT Master Plan. If you put them all in one package, any resemblance of a coordinated effort is purely coincidental.

And that's my statement for you. I'd be glad to answer any questions, if I may.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Thank you Don. Does anybody have any questions? Joann? (no response) I think what you just said Don-- The five different plans, is I guess basically why we are together trying to find out if we can and take it and put all your five and everybody else's fives together to come up with something that's master in concept.

We don't want to happen in South Jersey what's happened in North Jersey. I read in The Newark Star-Ledger the other day this article, what is it, "Roads, Rail lines, Boast the South Jersey Growth." It looks as though you people are pretty much on top of things down here as far as exists today. But that's the way it was in North Jersey at one time too, and we don't want this soon to become another megapolis (sic) -- if you will -- where everything ties everything else up.

The Hudson River Waterfront-- There are 11 towns and 18 miles of waterfront there. In 11 towns home rule -- God bless it -- don't step on my territory. But on the other hand, there are only four ways to get down into that 18 mile stretch. And once you get down there, where do you park the cars? Everybody wants to do their own building. Well it's the wrong approach. It's the wrong way to go. I haven't been the mayor of my town for eight years. "Hey don't tread on me, it's home rule."

But sitting where I'm sitting today, there has to be a little bit of give on the home rule business in order to bring the pieces together for the benefit of the entire state, and of the regions themselves. Whether it be the Atlantic County region or the Hudson County region, something has to happen in that direction.

But that's very good. I appreciate your comments Don, and appreciate your time for coming out this morning.

MR. VASS: Thank you. On behalf of the Commission for the Expressway, we're delighted to be able to work cooperatively with all the agencies. We look forward to some of these projects coming to fruition very shortly. And feel free to call me at any time.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Fine. Thank you, Don.

MR. VASS: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: I can see this is a job forever -- if we want to stay with it and pull all these pieces together. Thank you, thank you. How about Helen Walsh? Helen would you come down? Helen is the Executive Director of the Atlantic County Transportation Authority. Helen has everything under control down here. Isn't that right Helen? I've talked to Helen on the phone a few times and I know she's pretty much on top of it. Helen?

H E L E N W A L S H: I do have some prepared comments, which I'm going to leave with Larry. I won't read them all to you today. I would like to just pick up on a couple of comments that have come out of the two previous individuals who testified before you.

One: In the first speaker's comments he talked about, "If you have the will and the determination, you can make anything happen." I think we're beginning to see a tremendous local will which is pulling together agencies and governments. But there is something that you need in addition to will, and that is money. I don't think you can talk realistically about transportation improvements and what we're going to need to do here in the Atlantic County region, without recognizing that we are talking a tremendous infusion of capital financing from lots of different sources. But I think it's unrealistic to think that just will alone will do it. I represent an agency that's beginning to have a lot of will. We unfortunately still don't have much of the other commodity, and that is money.

You all are probably-- You've read statistics. You know what's happened here in terms of the explosive growth over the last eight years since casinos opened, and that is included in my comments for you. What we're talking about-- The 30 million who do come in annually, using the three arteries that Don Vass mentioned, the only ways to get into the city. Of those 30 million visitors, we know that about 44% of them come by bus. Only 1% come by air currently -- and I'll want to make a few comments on the airport -- and the rest all come by private vehicles. So we're dealing with a situation that would create congestion under any circumstances. But I think we are dealing with a rather dramatic and explosive growth of vehicular traffic, in a very short period of time for this region. And it's been dealing with that -- the explosive growth of vehicular traffic -- which I think has consumed most of the local governments' and agencies' time, including DOT.

And I do think that what you have seen and are beginning to see now, is a real infusion of money for improving the highway network in this area. Over the next four to five years I think you will see each of the major arteries into the city, the Expressway -- Don Vass outlined for you the improvement program that they have embarked upon and will be completing -- Route 30, Route 40-- DOT can share with you the major improvement plans on those arteries. In addition, Atlantic County government has just completed a major four-year capital improvement plan, and is ready to launch a second. Atlantic City is spending significant amounts of money on its local highway network. So I think in response to what happened to the roadways, the deterioration, that just the tremendous explosion of vehicular traffic caused on the local roadways, there has been a response by local governments.

I would say that one of the reasons that we've had this infusion of public money has come from the highway Trust Fund. That has made it possible to address the backlog of

things that needed to be done. The tremendous buildup of projects, plans were on the drawing boards, but there was never sufficient ability to put together funding from different sources to address those needs. I do think that the vehicular traffic is going to be well served by what we will see happen over the next five years as all of those projects reach completion.

But the fact of the matter is we can't just rely on vehicular traffic getting in and out of Atlantic City. I think the previous speakers alluded to that, and that is really the crux of the problem; that we need to have the same kind of tremendous pulling together and infusion of not just planning, but also money where it's required, to see that the other modes of transportation into this area are developed and that they come on-line.

Now we do have the restoration of the Atlantic City rail line. You are aware that's a project that has been in the planning -- and has now moved beyond the planning stage -- but it's been in planning for at least two years. I think we're looking now for ground breaking at the restored rail -- the new rail terminal at the foot of the Expressway sometime in the spring of '87. We expect the trains to be rolling again by 1989. That project has taken a tremendous amount of coordination of State government, DOT, New Jersey Transit, the Atlantic County Improvement Authority which is building the facility, and all of the other transportation entities, and some that are not transportation but have something to say about how we can develop, such as CAFRA, which regulates much of the development in our part of the county. I should point out that project has in it \$15 million of local money. That's why the rail line is being restored; because the local government in this case the Atlantic County Improvement Authority representing Atlantic County put that kind of money in the project. That's because they believe we need that kind of additional way to get in and out of the city.

What we anticipate is that the rail, once restored, will be a tremendous addition to our commutation system. We have about 40,000 employees coming in and out of Atlantic City daily, working in the casinos. About 22% of them live in Atlantic City and so can get to work easily -- walking, public transportation. About 32% of them come from surrounding counties. So we know they're coming in by bus and car. And the rest come from Atlantic County. What we anticipate is with the rail restored, the stops it will make in Absecon, Egg Harbor City, Hammonton, Atco, and Woodcrest will allow employees to park and ride, and take the train into work which will relieve the commutation vehicles coming in. So we see it as not only improving the visitor market through the Amtrak trains, the Northeast corridor, but we also see it locally as a tremendous add on to our ability to move people in and out to work in this city, and that's extremely important.

I'd like to make a pitch for the railroad, because I think it will come on-line in '89; the new train terminal with restored tracks and with some modest work done on those stations that I mentioned, at those localities. If it serves the kind of needs that we all feel transportation requires here in terms of true development of multi-modal transportation, then I think we're unrealistic not to expect that there will be some other capital improvements required: the further upgrading of the stations, additional parking facilities where we're expecting commuters to come in and park, the consideration of additional sidings that would allow for a heavier schedule than it can meet with the one track that we have going into Philadelphia.

And my biggest pitch would be for looking at the feasibility of connecting the rail to the airport in Pomona. There is a spur, but it is not part of the current plans to upgrade that spur or to do what would be required in terms of double tracking. I think if we're going to be serious about

trying to really develop transportation in this area, then we have to look at linking the airport with the rail. And we have to look at ways to move people efficiently, without taking them from various modes of transportation and making it unpleasant for them to try to get into the city.

And I think realistically we are going to-- Time will come when we will be talking about additional capital improvements on that rail line if it's going to really do what we hope it does. So I sound that now as a kind of warning note, because I think there are a limited number of places one can go to get money. The Highway Trust Fund if it's renewed, is one place. And I make a strong pitch for the renewal of the Highway Trust Fund because it does have some good monies in it for mass transit as well as highways.

