

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY GOVERNOR JIM FLORIO
STATEWIDE ADDRESS
SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1990

GOOD EVENING.

I APPRECIATE THE CHANCE TO TAKE A FEW MINUTES AND SHARE SOME THOUGHTS WITH YOU ABOUT THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY.

AFTER SEVEN MONTHS OF ACTIVITY IN TRENTON, IT'S A CHANCE TO CATCH OUR BREATH, AND TALK ABOUT THINGS.

A LOT OF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS. SOME OF YOU ARE ANGRY. I UNDERSTAND THAT.

A LOT HAS CHANGED IN NEW JERSEY SINCE I TOOK OFFICE IN JANUARY. WE'VE WRITTEN INTO LAW CAR INSURANCE REFORM THAT WILL BRING DOWN RATES NEXT YEAR. WE'VE APPOINTED AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROSECUTOR AND GIVEN HIM TOUGH LAWS TO PUNISH THOSE WHO POLLUTE OUR WATER. AND WE'VE ENACTED THE NATION'S STRICTEST LAW TO BAN ASSAULT WEAPONS.

WE'VE MADE BIG CHANGES IN THE WAY THIS STATE RAISES AND SPENDS MONEY.

WE'VE DONE THESE THINGS -- MADE INVESTMENTS -- FOR A MORE SECURE FUTURE. WE'VE DONE THESE THINGS TO MAKE NEW JERSEY HEALTHIER. GREENER. SAFER. TO HAVE A SOUND ECONOMY THAT OFFERS GOOD JOBS -- FOR OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN.

LIKE ALL GOOD INVESTMENTS, THESE WILL TAKE A LITTLE TIME.

TONIGHT, I WANT TO ADDRESS WHAT'S AT THE HEART OF THE CONCERNS OF SO MANY. MONEY MATTERS. I WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE BUDGET CRISIS THAT WAS FACING NEW JERSEY. ABOUT WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING TO MIDDLE-CLASS PEOPLE HERE, AND ALL ACROSS THE NATION. ABOUT WHAT WE'VE DONE TO OFFER PROPERTY TAX RELIEF.

AS LUCINDA AND I TRAVEL ACROSS THIS STATE -- AS WE LISTEN -- IT'S CLEAR THAT YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE. YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY.

I WANT TO TALK ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS FOR ALL OF US. BECAUSE IN THE END, THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT -- PEOPLE. NOT PERCENTAGES.

LET ME BEGIN BY ANSWERING SOME OF THE QUESTIONS I HEAR MOST.

A LOT OF PEOPLE ASK ABOUT WHAT I SAID IN THE CAMPAIGN LAST YEAR ABOUT SEEING NO NEED FOR NEW TAXES. SOME PUT IT QUITE BLUNTLY: DIDN'T YOU LIE TO US?

THE ANSWER IS NO. YES, THINGS MIGHT BE EASIER FOR ME NOW IF I HAD NOT SAID IT. BUT I BELIEVED IT. I BELIEVED IT, BASED

ON THE BEST INFORMATION I HAD AT THE TIME. I BELIEVED WE WOULD HAVE THE SURPLUS MONEY GOVERNOR KEAN SAID WE WOULD. I WAS WRONG.

TAKE A LOOK AT THESE HEADLINES.

AS YOU CAN SEE, IN OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR -- A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE ELECTION -- GOVERNOR KEAN TOLD THE STATE HE EXPECTED TO LEAVE THE NEXT GOVERNOR A \$274 MILLION SURPLUS. A HEDGE AGAINST HARD FISCAL TIMES.

BUT, AROUND CHRISTMAS, HE SAID THAT SURPLUS WOULD HAVE TO BE USED UP TO AVOID RUNNING OUT OF MONEY.

THINGS GOT WORSE FAST. A FEW DAYS INTO THE NEW YEAR -- SHORTLY BEFORE MY INAUGURATION -- IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE SURPLUS ALREADY WAS DOWN TO \$150 MILLION, AND FALLING FAST.

AS I TOOK OFFICE, NEWSPAPERS WERE WRITING THAT I FACED A "BUDGET CRISIS LIKE NO OTHER."

