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# *Committee Meeting*

of

ASSEMBLY TOURISM AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 66

*(Designates June as New Jersey Arts, Culture, History, and Tourism Month)*

*“Testimony from invited speakers on issues affecting the tourism  
and arts industries, including performing arts and sports entertainment”*

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**LOCATION:** Bergen Performing Arts Center  
Englewood, New Jersey

**DATE:** February 16, 2011  
11:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Matthew W. Milam, Chair  
Assemblyman Gordon M. Johnson  
Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle  
Assemblywoman Nancy F. Munoz  
Assemblyman Robert Schroeder



**ALSO PRESENT:**

Amy Denholtz  
*Office of Legislative Services  
Committee Aide*

Jillian Dempsey  
*Assembly Majority  
Committee Aide*

Kelly A. Comerford  
*Assembly Republican  
Committee Aide*

***Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by  
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,  
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey***

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**ASSEMBLYMAN MATTHEW W. MILAM (Chair):** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Assembly State Tourism and Arts Committee.

I want to thank the bergenPAC for hosting us today. It's part of our -- as the Tourism Committee, as we travel around the state to bring our Committee out to the arts and the historic areas of the state, so we can actually, hands-on, see the importance of this very, very important economic revenue-generator for the State. And there's nothing like the Committee going out and actually seeing it firsthand instead of folks coming to us in Trenton and trying to explain to us what they're very, very proud of. So, instead, when I became Chairman over a year ago, I wanted to take our Committee on the road and let us see firsthand what everyone is very, very proud of -- that we should be, as a state, as well.

I'm going to just start with a roll call. We do have some formalities that we have to do during our Committee. It's not all fun, but I try to make it as fun as I can. (laughter) But we're going to do our roll call, we're going to do our formal business.

Amy, I'm going to ask for a roll call.

MS. DENHOLTZ (Committee Aide): Assemblyman Schroeder.

ASSEMBLYMAN SCHROEDER: Here.

MS. DENHOLTZ: Assemblywoman Munoz.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUNOZ: Here.

MS. DENHOLTZ: Assemblyman Johnson.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Here, and having fun already.  
(laughter)

MS. DENHOLTZ: Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Here.

MS. DENHOLTZ: And Chairman Milam.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Here.

I'm going to ask Senator Weinberg to come up first and just kind of welcome us.

Welcome to our Committee meeting, Senator.

**S E N A T O R L O R E T T A W E I N B E R G:** Thank you very much.

Good morning to the Assembly Tourism and Arts Committee. On behalf of my two colleagues who are sitting on your Committee -- Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle and Assemblyman Gordon Johnson -- welcome to District 37, welcome to Englewood, and certainly welcome to one of the centers of the arts community that we have right here in Englewood, bergenPAC.

But I'd also like to talk a little bit more about why this should become a tourism center, why we should be talking about Bergen County in terms of the positive aspects of the tourism community that we should have here. And I know you're going to be hearing from Kevin Wright and Mike Trepicchio who represent New Bridge Landing, one of the most wonderful historic sites -- the place where Thomas Paine conceived the words, "These are the times that try men's souls." And those of us who have been in politics have repeated that line time and time again over the years. It is a historic site where the State has put money in -- Green Acres money -- and we are hoping to develop it with a visitor's center. And I'm sure you will be hearing more about that.

In addition to the historic sites and the kind of performing arts center that we have right here, we have the Puffin Foundation, which has developed a walkway through the wetlands -- rescued wetlands that were littered with old construction material -- and developed a wonderful walkway for the public.

And before I voted on the new Director of Tourism, as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I had gotten a promise from her that she was going to come up to Bergen County and take a tour through all those sites; and that after 5:00, we would all go shopping at Bloomingdales (laughter) where, as you well know, you don't have to pay tax on clothing -- which is why I think we can put this all together into a great tourism destination.

So we're glad you're here, we're glad that Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttel, I'm sure, was instrumental in arranging this. And I know Assemblyman Schroeder is from Bergen County too and would like to see all of these things tied together so that we can make Bergen County a real tourism destination; and then, along with the appreciation for the arts and history, be able to turn this more into an economic engine for the area.

So thank you all for being here. Thank you for enabling me to say words of welcome. And I know you're going to have an interesting morning. Thanks, again.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Senator Weinberg, thank you very much. And I know I'm in District 37, a very, very far cry from District 1 where I'm from. (laughter) It's absolutely beautiful here. And the walkway you spoke of is the walkway I came across. And I'm so glad the Mayor of

Englewood is here, because I heard if he was coming, he was validating everybody's parking who parked in that garage. (laughter)

SENATOR WEINBERG: I didn't realize he came here.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: And that only came from Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle.

But I am actually going to call on Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle, actually, to introduce our next speaker and also for a comment.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Thank you, Chairman.

I just wanted to follow up on Senator Weinberg's comments. Although she was very thorough in her remarks, she left out one item that she usually tells, and I will tell it. Her daughter started her -- I want to say theatrical and creative career -- she's in California now as a film producer, and she's into the arts. But she actually started on the stage here at bergenPAC.

So, Senator, you forgot that item.

SENATOR WEINBERG: She played the door mouse in *Alice in Wonderland*. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: So with that--

SENATOR WEINBERG: Had I known, I would have brought the video. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: And we also, in a strictly political partisan moment, if I may -- personal privilege -- she did -- and it is pretty historic. When New Jersey created the position of Lieutenant Governor, and Senator Weinberg was the candidate for Lieutenant Governor, it was announced right here at bergenPAC. So I

think that's historic as well. Whether you're Democrat or Republican, I also think that was an important tidbit to add.

So thank you, Senator, as always.

I also want to thank our Chairman for taking this Committee on the road, because New Jersey really is in the shadows, as we say, of Manhattan and Philadelphia. And we have so much to offer, not only in Bergen County, as you will hear today, but throughout the state. And our first meeting was down in Cape May. We went to the Paper Mill Playhouse. So we really have been traveling across the state. And I really want to thank you, Chairman Milam, for really highlighting all of the important jewels around the state, because that is what makes New Jersey so special. So thank you very much for that.

And I guess I get to introduce our next speaker, who not only is the Mayor of Englewood -- but I found it important to have him here this morning because he was really the person behind opening up the former John Harms and turning it into the Bergen Performing Arts Center today. And that's what he does on the side. He volunteers to take -- turn things around when there are challenges. And as you heard about what the arts can do for the economic -- is the economic engine in the town, just all of us here this morning -- I'm sure Dunkin' Donuts and Starbucks have gotten some part of that--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Economic stimulus.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: --economic stimulus.

Thank you, Assemblyman Gordon.

So with that, with no further ado, I'd like to introduce the Mayor of Englewood, Frank Huttle. (applause)

**MAYOR FRANK HUTTLE III:** Thank you.

Thank you, Assemblywoman Huttle. (laughter)

**ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE:** Thank you.

**ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM:** You guys know each other. (laughter)

**MAYOR HUTTLE:** We only meet when we have functions.

**ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE:** That's right. So I asked him to come this morning.

**MAYOR HUTTLE:** Mr. Chairman, I thank you for this honor to speak. I also thank you for coming from the South. I greatly appreciate that, because I am from the South; that is, Hammonton, New Jersey. And I also recognize the magnitude and importance of the arts and culture down in South Jersey -- the South Jersey district -- as well as throughout the state.

I'll say a few words about Bergen County and the words of: *to create an economic engine* or *to create tourism*. We already have that here in these halls. And the question is: What level can we take it? And with regard to how the John Harms closed, reopened, and what we -- myself, as the founder, with five other people that turned into 30 other people, that turned into thousands of people -- we had certain missions. And one of the missions was to, in the first year-and-a-half or year, to go live, worldwide, from these stages. We did that several times. We had Grammy nominations and awards that were recorded on this stage. We've done that.

But what bergenPAC is, and what tourism is-- During these very challenging times that you're witnessing down in Trenton, and what

the County is facing, and what my City is facing, it's very difficult to just-- You know, everything seems to be a cut, a cut. The question that everyone has to ask themselves as representatives of the people, of the State, representatives of this city, is where to spend those dollars -- that when you put a government dollar, you get a dollar-plus from an economic engine. And that's something that's incumbent on each and every one of you, and the Governor -- to look at the whole equation. Because if you just cut one line and not support, you are bringing down a community, a county, and a State.

So what do we have in Bergen County? And this is-- What I say with respect to the Bergen Performing Arts Center equally applies to New Jersey PAC, equally applies to New Brunswick, to Morristown, to Red Bank. But in this region, we have something next door to us that's called *New York City*. And that is an economic engine that has been achieved from the Apollo to the Metropolitan. And all these models clearly demonstrate the engine and the dollars it brings to revenues. People in the Northern Jersey region have a choice, when they want to see a show, to go to Englewood where it's comfortable, or to go to the City. Of course people are going to go to the City for certain shows, and other shows in Englewood. But we should be capturing that revenue. And how do we do that?

Yes, I'm not going to-- Other people will probably testify today on the culture or the arts, the impact on children, the magnitude of the SAT scores -- that they're increased by 50 points for those who are involved. But I'm going to spend my time on pure dollars and cents -- pure dollars and cents. This theater, this stage is already a recording hub. Why?

You're going to be seeing very shortly -- you're going to go down to Bennett Studio -- fiberoptically connected. We flip a switch, and we have audio worldwide. We don't have video. So when we do the recording worldwide to compete with L.A., to compete with New York -- and I don't say that bashfully -- we do; and we can compete better and directly with the largest recording venues in the country, because artists want to go to a place where it's comfortable. They also worry about their dollars and the recording. Just ask Tony Bennett why he records here.

What we also have is -- and I would ask everybody to just take the steps and walk. If you walk about a hundred feet, you'll hit Palisades Avenue. This is very different than any other performing arts center in the state. Why? Because Palisades Avenue has a fiberoptic cable that goes to the Empire State Building. What does that mean? If we now fiberoptically connect to Palisades Avenue, with the flip of a switch, anybody who wants to come here -- they no longer have to bring the satellite trucks, they don't have to bring audio. With a flip of a switch-- We already have HBO here, we have the Grammys. We could go further and do further recording -- that we are clearly a recording hub, bringing an economic engine better here.

Now, focus on the recording. I'm also-- When we started, we had 60,000 people coming to John Harms. We have 250,000. It's a proven fact for the John Harms -- for the Bergen County Performing Arts Center there is about \$5 million a year that's generated directly from ticket sales and contributions to the engine here. The studies, which I'm sure somebody else will testify to -- there's an economic engine basically four to one of bringing revenues into the region. So what I'm simply trying to say

here is we, at our fingertips, have something great. And you'll also tie the network into the other performing arts centers in the state. We have something within a mile or two of New York City, and we do compete.

And if you want to talk about tourism, when we had, two years ago, Tony Bennett recording his Christmas album, and there was a special showing of -- a hundred people came in and watched it. But when you have the HBO recordings -- hey, this is a small town, we're 26,000, 27,000 people -- this is a good thing, and it's a good thing for New Jersey.

So I appreciate my time in speaking. I'm a little passionate about this place, I'm passionate about the county, and I'm passionate about New Jersey. And we should, in Bergen, be second to none with respect to expanding tourism. And whatever the State can do, the New Jersey Arts Council can do, the City can do, the County--

When we started -- and I will end with this -- regional performing arts center, in 2003, when the John Harms closed -- and then we took this energy to reopen it -- we created a public-private partnership. And at the time, most organizations that had troubles at the time -- whatever, 2003 -- they often turned to government first and said, "Taxpayers, write a check." There was a major report done; the company -- it's a major company -- escapes me. But 1,500 performing arts centers closed throughout the country in less than a 10-year period. Some of these arts centers were magnificent -- the facilities throughout the state. And what I learned from that was that any institution cannot continue and generate the economic dollars, and generate the community benefit, unless it's supported by the region. Bergen County has demonstrated, first -- because that's how we did it. Before we went to government, we said,

“Does the region -- 900,000 people -- want this place?” They said yes. And with the \$12 million or so that’s been raised since its rebirth we are here.

And what I think is important is: During these very stressful financial times -- and I’m a fiscal conservative -- some people consider me a fiscal conservative; I probably am -- I am, I confess. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Just don’t go to the right. Go ahead. (laughter)

MAYOR HUTTLE: Okay. We have to count every dollar that we spend. And when you count the dollars, you have to look at the revenue generation. And if you don’t look at the revenue generation, then each and every one making those decisions are shortsighted.

I ask you to expand when you’re looking at these difficult times. And if you want any information on that, I’d be happy to travel anywhere to explain it. But we have a tremendous opportunity in Bergen, and we tie that nexus to all the performing arts centers, and make New Jersey number one. And New York does look for other venues. So we have the recording, we have the 250,000 people, we have the children.

I deferred from the emphasis on -- because this is tourism -- but on the arts -- but we have a magic here, and it’s called something special, and it’s called *real dollars* for the State of New Jersey.

Thank you very much. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Mayor Huttle, thank you.

Mayor Huttle.

MAYOR HUTTLE: I’m sorry. You get to ask questions?  
(laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: I'm just going to call on Assemblyman -- Assemblyman Johnson raised his hand.

Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Yes. Through the Chair, a question to the Mayor of the City of Englewood. Being what his back -- what I know of his background and his passion for bergenPAC-- The New Jersey Arts Council -- and this is for clarification for those who may not know, and for me too -- the New Jersey Arts Council determines how much money each theater gets? Is that--

MAYOR HUTTLE: The New Jersey Arts Council -- and I'll defer those questions to Mr. Rodriguez -- which I assume he's testifying. The New Jersey Arts Council is the organization that does allocate the dollars across the state for the arts and other cultural-- Since you're mentioning the arts, I'll take my little statement. A certain Republican wrote an editorial -- sorry to be mentioning -- is Governor Kean, a while ago. But the New Jersey Arts Council, yes, does allocate the dollars.

This organization, and organizations across the state at this point -- for the amount of dollars that come through the Arts Council and the amount of effort that these types of organizations spend -- is a lot. Again, I think, yes, they allocate it. But we should also look at how we're allocating to promote not just arts, but tourism as an economic engine.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay. That's basically my question, Mayor. I've gotten certain complaints -- not complaints. People have approached me in this district here in the 37th about the amount of money that Bergen County puts into it versus how much we get back to support our theaters in the County of Bergen or our activities up here.

That's probably a discussion for later. But I think it's something that should be brought out while I have -- while we're having this -- while we're in this venue. So I will ask Mr. Rodriguez, when he comes to the table, a few more questions regarding that. And maybe, in some way, we can figure out a formula that will be seen as more equitable for the people of Bergen County when it comes to a county that's the most populated and also putting -- probably putting in the most dollars -- or a majority of the dollars comes from Bergen County. That will be a question for later though.

MAYOR HUTTLE: I'll leave that to the legislators.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Mayor Huttle, thank you, again. Thank you for being our host today.

MAYOR HUTTLE: Okay. And thank you.

And while you're in this city, any parking, any issues, just call me, and I will drive back and resolve them. (laughter)

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: That's better than I can do in my own home district.

