

PUBLIC HEARING

before

ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

on

ASSEMBLY BILL 1989

**(Requires the transit corporation to offer commuter rail service
at various locations between Atlantic City and Cherry Hill)**

Held:
June 13, 1984
Camden City Hall
Camden, New Jersey

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman Wayne R. Bryant, Chairman
Assemblyman Paul Cuprowski, Vice Chairman
Assemblyman Thomas P. Foy
Assemblyman Edward K. Gill

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Senator Walter Rand, Chairman
Senate Transportation and Communications Committee

ALSO PRESENT:

Laurence A. Gurman, Research Associate
Office of Legislative Services
Aide, Assembly Transportation and
Communications Committee

New Jersey State Library

* * * * *

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Alfred Harf Director of Planning and Research New Jersey Department of Transportation	2
Stanley Feinsod Assistant Executive Director for Development New Jersey Transit Corporation	5
John Finley Administrative Aide Camden County Board of Freeholders	20
Mayor John Tarditi Borough of Haddonfield	22
Mayor John Morrissey Borough of Merchantville	29
Mayor Edward Wanzer Chesilhurst	35
Phillip Connaught Vice Chairman South Jersey Transit Advisory Committee	37
William O'Connell Residents Against Gambler's Express	41
Evelyn McGill Residents Against Gambler's Express	46
Chester W. Ambler, III Coordinator Atlantic City Urban Area Transportation Council	48
Henry Nicholson Atlantic County Transportation Authority	49
Timothy G. Chelius Principal Transportation Planner Atlantic County Department of Regional Planning and Development	51
Reverend Samuel A. Jeanes Pastor of First Baptist Church Merchantville	53

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Catherine Riccardi Private Citizen	56

APPENDIX

Resolution Submitted by Mayor John F. Tarditi Borough of Haddonfield	1x
Letter and Enclosure Submitted by Mayor Jack C. Woerner City of Egg Harbor	2x
Written Statement Submitted by Lawrence D. Cohen Southern New Jersey Development Council	5x

* * * * *

MY: 1-19
JB: 20-59

ASSEMBLY, No. 1989

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MAY 7, 1984

By Assemblyman BRYANT

AN ACT concerning the New Jersey Transit Corporation and supplementing P. L. 1979, c. 150 (C. 27:25-1 et seq.)

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
2 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. Notwithstanding any law, rule, regulation or order to the
2 contrary, the New Jersey Transit Corporation is directed to: oper-
3 ate daily rail passenger service between Woodcrest Station, located
4 in the township of Cherry Hill in the county of Camden and
5 Atlantic City, in the county of Atlantic; provide at least 12 round
6 trips per day between these two locations; and receive and dis-
7 charge rail passengers at five or more railroad stations on each
8 one-way trip.

1 2. This act shall take effect immediately but shall remain in-
2 operative until September 30, 1985, and shall expire on September
3 30, 1992.

STATEMENT

This bill is intended to insure that residents of southern New Jersey whose employment requires them to travel to and from Atlantic City be provided with a substantial program of commuter rail service by the New Jersey Transit Corporation, commencing on September 30, 1985. This bill requires the corporation to offer commuter rail passenger service at various locations between Atlantic City and Woodcrest Station in the township of Cherry Hill until September 30, 1992.

A Congressional deadline attached to receipt of federal matching funds for railroad rehabilitation work along the Atlantic City rail corridor requires that trains be running to and from Atlantic City by September 30, 1985.

ASSEMBLYMAN WAYNE R. BRYANT (Chairman): I would like to get started with this public hearing on A-1989. Let me start off by introducing myself. I am Wayne Bryant, Assemblyman from the Fifth District; I am Chairman of the Transportation and Communications Committee in the Assembly.

This is our Vice-Chairman, Mr. Paul Cuprowski, from Hudson County. We have with us also Assemblyman Ed Gill from Union County and Assemblyman Thomas Foy from Burlington County. And, we have been honored to have our Senator sit in on the hearing -- Senator Walter Rand from Camden and Gloucester Counties.

This is a public hearing where we are taking testimony on this bill. There will be no action on the bill. The purpose of the public hearing is for us to hear insights from those who are interested in the bill. The bill is fairly simple. At this juncture, and I should clarify this issue, this bill is not dealing with the type of rail that might come from Woodcrest to Atlantic City; by that I mean, whether it is by electrification or by diesel. That is one issue. Assuming there is a rail of some type, either by electrification or by diesel, this issue deals with the possibility that there may not be adequate commuter transportation. The bill spells out a number of commuter stops in order to get people back and forth to Atlantic City where right now there are over three thousand jobs, and where in the next seven years, it is projected that there will be six thousand new jobs in the casinos. It also deals with the number of stops to ensure that, in fact, we get enough commuter travel in order to get people to and from Atlantic City during the shift hours of the casinos. That is very important. In the city of Camden, with one of the highest unemployment rates in South Jersey, for example, it is very important for those who live there and who can't afford cars and car insurance, to have a link from the PATCO high-speed line straight on down to Atlantic City and all along the line. They are talking about stations possibly in Atco and Hamilton. If people would have access to that system, they would not further congest Atlantic City.

With that, I will open up the public hearing. At this juncture, we are going to hear from Mr. Feinsod, the Director of Policy

and Capital Program Development of the New Jersey Transit Corporation, and from Mr. Harf of the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

ALFRED HARF: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Al Harf. I am the Director of Planning and Research for the New Jersey Department of Transportation. On my left is Stanley Feinsod, who is an Assistant Executive Director with New Jersey Transit. I know that the primary purpose of this public hearing is to discuss Assembly Bill 1989 and, in particular, the commuter service element of the proposed rail plan for restoration of rail service to Atlantic City. What I would like to do, if I may with your permission, Mr. Chairman, is to indulge the Committee members who haven't been as intimately involved in the progress of this project as you have, with a little bit of history to set the context for some prepared remarks that Stanley Feinsod will be delivering with respect to A-1989.

As all of you know, the interest in resumption of rail service to Atlantic City has really been keen ever since the legalization of casino gambling. We have gone through several chapters in the history of planning efforts for rail service to Atlantic City.

The initial effort was an effort by the Federal Railroad Administration and the Amtrak National Rail Passenger Service Organization back in the early 1980's -- 1980 and 1981 -- to look at the possibility of actually adding a line to the nationally dedicated Amtrak system. There was a study done by FRA and Amtrak in 1980/1981 which looked at that possibility and wound up concluding that would be an extremely useful, cost-effective and appropriate adjunct to the Amtrak system. It was right around that time that the Carter administration was about to embrace that proposal and seek legislative support for additional funding for Amtrak so that the line could be added to the system. The administrations changed; the national perspective, with respect to national rail service, changed rather decidedly with the change in administrations. The new administration felt there was no legitimate national interest in the establishment of a rail service to Atlantic City as an adjunct to the Amtrak system.

Consequently, another study was commissioned. This study was really designed to see whether there was a substantial enough revenue

potential in this corridor to justify private sector investment for the inception of rail service. That study wound up concluding, in 1981 or early 1982, that the prospects for a financially self-sustaining rail operation in this corridor were excellent. On the basis of that recommendation, the State Department of Transportation, in collaboration with NJ Transit, launched a private sector solicitation process, where we sought proposals from private sector rail operators, investment banking concerns, etc., in hopes that we would be able to attract an investment and the start of rail service without any form of public subsidy. I regret to tell you that effort was for naught. There were a number of interested parties at the outset, but as people really looked at the magnitude of investment required to restore rail service to Atlantic City, it became clear that was not going to happen in the absence of any public funding.

It was at that time, late 1982 and early 1983, that Congressman Florio sponsored legislation which passed and was signed into law in January of 1983, which made available, for the first time, \$30 million of Federal funding that was specifically earmarked for a rail service plan to Atlantic City. That legislation stipulated that the State of New Jersey had to prepare a plan, submit it to Amtrak, and that Amtrak would have to declare the plan feasible before the \$30 million of Federal funds would flow.

In June of 1983, the Department of Transportation prepared such a plan and submitted it to Amtrak. At the time that plan was prepared, it was envisioned that there would be two services on the line. One would be an intercity service, which would be run by Amtrak and which would connect Philadelphia with Atlantic City with a single station stop en route to permit an interface between PATCO and the Amtrak trains. At the time the plan was submitted, that interface station was expected to be Lindenwold. The second service that was envisioned on that line was a commuter service which was to be operated by NJ Transit. At the time the plan was submitted in June of 1983, it was thought that we would confine ourselves at the outset to some four commuter trains a day, in addition to the six to seven Amtrak trains that would be operating between Philadelphia and Atlantic City on a daily basis.

What has happened since? In late 1983, while Amtrak was reviewing that State plan, additional Federal legislation was passed, which instituted certain conditions on the availability of the \$30 million in funding. Those conditions are fundamentally important in understanding the nature of the present plan. The conditions were twofold. The first condition was that not less than forty percent of the total cost of the rehabilitation project had to be financed with nonfederal funds. That had the effect of forcing the State to reexamine its financing plan since the original financing plan did not satisfy that condition. The second condition was that Amtrak had to certify that not less than eighty percent of its operating costs would be recovered from the fare box in the first year and one hundred percent of its operating costs would be recovered from the fare box each year thereafter, and that was to be an integral part of Amtrak's feasibility determination. Between October/November of 1983 and the present, the State has attempted to revamp the plan to account for those new conditions and also to account for what I would characterize a groundswell of public opinion along the corridor that there needs to be substantially more commuter service than what the original plan envisioned.

We believe that the plan that we have now provisionally developed, satisfies all of those objectives. What I would like to do is to invite Stan Feinsod to discuss the commuter service elements of that plan. I should add, before I turn the microphone over to Stan, that any plan or any transportation project which is proposed for implementation in a complex urban environment is going to have its friends and it is going to have its enemies. This project is no exception. I think that the concerns that you are likely to hear at this public hearing, following my presentation, are legitimate concerns; they are concerns that are, perhaps, best articulated by the Camden County Mayors Association and the grass-roots ad hoc group called RAGE (Residents Against Gambler's Express). Both of those groups are going to express to you, concerns on a number of fronts. Number one is apprehension about the environmental impact of this prospective project and, in particular, the proposition of running

diesel trains through a built-up corridor. Secondly, you are going to hear concerns about the extent of commuter service.

Let me speak to each of those concerns. With respect to the environmental impact, we want to do what we can to allay the apprehensions that many of the residents who live along the corridor presently have. Consequently, we are engaged right now, in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration and a consultant to the Federal Railroad Administration, in an environmental assessment of this project, where we will confirm conclusively what the impacts are, both positive and negative, so that the decision that we make, following the completion of that assessment, will be a well-informed one.

With respect to the commuter service element of the plan, we believe, on the basis of a much more careful look at the potential ridership in this corridor, that a significantly higher level of commuter service than was originally envisioned is warranted. At this time, I will ask Stan to speak on that point.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you. We will have questions after both gentlemen speak.

STANLEY FEINSOD: Thank you, Assemblyman Bryant, Senator Rand, and Assemblymen Foy, Cuprowski, and Gill. You have assembled today, not only yourselves but a particularly representative group of speakers, to discuss the concerns and the positive points with respect to the reimposition of public transportation commuter rail and intercity railroad service to a portion of the State of New Jersey that has no such service. I want to thank you for convening the forum and giving us the opportunity to speak to it.

I am the Assistant Executive Director for Development for New Jersey Transit, and I am here to discuss, specifically, Assembly Bill 1989, which would require NJ Transit to operate a minimum of twelve round trips per day for no less than seven years and to no less than five stops. I want to be as direct as possible from the outset and say that we are not in favor of this legislation. I am quick to add, in response to the statement that you made in the beginning, when you said that there should be adequate transportation, that we would echo that and assure you that a great many people, through the months since the

operating plan was produced and certified by Amtrak a year ago, have been working diligently on behalf of this highly-complex project. One of the things I want to leave you with today is a sense of the complexity of those relationships that will lead, I am sure, to commuter railroad and intercity service on this rail right-of-way.

We are taking an extremely positive view. New Jersey Transit is a statewide public transportation corporation and is involved in public transportation and improvement projects throughout the State of New Jersey. We are not involved in rail projects in every county; we are, in fact, involved in bus projects in every county but one, and in special services and other kinds of transportation services in all twenty-one counties. In the Atlantic and Camden County area, since the suspension of railroad service that occurred because of bad track conditions, we have been looking, with the Department, for a way to find the resources and the leverage to provide reinstituted railroad transportation services. We believe in that, because of the environment within which the people in these counties live, the incredible development that has occurred in Atlantic City, and the growth in the number of jobs. I believe those numbers are suitable for quoting: In Atlantic City in 1975, there were 6,900 jobs and in 1983, there were 113,000; that is an increase of sixty-two percent. With respect to the casino industry, that growth will continue. We believe that the market for renewed commuter railroad service and intercity service is correct, is right, and it will be successful.