IT WAS LIKE BEING TOLD YOU'RE GOING TO GET A GIFT OF \$100 TO SPEND IN A FEW WEEKS. THEN BEING TOLD IT WASN'T COMING. AND FINALLY, HEARING THAT YOU OWED MONEY INSTEAD.

WHEN I TOOK OFFICE, MORE MONEY WAS GOING OUT THAN COMING IN. BY EARLY SPRING, NEW JERSEY WAS STARING AT BANKRUPTCY. WE WERE \$600 MILLION IN THE HOLE. OUR STATE'S CREDIT RATING HUNG BY A THREAD. WE WERE IN DANGER OF GOING THE WAY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AND OTHER STATES THAT DIDN'T ACT.

WE HAD TO ACT FAST. WE CUT \$600 MILLION WITHIN 24 WEEKS. IT BARELY ALLOWED US TO BALANCE THE BOOKS. BUT THAT ONLY TOOK CARE OF PART OF THE PROBLEM. WE ALSO HAD TO ADOPT A BALANCED BUDGET FOR THE NEW YEAR THAT STARTED JULY FIRST. STATE LAW SAYS WE HAD TO DO THAT.

COULDN'T WE HAVE SAVED MORE MONEY BY DOING AN AUDIT? YES, AND WE WILL. BUT, YOU CAN'T DO A SENSIBLE, BUSINESSLIKE AUDIT OVERNIGHT. RIGHT NOW THE BEST ACCOUNTING FIRMS IN THE COUNTRY ARE WORKING ON THE AUDIT. DONATING THEIR TIME. AND THEY'RE DOING A GOOD JOB. REAL SAVINGS WILL COME OUT OF THEIR WORK.

BUT THE BUDGET DEADLINE OF JULY 1ST REQUIRED THAT WE HAD TO ACT QUICKLY TO PROTECT NEW JERSEY. SPENDING HAD BEEN OUT OF CONTROL FOR TOO LONG. IN THE LAST EIGHT YEARS THE AMOUNT OF MONEY STATE GOVERNMENT SPENT DOUBLED. FROM \$6 BILLION TO \$12 BILLION. WE HAVE ONE DEPARTMENT IN STATE GOVERNMENT THAT'S BIGGER TODAY THAN ALL OF STATE GOVERNMENT WAS EIGHT YEARS AGO.

FOR THE NEW YEAR, WILD SPENDING. ONE-SHOT GIMMICKS LIKE RIPPING OFF THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT TRUST FUND FOR \$100 MILLION. UNREAL REVENUE ESTIMATES DONE BY FOLKS WEARING ROSE-COLORED GLASSES. ALL THIS LEFT US A \$3 BILLION GAP TO CLOSE.

ONCE AGAIN, THE FIRST THING WE DID WAS CUT. WE CUT \$2 BILLION IN SPENDING.

WE DID THINGS LIKE CUTTING STATE CARS -- 1,000 ORDERED OFF THE ROAD SO FAR. CARS THAT NEVER SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN OUT IN THE FIRST PLACE. WE'VE TARGETED 1,500 MIDDLE MANAGEMENT JOBS FOR EXTINCTION. ELIMINATED GLOSSY ANNUAL REPORTS AND MAILINGS LIKE THESE. SOME PEOPLE SAID WE SHOULD CUT EVEN MORE. WELL, IF YOU'VE WAITED IN LONG LINES TO GET YOUR CAR INSPECTED, YOU'VE FELT THE CUTS WE MADE. YOU'VE FELT THEM IF YOU'VE LOST PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES. IF YOU GO TO RUTGERS OR A STATE COLLEGE, YOU'RE PAYING HIGHER TUITION. BUS AND TRAIN RIDERS ARE PAYING HIGHER FARES.

THOSE ARE THE RESULTS OF OVERSPENDING IN THE PAST.