While the Executive Director of the bergenPAC, David Rodriguez, makes his way up to the table, Senator Weinberg had mentioned that newly confirmed Director of the Division of Travel and Tourism for the State, Grace Hanlon. She was invited today and had to respectfully decline. She definitely wants to be invited back to our Tourism Committee next meeting. She's just kind of getting settled and was kind of pulled in nine different directions. But I did have a chance to meet her Friday. She is very, very upbeat. The Senator can attest to that as well.

And we're looking forward to working with her as a Committee as we move forward and start going to the next avenue.

And I also, real quick -- Mr. Rodriguez, if I can -- I just want to call on the members real fast just to see if there are any comments they want to say opening up. I probably should have done it in the beginning, but I'm going to ask now. And I'm going to start with Assemblywoman Huttle.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: I'll defer until later.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Okay. Assemblyman Johnson.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Briefly, first of all, I'd like to thank the people who are here today who have a passion for the arts, and history, and our historic sites in the State of New Jersey. Bergen County is rich in history. You speak of the -- and it's mentioned in the Resolution, there's a stop on the Underground Railroad throughout here. It goes back to Revolutionary days with New Bridge Crossing.

We have numerous theaters throughout the County of Bergen that are supported by -- mostly by the local taxpayers and also other grants from the State; and some from the Federal government, I guess. So we have to ensure -- we, as elected officials, have to ensure that we keep our history -- and history is also taught through the arts -- and our different cultures, because we are a multi-colored fabric as Americans. And each one of us comes from different backgrounds, but we need to ensure that the younger generations and future generations of people here have an understanding of where their families came from and what their different ethnicities are

about. And you get that through the arts and through culture, either through dance, or through acting, or through music.

So thank you. I'd like to thank you, Chairman, for coming up from District 1, which is way down in the southern part of our state, and for coming up to Bergen County and providing this forum for us to have some discussion.

Thank you, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you, Assemblyman.

Assemblywoman Munoz.

Just before she starts, that was our first, kind of, on-the-road-- Assemblywoman Munoz hosted us at the Paper Mill theater. And what a great day that was. I mean, just to see-- And it goes back to what I said earlier about actually seeing, hands-on, what these little theaters are doing. But also not just the theater but all the -- and here is what you don't think of, unless you see it. You can hear it all you want from people that -- of all the other businesses that are able to make out very well when they have a night of theater. Because the people are going to go to dinner, and then they're going to go after and maybe have their coffee and deserts. But to see how that whole town thrives during a theater night is very interesting.

And that's kind of the whole point that I like to bring, and see the whole flow-over of what happens -- even in the bergenPAC -- of what happens to these businesses surrounding that can also be able to contribute to the theater's success, and also be able to help themselves as well in an economy like this.

Assemblywoman Munoz.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUNOZ: Just briefly, thank you.

I see a lot of the same faces from when we've been at the other places -- at the Paper Mill. It's nice to be up here in Bergen County. My husband's brother lives in Bergen County. I'm from Union County. And as we go around the state, we see the importance of the arts for all the counties. And we're really happy to sit here and hear how you all contribute, because I do believe the importance of the arts in tourism. It's a huge economic driver for the State.

I have my quarters here because I'm not in the parking garage. (laughter) So I have to-- We're worried about getting a ticket. I don't know if they ticket or not aggressively out front, but we're going to keep our quarters ready. But just quickly, thank you all for coming, thank you for testifying, and thank you for your continued participation. Because like I said, I see a lot of the same faces, and we're happy to hear from you.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: And Assemblyman Schroeder, who is actually filling in for Assemblyman Wolfe.

Welcome, and thank you for filling in.

ASSEMBLYMAN SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I want to thank the Mayor for his words today. I know being the Mayor of a big city like Englewood, and having this major responsibility here, it's a great challenge. But obviously you're doing a great job, and thank you for that. And you do have my support.

MAYOR HUTTLE: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN SCHROEDER: And you know when a theater is doing good? When we want to go to an event here, and we have

to buy our tickets online at three times the value of the ticket. (laughter)  
So that's how you know you're doing good.

By the way, I was born and raised up in Washington Township, at the northern end of Bergen County. And I am absolutely a supporter of the arts and tourism, especially for our county. You know, you look at what our county has to offer -- you have the Meadowlands, you have the bergenPAC here. There are just so many outlets that our tourists can visit. And as a resident of Bergen County, as a legislator, I will continue to make sure we keep money flowing into Bergen County.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you, Assemblyman.

I want to welcome now David Rodriguez, Executive Director of bergenPAC.

David, I said to you earlier, thank you for opening up your house today for our, kind of, on-the-road show.

**DAVID RODRIGUEZ:** Well, thank you so much for joining us.

My name is David Rodriguez, and I'm the Executive Director here. I want to thank you for bringing the Committee here; the fellow members of the Committee, our local representatives -- Senator Weinberg and Assemblywoman Huttle, and Johnson -- for their leadership and advocacy; as well as Mayor Huttle, who is really more than our Mayor. I mean, we really have given him the title of founder, because when the theater did close-- When the doors closed, he took the key leadership role of bringing those people together. And as they say, one person tells two, two people tell four, so on, and so forth; and for that reason, we are here today.

This theater is now among the five busiest theaters in the state. As Frank had mentioned, we'll reach over 250,000 people this year. But we do a lot more. When he mentioned the recording hub, we now have -- after Sunday, we now have 8 Grammys and 14 nominations: anything from Steve Martin's bluegrass album to Tony Bennett's duets album were all recorded here on this stage. We've had over two dozen television shows done from here, from being a satellite for last year's NFL Draft to six HBO comedy specials.

Since we've reopened, we've had over \$20 million in private donations to the theater. One of the things that Frank broached upon was the fact that we didn't go to the public sector first. We made sure that the private sector wanted the theater. And up until quite recently, 94 percent of our funding was from the private sector. So that partnership is all the more critical, now more than ever.

We also bring over 30,000 young people into our stage every year. And one of the wonderful things about that is our policy where no child is turned away because of an inability to pay.

I could give the standard propoganda. I could quote the Port Authority of New Jersey study that every dollar generates four into the economy. I can go into Ernst and Young and talk about \$47 million into local economy for a 1,500-seat theater in Uptown Manhattan. I could speak about a small South Jersey town that saw occupancy (*sic*) rates that were -- for retail establishments that were 50 percent, that went down to 6 percent with the opening of an arts center.

But I'm really here to talk about Englewood and bergenPAC. We have a case study unlike any other. We know what it's like when the

doors close. We saw the arts eliminated from public schools when the doors closed. Eight of our local restaurants that you will see within this couple-block radius closed. Seven million dollars, according to our figures, were lost from the local economy when this theater closed. And, most importantly, the quality of life of the taxpayers who live in northern New Jersey changed.

I know we live in a time of austerity where budgets are being cut. It's easy to say *this program* or *this program*; when really the argument is: this program and this other program, and to what balance you create. I'm not here to say an AIDS program is more important than the arts, or the arts are more important than something else. But they all live in consort. And what I can say is how difficult it is to take a theater once it's -- back to being vital once it closes.

The difference of keeping that vital support, that vital lifeline coming through is so critical because when you start from zero, the credibility that you have to rebuild with audiences, with parents, with teachers, with donors takes years to repair. And the dollars that have to come from the State to replace those arts and education programs, to replace the tax dollars that came from those restaurants really becomes insurmountable.

People know what happens at bergenPAC now in terms of -- on a regular basis. This week you can see Meatloaf; the Polish Philharmonic; Blood, Sweat and Tears; the Temptations and the Four Tops; Robert Wuhl's new theater event; kids cabaret programs; and Pink Floyd. That's just this week, in addition to this meeting.

But what people really don't see -- the face that, in a sense, if you are buying tickets to those events -- are the 400 dance students that come into our program every week; the Poetry Out Loud program we're doing with the State that's happening next Wednesday; the tech shadowing that's going with the technical directors for Pink Floyd -- beyond theater classes and auditions that will be happening in this space tonight, beyond recording that's happening in the recording studio that we're going to visit after this meeting, and our performing arts partnerships that happen all week. Without your support, they don't happen.

I thank you for your advocacy and support; I thank you for your support of bergenPAC. And I don't want to repeat what other people have said. I know you're our advocates; I know you are our friends. We need more. We need not just the stabilization of funding, but we need more funding. We were very fortunate to have, I believe, the Secretary of State come to an arts event in Trenton recently, and she said, "We're not going to cut you anymore in the coming budget," which is all well and good. But because of the baseline on the Hotel Occupancy tax, they can't cut us anymore without losing that tax. Chris Rock comes here a lot. He lives locally. And he says, "It's like getting minimum wage. We'd like to pay you less, but we can't."

Right now, statewide, we fund the arts less than any of the outer boroughs of New York City. I'm not talking about Manhattan. Queens gets more than the entire State of New Jersey in terms of arts funding. We're not asking for a lot. But what you give us we'll do a lot with.

I thank you for your support; I thank you for your advocacy.  
(applause)

And I also want to introduce someone who is part of one of our education programs. We do want an arts tinge today, so it's a pleasure to introduce Erica Butler, who won our bergenPAC Idol competition just last week.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: And if we can, Mr. Rodriguez, right before she starts -- and as she is working her way up -- I just want to ask the members if they have any questions. And before they do, before I call on our members-- Talking about your funding -- because this is part of the information that we need as we go start our budget process for this state -- and you made a very good point, as the Mayor did as well, about when that dollar is spent and how many dollars come back. I mean, there are a lot of different ones. But we know that this industry, whether it is the tourism and the arts, and it's our beaches, and the history of our state-- And we know when we advertise and market what we have in this state -- is very, very important. And as we're going into the spring-summer marketing campaign, knowing about what kind of funding has to happen to a place like this-- Can you give a range of what bergenPAC would have got at its highest on a State funding and what it is now?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: At its highest, bergenPAC received -- with the exclusion of any type of line-item support -- roughly \$450,000. Right now, our base funding is \$118,000.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Okay. If it's not too much to ask, what does it take to run a place like bergenPAC? You don't have to give me an exact. I just want to--

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Our total budget is about \$5.2 million. The funding from the State means a lot of different things. First of all, it's a stamp of approval. There is a panel process linked to arts funding in the State of New Jersey. And there are smaller funders who will say, "Listen, we know that they've gone through the arduous process of audits, so on and so forth, to make sure that this is a 501(c) credible organization." And that stamp of approval is very important.

But I can speak for bergenPAC -- when we closed, our level of funding did not jump back up all the way -- although when the Harms was at its peak it had about 67,000 people a year, and we're now at 250,000. When there are no more dollars going into the arts bucket, it's hard to restore people based on the amount of people they serve. Right now, Bergen County gets about 3 percent of the arts budget, and about 16 percent of personal income taxes to Trenton come from Bergen County. So it's a little lopsided right now.

But we're partnering with the Arts Council, and the issue is: Once again, we're fighting for the crumbs that are left. There needs to be more funding on every level, whether it's through partnerships with other organizations, whether its through marketing linked with tourism, so on and so forth. For those good programs, for those programs that are shooting up, like bergenPAC and many of the others who are going to testify later on in this room -- that they can get that seed funding to make a difference.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: The process with the State -- has it become more cumbersome to get those dollars or less? When I say -- does the paperwork process seem more cumbersome than it did when you were

getting \$450,000? I'm looking for a pattern here to see if they're making it more difficult for established places like bergenPAC.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I wouldn't say that it's more difficult, because when there are half the independent programs to apply to, it becomes very easy, because those programs don't exist anymore. We have general operating support that goes in every three years, which lessens some of the cumbersome paperwork. The problem is: The amount of paperwork you're doing versus the dollars that you're getting for doing that paperwork are sometimes -- in our case, a third of what they were.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Very good. Thank you.

Assemblywoman Huttle.

Assemblyman Johnson, anything for--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

Hi, Dave.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Hi, Gordon.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I asked this question before of Mayor Huttle -- the process used by the New Jersey Arts Council determines how much funding a particular theater gets. Could you just-- Do you know what that process is and how they come up with a number they assign to a theater?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: There are two things that come into play in terms of someone's funding. It includes both a panel process that looks at general artistic excellence and outreach. They're more specific than that, but in a nutshell those are the criteria. And those are looked at versus your last year's -- prior year's funding. And increases and decreases are made from that.

So the good part about the funding process is that you really do find people from all over the country making decisions. And we're very proud to both get an award of excellence for being in the top 5 percent, and being designated a major arts institution by the State and the panel. But if you're getting a \$500,000 grant, and that gets you a 10-percent increase; as opposed to if you're getting a \$100,000 grant and you get a 10-percent increase -- you can do the math.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: You mentioned before in your testimony that -- you mentioned 16 percent versus 3 percent.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: What was that again?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Personal income tax going from Bergen County to Trenton versus where we are now. I mean-- I will say, though, that there are statewide organizations like the New Jersey Symphony -- I certainly would consider New Jersey PAC a statewide organization in many respects -- that are counted amongst their -- in particular counties. So lots of people can do things with math. But what I can tell you more than anything is, if there is not a lot of -- any more in the pot, these things can't be fixed.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: One last question, Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Please.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: You brought up New Jersey PAC. How much do they get?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I wouldn't want to speak specifically to -- I can't tell you what they got this year.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Approximately.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I believe--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: What's been published?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I believe it's somewhere between \$800,000 and \$1.2 million, in that range.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: But please don't hold me to that.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: How many employees does bergenPAC employ?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: We have over a hundred part-time employees, and I believe we have 22 full-time employees. But that blossoms when we do recordings, when we -- whatever it might be.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Is that all local?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Largely local. And I have to say we rely on volunteers. Every person you see greet you at a performance is a volunteer giving of their time. This is a place built on passion.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Very good.

And now, please introduce our entertainment today.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: And now it's a real pleasure to introduce Erica Butler.

**ERICA BUTLER:** (witness performs) (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Erica, thank you very much. That was absolutely beautiful. We actually probably should have you come sing in the Rotunda in Trenton, because they could use some pick-me-ups and just reminders of why we're all serving up there. (laughter) But it was absolutely beautiful.

And I told Erica before we started-- I was like, "Hey, you know what, every time -- I'm going to give you a cue about every 20 minutes, and you have to come up with another song." (laughter) She decided to play throughout the whole meeting.

Next on our witness list is Carolyn Clark, Director, New Jersey Ballet; and Paul McRae, Associate (*sic*) Director.

Welcome. Come on up.

**CAROLYN CLARK:** Thank you very much for this opportunity.

And good morning everyone -- or should I say good afternoon? Where are we now?

Just some background on New Jersey Ballet: It was founded in 1958 and gave its first performance at Arts High in Newark. Since then, we travel to 10 venues across the state. We have been out of the country to Russia twice, Bermuda, Italy, Taiwan, bringing the arts from New Jersey to the rest of the world in addition to New Jersey.

More funding would be absolutely fabulous.

Is that not right, Paul?

**PAUL McRAE:** That is true.

**MS. CLARK:** To give you some idea, our top funding was \$220,000, and that was in the late '80s. Right now, we're receiving \$90,000. So with all that we've done in the past, and our record, we could do so much more for New Jersey. We've been going down to South Jersey for 15 years to the Performing Arts Center presenting our *Nutcracker*. We celebrated our 40th anniversary of *Nutcracker* at the Community Theater in Morristown this past year.