In terms of the airport let me just say that most of us locally are convinced -- that is business, government, anyone involved in transportation, anyone involved in the convention as well as the casino industry -- that we must have a developed airport in Atlantic City. We have a tremendous airfield. If you've been out to the FAA Tech Center, you know we have an airfield that probably is surpassed by very few. But we have a tremendously inadequate terminal and other facilities there. We don't have regularly scheduled flights into Pomona. We have a master plan underway right now, funded by the FAA. A \$200,000 master plan, jointly sponsored by Atlantic City-Atlantic County and the FAA Eastern region. And I think that master plan, which will be completed at the end of this year, will map out the kind of development which we will need to see at that airport. And that becomes the -- in my estimation and from the Transportation Authority's point of view -- the number one transportation priority on the agenda, which needs to be accomplished over the next few years. That, in terms of being able to bring people into this area, regularly scheduled commercial flights in, to support the

convention business as well as the casino business, as well as providing our residents and all the surrounding counties for whom driving to Pomona is easier and less tedious than driving to Philadelphia or Newark, additional transportation means, extremely important. And once again I bring up the question of money, because though we have the \$200,000 to do the initial feasibility study, there will be requirements of funding for engineering, site development, once we know how the plan sets out, how the airport should be developed.

I think that you're beginning to see locally much more coordination. That was the role that ACTA was supposed to play when we were created in 1980 by the State Legislature. It was in direct response to the transportation needs that this area would have. I think you're beginning to see coordination. You're beginning to see much less insistence on home rule and people beginning to work together to meet the transportation needs that we have. I think a lot has begun to happen. There's a tremendous amount that still needs to be done, and it's going to require a great deal of local will and -- to repeat what I said earlier -- it's going to require, I think, a significant amount of local money as well as money from other sources, in this case I think we're talking State government.

I'm glad you're here. It's a delight to be able to directly give you some of our comments on what we see happening here. And also, the fact that you're, here you get a firsthand view of the area. You do drive through the city. You do see the actual impact we're dealing with in terms of the transportation needs.

I will leave my comments with you. Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Helen it's very encouraging. We need more groups around this state doing just that. But a question, on the railroad station you're talking about, did you say just one track or is-- What's it's maximum capability

going to be? Have we checked into this becoming a major terminal? Is that part of the consideration?

MS. WALSH: Well, it's a single track from Philadelphia into Atlantic City, with several places along the way for sidings where the trains can cross, can pass each other. Coming into the terminal they're talking five platforms at the new terminal, which is being designed for the foot of the Expressway. That should accommodate, according to the schedule, 11 round trip commuter trains coming in from Woodcrest, as well as four round trip Amtrak trains, of which one will be coming in from the New York area. But I think realistically, as the schedule develops, if the ridership is there, we would be talking about increasing the number of places that you would build double track sidings, so that we could increase the schedule.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: If we could just work it so that the airport is expanded and taken care of at the same time that the rail lines are being put in from the airport in, at the same time the stations go in, at the same time the monorails go in from the station into Atlantic City, we'd have it made. As far as the rail transportation is concerned, it would be great.

That's very good. I might point out to you also that there's a five bill package coming out from the DOT, of which three of the bills are already in process, that has to do with the TRANSPLAN in particular, which is regional planning. Again, talking about the Hudson County situation -- Atlantic City situation, it's a regional type concept, wherein the county planning board will have a great deal more to say as far as allowing plans to be approved in any given area. Let me back up a minute. That would take in as an example -- and these are not in concrete figures at this point -- but if there's a development going up that's going to front on a State highway or county road, or if there's a development going up of 250 units, or a building of a hundred thousand square feet,

this would be criteria enough for this plan to come before the county planning board for their input, as far as the sewers, the water, the roads, and whatever in general is concerned. The applicant can at the same time be applying through the local planning board so that things are running parallel. But the county will have more of an input as to what's going on so as to prevent the things from happening that have been happening, because again home rule-- We need the rateables; the money is short. Everyone wants the revenue from the taxes, but something has to control this thing.

There's another bill which I know that Commissioner Gluck is out talking up right now that has to do with a constant source of revenue income for what has to be done in this state. I firmly believe-- I've yet to vote for a tax-- I've been in the Assembly five years, and I've yet to vote for a tax. I'm a real conservative, conservative. And I didn't vote for the gasoline tax last time, but sitting where I'm sitting today and seeing what's going on, I realize that something has to happen someplace because it just isn't in general revenue. I think there has to be a dedicated source of income, and that dedicated source of income would seem to me to be in the gasoline tax, at least one thing that comes to my mind. Now, whether that means five cents more a gallon on the tax dedicated towards the Trust Fund -- the Transportation Trust Fund -- and of that a percentage has got to be put aside for the public conveyance rather than just roads and bridges and what have you-- But there has to be a constant source. It has to keep coming in to keep the program going, because if it's to stop right now, I understand that we will lose a good year in construction work. And as you know, you can't go anyplace in the State of New Jersey today without being interrupted with somebody doing some kind of work on some road someplace. And if that stops, we lose again. So there's a great deal of effort to get that program moving.

MS. WALSH: Right. Our board has gone on record in support of the renewal. I think we feel very strongly that the ability to plan -- to know that the money will be there and you can do a plan, and know that you can accomplish, is extraordinarily important. Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Thanks for your time. I appreciate it. How about Dennis Keck? Dennis is Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Department of Transportation. I understand your new area of responsibility now is the airports. Is that right?

W. D E N N I S K E C K: That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Now you can tell Helen exactly when the airport is going to be taken care of.

MR. KECK: I think Helen can tell me more than I can probably tell her.

Mr. Chairman, thank you. I appreciate this opportunity to testify. Quite frankly I started my career with the Department of Transportation about 15 years ago, and one of my first assignments as a young engineer out of college working in the Bureau of Urban Planning was working on the Atlantic City Urban Area Transportation Study back in 1971. That group still is in existence, as I understand, and it basically provides for coordination of plans in this urbanized area.

The Federal Highway Administration, back in 1962, with the Federal Aid Highway Act of that year, mandated that all urbanized areas of 50,000 population or more, had to have an ongoing comprehensive transportation planning process. It was basically called "The three C process," which stood for Comprehensive Coordinating Continuing Transportation Processes -- I believe it was called. As a result, before you could get Federal funds for highway construction in any of those urban areas, you had to have this continuing transportation planning process. This still goes on, and I'm happy to see that not only DOT but the local governments of this area, the county,

ACTA, and so forth, all are represented on that committee. So there is some form of coordinated transportation planning going on in the Atlantic City area.

And yet I echo some of Helen's comments earlier. Quite frankly, I think with the lack of funding to this region, and to the state as a whole for transportation, especially during the seventies and so forth, many projects were promised with the stark reality being that there wasn't even near enough funds to come close to even developing and implementing more than a handful of those many projects. And with the advent now of the Transportation Trust Fund, I think we've made some tremendous strides in the last few years. And I as a transportation professional certainly would encourage everyone if they feel transportation is important for the economic well-being of this state, to encourage them to support the continuance of some type of stable funding for transportation.

In my new role now as the Deputy Assistant Commissioner-- I'm called the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Modal Services. And I remember when Modal Services was developed in the Transportation Department, one of the editors of one of the papers asked, "What the hell is a modal?" I think that quite frankly what we need in Atlantic City being a unique area-- What we really need is to look at various forms of transportation, obviously to make a very beneficial impact on transportation to an area that is certainly unique to all of New Jersey.

When I worked on the Atlantic City Transportation Study back in '71, Atlantic City had a problem during three months out of the year. That problem now, with the advent of casino gambling, of course has grown, and I mean transportation is an issue now twelve months during the entire year.

