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The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey  
Public Hearing – Toll & Fare Proposals  
August 16, 2011  
George Washington Bridge Administration Building -  
6:00 p.m.

JANE ROSE REPORTING  
Robyn Harrell, Court Reporter

JANE ROSE REPORTING 1-800-825-3341

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Page 3	APPEARANCES  SPEAKERS (Cont'd.) Stephen Kaplowitz Danny Giordano Thomas Luterzo Robin Prince Ana Tavaréz Elliot Matuscow Peter DeSheplo Lisa Breslof William Tsamjoures Edward Faraday Gurvis Miner David Johnson Anthony Barbee Daniel Rios David Matthews Christine Dominguez Carlos Gomez Tom Ramsay Edward Monahan Mike Dalpe John Blyden	Page 5	1 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Good evening. 2 My name is Cedrick Fulton. I'm the director 3 of the Tunnels, Bridges and Terminals 4 Department for the Port Authority, and I 5 will be serving as the hearing officer for 6 today's public comment meeting. 7 The purpose of this hearing is to 8 inform the public about the Port Authority's 9 proposed toll and fare increase on its 10 interstate bridges and tunnels PATH rail 11 system and to solicit public comments on the 12 proposal. To fully solicit comments from 13 the public, the Port Authority is holding 14 the most number of hearings it has ever held 15 for a revenue proposal - eight over the 16 course of the day in locations throughout 17 New York and New Jersey as well as one 18 additional online hearing. 19 To provide everyone who wishes to speak 20 with an adequate opportunity to be heard, 21 anyone who has not yet registered and who 22 wants to provide comments at this meeting 23 must register at the registration desk at 24 the entrance to this room by 6:30. 25 Spanish translators are available for

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<p>1 speakers who wish to deliver their comments 2 in Spanish. ASL interpretation is also 3 available. 4 General information and copies of the 5 notice of today's hearing are available at 6 the registration table. All comments 7 presented at this hearing and those 8 submitted and received by 7:00 p.m. on 9 August 16, 2011 will be accepted by the Port 10 Authority in its consideration of actions 11 that are the subject of this hearing. 12 Written statements should be sent to Public 13 Hearing Comments, 225 Park Avenue South, 14 18th Floor, New York, NY 10003 or submitted 15 online at <a href="http://www.panynj.info">www.panynj.info</a>. 16 The Port Authority's Board of 17 Commissioners will receive a copy of today's 18 transcript and any written comments received 19 prior to the deadline. 20 At this time, I will make a short 21 opening statement explaining the Port 22 Authority's toll and fare proposal and why 23 Port Authority believes a toll and fare 24 proposal is necessary. The toll and fare 25 proposal under consideration is as follows.</p>	<p>1 hours each weekday night from 10 p.m. to 2 6 a.m. (previously midnight to 6 a.m.). 3 Fully preserving the Staten Island 4 Bridge "Discount Plan" for E-ZPass users, 5 giving these frequent users a 50 percent 6 toll discount on the peak E-ZPass toll. 7 In addition, qualified energy efficient 8 vehicles with GreenPasses will see no toll 9 increase during off-peak hours in 2011 and 10 the car-poolers discount rate is preserved 11 in 2011 with a 50 percent discount off the 12 E-ZPass peak hour rate. Both GreenPasses 13 and car-poolers would see a \$2 increase in 14 2014. 15 The base PATH fare would increase from 16 \$1.75 to \$2.75 in 2011 with the average fare 17 increasing to \$2.10 from \$1.30 giving the 18 steep 25 percent discount, which will be 19 fully preserved. The 30-day unlimited pass 20 will increase to \$89 from \$54. 21 The proposed toll and fare increase 22 will fully fund a new \$33 billion ten-year 23 plan, which will generate over 167,000 24 jobs. 25 This toll and fare proposal is</p>
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<p>1 Tolls for autos using E-ZPass on the 2 Port Authority's crossings to increase from 3 \$6 to \$10 roundtrip for off-peak travel and 4 from \$8 to \$12 in peak hours. An additional 5 \$2 increase during peak and off-peak hours 6 will be implemented in 2014. 7 A cash toll surcharge of \$3 to increase 8 the cash rate from \$8 to \$15 during the peak 9 period in 2011 for the 25 percent of toll- 10 payers who still use the optional cash 11 system similar to the MTA. The surcharge 12 will increase by an additional \$2 in 2014. 13 Truck tolls per axle using E-ZPass 14 off-peak to increase from \$7 to \$13 15 roundtrip and peak from \$8 to \$14 with an 16 additional \$2 per-axle-increase in 2014 for 17 both off-peak and peak hours. A similar 18 cash surcharge of \$3 per axle will be 19 applied to trucks in 2011 that continue to 20 use the optional cash system with an 21 additional \$2 per axle in 2014. 22 There will be no toll increase in 2011 23 on trucks that cross during the overnight 24 discount period and the Port Authority will 25 expand this overnight period an extra two</p>	<p>1 necessary because the Port Authority is 2 facing three unprecedented challenges at 3 once - (1) an historic economic recession 4 that has sharply decreased revenue below 5 projections (2) more than \$6 billion in 6 security costs since 9/11, which have more 7 than tripled from pre-9/11 security costs 8 and (3) the cost of rebuilding of the WTC, 9 which is now estimated at \$11 billion. 10 The proposal comes only after the Port 11 Authority initiated an aggressive cost- 12 cutting plan starting in 2008 to manage its 13 resources became clear: Cutting \$5 billion 14 in capital projects and deferring billions 15 more; holding operating expenses at zero- 16 growth for three consecutive years; and 17 cutting agency headcount to the lowest 18 levels in 40 years - an 11% reduction of 19 non-police staff in the last five years. 20 The Port Authority does not receive tax 21 revenue making its toll and fare structure 22 the primary way to fund the region's 23 critical interstate transportation network. 24 At this point after a multi-year effort to 25 control spending in recognition of declining</p>

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1 capital capacity, failure to act risks 240  
2 critical infrastructure projects and  
3 thousands of jobs, and will preven the  
4 longest overall of the agency's aging  
5 facilities in its 90-year history.  
6 Projects contingent on the proposed  
7 toll/fare plan include:  
8 The first replacement of all 592  
9 suspender ropes at the 80-year old George  
10 Washington Bridge, the world's busiest  
11 crossing, joining other suspension bridges  
12 like the Golden Gate and RFK, which have  
13 already replaced theirs.  
14 The replacement of the Lincoln Tunnel  
15 Helix. It will require major lane closures  
16 and load restrictions if not replaced.  
17 The raising of the Bayonne Bridge which  
18 will solve the current clearance problem,  
19 preventing the post-PANAMAX ships from  
20 accessing key ports.  
21 Significant security investments at the  
22 region's airports including the installation  
23 of security barriers.  
24 Complete replacement of 340 PATH cars  
25 replaced the 100-year old signal system and

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1 duct bank network, upgrade PATH security  
2 with tunnel hardening and flood mitigation  
3 measures, and rehabilitate the system's  
4 aging stations.  
5 We will now begin the public comment  
6 portion of this hearing.  
7 In order to give everyone an  
8 opportunity to speak, we require that  
9 speakers keep their oral presentation to no  
10 more than three minutes. Please note that a  
11 timer is placed in the table in the front of  
12 the room and will count down the three  
13 minutes. We remind you to be considerate of  
14 other speakers and conclude in a timely  
15 fashion.  
16 I will call the names of those who have  
17 pre-registered and are here to speak. I  
18 will read the name of the person who is  
19 first and two names on a list that follow so  
20 that everyone will be aware of the order in  
21 which they will be speaking.  
22 When a person is speaking, that person  
23 should use the microphone available. When  
24 you come forward to offer comments, I ask if  
25 you identify yourself, to give your name and

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1 your organizational affiliation if  
2 appropriate, for the record.  
3 If you have a written version of your  
4 comments, please provide them to the staff  
5 at the registration table at the entrance to  
6 the room so that the comments can be  
7 included in the final transcript of the  
8 proceedings.  
9 Finally, we remind you that the purpose  
10 of this hearing is to afford you an  
11 opportunity to make statements and comments  
12 about the proposed toll and fare increase.  
13 This is not a question and answer session.  
14 It is an opportunity for you to present your  
15 views so that the Port Authority can  
16 consider them in making any final  
17 determination. Now I will call the first  
18 three names.  
19 Mayor Mark Sokolich, Phil Arena Angelo D'Argenio.  
20 MR. SOKOLICH: My name is Mark  
21 Sokolich. I'm the Mayor of the Borough of  
22 Fort Lee, the host community to the George  
23 Washington Bridge. With me this evening are  
24 representatives of the governing body of the  
25 Borough of Fort Lee, Councilman Sohmer and

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1 Jan Goldberg. Thank you for providing the  
2 opportunity to be heard and to present other  
3 considerations by the Port Authority of New  
4 York and New Jersey.  
5 This is by way a very brief  
6 background. Fort Lee is a community  
7 consisting of approximately 40,000 people,  
8 most commuting daily to New York. Suffice  
9 it to say, we are among your best  
10 customers. I can personally attest to the  
11 importance of investment in public  
12 infrastructure for a multitude of reasons.  
13 I believe this makes for exorbitant  
14 expenditure in the future that will provide  
15 the highest quality of service to all  
16 citizens, and yes, to provide jobs.  
17 However, the timing of this initiative  
18 cannot be worse. The present economic  
19 climate is visited upon our nation and the  
20 New York Metropolitan region, financial  
21 challenges exceeded only by the Great  
22 Depression of the 1930s. Unemployment  
23 nearly double digits, were close to five  
24 consecutive record highs, and every day is a  
25 challenge for families across our country

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1 and right here in Fort Lee.  
2 For the record and on behalf of this  
3 community which I'm sworn to serve, let me  
4 to interpose my objections to the current  
5 status of the proposal. And what I mean by  
6 that is not the present, bear with me, not  
7 the present drastic increases that are  
8 proposed.  
9 And I'm only offering to the Port  
10 Authority of New York and New Jersey that  
11 there must be a happy medium, not one that  
12 will impose the hundred, 150 percent  
13 increase that are presently being  
14 contemplated that will all but eat up the  
15 balance of disposable income here in Fort  
16 Lee, but something less than that so that  
17 there is reinvestment in our infrastructure  
18 and so that jobs are provided and that folks  
19 here create jobs and there will be then a  
20 coexistence of a better economy and a better  
21 economic condition here in the area.  
22 Never in the history of our borough or  
23 community have we seen more signs for sale,  
24 for rent, going out of business signs. It's  
25 a sign of the times. I think that the