Do you want to add anything?

I wasn't expecting to speak, so--

MR. McRAE: New Jersey Ballet is a statewide organization. We have a long history here at the bergenPAC center. We were here when it was the John Harms Center.

MS. CLARK: And that was back in 1976.

MR. McRAE: And we have the proud honor of being the first organization to present when the theater reopened. Mr. Huttle here had us come back and do our *Nutcracker* so that there would not be a break in our performing season there -- the year. And so we--

MS. CLARK: And I remember -- a little side effect -- the doors were locked, and this nice gentleman ran down with the keys so we could get in and do the dress rehearsal.

MR. McRAE: It is really important. I mean, the arts play a big part in the economic development of communities. And we see that time and time again in the many different theaters we perform in throughout the state. We just were part of the opening of the new Lackland Center up in Hackettstown, which really has just brought that community into a new era of economic development and growth. You can see that there is lots of new activity downtown -- the restaurants opening.

And so it really helps to have the arts in the community, and it helps to have strong arts organizations in the state that are available to present at those locations as well, and to build audiences and to bring in people from out-of-state to come and see performances.

We are trying to develop programming that will not only bring audiences to these theaters, but to bring audiences from out-of-state -- bringing in unique choreographers, unique programming. We did, at the

New Jersey Performing Arts Center, a full-length *Esmeralda*, which was the first production of that ballet in 50 years in the United States. And that brought audiences from the whole tri-state area into New Jersey just to see that production. So we're committed to being here in New Jersey, and we're committed to being all over the state and building a broad audience base.

MS. CLARK: And we might add that the arts, I think, make life worth living.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Yes.

MR. McRAE: The other thing that really would help with arts organizations and tourism is a marketing program -- a really strong marketing program to show that there are activities here in the state and that we are all a part of one big community; and supporting not only the arts in New Jersey, but tourism in New Jersey and bringing people into the state. We have lots of beautiful venues here, both historical and artistic, that really could use a steady stream of people from out-of-state to come and enjoy what New Jersey has to offer.

MS. CLARK: I remember years ago Ray Bateman was on our board for 12 years. He made a statement: "You could have the best product there is, but if you don't have the money to market it, it's of absolutely no value." And I think that was a--

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Very good point.

MS. CLARK: Quite a wonderful statement.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Yes, it is.

Thank you, both, for coming.

I'm just going to-- If you could just stay one minute.

MR. McRAE: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: A comment from Assemblywoman Huttle, then Assemblyman Johnson.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Just a comment -- actually a compliment to New Jersey Ballet.

As Mr. Rodriguez said, we need, sometimes, stamps of approval, and we need to validate what's important. I will tell you that when the New Jersey Ballet performs here at bergenPAC, that is certainly a validation of approval and the importance of bringing the Ballet here. And New Jersey Ballet has to be applauded. And I wish you continued success. Because, don't forget, they're not part of bergenPAC, but they perform all over the State of New Jersey. So without the New Jersey Ballet--

MS. CLARK: Which makes it very difficult.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: You are representing the ballet for New Jersey. So I just want to thank you for that.

MR. McRAE: Thank you.

MS. CLARK: We thank you for that.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Where are you headquartered?

MR. McRAE: We are headquartered in Livingston, New Jersey, but our performance venues are throughout the state.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Throughout the state.

MR. McRAE: The Community Theater -- the Mayo Center in Morristown, and bergenPAC, Cape May as well.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I understand, you cover the whole state. I understand that.

How do you rehearse? I mean, you bring people from all over the state to come together at a central location, I guess, where you practice or rehearse.

MS. CLARK: Well, we have studios in Livingston, and we have-- Dancers are on a 26-week contract. We operate October through December, and then February through May. And they rehearse at the studios in Livingston, and then we travel.

MR. McRAE: But our dancers live all over: in Hudson County, in Union County. We have dancers in Monmouth County and Middlesex. So they all come to us--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: All travel to Livingston.

MR. McRAE: --on a daily basis to rehearse, and then we go out and perform wherever.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay. You mentioned the number -- at the peak you got \$220,000 from the State at one time.

MS. CLARK: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: And it's down to \$90,000 now.

MS. CLARK: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I guess I'll see you again when you come before the Budget Committee, being that I sit on the Budget Committee. (laughter) I'll have these numbers.

Do you have a number in mind that you could live with? Is that a proper question, Chairman? Do you have a guesstimate, maybe?

MS. CLARK: Well, we could do so much more if we could raise our budget from \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million; and if we could go from \$90,000 to -- what would you say, Paul -- \$150,000.

MR. McRAE: Yes, \$150,000.

MS. CLARK: I mean, we run a very, very tight ship. Otherwise, we wouldn't still be here.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I understand.

MR. McRAE: But the real base of funding is that the pot from the hotel/motel tax -- the amount that the Arts Council gets needs to be larger. It should be somewhere around \$21 million, and it's now \$16 million or something. So if that pot could grow back up to its base of at least \$21 million, then the arts community would be doing much better.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: As a whole, the arts community.

MR. McRAE: As a whole, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Chair.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: When you mentioned you could do so much more, what is that? Just so I can hear, the Committee can hear, other people can hear-- When you say you could do so much more, what is it?

MS. CLARK: Well, at the peak of funding, we were doing about 60 to 80 performances statewide. We were doing 60 to 80 educational programs from Bergen County to Salem County. Right now, we've had to cut back to 40 performances statewide, and our educational programming, because it's a no-revenue situation, is down to about 12, which is absolutely pathetic.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: What is the no-revenue?

MR. McRAE: The educational program.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Okay. What age range are you trying -- or do you do with educational?

MS. CLARK: Well, educational, we go from grammar school right through college.

MR. McRAE: So we do basically in-school lecture/demonstration programs. But since there is so little support for -- funding for arts in the education system right now, it's really difficult to subsidize, get those performances subsidized, and so we're really focusing on the revenue-generating performances that we're able to present.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: And the revenue-generating being ticket sales?

MR. McRAE: Yes.

MS. CLARK: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: What other revenue generators do you have? Ad books, corporate sponsorships?

MS. CLARK: We do advertising, we have a ballet guild that presents different luncheons and things to raise money during the year.

MR. McRAE: We have corporate sponsorships. We have fundraising -- general fundraising; grants from private philanthropy organizations.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Have you seen attendance at your performances increase, decrease, stay the same, say, in a three- or four-year period?

MS. CLARK: Well, we did receive a very nice grant from the Kirby Foundation. And when we were able to use those -- it was specifically for marketing. When we were able to use those marketing dollars,

audiences increased at the theater, which seats 1,200, from about 300 or 400 to 1,000. So we feel that's--

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: So it's about that marketing which we keep going back to.

MS. CLARK: Yes, marketing budget. I mean, as I said before, if people -- you have a great product. But if you can't market it, it doesn't go and it doesn't mean anything.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Yes, I just wanted to make sure everyone heard that out loud.

Thank you very much.

Any other questions from the Committee? (no response)

Thank you, again.

MR. McRAE: Thank you.

MS. CLARK: Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: The next one I want to call up is David Kaplan, Director, Yogi Berra Museum and Learning Center.

Welcome.

**DAVID KAPLAN:** Thank you.

First of all, thank you for inviting me. Any funding from the Arts committee is something we'll take. (laughter) We don't receive any.

But I would like the opportunity-- I appreciate the opportunity to tell you a little bit about what we do. And I should set the record straight. We're the Yogi Berra Museum and Learning Center. And Yogi Berra and learning center is not an oxymoron. (laughter) We do some wonderful education programs -- character education programs, as the State has slashed those programs throughout the state. I just came from an anti-

bullying assembly, one of the many that we do throughout the state. Yesterday, in the *Bergen Record*, I wrote an op-ed piece about a leadership program that we conduct to prevent hazing and bullying in high schools. And that's really what we're about. I mean, we're a -- reflect the values and the life of Yogi Berra, who is really one of our state's treasurers, a national treasure.

Just very briefly, we began in 1998. We're a 501(c)(3) nonprofit on the campus of Montclair State. We're currently going through a pretty extensive renovation. And, you know, it's funny, my daughter, who goes to college in Pennsylvania, was asked to do a persuasive speech in her speech class. And so being a born and bred Jersey girl, she read me what she wrote. And it was really about how New Jersey gets an unfair rap and probably has more things to see and do -- more historic and entertainment venues than states four times its size. And how bad can New Jersey be if Bruce Springsteen -- born here, never left; and Yogi Berra has made it his home for over 50 years?

And our state is very unique. And to that point, we think the Yogi Berra Museum and Learning Center is really quite a unique place as well. Like I said, we're kind of in a tucked-away place in a corner of Montclair State, which is the fastest growing university in our state. And I'm confident that when we reopen in April, we are going to be a must-see attraction. I know we draw visitors from all over the country, and even actually different countries as well -- South America, Japan.

And I think largely that's because of our subject. He is, as I said, an American treasure. Yogi transcends baseball. He appeals to all generations. He's arguably the most quoted person in the country, he's

arguably the most beloved sports figure in the country. And our challenge, really, has been to tell his story in a very compelling fashion and reflect those values: respect, humility, honesty, and good character. And I think Yogi really represents, to people, a kind of decency that our America grew up on. And he happened to be a fairly awesome baseball player as well, winning more championships than anybody in the history of the game. And really, his life story is very inspirational. It is the story of the American dream.

So our challenge, right now-- I heard a lot about marketing. That's our issue as well. Yogi is definitely old-school, but we're going new-school, mostly social media outlets. We work very, very closely with the students and the faculty at Montclair State. We have a wonderful association. So we are now beginning to market the Museum in very nontraditional venues, whether they be Facebook, Twitter, Google marketing. And whatever I don't understand I'm asking my college daughter. (laughter)

In closing, I would just like to say that we have a jewel of a museum in a gem of a state. And really, to borrow an observation from Yogi, "If nobody goes to us anymore, it's only because it's too crowded."

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Any comments or questions from the Committee while Mr. Kaplan is here? (no response)

Thank you very much for your--

MR. KAPLAN: Okay. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: And also, your anti-bullying stuff is very, very important, as it is to Assemblywoman Huttel as well. I've been

doing the same in the South for our kids as well. That has really taken off; the awareness has become-- And I don't want to go off track, but you mentioned something that is very near and dear -- and it's gotten that way for me. And through Assemblywoman Huttle, it's come out into a real important issue.

MR. KAPLAN: It's just astonishing how bullying in different forms takes place. I mean, we were talking to first and second graders today. And I was just talking to the principal about how it's an epidemic.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: It is. Keep up that good work, because it's going to be very important for our kids in the future.

MR. KAPLAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Next, I'm going to call up -- I'm going to give this a whirl -- Mike Trepicchio. (indicating pronunciation) Was I close?

**M I C H A E L T R E P I C C H I O:** Trepicchio. (indicating pronunciation)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Bergen County Historical Society, Historic New Bridge Landing Commission.

MR. TREPICCHIO: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you.

MR. TREPICCHIO: I also have Mr. Kevin Wright here with me, who is a past--

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: I could have said that name.  
(laughter)

MR. TREPICCHIO: He is the past president of the Bergen County Historical Society, as well as the Sussex County Historical Society, and currently serves as the Secretary of the New Bridge Landing State Park Commission.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Welcome.

MR. TREPICCHIO: On behalf of the Bergen County Historical Society, I welcome you to historic Bergen County. For those of you who may not be familiar with our efforts, the Bergen County Historical Society is a century-old and entirely volunteer, nonprofit association devoted to the preservation, study, and public presentation of local history in New Jersey's most populous county. We have proudly promoted Historic New Bridge Landing since 1904, when historian William Alexander Linn first published research documenting Baron von Steuben's Estate at New Bridge, promoting appreciation of its association with Baron von Steuben, the Prussian Inspector-General of the Continental troops who personally organized and trained the first American Army.

Historic New Bridge Landing preserves and interprets a scenic fragment of the Jersey Dutch countryside, strategically situated at the narrows of the Hackensack River and famed for its compelling role in the Revolutionary War. Lying so close to Manhattan, the principal base of British operations throughout the War, New Bridge served as a battleground, encampment ground, military headquarters, and intelligence-gathering post throughout the War.

The Zabriskie-Steuben House is the only extant house along the route of the British invasion and Washington's retreat through Bergen County in November 1776. General Washington established headquarters in the Zabriskie-Steuben House when the Continental Army encamped between Van Saun Park and Soldiers Hill Road in Oradell, in September 1780.

Historic New Bridge Landing also tells the story of our multicultural origins. Through a process of conflict and accommodation, the Bergen Dutch blended significant contributions from the indigenous Lenape, Netherlanders, Africans, English, Germans, French Huguenots, Scots, Scots-Irish, Scandinavians, Polish Silesians, and others into a distinct regional folk culture. The process of creolization is evident in the development of a Jersey Dutch dialect, folk architecture, and material culture, including distinctive styles and traditions of furniture, tools, utensils, and decorative objects.

The much admired examples of Jersey Dutch sandstone architecture at Historic New Bridge Landing, augmented by the extensive artifact and archival collections of the Bergen County Historical Society and the Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation, tell the compelling story of New Jersey's pivotal role in American history, progressing from the most culturally diverse colony to the most densely populated state.

Few sites in New Jersey are as well situated as a potential heritage destination. Historic New Bridge Landing Park is centrally located within Bergen County with its largely suburban population of about 895,000 people. It is also centrally located within the Greater New York Metropolitan Area, the nation's most populous, which stretches from

northeastern Pennsylvania to western Connecticut, encompassing a population of over 20 million people. Only nine miles from the George Washington Bridge, New Bridge Landing is convenient to most major arteries of travel, including State Routes 4 and 17, Interstate 80, the Palisades Interstate Parkway, the Garden State Parkway, the New Jersey Turnpike. This historic park is only two blocks distant from major rail and bus lines. Hotels, restaurants, a shopping mall, and other visitor amenities are literally within walking distance.

For those of you who are not residents, but have arrived safely in our midst, you must have already discovered that Bergen County is New Jersey's most populous county. It is also the nation's most *boroughized* county, boasting 70 municipalities within a land area of only 234 square miles. Consequently, there are 275 public and private schools within its territory. New Bridge Landing is well-situated to serve this large school population as a unique educational resource. As you are well aware, Bergen County also spans six of New Jersey's 40 legislative districts. Given its location, ease of access, significant resources appealing to heritage and ecological tourists, Historic New Bridge Landing holds great audience potential.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines *heritage tourism* as traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past. This is according to Cheryl Hargrove, the Trust's first heritage tourism director. It is one of the fastest growing niche market segments in the travel industry. A 1996 U.S. Travel Data Center survey showed 45 percent of American adults who planned a pleasure trip said that they intended to visit a historic site while

on vacation; 41 percent of the leisure travelers also planned to visit a cultural site.