BUT I WAS NOT PREPARED TO CUT BEYOND A CERTAIN POINT. BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME COMMITMENTS THAT STATE GOVERNMENT CAN NEVER ABANDON. SCHOOLS. MAKING SURE THE JERSEY SHORE IS CLEAN. CRACKING DOWN HARD ON DRUG DEALERS. HELP FOR BATTERED CHILDREN. ROADS. SEWERS. PRISONS. CLEANING UP TOXIC WASTE DUMPS. THOSE ARE EXPENSIVE. THERE'S NO HIDING IT.

EVEN WITH ALL THE CUTS, THERE SIMPLY WASN'T ENOUGH MONEY TO BALANCE THE BUDGET. SO WE RAISED TAXES ON LIQUOR AND CIGARETTES. ON OIL COMPANIES. IT STILL WASN'T ENOUGH. WE HAD TO RAISE AND BROADEN THE SALES TAX. THE LAW SAYS WE MUST HAVE A BALANCED BUDGET. IT WAS MY JOB TO SHOVEL UP THE MESS. I DIDN'T LIKE IT, BUT I DID IT.

FOR MORE THAN 8 OUT OF 10 PEOPLE IN NEW JERSEY THE SALES TAX INCREASE IS THE ONLY STATE TAX INCREASE YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY.

IN THE END, WE PUT TOGETHER A BUDGET WHERE STATE SPENDING ROSE JUST 2 PERCENT. THAT'S LESS THAN INFLATION. AFTER EIGHT YEARS WHERE THE INCREASES AVERAGED 14 PERCENT A YEAR, I THINK THAT PUTS US ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

OTHER QUESTIONS I HEAR A LOT ARE, WHERE'S THE LOTTERY MONEY? WHERE'S THE CASINO MONEY? WHERE DOES ALL THAT MONEY GO?

WELL, THE LOTTERY MONEY GOES TOWARD EDUCATION. AND THE CASINO MONEY FOR PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS AND THE DISABLED. BUT YOU'RE ENTITLED TO A MORE DETAILED ANSWER THAN THAT. SO I'VE ORDERED A REPORT PREPARED FOR MAILING TO EVERY TAXPAYER. LIKE THE PHONE COMPANY COMMERCIAL SAYS: MAKE THEM PUT IT IN WRITING. WE WILL. IT'S YOUR MONEY, AND YOU SHOULD KNOW.

HOW NEW JERSEY AND THE REST OF THE NATION GOT INTO THIS FIX IS A DISTRESSING STORY. IT'S THE STORY OF A DECADE-LONG SPENDING "HIGH", CAUSED BY FEELGOOD LEADERS WHO SPENT OUR MONEY AND TOLD US, "DON'T WORRY; BE HAPPY." AS IF THE HIGH WOULD LAST FOREVER.

THEY BROKE THE BASIC RULE THAT WE ALL KNOW ABOUT. YOU CAN'T SPEND MORE THAN YOU TAKE IN.

IN THE PROCESS, THEY MADE THE RICH AMONG US RICHER. AND LEFT THE REST OF US LAGGING BEHIND. THEY PROMISED THE GOOD THINGS WOULD "TRICKLE DOWN." BUT THEY DIDN'T. INSTEAD, OUR NERVES ARE FRAYED AND OUR WALLETS ARE SQUEEZED.

FOLKS HAVE TO RUN AT FULL SPEED JUST TO STAY IN THE SAME PLACE. WORRYING ABOUT FINDING A SECOND JOB TO PAY THE DOCTOR BILLS OR DAYCARE. WORRYING ABOUT HOLDING ONTO THE JOB THEY HAVE. IT'S CRAZY.

IN NEW JERSEY, MAYBE THE WORST PART IS THAT YOU GET SOCKED, YEAR AFTER YEAR, BY PROPERTY TAX INCREASES THAT HIT LIKE MIKE TYSON'S PUNCHES. A HUNDRED AND EIGHT PERCENT INCREASE IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS. THAT'S DEVASTATING.

THE CRUEL JOKE IS THE REPUBLICANS WHO SOLD US THIS LINE ARE STILL TRYING TO MAKE US BELIEVE THEY'RE FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS. WHILE THEY GO ON PROTECTING THE POCKETBOOKS OF THE WEALTHY.