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1 investment would be important but not as  
2 presently contemplated by the Port Authority  
3 of New York and New Jersey. It's simply way  
4 too much to be absorbed by our commuters.  
5 The additional money will be required  
6 to be absorbed -- that will be absorbed by  
7 rate increases would be a substantial  
8 portion as I said of disposable income. Our  
9 demographic studies have shown that most of  
10 our population are seniors on fixed income  
11 and that these folks will actually be hit  
12 the hardest.  
13 I've also heard that without rate  
14 increases and the lack of such increases may  
15 adversely impact financial and credit  
16 ratings. We understand the importance of  
17 credit ratings, and we understand the  
18 importance of the impact that credit ratings  
19 have. However, we cannot govern for  
20 purposes of satisfying credit rating  
21 agencies to the detriment to very people we  
22 were sworn to serve.  
23 Thank you for considering my comments.  
24 We request that the rate increases as  
25 presently proposed, as presently proposed,

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1 not go forward. That you reconsider and not  
2 take such a drastic step and reach the  
3 coexistence that all of us here at least I  
4 hope you will reach. Thank you very much.  
5 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you for  
6 your comments. Next speaker, Phil Arena,  
7 followed by Angelo D'Argenio, followed by  
8 Steven Gardener.  
9 MR. ARENA: My name is Phil Arena,  
10 member of Local 590, a resident of  
11 Bloomingdale. For reasons of safety,  
12 security, quality of life and work creation,  
13 I support the Port Authority's capital plan.  
14 Regarding safety, one does not have to  
15 look any further than the George Washington  
16 Bridge to see the safety issues that need to  
17 be addressed. Eighty-year old standard  
18 tables, while I am sure are the best  
19 conditions possible, are not to be long-term  
20 opposition. I had read that in these  
21 bridges, including the Ben Franklin Bridge  
22 in Philadelphia, the Golden Gate Bridge in  
23 San Francisco, and the RFA Verrazano Bridge  
24 in New York have already replaced these  
25 cables.

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1 Better to follow their lead than follow  
2 the I-35 West Bridge in Minnesota that  
3 collapsed a few years ago. I do not want to  
4 sound like an alarmist, but tragedies like  
5 these do not just happen out of the blue.  
6 Of the warning signs, if there are warning  
7 signals -- let's accept our original  
8 thinking standard cables to be our warning.  
9 Regarding security, it is tough to  
10 ignore how the world has changed in the last  
11 10 years since 9/11. We have capital costs  
12 and cut projects related to having people  
13 secure that we probably did not imagine 11  
14 years ago. These are not the type of  
15 projects we should ignore. The Port  
16 Authority has a responsibility to keep  
17 people safe, and they must do what it takes  
18 to accomplish that.  
19 While we -- is another important issue.  
20 Congestion and delays take time away from  
21 our families and jobs. Air pollution  
22 increases when traffic is stored. Property  
23 values may rise and lower based on the  
24 ability, and they are caused by fuel  
25 consumption and repair.

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1           Lastly, I would like to discuss jobs.  
2    We need jobs in the area just like we need  
3    jobs nationally. Not only did the Port  
4    Authority Capital Plan lead to construction  
5    jobs and engineering jobs, and supplies --  
6    suppliers will benefit as well.  
7           Getting the jobs mean work, one-person  
8    may visit department stores and restaurants,  
9    maybe even get some work done around the  
10   house. Multiple effects in the jobs create  
11   benefits. You cannot overlook 185,000  
12   jobs. It's 185,000 jobs.  
13           We need these jobs in every industry  
14   and every community. Using the GWB work, an  
15   example of tunnels, work will be done in  
16   Fort Lee. I will probably spend a lot of my  
17   earnings in Bloomingdale, maybe at the mall  
18   and wait.  
19           The benefits are not isolated in a  
20   particular area. These -- with this capital  
21   plan, everybody benefits. Long-term  
22   planning is always an easy way for people --  
23   sorry, long-term planning is not always easy  
24   when people are only concerned about short-  
25   term costs. We need to invest in our

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1    infrastructure if we want to repeat -- I'm  
2    sorry -- reap the benefits now and in the  
3    future. Thank you.  
4           HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
5    Next speaker, Angelo D'Argenio, followed by  
6    Steven Gardener, followed by Senator Bob  
7    Gordon.  
8           MR. D'ARGENIO: I'm here to support the  
9    Port Authority's capital plan as well as  
10   toll and fare increases. I've been around  
11   for more than a couple years and there are  
12   two things that I feel strong enough to  
13   relate to this Port Authority's proposal.  
14           One is that we can't ignore the  
15   enormous infrastructure we have in this  
16   region, and that is not just Port Authority  
17   infrastructure, but infrastructure in  
18   general. Last week we saw how one minor  
19   derailment on New Jersey Transit were  
20   breaking backs of users and businesses.  
21   Frustration levels were high and bottlenecks  
22   and delays come at a great cost to  
23   productivity, to user's ability to earn a  
24   living, and people just trying to get home  
25   to their families.

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1           That was just one rail line. What  
2    happens if the Lincoln Tunnel here goes  
3    down, is shut down the path of the George  
4    Washington Bridge. I consider  
5    transportation to be like the vein and  
6    arteries on people. They need to remain  
7    clear, free of blockages. Transportation is  
8    the lifeline of our economy, such as veins  
9    and arteries are to our bodies.  
10           Second, we have to stop passing the  
11   cost of civil society on to our children and  
12   grandchildren. We cannot continue to pile  
13   up our nation's crippling debt by borrowing  
14   to pay for these products. We cannot follow  
15   the federal government's path to downgrade  
16   and paying higher taxes. We need a world-  
17   functioning transportation system, and we  
18   need a way to pay for it. Increase user  
19   fees, while unfortunate, only makes sense.  
20           Let's stop passing the buck. Let's do  
21   the right thing and break bottlenecks and  
22   break the cycle of debt as well. Thank you.  
23           HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
24   Next speaker, Steven Gardener, followed by  
25   Senator Bob Gordon, followed by Freeholder

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1    John Driscoll.  
2           MR. GARDNER: Good evening. My name is  
3    Steve Gardner. I'm the director of the  
4    Labor Internal Education Fund. I appreciate  
5    the opportunity to appear here today in  
6    support of the capital plan of the Port  
7    Authority.  
8           The Port Authority has been and must  
9    continue to be an (inaudible) application --  
10   The Port Authority must also identify its  
11   needs and plans. This capital plan offers  
12   more of those (inaudible). It offers  
13   solutions, how we deal with increase demand  
14   (inaudible) transportation system  
15   (inaudible) state of priorities over the  
16   (inaudible) indicate how much the prize rely  
17   on transportation system changing and what  
18   if anything should we do to change along  
19   with it.  
20           Particularly, the Port Authority  
21   capital plan is not about infrastructure.  
22   It is about who we are and who we are going  
23   to be in the future. We have a choice.  
24   (inaudible) shape that (inaudible) and we  
25   can have that defined for us.

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<p>1 The New York-New Jersey (inaudible) 2 important to our nation and the world. 3 While we still hold it (inaudible), there is 4 no guarantee that we will (inaudible). 5 Moving the economy forward, being 6 (inaudible) to move people (inaudible) 7 probably efficiently, and there is no 8 question moving the economy forward. So 9 instead, that now is not the right time. 10 This recession is not the time to raise 11 tolls and put cost on it (inaudible). 12 Now is exactly the right time -- now is 13 the time (inaudible) 40 percent of 14 unemployment (inaudible) that we figured out 15 a way to use public sector money, to put 16 people back to work our economy and relax 17 our system but (inaudible) and make a whole 18 (inaudible), something which we need to do. 19 We need on the road and less traffic. 20 But in this region, we need to rely on the 21 road, rail, bridge, tunnels, (inaudible) 22 best traffic. And those are the ones that 23 are kept in good shape. 24 Capital plan addressing those have been 25 (inaudible). Thank you. Thank you.</p>	<p>1 paying jobs now. And there is no doubt that 2 in this economy these jobs are sorely 3 needed. The construction trades have been 4 among the hardest hit in this economy, and 5 absent public works, stimulus projects 6 coming out of Washington. The Port 7 Authority has a chance to step in and fill 8 this void. 9 I also understand the need to protect 10 the agency's credit rating to ensure its 11 borrowing costs do not increase. 12 I only wish the partisans in Washington 13 had as much concern about our nation's 14 credit rating. 15 But there's another critical issue that 16 needs to be addressed here, and that's where 17 all of this money is coming from. It is the 18 middle class that will undoubtedly bear the 19 major burden of this hole. Taken at once, 20 the \$4 increase in the George Washington 21 Bridge and Lincoln Tunnel tolls, the 22 crossings for most -- this costs the daily 23 commuter an additional \$1,000 a year. In 24 effect, a tax increase is \$1,000 a year. 25 My concern here is not whether these</p>
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<p>1 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Senator 2 Gordon, Freeholder John Driscoll, and Doug 3 Sugarman will follow. 4 SENATOR GORDON: Good evening. I'm 5 State Senator Bob Gordon, and I represent 6 New Jersey, 38th Legislative District, 7 encompasses Fort Lee and two other 8 communities in Bergen County. 9 Part of the residents of Bergen County 10 counts for more than 50 percent of the 11 week-day traffic of the Hudson River 12 crossings, the proposed toll increases will 13 have a profound impact on the households 14 that I represent. 15 There is no doubt that we need to 16 strengthen our transit infrastructure, not 17 just for commuter convenience, but also for 18 regional economy. Our tunnels, bridges and 19 path services must be able to accommodate 20 the growing transit volume expected in the 21 decades ahead. If we fail to invest in our 22 infrastructure, our regional economy will 23 surely stagnate. 24 I also recognize that the Port 25 Authority has the ability to create good-</p>	<p>1 projects are needed, which they are, but 2 whether we need to put people back to work, 3 which we do. But whether we should be 4 asking commuters to pick up the entire tag 5 personally in such an immediate fashion. 6 I echo the words of both state 7 governors. The Port Authority must look 8 within its own operations for savings so 9 that these projects can be completed without 10 imposing the entire burden on the toll- 11 paying public. 12 I would ask the Authority to prioritize 13 these projects and wherever possible to 14 spread out work. That way, if there are 15 cross-over runs, the impact would not be 16 compounded or another toll plan. 17 I stand here supportive of my friends 18 in labor. I want to see them back on the 19 job. Their paychecks can help not only 20 their families but our region, entire 21 economy. 22 But I will also implore the Authority 23 to keep our commuters in mind. They do want 24 to see the transportation efforts improved. 25 They do want to see the jobs created. But</p>