I think that we need to look at all modes of transportation and there are some positive things that are happening right now. Rail service certainly has been something

that the Atlantic City area has been clambering for, for years and years and years. Finally we are seeing some results and some actual construction happening, and hopeful that we will have rail service as Helen described in the upcoming future, certainly within the next two or three years.

In addition to that, I'm sure I don't have to remind you people that recently there was a Monorail Study Commission formed, much through the efforts of a fellow Assemblyman, Bob Littell. That Commission has looked at a number of areas in the state, and clearly the Atlantic City region is one of those areas where monorail type technology they feel has some very real possibilities. I know that the Department of Transportation will be working with officials of this area to look at that type of technology to see if it makes sense, and if it does, to see how that can be implemented in the near future as well.

Airports certainly are an important part of the Atlantic City region, and I'd like to just brief you on a little bit of history regarding Bader Field and Pomona Airport, which have long been active in this region. I'm going to refer to my notes-- Here we go-- I lost what I was going to say--

Just to talk a little bit about Bader Field for instance, Bader Field opened in 1919. The city acquired the Airport in 1922. The word "airport" was first coined at Bader Field. The first scheduled air service was inaugurated at Bader Field, So it really is an historic airport. The city operated the airport and acted as its fixed base operator on the field until 1963. Southern Jersey Airways then became the fixed base operator. In 1970, Southern Jersey Airways began to operate a commuter service at Bader, providing service at that time to Cape May and Philadelphia. Southern Jersey Airways currently serves Washington National, La Guardia, JFK, and Mercer County in addition to Cape May and Philadelphia. They also operate several charter operations in conjunction with

scheduled air service. In 1974, Bader Field received a Federal grant for a master plan study, which was completed in 1977, followed by an additional master plan grant offered in 1979. A third master plan is in progress, as Helen mentioned. A control tower was purchased by the city and operated by the FAA and that was opened in 1984. Early in 1986, the tower became non Federal and is operated by a private firm contracted with the city. Current activity at Bader Field consists of general aviation, commuter service, and charter service. Numerous helicopter operations are prevalent at the field, also new technology STOL aircraft utilize the field for charter operations and in 1985 STOL aircraft were placed on scheduled service.

With regard to the Pomona - Atlantic City Air Terminal, that facility was established as a naval air station, leased from the City of Atlantic City in 1942. The FAA assumed the lease in 1958. In 1959, the city sold the property to the United State Government, except for approximately 80 acres on which the air terminal is located. In 1959, a Federal grant was offered to build the terminal facility at Pomona. A master plan study of the terminal was completed in 1981. The second study again is in progress right now, and should be completed by the end of the year, as Helen mentioned.

Atlantic City had one flight a week into the city in 1971. The building was on lease to the FAA for offices. Consequently the building was vacated in 1978 so airline service could resume. American International Airways began service in 1981. The Airline offered discount fares, which made the Airline very popular in the Southern Jersey area. The Airline developed Atlantic City as its major hub in 1983. The facilities were unable to handle the volume of passengers which were generated. American International Airways eventually moved most of its operations to Philadelphia in late 1983, and later the transportation demands placed on the region caused

that airport to close. Excuse me. My notes are jumbled. I'm causing myself an embarrassment. I'm sorry, did not cause the airport to close. Later that airline later went and declared bankruptcy. People Express began four flights a day into Atlantic City in the summer of 1983. They later pulled out in 1984. Currently, Atlantic City has casino charter operations at that airport in Pomona. Sorry for the mix-up.

The Department of Transportation agrees with just what Helen echoed. There needs to be a coordinated plan we believe to look at the two airports. We believe that the airports together linked with some type of land transportation can be a tremendous boost not only to the city, but to the entire South Jersey region, and the Department of Transportation will certainly support those types of efforts in the future.

My forte quite frankly, over the last few years has more been highways and these other modes of transportation, which are new and, quite frankly, something that I am now getting involved in. But with regard to highways in the Atlantic City area, back in 1971 when I worked on the Atlantic City Transportation Study, we were promising at that time that Route 152 would be constructed in the next few years. The reality was, there wasn't enough money, and we had problems getting it through the environmental process. It wasn't until just recently that we now let contracts, and Route 152 between Longport and Ocean City is now under construction at a cost of about 50 million. Again, the Trust Fund being the stimulus that finally gave us the money to get that project moving.

We have spent some considerable funds in the last two years in the Atlantic City and Atlantic County region on both Routes 30 and 40. And we have plans to make some major improvements for both Routes 40 and 30 in the Atlantic City area in the next year or two. Precisely, we need to make some tremendous infrastructure improvements along Route 40 between Atlantic City and the City of Pleasantville. Major bridges

which cross over beach, broad and inside thoroughfares are in a rapid state of deterioration, and they need to be replaced and repaired. Those bridges look like they will be ready to go to construction sometime in the fall of 1987. Major construction would probably start up in all earnest, probably in early 1988. At the same time we're also looking at some major projects on Route 30 between the Atlantic City area and again out to the vicinity of Absecon. So basically the two major connector roads which connect the mainland to the barrier islands here both are in need of repair and both we anticipate having ready to go to construction sometime starting in the fall of 1987 and early 1988. The type of work on Route 30 would be to provide a barrier curbed type of operation with jug handles, and to provide 12 foot lanes with 10 foot shoulders.

The biggest concern that we have quite frankly -- and we heard Don Vass talk about the Expressway. The third lane being under construction now, should be finished sometime, as is my understanding, by the middle of next year. But with both Route 30 and Route 40 perhaps going under construction at the same time, we need to look at how we can minimize disruption to the people traveling to this region. Clearly the projects are needed, and have to be done. But we will be coordinating, and I've already held some meetings with the local officials, on how we can best coordinate that construction to minimize disruption to the commuting traffic, and to the visitors coming to Atlantic City during that reconstruction. So both of those major projects are on the table right now, are working on final design, and we will be coordinating with local officials and promoting exactly what we can do to help that situation in the future.

New Jersey has been somewhat of a leader in this area. On a recent project on 287 in the Somerville area of Somerset County, we did a lot of extra public relations type of work and got the public involved. It helped I think to a great

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degree because much of the disruption we thought would happen on that road -- a road that carried 80,000 vehicles a day -- basically there was some disruption but not nearly to the degree that we thought it would, and delays were minimal I think. So New Jersey will be working with the local officials here, and will be doing all we can to coordinate the design of these projects to minimize disruption to the commuting traffic.

I think in general that pretty much concludes my presentation, and I'd be welcome to answer any questions that you may have. And I'm sorry for the disruption with my notes. You can see that I wasn't quite awake this morning.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Dennis, you made mention of the advisability to link the two airports with some sort of land transportation. Is that part of the new master plan? Is that being considered at that--

MR. KECK: No, I don't think that's specifically being considered as part of the master plan. Helen probably knows this better than I, but I do understand that ACTA will be looking in the future at the potential for access to the airports. And I think that is something they are very concerned with and DOT certainly supports that effort as well. But I don't believe that is part of the master plan that is being conducted now, I guess by Louis Berger and Associates.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Is it the Pomona Airport that there is residential objections to? Is that the one that--

MR. KECK: No. I believe the residential objections you're talking about is at Bader Field.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Bader Field?

MR. KECK: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: And Bader Field is the main airport that we're talking about here, as far as expanding to--

MR. KECK: No, I think it's just the opposite. It's Pomona, which is the old NAFAC facility, which is the one that would have the most potential for major airline flights. They

have the type of facility that can bring in large jets for instance. Bader is more a smaller airport. Again, Bader, very historic, opened with the first airline in the United States really-- The first airport in the United States, opening in 1919. But that's a smaller airport.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Very good. The fact that Assemblyman Littell had his hearing here on the monorail is not-- It's part of let's say the overall program and problems that we're trying to confront. And I think the Commission is doing a yeoman job on their particular assignment. And their findings will be made part of what we're doing here right now. Everything is going on tape of course, to be put under one binder, and at that particular point then maybe we can come up with some conclusions, even to the point maybe after having us gone on for some months. Maybe at some point in time we'll bring everybody together, representatives from each department, each group, to sit down and banter around a round table type open forum discussion as to the findings. After everybody has had a chance to review all other comments and statements, see what we can do then, and jump off from that point as far as an overall program is concerned. You did mention the environmental process?