We have been working, as Mr. Harf mentioned, with Amtrak and the FRA with respect to the Federal legislation that would provide \$30 million. We have been working to create a financial package that would provide the forty percent required by Congress for that investment, for a total of \$50 million to be invested in the renewal of the railroad from Philadelphia to Atlantic City. We have also been working to find the resources and define the program for a renewal of commuter railroad services. That includes resources over and above the \$50 million potentially available through the Congressional action. We are working within a framework, of course, that was created by the Congress. In other words, the Congress has created an intercity railroad investment,

and our interest in commuter rail service must be consistent with that intercity investment or it will not be made possible. We are in a situation of negotiation because the intercity service is being financed with this \$50 million, and the commuter service must be consistent with it.

The provisions of our agreement with Amtrak, which is not yet final and has been tortuously negotiated, would provide for the service as represented in the operating plan, that was done in 1983, a year ago. We have been working with Amtrak to expand our ability to use this railroad for commuter services. That expansion has been given informal staff approval with respect to an expanded number of trains that have to go on this single-track railroad and be safely operated throughout the day. As you know, we are discussing an interface with the PATCO System to Atlantic City; that would be the service area for the railroad, the commuter service. The number of trains that are placed on that railroad must be safely operated within the stream of intercity trains and the very low number of freight trains that are now operating on the railroad.

We have discussed with Amtrak, additional sitings that would have to be placed on the railroad to make possible an increased level of service beyond that which was approved in the operating plan. We are now discussing the range of possible commuter services from the agreed upon four peak-hour-period trains in each direction per day, which is eight trains in all, four in each direction to twenty-two trains per day, or eleven trains in each direction per day. This is the range of transportation for commuter service under discussion. One of our objectives, in trying to expand our ability to run commuter services on the railroad, is our hope that we can maximize the utilization of the equipment that will have to be produced and provided for commuter services. If the equipment is there, we would like to see it used as much as possible.

We also are extremely cognizant of the fact that the success of the service may well be linked to the frequency of the service. It is our abiding commitment to program the overall investment for success and not for failure and to do that prudently and cautiously.

We have been working, as I said, on a complete commuter service plan. We have been discussing the possibilities, with respect to stops and to frequencies, with a constituency in the two counties. Some of the people we have been discussing these possibilities with will be speaking to you this afternoon. We have had meetings with local officials, with county officials, and with regional agencies in an attempt to reach a consensus, based on the transportation assumptions that are being made, based on the technical facts at our command, and based on our joint feeling as to what would be the most prudent set of investments possible.

Funding required for the commuter services is available through program actions that were taken by the NJ Transit Board of Directors last year. There is at least \$6.9 million already programmed for the investment, and we believe that the package of possible improvements that will be provided to make the commuter railroad service work will total approximately \$14 to \$15 million. I do stress, however, that these numbers are still in the planning and discussion stage and have not yet been finalized. The same thing goes with the number of specific trips per day and the number of specific stops on the railroad. We have discussed stops at Hammonton, Egg Harbor, Absecon, and, of course, Woodcrest. We have also discussed a stop at Atco. In terms of the discussions that have gone forward, I think our number and your legislation match very well. Similarly, as I mentioned before, our most optimistic frequency and your legislative proposal are almost in synchronization.

I think that the other thing that I need to stress, with respect to the operation of the railroad, is that the budget for the railroad has also not yet been set and will be a part of a final operating plan that is put together as these plans get completed. We hope to see this railroad support itself, in part, through ridership. We are not hoping to repeat the situation which we have had, in the past, where we were operating, at great cost, railroad trains without passengers in them.

We are conducting intensive analyses of the potential ridership provided to the casino industry and in both directions on the

railroad, and we are beginning to get a keen sense of what the potential is, in terms of attracting riders to the railroad. Without riders, there cannot be a railroad. We will be using those riders, of course, to assist in the financing of the railroad because the fares that they will pay will provide revenue against the total costs. We will also be talking to the casino industry because we believe that the casino industry has a mutual interest with the citizens of southern New Jersey and with NJ Transit and N.J. DOT in the provision of commuter services. We will be asking the casino industry to consider direct subsidization to their employees, as they are now doing, in part, with respect to the automobile, to help defray their commuter expenses. We believe if that is done, it will have a significant impact on our overall ridership and would, therefore, make the financial results of the railroad even better. We would be hoping to convince the casinos that it is in their interests because the Congress is, right now, taking up some tax legislation that would prevent such a subsidy from being held as taxable income to individual employees; this is an excellent and far-reaching tax decision that the Congress is hopefully making in the current consideration of a tax bill.

I want to reiterate that we believe in the success of the system. We believe it will be successful. We believe in getting it done. We are working with the Delaware River Port Authority to secure a trackage right on the 5.8 miles of railroad that it owns, which is necessary for the service. We are working with the Federal agencies that Mr. Harf mentioned. We are working with various State agencies. We are working intensely and actively to secure the series of agreements that need to be reached, signed, and completed so that the funds can begin to flow and we can see the railroad service that we desire in place.

The NJ Transit Corporation, as you know, is being asked by the Legislature to provide cost-effective balanced transportation services to the State. The cost-effectiveness of our services is of keen interest to NJ Transit management, as it has been for the Legislature, and the Legislature has, so far, been more than generous in providing NJ Transit with the support it sought to balance its fare

box revenues with its overall transportation budget. We believe that we have been able to secure some of the necessary trust from the Legislature by intensely managing the system. In some cases that has meant reducing the level of service where service did not seem to be appropriate. By good management and by developing service standards, we have been able to increase the effectiveness and the efficiency of the State's public transportation system. We are not in the business to discontinue or abandon service, but to ensure that the necessary service is available to our citizens. We believe that we need the ability to take into account that kind of budgetary limitation and cost-effectiveness, as we program improvements and secure services throughout the State. It is for that reason that I began the statement by saying that we were not in agreement with a legislative requirement with respect to service on the commuter railroad that we are hoping to see implemented. We are again, however, very committed to the service and very optimistic that once the service is initiated, it will be successful. If successful, it will be continued and expanded, and it will provide jobs and an economic benefit to the counties of southern New Jersey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I will open it up to questions from the Committee.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: I have a question regarding your commuter service. You are going to be working closely with the casinos; their employees work unusual shift hours. What plans do you have to accommodate those peculiar types of shift hours? And, how do they impact in terms of other commuters who may work at normal occupations, in a sense?

MR. FEINSOD: Mr. Chairman, I have been present at some hearings where there has been a device used -- through the Chairman in response to questions -- and I never got the answer to my curiosity as to what the actual appropriate way to respond is; so, I seek your guidance.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Everything is through the Chair.

MR. FEINSOD: Through the Chair, Assemblyman, the commuter service schedule that we are moving towards is one that is not

concentrated in the peak period of the day. In fact, there is a consistency with the employment times of the casino industry which is definitely scattered throughout the day and our ability to expand the service within the railroad stream that Amtrak is proposing. So, our service would be scattered. It would not be all doing the peak hours; in fact, the number of peak hour trains would be similar to the agreement of June 1983.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: As a follow-up, do you anticipate enlisting the support of the casino industry in terms of providing certain kinds of passes or things like that for its employees? Would you then receive direct payment from the casinos? How would that work?

MR. FEINSOD: Through the Chair, that is what we are going to attempt to do. We have not yet specifically approached the casino industry on this matter, but we intend to.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: So, you are betting on the pass line?

MR. FEINSOD: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Mr. Gill.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: I would like to address about three questions to you. About a year or so ago many of us in the Legislature were approached by a private firm that was trying to implement a monorail system between Philadelphia and Atlantic City and, possibly if that succeeded, between New York and Atlantic City. I don't know what has happened to the proposal. As I said before, it was a monorail system, which would use the Atlantic City Expressway, and I don't think it involved any funds from the State or Federal government. Do you know what happened to that?

MR. HARF: Mr. Chairman, I think you are talking about the American Mag-Lev Corporation. To the best of our knowledge, that is a paper corporation. It is a paper corporation that has a reportedly loose affiliation with the Budd Company and other equipment suppliers who are representing international high-speed rail interests. Not only did they approach certain members of the Legislature, but they approached the Department and NJ Transit. We encouraged them to flush out a proposal and present it to us. Essentially what they were

seeking at that time was a carte blanche commitment by the State to enter into some kind of joint venture with them on terms that were never specified. As of this point in time, we have not seen anything more explicit from them.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: On the particular issue that we are talking about today, did you indicate that within two years you would expect that one hundred percent of Amtrak's cost would be through the fare box?

MR. HARF: Yes. Based on the projections of ridership on the Amtrak trains -- and the Amtrak staff concurs with this view; that was the basis of their feasibility determination -- we anticipate that in year one, the Amtrak trains are going to generate revenues in excess of the Amtrak operating expenses. Based on a formula that has been worked out with Amtrak, those revenues will be shared between NJ Transit and Amtrak and will be used, in the case of NJ Transit, to defray expenses on the maintenance of the right-of-way, which is an expense that NJ Transit is incurring, and also to defray some of the expenses for the commuter rail services.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: I appreciate that because I think we understand that quite well since you probably commute from Westfield on the Raritan line, which is heavily subsidized by the State. I am sure that you can get any fares to balance out the cost if the fares are high enough. How would the fare per mile on the proposed road compare with the cost per mile on, let's say the Raritan line? Are you familiar with that?

MR. HARF: Let me just speak to one point which you just made. There isn't a railroad in the United States or, to the best of my knowledge, in the world that is financially self-supporting through the fare box. The exception is the Northeast Corridor line, where revenues do meet short-term avoidable costs that Amtrak incurs. The Amtrak fares, from Philadelphia to Atlantic City, in today's terms, would be \$20 round trip. It is expected that many of the casinos will utilize the Amtrak trains in the same manner that they utilize buses presently, providing incentives to people who ride the Amtrak trains in the form of a rebate.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: How many miles is that?

MR. HARF: I think it is about 50 miles, as the crow flies. The fares on the NJ Transit commuter trains would be comparable to the prevailing fares, which are uniform, I might add, throughout the State. A representative fare from Woodcrest to Atlantic City -- this would be a monthly commutation fare -- I believe, is \$134. That would be a monthly fare expense for a passenger boarding the NJ Transit trains at Woodcrest and riding to Atlantic City. That is the same fare level that NJ Transit is charging its patronages on any of its commuter trains for comparable services and comparable distances elsewhere in the State.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: One last question. You might say that I am very much in favor of a commuter or rail line in South Jersey, whether it goes to Atlantic City or not; I am in favor of opening up the State for this. What does your study show about the possibility of commuting to Philadelphia? We have been talking about everything going to Atlantic City and back. How about the reverse?

MR. FEINSOD: Our current demand analysis and our studies have been very skeptical in that direction and very optimistic in the Atlantic City direction. One of the reasons is the experience that we have had in the previous time when service was provided on the railroad. The service that was provided, although very slim, was oriented to Philadelphia commuting habits. It was attracting approximately 150 people a day. We are concerned that the employment working hours in an urban center like Philadelphia are very concentrated and peaked and that the market in that direction may be much less than in the Atlantic City direction. As I said, our estimates, I feel, are very conservative on the Philadelphia-side. This service will be provided in both directions. Because of the kind of schedule it will be, there will be good commuting hour services provided from Atlantic City and the other stations into Woodcrest where a PATCO interface would be possible for travel into downtown Philadelphia. The opportunity will be there. Right now our estimates are kind of low.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: Just one other question. Do you anticipate, jointly with PATCO or on your own, constructing a major parking facility at the Woodcrest station?

MR. FEINSOD: As you know, the Delaware Port Authority has recently created a major transportation center at Woodcrest, in part, by the way, through the NJ Transit Corporation and grants from the Federal Highway Administration and Urban Mass Transportation Administration. There is a 1600 car lot there. There is an I-295 interchange that goes right into the lot. What we would be doing at Woodcrest -- again, this is subject to further discussions and negotiations and a final agreement between the parties -- is using and utilizing the existing capacity and at the same time guaranteeing potentially to DRPA that, to the extent that they need the full utilization of the 1600 spaces, we would perhaps provide additional spaces. That is, again, a part of the negotiation that is ongoing.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Where do you anticipate getting the rolling stock from?

MR. FEINSOD: Mr. Chairman, the rolling stock for the railroad will be either from an existing rolling stock available to NJ Transit, which is now deployed elsewhere or in storage, or it will be rehabilitated rolling stock that is now in storage. We are estimating the need for railroad cars, cab cars, and electric head and power diesel locomotives. We are going to be negotiating with the Urban Mass Transportation Administration -- which will be our funder -- regarding which package and mix of rolling stock would be assigned to the Atlantic City service. There are no final decisions, although we believe we will need three train sets and an additional fourth locomotive and cab car to assure reliable service.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: You mentioned eleven round trips and twenty-two one-way trips. I must say that I am quite pleased to see that type of thinking is going on. How do we know that these plans aren't plans that someone is telling us about and then all of a sudden they just go away? How do we have input?