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1 they can't pay the entire threat. All I ask  
2 is for fairness in the public, and that if  
3 we are going to be asked to pay more on the  
4 bridges and tunnels, that they know that the  
5 Port Authority has done everything in its  
6 power to save every dollar. Thank you.  
7 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Next speaker,  
8 Freeholder John Driscoll, followed by Doug  
9 Sugarman, followed by Stephanie Fisher.  
10 MR. DRISCOLL: Good evening, everyone.  
11 For the record, first off, I didn't know  
12 your name. Is there a commissioner present  
13 in this room right now?  
14 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: No.  
15 MR. DRISCOLL: I'll tell you right now  
16 as Chairman of Bergen County Freeholders, I  
17 represent over a million people in Bergen  
18 County seven municipalities. I'm privy  
19 today to say that one commissioner could not  
20 come to this to watch at this hearing. The  
21 fact that you are telling me that they are  
22 going to hear eight hearings between now and  
23 Friday to make their informed decision.  
24 The resolution that I read as a  
25 freeholder is a lot of work, eight

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1 testimonies, about eight locations, and I  
2 find it hard to believe that you will read  
3 all, each one of them. And it's sad they  
4 are not here. And as long as we're on the  
5 topic, any future hearings I would be more  
6 than happy to open up Freehold chambers to  
7 be held.  
8 Something of this magnitude I think  
9 deserves a little bit better than a garage,  
10 really. This is disgraceful.  
11 As Senator Gordon said, according to  
12 Bergen records today, over 20 percent of  
13 traffic that crosses that bridge every day  
14 comes through Bergen County. It's  
15 astonishing.  
16 I'm here tonight to voice my opposition  
17 to the proposed toll increases across the  
18 Hudson River crossings. In my opinion, this  
19 proposal looks very one-sided. The  
20 residence of Bergen County, New Jersey, are  
21 once again shouldered with the burden of  
22 this proposed toll hike. The increases will  
23 have a devastating impact of the residents  
24 that commute from Bergen County into the  
25 city.

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1 First off, the residents would be  
2 forced to pay more simply to school, work,  
3 or into our airports to travel. Already  
4 high cost of gasoline and many families and  
5 these proposed toll increase, this probably  
6 will be probably be the straw that breaks  
7 the camel's back.  
8 The second impact to Bergen County  
9 would be the residents of New York who come  
10 across the bridge to spend money on our  
11 shopping centers, on our Giant Stadium, on  
12 our future, schools down in South Bergen.  
13 They won't come across the bridge because  
14 they know what they save will probably be  
15 going back into the tolls. So they're also  
16 using their money back in New York City.  
17 So simply standing at the foot of the  
18 George Washington Bridge, what I call the  
19 gateway of Bergen County, ladies and  
20 gentlemen, during the tough and economic  
21 times, there are so many families that are  
22 hurting right now, and it will be asking  
23 them to do more. As leaders, we need to be  
24 creative in the environment, a financial  
25 responsibility, and we need to look for ways

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1 to save money wherever possible.  
2 In Bergen County alone this year, we  
3 heard today about the ratings. In Bergen  
4 County, we received a Triple A rating,  
5 unlike elsewhere in this country. This  
6 administration has done that.  
7 So on behalf of the one million people  
8 of Bergen County that I represent as  
9 Chairman of Bergen County Freeholders, I'm  
10 asking you do not push this proposal  
11 through. I'm asking for a pause and start  
12 thinking a little more creatively to help  
13 both sides on this discussion. Both sides  
14 need help. The way this is structured right  
15 now, it seems one side is really getting the  
16 short end. So thank you.  
17 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
18 Next speaker, Doug Sugarman, followed by  
19 Stephanie Fisher, followed by Thomas  
20 Bennett.  
21 NEXT SPEAKER: Good evening, ladies and  
22 gentlemen. My name is Doug Sugarman. I'm a  
23 resident of Fort Lee for the last 38 years,  
24 but I have been traveling the George  
25 Washington Bridge since before the Cross

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1 Bronx Expressway was built, before Route 80  
2 was built, before the lower level was  
3 built. And I have to tell you that while  
4 some increase in revenue might be necessary,  
5 what's proposed, this is not the time.  
6 I sit as the chairman of the board in  
7 Adjustment Bureau of Fort Lee, and we have  
8 people who come to us to try and open new  
9 businesses in Fort Lee. We have a project  
10 that's been vacant for 30 somewhat years,  
11 maybe 40 somewhat years, right next to the  
12 bridge, and we are finally getting to the  
13 point where that is going to be built.  
14 I don't say that an increase is not  
15 necessary. I do say that the increase that  
16 is requested is totally unconscionable. We  
17 have people not only in this borough who  
18 hold -- you heard that 20 percent of the  
19 weekday traffic on the bridge comes through  
20 the borough -- comes from Bergen County,  
21 while one percent of the traffic that comes  
22 through across the George Washington Bridge  
23 comes through the borough of Fort Lee.  
24 It is a tax on our infrastructure. Our  
25 police department handles most of the

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1 traffic problems. Our police department,  
2 our public service, our emergency services  
3 handles most of the problems that happen on  
4 the bridge, and we need to focus on that.  
5 We have supported the Port Authority of  
6 New York and New Jersey as the borough of  
7 Fort Lee for years and years and years. We  
8 don't get our bang for the buck. We are not  
9 supportive. And by the way, as I say, I  
10 want to thank the Port Authority of New York  
11 and New Jersey for this lovely room to have  
12 this meeting.  
13 But jobs are necessary. Construction  
14 jobs are necessary. Later jobs are  
15 necessary. Every job is necessary. You  
16 know, there was a proposal for what they  
17 call the Arc Tunnel, which would have  
18 increased the regional public transportation  
19 between New York and New Jersey. Well,  
20 apparently, somebody decided to cancel that.  
21 So, so, again, I see my time is up. I  
22 strongly ask the Port Authority of New York  
23 and New Jersey to reconsider this and to  
24 re-look at this and to go back and to come  
25 up with something that will not be a total

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1 burden on the people, not only of the burden  
2 of Fort Lee, but the entire community in the  
3 metropolitan area. Thank you.  
4 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Let me take a  
5 temporary recess, please.  
6 (Brief recess.)  
7 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Next speaker,  
8 Stephanie Fisher, followed by Thomas  
9 Bennett, followed by Jeannie Zamudio.  
10 MS. FISHER: Hi. While many of you are  
11 here today representing a union whose  
12 members will benefit from this fare hike, I  
13 am here today representing a union whose  
14 members will not benefit. The teachers  
15 union. I'm a proud Bergen County resident  
16 and New York City public school teacher,  
17 whose civil servant salary has not moved in  
18 years because the city just doesn't have the  
19 money, just how the government has told us  
20 now. And we have had to accept that and  
21 become creative with our personal budgets,  
22 so should the Port Authority be forced to in  
23 this tough economy to become creative with  
24 their budget.  
25 And while we the public say no, we are

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1 all in this recession together, and it's up  
2 to them. The mentality is cannibalistic. I  
3 urge the Port Authority to reconsider their  
4 positions on this. Thank you.  
5 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
6 Next speaker, Thomas Bennett, followed by  
7 Jeannie Zamudio, followed by Tony Abruzzo.  
8 MR. BENNETT: Good evening, everyone.  
9 When I was a child, my grandfather told me  
10 about watching the bridge getting built.  
11 And he told me that when a bridge was  
12 finally paid off, it was going to be free.  
13 And he laughed and he said once they start  
14 collecting tolls, they're never going to  
15 stop, and they never will.  
16 I have some pre-facts for you. The  
17 executive director, he makes \$304,902 a  
18 year. The CEO, he makes \$185,000, but he  
19 accepted a salary freeze. The director of  
20 procurement makes \$198,000 a year. The  
21 chief technology officer makes \$231,000 a  
22 year. His 1400 workers makes a hundred  
23 thousand dollars. His 90 people were put in  
24 newly creative positions or were just given  
25 raises. There's 130 police officers --

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1 police sergeants made \$149,000, which I  
2 don't really disagree with that.  
3 Instead of raising the tolls again and  
4 again and again, why don't we just stop  
5 giving this exorbitant amount of money to  
6 people who basically are working in an  
7 office. Thank you.  
8 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
9 Next speaker, Jeannie Zamudio, followed by  
10 Tony Abruzzo, followed by Nick Lento.  
11 Jeannie Zamudio? Jeannie Zamudio?  
12 Tony Abruzzo. Tony Abruzzo.  
13 Nick Lento followed by Sebastian  
14 Belfon, followed by Harriet Cornell,  
15 Rockland County Legislature.  
16 MR. LENTO: I briefly say I want to  
17 thank all the wonderful employees of the  
18 Port Authority that have done such a great  
19 job over the years maintaining the property,  
20 bridge, and tunnels, and protecting us. I  
21 appreciate the work of you guys, what you've  
22 all done over the years.  
23 I understand why you are here. You  
24 want to protect the cash flow that employs  
25 you. You want to protect the benefits of

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1 the jobs you have now, and I don't think  
2 anybody, anybody in the community wants to  
3 change any of that. I don't think there  
4 should be any salary cuts. I don't think  
5 they should be getting layoffs. Okay. So  
6 let me say that much.  
7 But I do believe that the Port  
8 Authority is being extremely greedy and de  
9 facto, not de jure, because this is all  
10 legal, but in fact it's a corrupt  
11 organization. They have the power to tax  
12 this area without being accountable in any  
13 way to the electorate or to stockholders.  
14 So it becomes a self-perpetuating predatory  
15 parasitic machine which is basically  
16 shafting the public.  
17 And there's a lot of companies,  
18 corporations, suppliers. There's a lot of  
19 interest that have the profit from this  
20 multi-billion dollar cash flow. And part of  
21 the reason to justify this radical increase  
22 I heard was that the economy is so bad  
23 because there's a lot fewer people going  
24 across the bridges and tunnels, so that the  
25 people still have jobs in the community.

