

# FROM CANDIDATE TO GOVERNOR-ELECT

Recommendations for Gubernatorial Transitions

JULY 2017

Eagleton Center on the American Governor  
Eagleton Institute of Politics

**RUTGERS**  
THE STATE UNIVERSITY  
OF NEW JERSEY

# Summary of Recommendations

## **PRE-TRANSITION: Issues to Address Prior to Election Day**

1. Decide on size and structure of the Governor's Office.
2. Select chief of staff.
3. Decide on all, or at least most, members of the central transition team.
4. Identify cabinet and other positions new governor will fill and start preparation of lists of potential candidates for specific positions.
5. Plan for desired transition-period interaction with the outgoing governor.
6. Develop goals and plans for possible lame duck legislative session.
7. Plan governor-elect's immediate post-election schedule.
8. Write victory speech (and concession speech).

## **THE TRANSITION: Issues That Must Be Addressed Prior to Inauguration**

1. Contact the National Governors Association and party-specific governors association.
2. Consider whether to form subject-area transition committees.
3. Make key appointments.
4. Meet with legislative leaders as a group and individually.
5. Determine priority issues and pending decisions.
6. Determine goals for first 10 days, 100 days and perhaps other calendar markers.
7. Write inauguration speech.
8. Plan inauguration.
9. Decide which, if any, executive orders should be issued, overturned or changed on "Day One" and within first 30 days.
10. Develop framework for first budget message in February.
11. Understand that state "bureaucrats" can be your friends.

## **DON'T MAKE PROMISES YOU MAY REGRET**

1. Avoid early commitments to specific ethics reforms..
2. Avoid early commitments to shrinking the size of the governor's office.
3. Avoid promising to reduce the size of the state workforce.
4. Avoid pledging not to consider lobbyists for transition team or administration.
5. Hesitate before promising campaign staff specific roles in the administration.

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We also made use of the interviews conducted by the Center on the American Governor over the past ten years. Many of these generally wide-ranging conversations included descriptive and thought-provoking comments about transitions. Particularly valuable for this project were those quoted at length in Appendices I and II from Governors Brendan Byrne, Tom Kean, Jim Florio and Christie Whitman, and from the late Dick Leone (who was active in the transitions of both Brendan Byrne and Jon Corzine), Lew Thurston from the Tom Kean transition, Steve Perskie and Karen Kessler from Jim Florio's, and Judy Shaw from Christie Whitman's.

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This report is dedicated to the men and women who choose to run for governor and other elected offices and the many others who also devote all or part of their careers to government service. — *John Weingart and Kristoffer Shields*

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# INTRODUCTION

The Center on the American Governor at the Eagleton Institute of Politics is releasing this report with two major objectives. One is to help gubernatorial candidates and their staffs learn from the experience of previous governors-elect and perhaps avoid pitfalls or seize opportunities that might otherwise be missed. The second is to assist the media and interested public who will be watching the next transition for clues about the likely agenda, personalities and style of the administration to follow.

The report is based on research including 25 interviews conducted specifically for this project, along with extensive material drawn from the archives of the Eagleton Center on the American Governor. Almost all of the examples and observations stem from the transitions of the seven new governors elected by New Jersey voters over the 36 year period from 1973 through 2009, with most coming from those of Governors-Elect Brendan Byrne, Thomas Kean, James Florio and Christine Todd Whitman. While the recommendations that follow originate in New Jersey - and no two states are identical - we hope they will be of value not just in New Jersey and perhaps Virginia in 2017, but also in future gubernatorial elections in other states.

While each election and new governor is unique, the duration, general framework and subsequent memories of transitions have much in common.

**“No transition is easy. There’s no such thing as being able to plan and have an orderly transition. I think the [outgoing] Kean Administration was very good in sharing information. But you don’t keep doing transitions. So once you get good at it, you know, it’s kind of over... I wish we had listened a little bit more ... on a lot of things. I can say that now. We wouldn’t have said that then.”**

*Brenda Bacon on the 1989 transition from Republican Tom Kean to Democrat Jim Florio*

**“We have this real luxury in this country to turn over power without bloodshed...and in a statesperson-like way. So you’re working to do that on the outside, but inside you’re really dealing with people’s lives, people who are coming into a new opportunity, people who are leaving earlier than they thought they would, or thought they should.”**

*Judy Shaw on the 1993 transition from Florio to Republican Christie Whitman*

The 2017-2018 gubernatorial transition in New Jersey will run from Election Day on November 7<sup>th</sup> (the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November) through inauguration on January 16<sup>th</sup> (the third Tuesday in January). These 10 intense weeks could help determine the success of the new governor's crucial first year or more. Sam Crane, a New Jersey veteran of multiple legislative and executive positions, considers transitions, "the most important time of the first four years of a gubernatorial term... It is the last freedom time you have. And you have a lot of maneuver room."<sup>1</sup>

Three particular observations merit highlighting in this introduction.

### **First, start planning early - well before Election Day.**

It should not be considered presumptuous to plan for what you will do if you or your candidate wins. Rather, it is preparing for a very difficult job. As a presidential candidate in the summer and fall of 2012, Mitt Romney called his planning for the possibility of victory in November a "readiness project."<sup>2</sup> Do not be superstitious and worry that advance planning might jinx the outcome of the election. This would hardly seem worth mentioning but for the number of participants in multiple past campaigns who mentioned it as an obstacle they faced.<sup>3 4 5 6</sup>

*"I don't think [starting early] jinxes you; I think it is smart and healthy to do it."*

*— Dick Leone, transition leader for Governors Brendan Byrne and Jon Corzine*

### **Second, expect a major unexpected problem.**

For Brendan Byrne in 1973-1974, it was an immediate crisis his team had to navigate with the outgoing Cahill administration after an arrangement for the Hackensack Meadowlands fell through. Eight years later, Tom Kean's 1981-1982 transition got off to a significantly delayed start due to the close election outcome and three weeks of uncertainty over who the governor-elect would be. Eight years after that, in 1989-1990, Jim Florio faced a fiscal crisis significantly more severe than his team had realized until after the election when the transition process was already under way. And, four years later in 1993-1994, Christine Todd Whitman had to devote significant portions of the days and weeks immediately after winning the election to rebutting false claims made by her own campaign manager.<sup>7</sup>

By definition, it is largely impossible to predict and plan for the unexpected, but the governor-elect should have a team in place as soon after Election Day as possible that is sufficiently nimble to rise to the challenges that will arise.

### **Third, recognize that virtually every document related to a transition should be short.**

Time is even more precious than usual during this period, so the longer a document, the less likely it is to receive meaningful attention. In preparing this report, the Eagleton Center on the American Governor has tried to be guided by that advice.

Accordingly, the report's recommendations are described in the following 11 pages. They are grouped into issues that should be considered in the: **Pre-Transition** period prior to Election Day; those that must be addressed during **The Transition** between Election Day and Inauguration; and several others grouped under the heading, "**Don't Make Promises You May Regret.**"

In the subsequent 18 pages of **Recollections of Relevant Events and Experiences**, the recommendations are amplified and supported by 60 often-more-lengthy **Endnotes**.

Finally, the 54 pages of **Appendices** provide extensive excerpts from interviews conducted by the Center on the American Governor with Governors Brendan Byrne, Thomas Kean, James Florio and Christine Todd Whitman as well as with five figures central to those transitions: Richard Leone from Byrne and Jon Corzine's, Lewis Thurston from Kean's, Steve Perskie and Karen Kessler from Florio's and Judy Shaw from Whitman's. Additional appendices provide timelines of key dates in the transitions of the seven new elected governors from 1973-1974 through 2009-2010 as well as a list of the executive orders they issued in their first 100 days.

*"We got a lot done in large measure because of the preparation. [F]or about six months before I was even nominated [we] set up these sessions where we would go in depth into different issue areas, so we had put a lot of good thought into the problems we would be facing. We hit the ground running...."*

*—Governor Jim Florio*

# THE REPORT: RECOMMENDATIONS

This report identifies matters a governor must – or at least should – address prior to taking office. In recommending that these issues and tasks receive focused attention, we do not prescribe particular courses of action. We do, however, provide many examples of how previous nominees and governors-elect have handled them. These are found in an extensive series of *Endnotes* subtitled *Recollections of Relevant Events and Experiences*. In addition, the *Appendices* include lengthier reflections on their transition experiences by four past governors and five key members of their staffs.

Making the most of the transition period between election and inauguration increases the prospects for a successful administration. In turn, a good transition is much more likely if the governor-elect has laid the groundwork for it in the weeks and months between securing a nomination and being declared the victor on Election Day.

The recommendations that follow, therefore, are divided between these two time periods - *Pre-Transition* and *The Transition*. Most of the tasks inevitably overlap, as decisions made during the transition benefit from lists of options that were previously identified and ranked during the pre-transition period. A third set of recommendations, headed *Don't Make Promises You May Regret*, identifies potential pitfalls of several actions that may seem attractive during the campaign and transition but later make governing effectively more difficult.

***“People don’t talk about transition often, you know. If I had my way, and if I were 40, I would run a transition firm, because I think that period of time is so critical, and I think most candidates don’t think about it, because they think it’s untoward to talk about what will happen when [they] win.”***

*— Judy Shaw, first chief of staff to Governor Christine Todd Whitman*



## **PRE-TRANSITION: ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED PRIOR TO ELECTION DAY**

In the weeks and months leading to Election Day, the first priority for any campaign must be winning the election. But even during the tightest of races, candidates should designate one or more trusted people to prepare options and recommendations for decisions that will need to be made immediately after victory is declared. Among the challenges is to initiate this planning with as little of it as possible becoming public or otherwise causing any unneeded additional anxiety or distraction to the campaign staff. This section and its endnotes include some of the issues that should be considered in this period, with observations from some of the participants in past New Jersey gubernatorial transitions.

### **1. Determine the size and structure of the governor's office**

- a. Identify titles and roles of key figures. Governor Christie has a senior staff of 12, but the structure that worked for the outgoing governor will not necessarily be ideal for the new one.<sup>8</sup> For example, the chief of staff position, which had grown in power and influence during the Byrne administration, was cut back by Governor-Elect Kean so that it was “the chief counsel – not the chief of staff -- who would deal with the legislature.”<sup>9 10</sup>

Among the issues to consider in designing a staff structure: Does the candidate welcome being the “hub of a wheel” with many people presenting him/her with their input, either one-on-one or in a group?<sup>11</sup> Or does he or she prefer having options and recommendations funneled through the chief of staff or other specified advisors? Similarly, is the governor likely to read extensive background material and lengthy recommendations, or is s/he more comfortable with shorter, more definitive memos?

***“I don't know if they still do it this way, but they should: when you run for governor, you take somebody who's not going to be involved in the campaign, who knows state government, and you tell them you want them to work on the transition.”***

*— Governor Thomas Kean*

- b. Get floor plans for the State House and consider office space and furniture assignments for staff to be located there. While this could at first be viewed as a somewhat trivial housekeeping issue,

it is very important for establishing who has the most direct access to the new governor. Postponing this decision until after inauguration will foster uncertainty and can unnecessarily eat up time and decrease staff morale.<sup>12</sup>

***“Every governor has his or her own leadership style, and one of the main substantive points that was in my mind as I was helping to shape and talk to the governor-elect about how his office would be organized had to do with his leadership style.”***

*—Steve Perskie, first chief of staff to Governor Florio*

2. Choose the person who will serve as chief of staff<sup>13</sup> to the governor during at least the initial months of the administration.<sup>14</sup> Also, agree on other senior officials and (internally) schedule a public announcement for election night, the next day or very soon thereafter.<sup>15 16 17</sup>

3. Decide on the members of the central transition team who will oversee and guide all activity between Election Day and the inauguration. At least the director and key members should have

agreed to their potential roles before the votes are counted. Keep this group small.<sup>18</sup> Decide on a schedule for publically naming the members of the group. Consider for inclusion:

- a. People with a diversity of experience and perspectives that complement and fill gaps in the governor-elect’s background and perspective;
- b. One or more trusted confidants of the governor-elect who do not want a position in the administration;<sup>19</sup>
- c. The newly-designated chief of staff;
- d. People familiar with Trenton (i.e. state government history and culture) including current or recent state government staff with long service and deep understanding of key issues;
- e. People who have served in a previous (or other state’s) governor’s office or in an executive agency or the legislature; and
- f. People with knowledge of government from the perspective of experience in the private sector, non-profit organizations and journalism.

***“I think it made it easier to do my job...because most people knew I didn’t want to stay.”***

*— Karen Kessler, member of Governor Florio’s transition team.*

***“You will make mistakes [when vetting cabinet and administration members] and you will pay for every mistake you make. You don’t get away with any, so you want to minimize those mistakes. You...are going to depend on [those people], rely on them. You have to look into their souls if you can.”***

***— Dick Leone***

**4. Identify positions the governor is entitled to fill in departments, agencies and commissions and begin to prepare lists of potential candidates.<sup>20</sup>**

a. Consider potential desirability of eliminating or consolidating agencies and factor that into the selection process for heads of the relevant agencies.<sup>21</sup> For example, consider optimum organizational location for programs that have had various bureaucratic homes over the years such as Juvenile Justice, Senior Services, Energy, State Planning, Banking, Insurance and Commerce.<sup>22</sup>

b. Consider and, if possible, agree on the process and target schedule to be set up to fill the rest of the cabinet and staff positions.<sup>23</sup>

i. Consider whether or not to seek assistance from outside “headhunter” consultants, as was done to some extent by the incoming Kean<sup>24</sup> and Florio<sup>25</sup> administrations.

ii. Consider whether to seek suggestions from political leaders in other states as at least the Florio administration did.<sup>26</sup>

iii. The governor-elect should advise key staff of any appointments on which s/he has already decided.<sup>27</sup>

iv. Decide whether to actively seek or avoid members of the other party in the cabinet or, alternatively, to review all, or most, contenders on a case-by-case basis.

v. Set up a process for tracking and acknowledging the probable high volume of incoming resumes, applications and letters of recommendation.<sup>28 29 30</sup>

**5. Plan for desired interaction with the outgoing governor.<sup>31</sup>**

One perception is that, “With the right relationship with the outgoing governor, enormous things can happen during gubernatorial transitions.”<sup>32</sup> Identify areas in which he/she might be able to be helpful before leaving office.<sup>33 34</sup>

**6. Develop goals for possible lame duck legislative session and consider possible impacts of changes in leadership and/or membership the legislature may be about to experience.<sup>35</sup>**

## 7. Plan the governor-elect's schedule.

The schedule should begin on Wednesday morning<sup>36</sup> and continue for the following week and, more tentatively, for the remaining nine weeks before the inauguration:

- a. Plan a vacation for the governor-elect.<sup>37</sup>
- b. Consider whether or not to greet and thank voters on Wednesday morning.
- c. Designate responsibility for responding to and soliciting invitations from national and New Jersey press.
- d. Plan introductory coordination/courtesy visits to take place with, among others:
  - i. The outgoing governor
  - ii. State legislative leaders and members
  - iii. The New Jersey congressional delegation
  - iv. The President and/or Vice President

## 8. Write governor-elect's victory (and concession) speech

***"I think former governors can be very helpful to present governors, if present governors have the humility to reach out."***

*— Governor Tom Kean*

## THE TRANSITION: ISSUES TO ADDRESS PRIOR TO INAUGURATION

1. Contact the National Governors Association and relevant party-specific governors association to gain access to their transition resources.
2. Determine and convey to the outgoing governor and select cabinet members and other agency heads specific information you would like included and questions you would like addressed in the transition reports they will prepare to present to you. Try to obtain copies of these reports as they were prepared by each department and major agency in addition to copies with any edits the outgoing governor's office may choose to make before transmitting them.<sup>38</sup>
3. Consider the role and optimum number, size and membership of advisory transition task forces.

Governors-elect often set up numerous task forces during the transition that are each focused on a specific department or issue. At their best, these groups can simultaneously generate valuable recommendations for consideration by the new governor and incoming commissioner while also giving roles to individuals who had supported the campaign, even possibly helping to identify individuals to consider appointing to roles in the administration. The potential downside is that rewarding campaign backers can become the priority, leading to committees that are either dominated by members who lack any relevant expertise or are too large to be effective.

Evaluate the potential value of these transition committees against the level of staffing effort required, potential ill will from people not included, and potential for raising expectations that won't be met.<sup>39</sup>

- a. For any transition committees that are formed, give careful attention to the naming of chairs or co-chairs likely to steer the groups towards the issues the governor-elect most wants addressed. Also, plan size and structure likeliest to yield timely and potentially useful recommendations.<sup>40</sup>

*"The committees were very helpful actually. They developed basically a playbook for every department and agency and we didn't do everything that every one of them suggested, but ... we adopted a lot of the recommendations that came through that process. It was an enormously helpful process..."*

— Governor Christine Todd Whitman

- b. Consider shaping some committees around major issues rather than just the boundaries of the current executive branch structure. For example, transition committees could be formed around topics such as poverty, cities, rural areas, suburbs, jobs, children, tax policy, etc.
  - c. Consider other mechanisms for bringing focus during the transition to immediate issues likely to face the administration.<sup>41</sup>
4. **Prepare to make nominations and appointments of cabinet members and executive directors and members of key independent boards, commissions and authorities.**
- a. Before filling relevant positions:
    - i. If not already done, set up systems both to handle unsolicited resumes and to solicit applications from often under-represented and/or particularly desired groups.
    - ii. Decide which appointments are essential and which can/should wait until after inauguration. One point of view is that on Inauguration Day, a new governor need only have “an attorney general and a treasurer: One to say, ‘No, you can’t do that because it’s against the law,’ and the other one to withhold the money.”<sup>42</sup> An alternative view is that leaving many agencies with acting commissioners, as that suggestion would necessitate, will significantly slow the new administration’s lift-off in many areas.
    - iii. Decide which appointees might benefit from early collaboration with the person leaving the position.<sup>43</sup>
    - iv. Decide how much to consult with the legislature in advance on select nominees requiring Senate confirmation.
    - v. Consider whether addressing select issues that cross department lines could be enhanced by setting up inter-agency task forces that could start during the transitions and extend past inauguration.

***“When it comes to bringing in outsiders [from other states], unless they have good political skills to supplement their substantive knowledge about the issue area they’re in charge of, they’re going to have problems.”***

*—Governor Jim Florio*

- vi. Decide on the relative roles of the governor's office and commissioners-designee in selecting other executive staff in their agencies. Will positions for deputy and assistant commissioners and division directors be filled by the governor's office, the commissioner-designee, or in partnership?<sup>44</sup> The specific framework chosen is less important than the clarity provided by an explicit, up-front decision.
  - vii. Set up a process to review requests from existing staff for continued service, both to be part of the new administration and/or to vest in their pension.<sup>45 46</sup>
- b. Select most if not all cabinet members and upper level department leaders.<sup>47</sup> Recognize that the number not yet named by inauguration will be compared to the record of past new governors. For a timeline of previous New Jersey gubernatorial transitions from the 1981-1982 Byrne to Kean transition to the 2009-2010 Corzine to Christie transition, including key cabinet and staff nominations, see *Appendix III*.

Meeting or beating the pace of predecessors, however, is not sufficient reason to rush a decision that doesn't feel right. A nomination that implodes is obviously potentially far more damaging to the fledgling administration as well as to the erstwhile nominee.<sup>48</sup>

***“[A]ppointing women to [leadership] positions raised the visibility of women, let men and women see that women can do these jobs and brought the kind of diversity I like to see in the office.”***

*— Governor Christine Todd Whitman.*

Consider the diversity of the evolving cabinet and upper level staff.<sup>49 50</sup> A range of backgrounds and experiences can help bring valuable perspective to issues as they rise.<sup>51</sup> The gender, racial and ethnic makeup of the cabinet will also likely be the subject of press coverage comparing the new administration with those that preceded it.<sup>52</sup>

- 5. Meet with legislative leaders as a group and individually.<sup>53</sup> It is an opportunity to get to know members of the legislature personally or deepen existing ties and find common ground.<sup>54</sup>
- 6. Determine priority issues and pending decisions facing each state department and agency over administration's first month, three months and six months.
- 7. Determine goals for first 10 days, first 100 days and perhaps other calendar markers.

8. Write inauguration speech.
9. Plan inauguration. Consider the types of events to be planned, including their cost. Appoint an inaugural committee to plan and fundraise for the occasion. Note that the events and their cost may be the subject of public scrutiny and potential opportunity. In 1990, Governor Florio's inaugural dinner was oversold, leaving some attendees without seats, but he also hosted a well-received "Children's Inaugural." Governor Christie used his inaugural ball in 2010 as an opportunity to raise over \$200,000 for charity.<sup>55</sup>
10. Decide which, if any, executive orders should be issued, overturned or changed on "Day One" and within the first 30 days. For a list of selected executive orders issued during the first 100 days of prior New Jersey governors, see *Appendix IV*.
11. Develop a framework for first budget message to be delivered in February.
12. Understand that bureaucrats can be your friends. New governors and the commissioners and advisors they appoint often implicitly assume that the staff they inherit are all responsible for, and satisfied with, the status quo. Yet within every agency are some staff - so-called bureaucrats, civil servants or career employees - who have a deep understanding of the programs in which they work, a keen sense of ways in which they could be improved, and a commitment to public service.<sup>56</sup>



## **DON'T MAKE PROMISES YOU MAY REGRET**

There are good reasons for candidates to make pledges about substantive policies and programs they will work to initiate or change. While they may want to avoid promising specific accomplishments that even the most powerful governor could not deliver on his or her own, promising instead to try to fight or advocate for X can help voters make up their minds and also strengthen the hand of a successful candidate who can claim something of a mandate for positions about which s/he was relatively specific during the campaign.

