

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Whitman Breaks Ground on Route 130/Turnpike Extension Interchange to Ease Local Traffic, Benefit Regional Food Distribution Center

Governor Christie Whitman breaks ground today on a major road project to improve access between Route 130 and the New Jersey Turnpike in Burlington County. The improvements will also benefit a planned 660-acre regional food distribution site, which today the Governor announced would be named the Senator C. William Haines Distribution Center.

"We're not just breaking ground for a new interchange and distribution center, we're changing forever Burlington County's position in this region," said Whitman. "And, at the site of this extension, we're going to add another 9,400 jobs to our economy."

The new \$35 million interchange will make it easier for motorists on Route 130 to access the New Jersey Turnpike extension. Currently, motorists must take a circuitous route, mostly on local roads, to travel to and from Route 130 and the recently renamed Pearl Harbor Memorial Turnpike Extension (formerly known as the Pennsylvania Extension of the New Jersey Turnpike). The ramp improvements, scheduled for completion in 1999, will also help reduce truck traffic on local roads. The new interchange, which will accommodate electronic toll collection, will generate 1,000 construction jobs.

In addition, the new interchange will provide convenient access to the Senator C. William Haines Food Distribution Center, a 660-acre site which will serve as a regional hub for food distribution. The Governor today announced the official name of the facility in honor of the late Senator C. William Haines, who represented District 8 until his death last year.

"The construction of the food distribution center will create 5,600 jobs," said Whitman. "And when the doors open on the Senator C. William Haines Food Distribution Center, there will be 2,800 permanent jobs and \$60 million a year in wages."

The Food Distribution Center, which will provide a centralized venue to market "Jersey Fresh" and other products, will be located within 80 miles of nine percent of the nation's population, and 12 percent of the nation's food markets.

"New Jersey is back on the right road," said Whitman. "We've shown this in the way we've cut taxes 14 times, saving our citizens more than \$4 billion. We've shown it in the lowest unemployment rate in seven years. And most importantly, we've shown this in the 196,000 more jobs there are today than there were in 1994."

"This project furthers the State's goal of returning commercial traffic to the New Jersey Turnpike," said Transportation Commissioner John J. Haley Jr.

"The Authority is committed to contributing to the growing economy of New Jersey through its ability to provide safe and efficient travel to the citizens and businesses of New Jersey," said New Jersey Turnpike Chairman Frank X. McDermott.

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