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1 The idea is to extract more money from  
2 them. But guess what? It's going to screw  
3 up the economy even more because it's going  
4 to reduce the economic engine of the area.  
5 Not embrace it. If anything, we should be  
6 looking for ways to cut the tolls to  
7 stimulate the economy and to stimulate  
8 traffic. Thank you very much.  
9 I think that what the real answer is at  
10 this point, because the Port Authority has  
11 become self-perpetuating. It's more  
12 interested in perpetuating its own interest  
13 as an entity. It has so much power and  
14 clout, Governor Christie and Governor Cuomo,  
15 they themselves are intimidated by the power  
16 of the Port Authority.  
17 There's dozens of Port Authority --  
18 there's dozens of authorities throughout --  
19 authority -- New York and New Jersey that  
20 have this incredible amount of power because  
21 they become, again, self-perpetuating  
22 entities with their own interest, and they  
23 have a lot of power from the money from the  
24 cash flow they generate.  
25 Bottom line, going from \$8 to \$15 is

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1 ridiculous. And the tally has been over the  
2 years, they hit you with some outrageously  
3 high number, and they also get people pissed  
4 off, and then what they do is they come  
5 down, say hey we are going to increase your  
6 toll by 20 percent. And then we're supposed  
7 to be happy because we only got screwed a  
8 little bit, but we got screwed a lot.  
9 That's BS. You keep falling for this.  
10 What needs to happen and you need real  
11 shared sacrifice along the Port Authority.  
12 They need to run among their own budget.  
13 They need to stop doing commercial  
14 construction projects. I think it's  
15 horrible what happened to the World Trade  
16 Center. Everybody was terrified and  
17 horrified and angry with that. But to use  
18 that tragedy as an excuse to spend hundreds  
19 of millions of dollars, and people saying,  
20 oh I have to chill out to build property  
21 again which is commercially nonviable.  
22 These properties lose money. Why are they  
23 being built? Why is Port Authority building  
24 something we couldn't use? If a business  
25 did that, we'll be out of business. If a

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1 government entity did that, the people  
2 wouldn't get reelected again.  
3 But the Port Authority keeps on doing  
4 it and getting away with it. So we have got  
5 to stop their non-profitable money wasting  
6 ways, and they have to be put under a  
7 microscope. If it comes down to it, we have  
8 together rid of it altogether. Keep the  
9 employees that are working there now. No  
10 one should lose their jobs. No one should  
11 lose their benefits.  
12 But we got to stop it from growing,  
13 because at a certain point, the interest of  
14 a couple of thousand or whatever it is,  
15 5,000, 10,000. I have no idea of how many  
16 employees they are, but let me tell you  
17 something, you guys are here caring about  
18 your jobs, but what's behind you is hundreds  
19 of millions of dollars, maybe billions of  
20 dollars in contractors and agencies that are  
21 making the real money.  
22 There are people making money off of  
23 what you guys do. So that's why I say no  
24 worker should be harmed but the Authority as  
25 a whole, the commercial properties that come

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1 to this, contractors, the entities, the  
2 lawyers, there's a whole economic machine  
3 which is driven by the tolls of the Port  
4 Authority, and it needs to be stopped,  
5 because the people of the region can't  
6 afford it.  
7 Now even using \$10 of the toll is  
8 extremely -- Keep the tolls the way they  
9 are. Ideally, they should be cut back.  
10 Enough said. Just so you understand what I  
11 said. Got it. Thank you.  
12 MR. BELFON: Hello. My name is  
13 Sebastian Belfon. I just want to express my  
14 friend made some comments about a microscope  
15 in the form of the question, which I hope  
16 the elected officials will take up or  
17 someone immediate to the audience. And  
18 there's just two questions I have.  
19 One, I heard that the reason for  
20 increase in tolls is based on the potential  
21 downgrade or -- downgrade of the Port  
22 Authority's bonds, and so is that one of the  
23 reasons why they're increasing the tolls?  
24 And if so, are those also downgrade by the  
25 Port Authority involved in structured

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1 finance or the mortgage crisis?  
2 The MTA basically became a hedge fund,  
3 and they lost a tun of money when the banks  
4 went under. Is that the same condition that  
5 the Port Authority is in? We should know  
6 that as taxpayers.  
7 The second question I have is -- I'm  
8 sorry, I'm a little nervous. I'm losing my  
9 train of thought. What it's saying is the  
10 Port Authority is continuing to put in place  
11 for low-emission or zero-emission vehicles  
12 that are going across the bridge.  
13 Obviously, we need to upgrade our  
14 infrastructure. We have a ton of support in  
15 here. My hat's off to you. But what amount  
16 of money is the Port Authority going to put  
17 in to endorsing those zero-emission vehicles  
18 and low-emission vehicles? They are going  
19 to have to reduce the emission, they're  
20 going to cut down on health care cost, and  
21 have those secondary effects.  
22 So those are the questions that I have  
23 and will hope the Port Authority or elected  
24 officials will take those questions up.  
25 Thank you.

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1 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
2 Next speaker is Harriet Cornell.  
3 MS. CORNELL: Good evening, ladies and  
4 gentlemen. I'm Harriett Cornell. I chair  
5 the Rockland County Legislature, and I'm  
6 here on behalf of the citizens of Rockland  
7 County.  
8 Rockland drew this short straw with  
9 regard to transit options in New York City.  
10 I testified at numerous hearings employing  
11 the inadequate service and the monetary  
12 penalties of Rocklanders who in many cases  
13 have no choice but to use their cars.  
14 Rockland commuters should not be  
15 penalized with extremely large increases in  
16 tolls to cross the George Washington Bridge  
17 or use the tunnels. Our residents already  
18 pay the unconscionable payroll tax to  
19 subsidize the MTA service most cannot use in  
20 our county because of the limited nature of  
21 our service west of Hudson.  
22 No doubt, one of the results of the  
23 toll hike on the George Washington Bridge  
24 will be increased trips across the Tappan  
25 Zee Bridge by drivers seeking a less-

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1 expensive route across the Hudson. Since  
2 this bridge is already at capacity during  
3 rush hour, this will lead to longer  
4 commuting times for our people.  
5 The reality is that current mass  
6 transit options Rockland into Manhattan are  
7 limited and often unreliable. And we have  
8 thousands of people who are part of the life  
9 blood of the city. Firefighters, police  
10 officers, construction workers, nurses,  
11 teachers, musicians, actors. All of them  
12 are among the Rocklanders who must travel  
13 into and out of the city each day to work  
14 shifts that do not conform to mass transit  
15 schedules.  
16 So imposing toll hikes on these working  
17 men and women with limited incomes is  
18 unfair, especially when you consider that  
19 they may not have any realistic  
20 transportation options.  
21 One of the most significant problems  
22 for Rockland commuters, is the lack of  
23 reliable -- rail transit system west of  
24 Hudson. There is no one-fee train ride into  
25 Manhattan. And we in Rockland were thrilled

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1 when construction began on the access to the  
2 region's core, the Arc project, that would  
3 have provided that elusive one-seat ride.  
4 We were deeply distressed when Governor  
5 Christie terminated this project, single-  
6 handedly setting back improved  
7 transportation by many, many years for our  
8 people.  
9 I am really dismayed by the fragmented  
10 approach to mass transit in the New York  
11 metropolitan region, an embarrassment  
12 comparative to systems throughout the world.  
13 I have called over and over again for a  
14 dedicated fund to help with these issues  
15 west of Hudson.  
16 While I strongly support reinvestment  
17 and infrastructure and the jobs such  
18 investment will bring, I must voice  
19 opposition to toll and fare hikes which keep  
20 additional burdens on already financially  
21 distressed working people.  
22 And I certainly hope that the directors  
23 of the Port Authority will balance the need  
24 of the traveling public from Rockland  
25 County, New York, with its own substantial

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1 goals.  
2 And if indeed tolls do rise and  
3 Rockland residents are a part of your  
4 solution, then the Port Authority must be  
5 part of solving our transit problem.  
6 Attention and funding must be given to the  
7 infrastructure and service needs of counties  
8 such as Rockland which are an integral part  
9 of the metropolitan region. Thank you very  
10 much.  
11 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
12 Thank you for your comment. Beverly  
13 Blasnik. Beverly Blasnik.  
14 Anthony Williamson. Anthony  
15 Williamson.  
16 Ed Pichardo. Ed Pichardo.  
17 Joe McNamara. Joe McNamara.  
18 Elena Montanez. Elena Montanez.  
19 Elaine Bergman. Elaine Bergman.  
20 Charles Merrele. Charles Merrele.  
21 Stephen Faye. Stephen Faye.  
22 Paula Colbat. Paula Colbat.  
23 Lawrence Lewitinn. Lawrence Lewitinn.  
24 Freeholder John Mitchell. Freeholder  
25 John Mitchell.

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1 David Nusspickel. David Nusspickel.  
2 Peter Shea. Peter Shea.  
3 Leonard Daniels. Leonard Daniels  
4 Asher Forst. Asher Forst.  
5 Randy Liss. Randy Liss.  
6 Lavaon Chambers. Lavaon Chambers.  
7 MR. CRAY: Good evening. Thank you for  
8 the opportunity for making public remarks.  
9 Following up on one of the previous speakers  
10 who mentioned and heard the same thing that  
11 I heard, it's inconceivable that one of the  
12 reasons and/or if the only reason is that  
13 they are proposing this very, very high fair  
14 hike is to have the credit-worthiness stay  
15 at the present level as far as their bond  
16 rating.  
17 I think in that respect, it's up to the  
18 company itself, which to me has always been  
19 shrouded in mystery as far as their focus  
20 concerned, and I'm not sure, somebody  
21 mentioned shareholders, and I don't know how  
22 available the records, income and expenses  
23 are available, so I would like an answer to  
24 that if somebody could respond to that.  
25 And I just think it's the expense of

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1 going over the bridge as in the past few  
2 years just it went from like I can't even  
3 remember when it was 3 or \$4, and now it's  
4 \$8, and now they're talking about \$16. I  
5 just think it's outrageous. Thank you.  
6 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
7 Tobi Merrell. Tobi Merrell.  
8 Rich Warren? Excuse me. Rich Warren.  
9 MR. WARREN: Yeah.  
10 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Followed by  
11 Marcelo Idrovo.  
12 MR. WARREN: I'm Rich Walden. Been in  
13 the local for about 22 years, and I been at  
14 Port Authority jobs at least half of those  
15 years. So I need this, I need this jobs,  
16 this capital budget, whatever to get it  
17 done. I need this. Thank you.  
18 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
19 Marcelo Idrovo, Dr. Nina Levinson, followed  
20 by Stephen Kaplowitz.  
21 MR. IDROVO: My name is Marcelo  
22 Idrovo. I'm a member of the labor's union.  
23 I'm 22 years in the labor's union, and I  
24 never seen so many brothers and sisters I  
25 have worked.