MR. KECK: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: If there's one thing that gets me, it is when a three legged frog can get in the way of a highway. I think that we have to move that three legged frog someplace. I think we're all concerned about the environment. We're all concerned about wetlands and flood plains. But I think there are times, when push comes to shove, we have to do something that's going to allow-- let's not give anything up, but at the same time let's-- There has to be some compromise someplace along the line to get these things accomplished. We cannot bring the State of New Jersey to its knees economically as I say for three legged frogs. We've got to do something to

keep things moving, at the same time take care of our environmental problems. And I for one -- just a personal note -- find that the Department of Environmental Protection-- Lord knows they're needed, but that doesn't make them God. And I kind of think that the water and wetlands they're talking about-- I think they think they walk on that water sometimes, and I don't think that is quite the way it should be. There has to some sort of give and take in this overall problem so everybody is taken care of, at the same time taking care of our environment. And our highways and our byways and our rail lines and all this, we've got to go through, many times, we've got to go through wetlands to get there. I think there has to be something done to compensate for that. So I can sympathize with some of the problems that the authorities are having. Anybody else? (no response) Okay, thank you.

All right how about Richard Squires, the County Exec. for Atlantic County?

R I C H A R D S Q U I R E S: Good morning, everybody.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Thanks for coming down, Dick. We appreciate it.

MR. SQUIRES: I think in return I want to thank this Committee for coming to Atlantic City, because it does make it very helpful to have the Committee based -- at least for the period of the hearings -- in the city in which we have our most important message to deliver. I am pleased that you're here. I have a prepared brief statement, then I would be welcome to any comments or questions that might be in order.

As you know, I'm Richard E. Squires, County Executive of Atlantic County. And I'm pleased to see the Committee come to Atlantic City today to review the transportation needs of Atlantic City and Atlantic County. And I'm happy to offer whatever insights I can provide on this issue, which I'm sure you appreciate is critical to the area's growth.

I can tell you that one thing has changed locally in the last few years. It used to be that we'd be frustrated over the increasingly poor condition of our major roads. Now we're dealing with the major inconveniences that come with seeing improvements finally being made. In the next two years for example, improvements are planned for each of the three major corridors connecting Atlantic City with the mainland. I know that's been mentioned, U.S. 30 and U.S. 40-322 as well as the Expressway, which has many potential flyovers or exits being applied to it for some of our master plan growth as we go forth.

I'm sure you're aware that Atlantic City is the world's most frequently visited tourist destination, with more than 30 million people coming to the resort this year. I'm sure you also know that precious few of those visitors arrive by plane. And I heard the testimony just previously, and I agree that it's a shame that the airport hasn't been used more conveniently with the existing airport terminal that is in place. We are very hopeful to the FAA report that is in process now, known as the Berger Report, that is being funded by the FAA for Atlantic City government and Atlantic County government as a joint venture. The report is due by the end of the year. One of the things that happens with the planes are-- There are charter flights coming in and out of that airport. I want everybody in the room to know that there are people arriving at the present time, but not the general public as far as a non charter type operation, and to what degree I'm not sure.

Atlantic City and Atlantic County do grow when the population of employment continues to rise. Residential and industrial development throughout the region are increasing the demand on all of our roads. Reliable transportation is absolutely vital to our economic growth. This is why it is so important to maintain stable sources of funding and for local jurisdictions to have the powers they need to deal effectively with economic expansion and development.

Let me quickly bring you up-to-date on what we in Atlantic County have been doing. Three years ago, I instituted a four-year highway improvement program, committing funds and establishing priorities for repairing and upgrading roads, bridges, and drainage facilities in Atlantic County. We have spent \$16 million, including funds from the State and Federal governments, far more than has ever before been committed in such a period of time, and we've gone to work on our roads with a vengeance. And thanks to the lower petroleum prices we're spreading that money a little further. With that I'm trying to point out that in the 1986 budget we had anticipated doing a certain number of county roads and because of the prices and the contractors having the ability to finish early, we have extended that into some of our early 1987 road programs. So we're quite happy that our county road system, thanks to my predecessor who at the time I was Chairman of the Board of Freeholders we jointly got underway in 1978 to start paving county roads -- something that we felt had to be done and couldn't wait. And it was through the taxpayers' money that we bonded up-front and we continue to bond where we are not eligible for other funding.

The State shift of funds from FAUS -- as you know the Federal Aid to Urban Systems -- to the State municipal aid programs, has made our job much easier. We're already well into some of the fiscal 1987 projects, and we've completed most of those that were set for this year. These projects are badly needed and the reduction in red tape under the State aid program has helped to get these projects going quickly.

For some time now we have been using an idea advanced in one of the bills in the TRANSPLAN package, setting up transportation districts for highways and transit projects financed from fees collected from developers. Atlantic County has designated two such districts in our busiest growth areas, allowing us to keep pace with the rapid development. What that

amounts to is a fee that's collected at the time of approval on a pro rata formula that does go into an escrow account to enhance those highway improvements in that particular corridor, whether it be a county road known as Tilton Road, or Delilah Road or Fire Road. These are three main roads that we have in this particular development. For these two areas we conducted traffic studies, we developed an improvement plan, and set up assessment programs. The result has been the collection of \$600,000, all of which goes toward road improvements, signals, and drainage in the affected area. Our experience in looking for solutions to transportation problems convinces us that we need the programs in the TRANSPLAN package, now facing the Legislature.

Counties are particularly hard-pressed to handle the explosive growth we're seeing. And I've found over the years that traffic and transportation are the single largest concerns in many municipalities. For these reasons I strongly support the proposals to broaden county planning board powers to review all regional scale projects and to permit greater control over driveways and strip development, and as I mentioned before, to allow counties and municipalities to establish transportation improvement districts.

There is another proposal on the State level that I vigorously support, and that is the continuation of the State Transportation Trust Fund. Commissioner Hazel Gluck visited us two weeks ago soliciting our support for extension of this program. And I told her then that Atlantic County enthusiastically endorses the continuance of the Transportation Trust Fund. And when I say I, I mean also the Atlantic County Board of Freeholders. It has been a major factor in our ability to fund projects to the tune of \$118 million over the past three years. The beauty of the Trust Fund aside from the money it has brought to us and to other counties is the stability it has allowed us. We need the certainty of a stable, multi-year program, which the Trust Fund has provided.

And in closing, Atlantic County faces enormous demands for upgrading and maintaining its roads. With train and air service still years away, our roads are essential as they must be kept up. With the State's cooperation and support through expanding the authority of counties over development review, and continuation of the Transportation Trust Fund, we have a chance to keep pace with the demands on our roads. And that's the end of the printed statement.

It has been a program-- I was a Freeholder for eight years before I was elected County Executive, and have served all those years on the transportation committees. And when I referred to the FAUS funds there was what was known here as the Atlantic Area Transportation Study Group, otherwise known as ACUATC, which had to have their action and policy approval before any Federal funds could be utilized for any of the projects. Those particular shopping lists of projects that every year were put back on the back burner because there wasn't any funding, have basically been a very good tool in that a lot of the engineering and draftsman work had been accomplished up to a certain point. So with a transportation program-- With the funding programs in place in the last couple of years, it's been able to pick them up and cure a lot of our highway safety problems and drainage problems that were basically a danger to highway safety conditions. And I feel very good about those improvements.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Very good, very good. Fine, I appreciate your time, Richard, and coming down and filling us in on what's going on county wise. I'm pretty much impressed with what I've heard so far from everybody. It seems like you people down here are pretty much on the ball. If we can just pull all those things together with the rest of the state, and as I say get that rail line tied in to the highways and the airport and monorails, we'll get this show on the road.