The first plan that you mentioned was four round trips with one stop; now you are talking about four or five stops. The emphasis of the bill is to make sure that there is an adequate type of commuter service, assuming there is some type of rail. For some reason, I don't have contact -- and maybe other members of this committee do -- with that planning, to know whether or not it is going in that direction.

MR. FEINSOD: I think, first of all, I need to make an institutional observation, and that is, the Transit Corporation that you set up in 1979 -- and which is entering its fifth year -- has behaved as a very public body. It is under the direction of the Commissioner of Transportation and the Board of Directors. For any of the significant decisions that the Corporation has made -- whether it has been service increases, service decreases, fare changes, and the like -- opportunities have been provided for public involvement through public hearings and public meetings, through informal meetings, as I discussed, that have gone on in the region, through public sessions of our Board of Directors, and through opportunities at the board meetings -- prior to the agenda items -- where members of the public can speak. That refers to institutional behavior.

With respect to the specific inputs on this process that we have begun, and hopefully will complete relatively soon, we have been able to work through the Federal Railroad Administration environmental assessment project. There will be a meeting or several meetings at which the public at large will be invited to participate in, with respect to the environmental consequences of the entire project. The environmental review does not dislink one part -- e.g., the intercity from the commuter -- to one signal project. There will be at least two well-publicized opportunities for public comment and input. The commuter rail service plan will be part of that. In addition to that, meetings will continue with respect to the commuter rail service plan that NJ Transit initiates. Hopefully, we will be using the offices and procedures available to such organizations as the Atlantic City Urban Area Transportation Study, ATCA, and the institutions that exist for transportation decision-making. This form is an extremely helpful one. We would be making very public the procedures that are going to be used by the Board of Directors of NJ Transit in adopting and operating a commuter rail operating service plan; as a result, there will be ample opportunity to come to that board meeting and make one's views known. Prior to that board meeting, the results of our planning process will also be distributed so that you and anyone else who has approached us with an interest in the results of our planning

will have good advance knowledge of them. Your concern, it seems to me, is very simply that we can talk a good game, but when decisions are made, who knows what is going to be there? The purpose of the words I just said is to assure you that at such time as decisions are recommended by staff, you will have ample opportunity to respond to them.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: The only other thing that might not have been addressed -- from what I understand in the original plan -- was a two-year commitment to commuter rail. That concerns me and some of my constituents because it seems -- and you can correct me if I am wrong -- that no commuter service has panned out in two years. If, in fact, it is a real commitment to commuter service, we believe -- and I guess because South Jersey has no commuter rail at this time -- that it is important that the State make a longer commitment. You might also give me some information on how many dollars we actually spend on rails in South Jersey and how much we spend in the State.

MR. FEINSOD: Mr. Chairman, earlier in the day Senator Rand took an opportunity to show me some numbers and explained to me how he felt about them in that regard. With respect to the time period, as a public transit service agency, we -- in the matter of trying to run the railroad and bus company -- try to avoid anything that is a legal commitment because we need to be responsive to demand and responsive to the exigencies of budget and financial circumstances. We are dealing here with an investment that may reach \$15 million in terms of capital investment in the ground and in rolling stock to create a series of stations and commuter trains for this railroad. We are talking about operating expenses that are significant and, hopefully, revenues that are also significant.

For us to make absolute decisions today as to what is going to happen, I believe, would be a mistake. I can tell you how I think it is going to work. I cannot believe that once those investments are made, that the success will not come. At the same time, I do not believe that it would be good public policy to make absolute commitments. We are within the series of negotiated contracts with respect to this package of investments. We are being forced into

certain commitments. I believe that when all of the dust settles, there will be a contractual commitment for two years of commuter railroad service. That doesn't mean only two years; that means no less than two years. The interests that have put us into that situation of having such a contractual commitment are, in effect, saying it in that way. It is a complicated situation. The investment in the renewal of the railroad is an intercity investment; within the resources for that investment, there are a great many proponents. This investment should not be thwarted and usurped for commuter rail service. There is a sensitivity that we are dealing with, within this framework of negotiations. The money being put on the table to make this thing happen is intercity money. We cannot predict what is going to happen to the intercity service. We believe, as Mr. Harf has said, that the projections on ridership will come to pass and like the Northeast Corridor, the Atlantic City spur of the Northeast Corridor will cover its expenses. We are counting on that. If it doesn't, we will have some decisions to make, but at this time we are counting on it.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Let me ask the last question. What is the number of dollars we spend on the rails down here as opposed to what we spend in the State? What are we presently spending?

MR. FEINSOD: The number of dollars that is in this year's NJ Transit budget for rail service in Camden and Atlantic County is a little more than zero. I know, Mr. Chairman, that you expected that answer. I said a little more than zero because some dollars are being moved to PATCO for investments that they are making; we provided them funds for lengthening station platforms.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: How much do we use in the whole State?

MR. FEINSOD: The overall operating budget of the Corporation is somewhere above \$420 million, of which about \$180 million is for railroad operations.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Let me explain some of the problems with it. I am not sure if you can make an analysis in two years of things that might increase rider service. This is an opportunity to open up the whole South Jersey area, such as Gloucester County or some of the other areas -- not just Atlantic City -- in terms of growth or

industrial areas. The rail would be the biggest link to open up mass transportation in the southern region.

One suspects that if there is a two-year commitment, that it might be a commitment for it to die. When you say you are only committed to two years, it means that after two years -- at least in my language -- you could just say that you are going to stop. My next question is, are we also coordinating bus routes to impact upon that system. It would seem to me that there should be a coordinated effort if you want to succeed. Or is it in the planning stage?

MR. FEINSOD: I would be making it up if I said that right now we have a bus route planning activity under way. We are running a multimodal system. As this railroad becomes real and as we see construction beginning and an opening day upon us, we will be doing an analysis for our bus routes in southern New Jersey and making determinations about feeding the railroad or complementing the railroad with respect to our bus services. There will certainly be opportunities, with respect to providing services to Atlantic City from other parts of southern New Jersey, particularly in the summer, for linking with the railroad and providing transportation services.

With respect to the two years, I can assure you that we are programing for success. I can make that as an absolute statement. I can't convince you of it in any other way than to say that we -- and I know you -- do not treat the sums that we have been talking about lightly. I would be folly for us to be making these investments with the expection of failure.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: That is the reason for my question now regarding planning for these proposed bus routes. I look at Burlington County; if they don't have a link into what you are talking about, it would knock off a significant amount of people who would be using some type of rail to Atlantic City. The same thing applies to Gloucester County; the rail does go through Gloucester County at the tip end, but unless bus routes are fed into those areas, you will have a significant number of South Jersey residents who will not have the opportunity to use it. What you are really trying to do is to get people out of cars. If a person has to come from the top end of Burlington County

and drive all the way to Cherry Hill, he might as well take his car and drive down Route 73 right to Atlantic City. I think some type of bus transportation is an expedient way to feed in to that area. This is a much more rational decision for those people who say, "I will catch a bus at Moorestown Mall and come straight into whatever rail system there is and then go right into Atlantic City because it is fast and efficient." That planning needs to be done.

MR. FEINSOD: We will be doing that planning. Not to be argumentative, I would say, from a transportation point of view, we have found that automobile intercepts for railroad service are generally far more productive and successful than bus feeders.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Are we doing that too?

MR. FEINSOD: Yes, at each one of the stations we have analyzed parking needs. At Woodcrest, we have probably six hundred spaces a day available.

MR. HARF: Mr. Chairman, we may be talking past each other. You said earlier that you had the conviction that the commuter rail service would not realize its full potential within two years. There is absolutely no disagreement about that by either NJ Transit or New Jersey DOT. All we are saying about the two years is that is ample time, in our judgment, to be able to measure what that potential is.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I guess my point of view is if I had -- and this is not a knock on anyone -- as much dialogue in terms of what is going into the planning as I have had now -- actually starting a commuter service-- I don't know whether, in fact, the community is going to have that much input as to what is going to happen.

MR. HARF: I hope we have provided you with the kind of assurance that you are seeking in calling for this public hearing.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: We are on the way; we are moving. Are there any other questions? (negative response) Thank you very much, gentlemen.

MR. HARF: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I would like to move right along because I know people have things to do. Freeholder Director Borreggine is at a conference, and I think he asked Mr. Finley to testify on his behalf. Mr. Finley, are you testifying for him?

JOHN FINLEY: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Mr. Finley is an aide to Freeholder Deputy Director John Rodano, and he is giving testimony on behalf of the Camden County Board of Freeholders.

MR. FINLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to wish everyone a good afternoon.

Chairman Bryant, members of the Assembly Transportation and Communications Committee, Senator Rand, and members of the public, as Assemblyman Bryant mentioned, my name is John Finley. I am an Administrative Aide to Freeholder Deputy Director John Rodano, who is Chairman of the Public Works Department in Camden County.

I am here to present testimony on behalf of the County's chief elected officer, Freeholder Director Joseph Borreggine, who is at a conference in Atlantic City. I am here to provide the County's support of Assembly Bill 1989 and to urge its timely passage.

This bill is important to the residents of Camden City and Camden County because it will open new employment opportunities in Atlantic City.

The nine casinos currently comprising Atlantic City's gaming industry represent business with annual gross revenues exceeding \$1.8 billion. Next year, five more casinos are scheduled to open, which will raise total revenues to more than \$2 billion annually.

The gaming industry has had an impact on southern New Jersey. With a proper transportation system to Atlantic City, the gaming industry could have an impact on Camden County as well. Assembly Bill 1989 would provide the beginning of such a transportation system.

One major area of impact on the casino industry has been in employment. The nine operating casinos employ 30,000 workers. With the addition of five more casinos, the labor force could be increased by 15,000 workers.

As each new casino is developed, the need to attract casino workers from a labor pool outside of Atlantic City and Atlantic County will be increasingly apparent. With the expansion to 15 casinos, the casino industry's labor force will be drawn from other counties in

southern New Jersey that have a surplus labor force. Camden County has an excellent opportunity to fill Atlantic City's employment needs.

Casino hiring surveys indicate that employees of new casinos commute from great distances. One reason for this is the increasing land costs within Atlantic City. Additionally, the Pinelands Management Plan has restricted the rise of close-in developable land.

These factors will contribute to increasing pressures for development to occur in economically and environmentally-acceptable areas such as Camden County.

Currently, almost six percent of the casino industry's direct labor force commutes from Camden County. With Camden County's casino labor force approaching 2000 persons, the casino industry is one of the County's largest employers. Commuter transportation must be addressed if casinos are to continue to draw on Camden County's labor force.

Two-thirds of Camden County's casino employees live in the western portion of the County, with one-third of the casino's employees living in eastern Camden County close to Atlantic City. A rail transportation system to Atlantic City could open new employment opportunities to even more Camden County residents.

The major barrier to the employment of Camden City residents in Atlantic City's casino industry is the lack of transportation services. Many City residents do not own a car, and public transportation services are limited. This prevents a skilled and surplus labor force from competing in the Atlantic City labor market.

If we are to fill the needs of the gaming industry, we must seek alternatives which provide efficient transportation services to our residents. The rail commuter system outlined in A-1989 would prove to be an effective and efficient transportation system for workers in the casino industry.

I thank Assemblyman Bryant for addressing the commuter needs of Camden County's residents. I urge you to support this bill and to work for its timely passage. Providing employment opportunities to Camden County residents is a major concern to me.

If I can be of any further assistance to you, just let me know. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. Finley, for testifying on behalf of Mr. Borreggine. Committee members, I know we usually ask questions, but I'm not sure if Mr. Finley is in a position to answer them. If you have any questions though, please feel free to ask them.
(no response)

Thank you, Mr. Finley.

MR. FINLEY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Before we continue, I would like to mention that some of our members have long distances to travel. This is one of the reasons why we are recording the hearing. I know that Mr. Foy and Mr. Gill, and perhaps Mr. Cuprowski, have to leave. I want everyone to know that if you have come to testify, your testimony will be heard. I am going to stay until the end.

After the public hearing, the record is transcribed and it is available to all of the legislators. So, you don't have to worry about your testimony not getting to the legislators.

Next we have Mayor John Tarditi. I am going to go straight down the list. For those of you who were not on the list, we have added your names at the bottom. If you haven't submitted your name and you wish to testify, please see Mr. Gurman, who is our aide, and he will add your name to the list.

Mayor?

MAYOR JOHN TARDITI: Good afternoon, Assemblymen. I am Jack Tarditi, the Mayor of Haddonfield, and I am a businessman in the Haddonfield area. As Mayor of Haddonfield, I serve on the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors, and I am Treasurer of the Camden County Mayors Association. I am also Chairman of the Rail Line Alternatives Committee.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Mayor, may I interrupt you?

MAYOR TARDITI: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I don't want anyone to think that we are drinking water and you can't have any. Feel free to take some. There are two pitchers of water and some cups over there. If you are thirsty, please take a cup of water. You will not be interrupting the hearing.