THIS GOES TO FUNDAMENTALS. LIKE WHETHER IT'S FAIR FOR A FAMILY EARNING \$50,000 A YEAR TO PAY THE SAME TAX RATE AS A MILLIONAIRE, AS THEY'VE BEEN DOING IN NEW JERSEY. IT'S NOT FAIR. AND I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE SAYING THAT.

A PROMINENT REPUBLICAN STRATEGIST -- KEVIN PHILLIPS -- WHO NO LONGER BELIEVES IN HIS PARTY'S TACTICS RECENTLY WROTE, "THE 1980s WERE THE TRIUMPH OF UPPER AMERICA...THE NET WORTH OF THE FORBES 400 RICHEST AMERICANS NEARLY TRIPLED. AT THE SAME TIME, THE DIVISION BETWEEN THEM AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY BECAME A YAWNING GAP."

THIS UNFAIRNESS HAS TO CHANGE. AND SO DOES THE UNFAIR WAY WE TREAT SO MANY OF OUR SCHOOL CHILDREN IN NEW JERSEY. WE'VE GOT A LOT OF GOOD SCHOOLS IN OUR STATE. AND SOME GREAT ONES. BUT FOR TOO MANY KIDS, THE QUALITY OF THE SCHOOLING THEY GET DEPENDS ON THE ACCIDENT OF WHERE THEY HAPPEN TO LIVE.

THAT'S BECAUSE WE RELY TOO MUCH ON PROPERTY TAXES TO PAY FOR SCHOOLS. WE DON'T INVEST IN OUR KIDS. THAT HURTS ALL OF US -- CHILDREN AND HOMEOWNERS ALIKE.

THE SUPREME COURT OF OUR STATE RECOGNIZED THIS UNFAIRNESS A FEW WEEKS AGO, AND ORDERED US TO GIVE MORE MONEY TO SOME 30 DISTRICTS. BUT FAIRNESS DICTATED THAT WE DIDN'T STOP THERE. SO WE PUT IN PLACE A NEW SCHOOL FUNDING SYSTEM THAT INCREASES SCHOOL AID TO ABOUT 800,000 SCHOOL CHILDREN. IN RURAL AREAS. IN CITIES. IN SUBURBS.

I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR: THAT MONEY IS A CONTRACT, NOT A HANDOUT. WE AREN'T JUST GIVING MORE TO OUR KIDS, WE'RE GOING TO ASK MORE OF THEM. AND MORE OF EVERYONE INVOLVED IN EDUCATION. THAT MONEY IS NOT FOR BUILDING BUREAUCRACIES. NOT FOR LINING

ANYONE'S POCKETS. IT'S FOR THE KIDS. WE'LL BE WATCHING VERY CLOSELY.

PART OF ASKING MORE OF OUR KIDS MEANS MAKING SURE WE DON'T ABANDON THE BEST SCHOOLS. THEY ARE LIGHTHOUSES. THEY SHOW THE WAY. OUR NEW EDUCATION COMMISSIONER -- DOCTOR JOHN ELLIS -- WILL WORK WITH THOSE DISTRICTS TO HELP THEM CONTINUE SHOWING US THE BEST WAYS TO LEARN.

TO PAY FOR BETTER SCHOOLS, AND BRING PROPERTY TAX RELIEF, WE RAISED THE STATE INCOME TAX. WE DIDN'T RAISE IT FOR EVERYONE. WE DIDN'T RAISE IT FOR MOST PEOPLE. WE RAISED IT ON MARRIED PEOPLE AND SINGLE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS MAKING MORE THAN \$70,000 A YEAR. WE RAISED IT ON SINGLE PEOPLE MAKING MORE THAN \$35,000.

I DIDN'T PROPOSE THIS LIGHTLY. IT'S FOR FAIRNESS. IT'S FOR QUALITY EDUCATION. IT'S FOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF.

LET ME GO BACK OVER THE FACTS. THE INCOME TAX CHANGE AFFECTS ONLY 17 PERCENT OF NEW JERSEYANS. THAT MEANS EIGHT OF 10 OF YOU WILL NOT PAY ONE SINGLE PENNY MORE.