How about Wayne Johnson? Wayne, do you care to testify? Testify, sounds like a court case. Would you care to talk? Wayne is the Director of Community Involvement, New Jersey Transit Corporation. I have to tell you, Wayne before you start. I was in Newark, last week with Jerry Premo, last Friday -- a week ago Friday -- and I've never been so impressed in my life as I was with what I saw with New Jersey Transit. And I don't say that because your here. I just say from a personal point of view, I've never seen so many economies invoked in an operation as I saw there. I was overly impressed with the bus maintenance garage. And your fellow Lou out there was-- I mean he's one in a million I'll tell you. Born in the Ironbound section, he's been with the -- since Public Service had it. And you're walking around, there's a two story building, several buildings-- Everybody says, "Hello Lou." You know, it was a family type operation. Everything is just as clean and neat as could be, and everybody had pride in what they were doing. And I think the people in the state ought to realize that everything that's in a bus or a trolley car or a train, is taken care of by our own forces at great savings. They told me that they painted buses at \$900 a piece, they did four a week, it would cost them \$3000 to do it on the outside. When they refurbished engines for the buses at a cost of \$3000, it would cost them \$9000 on the outside. I mean this was impressive. Then to see -- it's either 11 or 17 acres of building under roof -- the new building that they're putting up for the renovation and repairs of engines and cars, that was quite-- Then go to the old building and see what they had in the old building, that was something.

And then also I was very impressed with Hoboken in looking at the control room, where they control the five lines that New Jersey Transit operates, right from that room. Every switch is operated right from that room. The targets, they can tell where the trains are. This is back to my line in the old

days. It was really enjoyable. And then that one room looked like I was in NASA with a big panel around there with all the red lights representing all the railroad tracks, and every little red light was a section of power. They can control right from there. If a power line went out, the light would go off. They can key it in through the computer and set the thing up to see which section was out. I mean I was really impressed with what I saw. I think there should be more of this.

Now, this was supposed to have been a tour for the Transportation Committees of both the Senate and the Assembly. Tom Cowan -- Senator Cowan and I were the only two that showed up for this thing, but I tell you it was a worthwhile day well spent. It's just too bad they can't do something about running a train from Trenton up, and picking all these legislators up, and powers that be to come up and take a look at this. It was a good -- as you say -- dog and pony show, but really a very worthwhile show. I appreciated that.

W A Y N E J O H N S O N: We'd be very interested in doing it again. We'd be more than willing to accept your assistance in trying to convince your colleagues to join with us the next time around. We'd be more than happy to do so.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: It was really worthwhile. We go on these things quite often -- these different tours. But I tell you, this was one that I was really impressed with. It was really a good show. They're doing a good job.

MR. JOHNSON: I thank you, and I'll convey that back to Jerry.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Right.

MR. JOHNSON: Okay. Relative to Atlantic City, I have to start off and say that New Jersey Transit definitely believes that Atlantic City and its surrounding communities are part of what we, in our euphemism, refer to as our family. And we try to treat all of our patrons and the respective municipalities in such a fashion, throughout our operations.

In Atlantic City itself, we operate seven local service routes, all within the city. We provide approximately 456 weekday trips out there, and service on a daily basis approximately 12,500 riders. On an annualized basis, a little over three million riders are serviced within Atlantic City itself. Additionally, we have some inter county services that go from Atlantic City to various other portions of the county. And that equates to approximately eight separate routes, which provide 279 weekday trips, and service over a million people on an annualized basis. We're very proud of that. We have instituted a number of lines -- you are probably most familiar in recent history at least with the 102 and 103 lines, and the very rapid growth that they have experienced down here in Atlantic County. As we're all aware, it's driven in large measure by the advent of casino gaming in the county, which has then spurred additional residential and commercial development throughout the county, which has begun to put a real pressure on both the highway infrastructure as well as the public transit network throughout Southern New Jersey, and in particular -- for purposes of the day -- the Atlantic County-Atlantic City region.

New Jersey Transit is actively trying to address the burgeoning growth that happens down here. We several times a year make various changes to our bus routes, based upon patron comments in coordination with local appointed and elected officials, grass roots organizations, as well as our own analysis of ridership growths and trends down here. We don't always do everything 100% right, I'll be the first to admit. But we always will -- 100% of the time -- redress the situation as quickly and as professionally as is possible.

We had a recent problem, as I know you are aware, with some of the A-5 routes down here. We got a surprise late in the year finding out that the schools were going onto a split session, which caused us to miss some trips with students down

here. That situation has been rectified. We've changed schedules down here. We've got new printed schedules out on each one of the buses, as well as available at the terminals and the like. We've had recent meetings with all of the local mayors, both in Atlantic City as well as up-island at Margate, Ventnor, and Longport, to address very localized concerns that they have had. We believe that we have the situation well in hand now, and the comments we're getting back from the patrons at this point are favorable. So we will continue to work very closely with both the appointed officials and -- equally as important -- those people who are our consumers of service, to insure that we're being as responsive as we should be, can be, and ought to be down here.

I know there is a lot of interest in the county and on this Committee relative to the Atlantic City rail line. As previous speakers have said, it is fully our intent to have that up and running by the early portion of 1989. And I'd like to just very quickly give you an update on where we're at with the construction phase of that. All of the preliminary brush cutting along the 53 miles of rail line out there, has been completed. You know the track -- as you are well aware -- has been unused for quite some time, and was overgrown with weeds, as well as having some rodent infestation out there. Amtrak has been serving as the general contractor on behalf of New Jersey Transit, to do the actual physical restoration of the rail line. There are some 42 grade crossings that have to be renewed throughout this line. Ten of those have been completed, nine in Atlantic County and one in Camden County at the Utica Avenue grade crossing area. That activity will be continuing through 1987. All things are moving on schedule.

We have currently in place 1.3 miles of fencing, and that is in place right now in Berlin. Fencing is in the process of going up in the Hammonton area as well. The original plan and contract for this project called for 14.2

miles of fencing out here. One of the issues we have heard consistently throughout the communities is that there is a perceived need -- if not a real need -- for additional fencing to go in. We have held several meetings with each of the affected municipalities and have requested both verbally and in writing from them, their suggestions on where additional fencing should be placed. We've only received to date one definitive written answer to that. We are continuing to coordinate with them. We feel confident, and assure you that adequate fencing will be provided at all areas where it is needed, and where there is a less than four foot differential between the height of the railroad and the surrounding topography. We're paying particular attention to the areas surrounding the schools and the playgrounds and the ball fields out there, so they will be protected.

Additionally, we are putting in state-of-the-art grade signal protection equipment, with the crossarms, the warning lights, the bells, so forth. The trains, as they go through each one of the grade crossings, in accordance with the Federal Railroad Administration rules and the operating practices of the respective railroads -- in this case New Jersey Transit and Amtrak -- will be sounding their horns as they go through the grade crossings, and in fact they will be sounding them in advance of the grade crossings. That has both a positive and negative effect in as the old expression goes, "Where you stand is a function of where you sit." From where we stand it makes sense to sound these horns a half mile in advance at the grade crossing, to provide adequate warning for any vehicles that are in the grade crossing or approaching it, as well as pedestrians, to be warned of an oncoming train. Twelve o'clock at night, when you're dreaming of having to get up and go to work in the morning, you may at that point sit and determine that is a negative. We and the railroad industry have consistently taken the position that that is a very short-term

disruption. The trains go through quickly. The horns are very unidirectional -- directed straight ahead so you don't have to get as much sound diffusion to the sides as one would imagine. But there is still an intrusive quality to that during the sleeping hours. However, I would rather trade off a five minute loss of sleep against a loss of a single life. And that is the position we are going to be continually maintaining throughout this.