MAYOR TARDITI: First of all, I would like to thank our neighbor, Assemblyman Bryant, and the Committee for holding this hearing in South Jersey, particularly since this is the area affected by this bill. It is significant that you are holding the hearing in our County seat, the City of Camden.

I would also like to thank the Committee's legislative aide, Mr. Gurman, for advising our constituents about this hearing.

Quite candidly, to us this bill is good news and bad news. If I may, I would like to explain that.

The goods news is that the bill will help to ensure that some of the services our constituents are asking for, one of which is a rail line between Atlantic City and Philadelphia, are provided. However, what this bill calls for, in my opinion, is a minimal level of service for the commuter, such as: 12 round trips; five commuter stops between Woodcrest, Cherry Hill and Atlantic City; and a seven-year guarantee. I believe the bill should be expanded to provide commuter stops all along the line in both Camden and Atlantic Counties, as well as more frequent commuter service than 12 runs per day.

The bad news from our point of view is that the basic plan you are trying to work with is flawed. The plan the Legislature is attempting to repair is, unfortunately, poorly conceived. I am referring to the plan developed by the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

The Camden County Mayors Association continues to be opposed to the N.J. Department of Transportation's plan. As you well know, we have developed an alternative rail plan, and we have submitted it to the Governor and the DOT. I will get copies of this to the Committee today.

We have developed criteria, and I would just like to read the criteria into the record. I won't read our proposal into the record for brevity's sake--

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: (interrupting) Thank you, Mayor. We will accept the document as part of our official record.

MAYOR TARDITI: (continuing) and in consideration of the people who don't want to spend the entire afternoon here.

A-1989 helps to satisfy some of the criteria. I would like to quickly read the criteria that the Mayors Association developed.

We believe any railroad line between Philadelphia and Atlantic City should have a positive economic and environmental effect on South Jersey, particularly Atlantic and Camden Counties. The criteria we feel this line should satisfy are as follows:

1) Frequent and dependable rail service providing transportation services to all the towns along the rail line with the highest priority" -- and, I underline highest priority -- "being rail service for the people who live and/or work in the South Jersey rail corridor." Parenthetically, that means that the priority should not be gamblers, but residents.

2) A rail service that will help to relieve the congestion on our highways, particularly the Black Horse Pike, the White Horse Pike, the Atlantic City Expressway, and the streets to and in Atlantic City."

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Also Route 73.

MAYOR TARDITI: Thank you, also Route 73.

3) A rail line with equipment and rail locations that result in the minimum negative environmental and public safety impact on the communities along the rail line.

4) A rail line that is economically sensible; that is, with the ability to operate at or near break-even.

Ideally, the rail line will qualify for the \$30 million of Federal Northeast Corridor Unit funding.

5) Service that will enhance the opportunities for economic growth in South Jersey, particularly for our second largest industry in the State, which is tourism.

Ideally, this will be a line that links the Atlantic City resort with attractions such as the Garden State Race Track, the Cherry Hill area hotels, and the Philadelphia Convention Center, as well as urban areas such as the City of Camden.

6) A commuter rail service that is affordable in comparison to current high-speed lines and bus fares.

Lastly, and most importantly, a rail line plan developed by a partnership of the State, county and local officials, with support from all three levels of this form of government.

As I said, for the record, I am providing the Committee with an outline comparing the Mayors Association Plan with that developed by N. J. DOT. I am providing the specifics of the Mayors Association's Plan.

In conclusion, on behalf of my constituents, particularly those of the Borough of Haddonfield, we are grateful for the Assemblymen's sincere attempt to improve the N.J. DOT plan. However, we remain convinced that the best long-range answer is an extension of the PATCO high-speed line, from Lindenwold to Atlantic City, and from 8th and Market Streets in Philadelphia to the North Philadelphia Station. While we commend the Assembly Committee for attempting to correct the N.J. DOT plan, we believe the plan is sufficiently flawed and requires major surgery.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Mayor, before I open this up to questions, I want you to know that this is the purpose of a public hearing. I came up with an idea, and when I get information from all of the citizens and from different groups, then my idea can be better developed. That is the whole purpose of a public hearing. It is not just to force a bill out to become law; it is to get input from all sectors.

Thank you for your testimony. Does any person on the Committee want to ask any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: I have one question. Having had some experience with commuter railroads, how many stops do you envision on a single rail line, if we were to stop at all the towns you suggested?

MAYOR TARDITI: If I may, Mr. Chairman, the current PATCO line provides for nine stops in Camden County. The Mayors Association suggests that if you add the stops in Atlantic County to that, you will probably be talking about 14 stops between Philadelphia and Atlantic City -- 14 commuter stops.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: Do you have any idea what the elapsed time might be?

MAYOR TARDITI: My understanding is -- and, this is a study done by the Mitre Corporation-- I'm not going to try to state the

exact time, because I think a lot depends upon the specific service. But, if you look at the high-speed lines, it is 20 minutes from 16th and Locust in Philadelphia to Lindenwold. I think you would be talking about an hour, or a little bit over an hour, from Atlantic City -- including commuter service -- if, indeed, you extend the PATCO line, which is designed for fast stop-and-go train service. If you have ridden the PATCO line, you are on and off that train in a matter of seconds. Via electric, it has quick pick-up.

The interesting part about it is, you are really talking about a very short rail line of 60 miles. Studies show that the bulk of the time is spent by the commuter driving to and from the train line, not riding the train line.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Mr. Foy?

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: First, Mayor, I want to compliment you on your taste in ties. You have a branch of First National State in your town, I assume. (laughter)

MAYOR TARDITI: They would like to open one, I understand.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: The question I have involves the existing nature of the movement of residents. For example, in a town like Haddonfield, since there is no service to Atlantic City now, I don't imagine there is a big demand by the people to travel there by rail. They are not doing it anyhow. But, I would assume you have a fair number of commuters going into Philadelphia. Have you assessed the impact of what is proposed by New Jersey Transit with respect to their having an option to going into Philadelphia? Is the link-up going to just be to PATCO, or will you stay with the service you have now?

MAYOR TARDITI: If I may, Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that if someone from Haddonfield wanted to use the Amtrak line to go into Philadelphia, he would have to go to Woodcrest to get the line.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: He would have to drive there?

MAYOR TARDITI: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: That is precisely my point.

MAYOR TARDITI: A number of our people currently walk to the PATCO line in Haddonfield because parking is at a premium in the entire town.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: All right. Have you conversed with the other mayors along the proposed route?

MAYOR TARDITI: Yes. In fact, we have made a presentation to the Atlantic County Mayors Association, and we have spoken to the mayors in Hammonton, Egg Harbor, and Absecon.

I think it is safe to say, without contradiction, that every town along the line is looking for commuter service -- every one of them.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: They want a stop.

MAYOR TARDITI: That is correct. Towns recognize that a stop, for example, in my town, benefits Cherry Hill. A number of people who stop in Haddonfield benefit the residents of Lawnside, just as a stop in Woodcrest benefits residents of Lawnside too.

Practically speaking, our discussions with the Mayors of Camden and Atlantic Counties and Mr. Morrissey, who is the President of the Mayors Association and who will be testifying later, reveal that their expectations are, "If the rail line goes through our town, then we want to be able to get on and off that train."

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: All right. Do you have any idea how much each additional stop costs with respect to capital construction?

MAYOR TARDITI: In the proposal we put together, the Camden County Mayors Association allowed \$2 million for each additional station. I will give copies of the proposal to the Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: Okay, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Assemblyman Cuprowski?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Mayor, I certainly give you credit for coming here to speak up on behalf of all your constituents in your particular town.

You said that a priority should be given to the residents, not the gamblers. As a mayor of a town, I can understand that, but will you elaborate a little bit on that? Exactly what do you mean?

MAYOR TARDITI: In planning a rail line, I think there should be no doubt that an area which hosts a rail service should get a benefit from it. The most significant benefit that any town along the

line can achieve, other than the minimal disruption of life style they have -- and, this is a concern that we have articulated -- would be access to the rail line. From day one, one of our major complaints about the plan developed by N.J. DOT and Amtrak is that it is essentially a line designed to bring the gamblers from New York City and Washington to Atlantic City. It doesn't really provide rail service for my constituents in Merchantville or Camden. We think that any community that hosts a facility like that should receive a benefit.

For example, in solid waste planning, if you host a resource recovery facility, you get a 25% discount on the tipping fee. Our sense is that a community which hosts a rail line should get a positive benefit and not just the thrill of seeing a train barreling through its town.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Okay, so your priority would be that the train should stop in your town, in addition to stopping in Merchantville, and so forth.

MAYOR TARDITI: I think, within reason, we can construct stops that will allow access to the towns. The initial plan that Assemblyman Bryant mentioned earlier only provided one commuter stop in New Jersey. That was the Woodcrest station. That was seriously flawed, and then based on discussions that N.J. DOT had at a number of hearings in both Hammonton and Haddonfield, they eventually added four commuter stops. I think this came about through a great deal of pressure on the Governor's office and through other commentary. I still think that five commuter stops in our case are insufficient, particularly if you look at the five stops. They go from Woodcrest to Atlantic City, so they really don't serve the bulk of Camden County.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Fine, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Are there any further questions? (no response) Thank you, Mayor. We appreciate your testimony.

MAYOR TARDITI: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Next we have Mayor John Morrissey, the Mayor of Merchantville. The only deviation from our list will be to hear the Mayor of Chesilhurst. We are going to let all of the mayors testify before we go to the rest of the list. Mayor?

MAYOR JOHN MORRISSEY: Mr. Chairman, my name is Jack Morrissey, and I am the Mayor of the Borough of Merchantville. I am also Director of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors and President of the Camden County Mayors Association.

I thank you for the opportunity to address your Committee today. It is an opportunity that I didn't have, nor did most of the other mayors have, with regard to the proposed rail service along the Amtrak line. Apparently one or two public hearings were conducted a few years ago, but most of the mayors involved with the line were not invited. That is sort of a sore point with us.

One of the problems I had when I looked at the agenda and saw that I followed Jack Tarditi was, I knew he would steal most of my thunder, so I have to scan through my notes to see what he didn't say.

I would like to present a little bit of history to you with regard to the position of the Camden County Mayors Association as far as the Amtrak line and the PATCO extension are concerned.

When Mayor Tarditi and I approached the Mayors Association about the proposed Amtrak line, they were in total ignorance of the proposal. I think we had to spend an appreciable amount of time trying to explain to them what it was that was happening with regard to the rail line. Subsequent to that, there were a number of meetings regarding the project. The Mayors Association's position is that they are unanimously opposed to the rail line in its current form. At least five of the mayors went back to their communities and secured funding -- taxpayers' money -- to institute legal action in opposition to the proposal. I believe we have five communities that appropriated \$1500 to hire attorneys. We have been in and out of the courts over the last two years in opposition to the Amtrak line.

We have also worked very closely with a citizen's group called RAGE, Residents Against Gamblers Express. They were very instrumental in bringing a lot of the detail to the mayors and making us very aware of what was happening. RAGE is purely a volunteer group.

As far as our position is concerned, it is a bipartisan effort. I also have to tell you that our resources are very limited. We have time, but we don't have much more than that. If you ask us for

plans, studies, and exact numbers, we're a little bit short in those areas because we're novices in some of the areas where you would look to us for support.

In Mr. Feinsod's testimony earlier, he mentioned a lot of new information. I was very glad to hear that transcripts will be made available to us because I love transcripts. When people make commitments, you can underline the commitment and send the witness a copy of the transcript. I think that is fantastic. (laughter) I wish Mr. Feinsod had spoken a little longer, because I would say that two-thirds of what we heard was an improvement over what we heard last week.

I support your position of not having input, plans, and feedback from the State with regard to what is happening with the rail service in South Jersey. Most of us rely on the newspaper.

We have had meetings with the Atlantic County Mayors Association, the Governor, Congressman Florio, and most of our local Senators and Assemblymen. I should tell you that we have almost unanimous support from the elected officials in this area -- bipartisan support -- in opposition to the rail line.

Just to highlight some of the dilemma we have been faced with, I have to tell you that I fully support everything that Mayor Tarditi offered by way of testimony. He has really stolen most of my thunder, and for that, he'll buy dinner the next time we go out. (laughter)

We had a meeting with the Governor two weeks ago. A representative of the New Jersey Department of Transportation discussed the fact that they are considering a stop in the Berlin/Atco area. The Mayor of Berlin Borough was there, and he almost fell on the floor because it was the first time he had heard about it. It was typical of the type of problems we are having with rail service and commuter service in this area. I had a conversation with the Mayor of Egg Harbor two weeks ago, and he told me he was in a dilemma because he should have heard two weeks prior to that as to whether or not Egg Harbor was going to have a commuter stop along the rail line. He still hasn't heard anything.

The day it was announced in the newspaper that there was going to be a stop in Woodcrest, Cherry Hill, I called Mayor Greenwald, the Mayor of Cherry Hill. She knew nothing about it.