ANOTHER QUESTION I HEAR IS, MY SPOUSE AND I MAKE JUST OVER \$70,000 AND WE'RE STRUGGLING JUST TO GET BY. OR, I'M SINGLE AND I MAKE A LITTLE MORE THAN \$35,000. HOW CAN YOU SAY I'M RICH?

NO, YOU'RE NOT RICH. WHICH IS WHY THE NEW TAX PLAN REALLY AIMS HIGHER THAN THAT. IT PUTS ALMOST ALL THE BURDEN ON PEOPLE MAKING MORE THAN \$100,000 A YEAR. NINE OF EVERY 10 DOLLARS BROUGHT IN WILL COME FROM PEOPLE MAKING MORE THAN \$100,000. THE NEW TOP RATE OF 7 PERCENT WILL BE PAID ONLY BY THOSE MAKING OVER \$150,000.

LET'S TAKE A MOMENT TO LOOK AT HOW THIS AFFECTS A REAL FAMILY. THE CATTANOS, WHO INVITED LUCINDA AND ME TO A COOKOUT WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS TO ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS LAST WEEK. THEY WERE KIND ENOUGH TO LET ME REFER TO THEM AS AN EXAMPLE.

ANDREW AND MONICA CATTANO MAKE BETWEEN 50 AND 60 THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR. HE'S AN ANALYST FOR A TRADE ASSOCIATION, AND SHE'S A NURSE WHO WORKS PART TIME. THEY HAVE THREE CHILDREN, INCLUDING A LITTLE GIRL, KELLY, BORN JUST FOUR WEEKS AGO.

THEY LIVE IN A 4-BEDROOM COLONIAL HOUSE ASSESSED AT \$137,000, IN A QUIET, NICE SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD. IF THERE'S A TYPICAL NEW JERSEY FAMILY, I THINK THEY'RE IT. AND NO ONE HAS TO TELL THE CATTANOS ABOUT MAKING ENDS MEET.

UNDER THE NEW LAW, THEY'LL PAY NO ADDITIONAL INCOME TAX. IN FACT, THEY'LL PAY A LITTLE LESS, BECAUSE WE'VE INCREASED THE EXEMPTION FOR DEPENDENTS -- A BENEFIT MOST PEOPLE DON'T SEEM TO KNOW ABOUT YET.

WHEN THEY WROTE TO ME, THE CATTANOS SENT ALONG THEIR TAX BILLS. IN FOUR SHORT YEARS THEIR PROPERTY TAX HAS GONE UP BY 37 PERCENT. IMAGINE. THIRTY SEVEN PERCENT!

A LOT OF YOU SAY YOU'VE HEARD RUMORS THAT WE'RE DOING AWAY WITH THE HOMESTEAD REBATE. WE'RE NOT. IN FACT, WE'RE EXPANDING IT FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED IT MOST. BECAUSE THE CATTANO'S PROPERTY TAX IS SO HIGH, THEY'LL QUALIFY FOR THE TOP REBATE IN OUR NEW SYSTEM. FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS.

STATE TAKEOVER OF WELFARE AND OTHER SOCIAL SERVICE COSTS IS ANOTHER PART OF OUR NEW LAW. THAT WILL CUT THE CATTANO'S PROPERTY TAX BILL EVEN FURTHER.

AND THEIR TOWN, LIKE MANY OTHERS, WILL GET SUBSTANTIAL NEW SCHOOL AID FROM THE STATE. MORE THAN A MILLION DOLLARS. THAT COULD MEAN A TEN PERCENT CUT IN SCHOOL TAXES.

LET'S ADD IT ALL UP, AND SEE WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THEM. THEY'LL PAY LOWER INCOME TAXES. THEY'LL GET UP TO \$900 IN PROPERTY TAX RELIEF. THAT'S \$600 MORE THAN THEY GET NOW. THEY'LL HAVE BETTER SCHOOLS FOR THEIR CHILDREN. FOR THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES ALL OVER NEW JERSEY THE STORY WILL BE SIMILAR. THEY'LL GET RELIEF THAT'S LONG OVERDUE.