The Amtrak is using an almost one of a kind machine in this country called the TLM -- the track lane machine, which is a machine that is almost a half mile long. It will renew the ballast, the tracks, and the ties, all in one operation. It will complete approximately a half mile to two thirds of a mile a day. In fact, we have actually been pushing it to its limit and we've been doing almost two thirds of a mile a day. It has completed to date approximately 12 miles of ballast, tracks, and tie renewal. The machine began working at the beach thoroughfare which is just outside of Atlantic City and is working its way through the Absecon area. It has also performed some work in the Winslow area. This work will continue at least through March of 1987, depending on the weather conditions.

Additionally, we're putting in state-of-the-art signal and communications systems in here. The bids for the material are due from the manufacturers October 15th. Delivery of the materials is to begin in the Spring of 1987, and to continue throughout 1987. Field installation of this material will also begin in '87 and will continue throughout December 1988. Barring any further unforeseen difficulties and material deliveries, field conditions, financing or politics, this rail line will continue on schedule as it is now, and we will be up and running by the early part of 1989.

I'd like to also mention, as many of the other speakers have said, that we're very pleased that we have entered an era of cooperation between all the various levels of government as well as from the grass roots organizations down here in the Atlantic County area. New Jersey Transit right now is actively involved in a study of traffic circulation within Atlantic City in concert with the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the Atlantic County Improvement Authority, and the Atlantic County Transportation Authority. All entities have buried their claws -- come together cooperatively -- and found things are moving smoothly. There is a unanimity of concern about resolving the issue of transportation congestion and circulation in Atlantic City. And we do not see any problems at all in completing this study over the course of approximately the next year.

As many speakers have said, the studies are potentially the easier part. What becomes much more difficult is the actual implementation of these, and one of the key factors to implementation is funding. With that, and I will make just a very short pitch from the New Jersey Transit perspective as well for renewal of the Transportation Trust Fund. I know you've heard from Commissioner Gluck. I know you've heard from Mr. Premo on it as well. So I won't carry this out to any great extreme. I also know that the two of you are sympathetic to the issue, and I will leave it in your good hands to figure out the financing mechanism. I thank you.

Finally, let me say also that as part of our Atlantic City local commuter service operations down here, we have recently completed negotiations with Atlantic City for New Jersey Transit to purchase and take over the operation of the Atlantic City bus terminal down here. Through this effort, we will be able to provide relief to the city of an approximate \$700,000 annual operating deficit that they've experienced on that operation, which will free up funding that can be used for

other municipal services, including some of the renewal of the local street network and reduce the bonding that is necessary to do so for that work. We will be keeping on the current staff that is down there as long as they can pass a physical, submit the appropriate application forms, and adhere to all union guidelines as established by New Jersey Transit. We completed those negotiations via a municipal ordinance on September 3rd. Our respective staffs are right now in the midst of pulling together the actual contract, but we are proceeding as if everything were completed at this point.

We have a very cooperative relationship, I'm happy to say, with the city administration as well as with the county administration. It's been very good, and we see this relationship only continuing to blossom. It is a marriage that may not have been made in heaven, but it was made in New Jersey, which says the same thing.

I'll stop there, and see if there are any questions that you, Mr. Chairman or Madame Vice Chair, have of us that I could answer for you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Let me ask you this, Wayne. Let's get back to the rail transit business again. What are your plans for New York to Atlantic City, as far as rail lines are concerned?

MR. JOHNSON: New York to Atlantic City? New Jersey Transit will be operating the commuter service, which begins at Woodcrest Station in greater Cherry Hill Township. Amtrak will be providing the train travel from 30th Street Station down to Woodcrest, with an additional trip from New York coming down the corridor. At this time you're really talking about one New York connection at this point? That is part of the preliminary operating plan. That plan is still under review. As we get closer towards implementation there will be fine tunings of that plan.

In general what I would say is that we are really looking at this point to operate 11 daily commuter round trips from Woodcrest into Atlantic City via New Jersey Transit, five Philadelphia to Atlantic City trips via Amtrak, and an additional trip from New York via Amtrak into the city. That is something which is subject to change after the rail line is up and running, and we begin to get an experiential factor on whether -- what all of our collective intelligence tells us is going to be a successful experiment and actually bear fruit. I think it would be very premature for us to overexpand the network until you really have something up and running, and see what you've got and get a better handle on what your actual operating costs are, your actual ridership demand and revenue is, and then we will be very shortly trying to link arms with the casino industry and see if we can't get some of the same types of incentives that they use on the bus systems to be applied to the rail line as well.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: The line Philadelphia to Atlantic City, that's electrified?

MR. JOHNSON: From Philadelphia there is an electric territory. What we're going to be using between Woodcrest Station and Atlantic City is going to be diesel.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Diesel? Is there any chance-- Is it physically feasible to tie the Amtrak line right into the Atlantic City line so that you have a continuous run from New York to Atlantic City, without transferring?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes it is. In fact, it's something that's under works now. There is even currently-- There is a direct line that comes right in from 30th Street Station and connects in with our main line that goes into Atlantic City. What the real issue becomes for us, is that New Jersey Transit operates push-pull equipment which doesn't require a loop track or a turn on it. We're also in the midst of studies for a dual mode locomotive, which can operate either electric

territory or diesel territory. Amtrak is looking at similar things. I feel very confident that by the time this rail line is implemented we will have the type of direct connection -- direct service -- that you're talking about. And we will be very closely evaluating the need for transfers, the ability to put through express trains, and very closely monitoring what ridership demands and travel patterns are.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: I see. This Amtrak line we're talking about goes from New York to Philadelphia on down to Washington. Is that the main line we're talking about?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, you could make that connection. You'd have to do some other changes if you really wanted to run all the way down to Washington on this portion of the line.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: I see. I was just thinking about getting from the other direction up, coming from Delaware, coming from Washington, up into Atlantic City. Would there be any direct tie in that direction coming to Atlantic City, without a--

MR. JOHNSON: Not under the current project. No it wouldn't. You know, the current project is costing depending on whose figures you look at, between \$101 million and \$105 million, \$30 million of which as you are probably aware came from the Federal Government, the FRA, through the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project. The \$15 million being put up by ACIA on the county end, and \$56 million is being put in by New Jersey Transit at this port.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: I see. But we have all the right of ways--

MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: So everything is in place. It's just a matter of implementing what you are doing here?

MR. JOHNSON: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Very good. All right then, Jerry mentioned something about a run from Camden into Atlantic City.

MR. JOHNSON: A run from Camden into Atlantic City?

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: So that would probably come into being before New York to Atlantic City.

MR. JOHNSON: There is a spur that's out there. You know, we've got a number of studies that are looking at the demographics of the whole area. So that would be one potential if and when you start to talk about expansion of the proposed system as it is now out there. It's nothing that's funded, nothing that's been designed at this point.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Just looking at it. Of course all that ties into park and ride facilities also--

MR. JOHNSON: Yes it does.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: --because they leave their cars there instead of driving to Atlantic City, which becomes another problem.