This is typical of the problems we have had in working with N.J. DOT with regard to the line. We support a PATCO extension, and we feel very strongly that Camden and the other communities in Camden County have a need for commuter service, if, in fact, there is to be an extension of rail service from Camden County to Atlantic City.

The train goes right through my town, and it is a depressed line. There won't be a stop in Merchantville, regardless of what plan there is, unless they want to have a depressed station. That might not be a bad idea; at least it will stop the train. You know, a train goes 80 miles an hour, and we won't particularly enjoy having a train go through our area at 80 miles an hour and not stopping to provide service to our commuters.

We are not in favor of the Amtrak line, but we do favor an extension of the PATCO line. I support your position as far as legislation is concerned. I think that is the message here; we should legislate what is going to happen and what is going to be provided in the way of rail service, particularly in the way of commuter service.

I personally feel very strongly that this should be legislated. I think that is the only way you are going to get a commitment from anybody with regard to this rail line. So, I do support your position, but I think it needs to be modified to provide more extensive service in the area. As you said, that is why you conduct public hearings.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mayor.

ASSEMBLYMAN FOY: I would like to excuse myself, and to thank all of the people who have testified and all of the people who have yet to testify. I have a commencement to attend at Burlington County College. I want to thank Chairman Bryant for his hospitality.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you for coming, Assemblyman Foy. Assemblyman Cuprowski?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: The only comment I have is, it is disturbing to hear from mayors of municipalities -- and, we have 567 municipalities in the State of New Jersey -- who are not aware of what is happening which affects their particular towns. I find that very disturbing. I was just wondering what attempts were made by your organization to contact the DOT to try to rectify that and to communicate the plans so that you are aware of what is happening and you can relate that to the people in your town.

MAYOR MORRISSEY: Assemblyman, when this was first brought to our attention, we arranged a meeting with Commissioner Sheridan in Trenton. We met with him and a few of his aides, and expressed our concerns to them in very great detail. We asked that a dialogue be established and that they open the lines of communication. I have to say to you quite frankly, I feel that that did not happen at all. If there has been communication, I feel it has been one-sided -- from us to Trenton.

Assemblyman Rocco and I met with Commissioner Sheridan at the taping of a television program regarding this subject, and we, again, expressed our concerns to him privately. We solicited a commitment from him that there should be better lines of communication. I don't feel that that ever transpired.

More recently, we met with the Governor at his new South Jersey office, and again, it was expressed to us that we would have better lines of communication. As I understand it, there has been a meeting set for June 27 at the Governor's office, at which time I believe Mr. Harf will make a presentation to us with regard to the current plans.

I would say that we have made attempts from our end, and quite frankly, we haven't been very successful. I am quite annoyed in that I have constituents who call me on the phone and question me about articles that are in the newspapers which I know nothing about. It is very embarrassing.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: It shouldn't be. I might suggest, Mr. Chairman, that this Committee go on record to request that steps be taken by the Commissioner of Transportation to rectify that

communication gap. If there are arrangements set up for June 27, or whatever the date might be, then I think we should go on record as making a formal request on their behalf as representatives of the people in South Jersey. I would request that our staff--

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: (interrupting) That is duly noted, and I guess you want him to make sure that he reaches out to all the mayors in that area to let them know about the meeting. I just heard about it myself.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Maybe after the meeting, since you received additional information today by sitting here, you'll endorse the plan.

MAYOR MORRISSEY: Well, it is possible.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Assemblyman Gill?

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: Other than the fact that there is obviously a communication gap, which is regrettable, the basic intent of this bill is to provide transportation across Camden County right into Atlantic City, for whatever the reason might be.

You say that the mayors are unanimously opposed to this rail line. Under what conditions would you be in favor of it?

MAYOR MORRISSEY: The Mayors Association's position is that they want improved rail service in South Jersey. As an alternative to the proposal that we have directed our attention to, we would support an extension of the PATCO high-speed line, with commuter stops. I believe Mayor Tarditi has a very good plan that he has put together, which I believe is 14 stops, or whatever. It would provide commuter service to those cities along the PATCO extension that have expressed an interest in commuter service.

We have met with a number of groups; we have even met with the casino industry. Quite frankly, in candid conversation, it has been indicated to us that they are very skeptical of the ridership from the Northeast Corridor. Anyone living in the Washington/Baltimore area, for instance, probably could fly to Pomona and take transportation from Pomona to Atlantic City quicker and for the same, or less cost, than he could on an Amtrak line. From New York City, you probably could take a bus, or you would continue taking the bus, down

the Parkway. You'd probably arrive around the same time, or maybe a little quicker, and again, at less cost. It is the hypotenuse of a triangle to go from New York City to Atlantic City via the Parkway, rather than going into the 30th Street Station and then going to Atlantic City via rail.

We are skeptical of the additional ridership that would be forthcoming from hooking up with the Northeast Corridor. We feel, quite frankly, that the PATCO extension would provide service to the commuters in the area in both directions. The PATCO line goes to Philadelphia, so ridership from Philadelphia could quite easily go from 8th and Market Streets and pick up the PATCO line to go to Atlantic City. We feel that is where the attention should be directed.

There have been cost comparisons made -- the cost of the PATCO extension versus the cost of the Amtrak line. Most of the State representatives talk in terms of the least costly project, and I think we are saying that maybe the least costly project isn't the best project. Maybe a more costly project would better serve your constituents in this area.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: Generally speaking, are you saying the position of your Mayors Association is that while rail service in this part of the State is desirable, the proposal from the Department of Transportation is not the answer, and possibly the answer would be PATCO?

MAYOR MORRISSEY: That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: There is another question I would like to ask the Mayor. One of the things I focused on in this bill was, assuming there is some type of rail, regardless of whether or not it is electrification, we do not want to get left out. Assuming there is a rail put in, we want to make sure we address the issues of what kind of commuter service and frequency at stations-- I don't think that is inconsistent with what the Mayors are saying. They might disagree with the type of line which is being proposed by the Department of Transportation, but my bill doesn't talk about the type of rail. It says, "Whatever rail goes in, if there is rail service that is

connected, we want to also address that." What we're finding, is that while there is a dialogue to the type of service that is going on, there is a lot of planning going on, and much of the commuter portion is being left out. I wanted to address that right away, regardless of what you might put in. We don't want to overlook the issue we are concerned about, that is, having adequate commuter service and an adequate number of stops. That is really not inconsistent with what the Mayors are saying.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: Mr. Chairman, do you envision the possibility for commuter service within the realm of PATCO and not necessarily in New Jersey Transit?

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: If PATCO came in, I would say that we will still be worried about commuter service. That is why my bill does not address whether it is the PATCO line or the Amtrak line.

MAYOR MORRISSEY: I understand your point. I do support legislating the commuter service regardless of whatever line is utilized.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mayor.

MAYOR MORRISSEY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Are there any other questions? (no response)

We are going to have one deviation. Next we will hear from Mayor Wanzer from Chesilhurst, and then we will follow the list. Mayor Wanzer?

MAYOR EDWARD WANZER: I will be brief with my presentation, and I will not be redundant because my colleagues have covered most of the concerns of the Mayors Association.

I represent a community that is about equal distance between Atlantic City and Philadelphia. In talking with my constituents, my approach is that it seems much of the legislation and much of the planning which is involved in the State regarding commuter service is sort of counterproductive to smaller communities in rural areas. For instance, unless things have changed, my understanding is that if you commute more than 10 miles to work, you pay a different rate. You are put into a different pricing plan.

In my area, it is kind of hard to find a place to work that is within 10 miles. To give residents of South Jersey the benefit of a doubt, it would seem that commuter stops would be one way of trying to tackle the problem the State is facing with the no-fault automobile insurance. That is just my way of thinking and also the thinking of the residents I represent.

I heard the gentleman from the New Jersey Department of Transportation say that the way to make a commuter rail service work is to have automobile interceptor stops. Yet, it would seem that if there was some success behind the concept of commuter rail service, you would try to saturate the entire line with as many commuter stops as possible in order to ensure that the project would work. I don't see that happening as expressed by Mayors Tarditi and Morrissey. It just seems to be counterproductive.

I was one of those potential mayors who was at that first meeting in Hammonton when the concept of the commuter rail program was initiated. I said at that time that it seemed to me to be a waste of planning and a waste of dollars, both on the Federal and State levels, if a commuter rail system doesn't take into account the planning that is going on in the City of Camden for its commuter transportation terminal. It seems an awful waste to try to put together any large-scale plan for commuter service if you don't tie into those plans that are already in the working.

I'll be brief because I've been sitting over in the corner for awhile.

I support Assembly Bill 1989, and I want to thank the chair and the Committee for giving me the opportunity. Again, I hope the Committee takes into consideration that those communities which are forced into commuting back and forth on a daily basis to work should not be penalized by not having commuter stops where those residents can utilize them.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Let me ask you a question, Mayor. There was a proposed stop, or at least a discussion of a proposed stop, in West Atco. That would be about half-way between Atlantic City and Philadelphia. Would a stop in that area address some of the needs you are talking about?

MAYOR WANZER: Very much so. A way to ensure that things will happen is to legislate it into being. I hope you will look at the distance or the spread of those stops to try to get maximum benefit for the residents of South Jersey.

Again, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Are there any other questions? Mr. Cuprowski?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: The only question I have is, what is the population of your town?

MAYOR MORRISSEY: Well, I had all of that on my cards. It is about 1,562 people.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Okay, thank you.

MAYOR MORRISSEY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: You're welcome. I should explain to the Committee that you'll find that along the corridor -- the White Horse Pike or the Black Horse Pike -- you'll have many small towns. Within a five-mile radius, you might have 12 or 13 towns in South Jersey. Population ranges from 10,000 down to 1,500.

To give you an example -- I don't know how many towns you have in your districts -- I have 14 towns in my district. It takes six towns to make up 184,000. I have 14 towns that make up 184,000. That kind of gives you a size difference.

At this time, I would like to call on Mr. Phillip Connaught, Vice Chairman of the South Jersey Advisory Committee.

PHILLIP CONNAUGHT: Good afternoon. I left a copy of my testimony with Mr. Gurman, and after I finish with my testimony, I would like to have an opportunity to address a couple of other points, if I may.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: That is fine.

MR. CONNAUGHT: My name is Phil Connaught. I am a Vice Chairman of the South Jersey Transit Advisory Committee. Our Committee was established by the same law that set up the New Jersey Transit Corporation to advise the Corporation's Board of Directors on matters pertaining to transit in South Jersey. Our members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, but we have always tried to take a nonpartisan stance aimed at improving public transportation, and all forms of transportation, in the southern part of the State.

The South Jersey Transit Advisory Committee has long supported the institution of high quality express and commuter rail service to Atlantic City. We believe that for residents of Camden County and western Atlantic County, the commuter service which New Jersey Transit will provide will be the key factor which will justify the renovation of the rail line, since that will be the only way they can benefit directly from the line. Thus, we fully support what we take to be the general aim of Assembly Bill 1989, namely that New Jersey Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation be strenuously encouraged to plan a commuter service schedule and marketing program that will attract the greatest possible number of riders. We believe that such a schedule will almost certainly have to include more than four round trips per day in order to serve casino workers on afternoon and evening shifts, and day tourists who might want to stay on through part of the evening in Atlantic City.

At this point, we are not sure precisely how many round trips per day would permit the New Jersey Transit commuter service to maximize its ridership and minimize its operating losses. We are also not sure that New Jersey Transit knows the answer to this question with a high degree of precision. Thus, we believe that before anyone can say what the exact number of trips per day should be, much more information needs to be developed and made public. We think New Jersey Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation should be asked to review all of the available information on the commuter market. If necessary, they should be encouraged to conduct new market surveys of the potential ridership for the commuter service under a variety of different assumptions about service levels -- for example, four round trips per day, 10 per day, etc. They should also be asked to review and update their estimates of how much it will cost to provide these different levels of service. This information, together with their recommendations as to what level of service to begin with and how best to market the service, should then be presented to the Assembly and Senate Transportation Committees and the South Jersey Transit Advisory Committee for their scrutiny.

None of our respective Committees want to, or are capable of running a railroad. Operating decisions must be made by operating agencies. But clearly, we want to be assured that New Jersey Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation have made their best good-faith efforts to plan and provide a modern, attractive system of commuter service that will serve the people of South Jersey well. We believe that requiring the information-sharing process we mentioned above will go a long way toward achieving that goal.

The South Jersey Transit Advisory Committee fervently hopes that this new rail service will succeed and become a permanent feature of the area's transportation system. In that context, we should underline the fact that "success" can be defined in many ways, but it cannot reasonably be defined as making a profit or even breaking even.

Public transportation is recognized as a public service that cannot be expected to recover all its costs from fares alone. Decisions on service levels and operating subsidies must be made with this in mind. But, it is also true that such decisions can only be taken in the light of actual operating results. Thus, we believe it is premature to mandate any given level of service for any given number of years beyond the original two-year period until we all have had a chance to see the operating results. This will enable us to make an informed judgment on the transportation benefits to area residents versus the taxpayer costs in operating subsidies.