“Museum Facts,” published by the American Association of Museums, includes the following visitor data: A 1996 survey shows that museums rank in the top three family vacation destinations. A 1999 study shows Americans from all income and educational ranges visit and value museums. Tourists who visit museums spend nearly twice as much on their travel as those who do not. And for every \$0.50 of public money invested, museums generate \$1 in private support.

Studying the economic impacts of heritage tourism, in partnership with the New Jersey Historic Trust and the Center for Urban Policy Research, the Task Force of New Jersey History found that just under 5 million heritage day-trippers visited New Jersey annually between 1993 and 1995, spending an average of \$56 per adult. This group alone accounted for an annual expenditure of about \$276 million. The Task Force also reported that about 658,000 overnight tourists visited annually between '93 and '95, spending an average of \$101 per adult. This contributed over \$66 million annually to the State's economy.

Visitors to historic sites tend to stay longer and to travel in larger groups than other overnight tourists. They also are more likely to be repeat visitors. According to the Task Force survey, 68 percent of historic-site administrators named motor coach travelers -- particularly 65 years of age or older -- as their primary growth market. About 50 percent identified school groups as a primary growth market, 46 percent identified family groups, and 45 percent named senior citizens.

As Ms. Hargrove pointed out, “The American heritage traveler is older, better educated, and more affluent than other tourists.” Baby Boomers particularly like to experience history through travel. Professor David Listokin, of the Center for Urban Research (*sic*), concurs, noting aging Baby Boomers have a greater interest than their parents in things historic and in preservation. They also have greater financial resources and, therefore, opportunities for leisure activities. One in three international visitors can also be expected to visit a historic attraction.

To promote growth in all sectors of the tourism economy, the New Jersey Tourism Master Plan called for a commitment to provide a quality visitor experience, for a concerted effort to strengthen the State’s image and leverage unique assets which competitors cannot offer by promoting and appreciating what is uniquely New Jersey; and to build an industry which effectively pools resources for collaborative promotion while also providing choices and value for the consumer. Studies show tourists universally demand a quality experience and are willing to pay for it.

Historic New Bridge Landing promotes what is uniquely New Jersey, and we have been in the business of heritage tourism long before it became fashionable. In 1888, two elderly women rode their carriage to the Zabriskie mansion at New Bridge and asked to see the stone vault where their grandfather, Hackensack tavern keeper Archibald Campbell, had hidden during a cold March night in 1780 to escape his British captors. They were the first trickle in a steady and growing stream of visitors attracted to the storied landscape that is New Bridge.

The vision and goals for Historic New Bridge Landing have not substantially changed over the past 65 years since the Bergen County

Historical Society acquired eight acres on Main Street in River Edge, in 1944, to facilitate the relocation of a proposed county highway bridge to be built adjacent to the south gable end of the landmark Steuben House. With the Society's inspiration, investment, and encouragement, this significant remnant of the Jersey Dutch countryside, a Revolutionary battleground and one of the last unspoiled vistas of the Hackensack River in its central valley, was preserved for future generations.

At that time, as Hackensack Avenue was extended beyond Main Street to a new conjunction with New Bridge Road, plans were made to save not only the 1889 swing bridge, but also the historic Demarest House in New Milford and the Westervelt-Thomas Barn in Washington Township through their relocation to the newly acquired lands. Most importantly, plans were made to build a Hall of History at New Bridge to house the outstanding collection of Jersey Dutch and Bergen County artifacts displayed in the Steuben House since 1939. These museum collections, accumulated by the Bergen County Historical Society since its founding in 1902, once made the Steuben House the best attended State historic site in New Jersey.

Since the State of New Jersey only acquired the Steuben House on a postage-size stamp of land in 1928, the Bergen County Historical Society donated land immediately south of the house in 1959 to allow for the construction of a public parking lot to accommodate visitors. The Township of Teaneck foresightedly acquired the former Rekow Farm and Benson's Campground through Green Acres purchases in 1968 and 1969, creating Clarence Brett Park. This not only preserves a vital wetland and a

scenic historic view shed of the river, but also a Native American site and a significant piece of the Revolutionary War battleground.

In 1977, the Historical Society offered the County of Bergen a 50-year ground lease to move the Campbell-Christie House from New Milford onto its land, on condition that the Historical Society not only have occupancy of the structure in keeping with its mission, but also the exclusive right to determine its use and historic restoration. In exchange, the County of Bergen agreed to pay utilities and to maintain the house and its mechanical systems in sound condition.

The Bergen County Historical Society revived comprehensive planning for the site in 1984, first suggesting restoration of its name, *Historic New Bridge Landing*, to brand and market the entire site and its popular menu of programs. This branding has been highly successful. Through bipartisan support, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission was established by law in 1995 to coordinate and implement Federal, State, county, municipal, and private development policies and other activities related to the historic preservation and recreational use of the property under the Commission's jurisdiction. The Commission successfully generated a general management plan, a comprehensive interpretive plan, and an implementation plan. Based upon the common and clearly articulated goals and objectives set forth therein, the Commission acquired, through Green Acres purchase, the Pizza Town lot and the adjacent Sutton and Lys property on Hackensack Avenue for parking, as well as the former Saw Shop property at the eastern approach to the historic swing bridge.

Through former U.S. Senator Robert Torricelli, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission received a \$1.1 million Federal grant in January of 2001 to purchase and remediate the former BAPCO property as the site for a proposed visitor center and battle monument. Removal of the former auto salvage yard and its enclosed fence now reveals Historic New Bridge Landing to 40,000 passing motorists daily. New signage, freely and professionally designed by Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commissioners Ann Subrizi and Deborah Powell, has been installed to capture an ever-expanding interest in what is destined to become a major heritage destination.

While Governor McGreevey officially designated Historic New Bridge Landing as one of the three new urban State parks on October 21, 2004 -- the others being Trenton, and Great Falls in Paterson -- no benefits accrued to the site by this action and all moneys were instead spent at other locations.

While the Steuben House has been subject to supernormal tides over the centuries, a northeaster in April 2007 proved the perfect storm. Despite considerable experience in protecting the artifact collections displayed at the Steuben House over the previous 70 years, and despite a timely warning and offer of volunteer assistance, the museum collections suffered \$170,000 in flood-related damages. Consequently, the powers and jurisdictional boundaries of the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission were expanded through new legislation in 2009, transferring administration of the State-owned lands and buildings to the Commission. The bill unanimously passed both Houses of the Legislature, indicating

bipartisan support for this model public-private partnership in preserving and promoting a cynosure of New Jersey's rich historical identity.

The Blauvelt-Demarest Foundation has recently completed a \$60,000 restoration of the Demarest House at Historic New Bridge Landing, and the Bergen County Historical Society -- a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) volunteer organization -- provides all the programming without any governmental support. The County Historical Society has over 500 members and remains the largest landowner at New Bridge.

We already know that Historic New Bridge Landing has much to recommend to its wide audience -- interesting associations with historic persons and events, especially with the Revolutionary War; a treasure of historic artifacts and architecture evident of the vanished folkways; a scenic river view, and open space amidst suburban congestion.

With a great story to tell, it is obviously a great opportunity to hand -- there's a great opportunity at hand to leverage what should become a premier heritage destination in Bergen County. From long experience in successful marketing and programming -- that Bergen County needs and deserves a premier historic park of national significance and interest to claim and to honor its unique cultural identity, and to serve as a catalytic attraction for a whole host of other worthy and diverse tourist destinations.

We have already succeeded in our efforts at branding. Both the postal substation and former North Hackensack train station were renamed New Bridge Landing, literally putting us on the map. But our greatest challenge remains a lack of tourist infrastructure to accommodate visitors. Limits on staffing, operational funding, infrastructure, and publicity over the many years have kept New Bridge Landing one of New Jersey's hidden

gems or best-kept secrets. But few historic parks are more historically deserving, more scenically endowed, or better positioned in a heavily populated metropolitan area to provide a range of meaningful visitor experiences. Even after 83 years as a State-owned and operated historic site, the Zabriskie-Steuben House lacks public restrooms or any full-time professional staff to sustain a destination of great potential.

For this and various other good reasons, the Historic New Bridge Landing Park Commission is working on a plan to drive revenues to help sustain our operations and serve the public. There is a great opportunity right under our noses, and all it would take is little in the way of resources to make it worthwhile for neighbors and long-distance travelers to come and spend the day.

I encourage you, in your role as legislators, to change the way we do business and to help us build an economic engine that will benefit all of us in many important ways.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you.

Are you saying anything, or are you just there supporting? (affirmative responses). Please do, feel free.

**KEVIN WRIGHT:** I would just add something.

I think heritage tourism is keyed into the often-noted identity crisis that New Jersey suffers from. I think we would all agree on that. If you stop and think about competing in the Manhattan market, which we do every day with our programming, we have something -- we have one of those things that if you live in Manhattan you have to come to Bergen County to see. Only six buildings in Manhattan predate the year 1800.

And there is a growing interest in the original culture of the colony of New Netherlands, which encompasses Bergen County. Because if you read the best-selling book *I Lived in (sic) the Center of the World*, you realize that who we are as Americans descends not from the monocultural pilgrims of Massachusetts or the cavalier society of Virginia, it descends from the multicultural society and the origins of the civic value of tolerance that grew in the colony -- the Dutch colony surrounding the Hudson River. And Bergen County does preserve the multicultural origins of Manhattan. If you want to see that, you have to leave Manhattan and come to Bergen County, because only here has it survived, and survived much longer, in Bergen County.

I want to make one last point, because I think it's very important to what we do. I think that heritage tourism has suffered over many years because it is considered a form of entertainment, and it is not. I can't emphasize this enough. I never had to-- No one in a school ever had to teach me what the Second World War was, or the Vietnam War was, or even the Civil War was. You learned this at home. This was part of what you absorbed in multigenerational families even 50 or 60 years ago.

But, today, since 2007, no school child can go to the Steuben House. After generations -- 70 years or more of school children being able to come here and see this, they are no longer able to do that. And I want to emphasize, because I think when you look at the big picture -- if you looked at the events that just happened in Egypt -- that democratic -- hopefully democratic revolution-- I want to emphasize that in November of 1776, an empirical armada arrived in New York Harbor, transporting 30,000 of Europe's finest troops who were determined to crush an experiment in self-

government. They successfully routed the American Army from Manhattan and took control of the lower Hudson Valley. And only five months after the Declaration of Independence was signed, the American cause -- this experiment in self-government -- was on the verge of utter collapse. When the British crossed to Bergen County and climbed the steep wall of the Palisades on November 20, 1776, to attempt to trap a remnant of Washington's Army at Fort Lee between the Hudson and Hackensack rivers, there was only one route to safety for that army to live and fight another day, and that was New Bridge. This is what Tom Paine meant by, "These are the times that try men's souls."

And I ask you, as I ask all the visitors to Historic New Bridge Landing, to remember this one thought: When that army, with Washington at its head, crossed that bridge -- and we have eyewitness accounts that say you could follow the trail of that army by the blood stains in the snow and ice on the road on which they traveled -- blood stains. They were shoeless -- virtually shoeless. And Washington personally led them over the bridge. And I always ask people to remember: At that moment in history how many other democratic republics were on the face of this earth? None. So when you look out at the world today, and you look at however imperfect the various democracies and republics of this earth are and, perhaps, will always be, they all descend from that line of march that crossed that New Bridge. This is not entertainment. This is the most important thing that we can give to ourselves, and to our children, and to future generations.

We are -- we have done what we have done here so far largely, if not entirely, on volunteer -- through volunteer efforts. As recently as two

years ago we applied for a general operating support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission and were denied, which is -- I can understand. You can't give money to everybody. But when we asked for the reviews on that -- for why we were denied, several things came out from those review notes. They were: "Number one, you're in Bergen County. They have a lot of money up there. Go ask them for the money." And then they turned around and gave \$43,000 to another very worthy organization in Ho-Ho-Kus. We were told that our board members were too old -- ageism. Unfortunately, we never gave them the age of a single board member. And I think you can see from Mike and I that we're not terribly old. I bet you the average-- I'm beginning to appreciate what age means with every day. But, you know, these are not valid reasons not to support what we have tried to do here.

So I ask you to consider these things. History and heritage tourism-- If you look at the public news -- commercials from other states, you would think that the War was entirely fought -- the American Revolution -- in Massachusetts or Pennsylvania. You can read statistics comparing the moneys that are derived from tourism at Valley Forge versus Morristown, where Washington spent not only two winters, but the worst winter in the last 200 years. In January of 1780, New York Harbor froze six feet deep. They brought cannons and artillery across from Manhattan to Jersey City on the ice. And that's when those men were ensconced up there in--

This is the most compelling story we can tell our children -- our future. And believe me, we're not asking-- We receive nothing in public grant support, nothing. Everything we do is from a love of what we do.

And if we fail in the New York market -- the tourist market -- we're finished. Do you see what I mean? If I put on a program that doesn't bring in more revenues than it costs, we lose. We run this largely off of membership and our ability to provide adequate programming.

So don't forget history in the mix. It is what is uniquely New Jersey, and it is not entertainment. And I don't say that to deride-- I'm a great visitor of art museums both here and in Manhattan, and other places. And so I know what the arts mean -- the same thing. I don't consider the arts entertainment either. But this goes to the core of who we are as a people. People preach about family values and use it when its politically convenient, but we do it every day because we believe in it.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you very much.

And you make a great point, because as we're going around the state, we're starting to realize that our Committee should be the Tourism, Arts, and Historic Committee -- History Committee. And one of the business items we have today is to pass a resolution -- one of the amendments is to add *history* to this amendment. And if you stay around, you'll see what that resolution is going to do.

Committee members?

Assemblywoman Huttle.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Thank you very much, gentlemen, for coming. You certainly enlightened us on the history of not only Bergen County, but New Bridge.

I also want to note that there was a train stop there not too long ago for our members, and the name of the train stop was North Hackensack. And we, legislators in Bergen County, changed that to New

Bridge Landing -- for the train stop. That's how important that is right here in our own county.

SENATOR WEINBERG: That took five years for NJ TRANSIT, by the way.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Which goes to the next statement -- how important it is; that we don't even -- not that-- We get it. But it's hard for people to grasp that.

And my question, I guess, to Kevin -- because I was actually going to say, as a parent, I remember when -- you know, my daughter is 22, so I think it was, like, her first grade trip -- we went to New Bridge, and I had just discovered it that many years ago -- 15 years ago, whatever that was.

MR. WRIGHT: I hate to tell you who she probably talked to.  
(laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Probably.

But you say we learn history at home, and that's so true. But you can't imagine -- when you go and see it, and feel it, and touch it, it's much different than just reading about it.

And so my question is-- I did not realize, you said the tours stopped in 2007 -- what happened -- for the kids?

MR. WRIGHT: Oh, after the flood.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Right. But are you back now?

MR. WRIGHT: Well, we lost the position.

MR. TREPICCHIO: The site is open for special events right now, but there is no staffing there. It's run by volunteers. The school

children come during the week, so there is no staff -- paid staff on site to facilitate that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: So you're not having -- if I may, through the Chair -- you don't have the classes come and visit now. Is that temporary until you get-- Is it that you need funding for that?