Candidates may want to think differently, however, about publicly promising executive organizational changes that may be within their power to accomplish unilaterally but may also have ramifications that are not immediately apparent. While virtually all candidates want to be perceived as leaders who will strive to lead an efficient and ethical administration, some specific “reforms” that make good campaign sound bites may not lead to better government and can, in fact, be counter-productive.

### **1. Avoid early commitments to specific ethics reforms.**

It is easy to advocate for “stricter” ethics rules and procedures, but if not carefully crafted, such changes can be counterproductive or, at a minimum, have negative as well as positive impact. They can, for example, simultaneously limit an administration’s ability to hire all the people it considers most qualified while also failing to create any actual or perceived increase in government integrity. Also, because it is often politically difficult to be perceived later as “easing” ethics requirements, governors-elect and their staffs would be well-advised to refrain from issuing executive orders or other proclamations changing ethics standards until they have at least some weeks – and perhaps months – of experience in the State House.<sup>57</sup>

### **2. Avoid early commitments to shrinking the size of the governor’s office.**

Announcement of such changes can earn brief positive media coverage, but then significantly hamper a governor’s office’s ability to nimbly handle all the issues and problems that will come its way. Often the result is that the gaps quickly become apparent and key positions from other agencies are then quietly moved to the governor’s office.

### **3. Avoid promising to reduce the size of the state workforce.**

Leaving staff positions vacant can be a way to save money in some situations while necessitating the hiring of more expensive contractors in others. It also may lack the positive political impact that may be anticipated.<sup>58</sup> Evaluate on a case-by-case basis what types of changes will make government more effective and/or efficient.

4. Avoid pledging not to consider lobbyists for the transition team or appointments.<sup>59</sup>
5. Hesitate before promising campaign staff that they will have positions in your administration.

While governors-elect are understandably elated and grateful to their campaign staff, those people may or may not be ideally suited to roles in the administration.<sup>60</sup> In particular, the campaign manager often is considered the obvious choice to be a new governor's first chief of staff, but the experience, skills and temperament that lead to success in the two roles are not necessarily identical.

***"[I]n New Jersey, you had to let the legislature know that you need them, that they are part of the program. I would meet with them from time to time [in their districts]. The legislators liked that because we got coverage in the local papers...."***

*—Governor Brendan Byrne*

***"The single biggest mistake...was not spending enough time, not just with the legislature, but being available to just have a cup of coffee with people."***

*—Doug Berman, campaign manager for Jim Florio's 1989 gubernatorial campaign*

# Endnotes:

## Recollections of Relevant Events and Experiences

### TRANSITIONS IN GENERAL

- 1 Former State Treasurer Sam Crane said:

*[T]ransitions are the most important time of the first four years of a gubernatorial term. They tend to be treated as a chance to fill cabinet spots and get people jobs, but it is the last freedom time you have. And you have a lot of maneuver room. And I am a great believer—was then and to this day—that they pay far too little attention to transitions. Usually they bring in a bunch of campaign people who are exhausted and whatever. And what you need is a group of people who are going to then work with the incoming Governor to do what they have to do.*

December 22, 2014 Center on the American Governor interview

- 2 Mitt Romney's ultimate defeat in the 2012 presidential election was in no way related to his preparation of a very detailed *Romney Readiness Project 2012* that was subsequently published with the subtitle *Retrospective & Lessons Learned* and a foreword by Michael O. Leavitt, the Utah governor who chaired the Romney Readiness Committee.

Other resources on presidential transitions include the U.S. General Services Administration website regarding presidential transitions: <https://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/26427>; the Center for Presidential Transition website: <http://presidentialtransition.org/> and *Presidential Transition Guide* (April 2016); and Alvin S. Felzenberg; *The Keys to a Successful Presidency*; The Heritage Foundation; Washington, D.C.; 2000.

### PRE-ELECTION PREPARATION

- 3 Former State Treasurer Dick Leone, who also led both the Byrne and Corzine transitions, said of the Cahill to Byrne Transition in 1973-1974:

*Since we knew we were going to beat Charlie Sandman [Republican nominee], we set up a transition department over the summer. I don't think it jinxes you; I think it is smart and healthy to do it. People were given assignments. They were in charge of specific areas. It couldn't be an area where they were interested in working. So if you were interested in being attorney general, you couldn't work on law and public safety, you had to work on something else. That was the only rule I had.*

*During the September/October run-up to the election, there was very little interaction between the campaign staff and transition staff. There were people—as you get close to*

*an election, particularly one that you are clearly going to win, anxieties and insecurities emerge. People wonder where they are going to wind up. It is always a good idea to designate people as soon as you can, so at least there is some group that is functional and not wondering what is going to happen to them. And it also means that other people have somebody to relate to, because you get ripples of insecurity and uncertainty. Not only do the people not know what jobs they are going to get, but the people who care about who's going to get those jobs don't know who is going to get those jobs.*

April 5, 2006 Center on the American Governor interview. For more of Leone's thoughts, see the full summary of his Center on the American Governor interview in *Appendix II(a)*.

Similarly, John Sheridan, former transportation commissioner and co-chair of the Whitman transition in 1993-1994, said:

*During that year [1993], with a little hubris I suggested that perhaps I could help with some campaign planning during the primary. And then during the campaign, I suggested that perhaps my best role would be to kind of work on a transition, and the governor said, "Shhh..." And a bunch of us quietly worked on the transition plan, and we had a good plan, I thought.*

February 9, 2010 Center on the American Governor interview

4 Steve Perskie, then a judge and former Assembly member and state senator who would later become Governor Jim Florio's first chief of staff, was asked in the spring of 1989, when Florio was "...involved in the primary and doing very well... to do some research in terms of the possibilities for the structure of the governor's office." For some of Perskie's reflections, see the summary of his interviews with the Center on the American Governor in *Appendix II(b)*.

5 Governor Florio on how pre-election substantive preparations helped his first 100 days:

*We got a lot done in large measure because of the preparation. I don't think there's ever been an administration that has come into office with as much preparation for state issues as we've had. I had Carl Van Horn for about six months before I was even nominated setting up these sessions where we would go in depth into different issue areas, so we had put a lot of good thought into the problems we would be facing. We hit the ground running when I came into office.*

September 26, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

6 Judy Shaw, first chief of staff for Governor Whitman, said of the beginning of the Whitman transition in 1993:

*People don't talk about transition often, you know. If I had my way, and if I were 40, I would run a transition firm, because I think that period of time is so critical, and I think most candidates don't think about it, because they think it's untoward to talk about what will happen when I win. They'll hire a speech coach, a financial coach, a political coach. I mean, you have consultants for everything today, but often they don't have a consultant for the transition, and if they could start earlier, I think you'll see that now. It may be a*

*little behind, below the radar, but that's pretty daunting that next morning when you have to just hit the ground running.*

October 24, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview. For more of Shaw's reflections, see the summary of her Center on the American Governor interview in *Appendix II(c)*.

**7** Dick Leone on Brendan Byrne's 1973-1974 transition:

*One of the things you have to do in transition is create two things in miniature:*

- (1) A campaign organization, because you are still out there doing things, being asked by the press about everything. You have to move the governor-elect around, deal with mail, lots of people in contact with you.*
- (2) And you are a kind of miniature government, because you immediately inherit problems, people want you to answer them.*

*I always use the phrase that there is only one governor at a time. But some things you can't avoid. We had an immediate crisis because the Meadowlands deal had fallen through. And we had a hole in the ground and no deal any more, no ability to finance the Meadowlands. And the Cahill administration really had no ability to do it at that stage, no power in the legislature. And a variety of other small issues we had to turn our attention to right away.*

April 5, 2006 Center on the American Governor interview

Indeed, over the past half century, gubernatorial transitions in New Jersey have routinely faced unexpected obstacles that occupied valuable transition time. Tom Kean's 1981-1982 transition got off to a significantly delayed start due to the closeness of the election and three weeks of uncertainty over who the governor-elect would be. In 1989-1990, Jim Florio faced a fiscal crisis more severe than his team realized until he had already begun the transition process. And in 1993-1994, Christine Todd Whitman had to spend valuable time in the early days of her transition dealing with fallout over her own campaign manager's claims that he had paid off African-American clergy to depress voter turnout, allegations that turned out to be untrue. It is impossible to predict what, if anything, could present unexpected problems during the 2017-2018 (or future) transition, but it would be beneficial for the governor-elect to "expect the unexpected" and prepare for such a possibility, in particular by being prepared for the potential of a shortened transition period.

### ***STAFFING THE TRANSITION AND STRUCTURING THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE***

- 8** As of March, 2017, Governor Christie's senior staff included 12 people listed on the administration webpage in the following (non-alphabetical) order: chief of staff; chief counsel; senior deputy chief counsel; deputy chief counsel; deputy of staff for policy and cabinet liaison; deputy chief of staff for communications; deputy chief of staff, programming and planning; deputy chief of staff, finance; senior special counsel, finance; appointments director; director of authorities; and chief of staff to the lieutenant governor.

**9** Dick Leone on the Byrne administration:

*The chief of staff position kind of evolved in the Byrne years. You know, you couldn't tell me who Bill Cahill's chief of staff was, and Hughes had no chief of staff. It was the first time the New Jersey governor had a chief of staff who was a chief of staff the way we think of it now. So it was Byrne's later chiefs of staff who defined that office.*

April 5, 2006 Center on the American Governor interview

Lewis Thurston, first chief of staff to Governor Kean:

*We made a change right at the very beginning of the administration and decided that it would be the chief counsel – not the chief of staff – who would deal with the legislature. And so, Cary Edwards did that.*

February 9, 2010 Center on the American Governor interview. For more of Thurston's thoughts, see the full summary of his Center on the American Governor interview in *Appendix II(e)*.

**10** Steve Perskie described beginning to think about the transition as early as the spring of 1989, even before the primary:

*I went to see a friend of mine who was in the legislative services agency - one of the staff people - and asked him if he would help me collect research on how gubernatorial offices had initially been organized in new administrations, transition systems and whatnot. He and I together did a lot of research. We looked into how the Kean administration had organized itself in 1981. We looked into how the Byrne administration had organized itself in 1973. I had watched Brendan Byrne do it through Dick Leone, and I had watched Tom Kean do it through Debbie Poritz and Lew Thurston and whatnot, so I had some sense of what might be involved, but it was off in the distance. Now I had to really get into it and figure it out and be in a position to make some suggestions to Florio, both with respect to how the transition period from November to January would work and then also how the governor's office itself should be organized and structured to start a new administration.*

March 28, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview

**11** Steve Perskie observed, in considering the structure for the Florio governor's office:

*Every governor has his or her own leadership style, and one of the main substantive points that was in my mind as I was helping to shape and talk to the governor-elect about how his office would be organized had to do with his leadership style. Some people prefer what you might call a pyramid style. You have everyone coming up a chain, the chain gets smaller and smaller and eventually comes to a point, and the governor's at the top. That's not the Jim Florio style.*

*There's nothing particularly right or wrong with that style; it's just not how he worked. He worked on what I called the 'hub of the wheel' style. He was in the middle and out from him went all of the spokes to Doug Berman, Brenda Bacon, Carl Van Horn, Greg Lawler and me, who all had direct access to and contact with the governor according to the particular issue involved. Jim was always in the middle. He modeled his leadership style – consciously modeled his leadership style – out of Franklin Roosevelt's model, which of course worked very well for him too.*

*Jim didn't want what any of us had to say filtered through anybody – through me or any of those people. I'm not complaining; I'm just describing. It was what it was, but my life as well as the other lives were much more difficult because we weren't entirely certain of who was saying what to him. As a practical matter... there was something of a sense of chaos in that respect, organizational chaos not policy chaos.*

March 28, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview

- 12** Karen Kessler, a member of Governor Florio's transition team, on learning the importance of these types of issues even before Election Day:

*One day, Steve Perskie said to me, "Why don't you Call Ed McGlynn [chief of staff to Governor Kean] and tell him that you're going to begin to work on transition for Jim Florio, if he gets elected? Ask if he'd be willing to help you. Tell him that you understand that Jim Courter [Florio's opponent] could get elected—he might have the same conversation with someone else—but that you wanted to be ready." So I picked up the phone and I called down to Trenton, and I asked to speak to him, and I said my name, and I said I worked with Jim Florio. He answered the phone and I said the script exactly as I was told to say it. He said, "Sure. I'm happy to help." He was such a gentleman. He was lovely. I said to him, "I don't know exactly what I should be asking for." And he said, "The first thing you're going to need are the floor plans." And I said, "The floor plans for what?" And he said, "For the offices. The biggest issue you're going to have, Karen, is who wants to sit where, and those decisions better be made early. Otherwise, you're going to have some real fights on your hand." Then he said, "And then, once you get through that, talk to me about furniture." And I thought he was kidding, but he was not.*

July 29, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview. More of Kessler's reflections are available in the full summary of her Center on the American Governor interview in *Appendix II(d)*.

- 13** At candidate Jim Florio's request, Steve Perskie spent the summer of 1989 quietly identifying issues and options Florio would have to address if he won. Perskie publically took on that role in mid-October and was named director of the transition the day after the election. While it was clear that he would have a major role in the administration, they decided on chief of staff because Perskie – a former state senator and Assembly member– wanted his "...principal role to be as chief legislative liaison. While counsel to the governor would have permitted that, chief of staff permitted it in a different context, and also allowed me to follow-up on the structural issues that we were dealing with."

March 28, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview

- 14** Judy Shaw on becoming Christine Todd Whitman's chief of staff:

*On the Sunday night before the Tuesday election, the governor called and asked if I would be chief of staff. Then I started to think of what we had in front of us. And I just made a couple of notes about what a transition has to do in six very short months.... And all that had to come from a group of people who probably until two days before the election weren't ever sure we were really going to win.*

May 14, 2012 Center on the American Governor Colloquium on the Campaign, Transition, and First Year of the Whitman Administration

**15** Governor Kean said of selecting his chief of staff, Lewis Thurston:

*I don't know if they still do it this way, but they should: when you run for governor, you take somebody who's not going to be involved in the campaign, who knows state government, and you tell them you want them to work on the transition. You do this long before Election Day. Lew had been working down there in the state Senate for years, and he knew where all the bodies were buried. So he worked on what was happening in departments, what was happening on the budget, what was happening on this and that. And so he had a plan for us by the time Election Day was over. It was logical, then, for him to become chief of staff.*

July 12, 2010 Center on the American Governor interview

**16** Judy Shaw on the Whitman transition after she had defeated incumbent Governor Jim Florio:

*The Florio administration was cooperative, but I think it was very difficult. I mean, if you can imagine being in their shoes, they did not expect to lose, so I don't think they had any real Plan B in place of what to do for a transition. I don't know that they had a transition director, or if they had thought about winding down major public policies, or letting certain contracts, work you would want to get done before you turned it over to the next person. So that afternoon, the first day, John Sheridan and I walked into the governor's office. I think that's the hardest thing I had to do in the whole campaign. And we all know each other. I mean, we're all—you know, I'm a golfer, so we would say, "We're all inside the ropes." Right? We have a lot of respect for each other. We've worked together.*

*We've opposed each other, and you're walking in, and just no one thought they would lose or could lose, but I remember Rick Wright was the governor's chief of staff at the time. He got it. He got "The king is dead, long live the king." That's how it works, and he kind of grabbed hold of it, got the right people together, gave us access to things that we felt we needed access to. When you run, you think you have a pretty good view of what the government is like, but you're not privy to a lot of the lawsuits. You're not privy to some of the personnel matters that are festering.*

*It's a very, very difficult time, but slowly but surely everybody got onboard and made available to us what we needed to do to make the transition, and they had requests, as well. Is there any chance that you could keep so and so on for another six months? They're about to vest and retire. They've done a great job. They're not a rabid partisan. So there was some of that trading back and forth. The governor said, "I'll finish up a couple of things, kind of hot potatoes, so they don't have to be handed to you." The governor-elect was asking for some things. Generally the governor-elect comes in and says, "I don't want you to let any more contracts. I want you to stay all personnel decisions." You know, they want certain things to stop, and the governor, as was his prerogative, said no to a number of them. "No. I'm governor for another nine weeks, and I intend to govern during that period of time." So there's that kind of back and forth.*

October 24, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

**17** Governor-Elect Jon Corzine didn't ask Dick Leone and Carl Van Horn to co-chair his transition until election night, although they were not surprised by the assignment.



**18** Steve Perskie:

*I would suggest ...having watched closely the Byrne administration start, the Kean administration start and the Florio administration start, that what all three had in common was that a very small group of people had responsibility to engage a very precise agenda and did so as best they could in the political environment in which they operated.*

March 28, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview

**19** Karen Kessler noted that her lack of interest in a job in the administration was helpful:

*I think the fact that I wasn't planning to stay much longer probably made it easier for a lot of people to feel comfortable about me. It made it easier to do my job, especially because most people knew I didn't want to stay. Throughout the entire campaign, I'd made it clear that this wasn't for me. I kept saying, "I want to have another career. I don't want to do this." So I think people were well aware that I didn't plan on staying.*

July 29, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

### **EARLY APPOINTMENTS AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**20** Karen Kessler on preparing lists of candidates for appointments and nominations prior to the Florio transition:

*Steve [Perskie] and I plotted out what we thought were the top 30 to 40 positions. We went that deep, because they were not all just at the front office; they were throughout, plus chairs of boards and commissions. We sat down and we began to talk about who was in those positions now, what kind of skill sets we thought we needed. And then I turned to Steve, and said, "You and I both know Jim Florio well enough to know that he's got some really strong opinions on these folks. So maybe we should find out if everybody who wants to be treasurer is really going to be treasurer, if everyone who wants to be whatever is going to really be whatever." But Jim never really sat down with us to really, really talk about it until right after the campaign.*

*The morning after he won, we announced the transition team. I remember then sitting down with the governor and Steve Perskie and we had the cabinet list we had put together, and the governor said, "All right, the following are all taken." And he just checked them off. He said, "Attorney general: done." I said, "What do you mean, done? We didn't even interview anyone." He didn't even interview him. He looked at me and said, "You're not interviewing anyone, Karen. It's Bob Del Tufo." I mean, it was just done. And I said, "Oh, okay." Then, "DEP: done." "Who is it?" "Judith Yaskin." In his mind, he already knew a number of the big positions—cabinet positions, chief of staff, the people close to him.*

July 29, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

**21** In March of her first year in office, for example, Governor Whitman announced plans to eliminate two of the then-19 cabinet-level agencies in state government – the Department of Higher Education and the Office of the Public Advocate. She had avoided installing new leadership who might have amassed clout to fight for either agency's survival by retaining on an acting basis the previous administration's chancellor of higher education, Ed Goldberg, and public advocate, Susan Reisner.

- 22** Banking and insurance, for example, were a combined department until 1970, when the two were split into the Department of Banking and the Department of Insurance. They remained separate until 1996, when they were recombined to create the Department of Banking and Insurance, which still exists today. The Department of Commerce and Economic Development was created in 1981 and became operational in 1982. It became the Department of Commerce, Energy and Economic Development from 1988-1991, after which Energy was moved to the Department of Environmental Protection to create the Department of Environmental Protection and Energy. Energy was removed from DEP's title in 1994 and the Department of Commerce and Economic Development was abolished in 1998. The chief executive officer of the Economic Development Authority is currently a cabinet position.
- 23** Dick Leone noted that it is crucial to have a thorough and well-planned selection and vetting process for two reasons. First, it is important to minimize mistakes because the appointments are so high-profile. He said:

*You will make mistakes and you will pay for every mistake you make. You don't get away with any, so you want to minimize those mistakes. You want those people—you are going to live on them, depend on them, rely on them. You have to look into their souls if you can. I always have a final conversation with people, when I say I know as you are sitting here you don't think this is true, but believe me, this is true. Everything you have ever done may come, will come out, will affect you and your family. Things we can't possibly discover right now but you know are there. You have to sit here one more time with me and tell me that under those circumstances, you are willing to expose yourself, your family and the governor to your appointment to something where there is going to be scrutiny. I have had people drop out at that stage.*

April 5, 2006 Center on the American Governor interview

Second, Leone notes that there will inevitably be people who are disappointed to not receive the position they wanted; this disappointment can be minimized if they feel the process was thorough and fair.