For the past year, our South Jersey Transit Advisory Board has been conducting an active and incisive dialogue, including frequent meetings with New Jersey Transit's staff on the planning, design, operation, safety, and budgetary aspects of the forthcoming commuter service project to and from Atlantic City.

New Jersey Transit's presentations at our monthly public Committee meetings have enabled our Committee to more completely comprehend the many interdependent concerns and variables which must be accommodated by New Jersey Transit so that they may effect a clean, safe, and reliable commuter service adequate to serve the real needs of the citizens of South Jersey. We are convinced that New Jersey Transit has, is, and hopefully will continue to work to satisfy our concerns.

We hope they will consider our Committee's recommendations toward achieving the aforementioned ends.

Mr. Chairman, the South Jersey Transportation Advisory Committee appreciates your invitation to express our views on this important matter. We look forward to continuing to work with you for improved transportation in our region.

We would be pleased to have you or your representative attend any and all of our Committee meetings, and we will see to it that your office is put on the notification list for our meetings. In fact, I am certain your office has received letters and mailgrams from us in the past on current issues, such as the proposal to create a Transportation Trust Fund, which we strongly supported last year and continue to support this year. We believe it is important for all concerned citizens and officials of the region to work together for better transportation.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. Connaught. You said you had some other comments you would like to make.

MR. CONNAUGHT: Well, I'll take any questions you may have first.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: I have no questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I think you were kind of succinct in your testimony, and I think it was well-understood. We appreciate that.

MR. CONNAUGHT: If I may, I have a comment from more of a personal viewpoint because of 14 years in the transit industry than from my Committee representation.

The way, I believe, Assemblyman Bryant, that you can ensure adequate commuter service -- assuming we can define what that is -- is to provide the resources with which we can do that. By we, I mean the people of South Jersey. New Jersey Transit is obliged to meet a budget. There is a combination of reordering priorities within the budget they have, and adding to that budget where there is added need. I feel that if we demand people to provide service without providing them with the resources, it would be to provide them with

responsibility without providing them the with authority. I commend that to your attention.

Certainly, the Transportation Trust Fund is one major element. Servicing it every year is much like going to California and saying, "I'll give you \$5.00 for gas when your tank is empty, but before you go the next step and expect to be there on Tuesday, get a job." You really can't get there without the resources.

Secondly, I would like to comment on the Mayor's proposal. Unfortunately, we don't have a copy of it. If we present a line of two ribbons of steel going to Atlantic City from we'll say, in this case, Woodcrest, that line can be upgraded to include electrified service should there be the need or the desire to add that commitment financially.

If I may, the metropolitan region commuter group up in New York is extending electrified service to Brewster, New York. This is a very long, heavily-traveled system that has been served by local coaches until very recently. I mean, this has been over a period of 50 years. They then found that there were enough people demanding the service so they were able to justify the expense.

We would have two ribbons of steel going down there which would be available to us. Should you wish to put PATCO-type cars and the attendant electrified substations every two or three miles for that kind of service, fine. Then we would have that opportunity. But, we must start with something.

You asked, how much money did we spend from this year's budget for rail? The answer is essentially "zero." I would like to see us start to crawl a little bit before we start to run. To think that you can start out on September 30 with a full-blown system, I think, might be a bit ambitious. I think the ultimate system is certainly beyond us at this time.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you. Next we have William O'Connell.

WILLIAM O'CONNELL: Good afternoon, Assemblyman Bryant and members of the Assembly Transportation Committee. My name is William O'Connell, and I have a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and a master's

degree in industrial engineering. I am a professional engineer in the State of Pennsylvania.

I have dealt with construction for over 10 years, and I have dealt with rail systems within my field. I wanted to give you my background in order to preface my comments.

The concern I have is not so much with your bill, but with the overall operating plan -- the funding of the plan by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. I have worked with the Camden County Mayors Association in developing an alternative plan to that system. I have done that as a concerned resident, as well to service the Camden County Mayors Association, which I have done at no cost.

The problem I see with the New Jersey Department of Transportation's plan is that it is dramatically underfunded. Again, I believe if you go back through history, the initial report was that it was going to cost \$30 million, which was targeted from the money which was provided by Federal legislation. As questions started to come up and the bills became modified, the cost went up to \$50 million.

We heard today from the New Jersey Department of Transportation that the commuter rail service which was applied to the original proposal has an amendment resulting from pressure from residents, the Camden County Mayors Association, and other officials. It is underfunded, and it is costing in the neighborhood of \$15 million. The plan, as proposed by the N.J. DOT, also identifies \$16.1 million of unfunded, long-term capital improvements, which I believe should be instituted immediately to provide safe service to commuters both from Lindenwold to Atlantic City and also from center city Philadelphia -- the 30th Street station -- to Atlantic City. If you add up those dollars, it comes to roughly \$80 million. That leads me into my second concern.

We are spending New Jersey taxpayers' dollars for the support of ridership outside the State of New Jersey. I feel that the N.J. DOT should be more concerned with commuter service and service to the residents of the State of New Jersey, rather than those people outside of the State. Therefore, I wholeheartedly support your bill.

I also oppose the spending of New Jersey taxpayers' dollars to support a gambling industry when there are so many other needs within the State of New Jersey.

In addition, I oppose the sale of State lands to obtain dollars to fund this rail line for the same reasons.

I have been involved with this program since its inception in January 1983. The concern of the residents is that the New Jersey Department of Transportation has little concern for the residents along that line. I believe that is a poor philosophy, especially from the view that they are spending so much money in North Jersey for commuter rail service, and they are not supporting the South Jersey residents.

If you really look at the New Jersey Department of Transportation's plan for commuter service as published to date -- again, I must preface my remarks because there was more information provided today than was available in the past -- the present commuter service, as published, is a secondary project if and when the funding becomes available under the fare box.

Prior to today, the only commitment that the Department of Transportation made was the two services in the morning and the two services at night, which are insufficient for commuter service. It is deemed to failure because it does not address the wide range of working conditions in Atlantic City.

I must go along with the Mayors Association in supporting their position that an extension of PATCO is a better solution to the problem. It addresses the primary concerns of the residents of South Jersey by providing commuter service, which should be the initial goal of this system.

Further, I believe that PATCO has established itself as a much better organization to run commuter service, as it is probably the most profitable, well-run commuter service in the United States.

I find it very difficult to believe that the New Jersey Department of Transportation is so willing to support a plan which services outside interests, primarily the casino gambling interests and commuters from other states. They are willing to go far and wide to find funding for that project, yet they will not try to find funding for a commuter rail service for the South Jersey area.

In conclusion, I would rather see that service initiated for commuters because the bulk of ridership available is from the 30,000 to 40,000 employees per day to Atlantic City. I believe to tap that ridership would certainly -- even if you took 10% of the total employment or 3,000 -- double the ridership they are projecting for the Amtrak service at this time.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you. Are there any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: I have a couple of questions, Mr. O'Connell. I have trouble distinguishing whether you are testifying from your professional engineering aspect or from your sociological aspect against Atlantic City. I think we generally agree today that it would be highly desirable to have a commuter line across South Jersey. With that in mind, does that answer most of the objections you have raised?

MR. O'CONNELL: The objection I have is that the New Jersey Department of Transportation's plan provides only for the express inner-city service, and it utilizes taxpayers' dollars to do that. I would rather see the plan for commuter service initiated on the PATCO extension. At least at this point, that would make a lot of sense to me. Primarily you would only have one rail service which you might have to subsidize at the lower end.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: In other words you are in favor of commuter service--

MR. O'CONNELL: (interrupting) I am in favor of commuter service--

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: (continuing) by using PATCO.

MR. O'CONNELL: Well, let me just say I would rather support commuter service at the lower end of that line. I believe a tie-in to the PATCO system is essential.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: We have a large amount of commuters coming from North Jersey, particularly from the area that I represent, into New York City. There is never a question as far as we're concerned that we have the ability to move large numbers of people from spot to spot to spot. If they happen to wind up in New York City, that is good. They could wind up in Jersey City, Newark, or any other place.

I find it difficult to distinguish between out-of-state commuters and in-state commuters. How would we measure that?

MR. O'CONNELL: Well, as a taxpayer, I oppose utilizing my taxpayer dollars for out-of-state interests, and also to support the gambling industry.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: I recognize the last part, but regarding the first part, how can you have a commuter operation without ending up somewhere -- for example, either in Philadelphia or in New York City? Supposing you come in from Camden, which is right across the river from Philadelphia, into Atlantic City? That is all right from your standpoint?

MR. O'CONNELL: That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: You're not bothered by someone from Philadelphia using your line?

MR. O'CONNELL: I have no objection to eventually having service from Philadelphia to Atlantic City. I am opposed to initiating service in that manner when the needs in South Jersey are much greater. That is my belief.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: Going back to the question I asked earlier, I am just as much interested in seeing commuter service from any part of South Jersey into Philadelphia. Hopefully, it will be stimulated in that way. Here again, you could be taking New Jersey commuters and putting them in an out-of-state depot.

MR. O'CONNELL: Well, I guess that is why I favor the PATCO alternative. It provides a link to Philadelphia, and a relatively close link to the Northeast Corridor. If we're going to spend our taxpayers' dollars to do something, we should be looking primarily at the residents of New Jersey -- how we can benefit them -- and then extending that into a wider horizon if we can benefit the population.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. O'Connell. We appreciate your testimony.

The Committee will probably ask for your reports which deal with some of your marketing studies and what you project your commuter rail service in South Jersey will be. We will probably do that through our committee aide.

Thank you, Mr. O'Connell.

MR. O'CONNELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Evelyn McGill? Ms. McGill, it is a pleasure.

EVELYN MCGILL: Thank you, Assemblyman Bryant.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Before you start, I would like to say that I am giving a lot of longitude and latitude to the discussions here today. Even though we are really dealing with commuter service, I know some people have ideas about the type of rail, so please feel free to say whatever you wish.

MS. MCGILL: Thank you, Assemblyman Bryant, for the opportunity to be here today. I represent Residents Against Gamblers Express from the Borough of Merchantville. I am not only speaking as an interested resident, but I am also speaking as an employee of the rail industry for 41 years.

I am very familiar with the cost of operating these trains. In 1951, I became a member of a cost-projection group at the Pennsylvania Railroad. I worked at that job until 1955. My position was to give profit and loss to the stockholders of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Nineteen fifty-one was a very lean year for the railroad industry. They made a lot of money in freight service, but the minute they went into passenger service -- terminal costs, rail costs, and crew costs -- profits went down to the point that the Pennsylvania Railroad was running in the red. This was mainly caused by the New York Terminal, the Newark Terminal, and the Philadelphia Terminal.

PATCO runs at a much cheaper cost. They have automation, etc.

Back when Pennsylvania Railroad merged with New York Central Railroad, they picked up rail lines that ran parallel with one another, such as the Central Railroad of New Jersey running into Bayhead. Because of the rail industry, the unions, and the PUC, they couldn't do away with these lines, so they ran at a deficit -- running trains to the same place with different railroads.

This is what this rail line appears to be to me. Once the casino industry invests its \$20-some million in a terminal in Atlantic City, they won't be able to convert it over to PATCO.

In the plans we read from PATCO, they can go from Philadelphia to Atlantic City, to Ocean City, to Cape May, and to Wildwood. This will benefit the residents of South Jersey. It is fine if the casino industry gets a little piece out of it, but I think New Jersey is more than the casino industry. To invest all of our tax dollars in just the casino industry doesn't seem fair to me.

There are good people in businesses in Wildwood who are suffering. The buses are centralized toward Atlantic City; everything is Atlantic City. There is nothing to Sea Isle, Avalon, or any of the other seashore resorts. I think the interest of the Assembly and the Senate should be for all of New Jersey.

As a member of RAGE, we conducted a program last year, and we obtained over 5,000 signatures from people just in our area of Merchantville, Pennsauken, and Haddonfield. This area is representative of at least 20,000 to 25,000 voters. When you go to a house and knock on the door, you get either the husband or the wife to sign a petition. There is an average of four people in each home, so this shows that the people do not want the gamblers express going through our towns.

Where I live, I can stand on my back porch, and I can throw a stone onto the right of way. The thought of a train going down there at 80 miles per hour is frightening to me, especially because of animals and children playing on those tracks.

Just last Friday, there was a wreck in Philadelphia, and this is the kind of thing that concerns me. Heat caused a kink in the track.

When you have a single track, there are houses 20 feet from it on one side and 40 feet from it on the other side. Where are those cars going to go? They are going to go into the houses. To appease just a few gamblers coming into Atlantic City, you are endangering the lives of thousands of people along the rail line. That is my concern, because I represent the people of Merchantville.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Are there any questions? (no response)
Thank you. I appreciate your testimony.

Did Mayor Wilkinson arrive yet? (not present) I haven't seen him, so we'll hold off until later.

Chester Ambler, Atlantic City Urban Areas Transportation Council?