MR. TREPICCHIO: Right. We would hope that we would be able to-- Obviously, we would want to never have that stop. I mean, that's a core principle of what we do. Right now, we just don't have the funding. The DEP allocated a seasonal, part-time staff person for the site. But to turn the keys over of the site to a part-time, \$10 an hour person is just something that we can't do. So we've been trying to work through that. We're not looking a gift horse in the mouth, so to speak, about that position. But it's not something that we can just hand over that -- with priceless artifacts in these houses there.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: I find that very disappointing and distressing.

I remember I was at a press conference a couple of years -- maybe it was more than a couple of years ago. And as a businessperson, we all pay our corporate business taxes. And one of the areas there was being funded by the CBT tax. I said to myself, "Gee, we should see, really, where these dollars go." Because not that it made me feel any better to pay my taxes, but I obviously knew that they were going -- prioritizing to this type of historic site.

I think the Senator gave us something--

SENATOR WEINBERG: No, somebody left that for you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Oh, okay.

So do you get--

If I may, just a couple more questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Sure.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Do you get any funding from the County?

MR. TREPICCHIO: No.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Nothing from the County.

MR. TREPICCHIO: Right.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: And nothing from the State.

MR. WRIGHT: Nothing.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Well, you've got Green Acres.

MR. TREPICCHIO: Right. There's been public moneys that have been handled for infrastructure purposes, which have been greatly needed and appreciated. But there's nothing in terms of operating funding beyond--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: And it was that your applications were rejected. Was that it? Or it was too old?

MR. TREPICCHIO: Well, that was for an operating grant that we were going to use on site. It wasn't a large-- I think we requested maybe \$17,000 for an operating grant.

MR. WRIGHT: And if I could address, briefly, something that you said, because I think it is the greatest-- If you want to leave a legacy to the people of New Jersey, as legislators-- And let me first say that the

bipartisan support-- We would not be sitting here today if it had not been for the bipartisan support of the Legislature in creating the New Bridge Landing Park Commission, which is a model public-private partnership. And we not only have to thank Senator Weinberg, and you, and Assemblyman Gordon, and John Rooney, and Charlotte Vandervalk. These have all been dear friends of ours.

MR. TREPICCHIO: Senator Cardinale.

MR. WRIGHT: The Legislature has been very supportive. But I do think a major structural issue in the State of New Jersey -- and I say this from 30 years experience working at historic sites -- the historic sites, since the end of the Second World War, have been placed in what became the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. And while the mission of that Department is laudable, it, however, does not encompass history. It is always an orphan of that Department. And if you want to do something meaningful-- You have to remember that all the crown jewels of our history are State-owned and operated -- Monmouth Battlefield, Princeton, Ringwood Manor.

I grew up in Sussex County, where a third of the land was public parkland, and where tourism was a major industry for Sussex County prior to the opening of Route 80 and the changes that brought its suburbanization. And you had people there -- I remember, particularly, Senator Littell, who got that message and stayed on top of that issue that you have to have tourist infrastructure.

But if you stop and think about it, after being run as a State historic site since 1928, there is not a public bathroom at the Steuben House. When I lived there -- and I lived in the house when I was the

curator there-- When I accepted the job in 1981, it was the lowest-paid full-time job in State government, and we had to pay fair market rent to actually live in the house, and for my wife and children to have the privilege of being the volunteer staff to run a State historic site. We brought the attendance up to -- I think it was 15,000 people a year. Imagine having two school groups every day and not having a bathroom, not having a place you could park a bus.

I think if we've learned one thing in the last 70 years it is, where the historic sites are in our government hasn't worked. You need to elevate the State-owned and operated historic sites to give them -- so that people who have the experience at managing these sites for the public can attain levels of management and administration.

I know that's a little bit off the topic, but I think it-- If you really want to make New Jersey a tourism destination through its amazing history -- and that history, remember, comes right up into the present time to people like Thomas Edison. I mean, New Jersey's history does not diminish. I mean, when I saw, for example, the movie *Iron Jawed Angels* about Alice Paul, in Paulsboro-- Stop and think about this. This is the county. Tenaflly was the residence of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She went down to the Tenaflly Hotel in 1880 to vote for -- to attempt to vote for President Garfield, or whoever her choice was. We don't know. She returned home and, with Susan B. Anthony, wrote *The History of Woman Suffrage*. There's not even a marker.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: A little plaque.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, a little plaque.

In any other state -- this should be a state historic site. We should be telling our children that these things -- these revolutionary events in the history of the world, not simply of Bergen County. But we don't have a mechanism, we don't have a structure in State government to advance history in the way that it should be--

MR. TREPICCHIO: Well, it was -- if I may interrupt. Steps were taken at New Bridge to establish the State Park Commission, which is now the administrator and has the jurisdictional authority over the park. It's a State Commission. It's appointed by the Governor, it's ratified by the Senate -- the Commissioners. Our operating budget is zero. I pay for the web site, I pay for the P.O. Box, which is fine. I'm not asking for reimbursement. But there is a zero budget.

And we've taken pride in the fact that we do operate this on private funds, but there is only so far we can take that with our resources. We need to have a bigger exposure in the private industries out there that can help support us because, in turn, we would be supporting them with the tourist dollars that would flow into there.

So therein lies the dilemma. The ingredients are there, all the ingredients are there for a great tourist destination -- heritage tourism -- it's right at our fingertips. We just need to have a little more support and recognition to really turn this around and make this the jewel that it could be for everybody.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you for being here, thank you for listening, and thank you for this opportunity.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Chair, I have a quick question of -- just a quick question. It's a historic question, Mr. Wright.

What day did the British leave New York Harbor? On what date, do you know?

MR. WRIGHT: Evacuation Day was in 1783. I can't think specifically of the day. I think it was September, but I'm not sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: And then George Washington declared it to be a national holiday -- we should celebrate the day the British left?

MR. WRIGHT: I think it was celebrated because it was Evacuation Day in New York City. It was celebrated there for many years afterward, but not in--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Not nationally.

MR. WRIGHT: Not nationally.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

I digressed, Chair. I'm sorry.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: No, that's fine, absolutely.

Gentlemen, again, thank you.

MR. TREPICCHIO: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN WEBBER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Next up, I'm going to call up the Meadowlands Liberty Club (*sic*): Jim Kirkos, Ron Simoncini, and Judy Ross.

**R O N S I M O N C I N I**: It's not a club, it's a Convention Visitors Bureau. That's C-V-B. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Oh, wait a minute. Okay.

MR. SIMONCINI: Not C-L-U-B, but C-V-B, a convention and visitors bureau is a destination marketing organization.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Very good.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I thought you made up a club all of a sudden.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: I was like, "We don't know about it."

**JIM KIRKOS:** Mr. Chairman, thank you for hearing us.

My name is Jim Kirkos. I run the Chamber of Commerce in the Meadowlands, and the Meadowlands Liberty Convention and Visitors Bureau. I have brought with me Judy Ross, who is the Director of our CVB; and Ron Simoncini, who is our Marketing Strategist.

And you've heard a lot of testimony here this morning, and I don't know that-- And while you'll hear a lot of passion come from our voices, I will not try to replicate the passion of each of the previous people who testified about arts and culture.

What I'd like to do is go back to what Mayor Huttle said about making a business case for tourism. And I'd like to help share with you some facts and figures that might differentiate ourselves and give you a better understanding about how New Jersey is doing in its tourism.

You said it yourself, Mr. Chairman, before, that it all comes down to marketing. And I think New Jersey is at a pivotal point in time when it comes to how we look at funding tourism. None of the people who have come before me right now in this testimony will ever have the ability to have greater funding if we don't begin to look at the way we treat tourism funding in New Jersey.

I will make some cases, and the business case is this: In just the Meadowlands Regional Chamber, we have almost a thousand business members in our organization. Almost 46 percent of those members -- many

of which are small businesses -- constitute destination-related entities: hotels, restaurants, retail stores, and the like. Overall in our organization, 78 percent of our membership is small businesses, many of them downtown Main Street businesses just like those that are all around us.

We've studied the impacts -- the economic impacts of tourism over the last six or seven years in our advocacy for predominantly the Meadowlands Sports Complex. But when we created our Convention and Visitors Bureau, we did so recognizing that the Sports Complex, in its reinvention with Xanadu, and the new stadium, and so forth was really just a nucleus. If you look at the geographic region from the George Washington Bridge to the Statue of Liberty -- what we call the *Meadowlands Liberty region* -- that is a very powerful destination, asset-rich environment. And it covers all the people who spoke here today. And we have an opportunity here to promote and market all of those folks.

And my business case to you is that tourism development and destination marketing really is economic development. It is so much a part of our organization that it is now taking-- About 50 percent of all the efforts that we do at our Chamber has to do with tourism development, especially because of what goes on in and around.

I will give you a couple of case studies or just a couple of points of interest. Little things like the Izod Center-- We've been big supporters of the Izod Center remaining open, and we've been fighting that battle for a couple of years now. And hopefully that battle will go away when the new folks take over Xanadu. But *American Idol* came in a couple of months ago -- I think it was back in September -- for a couple of days. Those three days that *American Idol* was in setting up and doing their show there was a 9

percent increase in hotel occupancy. That 9 percent increase in hotel occupancy from just that couple of days resulted in somewhere around \$7 million or \$8 million in economic impact.

Tourism branding and marketing doesn't have a 4 to 1 return on investment, it has somewhere between an 8 and 12 to 1 return on investment, documented by this -- all over the country and through the national association that we belong to, Destination Marketing Association International. So this is a powerful piece.

The City of Philadelphia will spend, this year, somewhere between \$16 million and \$20 million marketing the greater Philadelphia area -- just the greater Philadelphia area. And they will market all of their destination assets: arts, culture, history, all of those items. The tourists that come in from the power of that marketing will fuel their hotel tax and will fuel the dollars that go into it. In New Jersey, we have a very different model. Just about every other state -- the hotel tax goes to fund destination marketing organizations. We call them DMOs. Destination marketing organizations like our Meadowlands Liberty Convention and Visitors Bureau-- In New Jersey, not one DMO receives any direct funding from the hotel tax. The hotel tax goes directly into the State coffers.

Now, a few years ago, Secretary of State Nina Wells did a great job. We've been making this case for a good amount of time. And Secretary of State Wells decided to put in a DMO marketing grant as part of that particular budget.

We're proposing to you today that as time goes on-- And we understand the State of New Jersey's fiscal crisis. But what we're saying to you is that you can't cut your way and grow. You have to find a way to

reinvest. And the reinvestment-- We'll never be able to fund all of the folks who came before me in any greater capacity if we don't grow revenue. And you can't grow revenue and grow tourists if you don't tell the world that there is something here for them to see.

You know, we have a big event coming up here in a few years called the Super Bowl. We've already begun our planning for that. Because what I fear most is that we'll be looking in the rear view mirror the day after the Super Bowl comes by, and we're going to be saying to ourselves, "We should have done this, and we should have done that, and we should have had the opportunity to brand, and market, and not miss out on a once-in-a-lifetime." It may be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Because we've determined that the Super Bowl is more about the day the game ends, forward, than it is about the business that comes in from the Super Bowl. I think the State of New Jersey should think about leveraging the fact that we're bringing a game like that into the heart of the Meadowlands, so that we can use it for economic development, so that we can use it for brand awareness of all of the arts and culture that we've talked about here today.

So I think my message to you today is that the State needs to begin to look at how will we increase slowly, over time, perhaps as the economy gets better -- how will we increase funding of tourism which covers arts, culture, history? Because if we don't begin to do that, we're going to lose market share to all the states around us who are spending a greater amount of time and a greater amount of money on that.

We've proposed-- I have to give some credit. The current Administration has listened to us. Grace Hanlon, the new Executive Director of the New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism-- I believe she is a

believer of DMOs. We've shared our story. I think she's going to do a great job. We've spoken to the Lieutenant Governor. She was at our tourism conference that we held a few months back at the New Meadowlands Stadium. And Assemblywoman Huttle and Assemblyman Johnson was there with us that day, and Senator Weinberg was there that day. There's a lot of education that needs to continue to be proliferated so that we talk about it.

But I think what I'm asking for you to look at is that funding formula. Perhaps as the economy changes and we start to generate more tax revenue from the hotel tax, dedicate a greater portion of that hotel tax so that we're -- so that we get off the floor. We're at the poison-pill level right now. So as the economy changes, let's put -- let's increase that so that we can market and we can fill the ballet theater, and we can let people know about New Bridge Landing, and we can help partner with all the folks who were here today to brand and market that.

I think we're at a crossroads. I think we have a unique opportunity to tell the world that -- all that there is good. That's the purpose of what a convention and visitors bureau does. It's solely to brand and market a geography or region. And we've branded that region. Our job is to make sure that when visitors come to this region, they spend their money in New Jersey.

We're even developing a campaign right now called *See America Through New Jersey*. Because we think that you can see just about every part of this great country right here in New Jersey. That's how asset-rich we are, from the top of New Jersey to the bottom. So even though my job is to brand and market the Meadowlands Liberty region, which includes this

facility, it's really about New Jersey. And all of that changes the image. A few folks talked before about changing the image of New Jersey and doing that awareness.

So that's what I ask of you today. I think the conversation needs to continue. There are no quick answers. But when we talk about cutting, I remember-- I'll conclude and pass this on to my colleagues. I remember testifying before the Senate Tourism Committee a year or so ago at the New Jersey Governor's Conference on Tourism. And a legislator who will remain nameless looked me in the eye and said, "I can't, in good conscience, even vote for tourism funding when we're cutting other programs, and we're cutting school funding or after-school programs." And I get that. I understand you have to look constituents in the eye about that. But my business case back to you is, we'll never be able to fund those programs if we don't generate the revenue. We just can't simply cut them.

And that's my--

I'd like to -- Judy, if we could, and then we'll conclude with Ron, who is our brand strategist, who helps us devise the marketing and brand strategy for our region. And perhaps Judy could talk a little bit about our stakeholder involvement.

Someone talked before about public-private partnerships. I can tell you that the private sector has a ton of skin in the game. We have reached out. Our hotel members spend \$20 per hotel room -- \$6,000, \$7,000, \$8,000 a year to help us with our marketing budget, because we can't just live on the couple of hundred-thousand dollars -- or \$100,000 we get from the DMO marketing grant. We have an obligation to tell people that Medieval Times is there, that the bergenPAC is here, and so on and so

forth. So we're out there looking to make those business cases. And we don't expect anything to happen quickly, but I think we need to pay attention to it and really brainstorm how we can find the marketing funding.

Judy, would you please.

**JUDY ROSS:** Certainly.

As Jim mentioned, many of the hotels that are in the region are members of ours, as well as the major attractions. I mean, we certainly work with all -- Medieval Times, as he mentioned; bergenPAC is a member; Yogi Berra Museum is a member; some of the folks you've heard this morning. So not only the hotels -- all the attractions, the restaurants. It really narrows down to the smaller businesses as well -- the transportation entities, limo companies, even down to the florists who work with our hotels. I mean, we have a group side of our organization that brings in new business for hotels and conventions to our -- the Meadowlands Exposition Center, which is one of our biggest investors too. And the group aspect of it certainly reaches a greater area, not only just the stakeholders, but the retailers on Main Street, like in this major neighborhood right here.

