

## Sen. Kean: President Bush Should Block Port Sale

MOUNTAINSIDE — Senator Tom Kean, Jr. issued the following statement on the sale of six U.S. Ports to Dubai Ports World, a company based in the United Arab Emirates, a country with ties to terrorism:

In a post 9/11 world, it is an outrage that President Bush would allow the sale of American ports to a foreign company based in a country with ties to terrorism. The White House has turned a deaf ear to the Congressional uproar over the decision to allow a state-owned United Arab Emirates shipping firm to pay over six billion dollars to acquire six major United States ports — including one right here in New Jersey.

Each day, approximately 16,000 containers enter U.S. Ports. Almost everything we buy, sell, eat or drink is carried in these metal boxes. And of those 16,000 containers arriving each day, only 2 percent are inspected by U.S. Customs. This is a disaster waiting to happen.

The Department of Homeland Security is struggling with the port security issue, and that fact should concern every single American. The decision by the Bush Administration to give control of six U.S. ports to Dubai Ports World, a company based in the United Arab Emirates — a nation linked to 9/11 — is troubling on many levels. The idea that we would turn our port security over to a foreign country with ties to terrorism — a country that vows to destroy Israel — is shocking. There are many

unanswered questions, and a flimsy investigation won't cut it. President Bush must intervene and the White House needs to assure the country that our national security interests are protected.

Foreign control of our ports, which are vital to homeland security, is an alarming proposition. The administration panel that approved the deal, headed by the Department of Treasury, defended what they called a "thorough review" that included input from our nation's security agencies. Yet the investigation into Dubai Ports World did not include background checks on senior managers or an evaluation of the company's hiring procedures for new employees. This is a huge blind spot, and there should be deep reservations about moving forward with this deal.

If the President does not change course on the approval of this sale, there is a second option. I have called on Governor Corzine to exercise Section 48 of the lease between the Port Authority and the Port Newark Container Terminal to give the Port Authority the ability to void the provisions of the lease if the transaction is contrary to public interest.

Port Security is a major component to protecting our people from terrorist attacks. Five years after 9/11 it's important we maintain our vigilance — turning our ports over to a foreign government with a checkered past is an unacceptable risk.



**HAVING FUN...** Cub Scouts from Den 2, Pack 273 at Tamaques Elementary School in Westfield visit the offices of *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* on the afternoon of February 16 to learn how newspapers are created. They had fun getting their faces painted with glasses, beards and black eyes on the computer. They also learned the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where and why) and found out that their brain is their most important tool. They gathered that it is better to be on the honor roll than in the police blotter.

## Rep. Ferguson Calls for Pres. To Stop Port Deal with Arabs

*Editor's Note: This letter was sent to The Honorable Michael Chertoff, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Washington, D.C. and copied to the press.*

Dear Secretary Chertoff: I am writing to express my strong concerns regarding the Bush Administration's decision to permit Dubai Ports World, a state-owned business in the United Arab Emirates, to take over operations at six major U.S. ports, including in New Jersey.

As you know, port security is a central component of our nation's overall homeland security efforts. Because our nation's ports are high-risk targets for future terrorist attacks, this decision raises significant concerns. The largest port facility on the East Coast, operated by the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, is located just outside the 7th Congressional District that I represent.

With the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks still fresh in the minds of millions of New Jersey residents, allowing the Dubai Ports World to operate our major ports — and also

major targets for future terrorist attacks — is not in America's national security interests.

Moreover, UAE's track record in anti-terrorist efforts is deeply troubling. At least one of the September 11 hijackers came from the United Arab Emirates; the Justice Department and the 9/11 Commission found that most of the September 11 hijackers received funding channeled through sources in the UAE; the UAE served as a transfer point for nuclear components shipped to Iran, North Korea and Libya and the UAE was one of only three countries that recognized the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan.

America's ports are our gateways of commerce to the world and critical components to our homeland security. Transferring port operations to a state-controlled entity whose government has at best a questionable record on anti-terrorism efforts appears dangerously shortsighted.

I will support legislation in Congress to block this decision unless the Administration adequately explains why its decision is in America's national security interest.

Rep. Mike Ferguson  
New Jersey

## Bramnick Bill Focuses On Laser Beam Danger

WESTFIELD — Asm. Jon Bramnick is a co-sponsor of Assembly Bill 415 which will make purposeful pointing of a laser beam at the operator of a vehicle, railroad car, trolley, subway car, ferry, airplane or other transportation facility, a crime of as high as the second degree.

These lasers can distract, if not temporarily blind, pilots and have led to aborted landings.

Asm. Bramnick said he would continue his efforts in the area of homeland security.

## Letters to the Editor

### Westfielder Supports Ferguson's Budget Vote Citing Lowering of Deficit

I write to commend Congressman Mike Ferguson for ignoring the critics and voting for a budget last month that actually reduces the federal budget deficit.