CHESTER W. AMBLER, III: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am Chester W. Amber, III, Coordinator for the Atlantic City Urban Area Transportation Council. The Council is the official forum under Federal regulations for bringing together local government representatives in the Atlantic City metropolitan area for cooperative decision-making on transportation issues. We appreciate the opportunity to appear today.

The Council has consistently supported the restoration and improvement of rail passenger service for southern New Jersey, including commuter service. With the greatly increased demand for travel of both employees and visitors to Atlantic City, the Council sees rail service as a critical element of the transportation system needed to solve the area's transportation problems. Parking in Atlantic City and road capacity are increasingly constrained. Commuter rail service is essential to relieving some of these demands and controlling the associated construction costs and other impacts.

In working with New Jersey Transit to develop a successful service, the Council has repeatedly identified certain features that appear to be essential:

- 1) The provision of sufficient stops along the line with adequate parking to attract and efficiently serve all the ridership available from southern New Jersey communities;
- 2) Service at sufficient frequency to meet riders' schedule needs;
- 3) A start-up period of sufficient duration to allow full ridership development;
- 4) A strong marketing and promotional program; and,
- 5) Convenient services for getting around within Atlantic City.

This proposed bill is important in calling attention to the first three of these features which are crucial at this time. While

the Council would not want to preclude initiation of a commuter rail service that did not have all these features fully in place, it strongly believes that they ultimately will determine the success of the service.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Are there any questions? (no response)
Thank you. We appreciate your testimony.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: Mr. Chairman, if I may, my next appointment is at six o'clock, and it is many miles away.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I understand.

ASSEMBLYMAN GILL: I found this hearing very useful and very helpful.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I appreciate that. You'll receive the transcript, so you'll have the testimony of the people who speak after you leave. Thank you, Mr. Gill, for taking the time to come here.

Henry Nicholson, Atlantic County Transportation Authority?

HENRY NICHOLSON: Good afternoon, Assemblyman Bryant and members of the Transportation and Communications Committee. I am here today as a representative of the Atlantic County Transportation Authority, better known as ACTA. We are a regional transportation planning organization, and we are empowered under State enacted legislation to operate transit services in the Atlantic County area.

ACTA is happy to see the Assembly Transportation and Communications Committee's interest in the resumption of commuter rail service from Camden County to Atlantic City.

It has been ACTA's position that rail service will provide an essential ingredient to relieve the congestion of our highways and to provide another public transportation mode for those workers who live outside the Atlantic City area to commute to their place of employment by public conveyance. We also believe that there are some reverse commuter possibilities from the Atlantic County area to Camden County.

In 1983, Atlantic City attracted 26.5 million visitors. This is an increase of 15% over 1982. To support these visitors, there were over 36,000 casino jobs created, plus 21,000 other employees, which equates to 56,000 employee trips per day into Atlantic City from the

mainland. ACTA has identified a capacity problem for vehicular traffic for the visitor market, the auto/bus market, and the employee market.

In the last year, ACTA demonstrated, through the Edwards and Kelcey Parking Policy Study, that there is a finite capacity for the existing transportation infrastructure. Even by making the improvements generated by the ACTA/CAFRA Parking Policy, the transportation infrastructure would be limited. This could impede growth. If there is no new or expanded infrastructure, the level of constraint for growth will be in the 15 to 18 casino development range. As new casinos are constructed, we must increase our ability to intercept or vary the mode of travel for the casino employees and visitors. Currently, approximately 25% of the employee market is intercepted in remote fringe parking facilities. As new casinos develop, we find our catchment area widened considerably. In essence, what this means is that the place of residence versus the place of employment is moving further and further away from Atlantic City. This being the case, we must ensure that employees have the access and the flexibility to shift their mode of travel to commuter rail.

It is essential that the new rail service remain in effect for a trial period long enough to allow those casinos, which are under construction at the present time, to come on line and to fully achieve the potential usage generated by additional development in Atlantic City.

There are currently four casinos under construction, and six others are proposed within the next five years. This equates to 3,500 employees per casino, or an additional 31,500 employees, not including the multiplier effect on other support areas.

We also believe that an adequate level of service is necessary to ensure full usage of the commuter rail service. This service should be at a frequency which would allow reasonable access to Atlantic City, based upon casino worker requirements and, again, to carry these same workers back to their homes at the end of the work day. Due to the number of possible schedule variations which occur at the Atlantic City casinos, we believe that a level of service of 12 trains per day is reasonable. We also believe it is essential that a

sufficient number of stations be provided to allow those residents wishing to commute to Atlantic City adequate access to these facilities.

We have found that the Department of Transportation and New Jersey Transit have been most supportive of these concerns. Both have worked very closely with ACTA and with the Atlantic County Urban Area Transportation Council -- our MPO -- to ensure that station locations are adequate and the level of service will be sufficient. We are happy to see the New Jersey Transit plans all station locations to be modular in construction to allow incremental expansion as it becomes necessary.

As part of the ACTA Work Program, we are investigating the feeder system of buses into Atlantic County to support these rail stations.

In closing, we look forward to commuter rail service in 1985, and we believe that the New Jersey Department of Transportation and New Jersey Transit are doing a satisfactory job to implement the service.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. Nicholson. Are there any questions? (no response) I would like to thank the Authority on behalf of the Committee.

Next I would like to call on Timothy Chelius from the Atlantic County Department of Planning.

TIMOTHY G. CHELIUS: Good afternoon, gentlemen. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear here today, since I was a late addition to the roster. I will be mercifully brief.

My name is Tim Chelius, and I am a principal transportation planner with the Atlantic County Department of Regional Planning and Development. On behalf of our County Executive, Richard Squires, and our Department head, Rick Dovey, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify today.

The commuter rail service being planned by New Jersey Transit is essential to the continued growth and vitality of Atlantic County. Even now, peak-hour traffic is approaching and sometimes exceeds critical volumes on the principal access routes to Atlantic City. As casino/hotel development continues, we anticipate the number of net

commuters into the City to grow nearly as much as the total employment. Clearly, the existing highway system, even with a comprehensive bus management program and employee intercept parking, will be inadequate.

For these reasons, we have been working with New Jersey Transit, our Transit Authority, and local communities to develop a responsive and prudent plan for service, station location, and marketing. We believe that such a program will result in successful commuter rail service with vast growth potential and the capability to become a permanent element of South Jersey's and Atlantic County's transportation system. This bill is certainly a step in that direction.

We also believe, however, that a further detailed analysis should be conducted to determine exactly what the most effective level of service should be initially, and how it might change as casino/hotel development and employment growth continues. We believe that this type of advance planning is essential to ensure a flexible, responsive commuter rail operation.

To summarize, then, we fully support and appreciate the Committee's efforts to ensure high-quality rail service, but we hope that there are alternatives to a legislative mandate on exact service levels at this time.

We look forward to continuing to work with New Jersey Transit in developing a plan for viable and efficient commuter rail service. Again, our thanks to Assemblyman Bryant and the Assembly Transportation and Communications Committee for this opportunity to appear before you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Let me ask you a question. Do you think there is a minimum level-- My bill doesn't address that this is the only level. It deals with minimum levels. That is what we are getting at. At some point in time, there has to be some minimal level of commuter service required.

What you are saying is, you don't think there is enough data available to designate any minimum level of service.

MR. CHELIUS: As I understand it now, the typical question of minimum levels of service is almost not applicable to a situation like

this where we have this kind of employment in the industry. It is not the typical office employment situation where we have the regular peaking characteristics.

I don't want to try to represent New Jersey Transit's position, but my understanding is that they are still trying to see exactly what they will have to do to meet this peculiar aspect of the industry. Their thinking has changed, as we have heard several times today, from the initial service plan of two round trips and one station to what it is today.

If you like, I could speak to some of the community input that has been going on in Atlantic County. I should mention that I have a letter here from Egg Harbor City. I can either read it into the record, or just submit it.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: I'll accept it as part of the record.

MR. CHELIUS: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you. Assemblyman, do you have any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Okay, thank you very much.

MR. CHELIUS: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Next we have Reverend Samuel Jeanes, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Merchantville. Reverend, how are you?

REVEREND SAMUEL A. JEANES: I am fine. How are you this afternoon?

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Good.

REV. JEANES: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, and Senator, I am Samuel A. Jeanes, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Merchantville, and the executive secretary of the Camden County Council of Churches.

I don't have a formal statement to present, but I do have your bill. I'm sure that your motives are very commendable. You are thinking of people who need work.

The transportation you describe begins at Woodcrest Station and goes into Atlantic City. There is no statement as to where the trains originate. We've heard of trains originating in Boston, New

York, Washington, and Philadelphia -- bringing people from all areas. In fact, I noted a few weeks ago that one of the casinos was providing airplane transportation from Toronto, Canada. There was a banker there who had a little trouble to the tune of \$15 million; I don't think he is traveling now.

However, that is beside the point. I think your purpose is meritorious. You want to provide employment for people, and I'm sure that is primary with you. I think the interest of the casinos is secondary. They are interested in bringing more and more people into the State of New Jersey -- not the State of New Jersey, but right through the State -- down to Atlantic City. I don't have to tell you why they want them. You never win, do you?

One person may win \$1 million, but how many lose, Senator?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Too many.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Yes, too many. (laughter)

REV. JEANES: It is a bad business. I'm sure you have already been advised of the Freeholders' action. The Chairman of the Freeholders spoke very eloquently at a meeting in Merchantville in opposition to this. The Mayors Association is also on record in opposition to this.

My interest in this developed when I learned of what I call the "inflexibility" to any suggestions by the Mayors Association to the Commissioner of Transportation. I think that is inexcusable. I went to Trenton and discovered -- not through the Commissioner of Transportation, but through his aides -- that they had an unwillingness to see anything but this particular gamblers' express. I think this is probably what you have in mind in this bill, and I think it is very serious.

There are a couple of observations I would like to make. I ride periodically on Amtrak. If I'm in a hurry, I ride on the expensive line from Philadelphia to Washington. I notice, as that train goes through certain communities, that many of those communities certainly do not receive any positive contribution as far as property values and the appearance of the communities are concerned. The trains go tearing through, and I hate to think of that happening in

Pennsauken, Merchantville, Haddonfield, and some of our other communities. That is why I think the other program of going right down the Expressway would miss the areas where people live.

There are also any number of grade crossings with this gamblers express. There is a dilapidated bridge which opens every so often, and I can see that train having a lot of trouble getting across it at 70 seventy miles an hour when the bridge is open.

Another thing I want to call to your attention is the fact that a contribution may perhaps be generous from one of the casinos to furnish the terminal. I'm sure you are smart enough to see that that gives them a very unfair advantage, doesn't it?

There is a book in the library called The Rotten Borough, and it deals with Las Vegas. One statement said, "The gambling industry controls the state, and the politicians know it." That is serious, isn't it?

There is a statement I've made to a number of people: "There is no such thing as free cheese in the mousetrap." Do you understand what I am saying, Senator?

My last observation is this: You are a transportation committee, and we're worried about the \$30 million that you might lose. You know as well as I do that the President cannot red-line any part of a budget of that type, like our Governor can. He takes it or leaves it. He has to either veto the whole thing or part of it. Wouldn't it be a good thing for our Legislature to memorialize the Congress and say, "Let's use that money to fix the Benjamin Franklin Bridge?" Day after day, there are two lanes closed. Someone went down to look at it, but I haven't seen anything happen yet. There is some talk about raising the toll. There is \$30 million. Why don't you get busy with that and see if you can't get it out of Washington? At least get one of those lanes open.

That is all I have to say. Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Reverend. Hopefully, we will open up the lines of communication and have more dialogue on this issue. That is why your presence and everyone else's presence here is very, very important.

REV. JEANES: Thank you.

1970-1971 State Library

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you. Next we have Ms. Catherine Riccardi.

CATHERINE RICCARDI: I am speaking just for myself as a taxpayer and resident of Westmont. My elected official is not here, although Mayor Morrissey, who is President of the Mayors Association, spoke for all of us.

I live in a town where PATCO is already going through. We also have a defunct rail line. So, in essence, I am squished between two rail lines.

I believe in commuter service, and I am happy there will be commuter service, but I would prefer the extension of the PATCO high-speed line. I think if you review the materials that the mayors gave you about the condition of the tracks, the houses that are so close, the benefits, the costs, etc., you will find that it really is impractical.

You are hearing from all of these people who represent organizations. I am a taxpayer, and I live there. You need to know that people care about the train. I've written letters to Reagan, Florio, Kean, Sheridan, and everyone, and I get the same response, which is, "We'll support it if it is a commuter rail service." I'm telling you that if there is going to be rail service, I would like it to be PATCO, not the existing rail tracks. It wouldn't benefit me. My town is too small to have another stop, and I wouldn't be able to travel on that train.

That is all I have to say. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Are there any questions? (no response)
Thank you, Ms. Riccardi.