- 24** Governor Kean on use of an outside search firm:

*We were trying so hard after that very narrow election victory to find the right people. And we had a search firm working and I hadn't met some of the best people they found. They came out of the search firm based on quality. I'd never met Ken Biederman before I interviewed him, and without question he was outstanding -- our very best possible candidate to be the treasurer of the state. It was a little bothersome when I found out he wasn't a Republican but... his qualifications were so outstanding that he was obviously the right pick.*

April 15, 2009 Center on the American Governor Opening Colloquium for the Kean Archive

- 25** Karen Kessler and Governor Florio on bringing in cabinet members from other states:

*Kessler: And so we started looking for executive search consultants who would work pro bono and help us put together people for this government. And that's how we began to*

*find people. That's how we found John Ellis and Tom Downs. [Ellis came to New Jersey from Austin, Texas to serve as education commissioner and served for 31 months until resigning after what The New York Times called a "stormy tenure." (The New York Times; November 21, 1992). Tom Downs was in Washington, D.C. when he was approached about becoming transportation commissioner in New Jersey. He served in that post for Governor Florio's entire term and was generally considered a star in the administration.*

July 29, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

*Governor Florio: Just to share an insight with you that I think is significant. I mean the two weakest places in the whole cabinet were as a result of people from out of state, Texas on education and South Carolina, I think, on health. And good people, good credentials whatever, just didn't understand the toxic nature of New Jersey politics and were not able to do it.*

December 1, 2011 Center on the American Governor Colloquium on the Transition and First Six Months of the Florio Administration

*Governor Florio added in an individual interview: [I]t was just an interesting insight that tells me that New Jersey is somewhat unique in policy areas. You'd better understand New Jersey educational politics if you want to be successful. You can't take someone who has impressive credentials but knows nothing about educational politics and put them in place in New Jersey. That's something I've always retained and thought a lot about. When it comes to bringing in outsiders, unless they have good political skills to supplement their substantive knowledge about the issue area they're in charge of, they're going to have problems.*

September 26, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

**26** Steve Perskie on seeking potential candidates for Governor-Elect Florio's cabinet in 1989:

*I remember going to see Ed Koch and spending a couple of hours with him one afternoon in City Hall in New York City to effectively ask him – He was just ready to leave office [having been defeated after three terms by David Dinkins] – Do you have somebody who has served you well in any particular position that might be interested in being considered for a position in New Jersey's cabinet? And somebody came out of that. All these years later, I don't remember who, but at least one of the names came out of that.*

March 28, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview

**27** Karen Kessler on Florio's early personnel decisions and out-of-state recruiting:

*The Governor had probably half the cabinet pretty much in place as he was elected. He knew who he wanted for some of those roles...*

*I remember thinking at first – you know, I had no sense. I'd never done this before. So I said, "Do I have a travel budget? Because I'd like to go out to Colorado and interview this one..." and they looked at me and said, "Are you kidding? Of course you have no travel budget. You better tell them all to come in."*

*Florio was focused on cabinet positions, chief of staff, the sort of people close to him. And all of a sudden, we started seeing a lot of the South Jersey folks, who had been somewhat marginalized during the campaign, were coming back into the administration, which*

*made a lot of people in South Jersey happy. It made a lot of people from the campaign a little bit uncomfortable, like, "Where did they come from? I didn't know he was still in such close touch with them." And so after he took about a third of the positions off the table, he said, "I know where these are going, the rest of them, you better find people right away."*

*We had all the letters. We had letters of recommendation. There's a story about one state senator who was one of the big forwarders of resumes. I got this letter from him, directed to me, and it says, "If you want to hire a banking commissioner who's going to be the best in the world, and the most qualified..." – and he writes a glowing letter about this guy, and then at the top, there's a yellow sticky note, and it says, 'Karen, ignore the letter.'*

*There was another guy who wrote in and talked about his qualifications to be attorney general, before Bob Del Tufo was announced. And at the bottom of the letter, he said, "And if this is not possible, could you build an interchange at Exit 9, off Route 1 where I'm going to be buying property?"*

July 29, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

**28** Karen Kessler on Florio transition:

*...And every county leader and every Democratic person we ever ran into and everybody who ever gave a nickel to the campaign – everybody had their wish list and we got a lot of them. And some of them were so incredibly inappropriate that in the privacy of the office we would say, "Can you believe this?"*

*We kept records. We kept tracking. And we were really fortunate because we were working for a guy who would say, "I didn't know that guy gave us money." I mean Jim had not a clue who were his fund raisers. So it wasn't a question of keeping him happy because he didn't know who they were to begin with.*

July 29, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

**29** Judy Shaw on not making specific promises during the 1993 Whitman campaign:

*On election night, lots of people were jockeying around thinking that they might, if [Whitman] won, get different positions. She had been very, very judicious about not promising anybody anything. People had made their feelings known, but she wouldn't promise anybody anything. And there were requests for quid pro quos. She just didn't do that. She felt it was inappropriate. I think she had a list in the back of her head that maybe she and her husband, John, knew, and maybe her brother, Dan. I don't think anybody else knew what that list was.*

October 24, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

**30** Brenda Bacon, Governor Florio's chief of management and planning and a member of this transition team, on incoming inquiries and suggestions:

*I think we had a lot of information coming at us not only from people who wanted jobs but also on policy. There were a lot of people who had had a great idea that for eight years nobody would listen to. And they thought this is the way to fix that, this is the way to fix this. So you had a lot of data coming in because people had been out of power for eight years.*

December 1, 2011 Center on the American Governor Colloquium on the Transition and First Six Months of the Florio Administration

## **MAKING TIME FOR MEETINGS AND VACATION**

- 31** See, for example, Judy Shaw's comments in endnote 16 above.
- 32** Sam Crane from December 22, 2014 Center on the American Governor interview.
- 33** Lewis Thurston reports that he, Governor-Elect Kean and Governor Byrne, and outgoing chief of staff Harold Hodes met about 10 times in sessions ranging from an hour to four or five.
- 34** Former governors can also be useful resources. Governor Kean on drawing on the experience of former governors during his governorship:

*The two governors, funnily enough, who helped me out most, when I was governor, were Brendan Byrne and Dick Hughes, two Democrats. Dick Hughes was enormously helpful with advice and help and everything else, all the time, and so was Brendan. I mean, Brendan and I used to play tennis about every other week, then after tennis we'd sit down for an hour and I'd say, "I'm having trouble with Alan Karcher, tell me how to deal with him. How do you deal with Dick Codey? How do you deal with this or that one?" And he, of course, being a Democrat, would tell me a lot of information I didn't know about where they lived, what was important to them. They were both enormously helpful, and that's the way governors should be. I think former governors can be very helpful to present governors, if present governors have the humility to reach out.*

May 2, 2011 Center on the American Governor interview

- 35** Doug Berman, campaign manager of Florio's 1989 campaign and the first state treasurer in the Florio administration, says of the Florio transition:

*The single biggest mistake in the first part was not spending enough time, not just with the legislature, but being available to just have a cup of coffee with people.*

December 1, 2011 Center on the American Governor Colloquium on the Transition and the First Six Months of the Florio Administration

- 36** Judy Shaw on Christine Todd Whitman's election night in 1993:

*I think it may have been around 11:30 at night when Governor Florio called to concede, which no one could believe. I mean, we were astonished that that call was coming in. And then it was tears, and hugs, and kisses, and it was kind of that Robert Redford moment about, "Oh, my God, what do we do now?" kind of thing. So it was a very, very exciting evening, but it was instantly, "What do we do tonight? What do we do tomorrow?" We knew there would be a series of national TV interviews very early in the morning. How do you tee up for that, and how do you start the transition?*

October 24, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

- 37** Dick Leone on Brendan Byrne's 1973/1974 transition:

*Immediately after Election Day, Brendan went to St. Croix for a vacation and a small group of us went with him.*

April 5, 2006 Center on the American Governor interview

## **DEPARTMENT-ORIENTED TRANSITION COMMITTEES**

- 38** A veteran of many gubernatorial transitions from inside the bureaucracy remarked that he could recall no examples where the outgoing governor's office did not modify the agency-prepared draft before transmitting it to the governor-elect.
- 39** Christine Todd Whitman on the potential value of these types of transition committees, if structured properly:

*The committees were very helpful actually. They developed basically a playbook for every department and agency and we didn't do everything that every one of them suggested, but they were also given to the commissioners as they were appointed so they could see what had been found. They were very thoughtful. Some were in more depth than others, but we adopted a lot of the recommendations that came through that process. It was an enormously helpful process to what we ultimately tried to do.*

May 22, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview

- 40** For Brendan Byrne's 1973-1974 transition, Dick Leone recommended assigning people to transition teams for areas in which they are not interested in working.
- 41** Judy Shaw on starting the Whitman administration:

*During the transition, Michael Gluck [prominent attorney in Trenton] had come into the transition office and organized a series of roundtables that we held on different subject matters. It would be education, environmental protection and some pretty far out ones too that nobody else wanted to touch – hot potatoes. And the governor's direction was that she wanted to hear opposing voices in those meetings. I think one of the first sessions was with the legislature and we invited the Republicans and the Democrats. The Republicans were quite miffed that she had not just a session with them. But that was the nature of every session. And a sub rosa purpose for doing that was to kind of vet people who might be interesting for these different posts. And we developed a list of really, really good names of practitioners – some of whom were non-traditional - in those different fields.*

May 14, 2012 Center on the American Governor Colloquium on the Campaign, Transition, and First Year of the Whitman Administration

## **APPOINTMENTS AND NOMINATIONS**

- 42** Sam Crane:

*Transitions are the most important time of the first four years of a gubernatorial term. This is the last time you get your feet under you before the white hot light turns and you have to act as the elected official. While they tend to be treated as just a chance to fill cabinet spots and get people jobs, they are the last free time you have with a lot of maneuver room. Usually the governor-elect brings in a bunch of campaign people who are exhausted, when what you need is a group of people who are going to work with well with the incoming governor. You only need two cabinet officers the day you get sworn in - an*

*attorney general and a treasurer; one to say, "No, you can't do that because it's against the law," and the other one to withhold the money.*

December 22, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

**43** Sam Crane on the Florio to Whitman transition:

*The only unfortunate part is that they selected a treasurer very late. I only had one dinner with him right before Governor Whitman was sworn in and didn't get to develop a lot of relationship with him at that time.*

December 22, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

**44** Lewis Thurston notes:

*We tried to take people who had been supportive of the governor through the campaign and otherwise, and people he knew ... and put them in key positions throughout each of the departments. So, in some cases, we suggested that they be hired by various cabinet people. In other cases, the cabinet people knew key people in business, academia and other areas. And they wanted to bring those people in. So, it was a combination.*

February 9, 2010 Center on the American Governor interview

**45** Karen Kessler recalls requests during the Florio transition from current long-time state workers:

*Then there were letters and phone calls from a lot of the people who worked for Tom Kean that said something like, "I have six more months until my pension vests. I have three more months until my pension vests." I would say to Jim, "What do you want to do?" And for almost every one, he said, "Let them stay. Let them stay, let them vest. They put in their time. They gave government their service."*

July 29, 2015 Center on the American Governor interview

**46** Governor Whitman on department employees:

*We wanted to try to find who the good people were, too. I did not come into government with the idea that I wanted to throw everybody out who had been there just because they were Democrats. I actually got into trouble from some of the Republicans for that, but if they were good civil servants, they were good civil servants. If they were good people and they knew their job, we wanted to know who they were because I wanted to keep them.*

May 22, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview.

**47** Judy Shaw on the Whitman transition:

*We moved very aggressively on selecting a cabinet because we knew that would be a measure of how well the governor was doing.*

May 14, 2012 Center on the American Governor Colloquium on the Campaign, Transition, and First Year of the Whitman Administration

**48** One of those that imploded, though it's not clear that more time would have surfaced the problem, was Governor Kean's selection of a commissioner of education. After his staff had

narrowed the choice to three candidates, Kean interviewed all three and selected the then deputy secretary of education in Pennsylvania. Within days of the public announcement, however, Bob Braun of *The Star-Ledger* reported that the nominee had plagiarized his Ph.D. dissertation. A quick review by the governor-elect's staff verified the allegation, and the candidate withdrew.

## **DIVERSITY**

### **49** Judy Shaw on Whitman transition:

*The very first day Governor-Elect Whitman announced me as the chief of staff, Lonna Hooks as secretary of state and Debbie Poritz as the attorney general...so there was a panic among the Jerseyites that this was going to be an all-female cabinet... We asked Kathy Donovan if she would chair the New York and New Jersey Port Authority. We asked Nancy Becker to be the vice-chair at the NJ Turnpike Authority. Women hadn't served in these positions before... And you really felt like you were making a difference.*

October 24, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

### **50** Governor Whitman on being New Jersey's first woman governor and on diversity in her staff and cabinet:

*You don't run to be a role model, but just by being there, by virtue of the office, you are a role model. I had lots of parents, male and female, who would tell me what a difference it made to their kids, particularly their young girls, to see a woman in that position. The other thing was appointing women to positions that had traditionally been held by men: the first gubernatorial chief of staff, the first woman as an attorney general, the first woman as a chief justice, and to a host of other positions that'd traditionally been held by men. What I would find is when we had an opening, the first list that I got back from the appointments office almost always was predominantly white males. And I would send it back and say, "I want a bigger group from which to choose" and then I'd get a much more diverse group. It wasn't because they were trying to have white males. It was just a question of not reaching out and telling people, particularly minorities, that hey, we are interested in you and you can have a role here. And I sometimes went back to the original list and picked from that original list. I always said, "Look. It's not that I'm not going to appoint from that. I just want more choice and more people from which to choose, a bigger list from which to choose." But appointing women to those positions raised the visibility of women, let men and women see that women can do these jobs and brought the kind of diversity I like to see in the office.*

May 22, 2013 Center on the American Governor interview.

### **51** Steve Perskie on diversity in Florio appointments:

*The other point I wanted to respond to is... did we have any quotas? Were we looking for women? Were we looking geography? Were we looking for race? And the answer is, I have no recollection of any conversations of that nature. I think a lot of it was because in the natural process we would up touching a lot of bases without doing it that way. But I don't*



*remember ever seeing that and saying, 'Gee, we're really short on this and really short on that.'*

December 1, 2011 Center on the American Governor Colloquium on the Transition and First Six Months of the Florio Administration

- 52** As the benefits of diversity have become more widely accepted, the expectations for the leadership of a gubernatorial administration have clearly changed. Patricia Sheehan, then the mayor of New Brunswick, speaks of having hoped that Governor-Elect Brendan Byrne would appoint her to the cabinet when he was first elected in 1973. But once he named Ann Klein to be commissioner of the Department of Institutions and Agencies (later the Department of Human Services), Sheehan's advisors and friends assumed her hopes were dashed because "the woman's seat" had been filled. Byrne, however not only nominated Sheehan to be commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, where she served from 1974 to 1978, but put a total of seven women in the cabinet during his two terms though never more than five at one time.

Subsequent governors have chosen more female cabinet members with the numbers peaking at nine, 10, 12 and 16 in the Kean, Florio, Whitman and Corzine administrations respectively. As of this writing, Governor Christie's cabinet includes seven women.

- 53** Governor Byrne on cultivating a relationship with the legislature:

*In some states the legislature is probably more powerful than the governor but in New Jersey, you had to let the legislature know that you need them, that they are part of the program. I would meet with them from time to time. I would go up to Passaic County and meet with the Passaic County legislators at a restaurant in Paterson or someplace and I would go to Bergen and meet with them and go down south. The legislators liked that because we got coverage in the local papers and I certainly showed them deference from that standpoint.*

*You start off by having them at the governor's mansion. They like that, and I would have, for instance, when I was putting the income tax together I would have pool parties on Sunday afternoons and the legislators would bring their kids to swim and cook hamburgers and we'd have an afternoon of it, and there are people today who remember that that's the way it worked. So they start out by wanting to come to the Governor's Office. We'd have sessions at the Governor's Office or events or social events at the Governor's Office and it did develop camaraderie. But then they also wanted you to come to their district and meet them at their district and make the local papers. It was a nice blended thing.*

October 30, 2007 Center on the American Governor interview

- 54** It can even be useful to find common ground on a personal level with legislators with whom you may disagree on policy. Lewis Thurston noted that Tom Kean was able to bond with legislators such as Carmen Orecchio over shared roots in Essex County and with Alan Karcher over a shared interest in opera and books. These personal relationships were useful later during policy disagreements.

55 Governor Florio said of the children's event:

*The children's event was very nice. I run into a lot of people now who were there. There were a couple hundred children who came, and I've run into adults who were children at that point who were there, which is a nice thing. Some of them were children of my staff members and were some of them were children from schools that my wife taught in. It was a very nice event.*

September 26, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

Note, however, that inaugural planning can also have pitfalls. Governor Florio said:

*We had a series of events through the course of the whole day, and they all ran very, very well. I was genuinely impressed how effective and efficient the whole system worked, until the last event, which was the Inaugural Dinner, which we had in, I guess, one of the big centers up on Route 287, and it was over capacity. We didn't have enough room for all the people, so somebody messed up selling more tickets than there was space. We had a tent outside, and a lot of the people were a little unhappy who had to sit in the tent, as opposed to in the ballroom.*

September 26, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

### **VALUING CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES, AKA BUREAUCRATS**

56 Those government officials who eventually come to this realization are always surprised. A recent striking example at the federal level is this observation by Wilbur Ross, President Donald Trump's Secretary of Commerce, when he was several months into the job:

*I thought the quality of people in the government was not as high as it has turned out to be... There are actually quite a lot of very good, very serious, very intelligent people wanting to do their best. [The New York Times; May 27, 2017]*

Other similar experiences were recounted by a panel of eight former commissioners of the NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA), including four who had previously served in the Assembly, when asked what they encountered when they came to the executive branch that most surprised them and would most surprise members of the legislature. This discussion took place at a March 1, 2017 program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the department. With no hesitation, they all singled out the high quality of the workforce they found in DCA. Most of the staff they met confounded their expectations by being committed to public service, hard-working, extremely knowledgeable, and – perhaps most surprisingly to them – ready with suggestions for changes that could improve programs' efficiency and effectiveness.

This perception is not unique to DCA, nor is the surprise with which it was greeted by the commissioners. While some state workers undoubtedly fit the caricature of the tired jokes perennially directed toward all of them, most do not. Absorbing this reality early into transition planning can help new governors, first, to avoid alienating people who, for the most part, can't be fired anyway while, second, bringing into their orbit a wealth of expertise that can help them craft the best strategies for addressing the policy goals and objectives of the governor.

## ETHICS

- 57 The book, *Scandal Proof: Do Ethics Laws Make Government Ethical?*, by Calvin Mackenzie at Colby College with Michael Hafken of the Brookings Institution [Brookings Institution Press; 2002] is focused on the federal government, but the findings and perspective also apply to state governments. Mackenzie and Hafken argue that the answer to the question posed in their sub-title – Do ethics laws make government ethical? - is generally no. Select excerpts from the book follow:

*Rep Barbara Jordan (D-Texas) called on her colleagues to support an amendment that would allow more freedom for post-employment contacts. “We need to be careful,” she argued, “that in the passage of the bill we do not codify mediocrity, that we do not, somehow, enforce a lower standard, or below excellent standard for the people who work in the federal government. It is important that in our exuberance over ethics we do not become so exuberant that we deny to the government the kind of talent, the know-how, and the expertise that the government needs.” (page 43)*

*One of the reasons, then, that the government integrity may not have been enhanced by most of the regulations enacted under the ethics banner is that few of them followed any analysis of problems or careful study of the consequences they would yield. We should not be surprised if we found that a policy not carefully targeted at identifiable and measurable problems missed the target. Nor should we be surprised to find new indicators that government integrity has been substantially improved by these policies when we had so few indicators that it was in bad repair before we initiated them. If the policies seem to have little effect, it may be because the margin for improvement was so small. (page 153)*

*Can there be less ethics regulation without less ethics? We believe so. In fact, we believe that some ethics deregulation will improve the overall quality of the public service and of government performance with no discernible impact on public integrity. We can draw no other conclusion from our findings but that much of what now constitutes ethics policy is overkill or misses its target or imposes costs that greatly outweigh any real or potential benefits. (pages 163-164)*

*We do not believe that the goal of government integrity would suffer any great loss if all financial disclosure requirements were eliminated. We find little persuasive evidence that financial disclosure alters the perceptions of public officials or enables better detection of misbehavior. We have found, however, that financial disclosure is a painful requirement deeply disliked by nearly all who endure it and sufficient in some cases to deter able people from entering public service. It is a burden on recruitment by presidents, and it contributes to the sluggish transition to new administrations. More than that, it nourishes some of Washington’s worst political impulses by giving an administration’s enemies fodder for attacks on its members---attacks that not only wrongly damage the reputations of appointees but also undermine valuable public support for the president. (page 165)*

- 58 Governor Jon Corzine, for example, proudly stated during his 2009 reelection campaign that he had reduced the state workforce by 8,000 in his first term and proposed a further 2,000-person reduction in his second. Such a reduction in workforce likely made governing more difficult and whatever political benefit it may have had was not sufficient to avoid losing the election to challenger, Chris Christie. (“Corzine divulges plan to fix budget.” *New Jersey Star-Ledger*, October 9, 2009)

**59** Governor Whitman was criticized for naming Hazel Gluck and John Sheridan as transition co-chairs because they were both lobbyists. Both, however, had also been cabinet officers, knew how state government worked, and are generally considered to have added valuable perspective and done a good job.

***STAFFING THE CANDIDATE VS. STAFFING THE GOVERNOR***

**60** Judy Shaw on appointing campaign staff for administration positions:

*And we decided—which is probably not a good recommendation to an incoming governor because the skill set for a campaign is so different from the skill set to govern— but we said to everybody who had been in the campaign, “Every one of you will have a role in the transition and will have an opportunity to work in the administration.”*

October 24, 2012 Center on the American Governor interview

# APPENDICES

## **I. EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH FORMER NEW JERSEY GOVERNORS**

- a. Governor Brendan Byrne
- b. Governor Thomas Kean
- c. Governor James Florio
- d. Governor Christine Todd Whitman

## **II. SELECT EXTENDED RELEVANT INTERVIEW EXCERPTS**

- a. Dick Leone
- b. Steve Perskie
- c. Judy Shaw
- d. Karen Kessler
- e. Lewis Thurston

## **III. TIMELINES OF PAST NEW JERSEY TRANSITIONS**

## **IV. EXECUTIVE ORDERS ISSUED IN THE FIRST 100 DAYS**

## **APPENDIX I: EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH FORMER NEW JERSEY GOVERNORS**

### **Governor Brendan Byrne (D, 1974-1982)**

*Interviews on April 4, 2006; August 7, 2006; August 28, 2006; September 13, 2006; August 14, 2007; October 30, 2007; August 11, 2009; and January 25, 2011.*

#### **On taking a vacation**

The first thing I did after the election was take a week's vacation. I went out to Arizona. I always liked to go down to Arizona. I went out there and stayed at the Old Camelback Inn. I met then-Governor Castro of Arizona. We became friends for a long time. I stayed at a Marriott property and had lunch with both the senior Marriott and the junior Marriott. And it was just relaxation. I took a couple of people with me. Don Lan was with me, and I forget who else. But anyway, we had some of us out there, and then we came back. While I was out there I was trying to figure out how many departments there are in state government, and who should be what. Then we came back and started.