**MR. KIRKOS:** We have a hard time, in our area -- downtown Rutherford. If you look at downtowns -- and it may not be happening here in Englewood -- but in places like in Rutherford, some of those downtowns are hurting. It's hard to attract good businesses. And you can't get a-- Rutherford can't attract a Starbucks, you can't get any quality stores there. There's a lack of -- misperception. We need to change that, and the only way we change that is to continue that branding effort. And it is about -- a lot of it is about small businesses and the impact on those small businesses.

Ron.

MR. SIMONCINI: The answer is \$5 million.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Good, thank you. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: What was the question? How much?

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: How much do they need?

MR. SIMONCINI: The question is: How do you make sure that we don't lose the impact of the Super Bowl?

The Super Bowl-- Just to explain why the Super Bowl is a litmus test for really what your Committee does and what the State's commitment to travel and tourism is: The Super Bowl is owned by the NFL, it's hosted by the teams, its site is the stadium, and its location is the Meadowlands. You didn't hear the word New Jersey in there. You're not going to. Three years from today we'll be here -- I hope you're all reelected -- and you'll be doing a witch hunt for why we didn't get any value out of the Super Bowl. And the answer is because you can't get \$5 million to get on the committee. The NFL is concerned with one thing: money. The NFL is concerned with money. And if you want to participate on the Super Bowl committee, you have to put in money. You have to be a partner of the NFL's Super Bowl committee, and it costs money.

I was thinking maybe we could all just take our shoes off and pound them on the table and talk about how we're not going to get left behind in the Super Bowl marketing. It's pointless. We're going to get left behind in the Super Bowl marketing because we're not going to put in \$5 million. So here is why we should put in the \$5 million -- and I'm going to

be happy to come back here three years from now when the witch hunt starts, because I will have my own people to point out then.

But just for the conceptual sake, so that you guys can understand what it is that this gentleman -- who was far too kind in his words and has been far too patient, for these many years, living on \$100,000 worth of State funding to promote a region with 8,400 hotel rooms in it.

We have two battles with New York. Our first battle is a competitive battle. How do we get people to understand that we're a great alternative to New York City for travel? Our second battle is a branding battle. We win the competitive battle frequently. We will win the competitive battle in the Super Bowl. We will get-- Because of where we are, we will get people who want to stay cheaper, we'll get people who want to stay closer, we'll get people whose businesses are here. We will not win the branding battle. New York is going to kill us in the branding battle, because they're going to kill us with the NFL because they're going to put in \$20 million, and they're going to win. And you might even find that we hold a number of events here in New Jersey that are New York events, that are run by New York destination marketing organizations, and New York corporations, and New York committees.

The key to the Super Bowl is -- and there was a meeting recently where a State official said that it was important for us to market the region before the Super Bowl comes. And Jim and I have been colleagues for years. Maybe we'll even be colleagues after this meeting. (laughter) But he had the foresight, when the Super Bowl was being selected -- when the location was being selected -- to invite the Governor to come to Red's in the Meadowlands. The Governor had been invited to

Times Square with Mayor Bloomberg. And Jim said, "Don't go to Times Square. Come to the Meadowlands, come to a bar in the Meadowlands." We had 19 television stations there, we had 40 print publications who covered that day -- they didn't all show up, but they covered that day. So we know that we can promote the region before the Super Bowl, but we can't promote it as a destination for travel and tourism before the Super Bowl. We can only promote it as the site for the game. It's an important distinction.

What we need to be able to do is let prospective travelers know what is going to happen when the Super Bowl is here, and what visitors will encounter, so they get a little taste of it beforehand and maybe they come. And while the Super Bowl is here, we need a number of platforms so that we are able to depict for the world why it's cool to stay in New Jersey when you're traveling to the New York area. We need \$5 million. We need a seat on the Super Bowl committee. Because if we don't have one, we are not going to be featured in the Super Bowl marketing QED.

So I want to save everybody the meeting three years from now when we do the witch hunt to find out why we didn't benefit from the Super Bowl, because I can tell you why we didn't benefit right now. It's because we don't have the foresight to come up with the \$5 million it takes to sit at the same table with the NFL and the City of New York. And that's our litmus test. Because if we don't use the Super Bowl to brand this state, if we don't have the foresight to say -- from travel and tourism, as a prospectus -- "This is our huge, huge, once-in-a-lifetime, can't beat it opportunity to show people what it's like to stay in New Jersey when you're traveling--" If we don't use this platform for that, then we don't have a

good concept about how to market, because we don't have a better opportunity. And it's only \$5 million. The game has a \$500 million impact. We need \$5 million.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Explain these numbers to me. Five million -- what is that going to get us in return? The \$500 million -- where is that \$500 million? I mean, for \$5 million, we're going to get \$500 million? I mean, that's--

MR. SIMONCINI: The \$500 million is what the game impact is. That's the day of the game.

Now, just look at travel and tourism. Travel and tourism is a \$32 billion industry, give or take, in New Jersey. Those numbers get fudged all over the place. Let's just call it 30. So almost 2 percent of the State's travel and tourism revenue the year the Super Bowl is here will come on one day. It's a phenomenal, unbelievable, ridiculous impact.

What's our \$5 million for? Our \$5 million is so we can tell the NFL, "Yes, we are your partner in marketing this game." The idea that the State says, "You are here. You will include us." The NFL considers itself to be a country, not a state. They consider us to be an inferior authoritative body. We're way down the line. There's only one thing they understand: "Are you our partner or are you not? Do you have your price for your ticket or do you not?" We have to be honest about this. And I would love it if you guys said, "You know what? We can't afford it. We're not the NFL's partner, and I'm very sorry about the travel and tourism industry. But we will not be supporting it." Because if we can't use it -- if we can't use our money to support the travel and tourism industry the very best day possible, then when are we going to do that?

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: What's our return on the \$5 million? What is our return?

MR. SIMONCINI: I can't tell you what your specific return on investment is from a dollar point of view. But conceptually, travel and tourism promotion returns 8 to 12 times the initial investment. It returns to the State 3 times its investment in direct tax revenue. I spend \$1 as a State, and \$3 comes back to me in taxes from hotel rooms, restaurants, payroll taxes, user fees, gasoline, tolls, you name it. I get \$3 bucks back as the State, and the region has another \$8 or \$9 of economic activity. So your \$5 million -- if you just do that math -- your \$5 million brings back \$15 million to the State. But that's really not what it is, because you have to look at what happens around the world when people say, "You know what? That freakin' bar is cool, and when I go to New York I'm going to that bar." What's that value? What's the value of somebody saying, "I have to visit Train Bridge?" What's the value? I don't know what that value is. It's hundreds of millions.

So what's my job? What's Jimmy's job? When the Bowl is here, when the news teams are here, we get the coverage, we try to be the host in -- at least conceptually the host, if not in name. We try to make people understand what cool is going on in our neighborhood. But we can't overcome not being on the Super Bowl committee. And no one is getting on without money.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: We already have a disadvantage of being Giants Stadium, right?

MR. SIMONCINI: It's the New Meadowlands Stadium.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: You say Giants Stadium. That's what -- it's still out there, Giants Stadium. People say New York immediately. They're not going to say New Jersey. They're going to say the Super Bowl is in New York. You're making great points. I'm just kind of reinforcing them. I'm trying to figure out how I am going to sell that. How do I sell the \$5 million on the return? You've answered it though. That's what I needed to hear.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Chair.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Assemblyman Johnson.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I think it's called New Meadowlands Stadium when I hear it on TV when the Giants are playing.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Are they trying--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: They left Giants out.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: I'm talking when you're out and about, no one is saying--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Oh, yes, people on the street -- yes, it's Giants.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Absolutely. And it's the New York Giants and the New York Jets.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Yes, no one is correcting me and saying, "No, that's New Meadowlands." No, it's not, it's Giants Stadium, and they say New York Giants.

But anyway, anything else?

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Please.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Is this the first time you brought this up to a State entity? Who have you presented this to -- this \$5 million?

MR. SIMONCINI: Well, I think--

Maybe you're better off answering that question than me.

MR. KIRKOS: Assemblyman, we've been talking about overall tourism funding now to the State Office probably for the last three or four years.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I mean the \$5 million investment.

MR. KIRKOS: We've made the case. I mean, we have not done a distinct calculation to come up with that number, but it's a significant number. I think some of the ideas that could be done -- and we have not talked about this with anyone in the Christie Administration or in the Department of State that oversees the New Jersey Office of Travel and Tourism. But perhaps there could be a pilot program over the next couple of years, because we can't wait until 2014 to do this. You almost have to do it now. We have to begin to develop that campaign. And whether it's a campaign that is, "See America through New Jersey," or whether it's other distinct campaigns, the simple fact is that \$9 million as an overall State budget for tourism marketing and branding isn't going to work, isn't going to be enough.

As someone who comes from the marketing industry and advertising industry, you need something like \$5 million to spend on the lead up to the Super Bowl alone. And then perhaps that gives us the

economic data that would support increases in tourism funding across the board in the future.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: But for a seat on the Super Bowl committee--

MR. SIMONCINI: I'm guessing that what the NFL will say to you is--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Have you made this--

MR. SIMONCINI: They haven't convened that committee as a board to set standards for participation. But if you look at what happens in other cities, a CVB like ours will be asked for \$5 million in commitment. Now, half of the money that that committee generates -- which is about \$80 million per Bowl -- half of it goes to creating a sports facility for underprivileged children. We've proposed that a YMCA be built on the grounds of the Meadowlands Sports Complex through that \$40 million. And the other \$40 million goes to the NFL. So the people who are on the committee find the \$80 million. A CVB like ours will put in -- be expected to put in \$5 million, and a CVB like New York will put in \$10 million to \$20 million. The YMCA will put in \$1 million or \$2 million of the \$40 million facility that it wants built -- or it's a Boys and Girls Club facility, something like that. But the structure is that you do have to commit. You don't write the NFL a check for \$5 million. You say, "We're going to use our \$5 million Super Bowl budget to do these things in support of the committee's work." So you will negotiate that out. It won't-- If we have \$4.5 million, will they let us on the committee? Probably.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I understand that. And you've made this case to other government entities.

MR. SIMONCINI: No, we're-- Yes, we've talked about the fact that we need to be on the Super Bowl committee. But we haven't sort of gotten the momentum that we need to get for people to say, "How do we do that?" So we're here to say--

MR. KIRKOS: This is our start.

MR. SIMONCINI: Now we're saying, "You want to know what it is?" You asked the question before: How much do you need? It's \$5 million.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: It's an investment -- approximately \$5 million. Okay.

Thank you, Chair.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: You're welcome.

Assemblywoman Huttle.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: I'm going to go back to the Super Bowl in a second, but I just want to preface it by saying that I grew up in Hudson County, and my perception way back then of the Meadowlands was pretty stinky. When you drove that part of the Turnpike -- for those of you in South Jersey who didn't drive up this way, it really did have -- the environment was quite polluted.

So with that, fast forward. We have come a long way with preserving the Empire Tract which tried to develop the Meadowlands region, which, quite frankly, back then-- We really did come a long way. It was really just meadows, and it was environmentally not safe and not sound.

So with that, I have to give you credit for taking it, really, in a new direction -- for developing that marketing strategy. And we look at the

entire state -- and I've sat on the Gaming Commission, and our Chairman was down there -- the Atlantic City one. And we look at South Jersey, and we look at saving Atlantic City. Prior, there was always that South Jersey legislative mentality: all for Atlantic City; and that North Jersey mentality: all for the Meadowlands region. I think we've come full circle with that as well -- I think the Chairman will agree -- by coming up here and by discussing gaming and the Meadowlands.

We've come, in our caucus and the State, with bipartisan support to maintain the race track; support, in Bergen County, the Izod Center. Again, you know, we're competing against the Newark Prudential Center as well. And we've come to a resolution with a lot of these things to work together and to partner together. We're not North Jersey, we're not South Jersey. We want the beaches to flourish, we want Atlantic City to continue to maintain that status in that end of the state. But we have so much to offer up here in Bergen County, as we have heard today. And with the Meadowlands now, as the entire region--

And now I will get back to the Super Bowl. When we can't even say the New Jersey Giants or New Jersey Jets -- it's always New York, New York -- we really do have an image problem. And that is why we have to work together to look for creative funding, just like the funding down in the district in Atlantic City, which is now coming to fruition. We need to look at funding up here -- whether it is like other states, as we were talking about -- tourist improvement districts. This is a prime pilot district up here in the Meadowlands to get funding -- not for this region, but for the entire State. And I think that's what we need to look at. We need to look at

these jewels in other parts of the state -- how we can work together for the entire State of New Jersey.

And that is why I have a Resolution on today to promote New Jersey's arts, culture, tourism, and history -- designating June as that month. It's all about PR, it's all about advertising; but it's all about word of mouth, it's all about bringing people and letting them be aware of what's going on. Again, you live here in Bergen County -- you may not even know New Bridge Landing. The Super Bowl is a -- I'm using a different sports analogy -- home run; it's a touch down, right? I can't say it's a home run for the Meadowlands, but it's a touch down for this region. And I said it before, and you said it, we cannot start that day, or the week, or the year, we have to start now.

So what I am not getting is -- all right, you came up with \$5 million. And Assemblyman Johnson -- have you spoken to anyone-- I think -- I would think our Governor has to get it, and our Governor has to be aware of it. I mean, I would think there has to be negotiations and discussions going on now. Because if there is not, he is really missing-- I can't imagine that it's not.

And so with that-- We have Xanadu being resurrected. I don't know what's happening with EnCap. But we have a whole host of issues in that region that we need-- And forgive me, Chairman, for continuing to focus on local issues. But, again, these local issues have an impact statewide. And I'm sure you've heard of Xanadu, and I'm sure you've seen it coming on the Turnpike, coming up here.

So with those projects-- And I see Kevin O'Brien in the room, who is part of IATSE and part of our strong union that we have up here --

they create jobs. And that is what is so unique about the Meadowlands. Because not only do we have job creation, but we have environmental protection, and we balance it up here. And that's what we have throughout the whole State of New Jersey. We have such jewels. And we're environmentally, now, friendly with saving and restoring our beaches and the treasures. And we're creating jobs together.

So I just want to-- Again, we're talking about the Super Bowl because it's great. But what you've done for the Meadowlands as a whole-- Obviously we have a long way to go, but you should be applauded for that, because you've taken, I want to say, the pig farms, way back when, to what it is today. So I thank you for that.

MR. KIRKOS: Thank you, Assemblywoman.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Anyone else?

Assemblyman Schroeder.

ASSEMBLYMAN SCHROEDER: Yes, just a clarification on the \$5 million. Is the \$5 million what your organization needs or what the State of New Jersey needs to get into the game?

MR. SIMONCINI: We're the destination marketing organization for the region. We also, I believe, have demonstrated independently that we're the leading destination marketing organization in the state outside of Atlantic City, which gets State funding in a big way. We get a small grant every year. We have over 200 members. And there isn't anybody else who has the authority or the expertise to market this region that the Meadowlands has.