Is there anyone else who would like to testify? (no response) Then the public hearing portion is closed. Now, I would like to hear from the Committee members.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Mr. Chairman, before we close, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and to commend you for taking the initiative to have this hearing scheduled right here in the heart of Camden County. I think it is a credit to you and Senator Rand, who is the Chairman of the Senate Transportation

Committee. I think the people of this area certainly should be appreciative of your efforts in having this hearing here. I think that is the only way we can get the benefit of the people who are going to be most affected -- by getting their comments and input.

I also hope New Jersey Transit, in their plans-- I would assume from what I've heard that their plans are certainly not cast in stone, but the comments and recommendations that were made here today will certainly be given careful consideration.

I think the purpose of your legislation is commendable because the people who live in these municipalities should not be overlooked. The purpose of your legislation deserves a lot of consideration, and I commend you for that.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: Thank you, Mr. Cuprowski. Senator Rand?

SENATOR RAND: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and your Committee for allowing me to be involved in your deliberations here. Of course, it has been a very enlightening experience as far as I am concerned.

One of the reasons I was so happy to accept your invitation was because of the fact that I know, at one time, South Jersey had an excellent rail system. Whether by benign neglect or by ignorance -- I don't know which -- our total transportation mode as far as rail is concerned has literally gone down the drain. I am not only saying that this is a good mode and PATCO is better, but I am saying that we do have to upgrade the rail situation in South Jersey.

When you pursued your line of questioning, it was interesting to note that out of \$70-some million which goes for rail subsidy, out of \$160 million which the States gives by virtue of the Legislature, not one nickel goes for operating subsidies as far as rail service in South Jersey is concerned. I think that is because we have been sitting too long, and we have done too little as far as our rail situation is concerned. I think that by your action, we're beginning to attempt to upgrade not only passenger rail service, but freight rail service as well. Freight rail service is desperately needed if we are going to revitalize the South Jersey region.

I want to commend you and your Committee for holding this hearing.

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: In closing, I would like to thank the Committee. A lot of the members came a long distance, and I think that is very telling. The Legislature is very sensitive and wants to know the issues concerning Camden County.

You know, Mr. Cuprowski came all the way from Hudson County. That is a long trip. He wanted to find out what we needed in Camden County, Gloucester County, and Atlantic County. I want to commend him for taking the time to come today.

A lot of people don't know that when we have these public hearings, legislators come long distances to attend. They aren't just concerned about their own local areas. For instance, Mr. Gill came from Union County. They are concerned with, "Are we doing the right kinds of things in the State?" So, I would like to commend the Committee for that.

I would also like to commend the Senator for taking the time to come. He has a busy schedule too. He is on the Joint Appropriations Committee, he is the Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, and I know he had at least another hundred things to juggle, but he took the time out to come and hear testimony.

I want to thank New Jersey Transit and the New Jersey Department of Transportation for coming and offering information to us.

We have begun the dialogue that I think is necessary, and I think that is part of the role of the Assembly and the Senate -- to begin the dialogue on major issues which are going to affect South Jersey, or any portion of New Jersey.

You have gentlemen here who are willing to listen and to react to the things said by the various people here. None of this would be possible without you. Commuter service and rail service are important to South Jersey. Input from individuals or groups-- It is just as the last young lady said, "I'm just a taxpayer." But, it is important to me.

I want to thank everyone. I should not overlook the transcribers. They sit and make sure-- Really, many of you will probably want part of this transcript. Please write to our office, and we'll make sure you receive a copy. Our transcribers are dedicated

people. They set up their equipment two or three times today in order to make sure we get the best possible transcript.

I also want to thank the Freeholders. They have been very accommodating here today in making sure we had comfortable quarters.

If I don't say something about my own personnel staff, they will kill me. (laughter) All of this was arranged by not only Larry Gurman, who is my legislative aide, but by my own staff -- Valerie Wallace. They made me look good, and they did a yeoman's job by making sure all the people had the kind of information that was necessary. I appreciate their efforts also.

(Unidentified person from audience offers his assistance to the Assembly Transportation Committee to act as a liaison in the South Jersey area.)

ASSEMBLYMAN BRYANT: We appreciate that offer. At this time, I am going to close the public hearing.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)



May 22, 1984

BOROUGH OF HADDONFIELD

247 KING'S HIGHWAY EAST

HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY 08033

THE ATLANTIC CITY/PHILADELPHIA RAIL LINE

PROMISE: A rail road line between Philadelphia and Atlantic City will have a positive economic and environmental effect on South Jersey, particularly Atlantic and Camden Counties.

CRITERIA THAT SHOULD BE MET BY THE RAIL LINE PLAN:

1. Frequent, dependable rail service providing transportation services to all the towns along the rail line, with the highest priority being rail service for people who live and/or work in the South Jersey rail corridor;
2. Service that will help to relieve the vehicle congestion on our highways, particularly the Black (168) and White (30) Horse Pikes, Atlantic City Expressway, and the streets to and in Atlantic City;
3. A rail line with equipment and rail locations that results in the minimum negative environmental and public safety impact on the communities along the rail line;
4. A rail line that is economically sensible - that is with the ability to operate at or near break even. Ideally, the rail plan will qualify for the \$30 million Federal North East Corridor Unit Funding;
5. Service that will enhance the opportunities for economic growth in South Jersey, particularly for the Tourism industry. Ideally, a line that links the Atlantic City resort with the attractions such as "Garden State Race Track", the Cherry Hill area Hotels and the Philadelphia Convention Center, as well as urban areas such as the City of Camden.
6. Commuter rail service that is affordable in comparison to current hi-speed line and bus fares;
7. A rail line plan developed by a partnership of State, County and local officials, with support for all three levels of government.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Tarditi, Jr., Chairman
Rail Line Alternative Committee
lx Camden County Mayor's Association

City of Egg Harbor
New Jersey



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

June 13, 1984

State of New Jersey
Assembly Transportation & Communications
Committee
CN-042
State House Annex
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Attention: Chairman and Members

Re: Commuter Rail Service Along Southern New Jersey Rail Line

Gentlemen:

As Mayor of the City of Egg Harbor City, and on behalf of the members of the governing body and citizens of the Community, I would like to take this opportunity to endorse the reestablishment of commuter rail service along the Philadelphia to Atlantic City rail corridor.

The establishment of commuter service along this rail line will benefit both the Community and residents in the following manner:

Reduce the need for persons to commute to and from work by car, thus helping to relieve some of the traffic congestion problems now experienced along major highways in the area. In addition, the implementation of commuter rail service will reduce the need for commuter parking in the downtown areas of both Philadelphia and Atlantic City.

Establishment of commuter rail service that provides increased employment opportunities to area residents, not just in Atlantic City but also in the Philadelphia/Camden area, through the reduction in commutation time to these employment centers.

The implementation of commuter rail service will decrease the travel time to both Philadelphia and Atlantic City, thus providing increased opportunity for residents of the area to take advantage of the commercial and entertainment facilities at these two "anchor points".

City of Egg Harbor

New Jersey



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

State of New Jersey
June 13, 1984
Page 2

Commuter rail service will stimulate commercial activity in the vicinity of the commuter rail stations, thus benefiting local communities through increased ratables; the State of New Jersey through increased sales tax receipts; and merchants through an increased market area; in addition to commuters who benefit from the convenience of having these commercial areas nearby and accessible.

The benefits enumerated above are just a few of the many which can be raised in support of establishment of the commuter service on the Philadelphia to Atlantic City rail corridor. Although I could go on outlining additional benefits, I feel as though the few areas enumerated above outline the basic idea behind my endorsement for the establishment of commuter rail service, which is that communities and residents in the South Jersey area will benefit from the implementation of commuter service.

As the Mayor of one of the communities in which New Jersey Transit is considering the establishment of a commuter rail station, I must add the support of the local residents for commuter service has been tremendous. As noted on the attached letter, submitted to Jeff Zupan of New Jersey Transit, by Peter P. Karabashian Associates, Inc., Egg Harbor City's Planning Consultant, approximately 200 residents from Egg Harbor and the area immediately surrounding it have submitted their names indicating that they would utilize the commuter rail service on a regular basis, not only to commute into Atlantic City, but also for trips to the Camden County/Philadelphia area.

Thank you very much for taking the time to review this letter as part of the on-going decision making process of your committee.

Very truly yours,

CITY OF EGG HARBOR CITY

Jack C. Woerner
Mayor

cc: Congressman William Hughes
Senator William Gormley
Dick Squires
Rick Dovey

Jim Rutala
Jeff Supan
Egg Harbor City Planning Board
Egg Harbor City Council

May 9, 1984

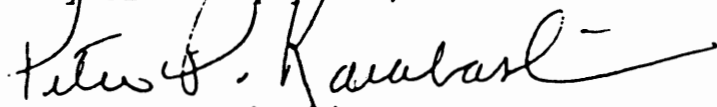
Mr. Jeff Zupan, Director
Department of Planning
New Jersey Transit
P. O. Box 10009
Newark, New Jersey 07101

Re: Egg Harbor City Rail Stop
(Reference PPK-207-84)

Dear Mr. Zupan:

On behalf of the City of Egg Harbor, it gives me pleasure to forward to you the enclosed list of approximately 190+ persons from Egg Harbor City and the surrounding area who either called or mailed in their names, indicating that they would regularly use commuter service if a rail stop were to be located in Egg Harbor City. Also enclosed is a letter from the Mayor of nearby Washington Township supporting the the location of a rail stop in Egg Harbor City. The submission of these names, in addition to the information previously forwarded to you by the Atlantic County Division of Planning, clearly indicates that demand exists for a rail stop to be located in Egg Harbor City, and that the average daily ridership would meet the minimum levels which N.J. Transit has determined would be necessary. If, however, you feel that additional information is necessary, please contact this office immediately and we will expedite the preparation of this information.

Very sincerely yours,



Peter P. Karabashian
Professional Planner
N. J. License #1375

PPK/hn
Enclosures

cc: Mayor Jack Woerner
Henry Sartorio
John Vetter
Ellan Johns
Lloyd Wimberg
Jim Rutala

southern new jersey development council

one new york avenue atlantic city, new jersey 08401 609/344-4163

TESTIMONY OF

LAWRENCE D. COHEN

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

ON A 1989

SUBMITTED TO THE

ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

JUNE 13, 1984

southern new jersey development council

one new york avenue atlantic city, new jersey 08401 609/344-4163

My name is Lawrence D. Cohen and I am Transportation Committee Chairman for the Southern New Jersey Development Council and Vice-President of Bayly, Martin and Fay Inc. of New Jersey. Development Council, a non-profit corporation representing business, industry, and government, promotes economic growth and seeks to enhance the economic climate for existing businesses in the eight counties of Southern New Jersey. Representing over 200 organizations, the Council serves as the leader in coordinating regional activities among businesses, local and county governments, and community organizations.

The Southern New Jersey Development Council appreciates the opportunity to present our views on A 1989, legislation requiring that New Jersey Transit provide 12 round trips daily from Woodcrest Station to Atlantic City for a period of 7 years.

We support both commuter and high-speed rail service between Atlantic City and Philadelphia. Opening this through route is important to the growth of our region and to the state as a whole. The rail line could serve as a lifeline between Atlantic City, where job opportunities are increasing, and areas of South Jersey that are suffering from high unemployment. It could stimulate expanded freight service as well as commuter spurs off this main line, thereby encouraging greater economic development in New Jersey.

The State's agreement with Resorts International is perhaps the first ever in which the private sector would contribute substantially to the initiation of a public transportation service. It allows the State to revitalize this service with little cost to New Jersey taxpayers. Our organization has led a coalition of about 20 organizations supporting restoration of the train service.

With regard to the specific proposal submitted as A 1989, the Council has several concerns. First, we have reservations about the mandating of commuter service for a period of 7 years. We understand there are no similar mandates for the providing of rail transportation services elsewhere in the state. While we understand the intent of mandated service is to insure that South Jersey will begin to receive subsidized commuter service similar to that enjoyed by our North Jersey counterparts, we believe the State of New Jersey could be severely burdened by the potential subsidies required to run this service for the year length of time, possibly without any ridership growth throughout the time period. We believe if such a mandate were

enacted, a formula for continuance of service should be included. It should require annual growth in ridership and a reduction (or at least no increase) in the subsidy cost to continue to provide the commuter service each year.

Second, a demand study should be undertaken to determine how many railroad stations are optimal and the best locations for stations along the route. This approach would be more cost efficient and would help prevent the State from spending precious transportation dollars to rehabilitate or build a railroad station that's later use does not warrant such an investment. We should not just rely on the location of previously used stations to determine the current station needs.

Finally, the current plan for Atlantic City-Philadelphia rail service provides four daily round trips (2 in the morning and 2 in the evening.) We are unsure that this extent of service will be adequate to meet the average commuter's needs, however, we also do not know that 6 trips in the morning and 6 in the evening are warranted either. We believe a dialogue with the casino industry is crucial to determine the optimal times and numbers of commuter trains necessary to serve as a good transportation source for casino employees.

We would be happy to answer any questions.