#### **On his first appointments**

My inclination had been to use people who had been candidates and who were pretty good and knew government. Ann Klein, for instance, was a natural, even though she had run against me. She was interested in institutions. That was a natural for her, although I considered her at one time for transportation commissioner. But she wasn't really interested in that. Ed Crabiell had always wanted to be Secretary of State and I gave him that job. Dick Coffee was interested in banking, and I had a post for him in that, but then he lost interest. Basically I tried to get people who were interested in the campaign, either as candidates or otherwise.

I wanted an attorney general who would have an anti-Watergate image. First I approached Herb Stern, who had been U.S. Attorney. Herb thought about it, but wouldn't take it. He had quite a record and would have projected the message that I needed to project. So I turned to Bill Hyland, who had been a possible candidate for the governorship in 1969. He was on the SCI; he had a good reputation there. I succeeded Bill as the president of the Public Utility Commission. He accepted and projected the image of integrity that I wanted in the attorney general. That was, frankly, the key appointment.

Dick Leone let it be known that he would like to be treasurer and there was no problem with that. Lew Kaden wanted to be counsel to the governor. Jerry English was in that mix; she became legislative counsel. Then we started hunting for some people. Alan Sagner originally wanted to be health commissioner, I think, but didn't have an M.D. At the time, I think the statute called for an M.D. He settled for transportation commissioner and wound up loving it. Then Joel Jacobson who had been active in the campaign, just a terrific guy, wanted to be labor commissioner because he had been president of the CIO. I went a different direction for the labor commissioner, with John Horn. I had to talk Joel into becoming public utility commissioner, which he was furious about at first. But later he thanked me for it, because it was a great new experience for him. He was good and he was compassionate, everything you would want a public servant to be.

As for my closest advisers, it depended. If you are talking governmental advice, probably Dick Leone. If you are talking about political advice, probably Kenny McPherson. Kenny had a great ability to feel the pulse of the political community. I relied on Kenny a lot. I put him on the Port Authority for a little while, but he liked to be his own man. He would come down and we would talk.

### **On assistance from outgoing Governor William Cahill**

Governor Cahill was very helpful during the transition. He made all the stuff available. Cahill, by the way, is one of the most underrated governors of New Jersey. Half of the stuff I did Cahill had started and couldn't get done. I remember when I was in the transition, I spent a week of vacation in the islands, and I took a whole boxful of his reports and read them. So the housing things, the income tax things, all of that was Cahill's sponsorship that we just pursued and got done. Cahill was to me a lovely guy. A lot of people didn't like him. He could be gruff, he could have bad days, but basically he was a guy who wanted to leave the state a little better than he found it.

### **On the impact of Watergate**

We had a program and spelled it out with the priorities that Watergate presented to us. We called it government under glass. We were reacting to all the bad things that were happening in Washington, and we were saying we're going to have open government in New Jersey. So we did things like financial disclosures from all of the cabinet members in the key offices in state government. We opened voter registration to postcard registration, so you could register to vote just by signing a postcard. And open public meetings, things like that. The most important thing was to get the people's confidence back in government.

### **On the location of the transition effort and more specific appointments**

Bill Cahill gave me some offices across the hallway from the governor's office in the State House. I could get to Cahill in 20 steps. He was very, very nice about that. We had access to whatever in State government we needed. I talked to Cahill about who might have been good in his administration. He had a health commissioner, who in concept might have been ideal, but he did not recommend him for whatever reason. So I found my own health commissioner, Joanne Finley. She was a good health commissioner. She invented the diagnosis related groups, the DRGs, which were controversial.

My insurance commissioner was Jimmy Sheeran. Jimmy Sheeran and I go back to high school days, where he was captain of the football team and the most popular guy in school. And had a great war record and had done some insurance work for Cahill. So he had the background to go into that and became a very tough insurance commissioner. I think Pat Sheehan led community affairs from the get go. I'm not sure. At one point, I tried to abolish that department and Pat Sheehan was so popular that the legislature wouldn't let me do it.

I inherited Colonel Kelly, who was an excellent head of the state police and had been there for a long time. But there was a feeling that there was a stagnation in the state police. So I did not reappoint Kelly. I let him stay there and was happy to have him there. But he didn't like the idea of my not reappointing him and, ultimately, left. And I think I made an interim appointment and then had to search, and came up with nobody. So I appointed Clint Pagano because I knew him from my prosecutor days.

Fred Burke was ultimately my education commissioner. Fred Burke was also controversial. I got him from Rhode Island, where he had been an education commissioner. And Fred had some good ideas, but looked a little pugnacious when he appeared, and was an easy target for people who hated either the education program or the way he was administrator or the amount of red tape. He was there when we went through that whole education reform and Tom Kean made a campaign issue of Fred Burke, how he was going to get rid of him.

David Bardin (D.E.P.) is an interesting guy. My staff wanted somebody else who had been in the Kennedy administration. And I interviewed the guy and just didn't have the rapport with him. And so the name, "David Bardin", came across my desk. He was in Israel at the time. He's the guy who wore sandals and no tie and so forth, a character. It was David Bardin who resurrected the Liberty State Park concept, which had been dead for a couple of years. The idea had been there and had been proposed, but nobody was moving on it. David Bardin did that. And I think David Bardin deserves a lot more credit for Liberty State Park than some of the people whose names are on plaques there.

### **On asking potential appointees questions**

If it were something like law enforcement or a utility thing, where I knew something about it, that was one thing. But if it was an education commissioner, I might not have asked deep probing questions about school financing. We had pretty careful background checks and State Police checks. Every once in a while, something would turn up something that disqualified a candidate. I don't think I asked them, point blank, "Did you ever commit a crime?" But I had some pretty strong documentation of where they were and who they were and what their background was.

### **On structure of the governor's staff**

In the Meyner days, there were only about four or five of us in the whole office. There was me. There was a press secretary. There was a policy guy and a couple of other people, maybe, the counsel. But there were only four or five of us. So there was no way of talking about organization and structure. We all did our thing. So when I became governor in my own right, I started out with that concept. I had a secretary, instead of a chief of staff. It wasn't until I appointed Bob Mulcahy as chief of staff that my design was deliberately to give the chief of staff a lot of power. And the chief of staff, for the first time, could make commitments that he knew I would keep. I did that because I needed somebody out there as a spokesman for me who could deal with the legislation and legislators, and the legislator would know that whatever the deal was, it was going to be the deal. If you had a Brendan Byrne, who was secretary to Governor Meyner, and only Meyner could make the decisions, Brendan Byrne could get a lot of information back for the governor but he couldn't make the decision and he couldn't commit.

When I was working for Meyner, the legislature had virtually no investigative power. They came in and they had no staff. They had Sam Alito, who sort of ran Legislative Services. We would have a meeting when the legislature came in during the Meyner administration. We would have a meeting of the Democratic legislators. And I or somebody else would sit and tell them what the administration's position was on the bills that were coming in out there. They had no independent research to make. Not that there weren't bills where they came to a conclusion on their own, but they had no structured research that helped them much. I remember sitting with Ed Crabiell, who



was the minority leader, until three o'clock in the morning, sitting beside him. And the bills would be posted and moved. And I would tell him which way the administration wanted the Democrats to vote on those bills. By the time I'm governor, they have staff, they have research, they have commitments. They have a lot of lobbyists telling them what to do. It was different.

For most of my first term, though, I used the executive secretary format. I think it started with Don Lan, who had been the guy who really got me into this race. And Charlie Carella was there for a very short time. Then in the second term I created the chief of staff position for Bob Mulcahy.

### **On whether anyone turned down the opportunity to join the administration**

Probably a lot of people. Offhand, I don't remember. When you start, you start with the best person you can get. And you ask them and the best person you can get may not be at all interested. So you go to the second best. I offered Ray Bateman a job in my second administration. He turned me down. I also offered Tom Kean. I remember I put Tom Kean on the Highway Authority, which gave him a little foothold when he saw the campaign in '81. I had to cover this very recently with Christie Whitman about whether I was too partisan a Democrat. I had heard that she always thought I was. I think I convinced her that I was not only not partisan and the Democrats knew it, but that I was really looking for the best people for the job. I created the EDA and the first guy who I put in that job was a retired Wall Street Republican who ran for Congress, I think, as a Republican.

### **On not owing favors to anyone**

I didn't owe anything to anybody. When I ran for re-election in '77, I did not have a single county chairman in my corner. Not a single one. And Dave Wilentz, who called me before the primary and told me I was going to win, called me later and said, "I was lying. I didn't think you had a chance. You didn't have a single county chairman." I didn't owe anybody anything. That was the unique part of my administration—I didn't have any county chairmen support, and I didn't have to raise a lot of money. With those two things, you can be a pretty good governor. I didn't have to get along with county chairmen, because they didn't do anything for me. When I had a proposition up before legislature, yeah, I had to deal with the legislators. In some instances, they had to go back and deal with county chairmen, for instance, Essex County, when I was trying to get the income tax through.

### **On advice from former governors**

Governor Meyner was quoted into my term as saying that he had to bite his tongue a lot of times. Meyner was a lot more conservative than I was, and yeah, he would come to see me once in a while, and recommend things, and help me in the campaign. The first campaign, especially, with contacting people. And a lot of the people supported me in '73 were people I had met through the Meyner administration. So yeah, from that standpoint, there was a nice relationship we had continued. Meyner was a pretty good tennis player, and he would call me every time he had a spare moment to play tennis with me.

Cahill would call once in a while. He was very helpful. The first year I was in office, I put up a major bond issue, and it lost. And it was a bond issue composed of transportation and various things. I lost it. That taught me that bond issues had to be bipartisan. So I

established what was then called the Cahill Commission, and Bill Cahill headed it. And they were to evaluate capital needs requests from their various cabinet officers, and education and so forth, so that when a proposition got on the ballot for a bond issue, it had bipartisan support.

### **On the Inaugural**

We had the inaugural at the old Trenton Armory. We raised some money. There was nothing about that inaugural that I thought was particularly noteworthy, except that it was to celebrate becoming governor. It was black tie, I think, and I gave a speech. I had various drafts, but it was basically written by Jeff Greenfield. He put it together pretty good in the drawing room. Either I or Dick Leone picked out the quote from Woodrow Wilson, where I said, "If you worry too much about being re-elected, you're probably not worth re-electing!"

I think I was the first governor that didn't use the formal morning dress at an inauguration. I wore a business suit. I have a picture somewhere of me greeting, or Dick Hughes greeting me at his inauguration. It's in some collection that's here. And he was formally dressed.

### **On his relationship with the legislature**

In my day as governor-elect, we got a turnover in the legislature, a huge turnover and it went from big Republican to big Democrat and so there were a lot of new faces. And again in those days, the governor was recognized as the person who's going to choose the leadership of the legislature, and so Jim Dugan, who was the state chairman, and a key guy, came to me with a list of who was going to be what and that's the way it went. I had the veto. I vetoed one. I'm not going to tell you which one but I vetoed one appointment but the rest of it had to have my approval or he would've done it my way.

In some states the legislature is probably more powerful than the governor but in New Jersey, you had to let the legislature know that you need them, that they are part of the program. I would meet with them from time to time. I would go up to Passaic County and meet with the Passaic County legislators at a restaurant in Paterson or someplace and I would go to Bergen and meet with them and go down south. The legislators liked that because we got coverage in the local papers and I certainly showed them deference from that standpoint.

You start off by having them at the governor's mansion. They like that, and I would have, for instance, when I was putting the income tax together I would have pool parties on Sunday afternoons and the legislators would bring their kids to swim and cook hamburgers and we'd have an afternoon of it, and there are people today who remember that that's the way it worked. So they start out by wanting to come to the Governor's Office. We'd have sessions at the Governor's Office or events or social events at the Governor's Office and it did develop camaraderie. But then they also wanted you to come to their district and meet them at their district and make the local papers. It was a nice blended thing.

### **On his relationship with Governor Tom Kean during the Byrne to Kean transition**

We were very close. When I was governor, I put Kean on the Parkway Commission and gave him the kind of exposure that he took advantage of when campaigning. He would be one to introduce somebody at events at the parkway and he was a good candidate and a good governor. Our families have always been close. When I left office in '82, the first invitation I had to be on a corporate board was from Bob Kean. And when Kean was governor he put me on the Sports Complex.

## **Governor Thomas Kean (R, 1982-1990)**

*Interviews on March 16, 2009; June 23, 2010; July 12, 2010; and May 2, 2011*

### **On the three-week recount period**

It was excruciating. It was silly in retrospect. I mean, funny things had happened. His people were watching the recount, watching the polls in the counties. And I remember [campaign manager] Roger [Bodman] thought that some of our people didn't understand well enough, so we rented a voting machine and brought it into the headquarters so that we could train the people who were watching the recount as to what to watch for. And somebody saw us counting the voting machine in the headquarters and the police came. The Democrats had called the police, said, "They've stolen an election machine, and they're counting themselves," and silly things like that. You'd get a call from the county clerk, and they'd say, "We've recounted." The Republicans would all call me first. Democrats probably all called Jim first, and they'd say, "We've recounted this and that town, and you gained three votes or you lost three votes," what have you.

I waited until the recount was over. And when it was over I picked up votes, so it got up to a thousand six hundred votes, whatever it was. I picked up two, three hundred, which usually happens. Recounts find thousands and thousands of errors, but if it's a fair election, they usually balance out so the winner usually stays the winner, and that happened in my case. And Jim was talking about whether to challenge it in the courts, so you'd have a Florida situation, I guess, and I couldn't have that, because at that point I believed I had won, that we'd had the recount, and I had to pick a cabinet.

You know, this was three weeks. You know what little time you have between the time you're elected and the time you take office under normal circumstances. So I figured I had to get going. I had to pick people. I had to start doing all the things you have to do to prepare to be governor, and I hadn't done any of them. We had no cabinet. We had nobody. And I promised nothing to anybody, so there weren't even any expectations out there, so I had a blank slate. And I only had at that point about seventy days before I had to have a cabinet in place, in office. So I figured I had to get going. I waited a while. Jim did not concede, so I went down to Trenton, had a press conference, and said I seem to be the governor, and this is how I'm going to proceed from here on in.

Jim conceded maybe a week or two later. There is another procedure where you go county by county, but it becomes expensive, and I think at that point the candidate has to pick up the expenses. I think he thought his chances of winning at that point were so, so small, that it didn't make sense anymore. If he contested it in the courts it would have created an uncertainty, which would have made it very, very difficult to govern, and so I owe him a debt of gratitude for not doing that. He could have done that.

### **On how it felt after he realized he had won**

It felt like something hit me. I mean, it's unreal, one because I hadn't expected to win. I'd always had tremendous respect for the governor of New Jersey. Dick Hughes had been my model in some ways. I had worked with him when I was first in the legislature. And I'd been friendly with Brendan Byrne. I'd worked with Bill Cahill when I was his leader in the legislature. So I always had tremendous respect for the governor. There was also a sense of mystery about the office, what the governor really did, and the fact that I could walk into the Governor's Office as governor was just—it took a couple of weeks after the recount was over for me to get it. I was going through the motions

of being the governor-elect, but in my head thinking, "I'm the governor?" It was really very, very difficult to conceive, and it was a tough time for me intellectually getting my head around it in addition to the fact we were already behind, and the Democrats were preparing a welcome for me which was not going to be very warm, because they didn't think I'd stolen the election but they thought they should have won it. And they should have. They should have won it. I mean, they had everything going for them that year. They should have won it.

It gradually sunk in. Certain things stand out. On election night, I got home to the house at 3:00 in the morning or so, and there was a state policeman waiting for me at the house. I said, "What are you doing here?" And he said, "Well I'm with you now, until this thing is decided." Well, of course, they were with me for the next eight years. It was a little surprising to suddenly have State Police move into your home.

There wasn't room in our house for the State Police. At first, for a while, they just moved into the house, whether there was room or not. Then they brought in a trailer and lived in the trailer from then on. There was always somebody there at night. During the daytime, there would usually be somebody who'd stay in the house or in the trailer, and then two usually would be traveling with me.

### **On whether he started planning the administration before declaring victory**

I started to think about it a lot. But in that period there were two of us out there who could be governor and I didn't want to seem arrogant. I didn't want to look like I was taking for granted that I was the next governor. So what I did, I did very quietly. I didn't make any public announcements until the recount was over. When the recount was over, I decided to go down to Trenton and say I was governor. Because you couldn't get a cabinet, you couldn't do anything until people were assured that you were going to be the governor. So I drove down to Trenton, held a press conference and said, "I'm now the governor and I'm going to start working as the governor." I don't know if Jim liked it too much. But I had to do that because I'd been declared the winner on the recount and we had to get going. There's very little time anyway between the time you're elected and the time you take office in New Jersey, and I'd lost three weeks, which is a lot.

### **On why governor is a tough job in New Jersey**

It's a tough job in New Jersey because you can do so much. It's a cliché, but we are the most powerful governorship in the country, and therefore you can make a difference. And you're involved with everything. You haven't got an independent attorney-general, really. You appoint all the judges. You've got veto power over the authorities. Other states don't have that. You can make changes in a budget. Other people just can dream of that, in the other states. At the Governors' Association, they nicknamed me the Ayatollah Kean when they found out all the powers I had that they didn't have. So you can do all these things, but the buck stops at you.

To get your arms around it all, you've really got to decide you are going to do two or three or four things, and that's what your attention is going to be on. And then you've got to appoint the very best people in the world that you can find and get to work with you to do the rest. And you've got to depend on them. You can call them up short if they're not doing what you want; they've got to follow administration policy. But my policy was, other than the things I was really concentrating on myself, to find the most able people I could, and give them the heads, and let them innovate. Let them bring

to me what they thought the right things were to do in their areas. And I, of course, had the final approvals. But I think if you appoint the best people, and give them their heads, they're going to give you everything they have. And you get the credit or blame for what they do anyway.

### **On appointing the cabinet and staff**

I think I did it differently than any other governor ever has. I didn't know enough good people, frankly, to appoint to the cabinet. I did not want to take a lot of people from the campaign, because they're different skills. Even the areas I knew best—even though I'd been probably the leading environmentalist in the state up to that point—I didn't know really who was the best person to be my commissioner. Education had been always my top priority. I didn't really know who I wanted as education commissioner. So I did something fairly unusual. I hired a search firm, a local New Jersey search firm, and told them I wanted them to screen and to find me the best candidates for each of these positions.

Even if I thought I knew somebody who would be good at the position, they had to go through the screening committee process with the other candidates. I called two old friends, Tony Ciccatello and Nick Brady, and told them they were going to be head of the process. So they managed the process. They would bring me the last two or three candidates for each position. In some cases it took a lot of interviewing. I didn't have my whole cabinet in place until late. Part of that was because of the confirmation process. But I think my last cabinet member was John Sheridan in transportation, and I think I finished that in March. So it was a difficult process. It ended up being a great risk. Over half the cabinet were people I'd never met before until I interviewed them. But they were some of my very best people.

For example, Ken Biederman, the treasurer, had an incredible résumé for the job. But I'd never met Ken Biederman. He was a Democrat, among other things, and was from out of state. His wife, I later found out, was a Democratic County Committee person, which didn't set well with some Republicans.

I'd never met Bob Hughey before. I'd never met Saul Cooperman before. They all came through the search process. People I knew well, like Mike Horn, would still have to go through the search process, even though I thought they were probably qualified for the position. Hazel Gluck was the same way. I'd heard a lot about her, but she had to go through the same process as everybody else.

Mike Warren was with banking, and he had a good background for that. Banking was separate from insurance at that point. Ken Merin ended up in insurance. Ken I knew because of Livingston, but Ken had to go through the same search process. I'd say over 50% of them I'd never, ever met before, including the most important members of the cabinet.

### **On the importance of picking a strong cabinet and “giving them their heads”**

You have to have confidence in them. If you pick somebody on only political grounds, and you put them in a cabinet position, you can't give them the heads, because it will embarrass you. But if you don't pick on solely political grounds, and you pick people who you have full confidence in, then why not let them have their heads? They worked with my counsel's office on legislation. They'd work with members of the front office. I had very good people there too. And the team took a while, because they didn't know each other and didn't know me, so it didn't happen right away. The first year was very

difficult due to a combination of new people and a terrible recession. But it gradually started to meld. They started to work together as a team and the thing worked.

But I've told gubernatorial candidates and new governors that they'll have to do some of that, but nobody's taken me up on it yet. It's a risk. It's a risk to have half your cabinet be people you haven't met before. It's a real risk. But then you've got to have total confidence in the search process. So when Nick Brady came and told me, "This is really somebody good...." Some people I had one interview with, or less. I knew an economic development commissioner, Borden Putnam. I never would've met Borden, but he was number two, I think, in American Cyanamid, and decided the CEO was the same age and so he'd probably never move up to that spot. He said, "I want to give something back." So I had somebody in that position who knew all the CEOs in the state, and outside of the state, and traveled with them. So when we were trying to attract people into New Jersey, he could call these CEOs on a first-name basis. Nobody else in any state had someone like Borden. He was incredible. I talked to him ten minutes and offered him the job.