MR. JOHNSON: If I could just digress for one moment -- and I know there's been a lot of interest in terms of exactly what does the rail line do for Atlantic City? Something that we shared with the mayor several months ago may be of interest to this Committee as well. It comprises of about seven or eight bullets:

One, it will allow the newly proposed convention center to be competitive in the national market. Secondly, it supports increased convention activity, allowing approximately \$150 million to \$250 million in direct and indirect expenditures into the local economy. Twenty four hundred new construction jobs during construction of the convention center and rail terminal complex would be created. One hundred permanent jobs on the railroad including a majority of unskilled jobs such as maintenance away and track trainmen and ticket agents would be created with the advent of the railroad. An annual payroll of approximately \$4 million to \$5 million in wages and benefits of railroad workers -- naturally of which some of which will funnel its way into the local

economy. Direct need for 10,000 to 20,000 square feet of commercial space related to commuters, and resulting in 50 to 100 new jobs. It would remove -- and these are early approximations -- approximately 900 to 1300 autos per day, and 15 buses from Atlantic City on the commuter service, as well as 650 autos and 40 buses daily on the Amtrak service. This would lessen the congestion of auto congestion and pollution in the Atlantic City area. It will provide Atlantic City residents access to Philadelphia, New York, Camden, Hammonton, and other job centers that will develop inland. Transportation dependent people will have improved access to jobs and to various leisure activities in and around the greater Atlantic City area. It provides for future growth of casino hotel and non casino employment by reducing parking and roadway improvement needs, and this allows more efficient use of scarce land here on the island. And finally, it will show an increase of \$2.4 million to \$3.2 million dollars in expenditures in local, commercial and retail goods, just by the commuters themselves who utilize this rail line.

In the initial year of operation, we're looking somewhere between 2500 and 3500 riders to take the initial run on this rail line. Depending on the types of incentives we may or may not get from the casino industry -- in terms of you buy your ticket you get \$15.00 or a free dinner and a dancing girl, you know, on it, those numbers may--

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: What railroad is this?

MR. JOHNSON: We'll even have dancing boys, you're right. (laughter)

But that kind of sums up the involvement that we're having currently in Atlantic City and Atlantic County. It's a presence we see continuing to grow, and one which will not disappear. Thank you for the opportunity.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Sounds like it's been a very positive economic impact upon the area. And I think that's good. Again, I think what we have to watch out for is that we don't become another Hudson County-Jersey City-Bayonne type situation, where it's gridlock all the way. And I think what we're doing here is perhaps starting from the right angle. If you can get the rail transportation taken care of, the rest will build around it, rather than being forced into it. If we can start that first, I think it's the right approach to it.

Wayne, thanks ever so much for coming down.

MR. JOHNSON: I thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: I appreciate it. Is there anyone else who wishes to be heard? Yes.

FRED VAN LOOY: Fred Van Looy.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Fred from Shortline.

MR. VAN LOOY: My name is Fred Van Looy. I'm the new Director of Contractual Services for Shortline Bus Systems. It's a pleasure to follow New Jersey Transit. As you know, Mr. Chairman, Shortline and New Jersey Transit have locked horns on several occasions and continue to do so.

One of the things that your Committee please keep in mind -- and I hope the same thing holds true for the officials in the Atlantic City and Atlantic County area -- is not to forget about private enterprise. I've just become acquainted with the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Corporation and work that is being done up there, and the involvement of private enterprise, and it is amazing what private enterprise can do. We are providing commuter service, that is contracted with private companies, from the New York City area into the Meadowlands, where these tremendous developments are going on. And something along those lines certainly ought to be considered in the greater Atlantic City area. For several years Shortline has asked New Jersey Transit to please open up for bid, and offer to private enterprise any new services they

are proposing and implementing, and prior to taking over existing services to open that up to private enterprise -- to give us an opportunity to bid on that service.

You mentioned your visit to New Jersey Transit up in Newark, that buses can be painted for \$900 as opposed to \$3000, and engines rebuilt for a little less than half of the price on the outside. That might be true on these particular occasions, however, on certain occasions it is possible that private enterprise can do an equal or better job for less money. That certainly has to be kept in mind. And if you please, make my notes part of the record, and let it be known that Shortline and many of the bus companies in New Jersey are interested in being considered. We might be out of the ball park. If that's the case, then the public sector has to step in. But, if we have an opportunity to do the same job, for the same amount or less expense, at the same quality, we ought to be given the opportunity to do so, because taxpayers' money can be saved and that's certainly a very important part of government. And, there's always somebody that wants to get to the trough and get some of that public money.

That's basically my remarks, besides sending kindest regards from my boss Buzzy Rukin, whom you know very well.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Right, thank you Fred. I appreciate that. Joann? (no response) Just one point Fred. In these series of hearings we're going to have a hearing that will do with the bus industry itself, as well as another one for the trucking industry, to get their comments as far as the transportation needs in the state. What you're saying here of course can come out at that particular time, also.

You have a friend when it comes to privatization. If I had my way, I would get as much government out of business as I possible could. I can go right down the line and say even these people working in the highway department pushing the brooms and repairing the roads, if I had my way, I would take

it out from under government and put it in the hands of private bidding and contractors to take care of.

We have done that with grass cutting. And I might point out that I am not particularly happy with what I see in this grass cutting, because those choppers -- those mowers cut the paper and everything else up just as well as they do grass, and it's all lying around. It looks like the devil. Our highways as far as I'm concerned are in a deplorable condition, not macadam, not cement, but as far as the litter, the debris, the sand from last year -- the year before's -- snowstorms that we've had and we've thrown the sand down. I see it. And I check in with the DOT to find out "Well that's like fourth priority, because there's only so much money to go around." You have to take care of the main things first. So, they have an argument. They have a point. Again, if we have three sweepers in every district or division -- I can't remember the last time I saw a sweeper on the highways -- but if there are three there maybe they're not being used again because of the dollar signs involved.

But when it comes to privatization I think that maybe if we put some of these things out to bid-- The man is out to make a dollar, the profit motive. I don't see profit motive in government enterprise, in government involvement. On that basis, I kind of think sometimes that maybe if we tightened up a little bit more, eliminate a lot of waste, waste in effort, waste in time, waste of material. And so, I'm with you when it comes to privatization. I will do all I can to steer anything I can in to the private areas, get out from under as far as the other is concerned. There are a lot of benefits to privatization. It has to be watched. Let's keep an eye on it. And I think the same holds true with your particular interest.

I think New Jersey Transit is doing a terrific job. They were organized for one basic reason, to take over those routes that the private companies could no longer afford to

run, or that went bankrupt, or were giving poor service. They've moved in. But, I think when the operation gets to that point that the-- Let's say New Jersey Transit in this case is giving competition to the private part of the business, and the competition is unbalanced because of their government subsidies going on this side, versus the private side, then I think that has to be looked at too.

Although I will say that those buses are worth \$180,000 a piece, and that New Jersey Transit does hand them out like throwaways. "No problems with how many you need guys. You know, pass them out." And then I found out there's no restrictions on this. I mean that bus can be rammed in the rear end and be falling apart, but there's nothing that says they have to fix it. I think that's wrong. I think maybe that when these buses are handed out there should be a bond go with it. You as a bus operator should put a bond up. They don't cost that much, but if you don't take care of that bus, call the bond and take care of it. It's our property that we're giving you. It's New Jersey's property that's being given away. So I think there has to a little give and take in this thing too.

But when we get around to the hearing on the bus industry, at that particular point I'm sure that there will be a lot of you people up there to talk about just these things. It should prove interesting.