BUT, WHAT WE'RE DOING MEANS MORE THAN JUST SOME MONEY FOR THE CATTANOS.

WE FACE UNCERTAIN ECONOMIC TIMES, ALL ACROSS THE NATION. SHOCKWAVES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST CAN RAISE GAS PRICES AND UNBALANCE A FAMILY BUDGET IN A MATTER OF HOURS. WE'RE ACTING TO PROTECT NEW JERSEY AS BEST WE CAN. ALREADY OUR GAMEPLAN IS PAYING OFF.

THE BOND RATING HOUSES HAVE TAKEN NEW JERSEY OFF CREDIT WATCH. THEY'VE REAFFIRMED OUR STATE'S TRIPLE-A BOND RATING -- HIGHEST IN THE NATION.

IN THE PAST FEW DAYS I'VE HAD THE PLEASURE TO STAND WITH TOP MANAGEMENT FROM CAMPBELL'S SOUP COMPANY AND TROPICANA ORANGE JUICE, AS THEY ANNOUNCED CONSTRUCTION OF MAJOR OPERATIONS IN OUR STATE. I'M REASSURED THAT WHAT WE'RE DOING WILL MAKE BUSINESSES DECIDE TO STAY HERE AND HELP NEW ONES DECIDE TO COME.

WE DON'T HAVE OIL IN NEW JERSEY. WE DON'T HAVE GOLD MINES OR IRON ORE. WHAT ATTRACTS BUSINESSES TO OUR STATE, AND SECURES OUR FUTURE, IS GOOD ROADS, SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS, EAGER, EDUCATED WORKERS -- A SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY THAT WE WANT TO PRESERVE.

WE'VE MADE THE TOUGH DECISIONS TO KEEP NEW JERSEY'S ASSETS. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER STATES HAVEN'T YET HAD THE WILL TO FACE UP TO THESE PROBLEMS. THEY WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THEM NEXT YEAR, AND THEY'LL HAVE A TOUGHER JOB BECAUSE THEY WAITED.

OVERSPENDING AND DEFICIT PROBLEMS DON'T GO AWAY IF YOU IGNORE THEM. THEY GET WORSE.

THE STEPS WE TOOK IN THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR MEAN THAT WHEN THE NEW CENTURY ARRIVES IN TEN YEARS, WE'LL BE BETTER OFF THAN ANY OTHER STATE. NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, WE'LL BE ABLE TO COMPETE IN THE NATION AND THE WORLD.

THAT'S WHAT WE'VE DONE, AND WHY. IT'S GOING TO HELP A LOT OF PEOPLE. BUT I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO TAKE MY WORD FOR IT. NOTHING I'VE SAID TONIGHT IS GOING TO CHANGE ANYONE'S MIND TOMORROW MORNING. I DON'T EXPECT POLL RATINGS TO SHOOT UP OVERNIGHT AFTER THIS TALK.

AND I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO TRUST ME. BUT I AM SAYING THAT I TRUST YOU.

I WANT YOU TO SEE THE RESULTS FOR YOURSELF. AND LET ME REMIND YOU: YOU WON'T SEE THEM NEXT WEEK OR NEXT MONTH. THIS WILL TAKE A LITTLE TIME. A LITTLE PATIENCE. THE DECADE OF THE QUICK-FIX IS OVER.

THE OTHER DAY IN ELIZABETH, A MAN CAME UP TO ME. HE WAS SO ANGRY YOU COULD SEE HIM SHAKING. "I CAME TO YELL AT YOU," IS THE WAY HE PUT IT. BUT WE TALKED, AND I TOLD HIM THE THINGS I'M TELLING YOU TONIGHT. I SAID, LOOK, YOU CAN'T JUMP ON A RUNAWAY SPENDING TRAIN GOING 200 MILES AN HOUR AND STOP IT IN 50 FEET.

WE'VE GOT PROBLEMS THAT WERE MANY YEARS IN THE MAKING. THEY WON'T BE SOLVED IN SEVEN MONTHS.