Jim also has a leadership position in the DMO group statewide, and we have been very good about distributing branding messages

throughout the state through the power of what we have in our region, which is really kind of a gateway for tourism to New Jersey.

So the \$5 million that I'm talking about-- And, again, the negotiations haven't started yet. I'm giving you that as my estimate, and I'm pretty solid on it. That is an amount of money that some entity or organization within New Jersey will be the steward of to participate in the marketing of the game. The game is really a week. In the Meadowlands, the game will be a little over five weeks, because there will be a media center that starts up about five weeks before the game, and it lasts about a week after.

So that six-week period requires support from independent organizations. The way that I see that setting up is the teams are going to be the hosts, and they're going to benefit from this game, and they'll participate. New York's New York and Company -- which is their travel and tourism arm -- they will be asked to put in a significant amount of money. The State of New Jersey will be asked--

And, again, I don't disagree with you. I'm sure that there is conversation someplace. But the vehicle to this is the destination marketing organization. It certainly isn't the State department (*sic*) of Travel and Tourism, which has three employees now. The State department of Travel and Tourism is a very good branding filter for New Jersey, and it's a very good funding allocation organization -- and very skilled people. But this is going to require a destination marketing organization with 200 members, probably 1,000 volunteers. We've got a whole big thing going here. That's what's required. And the money comes through that organization, perhaps with the State saying, "Hey, if I'm putting in my \$5 million, I want to

decide how this \$5 million gets spent.” We don’t have a quibble with that at all. Tell us what you want. Let us give you some ideas, go ahead and edit those, and then we’ll go ahead and invest the money the way that it’s appropriate relative to the game.

The committee is also going to have something to say about that. They’re going to look at your marketing plan, and they’re going to say, “Well, I like the way you’ve spent this and spent that, but we actually need some money allocated here. We need this site for an event. Can you buy that for us?” It’s a whole big collaboration. So I hope that’s enough of an answer.

ASSEMBLYMAN SCHROEDER: Thank you.

MR. KIRKOS: And if I may, also, Assemblyman, when it comes to overall-- In the entire State of New Jersey -- as you were just pointing out, Assemblywoman -- we’ve already partnered with 15 other DMOs throughout New Jersey to say that we’ll begin to create packages in New Jersey, so that we can say to a visitor from Iowa, “Come here. And while you’re staying in the Meadowlands, we’ll send you up to Sussex to do some skiing, we’ll send you down to Atlantic City, we’ll send you to Morristown to see where George Washington -- we’ll send you to New Bridge Landing, you’ll take in a show at the bergenPAC, and if you want to go to the City -- because we know you want to go to the City -- go ahead.” But we want to give them more options to do in New Jersey. We’ll work with every other DMO in the state to create those packages. This isn’t just about the Meadowlands, this is about New Jersey. And that’s really the passion issue here. So who spends the money, where it gets done -- I’m not sure that that’s an issue-- It’s dedicating that effort. And by the way, I do

know the Governor has appointed his brother Todd Christie, who has lead an initiative. He was part of the Super Bowl -- original bid process. He was in Dallas.

And I want to add that Judy Ross' team put in 1,400 man hours in the preparation of the Super Bowl bid, at no cost to New Meadowlands Stadium Company in doing that bid. That cost our organization close to \$100,000. Things like that are part of the \$5 million total impact -- the things that we would do for the NFL as being a partner in their branding piece. And that's just part of what we do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: If I may.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Please.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Have you spoken to the Lieutenant Governor since she is the Secretary of State? Has she been part of any of your--

MR. KIRKOS: We have, Assemblywoman. And we're promised that the process is going to kick into gear now, now that this year's Super Bowl is over. I've had conversations with Mark Lamping, the CEO of New Meadowlands Stadium Company. He's been upfront in saying that between now and April they will form the actual host committee, and they're doing a search -- national search right now for a CEO of that host committee -- and perhaps will be named. But what Ron's point is: If you want to play big in that game -- and we have a lot at stake in New Jersey -- you just can't go there and demand it. You have to come up there with a game plan and some money, and say, "We want to be your legitimate partner so we can benefit from it."

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Chair, I have one quick question, if I may.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Please, Assemblyman.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I'm told -- and I'm not familiar with this -- that there are certain restaurants or sports bars that partner up with the sponsors of the Super Bowl -- whether it be Coca-Cola, or Anheuser-Busch, or Mercedes, what have you. Is that a part-- Is that true that-- In other words, there's a process out there where restaurants, sports bars can partner up with the sponsors of the Super Bowl and become official Super Bowl sites. Is that part of the process? Am I wrong with that?

MR. KIRKOS: No, you're not wrong. And all of those things do come with a price.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: And are you involved with that -- to partner -- get these restaurants?

MR. KIRKOS: Most of the time, those things are negotiated directly by the individual restaurant. Most of the time it's a chain, because the price tag on that is pretty big. Unless Coca-Cola is going to be the sponsor of the NFL, or Pepsi, or whoever it may be, and then they say, "We want these four restaurants who are Coke users or Pepsi users -- we're going to make them official." And they bundle and co-op a package.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: But that doesn't involve you at all.

MR. KIRKOS: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. KIRKOS: Thank you so much. Thanks for being up here.  
(applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: We have two more folks to come up. I'm going to call on Allison Larena, Mayo Center for the Arts.

Allison.

**A L L I S O N L A R E N A:** Good morning.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Hi, how are you?

MS. LARENA: I'm well.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Very good. Welcome.

MS. LARENA: Thank you very much. Thank you for inviting me here today to speak a little bit about a different county, Morris County and the Mayo Center for the Performing Arts.

I'm Allison Larena, and I'm the President and CEO of the Mayo Center. Actually, I was born and raised in Bergen County, so I do have connections here. I actually started out my long career in the arts 20-plus years ago here at the John Harms Theater, as a volunteer. So I know the theater well. And certainly we appreciate all that Dave Rodriguez, my colleague, is doing, and many of you -- trustees and volunteers -- here at the theater as well.

Certainly we appreciate all the hard work of this Committee to advocate on behalf of tourism and the arts; and Ann Marie Miller, who also is with ArtPRIDE, and her advocacy work on behalf of the arts in New Jersey, and nationally as well.

I don't want to take up too much time today. I know you know a little bit about a presenting house, as many of you are associated with bergenPAC. My testimony today will be about the Mayo Center specifically. And it is one of those smaller -- small-town movie theaters that was built back in 1937 as part of the Walter Reade chain of movie theaters that -- with the inception of the multiplexes in the 1980s -- then closed its doors and was destined for the wrecking ball. And we were very fortunate that back in 1994 a group of volunteers came to the theater and literally pulled the boards off of the doors. And that began the whole renovation and rebirth of the community theater in Morristown, a 1,300 seat presenting house. We present over 200 events each year. We bring in over 200,000 patrons to our theater each year as well, and to Morristown.

One of the things about Morristown at the time was that it also was an example of the economic demise -- or decline, I should say -- in Morris County and Morristown. And the theater really helped in bringing Morristown back as a vital and vibrant community over the past 16 years that we've been in existence. We've just recently completed a \$7 million capital campaign. We renovated what was an old movie theater with no orchestra pit, no fly, very small stage -- as you can imagine with a movie theater built in 1937. We had no dressing room space, no backstage area. We had no loading bay. So we just completed a lot of these renovations to really bring our venue up to a state-of-the-art performing arts center. And as I said, right now we have over 200,000 people come to our theater each year.

As a presenting organization though -- specifically a presenting organization, we actually bring shows in for one performance, for the most

part, or performances in for one night, and then they leave. And we have a lot of different types or genres of performances, including classical jazz, world music, family events, dance. Carolyn mentioned a short time ago how this was the first year that we brought in the *Nutcracker*. The New Jersey Ballet has had a long, rich history with the community theater. However, the *Nutcracker* -- we were very fortunate to bring the *Nutcracker* in for their 40th anniversary season. And we were excited because the two weeks, really, of performances brought in over 10,000 patrons to Morristown. And we partnered with the Morris County Tourism Bureau, our partner organization with the business community, and the Arts Council of the Morris Area to really say, "What are we going to do once these 10,000 people --" a lot of them have never been to Morristown before -- "What are we going to do once they are here?" And we actually produced a promotional piece where we talked a little bit about -- "Once you're in Morristown, and you're coming to see the *Nutcracker*, here are all the other wonderful things that you could do throughout our community."

To celebrate the holidays, we actually had -- the local businesses in town participated in a window-decorating contest. And, really, everybody got very, very excited about working together and collaborating on ways that we could really make it a destination for a lot of our tourists who were coming into Morristown at that time.

We were very-- We have an art gallery at the theater. We just hosted the Poetry Out Loud Region 4 Finals for the National Endowment for the Arts and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. And we bused in over 30,000 school children -- a lot like David was talking a little bit earlier about -- to see performances at the community theater, at the Mayo Center.

And many of them are brought in for the first time. This is the first time, actually, that they've ever seen a live theatrical event. And we're very, very proud of that.

Really, as I said, we've been in existence for 16 years. And we would have never been able to exist without support from not only individuals, foundations, corporations, but certainly the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. We were very fortunate to receive one of the first cultural trust grants. And we received that grant for our ticketing software. At the time, we had a pretty antiquated ticketing system, and now we sell over \$5 million in tickets each year. And it really helped us to stay competitive in the area of technology, which I think a lot of nonprofit theaters -- it's very difficult for us to be competitive with for-profit entities. We still have to pay exorbitant artists' fees sometimes to the artists who perform on our stage in order to keep the caliber of performance sustained that our audience is used to seeing on our stage, and the caliber of the production. We deal with the same things that for-profit entities deal with: union issues, artists' fees, technology, staffing issues. We do have over 200 volunteers who assist us every year as well.

We generate over \$8 million of revenue back into Morris County. We're very, very proud of that. And we -- our education department is very, very extensive. We actually have a performing arts school at the theater. We go into the local school system and have residency programs, teacher training workshops. We work -- we partner with other nonprofit organizations to go out into the community for children who, perhaps, can't afford to come to the theater. Some of our-- Morristown is a very diverse community. People who can't afford to see a

performance -- we bring the performance to them sometimes. We do free concerts out on the Morristown Green, which is our central area in Morristown where a lot of the businesses are located. And local realtors really do see the value of what we do, and they use the theater as a marketing tool for a lot of the new development that takes place in Morristown as well.

I would love, Mr. Chairman, for you to come and conduct one of these Committee meetings at the Mayo Center so that we could show you, first hand, really how that theater has evolved.

But as a presenting house, as I said, we face unique challenges. Because our events are one-night only for the most part, we lack the ability to build audiences from word of mouth or critical reviews of our events. But because our mission is also to offer an expansive array of performances, we draw different types of audiences to every event. One week it may be -- in the same week it could be a pop artist, an international orchestra, world music, or children's event. So we must rely on creating an experience that people will choose our venue over others, perhaps, around the state or even in New York City.

We also serve as the proud Morris County home of many other New Jersey-based arts organizations such as the New Jersey Ballet, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Master Works Chorus. And we open our venue to other community-based entities at a reduced rental rate.

And since we're a seasonal venue, we actually book beyond this year. We're actually working on our 2011-2012 season. And that often presents budget challenges. I know the economy is improving, but there is always uncertainty with the arts funding for the future. And the arts are

often the first to be cut, as we all know, in our school systems. The economic climate affects foundation support, individual support, corporate support, as well as the State budget, Arts Council, and cultural trust funding. With this type of uncertainty, it's often difficult for an arts organization to really chart a healthy future. And we can only look, perhaps, a year or two out at best, sometimes, to really gauge how our unearned revenue will do, which we actually-- Our theater relies on \$1.5 million in contributions each year to sustain ourselves, because a lot of the classical productions, dance productions, world music productions certainly come in at a cost but don't generate the type of revenue and ticket sales that a lot of the more popular performances will generate.

Really, the arts are so important to all of us as individuals, to us as a society. And art centers like the Mayo Center are critical to the health of our communities -- as you all know -- our tourism, our culture, and our future generations. So thank you for your support and your continued support of the arts. And hopefully we'll get you over to Morristown one of these days.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you for your testimony.

Any comments from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: How many seats do you have?

MS. LARENA: Thirteen-hundred seats.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Oh, okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you, again.

MS. LARENA: You're welcome. Thank you very much.

(applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Next, I want to call up Stephen Fredericks, The Growing Stage, The Children's Theatre of New Jersey.

Welcome.

**STEPHEN L. FREDERICKS:** Thank you very much.

Chairman, distinguished members of the Tourism and Arts Assembly Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

As we pause here today in the midst of our 29th season, the mission of The Growing Stage remains to nurture the development of the performing arts through education and to create, produce, and perform works that engage the entire family. We seek to be a model of excellence in theater for young audiences and strive to develop new arts initiatives which will enhance the lives of young people across the state.

Founded in 1982, The Growing Stage is a thriving center for the performing arts that engages a community of professional equity artists and actors, community players, students, teachers, and families. We offer children of all ages performances on our main stage, as well as an extensive educational program in our facility. Our touring company travels statewide with our production of *Tales from the Garden*, a performance piece celebrating the history and lore of New Jersey. We have completed performing arts residences in several underserved elementary and middle schools in central and southern New Jersey. The Growing Stage has had the privilege of working with New Jersey schools as diverse as the people who make up the unique fabric of our state, including El Primer Paso, a Latino preschool in Dover, Morris County; the ECO Charter School in Camden; the Alpine Middle School here in Bergen County; the Red Bank

Charter School in Monmouth County; and the Stafford Township Intermediate School in Ocean County. Our classes are taught by professional teaching artists chosen specifically for their ability to mentor and inspire students. Growing Stage programs have become pivotal in delivering arts exposure to thousands of students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to experience live theater, music, and dance.

On March 1, 2011, we will be celebrating the 15th anniversary of The Growing Stage's reopening of the Palace Theatre. In addition to being the only theater solely dedicated to young audiences in New Jersey that owns its own facility, the restoration of the historic Palace Theatre has been recognized by both the State and local governments as a catalyst in the revitalization of the reemerging community of Netcong, New Jersey. In 1995, when we purchased the theater, the facility was in a desperate state of disrepair and was placed on the local fire department's let-it-burn list -- making, if necessary, the priority to ensure the safety of neighboring properties rather than the theater itself.

Now, 15 years later, after countless volunteer hours and over \$1 million raised and invested back into the facility, the Palace Theatre is on the County, State, and National Registers of Historic Places. Today, The Growing Stage is seen as a prime example of how the arts can stimulate local economy and encourage revitalization, while building a statewide reputation for creating professional, quality theater for young audiences on both the stage and in the classroom. Since our organization's founding in 1982, more than 250,000 people have been exposed to the wonder of the performing arts in classrooms, gymnasiums, and our home -- the Palace Theatre.