MR. VAN LOOY: I'm sure we will, Mr Chairman, and just to make a point: New Jersey Transit just sent out RFPs for the Bergen County lines. We received them I think Wednesday or Thursday. This Friday will be a pre-bid hearing and I think in another two or three weeks the bids are due. This is a case where New Jersey Transit is hearing us, and says, "Here guys, you want to go and run the lines up in Bergen County? You go ahead and see if you can do it." On the other hand, I was general manager of Lincoln Transit -- which went bankrupt in

1983 -- and we were in competition with New Jersey Transit for 40 years. One of the reasons I believe New Jersey Transit (sic) went under is because we had that problem with old buses and new buses and subsidies and all this kind of stuff. But that's something that might come out during the hearings when you have the bus companies and truckers involved. But it's certainly very very important that private enterprise is part of that whole process.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: I agree with you and I also think that subsidies have got to be considered when it comes to the public transportation, because, railroads included, I don't see how they can operate today, costs being what they are, on their own. They've got to have some support someplace along the line. This is why I cringe when I see us giving away \$180,000 buses, "Go ahead fellows, here they are." Really what it amounts to is, "Here are 40 buses for you, and 30 for you, to keep you in business." But at the same time I realize that something has to be done to help support this thing. Now again, we're going to give you those buses, and I want to see what the bottom line looks like. If that profit's too great because we gave you this much, then I think something has to be done about the subsidy part of it. It's got to be-- We want to keep you people in business; we want you to make a profit; but not subsidizing to the point that we're contributing to your pension plan. You know what I mean?

Very good Fred, appreciate your coming down.

MR. VAN LOOY: Thank you, Mr Chairman, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Is there anybody else that wishes to be heard? I might point out that -- and I didn't do this before but -- at the head table here is Rosanne Persichilli. Rosanne is on the Majority staff. And we have Dave Matos, who is on the Minority staff, is it? (affirmative response) And we have Larry Gurman who is the Office of Legislative Service staff. And Co-chairman -- Chairperson -- Chairlady of the

Transportation Committee, Joann Smith. She's the Assemblywoman from the--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SMITH: Thirteenth

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: --thirteenth District. Which takes in--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SMITH: Upper Monmouth County and lower Middlesex.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILLER: Upper Monmouth and lower Middlesex. Very good. And I'm Newt Miller from Passaic and Essex Counties. Other than that, thanks for coming. We appreciate it. And I want to thank SEEDS again for their help in this.

And thank you two people sitting over here also, for sitting here quietly and observing. I hope you got an education out of this today. (laughter) Thanks for coming down.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)

APPENDIX

It is a pleasure to appear today before the Assembly Transportation Communications Committee to make comments on the infrastructure and transportation needs of the Greater Atlantic County region.

Since the inception of casino gaming in 1978, this area has experienced an explosive growth in traffic. Approximately 30 million visitors arrive in Atlantic City on an annual basis at the present time and that number is expected to grow with the opening of two new casinos, the Showboat and Resorts Taj-mahol. Of those 30 million visitors who come into the City annually, 44% are coming by charter bus, that is over 12 million visitors arriving on an excess of 400,000 buses annually. Only 1% come by air and the remainder all arrive in private vehicles. This tremendous impact on the highway network state, county and local roadways over the past ten years has been devastating. Roadways constructed with much less traffic anticipated and many with long overdue repairs allowed to deteriorate because of the lack of available capital financing to keep them in A-1 condition - have experienced further deterioration with the sheer volume of vehicular traffic.

In addition to the 30 million visitors coming into the City, primarily by vehicular mode, we have also created through the establishment of the eleven casinos a tremendous volume of new employment opportunities. At the present time the eleven casinos are employing approximately 40,000 individuals. About 22% live in Atlantic City. The rest come into the City for work. With the two new casinos opening within the next eighteen months, an additional 7 to 8,000 jobs will probably come on line. Of the 40,000 employee base, we know that approximately 32% or over 12,000 now commute into the county from surrounding counties. Those

employees are coming in by car or by bus. The Atlantic County based employees also are commuting in to intercept lots and then being shuttled into the city. Those are additional millions of trips being made on county and local roadways as individuals commute into the Greater Atlantic City area for employment.

The impact on infrastructure from this tremendous and rapid development is significant. The most frequently mentioned traffic problem in discussions with individuals involved in transportation planning is traffic congestion. At present, congestion is evident on most of Atlantic City's major streets, plus on the U.S. Route 9 in Absecon, Pleasantville on Tilton Road on U.S. Routes 30 and 40/322 east of the Parkway.

Contributing to traffic congestion in Atlantic City, in addition to the high volumes of daily traffic, is an obsolete traffic signal system for which preliminary studies for computerization have been completed. However, those still remain on the drawing board for lack of financing.

It is heartening to note that over the next five years there will be major infusion of public dollars into a capital construction plan financed by the State, county and the local level to make significant improvements on the highway network. Both Route 30 and 40/322 will experience a dramatic upgrading with widening and other traffic improvements as part of the road program which is already underway in the engineering phase and will take through 1991 for completion. In addition, Atlantic County through its four year highway improvement program which is just ending and through institution of an additional four year period, is undertaking major improvements on its network. Atlantic City is in

the process at the present time of complete resurfacing of Atlantic Avenue and anticipates beginning Pacific Avenue in 1987. All of these major capital improvements to the highway network are required, and in fact, long overdue. They take significant financing at the local level and indeed are only possible at the present time because of the monies available through the Highway Trust Fund. The renewal of that Trust Fund is absolutely critical for the continued improvement to the highway network in this region.

Even with a tremendous infusion of capital into the improvement of our highway and street network in the Greater Atlantic County area, the sheer volume of traffic, of visitors who desire to come into Atlantic City and to the balance of the County for recreational purposes make the continued reliance on vehicular mode as the primary and, indeed, only way of transporting people in and out of the city inadequate.

The restoration of the rail service between Atlantic City and Philadelphia 30th Street Station is a critical link in the overall development of an adequate transportation system in this region. It will provide the ability for workers to come in and out of the Atlantic County region with stops along the way in areas convenient and accessible for park and ride. It promises to be a major addition to the commutation system with the eleven round trips daily. It will in addition open up the AMTRAK northeast corridor to tap into a larger visitor market than is currently coming into Atlantic City. The continued support of the rail project at the State level will be essential as it begins operation in 1989 and continues thereafter. The infusion of public dollars into rail projects in the more highly urbanized northern and central part of the state has become an accepted fact of life. We here in South Jersey would like to see

the same level of commitment and support to this critical rail link which opens up employment opportunities as well as other transportation opportunities to the southern end of the state. Continued support of this system, including financial support where required, to upgrade the stations along the way which are receiving only minor improvements in this first phase, for the continued maintenance and upkeep of the track and for the other capital improvements which will be needed will be essential. I refer specifically here to the possibility of linking the rail service to the regional airport for which a Master Plan is currently underway. That regional airport to be located at the FAA Tech Center in Pomona already has an existing rail spur, however, the cost of upgrading that spur and providing some linkage whether or not with the existing rail service or through some other mass transit mode of linking the airport to the rail station must be analyzed and costed out and at the appropriate time supported by proponents of improved infrastructure and transportation for the South Jersey region.

Another area of critical importance to the continued development of transportation services in the Greater Atlantic County/South Jersey region is the development of the regional airport at Pomona. This airport has the capacity to serve as a major transportation link, not only for the 200,000 residents of Atlantic County but also for the populations of Cape May, Cumberland, Ocean and anyone in this part of the State for whom the drive into Philadelphia or to Newark for availing oneself of major commercial flights is greater or more tedious than the drive into the Pomona facility. We believe that the regional airport development at Pomona has the capacity to not only solidify and expand the convention and tourism base of the economy of the State, but also to provide much needed services to our residents.

The Master Plan for this airport is currently underway with financing from the Federal Aviation Administration. The actual implementation of a fully developed airport will require support from other levels of government at the appropriate time.

There is a lot beginning to happen in transportation and still a lot which needs to be done. Supporting infrastructure is a basic investment in the state and its future. We in South Jersey are "Bullish" on the tremendous economic investment which has been made here - the millions upon millions invested in the casino properties and related development. In order to protect those investments and to reap the economic benefits of those investments in the long term we must be willing to make sizable investments in infrastructure - particularly transportation.

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