Other people, I had long interviews with. I talked to Bob Hughey two or three times, because I knew he was a good man but I didn't know whether he and I agreed on all the issues and whether or not he'd really be supportive. Things like the Pinelands were going on. I was a great advocate of the Pinelands. There was a whole group that wanted to destroy the Pinelands, led by the legislature. The federal government wanted to do it too—James Watt, right? They all wanted to get rid of the Pinelands. I had to fight that off and I wanted to be sure I had the support of my DEP commissioner.

My transportation commissioner was John Sheridan. I knew him, but not well. He was the last person I was able to get in place. I wasn't sure about John. I didn't know him that well, and it just took a lot of interviewing and frankly I wanted to look at other people. It just took a long time to get it. As it turned out, he was brilliant. I think many people would say he was the state's best transportation commissioner. It worked out well. I'm delighted I settled on him.

My attorney general was Irwin Kimmelman. I knew him pretty well. We'd both been in Essex County for a long, long time. I knew I wanted Irwin. I thought he was a brilliant lawyer and had a good reputation in the country. His father-in-law had been a friend of my father's. Irwin had served in the legislature, but not with me.

### **On structure and selecting the staff and importance of starting transition before Election Day**

For the staff, I picked people I knew. I didn't go interview people I didn't know who were going to be right around me. And I was very fortunate. I had Lew Thurston, and Lew had been working for the state Senate. I'd known Lew for a long time, and I brought Lew in as chief of staff. Lew had done my transition. I don't know if they still do it this way, but they should: when you run for governor, you take somebody who's not going to be involved in the campaign, who knows state government, and you tell them you want them to work on the transition. You do this long before Election Day. Lew had been working down there in the state Senate for years, and he knew where all the bodies were buried. So he worked on what was happening in departments, what was happening on the budget, what was happening on this and that. And so he had a plan for us by the time Election Day was over. It was logical, then, for him to become chief of staff.

Cary Edwards had first run for office, only to support me, because I needed a ticket to run against the organization in Bergen County. He and I had served together in the legislature, and I had tremendous respect for Cary, and wanted Cary there. Gary Stein was my chief counsel. Gary Stein and I had met in the Army, way, way back, and used to sit around the Army, when we were doing KP or whatever else we were doing, talking about stuff, and became good friends. And then we kept in touch. Gary worked for awhile on Wall Street, I worked for awhile on Wall Street, and we kept in touch over the years. And then when I declared for governor, Gary suddenly popped up. I hadn't heard from Gary in a couple of years. He popped up, called me on the phone and said, "Anything you want?" And so he had worked for me in the campaign, although again, everybody who worked for me in the campaign had to take on their organizations. So it was not easy. He became head of Policy and Planning because I wanted somebody who would be able to think a couple of years ahead, and always keep us ahead of the ball, rather than behind it.

That was tough because there were so many things that had to be done that first year or two that Gary, I think, ended up planning, but planning things that had to be done right away, and not things that I'd originally envisioned. Later on he could do that and Brenda Davis, his successor, certainly did it. But in the beginning we really had to get our hands around things. We had judges who were threatening to close prisons and let the prisoners out on the street basically.

Carl Golden was my communications person. I'd brought him from Washington originally when I was in the legislature. He was the first communications director to serve either house of the legislature, and he was superb. Not only was he superb, he knew me inside and out, because we worked together for nine years in the legislature and then somewhat afterwards. Nothing is more important than the person who's going to be your spokesman for media, because if they say anything wrong, it's coming from you. They are your spokesman. And if they don't understand you and say things that you wouldn't say, you can get in all sorts of trouble. And so to have somebody there who not only understands you but instinctively knows where you're coming from and knows what you believe, it's just very, very helpful to an administration. I never had an important meeting on any subject that Carl wasn't invited to, because I wanted Carl to understand not only where I was coming from, but how this or that policy was developing. I wanted him to hear the arguments on both sides. I wanted him to see how we came to these things, because then he could have better understanding and he could explain it better to members of the press corps. And so he was in on all the meetings, all the policy development meetings. Always welcome.

Sometimes he'd say, "I know where you're all going. That's not going to work." Or "I can't sell that," or "The legislature's not going to buy that." He'd pipe up not necessarily on the elements of policy, but on his particular expertise and knowledge about where that policy might go from a public point of view and how easy it was going to be to implement or not implement, or how easy it would be to sell or not sell. But I could never get Carl interested in anything outside of written press. He was a newspaperman from his toes to his head.

The world was changing. Television was becoming very important and radio was still important. And Carl was just not interested. You've got to go to New York and Philadelphia, particularly New York, if you want to reach people. And so I'd say, "Carl, I really want to do this" and he'd say, "All right, we'll work on it," and you'd never hear anything, and Carl would be off talking to somebody from the *Bergen Record* in the corner. And that's when I brought in Greg Stevens. I brought him in specifically to

work with the media that Carl just was either not inclined to work for or couldn't work. And then as Greg came in and worked, it became obvious to me he had the skills, political and otherwise, that I needed in the chief of staff's position. Lew was a policy person. He was a policy wonk, some people used to say, but he didn't return phone calls very often. <laughs> He didn't do this or that. He was probably not suited for the job. And so we made that change.

### **On working with former governors**

The two governors, funnily enough, who helped me out most, when I was governor, were Brendan Byrne and Dick Hughes, two Democrats. Dick Hughes was enormously helpful with advice and help and everything else, all the time, and so was Brendan. I mean, Brendan and I used to play tennis about every other week, then after tennis we'd sit down for an hour and I'd say, "I'm having trouble with Alan Karcher, tell me how to deal with him. How do you deal with Dick Codey? How do you deal with this or that one?" And he, of course, being a Democrat, would tell me a lot of information I didn't know about where they lived, what was important to them. They were both enormously helpful, and that's the way governors should be. I think former governors can be very helpful to present governors, if present governors have the humility to reach out.

## **Governor James Florio (D, 1990-1994)**

*Interviews on October 8, 2008; September 26, 2012; and August 6, 2012*

### **On Election Night and pre-election preparation**

It was, obviously, a pleasant feeling, but I immediately started thinking about the job, signing the form, the transition team. It was actually a couple of days before we had started to have some talk to that. Before the election, we had general outlines of what we wanted to do. Carl Van Horn was very helpful to me. Brenda Bacon was very helpful to me on the substantive side. So I had already switched gears and was talking and thinking about how we were going to address the specific issues that we had to deal with.

By September, we were fairly confident. We had tracking polls that indicated that we had a fairly substantial lead, and we were confident, hopefully not overconfident, but we were starting to even think about the transition. We'd actually almost started the transition team before the election. We had general outlines of it, so we actually started at a sprint. We didn't have to start thinking about the transition. Greg Lawler had really been thinking about the transition team and we had a system in place to go virtually into operation instantaneously.

### **On the transition after the election and working with the Kean administration**

The state set us up in some office space in Trenton. The relationship with the departing Kean administration was fairly good. The transition went relatively smoothly. I met with Governor Kean on one or two occasions there, but the handoff was smooth. Our conversation about the state's finances was a little bit contentious, because unbeknownst to us the representations that were being made that there was a three



hundred million dollar surplus in the current year's budget anticipated turned out not to be accurate. There turned out to be a six hundred million dollar shortfall, which obviously is somewhat substantial, and then we had almost a two billion dollar anticipated shortfall for the upcoming year. So coming into office in January, we had to narrow the six hundred billion dollar shortfall that was there, and anticipate how we were going to submit a budget in March, or so, to deal with the two billion dollar shortfall.

### **On the transition team**

I don't even know if we had a chairman of the transition team. We had a group of people who were there working on it. Doug Berman, who was very, very smart on figures, since the budget was such a dominating issue, played a disproportionate role in that.

Steve Perskie was my first chief of staff. Steve was a friend. Steve was very smart, very smart, very savvy, had obviously the experience of being in the state senate, so he knew how to deal with legislators, and is a good person.

Brenda Bacon was the chief policy person. Bob DeCotiis ultimately became chief counsel, but he was not the first one. I think it might have been Andy Weber, if I recall correctly.

### **On the inaugural events**

It was a very good day, very nice day. It was a pleasant day weather-wise. We had a children's event. First and foremost we had a religious event. Reverend [Howard] Woodson, who had church in Trenton, led a religious convocation of sorts. Then we had a children's event. We had a series of events with them through the course of the whole day, and they all ran very, very well. I was genuinely impressed how effective and efficient the whole system worked, until the last event, which was the Inaugural Dinner, which we had in, I guess, one of the big centers up on Route 287, and it was over capacity. We didn't have enough room for all the people, so somebody messed up selling more tickets than there was space. We had a tent outside, and a lot of the people were a little unhappy who had to sit in the tent, as opposed to in the ballroom.

The children's event was very nice. I run into a lot of people now who were there. There were a couple hundred children who came, and I've run into adults who were children at that point who were there, which is a nice thing. Some of them were children of my staff members and were some of them were children from schools that my wife taught in. It was a very nice event.

### **On the strength of his first 100 days**

We got a lot done in large measure because of the preparation. I don't think there's ever been an administration that has come into office with as much preparation for state issues as we've had. I had Carl Van Horn for about six months before I was even nominated setting up these sessions where we would go in depth into different issue areas, so we had put a lot of good thought into the problems we would be facing. We hit the ground running when I came into office.

## **On appointing a cabinet**

It went well, but there was a sanction. It was interesting. I got some insights as a result of that process: most of the cabinet people were local people, that is people from New Jersey. But a couple of areas I thought were sufficiently important that we should have a national search. We had a national search for the Department of Health and another for the Department of Education. We found people who were very impressive credential-wise, but those were the people that didn't work out well, so we had to have some replacements before too long. And it was just an interesting insight that tells me that New Jersey is somewhat unique in policy areas. You'd better understand New Jersey educational politics if you want to be successful. You can't take someone who has impressive credentials but knows nothing about educational politics and put them in place in New Jersey. That's something I've always retained and thought a lot about. When it comes to bringing in outsiders, unless they have good political skills to supplement their substantive knowledge about the issue area they're in charge of, they're going to have problems.

## **Governor Christine Todd Whitman (R, 1994-2001)**

*Interviews on August 20, 2012; May 22, 2013; and December 3, 2014*

### **On winning the election and having it sink in**

Well, you don't think about being the first woman to be governor. You think about, "I'm governor. Okay." It was such a high. It was amazing and you have the kids and you had an extraordinary enthusiasm because it was such an upset. It was the first time an incumbent governor had been beaten in a general election since the constitution had been redone in 1947. I mean, I wasn't just the first woman governor. I was the first person to defeat an incumbent governor at that point. And it was a big deal.

The thing that really brought it home was walking outside the hotel room and having the EPU, the Executive Protection Unit, there and suddenly moving people around and all that kind of stuff. And I said, "Okay. This is real." It was just very exciting. But it's a whirlwind. It's such a whirlwind. You go down and there are so many excited people. You give your remarks, whatever you say. I haven't a clue what I said. You try to remember to thank the right people, which you never do. And then you try to digest it a little. It was late so I had to go to bed because I knew I'd be on all the early morning shows. Because the thing that makes the race in New Jersey more prominent is that we're the one of the only off-year elections. New Jersey and Virginia are the two gubernatorials and then the mayor of New York and the mayor of Los Angeles. Those are the four big races. That's all that year. So just by nature of the timing of the election, you become more prominent than you would be if you were elected during the year when there 32 governors are up for election. So that meant I was going to be getting up early and do a whole bunch of interviews. So I tried to go get some sleep, which was difficult to do. You're saying, "Okay. Now, where do we move? What do we do?" We have to set up transition headquarters. We have to get everything in place and that became the next challenge.

## **On working with Governor Florio's team during transition**

Governor Florio was perfectly friendly. We weren't warm and fuzzy, but perfectly friendly. They didn't try to make things difficult and it went forward pretty smoothly. He and I met only once at Drumthwacket to look at the house and then maybe one other time, so he and I didn't do a lot directly. But I never heard that there were any real problems in getting in the budget and getting budget numbers, that sort of thing. I mean, we found some things there that we weren't told about, but it wasn't because they were trying to hide things during the transition or make things difficult at all.

## **On the Ed Rollins allegations**

I heard about it at the transition office. Judy Shaw came in and said she'd gotten this call from Ed saying, "Oh, there's no big deal but you might hear about something at the Sperling breakfast today. I kind of said something that might cause some problems." She told me what it was and I said, "Yeah, that's going to cause problems. Get him on the phone." We finally got hold of him and I said, "What were you thinking?" and he said, "Oh, I don't know. It just happened. What do you want me to do?" And I said, "I want you to tell everyone it's a lie and I want to be clear about it." But on the other hand, campaigns being what they are, you have a lot of people. We had such tight control over the money and with Peter Verniero as our chief legal officer, I knew perfectly well there wasn't going to be one dime spent that wasn't absolutely on the up and up. But there were a lot of people out there who could have said something to somebody. So I immediately called anybody I thought might have known about it and said, "Have you ever heard anybody anywhere say anything about offering money to black ministers and mayors to keep down the vote?" And everybody came back with no, they never heard any of that anywhere, anytime.

So I was very confident it hadn't happened. But we still had to contain the allegations and try to deal with them. Within a day, I was in the transition office and heard that Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton were at the end of the street about to march on on the transition office. I said, "Go get them. I want to meet with them." They brought them down and I was in a tiny office and I had Judy Shaw and two or three of my African American advisers sitting across from Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson. I can remember thinking I'm not even governor yet. I'm not sure this is supposed to be happening. But we talked about it. It was Al Sharpton who really stepped up. I said to them basically, "Bottom line, look. I don't think this happened. I can find absolutely no indication that it happened but if you find any indication that lends substance to it I'll agree to hold another election." Al Sharpton said, "Okay." Jesse Jackson wanted to still go ahead with the march and Sharpton's the one who said, "No, let's give her a chance." Then we had to go out and meet the press and we were in a room not much bigger than this one with one long table and masses of media and people lying on the table and screaming at one another, "You're in my shot" and all this kind of thing. And the three of us stood up there and basically said we'd come to this agreement.

Then we had two federal investigations going. Janet Reno opened an 800 hotline and I was sure that was going to get something because hotlines just encourage people who just have a grievance and it had been a very close election. They never got a call on that hotline and all the investigations came to nothing because there was nothing. But it was brutal for a while. I can remember some people saying, "Well, it shows you've got character." I said, "I don't need any more character, thank you very much. <laughs> I think I'm fine."

It was a big distraction. It really was. I mean, I had to spend a week or so before we had the discussion with Sharpton and Jesse Jackson. It took quite a bit. And then of course after that we had all these investigations going on. We had a state investigation. They had the state attorney general investigating, the federal attorney general investigating, we had the 800 number. There was just a lot of stuff going on, and you're always nervous that something will turn up, that somebody somewhere said something. I knew we hadn't spent \$500,000. I knew that; there was no question. There was never a question about that, but someone might have said something somewhere.

But the other thing that really bothered me about it is so many people were willing to jump and say, "Aha, I'm sure you did it." They were mostly Democrats, obviously, and I wanted to say, "But do you know what you're saying. You're saying that there are black mayors and black ministers who could be bought." Nobody seemed to be taking that up. I kept saying, "You can't have just one side of this. If Ed Rollins is saying that's how we won the election then you'd have to say—and I don't believe there are any black ministers or mayors in this state that would have accepted that. I just don't believe it." I said that at the press conference, but I was surprised that everybody seemed to be so willing to believe that we had done it but not seeing that that meant there had to be someone on the other side who would have accepted it.

Probably the best thing that came out of it is people saw that I was tough and that I would face issues head on. I think that did help with some of the other things that we did. It certainly set a tone. I don't know that people had voted for me as much as voting against Jim Florio, and so this may have reinforced in their minds that they hadn't made a mistake. This gave them a little bit of an understanding that I could be tough and I'd be straightforward and we'd face down the issues and hopefully that made them feel a little bit better about things.

### **On creating a transition team**

There was a transition team comprised of hundreds of volunteers who reviewed every state agency and department. Judy Shaw and Hazel Gluck chaired the effort. There was a whole group of people who co-chaired that. That was the way to really get into the departments. No one person was going to be able to know every department and we wanted to get a good understanding of what had been going on, where the issues were going to be. That meant putting together teams that were focused on each particular department and those sets of issues. Then they could make recommendations that we put into place eventually. It was important to me to get that kind of depth rather than to just have a superficial overall look of how we were going to change things.

We wanted to try to find who the good people were, too. I did not come into government with the idea that I wanted to throw everybody out who had been there just because they were Democrats. I actually got into trouble from some of the Republicans for that, but if they were good civil servants, they were good civil servants. If they were good people and they knew their job, we wanted to know who they were because I wanted to keep them.

The committees were very helpful actually. They developed basically a playbook for every department and agency and we didn't do everything that every one of them suggested, but they were also given to the commissioners as they were appointed so they could see what had been found. They were very thoughtful. Some were in more depth than others but we adopted a lot of the recommendations that came through that process. It was an enormously helpful process to what we ultimately tried to do.

## **On appointments**

It wasn't hard to solicit names. They came in in droves, believe me, and again we had the transition team. They appointed subgroups that looked at every name that came in for every department to see who would fit. Hazel and John Sheridan were the chairs. John was chair of the transition as well. They were the ones who actually did a lot of the vetting for the cabinet. They would make recommendations of three or four names of people who I then interviewed personally to see whether I liked them or not and whether I felt we were a fit or not, but I obviously didn't interview for every position up and down the line. That happened within these subgroups. They'd make recommendations and when the commissioners came in, we let them do a lot of the picking.

I obviously wanted to hear that they were people who understood they were part of a team and it was my team <laughs> and where I wanted to go, the kind of approach I wanted to take to governance. I also wanted to get a sense that they thought for themselves and that they weren't going to be afraid to push back if they thought something was wrong or an idea wasn't the right way to go about things, but at the end of the day they recognized that the decision was mine. And I've always said, "I'd always rather have a horse I had to put the curb on than one I had to kick all the time." I would rather have to say to them from time to time, "Now wait a minute. You're getting ahead of yourself. You're getting ahead of me and we need to vet this a little bit more" than constantly saying, "Okay. What do we need to do here, what are your ideas of this department?" For a lot of those interviews, I just listened to what their ideas were for that area, for health, for criminal justice, education. What did they think? What were their ideas? And if they were pretty much in tune or at least going the way that I thought about going at things then I thought we had a pretty good chance of making a good team.

There's always a certain amount of political pressure, but it wasn't too bad. I think that got me into some trouble with some members of the legislature because we didn't appoint all of the people they wanted. We appointed the good ones. I mean hey, give me a good name and I'm not going to hold it against them that they're Republicans, but if there was a person in the position who was good, I didn't necessarily throw them out just because they'd been appointed by Jim Florio or they were Democrats. And there were recommendations at times to do that because that was a coveted position and they wanted somebody there. For the most part, certainly, all the cabinet appointments were new. They weren't all Republicans; we had some Democrats and some Independents in the cabinet. I just wanted the best people. That was the thing that mattered the most to me.

In addition to Hazel and Judy, my closest advisers were John Sheridan, Phil Angarone. Phil was somebody who was there for the political part of it most definitely. He was constantly grumbling at me, "Get rid of some of these Democrats. They're just going to undermine you," and some of them tried later on, yes, but for the most part we got on well.

## **On diversity and being the first woman governor of New Jersey**

You don't run to be a role model, but just by being there, by virtue of the office, you are a role model. I had lots of parents, male and female, who would tell me what a difference it made to their kids, particularly their young girls, to see a woman in that

position. The other thing was appointing women to positions that had traditionally been held by men: the first gubernatorial chief of staff, the first woman as an attorney general, the first woman as a chief justice, and to a host of other positions that'd traditionally been held by men. What I would find is when we had an opening, the first list that I got back from the appointments office almost always was predominantly white males. And I would send it back and say, "I want a bigger group from which to choose" and then I'd get a much more diverse group. It wasn't because they were trying to have white males. It was just a question of not reaching out and telling people, particularly minorities, that hey, we are interested in you and you can have a role here. And I sometimes went back to the original list and picked from that original list. I always said, "Look. It's not that I'm not going to appoint from that. I just want more choice and more people from which to choose, a bigger list from which to choose." But appointing women to those positions raised the visibility of women, let men and women see that women can do these jobs and brought the kind of diversity I like to see in the office.

There were times when we were called the estrogen palace, but that goes with the territory. You'd hear the grumblings and they would sort of get over it. These women were enormously qualified and I had no hesitation. I made no apologies for those appointments. They were good appointments.

### **On using the Inaugural Address to announce tax cut (power of going to the people)**

There was a lot of surprise. It happened the way it happened because right after I was elected I was asked, "Well, what are you going to do?" I said, "I'm going to cut taxes." And they said, "No, no, no. What are you really going to do?" And I said, "I'm going to cut taxes." And so then some of the press went to the legislature and I started hearing some quotes from legislative leaders in my party who were saying, "Well, that was the election and now we've got to look at the budget." I could sense a softening there, so I didn't tell them. It was the year that Bill Clinton had retroactively raised a tax—it was a big deal. So what I said is "If he can retroactively raise a tax, I can retroactively cut a tax and the bill's on your desk, oh, by the way." I hadn't told them ahead of time. They were all sitting behind me. I couldn't see their expressions, but I'm told they were a little shocked in the legislature to hear this. But there was nothing they could do because I had the whole audience and of course they were all cheering. This is what I'd said I'd do. So that started the process of getting to the 30 percent tax cut in the three years—in less than three years actually.