THE FELLOW THOUGHT AND SAID, "OKAY, I'LL GIVE YOU MORE TIME."

AND THAT'S ALL I'M ASKING. TAKE A LOOK. JUDGE FOR YOURSELF.

I KNOW THAT NOT EVERYONE IS WILLING TO WAIT. YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT THE PEOPLE GOING AROUND, GETTING PETITIONS SIGNED. DEMANDING WE UNDO WHAT'S JUST BEEN DONE -- BEFORE IT EVEN GETS A CHANCE TO WORK.

WELL, I CAN'T HELP FEELING MOST PEOPLE ARE MORE PATIENT. THEY HAVE QUESTIONS, NOT DEMANDS. THEY'RE NOT YELLING. THEY'RE MORE INTERESTED IN ANSWERS THAN CONFRONTATION. THEY'RE QUIETLY CONCERNED, BUT OPEN-MINDED. LIKE THE CATTANO FAMILY THAT LUCINDA AND I VISITED THE OTHER NIGHT.

WOULD I LIKE TO BE THE MOST POPULAR GOVERNOR IN THE HISTORY OF NEW JERSEY? SURE. WHO WOULDN'T? BUT NOT IF IT MEANS SACRIFICING THE FUTURE FOR MY GRANDCHILDREN. NOT IF IT MEANS LOSING THE QUALITY OF LIFE WE CHERISH IN NEW JERSEY.

AT A POINT IN HISTORY WHERE WE'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT JUNK-BOND FORTUNES, SAVINGS AND LOAN SCANDALS, AND

BILLION-DOLLAR MERGER DEALS THAT MAKE A FEW PEOPLE RICH WITHOUT CREATING A SINGLE JOB FOR THE REST OF US, I'M SUGGESTING WE GO BACK TO THE OLD VALUE OF INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE.

THAT WE LOOK AND ACT FOR THE LONG TERM. THAT WE PLAY BY SOME TIME-TESTED RULES.

IF WE INVEST, WE'LL HAVE GOOD SCHOOLS. A HEALTHIER, GREENER, SAFER STATE. A JERSEY SHORE THAT'S A SOURCE OF RELAXATION AND INSPIRATION. WE'LL KEEP ALIVE THE DREAM OF OWNING A HOME. THESE ARE INVESTMENTS THAT WILL YIELD BIG DIVIDENDS, FOR ALL OF US, OVER TIME.

BUT I WILL NOT LEAD BY JUST WISHING FOR THESE THINGS. BY TELLING YOU I'M FOR THEM, WHILE THE REALITY SLIPS FARTHER AND EARTHER AWAY.

I AM PREPARED TO ACT. IN NEW JERSEY, OUR STATE BIRD IS THE GOLDFINCH. IT'S NOT THE OSTRICH.

WHEN I SWORE THE SOLEMN OATH OF OFFICE SEVEN MONTHS AGO TOMORROW, I SPOKE ABOUT KEEPING UP THE CONVERSATION I BEGAN LAST YEAR WITH THE PEOPLE OF NEW JERSEY. TONIGHT HAS BEEN PART OF THAT. I'LL KEEP UP MY PART OF THE BARGAIN. CUTTING WASTE IN GOVERNMENT; ATTRACTING BUSINESS TO NEW JERSEY.

I'LL GO ON TALKING ABOUT WHAT WE'VE DISCUSSED TONIGHT. I WILL EXPLAIN.

IF I HAVE TO GO BLOCK BY BLOCK, HOUSE BY HOUSE, PERSON TO PERSON, I WILL. BECAUSE YOU'RE ENTITLED TO STRAIGHT ANSWERS, AND YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE THEM. BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT MOST PEOPLE, WHEN GIVEN THE FACTS, WOULD PROBABLY MAKE THE SAME DECISIONS I'VE MADE.

TOGETHER, WE'LL WORK THROUGH THESE TOUGH TIMES. OUR VISION, OUR DETERMINATION WILL BRING US THE CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE NEW JERSEY WE WANT. A GOOD PLACE TO WORK. A GOOD PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILY. A PLACE TO GROW.

THANK YOU AND GOOD NIGHT.