

ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATS NEWS RELEASE



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MULTIMEDIA PACKAGE

ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATS COMMENTARY ON COMMITTEE REVIEW OF OVERSIGHT FOR NJ PORTION OF FEDERAL STIMULUS

(TRENTON) – Chairs of six Assembly committees today issued a multimedia package on the Assembly’s efforts to ensure legislative oversight and accountability of the money made available to New Jersey from the recently enacted federal stimulus package.

The committee hearings were the first of two days largely devoted to discussing the impact of the federal stimulus on the state. Assembly committees heard from a variety of state commissioners and department heads on their efforts to obtain and oversee distribution of federal stimulus dollars.

The multimedia package consists of a video press release on the committee hearings, audio of same and a transcript of statements by the committee chairs.

The video can be accessed directly via our Web site – www.assemblydems.com – or by pasting the following link into a Web browser: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zh2mbvrT1u8>

The audio file has been included in the e-mail as an attachment.

A transcript of statements by Assembly committee chairs is appended below:

Assemblyman Louis D. Greenwald (D-Camden) – Budget Committee Chairman:

“Over \$400 million hit the street in New Jersey today for federal stimulus on roads and bridge projects through the Department of Transportation. It’s critically important that we know where that money is going, how it’s going to be spent and what the oversight will be.”

Assemblyman Herb Conaway, M.D. (D-Burlington) – Health and Senior Services Committee Chairman:

“It’s important for states like New Jersey and folks across the country to understand and to use this important federal money that is designed to stabilize programs that are coming under significant strain because of the economic downturn that we’re facing here and across the nation.”

Assemblyman Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. (D-Middlesex) – Higher Education Committee Chairman:

“It’s the future of our country. I mean, all you have to do is pick up the newspaper in the morning and you see the dire straits that the United States economy is in and this stimulus package, in my mind, is probably the most important thing that has happened to the United States of America since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt.”

Assemblywoman Nellie Pou (D-Passaic) – Appropriations Committee Chairwoman:

“I think it’s important for us to have these hearings today in order for us to ensure that we’ve informed the public how these dollars are going to be spent. We need to make sure that we have transparency, we have accountability and, more importantly, make sure that the money goes into our streets, into our communities and our municipalities as quickly as possible to ensure that we stimulate our economy.”

Greenwald:

“It allows us to coordinate with the different departments and to ensure that on the second wave, where we’re waiting for certain permits from DEP and certain other requirements to meet the federal standards, that we as a legislative branch have a check-and-balance with the executive branch to make sure that the departments are following up on what they need to so that New Jersey capitalizes on the money.”

Assemblyman Upendra J. Chivukula (D-Somerset) – Telecommunications and Utilities Committee Chairman:

“We are responsible to the people and this is, after all, taxpayers’ money and we have to make sure that we have the proper oversight. Also, the projects that are in need – and especially the residents and municipalities that are in need of these funds – should be benefitting from these funds.”

Assemblyman Joseph Vas (D-Middlesex) – Commerce and Economic Development Committee Chairman:

“I think the public needs to know that New Jersey is doing its very best to achieve accountability and to maximize how these dollars are being put to use so that they are being put to use for their intended purpose, that they’re not being spent willy-nilly and that they’re not being wasted.”

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