While our individual story is unique, the challenges facing the arts organizations that encompass our state are not. Our not-for-profit status holds a purpose. In our particular case, it allows us to maintain our ticket prices in line with cinema costs to encourage families to choose the performing arts as an economically accessible alternative to the everyday fare marketed to our young people; provide complimentary tickets to our productions to other not-for-profit organizations such as the ARC, United Cerebral Palsy of Morris/Somerset, Domestic Abuse Services, the Morris Shelter, and Big Brothers-Big Sisters of Sussex County. Our arts and education touring company offerings are set at affordable per-seat cost to the schools that is generally half the cost usually attached to similar professional programs of its kinds. And it allows us the ability to restore a building that now acts as a key driver in a small town's revitalization of its downtown business district.

This incentive permits professional companies like our own the opportunity to contribute back valuable tools that positively impact education, health, community, and business sectors throughout New Jersey; tools that contribute to the State's efforts to entice business back to New Jersey and help to make our communities attractive to businesses that continue to call New Jersey home.

Beyond that IRS designation, the not-for-profit business faces similar challenges as does any small or large company in our state. We face the same requirements of compliance as any business. When we began the process of restoring and renovating the Palace Theatre, we were issued the same building permits, applied for the same certificates of occupancy,

ensured the facility was fully ADA compliant, and followed the same required steps and procedures of any business here in New Jersey.

We work to negotiate fair agreements with the union we work with -- the Association of Actor's Equity -- hoping to balance the needs of our professional artists while remaining fiscally responsible to our own organization. It is difficult but necessary if we want to maintain a high level of quality for our young audiences. Last year, The Growing Stage employed over 100 professional artists, all of whom reside here in New Jersey.

We struggle to provide healthcare benefits for our employees. In this continuing challenging economy, our staff accepted a 5 percent pay cut in our salaries and raised our deductible to ensure that our employees would be able to continue to have coverage. And we struggle to find marketing dollars to encourage new audiences while the newspaper industry struggles, and the cost of internet technology and web site design inhibits our ability to reach the consumer.

Our community has been encouraged to look for collaborative partnerships and potentially merge services. But when dealing with the arts, the challenges that confront that possibility is the loss of individual vision that makes each of us unique and the value to the communities we serve.

A broad brushstroke cannot easily be applied when we are attempting it in a way that could, in fact, enhance what we present individually. For example, The Growing Stage and Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey are in the final stages of establishing a strategic alliance in which we will coproduce a new work next season that will be aimed at family audiences and be presented at each other's venue. Together, we will extend

their established play-reading series to include works for young audiences. We are also looking for methods in which we can combine the museum experience with that of a staged performance that can be presented at many different venues as well as our theater in Netcong. We are attempting to extend boundaries, both geographically and artistically, to the benefit of our fellow citizens.

We share the same struggle in the reliance we have on our stakeholders -- that is, our contributors -- both from the public and private sectors. Our ability to serve our mission, which exists to provide for our patrons, relies heavily on the contributed dollar, which poses a particular challenge for us in the economic climate. When their only return on their investment is the services we provide, the individual contributor or family faces a choice that, in our case, makes the decision for them whether to come see a show, have their child participate in one of our classes, or make an annual contribution to The Growing Stage. They cannot do both. So we face the risk that our ability to serve them suffers.

When the market takes a dramatic downward turn to the degree we experienced, and the investment the private foundation is able to contribute is sharply curtailed, our programming is reduced and our ability to serve our patrons suffers. When the corporate gift is reduced and eliminated due to the impact that they have placed on them by increased taxes or their own loss of market shares, our staff is cut, our programming is reduced, and our ability to serve our patrons suffers.

If both sides of the aisle have their way in Washington this week and the NEA is eliminated, and the President's budget that greatly reduces the amount of deductions allowed for charitable causes is passed,

our staff is not only cut, our programs are not only reduced, our ability to serve our patrons does not only suffer, our lights are potentially turned off.

Please do not allow this to happen in New Jersey. Our state is renowned for its appreciation and recognition in the power of the arts: for the economic impact it makes on our communities, for its ability to raise the educational value we offer our children, for its capacity to stretch beyond cultural and physical boundaries, for its ability to make living in our state desirable. Nothing makes this possible more than the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and the New Jersey Cultural Trust, both institutions that The Growing Stage has benefited from.

The leadership that both the board and staff of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts provides is the envy of the nation. Over our near 30-year history, they have provided guidance to our emerging company, and general operating support which has allowed us to create new and innovative programming. We would not have survived this struggle to this date without their active participation and assistance.

The New Jersey Cultural Trust is a similar gift, though its focus has been to provide opportunities of support on the capital side of the ledger. The \$25,000 grant we received from them in 2009 allowed for us to conduct a systems replacement plan which subsequently created the basis for our facility fund to ensure that our home, the Palace Theatre, never meets the same fate that it faced when we purchased it.

And just as there are similarities to the same challenges between the arts and business community, we too share in both the burden and privilege of serving our constituents. William Faulkner wrote, it's the artist's "privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him

of the courage, and honor, and hope, and pride, and compassion, and pity, and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past. The artist's voice can help man to endure and prevail.”

That's the mission that all of us in the arts share in New Jersey, a common bond that stretches between the dance of Carolyn Dorfman performing at the South Orange Performing Arts Center to Nai-Ni Chen performing at New Jersey PAC; from the words of Shakespeare recited in Madison or Hoboken; from the strings heard from New Jersey Symphony or the Bay Atlantic Symphony; to the concert heard at the Mayo Center in Morristown or on the lawn at Appel Farm; at the arts district that has been created to enable a community to restore its viability -- whether it's created in Englewood, Millville, Red Bank, or even a small town in Netcong. It's the bond that we share to raise the spirit, inspire the hope, and raise the promise for a better tomorrow, a better New Jersey.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity to be here today.  
Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you, Mr. Fredericks.

Anyone from the Committee before we go-- (no response)

Thank you, again.

On our business item agenda, we have a Resolution that we need to pass, AJR-66.

I'm going to call on Amy to read that, with amendments.

MS. DENHOLTZ: Assembly Joint Resolution 66 would designate June as New Jersey Arts, Culture, and Tourism Month. The proposed Committee amendments would change this to designate June,

instead, as New Jersey Arts, Culture, History, and Tourism Month; and also makes technical corrections to the Joint Resolution.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you.

I'm going to call on Assemblywoman Huttle as the prime sponsor of this resolution.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you for posting this Resolution, especially today, since I think the common theme here we all heard was to promote not only the arts, but history, culture, and, of course, tourism, which is going to drive the economic engine for the State of New Jersey. And I think we also heard that we need to promote this, because most people really are not aware of all the assets New Jersey has to offer, whether it's the Meadowlands region, the Pinelands, the Highlands, the beaches, the theaters, the venues -- that we're sitting here today -- for entertainment and history, and so on. So this simply will designate June as New Jersey Arts, Culture, History, and Tourism Month. And the goal, obviously, is to promote New Jersey's wide range of everything we just heard today and to really make this a destination. And so with that, I'm hoping that we have full support. And I thank you, again, for posting. And I appreciate it.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: You're welcome, Assemblywoman.

We have three people who signed up to testify. They're in favor of it: Kevin O'Brien, Ann Marie Miller, and Andrew Chiang. Any need for you to actually come up and testify? If not, I see you're all in favor of it.

Welcome up, if you are. All three can come up if you want to say a few words.

**A N N M A R I E M I L L E R:** I know you're running late, and we appreciate your patience, your due diligence in listening to all this testimony, which is really valuable. We really appreciate it.

We fully support this bill. You may know that we do have National Arts and Humanities Month in October. But the ability to combine arts, history, and tourism together for the month of June -- which is a wonderful kick-off for tourism -- we really, truly appreciate that.

We want you to know that we spend a great deal of time trying to collaborate together with the little resources that we do have in terms of marketing, and that we spend a great deal of time-- And we are really fortunate to have a strong DMO association with Discover Jersey Arts and the DMOs working together -- and the Division of Travel and Tourism. We've met. We're looking at ways to cooperate and collaborate even more closely, because we know how to stretch the small bucks that we have.

My only point that I was going to add was -- because you are interested in issues affecting the arts -- is that there have been two amendments made in Congress, one by Representative Garrett of New Jersey, to eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts. We learned about this yesterday. My work has been sort of amped up since that time. It has the potential for New Jersey to lose close to \$2 million, plus the match that's involved with that. So we're working very hard to make sure that that does not happen. I have been in touch with the Congressman's staff who have assured me that that amendment may not go forward for a vote, but we don't know that yet for sure. It is New Jersey and Michigan so

far that have those amendments in. And we're saddened by that, because it represents a significant loss to the State of New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you.

Andrew.

**A N D R E W C H I A N G:** Well, I just wanted to echo what Ann Marie has said. We're certainly in favor of the amendment.

And I, myself, have been on the Board of the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, which is an arm of the National Endowment of the Arts. There are five different arms, we call them. And it's actually been -- New Jersey State is a member of the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. And we bring arts to tour around the mid-Atlantic states. And we believe that more -- obviously the tourism and what you're doing is very, very closely related to the work of the Foundation.

So we really want to thank you, and appreciate what you're doing. And hopefully that -- your work will reflect on all the arts that are happening in New Jersey.

And also, I do want to say, as a person from a diverse cultural background, heritage and arts are being made here today. You can see the Korean population here in Bergen County and all the Asians that are in Central Jersey. These are people who are making cultural heritage, and these are the people who are bringing in cultural heritage visitors to the state. We are not only a working force, but also a way in which New Jersey bridges to the world.

So I would like to just add that to your plate of testimony.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Very good. Great point you made.

**KEVIN M. O'BRIEN:** I'm going to speak very briefly, but I do--

In the full interest of disclosure, I'm Kevin O'Brien, the President of Local 632 IATSE, and the hat I'm wearing today.

I can't say how-- This is perfect timing. The members I represent are in quite a few of the 501(c)(3) theaters that we represent in North Jersey. You've heard from the Executive Directors -- my counterparts in the theaters -- the Executive Director of the bergenPAC here, David Rodriguez; the Executive Director -- the President and CEO of the Mayo Center, Allison Larena.

And in the interest of full disclosure, I'm also a member of the Chamber of Commerce, thanks to Jim Kirkos. And we work collaboratively on a lot of issues. And that's strange hearing from a president of a union. But the fact of the matter is, when they do good -- when business does good, we do good; and when we do good, business does good. And I can't think of any better timing for this Resolution to hit the floor of the Senate and the Assembly than right now.

I'm here speaking primarily for the Super Bowl funding. I know Jim spoke on it on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. But in that six-week period of time, there are 600 to 700 stagehands -- theatrical stage employees are going to be working on that Super Bowl. The NFL experience, right now, is slated for the Izod Center and the Pegasus. And I know, Assemblyman Milam-- I do appreciate the Gaming Summit that you hosted up in -- when we were at Pegasus. I spoke at that hearing.

This Resolution hits to the heart of the matter in that now we have what's called-- I think I coined the phrase with another roadie from Green Day. We were sitting around backstage waiting for some cues at the

opening of the Jets game this fall, and Green Day was the half-time entertainment. And it's become what's called *sportainment* now. That's my phrase for it. It's a blending of sports, entertainment, culture, whatever you want to say. Everything is blending together now. And this Resolution specifically speaks to the heart of that matter. That's why we had Green Day opening for the Jets, that's why we had Dave Matthews opening for the New Orleans Saints, that's why we had Aaron Neville opening for the Giants this fall.

So when you talk about this Resolution -- again, it hits to the heart of the matter in that there are more people working right now in northern New Jersey -- we talk about four-wall lighting, masked sound recording, PRG lighting, scenic technologies. Everybody is making more money, more business is going out of the door because of this sportainment. And that's what hits to the heart of the matter with the Super Bowl coming here. We need that funding somehow, whether it's public-private, whatever it is. We're going to need that funding to have a stake on the Super Bowl committee. And I can't stress that highly enough. I know Jim stressed it, and Ron stressed it, and Judy. We stress it every day. And I'm going to stress it any time I see you in the halls of the Senate or the Assembly. Any time I'm down in Trenton I speak to somebody about it. So this is perfect timing.

I thank you for this opportunity to address this Committee.  
Thank you. (applause)

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Thank you.

MR. CHIANG: I wanted to add one thing, which is I just got an invitation to talk about the America's Cup and the arts -- the America's

Cup of the arts -- with the arts, happening in San Francisco. The arts, and tourism, and sports are together. There is no question about it -- all over the United States.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Very good.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: I have a comment.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: One comment from Assemblywoman Huttle.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Ann Marie, thank you for alerting us about Congressman Garrett's proposal to eliminate the Arts Endowment. I was not aware of that.

I would hope that this Committee could send a letter.

And I think, Assemblyman Schroeder, that is your district, correct?

ASSEMBLYMAN SCHROEDER: That is correct.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Possibly we can send a letter, in a bipartisan fashion, to have him reconsider the impact if that does happen.

So I would ask the Chair to evaluate that, to respond to that, to take that into consideration.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: We will.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Thank you.

MS. MILLER: Thank you very much.

MR. CHIANG: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: We need a motion on AJR-66, with the amendments. We're going to do it all at one time.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: So moved.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Second.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Roll call.

MS. DENHOLTZ: On the motion to release Assembly Joint Resolution 66, with proposed Committee amendments, to designate June as New Jersey Arts, Culture, History, and Tourism Month.

Assemblyman Schroeder.

ASSEMBLYMAN SCHROEDER: Yes.

MS. DENHOLTZ: Assemblyman Johnson.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

I'm voting yes for this with a comment: We've heard a lot of testimony today from all aspects when it comes to the importance of history, and culture, and travel; and from our DMOs. And as we put together this packet for marketing, which is an important part of our planning to go forward, we can't just prioritize -- leave our priorities with Atlantic City. That's what I've heard today. This is a big state with a lot to offer, and our marketing dollars have to go throughout the state and not just to one location, which is called Atlantic City. Atlantic City is a travel destination, as we all know. But there are other aspects and other sites that are important, that are educational, that are cultural, that are just as important as Atlantic City.

So with that in mind, I vote yes.

MS. DENHOLTZ: Assemblywoman Munoz left her vote in the affirmative.

Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: Yes.

MS. DENHOLTZ: And Chairman Milam.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: Yes.

MS. DENHOLTZ: The bill is released.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: The Resolution is released.

Before I ask for a motion for adjournment -- everybody was ready to get up too -- I just want to thank the bergenPAC, I want to thank the Mayor of Englewood; and of course Senator Weinberg, our local legislators Assemblywoman Huttle and Assemblyman Johnson just for hosting us; and with the encouragement of Assemblywoman Huttle to make sure that we do visit bergenPAC. And we're very glad we did. I'm glad everyone came out. And the ones who already had to leave -- I'm glad they did come out. Because it is about all the awareness, the information we had today. If anyone who testified today has written testimony, we would sure like to have that just to -- as we start moving forward in our budget process -- to make sure that tourism, the arts, history is not forgotten in this budget moving forward.

Thank you, again.

Motion to adjourn?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN VAINIERI HUTTLE: So moved.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Second.

ASSEMBLYMAN MILAM: All in favor? (affirmative responses)

Thank you.

We're adjourned.

**(MEETING CONCLUDED)**