For many long years, we have read about rising budget deficits and mortgaging of our children's futures. Now that Congress has actually taken a step toward fiscal sanity, we have to listen to critics wail about the havoc that their cuts will wreak with future generations. Well, which is it?

If deficits and budget cuts are both unacceptable to these budget hawks, then the only alternative is tax increases.

This New Jersey taxpayer cannot afford higher taxes.

Thank you, Congressman Ferguson, for choosing lower spending and a lower tax burden over high taxes for this over-taxed New Jersey homeowner.

Francis Quinn  
Westfield

### It Is Time to Settle SPFEA Contract In Line With Surrounding Districts

*Editor's Note: A copy of the following letter was sent to Dr. Carol Choye and the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education.*

I would like to thank Dr. Choye and the board for the many hours that have been spent working toward an agreement with the teachers for a fair contract. Our community is extremely lucky to have such a dedicated group of people working to ensure a wonderful education for our children.

I have four children in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood (SP-F) schools. I have been active in the PTA since 1998. I have been extremely pleased with the education that my children have received. The teachers in this district continue to provide an excellent education for our children. Ninety percent of our high school graduates continue to college. The service that the teachers provide directly benefits students and parents, but the rest of the community also benefits by the high property values that are driven, in part, by our high-achieving schools.

I think it is time to settle on a contract that is in line with other districts in Union County. SP-F is one of only four districts in Union County that still have not settled on a contract. Is the board proposing cuts in the benefits? Benefits are a critical part of a competitive package that other districts offer. A decrease in the benefit package could mean some quality teachers will leave the district.

Is the board offering a salary proposal above or below the county average? Would the board proposals help or hurt SP-F's ability to attract and retain high quality staff? I find it very disturbing that for many, many years this district has not settled a contract on time. It is time to settle and keep the SP-F school district competitive.

I would like to lend my support to the teachers for the fine, outstanding job that

they consistently provide for our students. Even though the teachers are working without a contract, they have continued throughout the negotiation process to support, encourage and provide a meaningful, high-level education for our students. I must commend them for their dedication, professionalism and talent.

It is my belief that my children have one of the best groups of teachers one could ask for. I think the teachers of SP-F deserve a fair and equitable contract that is competitive with surrounding districts.

The teachers in this district have provided my children with a superb education. They have been supportive, generous, kind, challenging and most of all have instilled in them the critical tools necessary to continue and be successful in higher education and life. The teachers of this district consistently offer their time and expertise before, during and after school hours. The teachers of SP-F have guided my children and helped them to love learning.

I support their efforts to try and settle with the board and receive a fair contract. We will all benefit from keeping our fine teachers in the SP-F schools.

Patricia Walsh-Pierce  
Fanwood

### Asm. Bramnick to Address Conference

WESTFIELD — On March 15, Asm. Jon Bramnick will address Leadership New Jersey (LNJ) on topics of government and politics. LNJ, celebrating its 20th anniversary, will hold the seminar at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and Int'l. Affairs at Princeton University.

Mr. Bramnick, a graduate of the Maxwell School of Pol. Science and a former adjunct professor at Rutgers University, will discuss property tax solutions.

## Westfield Comm. Looks at Historic Home Restoration

WESTFIELD — Long concerned about the current proliferation of McMansions in Westfield, the Westfield Historic Preservation Commission (WHPC) focused its attention on the current restoration of, and addition to, one of Westfield's architectural landmarks at its January 23 meeting.

This 1880s house, originally built on Dudley Avenue, was long ago moved to its present 730 Lawrence Avenue site. Often credited with being an inspiration for Westfield native Charles Addams' ghoulish cartoons, it had fallen into some disrepair over the years and was a candidate for demolition.

Thanks to the efforts of a local builder and resident, the house is now being renovated with modern amenities while retaining its historical character.

"The situation with this home shows that demolition does not have to be the only option," said Betty List, chairwoman of the WHPC. "We can save Westfield's unique assets while providing hous-

ing that is desirable for today's home buyers."

"It takes more time and money to save an historic home than to tear down and rebuild," said Simpson's Builders President and WHPC member Todd Annis, who is renovating the home. "In the long run, however, the value of this property and those around it can only be enhanced by this project."

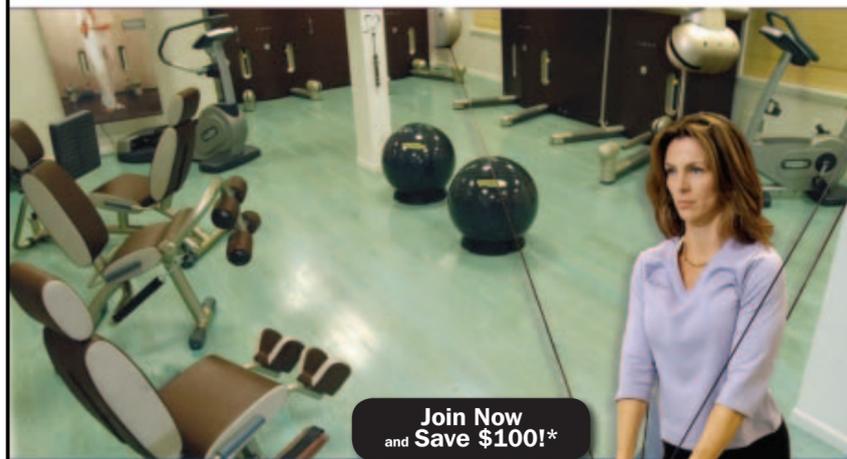
The WHPC is studying ways that vintage homes such as this can receive some kind of special designation for protection from possible inappropriate changes.