I could sense that we would lose it otherwise. If I didn't do it when I had a stage where I could get the public really behind it, and kind of box the legislature in so it was hard to get out of, it wasn't going to happen. I don't think they were very happy about it, and again it probably soured relations and made things a little more difficult than it should have been with the legislature even with the Republicans and I don't blame them. I can understand why they'd be a little affronted by it, but on the other hand they were getting squishy on me. I could sense that and I wasn't going to let them go because that's what I said I was going to do and I was convinced that it was the best way to get the state back on its feet and get the economy going again.

## APPENDIX II: SELECT EXTENDED RELEVANT INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

### Dick Leone

State treasurer under Governor Brendan Byrne, campaign manager for Byrne's 1973 and 1977 campaigns, and transition chair for Byrne and Governor Jon Corzine

*Interview on April 5, 2006*

#### **On the power of the New Jersey governor**

As somewhat of a student of this, the New Jersey governor technically is the most powerful in the country but it never seems that way to the governor. I think one of the things that the structure in New Jersey means is that the New Jersey governor has a broader agenda. They have a lot of potential political influence because they can appoint prosecutors and judges and people who are elected in many other states. Assembling all that power and using it effectively occasionally can lead to major breakthroughs; but New Jersey had been a very localistic state, run by county organizations politically, who dominated the legislature. And the governor had to deal with those power brokers more on a basis of equality than of dominance.

#### **On planning the transition early**

Since we [the Byrne campaign] knew we were going to beat Charlie Sandman [in the 1973 gubernatorial race], we set up a transition department over the summer. I don't think it jinxes you, I think it is smart and healthy to do that. I wound up chairing it after the election, but it had a life of its own.

People were given assignments. They were in charge of specific areas. It couldn't be an area where they were interested in working. So if you were interested in being attorney general, you couldn't work on law and public safety; you had to work on something else. That was the only rule I had.

By and large, I picked people who I thought were sufficiently versatile that they could handle the areas. I drew heavily on two sources. The people I knew from the [Governor Richard] Hughes years, when I formed judgements on people and how they performed. And people from places like the Woodrow Wilson School and Princeton or other networks who I thought could do this. There were very few people who represented traditional political constituency groups. We did have Ann Klein [runner-up to Byrne in the Democratic primary] involved and some of the people who had been involved in the primary. But I didn't know I would be running the transition until the morning after the election.

Brendan said to me you could have whatever you want. I said well, what do you want? He said I want you to be chief of staff. I said no, I won't be chief of staff. Things were very centralized under Byrne. When his father died—this was a couple of weeks after I had signed on—he wanted me to handle all the arrangements. He wanted one person. I didn't think that was the right way to do this. I thought he would be better served by having more voices and more people and we ought to broaden that circle.

I thought I should take on the toughest problem, which was the budget and taxes, from what I know about treasury. And I thought if I went into the governor's office, there would be no change or movement, it would still be the people I knew. I think I was right about that. We had a little bit of a struggle about it, to get me to be in charge of the transition, and then he said fine. I did hire the governor's office staff people, and set their salaries, which is unconventional. That was on the first round, obviously.

During the September/October run up to the election, there was very little interaction between the campaign staff and transition staff. There were people—as you get close to an election, particularly one that you are clearly going to win, anxieties and insecurities emerge. People wonder where they are going to wind up.

It is always a good idea to designate people as soon as you can, so at least there is some group that is functional and not wondering what is going to happen to them. And it also means that other people have somebody to relate to, because you get ripples of insecurity and uncertainty. Not only do the people not know what jobs they are going to get, but the people who care about who's going to get those jobs don't know who is going to get those jobs.

### **On naming key appointments quickly and working with the prior administration**

So one of the things I did during the Corzine transition was to press him to name key people in the governor's office quickly. I think in the Byrne campaign—that was a very different time in my life—everybody knew I would be in the administration. And they were in varying ways trying to adjust to how unhappy that made them. Varying degrees of unhappiness.

I had a couple of ideas for Byrne's chief of staff, but we had a little pool of very talented people we thought we had to place in various places. The chief of staff position kind of evolved in the Byrne years. You know, you couldn't tell me who Bill Cahill's chief of staff was and Hughes had no chief of staff. It was the first time the New Jersey governor had a chief of staff who was a chief of staff the way we think of it now. So it was Byrne's later chiefs of staff who defined that office.

There are two funny stories about the Byrne transition. One is having dinner with Cahill and Dick DeKorte, who was his counsel and a friend of mine. And Cahill said, "You know that surplus," and he started laughing, they both started laughing uproariously. "There is no surplus, there is a big deficit." I said, "Why are you springing this on us?" They said, "We thought it would help Sandman if it got out, so we didn't want it to get out." Remember Sandman beat Cahill in the primary, so the only person who wanted Sandman to lose more than we did was Cahill.

The other meeting was also with DeKorte and Cahill and we are talking about appointments in the transition, and this was an extremely cooperative transition. I mean not only did they keep open the jobs and positions we wanted, but in one case they appointed a prosecutor to fill a slot so we wouldn't be able to fulfill our promise to someone we promised it to but didn't want to give it to. So we are near the end of the dinner and Cahill says, "Oh, one other thing. I am going to appoint a chief justice." I said, "Governor, we won't be able to stand for that." He starts chuckling and says, "You'll stand for this. It is [former Democratic Governor] Dick Hughes." So the next morning I went to see Brendan and I gave him my report, and at the end of it I said, "Uh, one other thing, Governor. He is going to appoint a chief justice." And Brendan started to get up out of his chair, and I said, "It is Dick Hughes." And he sat back down. We were happy with the Hughes appointment.



## **On the first steps after Election Day**

Immediately after Election Day, Brendan went to St. Croix for a vacation and a small group of us went with him.

And we set up a formal transition operation. In those days it was pretty primitive. You had a couple of offices provided in Trenton, so you had to have everything else somewhere else. The Cahill administration was quite cooperative in providing us with a certain amount of support. We basically took the scheduling operation and moved it into the transition.

One of the things you have to do in transition is create two things in miniature: (1) A campaign organization, because you are still out there doing things, being asked by the press about everything. You have to move the governor-elect around, deal with mail, lots of people are in contact with you. And (2) you are a kind of miniature government, because you immediately inherit problems. People want you to answer them. I always use the phrase that there is only one governor at a time. But some things you can't avoid. We had an immediate crisis because the Meadowlands deal had fallen through. And we had a hole in the ground and no deal any more, no ability to finance the Meadowlands. And the Cahill administration really had no ability to do it at that stage, no power in the legislature. And a variety of other small issues we had to turn our attention to right away.

## **On transition committees and reports in the Byrne and Corzine transitions**

We had to set up a formal structure for the transition with groups of people looking at the various departments, for two reasons. One is you can actually discover things you need to know, and you usually will not get those things from the department reports [reports coming directly from the departments themselves]. Even on those latest rounds with Corzine, those department reports were by and large not very useful.

The second reason is you want to be open to engaging people who have something to contribute so they don't feel left out. All of us have been passed over for jobs that we are absolutely convinced we deserved. I know in my case, endless numbers of cabinet jobs in Washington. I always think about that during a transition, because there are going to wind up being many disappointed people. There are a lot of talented people who have every reason to think they are qualified and ought to be sitting in a cabinet chair, but only one is going to be selected. So you want the process to give people a sense that they had a fair shot, that they were heard and treated respectfully. You are still going to wind up, and I have had this experience, and this is 30 some years on—you still run into people who basically are mad at you because they didn't get what they felt they should have gotten.

But anyway, the selection of those people is crucial. You will make mistakes and you will pay for every mistake you make. You don't get away with any, so you want to minimize those mistakes. You want those people—you are going to live on them, depend on them, rely on them. You have to look into their souls if you can. I always have a final conversation with people, when I say, "I know as you are sitting here you don't think this is true, but believe me, this is true. Everything you have ever done may come, will come out, will affect you and your family. Things we can't possibly discover right now but you know are there. You have to sit here one more time with me and tell me that under those circumstances, you are willing to expose yourself, your family and the governor to your appointment to something where there is going to be scrutiny." I have had people drop out at that stage. I've had people tell me things that I really didn't

need to know, where I say “No, no, that doesn’t matter. That is not what I am talking about.” But I have also been through that where people are either oblivious to their own faults or they have lied to you. I mean famously when they were vetting Geraldine Ferraro [to be the Democratic vice presidential nominee in 1984], at a time when her husband was under investigation by three separate agencies about those real estate deals, which never amounted to anything but it would have been nice to know, she said, “No, there is nothing going on in my family.” So I don’t know what that is. So you start that process and you want to be rigorous about it.

### **On selecting Byrne’s cabinet**

We had some very experienced people we involved right from the beginning. We had done an investigation of Byrne ourselves in the spring. We wanted to know everything that anybody could ever use against him. So after the election we started to do that for some of these key jobs. In that sense, we were ahead of our time.

Nowadays the pressure is even greater. Then, a lot of that pressure was self-generated. I was kind of obsessed with it personally because there had been scandals in the Hughes administration and in the Cahill administration. We wanted to avoid that as far as possible. Brendan had made very few promises. At the cabinet level, really none. There were a couple of people he wound up appointing because of political debts he felt he owed them, but they hadn’t been explicit promises. In a couple of cases we set up search committees. We had Robert Wilentz, this was before he became chief justice, lead a search committee for the commissioner of education. We had a search committee for the commissioner of environmental protection. We found people out of state: Fred Burke [education] from Rhode Island, who actually was not very successful; David Bardin [DEP] who was in Israel, who was very good at his job, although he had a habit of calling me very early in the morning on Sunday. He would take Saturday off as the Sabbath and then call at 6 or 7 o’clock on Sunday morning to catch up, until we put a stop to that. But he was a very talented man. So the search was of a variety of competencies and places to look. Most of the people, obviously, came from New Jersey. The governor’s office largely came out of the campaign. That is not unusual. We began very quickly to recruit other people.

The times sometimes drive what jobs seem important. One of the most important places to us seemed the Division of Purchase and Property because that is where there had been scandals through several administrations. So that is why I recruited Earl Josephson, who was the investigative reporter who had broken a lot of those stories to come.

The Division of Criminal Justice was also a key appointment as was deputy treasurer, where we put Cliff Goldman because he is the best and I knew him. He was my roommate at the Woodrow Wilson School. I was very lucky.

For higher education, Ralph Dungan was there, who I had recruited in the Hughes administration, for obscure reasons but mostly the fact that he was in the Kennedy White House, so I thought wow, you can get a guy was in the Kennedy White House. He was ambassador to Chile. He served for a year or two under Byrne, but they fell out personally. It would be interesting to ask Brendan why, I was never quite clear why. Personality more than anything else.

For human services, we appointed Ann Klein but there was a little controversy about that. People felt that she was not a team player—more of an advocate than a cabinet member for causes that were represented by that department: poor people, children,

abused people, mental health. And it was ultimately because Byrne bought the idea that we probably needed somebody who would make us all uncomfortable. And she did. She would fight for that department.

She had run against him in the primary, but I think first of all that the races were not personally nasty, the way they tend to be today. It is still somewhat unusual. I would make a generalization about politics, the people you really dislike are the people in your own party that you've fought, not the people in the other party. The people in the other party are sort of well, what do you expect. But this was not a case of that type.

### **On creating the Office of the Public Advocate**

One of our campaign pledges had been to create a Department of the Public Advocate. It wasn't a tough sell to fulfill after we'd gotten 70% of the vote. In the initial weeks things like that were easy.

### **On unclassified ("political") positions**

As treasurer, the first thing I did was fire all the unclassifieds. I actually had their checks delivered to my office and made them come to pick them up. Half of them didn't show, so they really had no-show jobs; they didn't even show up for the checks. The others I explained that I couldn't evaluate their performance, but I wasn't going to structure the department that way. And I never did fill most of those jobs.

One other Brendan Byrne anecdote from the transition came towards the end when I think he was really sick of me coming to him with things to do. There was somebody I really thought we should hire and he wouldn't hire him, and we went back and forth on it. He finally looked at me and said "Dick, I don't like his tie, okay? I don't like his tie." I don't know what the real reason was, but it was an intense period where you make a lot of decisions. And you have incomplete information.

### **On working on the Codey to Corzine transition in 2005/2006**

I realized something during the Corzine transition that I didn't know. Most transitions are organized before the election, and they involve a whole bunch of people who are more policy oriented or want to be involved and then there are the transition team and staff. And then you have this problem afterwards of figuring out what to do with the campaign staff and how to fit them together. But Corzine had no pre-election transition, so we had to put the transition together after the election, which delayed things. But the people we used were all the campaign people, because they were the ones who were there. I don't think the lost time was a loss at all, because we had people who really could cut it, who work seven days a week routinely, and don't think anything of working at night, who produce.

I was infinitely more prepared for the Byrne transition than for Corzine's. I had the disadvantage of not knowing the names and numbers this time. When I did it for Byrne, because I worked for Hughes and because a bunch of us had been around and I followed things closely, I knew who everybody was. When I did this for Corzine, I didn't know who anybody in the legislature was. I couldn't have told you who half the people in office were, let alone who should be kept or left. But on the other hand, there is something about having more experience and more patience.

## **Steven Perskie**

**First chief of staff to Governor Jim Florio, member of Florio's transition team, and former member of the state Assembly and Senate**

*Interviews on June 29, 2009 and March 28, 2013*

### **On his transition role during the campaign**

In the spring of '89, Florio was involved in the primary and he was doing very well. I got asked one day to do some research in terms of the possibilities for the structure of the governor's office. How should it be organized? How can it most effectively be done? Now, as it happened I was up for reappointment to the court, so I had to come to Trenton one day anyway to go to the Senate Judiciary Committee for my interview. While I was in the statehouse I went to see a friend of mine who was in the legislative services agency, one of the staff people, and asked him if he would help me collect research on how gubernatorial offices had initially been organized in new administrations, transition systems and whatnot.

He and I together did a lot of research. We looked into how the Kean administration had organized itself in 1981. We looked into how the Byrne administration had organized itself in 1973. I had watched Brendan Byrne do it through Dick Leone, and I had watched Tom Kean do it through Debbie Poritz and Lew Thurston and whatnot, so I had some sense of what might be involved, but it was off in the distance. Now I had to really get into it and figure it out and be in a position to make some suggestions to Florio, both with respect to how the transition period from November to January would work and then also how the governor's office itself should be organized and structured to start a new administration. And that's in fact significantly affected, or at least he and I believed that it should be, by what the agenda is. And if you'll remember at the time he got elected there were some compelling immediate interests. So we had to structure a system that would be prepared to deal with all that. So I spent June, July, into August thinking those things through, making memos, sending them to him through a third party, whatnot.

By the summer, he had won the primary. It was always my intention, which he clearly knew, that I would stay on the bench through at least the election and that after that it was entirely his call. If he wanted to invite me in to a position I would be prepared to accept it, but if he didn't that would be fine too, and I would stay on the bench. That was our understanding. Well, that was only good until about early August, because by early August he was so far ahead in the polls and his staff and organization so strongly believed that he would be elected that he called me up one day to tell me he had a problem. Nobody in his entire campaign knew anything about me, and that's how he and I both wanted it. I had responsibilities to the judiciary, and it could not be perceived that I was actively playing any role in the campaign. All I was really doing was serving as a think tank and advisor to him.

But by this time his staff is saying to him "Congressman, you're going to win this election in a few months. You've got to start thinking about how to organize your office. You've got to start thinking about how to run a transition. You've got to start thinking about all these things" that he had already been thinking about but hadn't told them. So he said "I need you to do me a favor. I've got a guy in the campaign that I trust, that I believe is trustworthy. With your permission I want to send him to see you. I want you to tell him everything you've been doing, and you keep doing what you've been doing, except that this time you'll do it through him and he'll do it. As far as the rest of my

organization is concerned he'll be the one that's doing it." Well, that was all right with me, so that's how I met Angelo Genova.

I think the world of Angelo. He came to see me at my house. We sat out on the deck one beautiful August day. I gave him all the memos that I had done. I told him what I was thinking. And he picked it all up, and as far as the rest of the Florio campaign organization was concerned he was doing all of this. And any time he had a question he would call me, and it worked fine for about four or five weeks.

But now it's Labor Day or shortly thereafter, and instead of being 10 points ahead in the polls, Florio is 15 points ahead in the polls. And now a whole lot of the people in his organization are coming to him and asking him about who's going to be doing what. "Okay, Angelo's working on a transition system, but who's going to be this and who's going to be that, and what's my role?" He needed somebody to be in a position to answer those questions, so I got another call. By that time my die was cast. I retired from the bench; I think it was the third or fourth of October, something like that. And I announced that I would be joining the Florio campaign as an advisor, which didn't fool and wasn't intended to fool anybody. Florio didn't want to be in a position and I didn't want him to be in a position where it looked to the outside world like was taking the election for granted and was already talking about how to organize his administration.

I opened up a very small office in Atlantic City: one desk, one telephone, one lamp. That was the office. And the telephone started to ring, and I spent the next month following up on all the things I had started with, getting the congressman to pretty much decide on how he wanted the transition organized, how he anticipated at that point the governor's office would be organized so that we could begin to think about personnel.

The day after the election I was named director of the transition.

### **On mixing a small group of advisors/staff and working with the legislature**

I would suggest, having watched closely the Byrne administration start, the Kean administration start and the Florio administration start, that what all three had in common was a very small group of people who had responsibility to engage a very precise agenda and who did so as best they could in the political environment in which they operated. Leadership has to start in a small quadrant and then you build from there. Kean did the same thing. Kean started with Lew Thurston and Justice Gary Stein.

Under Kean in '82 I was the majority leader of the Senate so even though I wasn't a Republican, I had an obvious responsibility to work with them and talk with them in those years to shape a program. And when they talked about the business of the governor's budget and taxes, I was in every meeting, as was Donnie DiFrancesco, who was the Republican minority leader. So there's always a mix between the governor's immediate staff and the wider outreach.

### **On appointments and personnel**

When I started getting calls from people interested in positions, I was a buffer but I also collected resumes and started to figure out who should go where. I want to make sure you understand that I didn't have nor did I expect to have any decision-making authority on all this. I was in a committee. Doug Berman was very actively involved at that point. Angelo Genova was involved. Karen Kessler was intimately involved in the process that I'm describing. I was a part of it and I was administratively in charge of it but not substantively.

One day, after whatever the discussions were, we were looking at possible attorneys general and it was one of the first offices we filled and Florio said to me, “Go see Bob Del Tufo for me” because he knew that I had a relationship with him. So I called Bob and I said, “I need to have dinner with you” and he was a lawyer down the street at the time and we had a terrific dinner.

A few days or weeks later, we were in a transition staff meeting one morning and we were all in there—Karen and Doug and Jon Shure and me and I don’t remember who else—and Florio says, “Okay. Raise your hand if you know who I’ve decided to appoint as the special prosecutor in the Department of Environmental Protection.” No hand went up and he said, “Okay. You’re all on record that you don’t know and that’s fine.” The purpose for that exercise was he was getting ready to announce it soon and he didn’t want to have any leaks.

My point in telling you this story all these years later is that I had as much to do with that selection as you did whereas on the other hand I was the one who was sent to get the attorney general. It varied from position to position. Judy Yaskin as DEP was a very complicated, very intricate process not for any reason having to do with her talents or abilities, which were easily recognized, but the whole environmental issue was a humongous political subject that involved an awful lot of input, a topic important to Florio and one with which he had considerable policy experience. It was one that he wasn’t about to turn over to anybody and I’m certainly not being critical; I respect that. From his point of view, that was as important an appointment as any that we were dealing with in the transition.

Some of them were his. George Zoffinger was his. Ray Bramucci was his. Some of the others were, “Go find me somebody.” I remember going to see Ed Koch. In my first Senate campaign I had hired a young guy to be the pollster named Doug Schoen. Well, Doug Schoen at that time was Ed Koch’s personal assistant or pollster or whatever and I called Doug and I said, “I need to meet with Ed Koch.” I went up with somebody else from the staff, I forget who, and spent a couple of hours one afternoon in City Hall in New York with Ed Koch. He was just ready to leave office—Dinkins had been elected—and I was shopping. I said, “You got somebody that has served you well in any particular position that might be interested in being considered for a position in New Jersey’s cabinet?” And somebody came out of that. All these years later I don’t remember who but at least one of the names came out of that.

My point is that with all of those positions—I think there were 16 or 17 cabinet positions, whatever it was—the process was different for each one of them.

## **Judy Shaw**

### **First chief of staff to Governor Christine Todd Whitman**

*Interview on October 24, 2012*

### **On Election Night and immediately starting the transition**

We [the Whitman campaign] were optimistic. We knew that we were trending up. I still think if you had gone around the room and taken a secret ballot, most people thought we didn’t have it, but we were really pleased with the campaign and how it had been run. And we were anxious, as most candidates are, for it to be over. It’s grueling. It is

absolutely grueling. I have so much respect for candidates at any level. I don't think the general public has a clue of what that takes and what they give up.

We had a series of rooms in a hotel in Princeton, and there was a war room where people were counting votes and it was, "We've got it. We don't." And, "Oh, my gosh, I thought that district was going to go for us and they didn't," and, "Where the hell are the numbers for Passaic County?" You're really just trying to cobble together as much information as you can get.