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1 We talking about how this toll increase  
2 is going to affect the fact of the working  
3 family. We are talking about all those  
4 thousands of people out of work for so many  
5 months, so many years. Somebody told me,  
6 said something about the businesses being  
7 closed, houses for sale, because people have  
8 no money to spend on those businesses.  
9 People don't have money to pay those  
10 mortgages.  
11 Why don't we get past this? We can put  
12 these people to work. We can put some money  
13 back in the businesses. We can get our home  
14 back. Think about it. It's not just a  
15 thousand dollars for a increase for working  
16 people using public transportation. It's  
17 about the thousands of people out of work so  
18 long. It's about those kids waiting for the  
19 father to bring some food to the tables.  
20 Let's think about them too. Thanks.  
21 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Dr. Nina  
22 Levinson, followed by Stephen Kaplowitz,  
23 followed by Danny Giordano.  
24 MS. LEVINSON: I'm Nina Levinson, and I  
25 chair the United Homeowners of the borough

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1 Fort Lee. I'm in agreement with my mayor  
2 who spoke very early, and I would like to  
3 start off with the kind of business being  
4 scheduled.  
5 Paula Colbat, whose name was called a  
6 little while ago, she's not here because  
7 she's probably in traffic somewhere or  
8 another trying to get back from New York  
9 City. Many of our people commute from New  
10 York or commute to New York and back again.  
11 I used to commute, and at my expense with my  
12 toll money, the twin towers were built.  
13 I resented it then that my toll money  
14 would be used for a commercial structure and  
15 not be constructed by private enterprise or  
16 by the state. It should not be my money.  
17 Now, the motorist is being raped again.  
18 The money goes not for the repair of the  
19 bridge. The money doesn't go for the repair  
20 of the roadways. A little bit maybe. But  
21 it goes again for where the twin towers were  
22 to build another building. And it goes for  
23 all kinds of other things that the Port  
24 Authority likes to do. It doesn't go back  
25 to the motorists.

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1 We are already paying a whole bunch of  
2 taxes. We are commuters. We pay New York  
3 State tax. We pay New Jersey tax. We pay  
4 federal tax. We pay real estate tax. And  
5 we pay commuter tax. And that commuter tax  
6 should not go up at an enormous rate.  
7 And I am totally together with the  
8 United Homeowners of Fort Lee. I'm totally  
9 opposed as well as many seniors. Which  
10 everyone. Thank you.  
11 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Steven  
12 Kaplowitz, Danny Giordano followed by Thomas  
13 Luterzo.  
14 MR. KAPLOWITZ: Hi. Good evening. I'm  
15 Steven Kaplowitz. I'm retired, and I live  
16 in Herrington Park, New Jersey. I'd like to  
17 compliment the Port Authority on saving  
18 money on getting rooms such as this. I hope  
19 that when the commissioners, when they have  
20 this meeting in this nice venue, that they  
21 will enjoy it as much as we did tonight.  
22 And the commissioners are going to have to  
23 move their table forward because something  
24 fell down from the ceiling.  
25 Now, seriously, I understand that I

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1 heard tonight and I read in the record  
2 newspaper that some of the increased toll  
3 money is to be used for the World Trade  
4 Center. In principle, I disagree that these  
5 fund projects other than bridges, tunnels  
6 and airports. The infrastructure should be  
7 approved, and some of the increased toll  
8 money should go for that. Okay.  
9 Real estate operations should not be on  
10 the backs of commuters. Many people  
11 tonight, even those in favor of the  
12 increase, have mentioned that these  
13 increases should be paid by the users.  
14 Well, I don't use the World Trade Center. I  
15 went there only once when I was maybe about  
16 25 years old, and I went up to the  
17 observation tower. I shouldn't be paying  
18 every day that I go across that bridge for  
19 the World Trade Center. Okay.  
20 As I said, real estate operations  
21 shouldn't be on the backs of commuters.  
22 They should be on the backs of the people  
23 who are going to use those real estate  
24 facilities. If the Port Authority can't  
25 fund real estate the way private business

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1 does, it rents, the Port Authority should  
2 not be in the real estate business. It's a  
3 business, and if it can't be profit-making  
4 based on its own revenues, then it's a  
5 failed business, and the Port Authority  
6 shouldn't be in it.  
7 Regarding the raising of the  
8 Bayonne Bridge. Okay. Everybody has talked  
9 about the George Washington Bridge and the  
10 tunnels and the helix and whatnot. Okay.  
11 But now we're talking about another thing  
12 that's not used by commuters at all.  
13 My first thought was don't raise the  
14 bridge, lower the river. But then I thought  
15 about it and that's really not going to  
16 work -- since nobody laughed. Seriously,  
17 that should be funded by those that use it,  
18 not the commuters. Okay.  
19 Who uses it? Ships and barges going  
20 through that can't make a clearance right  
21 now. I'm sure that they pay fees to use the  
22 port facilities. And if the bridge has to  
23 be raised, it should be on the backs of the  
24 people who use those facilities, go under  
25 the Bayonne Bridge, not over it, and they

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1 should pay for it. Thank you for my  
2 opportunity to speak this evening.  
3 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
4 Danny Giordano, followed by Thomas Luterzo.  
5 MR. GIORDANO: My name is Danny  
6 Giordano, member of Labor Local 592. I'm a  
7 Bergen County resident. I know all about  
8 that Route 80.  
9 I'm very proud to be up here tonight.  
10 Some people made some really good points on  
11 both sides of the issue. That's what it's  
12 all about is being part of the democracy,  
13 and I'm hearing about things from both  
14 sides. I look out, I see lots of my union  
15 brothers here. Some I know. Some I don't.  
16 And somebody said earlier that construction  
17 really took on this recession. I know a lot  
18 of my coworkers are out of work. I know  
19 from personal experience that the past two  
20 years have been the hardest of my 25-year  
21 career.  
22 So really, do I really need to pay an  
23 increase every time I want to go see a  
24 Yankee game, pay almost double when I want  
25 to take my girlfriend to the theater?

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1 Probably not. But I've been around long  
2 enough to know that sometimes you have to  
3 give to get. And if toll increases are  
4 going to get the ball rolling with some  
5 projects, help my union brothers to work,  
6 get that project done down at the World  
7 Trade Center, then I'm 100 percent for it.  
8 We need to get that tower up, and I fully  
9 support this whole thing. Thank you very  
10 much.  
11 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thomas  
12 Luterzo, followed by Robin Prince, followed  
13 Ana Tavarez.  
14 MR. LUTERZO: Hi. My name is Thomas  
15 Luterzo. I'm also a member of the Local 592  
16 laborers. I'm also for the state hike.  
17 Like Danny said, we took another chance.  
18 Many of our brothers and sisters living in  
19 cardboard boxes. Many are in the shelter in  
20 Hackensack. Many can't feed their families.  
21 Many of us don't have any medical insurance  
22 for our children. Some of our children are  
23 sick. And we are not even able to get  
24 charity care.  
25 Like Danny says, you know, paying extra

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1 money to go to a Yankee game or play,  
2 whatever you have to do in the city may  
3 affect us in the pocket for the short term.  
4 But people look at the big picture. Many of  
5 our brothers and sisters working in Jersey  
6 City and Fort Lee in 2001, 9/11, watched  
7 those buildings crumble.  
8 We're not talking about just  
9 buildings. A building's a building, it's  
10 replaceable. We're talking about American  
11 lives that were lost that day. And many of  
12 us forget about, you know, why we do the  
13 things we do and why we have to sacrifice.  
14 This country is all around is taking a hit.  
15 It's not only us. Not only the World  
16 Trade. It's everyone. And sometimes like  
17 Danny says, we have to give a little to get  
18 a lot in the long run.  
19 You know what, for me driving up to the  
20 Tappan Zee Bridge instead of taking the  
21 George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee, it's  
22 kind of a ridiculous idea if you have to  
23 spend a few more dollars, when a 12-mile  
24 hike will cost me \$10 or \$15 in gas.  
25 So you know what, maybe we have to

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1 tighten our purses and our pocketbooks a  
2 little bit more. Not doing some of the  
3 things that we were accustomed to doing  
4 before. Society has changed. The world has  
5 changed. And from my military background, I  
6 can tell you that 70 charge of C4 can bring  
7 down an 80 foot cables of that bridge. That  
8 bridge can be in the Hudson River tomorrow.  
9 We need Port Authority police to  
10 protect us. This is the whole deal was for  
11 here. It's not really just the buildings in  
12 New York. These people protect us with  
13 their lives every day. If they make a  
14 hundred thousand dollars a year, so be it.  
15 You know. If they had three shifts, they  
16 would be making a lot more. A lot of these  
17 people are dedicated in the Port Authority  
18 police, and they are protecting our bridges  
19 and our tunnels so we can have a better way  
20 of life, the same way our military is  
21 fighting overseas.  
22 So, you know, if I have to pay a few  
23 more dollars to put some people to work,  
24 because you know what, I know people, if you  
25 can battle the idea of how much it's costing

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1 you in your pockets to support people that  
2 don't have medical care, you know, it's cost  
3 us all money. How many dollars it's cost  
4 you out of your pocket for all of us that  
5 are unemployed. You know, a few measly  
6 dollars can cost bridge and tunnel. In the  
7 long run, it's going to benefit us all.  
8 And definitely, all the shots taken out  
9 of this garage -- you know, there was a man  
10 a thousand years ago born in a manger. He  
11 changed this world. We can all change the  
12 world together. Many of us out there are  
13 sleeping in cardboard boxes. I hate to  
14 complain about sitting on a plastic chair in  
15 a garage, you know, trying to come to some  
16 kind of compromise. Let's all be adults in  
17 this matter and try to come to some kind of  
18 compromise. Thank you. Thank you.  
19 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
20 Robyn Prince? Robyn Prince? Followed by  
21 Anna Tavarez, followed by Elliot Mastuscow.  
22 MS. PRINCE: I sympathize with those of  
23 you in orange shirts. My family were  
24 victims of the last economic downturn. And  
25 while most people are looking for

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1 retirement, my husband and I are not. We  
2 have many more years to work while most  
3 people now are thinking about retiring. And  
4 I know I have in recent years start crossing  
5 the bridge to work in Manhattan. And I  
6 wished that's a lot on this parking. I wish  
7 that his car wasn't 15 years old. And I  
8 wish that I didn't have to struggle to pay  
9 our taxes to keep our house.  
10 Now, please don't boo me, because it's  
11 a reality. I don't think I'm alone. I  
12 think there are many of us who are suffering  
13 and are struggling and see no end in sight  
14 to when we will be able to retire. And I  
15 have to cross the bridge every day. And we  
16 have tightened our belts. We have given up  
17 many things.  
18 The job is one thing I can't give up.  
19 And I work in a place that does not allow me  
20 public transportation. So, therefore, I  
21 sympathize with you. I empathize with you.  
22 I know what it's like. I've been there.  
23 We've done it, we've struggled. We've done  
24 it for a few years, in fact. Thank God we  
25 are both working.

