



REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION, INC.

... a research and planning agency supported by voluntary membership to promote the coordinated development of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Region.

New Jersey Committee
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Support for the Port of New York Authority's acquisition of the Hudson and Manhattan Tubes and construction of a World Trade Center on Lower Manhattan's West Side was voiced today by the Regional Plan Association in a statement by Cesar J. Bertheau, Chairman of the association's New Jersey Committee, to the New Jersey Senate's Federal & Interstate Relations Committee.

The senate committee conducted a public hearing on S 134, which gives legislative authorization to the Port of New York Authority to proceed with the two projects.

Mr. Bertheau's statement was read into the record of the hearing by Ernest Erber, Areas Director for Regional Plan Association who serves as staff to its New Jersey Committee with offices in Newark.

Mr. Bertheau's statement is attached.

Statement Made on Behalf of the
NEW JERSEY COMMITTEE
REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION

by

Cesar J. Bertheau, Chairman

at a Public Hearing

conducted by

the

Federal & Interstate Relations Committee

on

Senate Bill No. 134

To provide for the purchase of the
Hudson Tubes and the establishment
of a World Trade Center by the Port
of New York Authority

held in the

State House Assembly Chamber
Trenton, New Jersey

February 9, 1962

Regional Plan Association - New Jersey Committee

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STATEMENT BY

Cesar J. Bertheau, Chairman
New Jersey Committee
Regional Plan Association

Regional Plan Association favors the acquisition and rehabilitation of the Hudson and Manhattan Tubes by the Port of New York Authority and the construction of the Proposed World Trade Center. Without passing judgment upon details of legal or fiscal provisions, we are completely in accord with the principles of the proposed legislation and urge your favorable action.

Regional Plan Association came to this conclusion on the basis of the following view of the situation:

1. The proposed improvement of the Hudson & Manhattan is not a solution to New Jersey's commutation problem; it is not intended to be.
2. The Port Authority's proposals for the Hudson & Manhattan will, however, provide a firm financial basis and important physical improvements for what is essentially a vital link in the Region's core area transit system, with incidental benefits to some railroad commuters.
3. The rejection of the Metropolitan Rapid Transit Commission plan in 1958 indicates that an entirely new Trans-Hudson transit loop is not likely in the foreseeable future.
4. The improvement of commutation by railroad requires another and a different approach. Railroad commutation is related to, but separable from, the problem of the urban transit system, of which the Hudson & Manhattan is a part.
5. The approach to the railroad commutation problem should begin with the establishment of a public regional railroad commuting agency empowered to insure adequate rail commuter operations within the tri-state metropolitan region.

I wish to elucidate the above concepts by making these additional observations.

The Hudson & Manhattan carries 37,000 rush-hour passengers to Manhattan every morning. The significance of this

figure becomes apparent when we compare it with the fact that buses bring only 22,000 passengers to the Port Authority's 41st Street terminal during the same hours. A proposal which will assure continued operation of the Hudson & Manhattan, its modernization and improved connections with railroads warrants approval and support upon its own merits. It is illogical to decry it because it does not provide a comprehensive solution of all New Jersey railroad commuters' problems.

It is misleading to consider the Hudson & Manhattan to be an extension of the railroad network, and therefore inseparable from it in considering improvements. It is far more accurate to consider the Hudson & Manhattan to be part of an urban transit system, along with the New York subways, which serves the function of local distribution of suburban railroad passengers once the railroad has brought them to the Region's core.

It is, of course, possible to conceive of a new urban transit system to operate on both sides of the Hudson River that would be more efficient than the Hudson & Manhattan. Such a system was proposed by the Metropolitan Rapid Transit Commission in 1958. However, the public considered its cost excessively high compared to its benefits. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the Hudson & Manhattan, with such improvements as might be made, will continue to be the sole transit link between New Jersey and New York for the foreseeable future.

Regional Plan Association views the Hudson & Manhattan to be an important part of the transportation network of the Metropolitan Region, but withall, only a part. Regional Plan Association, from its inception in the 1920's, has advocated a coordinated transportation system for the entire metropolitan region and has urged that the three states join together to make long-range plans to improve the Region's transportation system.

The Tri-State Transportation Committee was set up last August by the Governors of the three states for such planning purposes.

The results of this planning committee's long-range studies are not due to be reported until 1963. The Association believes that action now is essential to insure the continuation and improvement of rail commutation.

Continued and improved commuter service from the suburbs of the New Jersey-New York-Connecticut region to its central business districts, which include Newark and Jersey City, is essential to the economy of the metropolitan area.

Transportation for Manhattan's 200,000 rush-hour rail

commuters, of whom 75,000 come from New Jersey, cannot be supplied by any other means than by the existing rail network with suitable improvements in coordinated service and new equipment. Other entry-ways at the rush hour are already loaded to capacity.

Rail commutation remains important for New Jersey's employment centers, such as Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Passaic and Elizabeth. Thus, for instance, some 8,000 persons commute by railroad to Downtown Newark daily.

Railroad commutation remains an essential public service. As such it requires public support, both for capital needs and to meet operating deficits.

We believe that the interests of the public should be represented by a public agency. This is essential if any policy of public payments to private railroads for the operation of the commuter system in this Region is to be instituted.

This practical situation calls for the establishment of a public regional transportation agency empowered to contract for or otherwise insure rail commuter operations within the metropolitan region. Such an action agency could be the recipient of public funds appropriated to insure essential commuter rail service in the public interest. A regional action agency would assure that the individual commuter lines are sufficiently coordinated; that equipment interchangeable to the extent practicable among all commuter railroads and specially designed for commuters is acquired; that modern equipment is bought in large quantities; and that improved operations are instituted across the board.

Any one of several organizational patterns could be used for this regional action agency. Whatever the agency, it must be responsible to the governments of the Region and broadly represent the Region's parts.

In conclusion I wish, on behalf of our New Jersey Committee, to underscore the benefits which will accrue to Northeastern New Jersey from the Port Authority's projects. We must remember that 40% of all jobs in the 22-county Metropolitan region are still located within a nine-square mile area in Manhattan, south of 59th Street. Easier accessibility to this area as a result of improved service on the Hudson & Manhattan is a decided economic advantage to the people of Northeastern New Jersey.

In this connection, the location of the World Trade Center at the Manhattan terminus of the Hudson & Manhattan places the 30,000 jobs which it will house as conveniently

accessible to Jersey residents as is physically possible for a Manhattan location.

Insofar as the World Trade Center will prove a stimulant to trade for the entire Port District, New Jersey's modern shipping facilities at Port Newark-Port Elizabeth will benefit.

The proposed new bus terminal to be constructed in Journal Square as part of the Hudson & Manhattan rehabilitation will provide a major stimulant to urban renewal in Jersey City.

Thus this legislation promises substantial benefits to New Jersey and to the Metropolitan Region as a whole.