Lots of people were jockeying around thinking that they might, if she won, get different positions. She [Christine Todd Whitman] had been very, very judicious about not promising anybody anything. People had made their feelings known, but she wouldn't promise anybody anything. And there were requests for quid pro quos. She just didn't do that. She felt it was inappropriate. I think she had a list in the back of her head that maybe she and her husband, John, knew—maybe her brother, Dan. I don't think anybody else knew what that list was.

We were still doing numbers. We were going back and forth. I think it maybe was around 11:30 at night, and Governor Florio called to concede, which no one could believe. I mean, we were astonished that that call was coming in. And then it was tears, and hugs, and kisses, and it was kind of that Robert Redford [in the film *The Candidate*] moment about, "Oh, my God, what do we do now?" So it was a very, very exciting evening, but it was instantly, "What do we do tonight? What do we do tomorrow?" We knew there would be a series of national TV interviews very early in the morning. How do you tee up for that, and how do you start the transition?

People don't talk about transition often, you know. If I had my way, and if I were 40, I would run a transition firm, because I think that period of time is so critical, and I think most candidates don't think about it because they think it's untoward to talk about what will happen when I win. They'll hire a speech coach, a financial coach, a political coach. I mean, you have consultants for everything today, but often they don't have a consultant for the transition, and if they could start earlier—I think you'll see that now. It may be a little behind, below the radar, but that's pretty daunting that next morning when you have to just hit the ground running. Used to be you'd win and you'd go on vacation for two weeks. I mean, that was years ago. They don't do that anymore. You're expected to be on the job at the top of that escalator at New Jersey Transit shaking hands, saying thank you. And now you have to start to work with the outgoing governor, and that was certainly challenging.

### **On the stages and requirements of the transition**

Well, the transition is many things in nine weeks. We had to first put the transition staff in place, find an office, and staff it. This is probably not a good recommendation to an incoming governor because the skill set for a campaign is so different from the skill set to govern, but we said to everybody who had been in the campaign, "Every one of you will have a role in transition and will have an opportunity to work in the administration. You may not all work in the governor's office," but somewhere. They knew her. They were loyal to her, and it's hard to break that. So we had that whole corps come in and help us start with transition.

The biggest job was to identify a cabinet and high level positions that you were entitled to fill as the fruits of victory. We had to plan an inaugural, which is more than just a party. It really is a prescribed ceremony with a lot of history. That's why it's run by the military side, and we had to raise money to do that. We had a very small budget for

transition. We had to plan the first budget. We had to plan the first State of the State, and you had to do that in nine weeks, with the Ed Rollins dust up around it. So that was my job to manage that, and I think we were very successful. We had all but one cabinet officer selected [by the inauguration].

### **On diversity**

At the governor's direction, we had the most diverse cabinet. The very first day she announced me as the chief of staff, Lonna Hooks as secretary of state, and Debbie Poritz as the attorney general. And the secretary of state and the attorney general's office are the two Constitutional officers, so there was a panic among the Jerseyites that this was going to be an all-female cabinet. I mean, that's what they saw first, right, all three. And then it spun out from there, but it was very interesting that she put that right out there the first day and named Hazel Gluck and John Sheridan as the transition chairs.

### **On working with the Florio administration**

They helped, but I think it was very difficult. I mean, if you can imagine being in their shoes, they did not expect to lose, so I don't think they had any real plan B in place of what to do for a transition. I don't know that they had a transition director, or if they had thought about winding down major public policies, or letting certain contracts expire, or work you would want to get done before you turned it over to the next person. So that afternoon, the first day, John Sheridan and I walked into that governor's office. I think that's the hardest thing I had to do in the whole campaign. And we all know each other. I mean, we're all—you know, I'm a golfer, so we would say we're all inside the ropes, right? We have a lot of respect for each other. We've worked together. We've opposed each other, and you're walking in, and just no one thought they would lose or could lose, but I remember Rick Wright was the governor's chief of staff at the time. He got it. He got "The king is dead, long live the king." That's how it works, and he kind of grabbed hold of it, got the right people together, gave us access to things that we felt we needed access to.

When you run, you think you have a pretty good view of what the governorship is like, but you're not privy to a lot of the lawsuits. You're not privy to the numbers behind the numbers in a budget. You're not privy to some of the personnel matters that are festering. It's a very, very difficult time, but slowly but surely everybody got onboard and made available to us what we needed to do to make the transition. They had requests, as well. "Is there any chance that you could keep so and so on for another six months? They're about to vest and retire. They've done a great job. They're not a rabid partisan." So there was some of that trading back and forth. The governor said, "I'll finish up a couple of things, kind of hot potatoes, so they don't have to be handed to you." The governor-elect was asking for some things. Generally the governor-elect comes in and says, "I don't want you to let anymore contracts. I want you to stay all personnel decisions." You know, they want certain things to stop, and the governor, as was his prerogative, said "No" to a number of them. "No. I'm governor for another nine weeks, and I intend to govern during that period of time." So there's that kind of back and forth.

We have this great luxury in this country to turn over power without bloodshed, and without real recrimination, and it's a smaller level, believe me, at a governorship than, say, the U. S. presidency, but we're supposed to be able to turn over power in a statesperson like way. So you're working to do that on the outside, but inside, you



know, you're really dealing with peoples' lives, people who are coming into a new opportunity, people who are leaving earlier than they thought they would, or thought they should.

### **On the selection process for the cabinet**

This was in a day and age when so much of this was still done manually. We didn't have the advantage of some great computer system to feed it into. We were receiving resumes and recommendations from everybody near and far. And actually Joyce Himmelman, who became the director of administration, managed that. How she did it, I have no idea. But she would start to develop a list of candidates and then John Sheridan and Hazel Gluck would meet and they would start to go through them and vet them down. They would do some preliminary interviews. I would sit in on some, but not all of those. The governor took some criticism because you have a lobbyist doing this kind of work. But they had each been cabinet officers. They knew how government worked.

They would develop a number of names, and then the governor would generally interview three. I often sat in on those interviews and they did a great job for us. There was only one case where—you know it's very, very hard, it seems, to pick a treasurer, because a treasurer plays a very central role in dealing with the legislature. The budget is obviously your policy document. We were interviewing Brian Clymer for transportation. People had said he'd be great. And we brought him in, and were about halfway through the interview, and we're saying to each other—this was before we could text each other; there was no BlackBerry or Droid at the time—but the body language was, "What are we doing? This guy should be the treasurer. He's really great." So we switched gears and we started talking to him about being the treasurer. And we said, "Do you have any great recommendation to be the transportation commissioner?" He actually knew Frank Wilson and said, "I think you should interview Frank." They were a very funny team. They were like Frick and Frack together, but that's how that happened.

I may have mentioned this before, but we got to the end of transition and we had appointed all but one cabinet officer. We didn't have an insurance commissioner, surprise, surprise. You have to have a death wish to take that job anyway. But we had it all done, and some of the major appointments as well. For instance, there had never been a woman who was the head of the Port Authority. Some of the boards and commissioners were pretty powerful. So we asked Kathy Donovan if she would chair that board, the New York and New Jersey Port Authority. We asked Nancy Becker to be the vice-chair at the Turnpike Authority. I mean, women hadn't served in these positions before. We had the first Hispanic cabinet officer, and it was really, really exciting to do that. And you really felt like you were making a difference.

### **On the reaction to having a number of women in the Cabinet**

I think, in some ways, people were not surprised. Whitman had said she would work for diversity. You may remember one of her great slogans was, *One Family, Many Faces*, which I think is marvelous to this day, along with *New Jersey and You, Perfect Together*. I think there were some people who were worried about it, who had not worked with women before, who didn't quite know how to approach that many women in powerful positions, and we do work differently. I'm not saying better or worse than men, but it is different: different priorities, different approaches, different protocols. So we all had to learn.

### **On inviting Democrats to issue-focused roundtables**

The governor loved to hear the opposite position, so in the beginning, she did a number of round tables with different interest groups—for profit, not for profit, regional—by subject matter, and she always wanted both sides of the central question represented. I remember we did something on school takeover, and on education, and she had a lot of Democrats come, out of the Democratic cities. The Republicans were really miffed. They thought this was their opportunity. They were out for four years with a Democratic governor. They finally get a Republican governor and she invites all these Democrats in. Governor Whitman said, “I want to hear both sides, and I want it to happen in front of one another. I don’t want to get ping ponged. You come in and say, A, you come in and say, B, now I have to go back and check B and C, instead of having you at the same table.”

### **On dealing with the legislature**

The governor didn’t engage with the legislature the way they would have liked. Now in all fairness, the legislature would like 110 percent of any governor’s time. They’re a co-equal branch of government, we get that. But they would like to have her 110 percent of the time. But they don’t want her ten percent of the time. So there was a knock on us for not interfacing enough with them. And a part of that was not having been a part of the good old boys club, if you will. She didn’t win with the outright support of the structural party. She won with a lot of Independents and others, so she wasn’t really as beholden to the party and the structure as maybe former governors had been. So she didn’t feel the need to interface that often. But it was different, and I think good for the progress of the sexes and of how to govern with a very diverse group of people.

## **Karen Kessler**

**Finance director of Governor Jim Florio’s 1989 and 1993 campaigns and deputy director of Florio’s transition team**

*Interview on July 29, 2015*

### **On starting the transition process during the campaign**

Steve Perskie asked Kurt [Shadle] and me to take a train down to Washington to the National Governors Association. We never said we worked for Jim Florio when we got there. We said we were interested in doing research on how a transition is put together, and we left with a pile of documents. We came back and I called Steve and I said, “I’ve got it! I’ve got it!” Like this was the big plan. And I said, “I have a load of stuff here.” And he said, “That’s great. Let’s get started.”

One day, Perskie said to me, “Why don’t you Call Ed McGlynn [Chief of Staff to Governor Kean] and tell him that you’re going to begin to work on transition for Jim Florio, if he gets elected? Ask if he’d be willing to help you. Tell him that you understand that Jim Courter [Florio’s opponent] could get elected—he might have the same conversation with someone else—but that you wanted to be ready.” So I picked up the phone and I called down to Trenton, and I asked to speak to him, and I said my name, and I said I worked with Jim Florio. He answered the phone and I said the script exactly as I was told to say it. He said, “Sure. I’m happy to help.” He was such a gentleman. He was

lovely. I said to him, "I don't know exactly what I should be asking for." And he said, "The first thing you're going to need are the floor plans." And I said, "The floor plans for what?" And he said, "For the offices. The biggest issue you're going to have, Karen, is who wants to sit where, and those decisions better be made early. Otherwise, you're going to have some real fights on your hand." Then he said, "And then, once you get through that, talk to me about furniture." And I thought he was kidding, but he was not.

### **On personnel and appointments**

Steve said to me, "Why don't you start doing the personnel piece? Start thinking about people and talent. We've got a lot of jobs to fill. We've got a cabinet to fill." So we began talking about offices and who was in them, and what we were going to need, but none of these discussions were with Jim Florio. None. Steve was certainly the spoke in this wheel. He was the link to Florio. Kurt and I were doing most of the work that was going to lay the groundwork for the transition itself. We were looking for office space. We went and looked at all kinds of office space. We talked about transition budgets. We talked about what some of the jobs were going to be.

There was heavy speculation within the campaign that I had moved from doing fundraising to quietly working on the transition. I started to be one of the people that was getting, you know, "I'd really like to be," and, "I don't know if you have my résumé," and, "I heard that you might be-- and can I just tell you that I really think that this is something I'd be interested in?" And I just would take it all and nod, and say thank you, and not confirm anything, and say to Steve, "We're up to about six treasurers now, and about fourteen banking commissioners."

Steve and I plotted out what we thought were the top 30 to 40 positions. We went that deep, because they were not all just at the front office; they were throughout, plus chairs of boards and commissions. We sat down and we began to talk about who was in those positions now, what kind of skill sets we thought we needed. And then I turned to Steve, and said, "You and I both know Jim Florio well enough to know that he's got some really strong opinions on these folks. So maybe we should find out if everybody who wants to be treasurer is really going to be treasurer, if everyone who wants to be whatever is going to really be whatever." But Jim never really sat down with us to really, really talk about it until right after the campaign.

The morning after he won, we announced the transition team. I remember then sitting down with the governor and Steve Perskie and we had the Cabinet list we had put together, and the governor said, "All right, the following are all taken." And he just checked them off. He said, "Attorney general: done." I said, "What do you mean, done? We didn't even interview anyone." He didn't even interview him. He looked at me and said, "You're *not* interviewing anyone, Karen. It's Bob Del Tufo." I mean, it was just *done*. And I said, "Oh, okay." Then, "DEP: done." "Who is it?" "Judith Yaskin." In his mind, he already knew a number of the big positions—cabinet positions, chief of staff, the people close to him.

After he took about a third of the positions off the table, he said we better find people right away for the rest of them. I did it the way I knew to do it, from my New York life. I called headhunters and I said, "We're looking for executive search consultants who would work pro bono and help us put together people for this government." And that's how we began to find people, and that's how we found John Ellis, and that's how we found Tom Downs. They were referred to us by executive recruiters.

### **On job applications, recommendation letters, and holdover employees**

We worked in office space dedicated to the transition. Kurt and I had an office where we did personnel. We had three locks on the door. We had all the résumés everywhere. We had all the letters. We had letters of recommendation. There's a story—and I have shared it with him, so I don't think it's tales out of school—but there was one state senator who was one of the big forwarders of résumés. All the time. The best was, I get this letter from him, directed to me and CCed to the person he was recommending, and it says, "If you want to hire a banking commissioner who's going to be the best in the world, and the most qualified, and the most"— he writes this glowing letter about this guy, and then at the top, there's a yellow sticky note, and it says, "Karen, ignore the letter." There were many others. There was one guy who wrote in and talked about his qualifications to be attorney general, before Bob Del Tufo was announced. And at the bottom of the letter, it said, "And if this is not possible, I really would like to know, could you build an interchange at Exit 9, off the Route 1, where I'm going to be buying property?" I mean, some of these letters were almost comical.

There were also letters and phone calls from a lot of people who worked for Tom Kean that said, "I have six more months until my pension vests." "I have three more months until my pension vests." And I'll just say, as opposed to a lot of governors since then, I would go in with a list of people that had six months or less until their pensions would vest, and I would say to Jim, "What do you want to do?" And almost every one, he said, "Let them stay, let them vest. They put in their time." In '93, when we lost, that was not the philosophy. The philosophy was, "Everybody turn in your resignation the next morning."

### **On the advantages of not wanting a role in the administration**

I think the fact that I wasn't planning to stay much longer probably made it easier for a lot of people to feel comfortable about me. It made it easier to do my job especially because most people knew I didn't want to stay. Throughout the entire campaign, I'd made it clear that this wasn't for me. I kept saying, "I want to have another career. I don't want to do this." So I think people were well aware that I didn't plan on staying.

### **On donor influence**

There was almost no interest ever paid by Jim Florio as to who his donors were and what they were interested in. He didn't care. He didn't really remember. One of my favorite stories was, we were on our way to meet a guy and the governor says to me, "He's one of my very biggest financial supporters." I turned and said, "No, he's not." And he said, "Didn't he give me a lot of money?" I said, "No, he didn't give you *any* money." "Really?" I said, "Yeah, really." He just didn't focus on that or use it as a basis to make appointments. I got angry, livid phone calls from people who said, "What do you mean? I was one of your supporters. I had a fundraiser at my house. I'm not going to get to be the lottery commissioner?" Those phone calls were just incessant for years.

### **On the end of transition and the importance of office size**

The transition didn't end at inauguration, so I didn't leave immediately. The transition went on until probably the end of February, because there were still so many positions left to fill. There was still budget left. So I kept my office, but most of the staff that had gotten jobs had moved in the first day that they could. And many of them were unhappy with their office space. But the interesting thing is Jim Florio took a small office

that was his, and next to him was another small office that was his chief of staff, and then there was this cabinet room. So he worked in this tiny office, and so if there ever were meetings with more than three people, you couldn't even have it in his office, and he liked it just like that. He was not into groupthink. He knew what he wanted to do, so it didn't matter to him that the office was small. And so it was really easy to say to other people, "You're not getting the big office," because if the big guys get the small office, it was a lot easier to tell everybody else that they weren't getting the big office.

So I stayed in the job till about the end of February. And then, I went to Steve Perskie—who was, at that point, chief of staff—and I said, "Listen. We're done. cabinet's filled. You've got people. We have some people from New Jersey, some people from outside of New Jersey. We have people who have done interesting things. You're all happy."

### **Lewis Thurston III**

#### **First chief of staff to Governor Tom Kean**

*Interview on February 2, 2006*

#### **On the impact of the uncertain election results on the transition**

I went to bed on election night very late, got up the next morning and called Tom Kean at his home. I said, "I have a transition report that I prepared along with Gary Stein." It was a document that we had put together over the summer to outline all the things that he'd have to do in the transition if he won the election. I said, "I have this transition report. Do you want it now or what should I do with it?" And he said, "Bring it over to the house." I was in Parsippany and I drove over to Livingston with the campaign transition report in my hand. Chris Daggett and I spent the whole day with the governor and his wife and some personal friends. We were still uncertain as to who had won the election but we felt fairly confident that he was going to win.

Shortly after that, Kean decided to put a transition committee together. He asked Nick Brady and me to be co-chairs of the transition committee. I worked in that role of chair of the transition right up until the governor took office, getting very little sleep and being very, very busy in a very intensive effort.

The result was so close a recount was authorized. So as they went through that process, we had a bifurcated transition in the sense that we had a team of people, I believe led by Roger Bodman, who had been the campaign manager, and by some attorneys, including Irwin Kimmelman, who later became the attorney general. They were working on the recount and making sure that everything was done so that the recount would come out in the governor's favor. At the same time, Nick Brady and I and others were working on putting the administration together with the transition. That was our job. So we had parallel efforts that were going forth at the same time. It actually worked pretty well.

#### **On personnel and the use of a search firm**

I was interested in the chief of staff position. I thought it would be something that I was well prepared for because I had worked in state government and politics. And the governor, at his house one day, asked if I would take that position. And I readily accepted it.

That was the beginning of staffing the new administration and the governor's office. Our job was to put together a new administration with 20 different cabinet officers and all the other people that had to staff it.

The governor knew a man in Morris County, I believe, who ran a search firm. He indicated he wanted to use that firm to help us identify some executives that might be potential cabinet officers. So we started that effort. At the same time, we had a personnel committee within the transition committee that also worked to identify people who were well known to us through politics, who had some political experience or experience in the subject areas for the various cabinet positions. We worked together. There were a few candidates who were identified by the search firm who we eventually hired. But most of the people did not go through that process. Most of the cabinet members were people that we had some knowledge of, who had worked in the campaign, that kind of thing.

### **On having Democrats in the cabinet and reaching out to the Democratic legislature**

We actually had three Democrats among the cabinet members: our treasurer, Ken Biederman; our human services director, George Albanese; and our public advocate, Joe Rodriguez. That was unusual because usually you would just pick all of the people from your own party and not reach out to others. But we felt it was a good thing to do. And it turned out to be very good.

Ken Biederman was first identified by the recruiting firm. He was working in the state of Delaware. George Albanese was somebody who was identified to us, as I recall, by Tony Cicciatello, who was a close friend of the governor and a key member of the personnel committee. Joe Rodriguez was somebody I suggested. He had been the president of the state bar association and a well-known South Jersey person. He was Hispanic as well, which was good.

We started out with the Democratic Party controlling both houses of the legislature. It became clear that we needed to work closely with the people who were controlling the legislature on legislation. The governor had served in the assembly for a number of years and had been Speaker of the assembly. So he knew a lot of the people personally. And that was very, very helpful. I also had known a lot of them through my previous service. The governor established a good rapport with Alan Karcher, who was the assembly Speaker, and Carmen Orecchio who was the president of the Senate. Carmen Orecchio was from the same county as the governor, Essex County. And Alan Karcher and the governor, while they publicly battled over lots of issues, shared lots of other interests—things like opera, books that they had read and various other kinds of personal interests.

### **On individual appointees**

We felt good about the cabinet. I think the governor was pleased with the results, feeling that we had good people. And we had a diversity of people.

When the governor first got started, he went to Washington to meet with President Reagan and Nick Brady and I accompanied him. We went down the night before and we were sitting in a hotel talking. And we started talking about different cabinet officers and what we were going to do. I said to the governor, "I have an idea which you may think is crazy but listen to my argument. I think that we should appoint Roger Bodman labor commissioner." Bodman had been chairman of the campaign, but he

was only 28 or 29 and lacked a whole lot of business and management experience. The governor said, "Labor commissioner? Why that?" I said, "Here's my reasoning: he's very good at political negotiations. Labor unions negotiate all the time. He'll establish good rapport with the labor unions. And he's too young and inexperienced at this point to take on a major management role with a larger department." The governor said, "Well, I'll think about it." Shortly after that, the governor named Roger Bodman to be the labor commissioner. Subsequently, Roger got promoted to be the transportation commissioner when he had more management experience.