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1 Now, I cannot say now I have a  
2 bottomless pocket, and I resent when the  
3 Port Authority believes that all of us do.  
4 And therefore, I want to ask for your help  
5 on our parts, that I know that we are in a  
6 struggling economy. And I know everyone  
7 deserves a job and health care and benefits  
8 and pension, but it's all falling on the  
9 backs of many of us who is also a struggle.  
10 And I thank you for listening to me  
11 tonight. Thank you.  
12 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
13 Ana Tavarez followed by Elliot Matuscow.  
14 Followed by Peter DeSheplo.  
15 MS. TAVAREZ: My name is Ana Tavarez.  
16 I'm a union rep for Local 592 in Edgewater.  
17 You know, we heard a lot about people having  
18 to pay to go across the river to go to  
19 work. For our members are not working.  
20 They haven't been working for a very, very  
21 long time. As a union rep, to see people  
22 walking to my office with tears in his eyes,  
23 are proud men with tears in his eyes,  
24 because his wife has cancer and he doesn't  
25 have benefits to cover the bills, it's just

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1 heart-wrenching. It is something that only  
2 those who have experienced can understand.  
3 Look, we talk about businesses, you  
4 know, people are coming into New Jersey to  
5 buy, shop, whatever. Let's talking about  
6 the businesses that are leaving New Jersey  
7 because they just cannot stand any more  
8 wasting time on our roads. Let's talk about  
9 those who are leaving because we don't have  
10 the infrastructure that we need to have in  
11 New Jersey to live and prosper.  
12 Let's talk about the hike. It's a big  
13 hike for us. What about our children? What  
14 about grandchildren? What about doing the  
15 responsible thing it is to do to support the  
16 hike so that our children and grandchildren,  
17 the future of our state, don't have that  
18 burden. What about us being responsible?  
19 What about the members who are not  
20 working, the people who come into different  
21 offices, not just in the building trade and  
22 construction, the other industries who's  
23 unemployment run out? There is no more.  
24 There is nowhere to go. What about those  
25 people, members of building trades who are

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1 now living in shelters, who now have to go  
2 to a place to see if they can get groceries  
3 for free to a church? What about those?  
4 These are serious times. We are all  
5 struggling. I realize that. But we all  
6 have to make a sacrifice. It's unfortunate,  
7 but it has to be done. It's a lot of people  
8 out there who have lost their jobs, who have  
9 nothing else, nowhere to go. Living five to  
10 a room. And I myself, I can say I'm an  
11 example of that. I have my family members,  
12 my niece with her whole family living in my  
13 house because, guess what, her husband lost  
14 his job, lost the unemployment, so what  
15 family we help each other. That's what I'm  
16 doing.  
17 And I'm not pointing it out because of  
18 me, I point it out because a lot of people  
19 are doing the same thing. We need jobs. We  
20 need jobs here in New Jersey, we need jobs  
21 in New York, so that we can actually afford  
22 to cross the river, and the people can  
23 afford to come over here to New Jersey. We  
24 need jobs, and we need them now. Let's do  
25 the right thing and responsible thing and

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1 support this hike. Thank you.  
2 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
3 Elliot Matuscow.  
4 MR. MATUSCOW: I'm Elliot Matuscow.  
5 I'm here not representing any group. I'm  
6 not a chairman of any committee. I'm not a  
7 political leader. I'm just a guy that lives  
8 here in Fort Lee who does use the Washington  
9 Bridge and other units of the Washington  
10 Bridge authority.  
11 And I find that it's necessary for all  
12 of us to have jobs, but I don't think it's  
13 necessary to be put on the backs of only the  
14 uses of the bridge. I think the entire  
15 state and the entire nation has to chip in,  
16 and I think that that's where it is, not  
17 only on our backs.  
18 I think that -- I've been a businessman  
19 all my life, and I have seen some very  
20 creative accounting in my time. And I would  
21 like to make sure that that's not what's  
22 happening with all the money that is taken  
23 in by the Port Authority.  
24 I am opposed to this as is requested.  
25 I'd like to address these comments mostly to

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1 Governor Cuomo, Governor Christie. I'd like  
2 them to be remember that it should be spread  
3 around, especially because you know, what he  
4 does to laborers, he stops another bridge,  
5 another tunnel going under the bridge. But  
6 I'd like to bring to their attention that it  
7 should be spread around, not only on the  
8 backs of users of its users of the bridge  
9 authority. Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
11 Peter DeSheplo, followed by Lisa Breslof,  
12 followed by William Tsamjoures.

13 MR. DeSHEPLO: How are you doing? My  
14 name is Peter DeSheplo. I represent my  
15 company, GW Taxi. I don't think the Port  
16 Authority understands how much this will  
17 affect businesses like mine.

18 We already pay in our customers over  
19 \$10,000 a month in toll fees. It's  
20 ridiculous. In the times like these, people  
21 losing their homes and you ask for a toll  
22 increase to build a project that you guys  
23 are going to be collecting rents on it. If  
24 we are going to pay for it, we should be  
25 getting some rent back.

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1 But for businesses like mine who are  
2 going to struggle and for me to have to  
3 apologize to my customers every day that it  
4 will cost more for them to go to JFK and  
5 Laguardia Airport than to Florida is  
6 absurd.

7 It's a ridiculous time to do this.  
8 It's not fair to local businesses like  
9 mine. And I don't think anybody up there  
10 representing us. Just for the record, I'm  
11 not against the laborers or anybody else. I  
12 want everybody to have fun. But think about  
13 all the people who work for me -- I'm not  
14 going over the bridge anymore. I have to  
15 apologize to them and to my employees for  
16 their loss. This is ridiculous, and it  
17 shouldn't be done. End of story. Thank  
18 you.

19 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you:  
20 Lisa Breslof, William Tsamjoures to follow  
21 and then Edward Faraday.

22 MS. BRESLOF: Hello, brothers and  
23 sisters. Like many of you, I represent  
24 labor, also. I'm not here representing the  
25 union I'm with, although it's one of the

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1 biggest unions in New York City. But I've  
2 lived here in Fort Lee for a very long time,  
3 and I have to go over the bridge every day  
4 like many of you and many people here in the  
5 county.

6 One thing that I'd like to address to  
7 the Port Authority directly is that this is  
8 only one idea that was put forward, and it's  
9 resting on the backs of the county, the  
10 people who use the bridge, union members  
11 like yourselves and nonunion members. It's  
12 just one idea.

13 I know, I've been in the union for 30  
14 years, and I know that the Port Authority  
15 could -- the Port Authority can come up with  
16 other ideas that would mitigate, not take  
17 away the increases, not take jobs away from  
18 the people in this room, but that would  
19 mitigate some of the expenses, because they  
20 are very high. When I did the math for  
21 myself, I would be actually paying double on  
22 a monthly basis than I'm already paying,  
23 which I never really disagreed with, but now  
24 it will be using not only my disposable  
25 income, but the rest of my income. There

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1 would be nothing else left after that. I  
2 would be paying rent, and I would be going  
3 over the bridge.

4 So when you put forth an idea like this  
5 and it rests solely on the backs of  
6 commuters and it's such a huge increase, you  
7 have to wonder why people react in the way  
8 that they're reacting, especially in this  
9 meeting and the other meetings that you will  
10 be going to. You have to ask yourselves,  
11 what can we do that will be good for  
12 everybody here, not just the union members  
13 sitting in this room but for the nonunion  
14 members as well? What's going to be good  
15 for everybody?

16 I go over the bridge every day. What  
17 do I see? I see a sea of people on the  
18 non-E-ZPass line, and I see a different  
19 group of people on the E-ZPass line.  
20 Weekends, I have to like look for the  
21 E-ZPass lane to get through the people who  
22 are not paying E-ZPass. So it's not enough  
23 revenue, and now you're taking the revenue  
24 out of the people who are actually using the  
25 infrastructure.

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1 You need to rehabilitate. There's no  
2 question about that. Much of the  
3 infrastructure in America, tunnels and  
4 bridges have just fallen to disrepair. I  
5 have to say, by the way, it's really good  
6 seeing you guys out there in line when I go  
7 out over the bridge working very hard, doing  
8 your balancing act on top of the cables over  
9 there. I know you're doing a very good job,  
10 but I don't see that raising the money on  
11 our backs is going to be good for everybody.  
12 It's not going to be enough money, because  
13 eventually, you will come along and you will  
14 ask for more money.  
15 My feeling about this is that, well,  
16 the tolls continue to go up, they don't have  
17 to go up as much, and other monies, other  
18 funds should be looked for not only county-  
19 wise to the individual members, but state-  
20 wise and federally, so that there's more to  
21 share of where -- of who's paying for this  
22 and where the money could be coming from.  
23 I want to support the union members  
24 here. Your arguments, they're right on.  
25 I'm union also, and I fight for many of the

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1 things that you fight for. I do it in New  
2 York City. But you have to put forward a  
3 plan that is good for everybody, that  
4 addresses everybody's needs. Thank you very  
5 much.  
6 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
7 William Tsamjoures, Edward Faraday, Gurvis  
8 Minor.  
9 MR. TSAMJOURES: Hi. I'm William  
10 Tsamjoures. I live in Fort Lee, New Jersey.  
11 My sentiments have been expressed much more  
12 clearly and more detailed by my mayor,  
13 Sokolich, and my remarks are not organized,  
14 in order such as his.  
15 I feel for people that are looking for  
16 jobs. Perhaps what we needed was a  
17 Roosevelt-style administration. I live in  
18 the days, I remember counting pennies and  
19 anything else that were brought in by my  
20 brother and my father. And jobs are really  
21 necessary. Jobs will improve the country.  
22 Will solve all -- a whole bunch of problems.  
23 Now, I think the increase that is being  
24 proposed, I don't mind seeing a small  
25 increase, I don't -- I don't mind --

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1 although I don't think an increase is really  
2 not necessary. Like the speaker said, when  
3 the bridge was being built, it was paid off,  
4 it will be free. Well, I think it has been  
5 paid off many times over.  
6 And the money that is going for the  
7 projects like the area of the Twin Towers  
8 Center, I don't think the Port Authority  
9 should be in a position to renovate the  
10 money that they make from the bridge and  
11 from other bridges and tunnels and divert it  
12 to that use. I think if -- if that is going  
13 to be a money-making situation, they should  
14 be able to raise the money from other  
15 sources.  
16 Donald Trump is a real estate person  
17 and has built a lot of big projects, and he  
18 is not using public money from -- he is  
19 using money supposedly from his own sources.  
20 I think the Port Authority people have  
21 overdone themselves. This proposal is  
22 ridiculous. And a lot of people here think  
23 it saves their jobs. There must be other  
24 ways.  
25 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.

