

**Letters to the Editor**

**ARC Tunnel Controversy Continues Over Blatantly False Report**

The usual liberal Democratic dopes were critical of Governor Chris Christie last week after the General Accounting Office ("GAO") released a report on the Access to the Region's ("ARC") commuter rail tunnel project from New Jersey to New York City. The supposedly un-biased report, requested by Senator Lautenberg, called for a review of the history and circumstances surrounding the ARC project cancellation by Christie in November 2010. Its most controversial finding was that Christie used a \$14-billion cost estimate as the primary justification for the cancellation, which the report indicates, was exaggerated. The report noted Christie's decision was based on "citing potential cost growth and the state's financial condition" for the state's withdrawal of support.

The report is blatantly biased. It follows a common script for propaganda. It mixes accurate facts with misleading omissions and slights of facts. It builds a strong case for the need for a third tunnel into Manhattan, which is valid, with how wonderfully the tunnel would have affected job creation, economic prosperity, congestion relief and a general sense of well-being. And all that could have happened were it not for Christie's cancellation. The first 14 pages consisted of this adulation. I kept looking for the "but" that I know exists with the project to no avail.

In addressing one of its three objectives, the report finally had to review the cost estimate history of the project. Begrudgingly, on page 15, it dealt with the inconvenient facts. A chart provided the project's cost estimate history and it is not a pretty picture. The cost estimates went from \$7.4 billion in August 2006 to as high as \$13.7 billion to \$12.4 billion by October 2010. In the following one-and-one-half-page narrative to explain this dismal history, it seemed as though the author could not finish fast enough to get past this to move on to other topics. The first sentence starts out: "In general, changes in cost estimates throughout the process of planning and designing a transportation project are normal and may happen for a number of reasons." After making a few lame cost increase excuses, most of the narrative was dedicated to an academic explanation about how costs of any generic large project naturally increases over time as more information becomes available. The

report says this is normal. The report failed to discuss the information in the chart. This was the source of most of the criticism firestorm surrounding the supposed revelations in the report release and it was very unfairly discussed. There were discussions but no agreement on how cost overruns would be funded - although the Port Authority was saying it was capped. The report criticizes NJ/Christie for canceling the project before a cost overrun agreement could be reached. This whole section reeked of bias.

The GAO report did not mention that NJ was also responsible for the infrastructure leading up to the tunnel, most notably a bridge called the Portal Bridge with an additional estimated cost of \$750 million. This was almost surely to be all paid for by NJ. When all is factored in, Christie justified his decision based on a \$14-billion cost estimate saying NJ would have to eat 70 percent of the cost increase from the \$8.7-billion estimate.

How many people know that the ARC tunnel was a tunnel to nowhere? That it was going to be several stories below all existing train lines in and out of Penn Station and the NYC subway system? The ARC tunnel was not going to provide through-line connectivity to any other train system line - no NJ Transit, no Long Island Railroad and no NYC subway lines?

When traveling by train from Westfield to NYC, the Raritan Valley line does not provide through-line connectivity. Westfield commuters must disembark in Newark to a through-line train to NYC. This is a terrible inconvenience. Why would we want to build the same thing new? The worst of it is that through-line connectivity could have been possible. Former Governor Corzine abandoned this goal so he could have a photo op at the ARC ribbon-cutting ceremony in June 2009 to bolster his re-election campaign for governor. Thank God he lost.

We need a tunnel for sure, but not just any tunnel and especially not one that costs \$15-\$20 billion and still does not provide the complete solution. Thank God Christie killed this boondoggle.

**Richard Sauerwein**  
Westfield

*Note: Edited for brevity*



**SIRENS...**The Junior Kindergarten class from St. Paul's Day School hear a Westfield police siren up close.

**St. Paul's Jr. Kindergarten Visits Westfield Police Dept.**

WESTFIELD - The Junior Kindergarten class from St. Paul's Day School heard a police siren up close and personal! The children took a walking field trip, led by Officer Frank Padovano, to the Westfield Police Station. He explained safety tips about bike riding and about stranger danger. But most of all, he said, police officers are here to help and keep us safe. Each child was sworn in as a Junior Officer and received honorary badges, which were worn with great pride.

Junior Kindergarten (formerly known as "4+") is a curriculum specifically designed for children who 1. Would like a more academic

experience than a typical 4-year-old class, or

2. Are old enough to attend kindergarten, but would gain confidence by delaying entrance for a year.

St. Paul's Day School is located at 414 East Broad Street, right across from the Police Station!

Please visit [www.stpaulsday.org](http://www.stpaulsday.org) or call (908) 233-5417 for more information.

*Paid Bulletin Board*  
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**HEALTHY MEETING...**Sal Caruana, left, of Westfield, a member of the Overlook Medical Center board, poses with Alan Lieber, center, president of Overlook Medical Center, on April 18 during a cocktail party for supporters of the hospital at Assemblyman Jon Bramnick's, right, home.

**The Passing of Lt. Governor's Father**

Senate Republican Leader Tom Kean, Jr. (R-Westfield) issued the following statement on the passing of Charles McFadden, Jr., the father of Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno, following a battle with cancer:

"Rhonda and I extend our deepest

condolences to Lieutenant Governor Guadagno for her family's very difficult loss. Watching a parent fight and eventually succumb to illness is a particularly difficult experience, and we know that the people of New Jersey grieve with Kim and her family in this trying time."

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**NEW DOWNTOWN OFFICE...**Keller Williams Realty recently opened an office at 188 Elm Street in Westfield. Attending the grand-opening ribbon cutting, from left to right, are: Robert Winters; Marjorie Brown; Debra Bonomi; Howard Bunn; Brandi Rush; Louise DeFabio; Beverly Caldora; Jerry Illanovsky; Pat Marlinski; Maureen Illanovsky; Amy Teeny; Mitch Beinhaker, Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce (GWACC) chairman; Mayor Andy Skibitsky; Chris Devine, GWACC Board member; Rachael Lipschutz; Ron Shovlin, GWACC Board of Director; Lili Ann Carpetto; Tom Wragg, First Choice Mortgage Banker; Dorothy Patkus; Eileen Blancato; Jennifer Colamedici; Teri Malone, Joanne Morgenroth, and Susan Massa.

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