WHPC officers for 2006 are Betty List, chair; Eric Diddle, vice chair, and Barbara Burton and Jody Melloan, secretaries. The next meeting will be held on February 27 in the municipal building.

The purpose of the WHPC, established in 1984, is to help protect the historical, cultural, architectural and social heritage of Westfield. To learn more, visit [www.westfieldtoday.com/whpc.html](http://www.westfieldtoday.com/whpc.html).

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**JOSMEYER PINOT BLANC \$23.99**  
Pinot Blanc was long thought to be Chardonnay's lesser cousin, genetic research has recently discovered that it is a white mutation of Pinot Noir. The elegance in this bottle testifies to that. Peach, citrus and floral elements around a great acidic structure. This Alsatian version is great with lobster.

**CHATEAU PLO DU ROY MINERVOIS \$23.99**  
Big, rich, full bodied southern French wine. Black fruit, spices, leather tones and chocolate flavors. The big tannic structure makes it ideal for medium aging. It requires a good hour decant. An undervalued lesser know region.

**COLLE DE BARDELLINI VERMENTINO \$14.99**  
Very dry and filled with lemony fruit. Refreshing acidity makes it a great food wine. Pasta with a white clam sauce would be ideal. More weight and mouth feel than your run of the mill Italian white.

**Wine Of The Week**  
**Madonna Estate Pinot Noir \$21.99**

The carneros region on the northern side of San Francisco Bay is among the best places in the U.S. to grow the two great Burgundy grapes; Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. The fog in the area helps keep the grapes from over heating and the breezes help prevent fungus. This Pinot is certified organic. Lovely cherry-berry tones and light herbal hints help make it a great food wine. Nine months in small French oak add weight.

**Your Favorite Wines**

Blackstone Merlot	\$8.99	750ml
J Lohr Chardonnay	\$10.99	750ml
Simi Chardonnay	\$12.99	750ml
BV Coastal Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay/Pinot Noir	\$7.99	750ml
Hess Select Chardonnay	\$9.99	750ml
Toasted Head Chardonnay	\$10.99	750ml

**Your Favorite Vodka**

Absolut 80	\$31.99	1.75L
Ketel One	\$34.99	1.75L
Grey Goose	\$25.99	750ml
Smirnoff	\$18.99	1.75L
Stolichnaya	\$30.99	1.75L
Skyv	\$23.99	1.75L
Wolfschmidt	\$13.99	1.75L
Gordons	\$14.99	1.75L

**Your Favorite Gin**

Bombay Sapphire	\$34.99	1.75L
Tanqueray	\$30.99	1.75L
Hendricks	\$27.99	750ml
Beefeater	\$28.99	1.75L
Gordons	\$14.99	1.75L
Seagrams	\$15.99	1.75L

**Your Favorite Scotch**

Dewars White Label	\$29.99	1.75L
Chivas Regal	\$51.99	1.75L
Johnnie Walker Black	\$55.99	1.75L
Johnnie Walker Red	\$29.99	1.75L
Clan MacGregor	\$16.99	1.75L

**Your Favorite Whiskey**

Jack Daniels	\$35.99	1.75L
Jim Beam	\$23.99	1.75L
Seagrams 7	\$14.99	1.75L

**Your Favorite Rum**

Captain Morgan	\$23.99	1.75L
Bacardi Silver	\$19.99	1.75L
Bacardi Gold	\$19.99	1.75L
Malibu	\$23.99	1.75L

**Your Favorite Value Wines**

Mondavi Coastal Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$16.99	1.5L
Beringer Founders Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$15.99	1.5L
Woodbridge Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$10.99	1.5L
Vendange Cab/Merlot/Chardonnay	\$6.99	1.5L
Fetzer Cabernet/Chardonnay	\$12.99	1.5L
Cavit Pinot Grigio	\$11.99	1.5L
Walnut Crest Cabernet	\$8.99	1.5L
Cesari Pinot Grigio	\$10.99	1.5L
Bolla Soave	\$10.99	1.5L
Beringer White Zinfandel	\$8.99	1.5L
Franzia Burgundy/Chablis/Chianti	\$10.99	5L
Carlos Rossi Burgundy/Chablis/Paisano/Sangria	\$8.99	4L
Opici Homemade Barbarone	\$11.99	4L

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