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1 Edward Faraday followed by Gurvis Miner  
2 followed by David Johnson.  
3 MR. FARADAY: This is Edward Faraday.  
4 I have here Port Authority passes from  
5 January 20, 1987, unused, and it cost \$20.  
6 And it allowed me 20 crossings over the  
7 George Washington Bridge. I lived in  
8 Fort Lee for over 50 years, and I have used  
9 the bridge every single day of my working  
10 career. Today I have in my household three  
11 siblings that's going to New York City,  
12 sometimes twice a day because of the  
13 business they're in. And in the  
14 entertainment, they are in stadium names,  
15 where they go in and set up shows, they get  
16 their break, they go home.  
17 I estimate, in my house, we support and  
18 give to the Port Authority somewhere in  
19 excess of \$5,000 a year, one family. When I  
20 bought this 20 years ago, it was found, my  
21 wife found it, says here's it's a little  
22 momentum, 20 crossings for \$20. Today, 20  
23 crossings at \$12 would be \$240. The  
24 proposal for 20 crossings at \$15 would be  
25 \$300 a month. That is unsustainable for any

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1 family in Bergen County for commuting.  
 2 At the last public hearing that was  
 3 held here about 8 or 10 years ago, the Port  
 4 Authority at that time stated that they  
 5 needed a toll increase for a capital  
 6 improvement project that included a  
 7 connected road, roadway ramp from the  
 8 Palisades Interstate Parkway to the roadway  
 9 of the George Washington Bridge. After the  
 10 tolls increases were granted to the Port  
 11 Authority, they proceeded to use their broad  
 12 powers of eminent domain to seize private  
 13 properties to the citizens of Fort Lee to  
 14 the connective grant project.  
 15 Today, approximately eight years later,  
 16 the connective grant project would not go,  
 17 and there is no indication that that project  
 18 would ever been built.  
 19 Today, the private property confiscated  
 20 by the Port Authority is used for an  
 21 unsightly storage yard for the storage of  
 22 construction material and unused motor  
 23 vehicle equipment. It resembles a  
 24 junkyard. And that is right out there on  
 25 Bruce Reynolds Boulevard right near George

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1 Washington Bridge.  
 2 This valuable rich tax-written property  
 3 should be returned to the borough of Fort  
 4 Lee to give some relief to taxpayers by the  
 5 Port Authority as land that is not being  
 6 used -- that it was intended to be used for.  
 7 Excuse me.  
 8 Today, every day thousands of cars,  
 9 trucks and buses stretch back five miles on  
 10 I-95 to proceed at a crawl space to access a  
 11 toll plaza at the George Washington Bridge.  
 12 When they finally reach the toll plaza and  
 13 pay an exorbitant amount of \$8, they you  
 14 still can't get across the span because of  
 15 other problems on the cross Bronx  
 16 expressway.  
 17 It is inconceivable in my mind that the  
 18 government and the Port Authority inflict an  
 19 even greater burden on these motors by  
 20 increasing a staggering toll increase and  
 21 not improving in any way a more timely  
 22 crossing over the spam.  
 23 I would like to just say, in retrospect  
 24 from my experience from years ago, I am a  
 25 construction worker, and I sympathize with a

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1 lot of you, but when they talk about  
 2 replacing the cables on the bridge, it's not  
 3 going to involve labor, it's going to  
 4 involve iron workers.  
 5 So it's a massive amount of laborers  
 6 here looking for work. It's not that much  
 7 work is going to be beyond the George  
 8 Washington Bridge. It's going to be for  
 9 iron workers. It's going to be for other  
 10 laborers -- workers -- not laborers. Thank  
 11 you very much.  
 12 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Sir, you've  
 13 exceeded three minutes.  
 14 NEXT SPEAKER: Thank you very much.  
 15 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Next speakers,  
 16 Gurvis Miner followed by David Johnson.  
 17 MR. MINER: Good evening. My name is  
 18 Gurvis Miner. And I thank you for the  
 19 opportunity to speak in Port Authority's  
 20 capital plan. If we're both users of  
 21 bridges, tunnels, et cetera, I think you'll  
 22 find there's a high level of frustration.  
 23 We all wait in the hour-long traffic jam on  
 24 the George Washington Bridge or approach to  
 25 Holland Tunnel. We've all faced train

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1 delays.  
 2 If we surveyed civil engineers about  
 3 the conditions of Port Authority's  
 4 transportation system, you'll probably hear  
 5 the same thing you're hearing from the Port  
 6 themselves. Suspended cables don't last  
 7 forever, over-crowded and pot-hole laden  
 8 entrance ramps won't fix themselves. We  
 9 know there's a need to improve our system,  
 10 and we must also know that these  
 11 improvements won't be done for free. Given  
 12 that toll increases which I, too, will have  
 13 to pay seem like a fair and responsible way  
 14 to pay for the work we all know is critical.  
 15 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
 16 David Johnson, followed by Anthony Barabee  
 17 followed Daniel Rios.  
 18 MR. JOHNSON: Good evening. My name is  
 19 Dave Johnson. I'm a representative for the  
 20 Lander's Eastern Region. I'm a 15-year  
 21 member of Local 78. There has been a lot of  
 22 debate here tonight about the proposal.  
 23 I'm responsible for the folks here in the  
 24 orange shirts. Can't emphasize this  
 25 enough. These guys are construction workers

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1 who are facing an unemployment of 40 to 50  
2 percent. They're from Bergen County. These  
3 guys live in Bergen County. They don't have  
4 work.  
5 I know the tolls are going to be a  
6 little bit higher for them to pay, but at  
7 least the people going through those tolls  
8 have a job. Our guys do not have a job.  
9 Second thing. Safety. We have to talk  
10 about health and safety here. I'm from  
11 Minnesota. I know what unsafe construction  
12 looks like. I-35 crumbled. You just heard  
13 a number of speakers talk about the George  
14 Washington Bridge. Our infrastructure in  
15 New Jersey is shot. It needs to be  
16 repaired. We can improve our health and  
17 safety. We can put our members back to  
18 work. We can put workers of Bergen County  
19 back to work by supporting this proposal.  
20 Thank you.  
21 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Anthony  
22 Barabee followed by Daniel Rios, followed by  
23 Daniel Rios and David Matthews.  
24 MR. BARAEE: Good evening, everyone.  
25 I'm from Local 5902 Bridgewater, and I'm

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1 just here to say I support the plan as long  
2 as my brother and sister get some work. I  
3 support the plan. That's all.  
4 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: David Rios,  
5 David Matthews and Christine Dominguez.  
6 NEXT SPEAKER: My name is Danny Rios.  
7 I'm from Local 5902. Besides everybody and  
8 brothers and sisters have to say about, I  
9 have to see about think about as a student  
10 and as a labor, it's hard work. It's hard  
11 when you go -- when I go to register for  
12 classes, and I register five classes, and  
13 the number comes up to \$6,000, \$7,000. And  
14 then, unfortunately, sometimes I have to say  
15 no, I have to cancel three classes, four  
16 classes, and just take two.  
17 I know many of you, you are parents and  
18 have kids and children that are going to  
19 school and will be going to college, and so  
20 we need these jobs as soon as possible  
21 because it's really hard. To me, it's  
22 really hard sometimes, like I said, for me  
23 when I go to register, I have to say, you  
24 know what, I can't pay that much. You know.  
25 I just can't afford this. And it's taking

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1 me a long time to operate. I will be  
2 probably next year, April, but that's okay,  
3 you know, I missed with the union, and I'm  
4 in good shape. So, hopefully, we'll be in  
5 good shape. Thank you very much.  
6 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: David Matthews  
7 followed by Christine Dominguez, followed by  
8 Carlos Gomez.  
9 MR. MATTHEWS: Yeah. I just wanted to  
10 say a few things about what's going on here.  
11 First of all, I just have to protest the  
12 times that these hearings are being held.  
13 This is absolutely outrageous. Are you one  
14 of the commissioners here?  
15 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: No.  
16 NEXT SPEAKER: Are any of the  
17 commissioners here?  
18 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: No.  
19 MR. MATTHEWS: So I have to ask a  
20 question, who are we talking to other than  
21 just other citizens? If the commissioners  
22 are that arrogant or that out of touch that  
23 not one of them can come here and hear the  
24 people?  
25 You schedule these meeting times at

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1 outrageous times and then you put them all  
2 in one day. So suppose someone was out of  
3 town this one day, they can never hear  
4 them. So, I mean, will they ever hear what  
5 the average person is talking about?  
6 This location. Why couldn't you just  
7 contact a few towns and have these hearings  
8 at high school auditoriums where people can  
9 find it? You seem to pick places that are  
10 very out of the way, where parking is  
11 scarce. You really don't want to hear from  
12 the people. This is what I call out-of-  
13 control government. Unaccountable.  
14 Unelected. Only reporting to the two  
15 governors, and where are they? Where are  
16 they?  
17 I mean, it all the seems like -- and  
18 then you're going to vote on Friday. That  
19 doesn't seem like you're taking much time if  
20 someone from the commission actually hears  
21 some of this, and then you're going to vote  
22 Friday? It doesn't seem like you are giving  
23 what the people say much thought. It's just  
24 so arrogant and secretive.  
25 I mean, I went on the web site to find

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1 out where the hearings were going to be  
2 held. It's not easy. Once you get on the  
3 web site, you have to put in -- you have to  
4 do a Google search within the web site to  
5 find it. And it took two or three times to  
6 find out where the hearings were. You would  
7 think it's right on the face of the web site  
8 they can put down where the hearings are.  
9 But no, they don't really want to hear from  
10 people.  
11 MS. DOMINGUEZ: And it took four calls  
12 to the Port Authority and no one knew the  
13 time the meeting started.  
14 MR. MATTHEWS: Yeah. You know, one  
15 thing that we have to think about, how is  
16 this going to make this region competitive?  
17 The State of New York, you see Charles  
18 Schumer every Sunday, like clockwork,  
19 running his mouth. Well, you know what, the  
20 State of New York is losing two  
21 congressional districts. Where did those  
22 people go?  
23 The State of New York once had 46  
24 congress people. They only have 27 now.  
25 New Jersey's going to have 12. We're losing

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1 one. North Carolina has more people than  
2 New Jersey now. Georgia has more people  
3 than New Jersey. Texas, in terms of  
4 population, has passed New York over five  
5 years ago. They are getting four new  
6 congressional seats.  
7 So where are the people going? They're  
8 getting out of here because they can't  
9 afford this stuff. How can someone put  
10 someone through college or pay the taxes,  
11 and you're going to double the tolls?  
12 Well, I'm going to tell you what's  
13 really going to happen. You think that you  
14 can double the tolls and whatever amount of  
15 money you budget, you're going to get. Look  
16 up something called a laffer curb,  
17 L-A-F-F-E-R. What that says is, and this  
18 happened in Englewood, they doubled the pool  
19 fee, tripled, actually, from a daily rate of  
20 \$5 to \$15 trying to raise more money. Guess  
21 what? They raised less money because no one  
22 went to the pool for \$15 a day.  
23 So this is what's going to happen  
24 here. When you raise taxes or fees to a  
25 certain level, you can actually get less

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1 income than you would have gotten if you had  
2 a more moderate increase. I know myself,  
3 I'm not going to be going over that bridge.  
4 I'm going to think very hard. I live in New  
5 Jersey. I'll just call my friend in New  
6 York or send them a text.  
7 But I mean, this is so outrageous.  
8 Finally, the whole country is tightening  
9 their belt, but it seems like to me the Port  
10 Authority, which is very secretive, which is  
11 very unaccountable, is building an empire.  
12 Why don't we think about going back to the  
13 point where the Port Authority was only  
14 responsible for ports like its name says?  
15 Why do we have to have the Port Authority in  
16 charge of airports? It's just empire-  
17 building. And the people on this commission  
18 are insensitive and not in touch with the  
19 average person.  
20 This should really be defeated and a  
21 reasonable fee, if any, fee increase should  
22 be considered by the people. And we've got  
23 to stop this empire going. Thank you.  
24 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
25 Next speaker Christine Dominguez followed by

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1 Thomas Silverman followed by Tom Ramsay.  
2 MS. DOMINGUEZ: Who are we taking to?  
3 Is anyone here? Is anybody here who we are  
4 speaking to. Who is representing the Port  
5 Authority in this public meeting?  
6 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Every word is  
7 being transcribed and will be relayed to the  
8 board.  
9 MS. DOMINGUEZ: Okay. So there's no  
10 one here of particular of that letter?  
11 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Yes.  
12 MS. DOMINGUEZ: To be perfectly honest  
13 with you, I will be off in less than a  
14 minute. I don't have anything prepared  
15 other than my anger brought me here.  
16 Tremendously inconvenient. I agree with  
17 that gentleman before who spoke much better  
18 than I would. It wasn't publicized. Even  
19 coming into this building, I didn't know it  
20 was in the basement. No signs whatsoever.  
21 There is no public representation here at  
22 all. I mean, this is a joke. And it's  
23 affecting everybody's lives in New Jersey.  
24 Sorry. Just like everybody else and  
25 I'm not going to bore you as to what I'm

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1 going through these days, other than to tell  
2 you I can't afford it. I can't afford the  
3 amount of money you're requesting to go over  
4 the bridge.  
5 Believe me, I'm a heart-felt person.  
6 I've heard the stories about not having a  
7 job. And I was out of work for two years,  
8 and I consider myself lucky to have one,  
9 even though it's one-third of the pay that I  
10 used to make, that's neither here nor  
11 there.  
12 I'm sympathetic to all of your  
13 situations. I don't feel the same sympathy  
14 back. I work for Port Authority as a  
15 consultant for two-and-a-half years, working  
16 on a project to implement an HR payroll  
17 system. When I tell you millions, if not  
18 more, were wasted on consultants that did  
19 nothing at \$120 an hour, the money that goes  
20 through the Port Authority's hands without  
21 any accountability, if you want to do this,  
22 tell me how many construction guys are going  
23 to be working on these new sites. I want to  
24 know numbers. I want to know salaries. I  
25 want to know time frames. I want to know

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1 who's overseeing these projects. In  
2 business, you have to have that.  
3 I don't believe a benefit, there's any  
4 organization with the public in mind. So,  
5 anyway, I don't want to bore you anymore. I  
6 just want you to feel the frustration. So,  
7 good luck.  
8 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
9 Carlos Gomez followed Tom Ramsay and Edward  
10 Monahan.  
11 MR. GOMEZ: Hi. My name is Carlos  
12 Gomez. I'm a local member of Local 592.  
13 And a lot of my brother and sisters, I'm  
14 currently out of work, and we can put price  
15 on safety, price on life, and I believe this  
16 would create a lot of jobs.  
17 I know a lot of people are upset about  
18 it, the hike and all, but everything. The  
19 infrastructure not only in New Jersey but  
20 all over America is falling apart, and if we  
21 don't do anything about it, now what's going  
22 to happen? Our lives will be lost  
23 unnecessarily. And this would create a lot  
24 of jobs. And like I said, I have been out  
25 of work for a while and something needs to

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1 be done. And that's all I say. Thank you.  
2 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Thank you.  
3 Tom Ramsay. Followed by Edward Monahan  
4 followed by Michael Calto.  
5 MR. RAMSAY: My name is Tom Ramsay.  
6 I'm a business agent for Labor's Local 593.  
7 And I'd like to talk to you about the guys  
8 who have been out of work for two years or  
9 better. These are the people that live in  
10 your communities. These are the guys when  
11 your house get foreclosed on, your home  
12 values go down. Okay.  
13 So, they go back to work, they put  
14 money in the entirety, part of the community  
15 that we're all trying, all of us, are trying  
16 to keep our community up right now. These  
17 are the guys. They go back to work. They  
18 go out and spend. They don't go to work.  
19 They have no insurance. If they had an  
20 emergency, they'd still pay. It just makes  
21 good sense. They go to work. They spend.  
22 And just one thing that the Port  
23 Authority's role has expanded. They're not  
24 just a small entity no more. They've got a  
25 lot more responsibility. And I've seen

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1 crowds like this before. God forbid one  
2 bridge goes down or security is breached  
3 somewhere and there's usually a loss of  
4 life, there ain't a person in here that  
5 thinks this toll hike is too high. That's  
6 all I got to say.  
7 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Edward Monahan  
8 followed by Mike Dalpe followed by John  
9 Blyden.  
10 MR. MONAHAN: My name is Edward  
11 Monahan. Local 592. I'm here in support of  
12 Port Authority plan, the jobs -- on  
13 unemployment, and we are going on food  
14 stamps, and still have to pay for it  
15 anyway. It's only four bucks. You make it.  
16 We all make it. You are not going to the  
17 city for \$30,000 a year job. Take this  
18 money, you got it so it to give it back. We  
19 need jobs.  
20 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Mike Dalpe  
21 followed by John Blyden.  
22 MR. DALPE: Good evening. My name is  
23 Mike Dalpe. I'm a business agent for Local  
24 593. Harton, Morris and Summerset County,  
25 all the way across the other side of the

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1 state. Simple, I'm not going to say  
2 anything that hasn't been said already. We  
3 need the work. We need the jobs. We are in  
4 complete support of the toll commissions  
5 hike. The bottom line, work. These  
6 gentlemen here need the jobs. We need the  
7 jobs. Thank you for your time.  
8 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: John Blyden.  
9 NEXT SPEAKER: Good evening. My name  
10 is John Blyden. I want to thank the Port  
11 Authority for giving me the opportunity to  
12 speak tonight. I was once told if you don't  
13 know where you're going, any road will get  
14 you there. Well, we all know the  
15 correlation to that is in order to know  
16 where you're going, you need to know where  
17 you've been.  
18 So, I started to think about to myself  
19 17 years ago. I was heading down the wrong  
20 path. And I tell you, if it wasn't for an  
21 opportunity to secure a decent job, I may  
22 not be in front of you today.  
23 Moreover, I also think that I had an  
24 innocent daughter that had a heart element,  
25 and I didn't know that through my work, I

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1 was able to take care of that bill with my  
2 medical card. I felt so proud. I felt like  
3 a man. I felt like I had dignity.  
4 So, basically, when I look at what's  
5 happening today, I heard a member speak  
6 today, tears running down his eyes, don't  
7 know how he's going to pay his bills. The  
8 dignity is gone.  
9 So I hear people from the other side  
10 saying, hey, wait a minute, let's -- let's  
11 look into that. Well, basically, what we're  
12 talking about today is saving lives. So,  
13 basically, we need this bridge. People's  
14 lives are at stake. What do we want?  
15 Jobs. When do we want it? Now.  
16 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Is there  
17 anyone else present who would like to make a  
18 proposed statement regarding actions at this  
19 time? Okay. Let the record reflect that no  
20 one has answered affirmatively to that  
21 request.  
22 NEXT SPEAKER: My name is Alex Hank,  
23 Bergen County. I lived in New Jersey my  
24 whole life. I value all points of views. I  
25 recently started working in Long Island

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1 City. This is my second job with the  
2 construction business. All you gentlemen,  
3 I'm not against you.  
4 I do understand that we need to pay for  
5 infrastructure. It's not that good. It  
6 needs to be improved. But realistically, I  
7 think maybe a \$2 hike would be better than a  
8 \$4 one. (inaudible) I can't afford it.  
9 HEARING OFFICER FULTON: Would anyone  
10 else like to speak concerning this  
11 proposal? Okay. The time is now 7:52, and  
12 this evening's hearing is concluded.  
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1 CERTIFICATE  
2 STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
3  
4 I, Robyn Harrell, a Certified  
5 Realtime Reporter and Notary Public within  
6 and for the State of New York, do hereby  
7 certify:  
8  
9 That the proceedings herein before  
10 set forth, that such proceeding is a true  
11 record of the testimony given by the  
12 witness.  
13  
14 I further certify that I am not  
15 related to any of the parties to this  
16 proceeding by blood or marriage, and that I  
17 am in no way interested in the outcome of  
18 this matter.  
19  
20 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto  
21 set my hand this 17th day of August, 2011.  
22  
23  
24 Robyn D. Harrell, RPR  
25

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