Another key cabinet office was the commissioner of transportation. From day one, my candidate for that position was John Sheridan, who had served as my counsel in the senate when I was executive director of the senate. I knew John very well. He knew transportation issues. He knew the political system. The governor said, "Well, I'll think about that." But he also said, "I want you to go out and find a transportation expert, someone who was like former Commissioner Lou Gambaccini." I scoured the country looking for a transportation expert, interviewed people in New York hotel rooms and other places and really was looking for this kind of expert who would fit well in New Jersey. And we didn't find anybody. Time went on and we had filled all the other positions. This was the very last position we had in the cabinet to be filled. So one day, the governor said to me, "We have to fill this position right away. I'll go with your guy, Sheridan." I said, "Okay, you won't regret it." About a year later, the governor told me, "You know, I think we have a very good cabinet but I think John Sheridan's the best guy we have in the cabinet."

There is an interesting story about the education commissioner spot. The governor had a very strong personal interest, so we had a multi-layer interview process for commissioner of education, which involved six people from within the administration. It got narrowed down to three final candidates. I said to the governor, "We have three candidates. What do you want to do at this point?" He said, "Well, give me a recommendation. Talk to the other five people and give me a recommendation as to which of the three you think is best and I'll interview that person." So I went to the other five people, all of whom were prominent people within the campaign and the transition. And it turned out that I couldn't get a consensus. I had two votes for each of the three candidates among the six of us. So I went back and reported this to Tom and he said, "I'll interview all three. I have a strong interest in education." So he did. He interviewed all three and he decided that he wanted to appoint a fellow named Ron Lewis, who was the deputy commissioner of education in Pennsylvania at that point. We made a public announcement that Ron was going to be the new commissioner of education. And a week later, Bob Braun, an education columnist for the *Star-Ledger*, wrote a story saying that Mr. Lewis had plagiarized his PhD dissertation, which, as you can imagine, created a real furor. So what to do at this point? Chris Daggett, who was the deputy chief of staff, had a master's degree in education. I said, "Chris, your job now is to go read the dissertation." So he went out the next day and found the dissertation, read it, came back and said, "Braun was right. He did plagiarize part of the dissertation." I said, "Oh, what do we do now?" So the governor said, "I want you to go talk to Mr. Lewis." So I got on a helicopter with Gary Stein and Chris Daggett and we went to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and we met with Mr. Lewis. And we said, "This is a real difficult situation." He at that point understood that and readily decided to withdraw as a candidate. That was not a pleasant thing to have to go through. We came back and announced to the public that Mr. Lewis had withdrawn. So now, we still need a commissioner of education. So I said, "Governor, what do you want to do now?" And he said, "Well, I'll go with one of the other two candidates." It turned out the one that I had favored was Saul Cooperman. So I called Saul up and told him that while he was

not our first choice—everybody knew that—he was our choice at that point. And he readily accepted to be commissioner of education.

Environmental protection was also interesting. A lot of people didn't realize that Tom Kean, while an assemblyman, had sponsored the legislation that created the state Department of Environmental Protection. So he had a very strong interest. We had a number of candidates that were suggested for the position. And there was one candidate named Bob Hughey who was originally suggested to us by Senator Bill Gormley from Atlantic County. Bob was from the southern part of the state. So, we called him in for an interview. And Tony Ciccatiello and I interviewed Mr. Hughey. Unlike so many of the other candidates who wore their interview suits and were all dressed up, Mr. Hughey came in dressed very casually and sat there and was very informal compared to everybody else. Tony and I asked him lots of questions. We knew the subject pretty well. We kept getting one good answer after another. He was excellent. So we thanked him and we said, "We'll talk to the governor and we'll get back to you." We went to see the governor and said, "We have this guy from Atlantic County who was very informal, very different than a lot of the other people but I think you'll like him." And so, we recommended that he interview him. The governor interviewed him and we hired him. And he was a very good environmental protection commissioner.

I'm not sure the other processes were so notable. We had some people who had come from business. We had the attorney general who was an outstanding lawyer in Essex County whom the governor knew very well. He had also served in the assembly with him. Most of the other picks were people who the governor knew. One person who was not well known but the governor knew him because he was from Essex County was Len Coleman, who we hired as the energy commissioner. He started out as the energy commissioner and he didn't have a strong background in energy. But he was a person who had a lot of energy and he was younger. He was interested in learning. He had good insights into the political process. And after a while, he moved over from the energy job to be commissioner of community affairs. And I think he was more comfortable doing that where he had a chance to interact with people throughout the state in various communities and serve the governor well in that respect.

### **On whether cabinet members were given free rein to hire staff**

It was a balance. We tried to take people who had been supportive of the governor through the campaign and people he knew from the legislature and other areas and put them in key positions throughout each of the departments. So in some cases, we suggested that they be hired by the various cabinet members. In other cases, the cabinet members knew key people in business and academia and other areas and they wanted to bring those people in. So it was a combination.

### **On campaign employees entering the administration**

One of the challenges you have at the beginning of any administration is that in a campaign, you have lots of people who at various levels and in various ways help the governor get elected. And they all have an interest in pursuing things they want after the campaign is over. They all think that their part of getting the governor elected was the most important. And that includes some of the people that come into the administration who might come into cabinet positions, subcabinet positions, work in the governor's office and so forth. Coordinating all of that is a major task. And the people who had worked closely in the campaign, who were used to talking one on one to the governor regularly, couldn't quite do that when it came to a large administration



where you had all the tremendous demands of other things and other people.

### **On working with Governor Byrne's administration during the transition**

During the campaign, there were some sharp exchanges between Governor Kean and Governor Byrne in the sense that they disagreed on programs. Governor Kean was critical of the Byrne administration in a number of ways. But after the election, Governor Byrne was very gracious and helpful. We had a series of meetings. We probably had about 10 different meetings, which included Governor Byrne and his chief of staff, Harold Hodes, and Governor Kean and myself. And we met at all kinds of places. We met at Monmouth Racetrack. We met at the Meadowlands Sports Complex. Whenever it fit into the Governor's schedules, we would meet. And we might meet for an hour or we might meet for four or five hours. And we discussed everything and anything. I think Governor Kean felt and I certainly felt that those meetings were extremely helpful. We learned an awful lot. We got a good running start and we had a good cooperative basis that I think continues right to this day. Governor Byrne and Governor Kean have a very good relationship.

### **On Cabinet meetings**

There were regular cabinet meetings. But I think the general public and other people in politics have a different impression of what cabinet meetings are than what the reality is. For the most part, cabinet meetings were an opportunity for the governor and his chief staff people to convey information to the cabinet members and make policy clear to them. It was not a place where policy was really discussed at length. The cabinet members, for the most part, would sit and listen. I think that's typically the case in most cabinet meetings, whether at the federal level or in New Jersey or other places. You have a lot of opportunities to work with people on policy in individual areas. But when you collectively get together 20 or more people with diverse subject areas, it's a little hard to have a real policy discussion on a particular subject. So it was more information conveying and policy direction from the governor.

## APPENDIX III: TIMELINES OF PAST NEW JERSEY TRANSITIONS

### Governor Brendan Byrne to Governor Thomas Kean

NOVEMBER 3, 1981	The New Jersey gubernatorial contest between Tom Kean and Congressman Jim Florio is too close to call. Unofficial results show Kean with a slight lead, but, with a recount likely, neither candidate claims victory. Kean does state that he will begin thinking about ideas for his potential administration.
NOVEMBER 6	With the latest results showing Kean with a 1,726 lead out of 2.8 million votes cast, Kean and Florio prepare for a likely court fight.
NOVEMBER 9	With all but two counties having officially submitted vote totals, Kean's lead stands at 1,732 votes. Florio considers an official call for a recount and names William Hamilton chair of his potential transition team. Governor Brendan Byrne makes transition facilities and police protection available to both Kean and Florio.
NOVEMBER 10	With all but one county officially counted, Kean claims victory and names a 16-member committee to lead his transition. Florio calls the victory claim "presumptuous" due to the historically thin margin and does not concede.
NOVEMBER 12	Florio petitions for a recount of all votes cast in the gubernatorial election.
NOVEMBER 13	While Kean meets with his transition team, a panel of three judges approves Florio's petition and orders a statewide recount.
NOVEMBER 18	The statewide county-by-county recount of gubernatorial votes begins.
NOVEMBER 30	With the recount almost complete and Kean still in the lead, Florio concedes the election, officially making Kean the governor-elect.
DECEMBER 1	Governor Thomas Kean is officially certified as the winner of the election by a total of 1,797 votes and, in his first speech as official governor-elect, suggests he will not seek an increase in the income tax.
DECEMBER 3	Kean names Lewis Thurston chief of staff.
DECEMBER 14	Kean makes his first cabinet appointment, nominating Irwin Kimmelman as attorney general.
DECEMBER 15	Kean adds to his staff, naming Carl Golden press secretary.
JANUARY 12, 1982	Kean nominates Jane Burgio secretary of state, the first woman in state history to hold the position.

JANUARY 13	Kean nominates Kenneth Biederman state treasurer. Biederman was originally suggested to Kean for the position by an executive search firm. He also nominates his former campaign manager, Roger Bodman, as labor commissioner.
JANUARY 14	Kean adds to his cabinet, nominating Michael Horn as banking commissioner. He also fills a staff position, appointing Gary Stein director of the Office of Policy and Planning.
JANUARY 17	The <i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> reports that Kean has submitted nominations for only 6 of the 20 cabinet positions. The delay is explained primarily by the lost time at the beginning of the transition when it was unclear who had won the election.
JANUARY 19	Thomas Kean is inaugurated as governor of New Jersey.
JANUARY 20	In his first executive order, Kean extends for four months an emergency order allowing the state to lodge prisoners in empty cells in county prisons.
JANUARY 28	Kean announces he will hold off before nominating commissioners for the Departments of Health, Transportation, and Human Services. He also announces he will support retaining Secretary of Agriculture Phillip Alampi if that is the Board of Agriculture's recommendation. Kean also indicates that he has made (or is close to) decisions on appointments for the Departments of Education, Higher Education, Defense, Corrections, and Insurance, but did not announce names. He would later retain Bill Fauver (corrections) and Edward Hollander (higher education). By mid-February, he had appointed Maj. Gen. Francis Gerard as defense chief of staff and Joseph Murphy insurance commissioner. Saul Cooperman was sworn in as education commissioner in July.

As of February 1, Kean had not named a commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. This department had been created the previous year by Governor Brendan Byrne, but had not been staffed. Kean later chose Borden Putnam to be the department's first commissioner. He also had not chosen commissioners for the Departments of Transportation, Health, Human Services, and Education.

## Governor Thomas Kean to Governor James Florio

NOVEMBER 7, 1989	Congressman Jim Florio is elected governor of New Jersey.
NOVEMBER 8	Florio begins “orderly transition” by naming Doug Berman, Steven Perskie, Brenda Bacon, Karen Kessler, Angelo Genova, and Jon Shure to officially head the transition team. He also states auto insurance reform will be a priority, begins day at 7:30 am shaking hands of commuters, and meets privately with Democratic leadership of the assembly and senate.
NOVEMBER 9	Florio and outgoing Governor Tom Kean meet privately for 90 minutes to discuss transition. Perskie is officially announced as transition liaison with Kean administration.
NOVEMBER 15	Transition team officially begins operations and moves into office space. Berman discusses plans for administration’s first day and the priorities of the transition team.
NOVEMBER 28	Florio names a 64-person transition committee, led by honorary chairmen (and former governors) William Cahill and Brendan Byrne. The committee is to participate in roundtable policy discussions and assist in seeking personnel. Unlike previous transitions, the committee is not broken down into specific task forces.
DECEMBER 9	Florio nominates Robert Del Tufo as attorney general.
DECEMBER 12	Florio announces three more cabinet nominees: Judith Yaskin as commissioner of environmental protection, Melvin Primas as commissioner of community affairs, and Scott Weiner as president of the Board of Public Utilities.
DECEMBER 19	Florio nominates Ray Bramucci labor commissioner and George Zoffinger commerce, energy, and economic development commissioner.
JANUARY 2, 1990	Florio names Joan Haberle secretary of state and Andrew Weber head of the personnel department.
JANUARY 4	Florio names Doug Berman state treasurer.
JANUARY 7	<i>Star-Ledger</i> reports that Florio is planning a restructuring of the State House, moving the treasurer (and more staff) into the State House and moving the secretary of state to a different building.
JANUARY 8	Florio announces most high-level staff positions en masse, including naming Steve Perskie chief of staff. He also names Brenda Bacon chief of management and planning; David Applebaum executive assistant to the governor; Jon Shure director of communications; John Sweeney counsel; Jamie Fox deputy chief of staff; Carl Van Horn director of policy; Greg Lawler counsel for legislation and policy; and Emma Byrne press secretary.

JANUARY 10	Florio informs Democratic county chairs that he will name Philip Keegan as next chairman of the Democratic State Committee.
JANUARY 11	Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously approves the first 7 of Florio's cabinet nominations, including Del Tufo (atty gen); Haberle (sec of state); Berman (treasurer); Yaskin (DEP); Weiner (BPU); Primas (community affairs); and Weber (personnel).
JANUARY 14	Florio and his wife Lucinda hold a private reception for the legislature at Drumthwacket. It is part of a week-long schedule of inauguration events.
JANUARY 16	James Florio is officially inaugurated as governor of New Jersey. Final preparations and renovations continue at the governor's office.
JANUARY 17	<i>Star-Ledger</i> reports that search for the department of transportation commissioner continues with interview of at least one candidate.
JANUARY 19	Florio elevates James Zazzali to chairman of the state commission of investigation (SCI).
JANUARY 24	Florio signs an executive order establishing an environmental prosecutor and names Steve Madonna to the position.
JANUARY 25	Florio approves Arthur Brown to continue as secretary of agriculture.
FEBRUARY 1	<i>Star-Ledger</i> names a candidate under consideration to be commissioner of human services, but notes that legislative leaders John Lynch and Richard Codey would like Acting Commissioner William Waldman to keep the job.

NOTE: As of February 1, Florio had not officially announced nominees to lead the following departments: Banking; Education; Health; Higher Education; Human Services; Insurance; Transportation; and Public Advocate.

### **Governor James Florio to Governor Christine Todd Whitman**

NOVEMBER 3, 1993	Christine Todd Whitman is elected governor of New Jersey.
NOVEMBER 4	Governor-elect Whitman announces her first personnel decisions, appointing Judy Shaw as chief of staff and Peter Verniero as chief counsel. Shaw is also named executive director of Whitman's transition office. Whitman embarks on a "thank you" bus tour through New Jersey.

NOVEMBER 9	At the Sperling Breakfast in Washington, D.C., Whitman campaign strategist Ed Rollins claims the campaign paid black ministers in New Jersey to suppress voter turnout. Rollins would recant the statement the next day and there was no evidence any such payments were made, but the ensuing controversy and multiple investigations required the attention of the governor-elect and her team throughout the transition effort.
NOVEMBER 17	Whitman selects Nancy Risque Rohrbach to handle the transition of New Jersey's Washington office.
NOVEMBER 21	Whitman names Hazel Gluck and John Sheridan to co-chair the transition. She also announces the creation of 23 departmental transition teams, with over 300 members. Each team is led by a chair and two co-chairs.
DECEMBER 13	Whitman announces her first cabinet nomination: Leo Klagholz as education commissioner.
DECEMBER 15	Whitman nominates Deborah Poritz to become the state's first female attorney general.
DECEMBER 16	Whitman names Jane Kenny chief of policy and planning.
DECEMBER 22	Whitman nominates Lonna Hooks as secretary of state.
DECEMBER 27	Whitman announces her endorsement of Arthur Brown to continue for another term as agriculture secretary.
DECEMBER 28	Whitman nominates Linda Anselmini as commissioner of the Department of Personnel.
JANUARY 3, 1994	In an appointment Whitman had previously said would be her most important, she nominates Brian Clymer to be state treasurer.
JANUARY 10	Whitman announces she will restore the Board of Public Utilities to cabinet-level status and names Herbert Tate, Jr., chairman.
JANUARY 14	Whitman announces she will retain William Waldman as commissioner of the Department of Human Services and nominates Frank Wilson as transportation commissioner.
JANUARY 16	Whitman nominates Robert Shinn commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.
JANUARY 17	Whitman makes two more cabinet nominations: Harriet Derman as commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs and Gil Medina as commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Economic Development.
JANUARY 19	Christine Todd Whitman is officially inaugurated as New Jersey's first female governor.

JANUARY 22	Whitman nominates Elizabeth Randall banking commissioner. Whitman also names Len Fishman acting health commissioner. Fishman would later become commissioner after legislation was passed allowing a non-doctor to be commissioner of the Department of Health.
JANUARY 24	Whitman nominates Paul Glazar adjutant general and commissioner of the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs.

As of February 1, Whitman had not named nominees for commissioner of the Department of Insurance, higher education chancellor, or public advocate. On March 15, 1994, in her first Budget Address, Whitman would push for the elimination of the Department of Higher Education and the Office of the Public Advocate.

### **Governor Donald DiFrancesco to Governor James McGreevey**

NOVEMBER 6, 2001	James McGreevey is elected governor of New Jersey.
NOVEMBER 16	The newly-elected governor takes the unusual action of publicly wading into a contest among the Democrats in the assembly to choose a new Speaker. McGreevey backed second-term Assemblyman Albio Sires, who triumphed over Assembly Minority Leader and former Speaker Joe Doria, who had been considered the favorite.
NOVEMBER 21	McGreevey names a total of 88 chairs and co-chairs to run his transition team, with Congressman Robert Menendez serving as transition chair.
DECEMBER 3	Governor Donald DiFrancesco announces a partial state hiring freeze and cuts \$32 million dollars in funding. He also announces that acting state treasurer Peter Lawrance will meet twice a week with McGreevey's transition team members. McGreevey's team and DiFrancesco's team disagree as to the extent of the state's budget shortfall.
DECEMBER 7	McGreevey's wife, Dina Matos McGreevey, gives birth to a baby girl.
DECEMBER 20	While not making an official announcement, McGreevey indicates at a Christmas event for Woodbridge Democrats that John McCormac will be state treasurer and Albert Kroll will be labor commissioner.
JANUARY 5, 2002	In his first official cabinet announcement, McGreevey nominates David Samson as attorney general.
JANUARY 7	McGreevey officially announces three more cabinet nominations: William Librera as education commissioner, Albert Kroll as labor commissioner, and Ida Castro as personnel commissioner.

JANUARY 8	McGreevey nominates Clifton R. Lacy commissioner of the Department of Health and Senior Services.
JANUARY 9	McGreevey continues to fill his cabinet, making three nominations: Susan Bass Levin as commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs; Bradley Campbell as commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection; and John McCormac as state treasurer. He also names Jim Davy chief of management, a newly-created staff position. The new position is part of a change in the structure of the governor's office, reducing power previously held by the chief of staff and the chief of policy.
JANUARY 10	McGreevey nominates Rev. William Watley to head the Commerce and Economic Growth Commission, Republican Holly Bakke as banking and insurance commissioner, and Col. Glenn Rieth as adjutant general. He also announces three senior staff positions to join Chief of Management Jim Davy: Chief of Staff Gary Taffet, Chief of Policy and Communications Jo Astrid Glading, and Chief Counsel Paul Levinsohn.
JANUARY 11	McGreevey continues a busy week of announcements, nominating Jeanne Fox president of the Board of Public Utilities and Regena Thomas as secretary of state, and approving of Charles Kuperus for agricultural secretary.
JANUARY 13	McGreevey restores the Office of the Public Advocate, a cabinet-level position that had been eliminated by Governor Christine Todd Whitman, and names Seema Singh to the post.
JANUARY 15	McGreevey officially resigns as mayor of Woodbridge and is inaugurated as governor of the State of New Jersey.

As of 2/1/02, McGreevey had not nominated commissioners for the Departments of Transportation, Corrections, and Human Services.

### **Governor Richard Codey to Governor Jon Corzine**

NOVEMBER 8, 2005	Jon Corzine is elected governor of New Jersey.
DECEMBER 1	Corzine names adviser Tom Shea chief of staff.
DECEMBER 9	Corzine announces he will appoint Representative Robert Menendez to take the U.S. Senate seat he is vacating.
DECEMBER 14	Corzine names federal prosecutor Stuart Rabner chief counsel.



<b>DECEMBER 20</b>	Corzine makes a number of staff appointments including: Maggie Moran, Patti McGuire, and Jeanne LaRue as deputy chiefs of staff; Anthony Coley as press secretary; Ivette Mendez as communications director; and Heather Howard as chief policy counsel.
<b>JANUARY 3, 2006</b>	Corzine makes his first cabinet decisions, nominating Nina Mitchell Wells as secretary of state and Maj. Gen. Glenn Reith to continue as adjutant general.
<b>JANUARY 5</b>	Corzine continues to add to his cabinet, nominating Ronald Chen to be public advocate and Lisa Jackson to be commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.
<b>JANUARY 9</b>	In more cabinet announcements, Corzine nominated Kevin Ryan to be commissioner of the Department of Human Services and announces Fred Jacobs would remain as commissioner of the Department of Health and Senior Services.
<b>JANUARY 10</b>	Corzine announces he will conduct nationwide searches for commissioners for the Departments of Education and Corrections, leaving acting commissioners in place under after the inauguration. Both acting commissioners—Lucille Davy in education and George Hayman in corrections—would later be nominated and confirmed as commissioners of their respective departments.
<b>JANUARY 11</b>	Corzine nominates Zulima Farber as attorney general.
<b>JANUARY 12</b>	Corzine nominates Bradley Abelow as state treasurer.
<b>JANUARY 16</b>	Corzine announces that three more members of Governor Richard Codey's cabinet will remain in their positions: Commerce Secretary Virginia Bauer; Agriculture Secretary Charles Kuperus; and Personnel Commissioner Rolando Torres.
<b>JANUARY 17</b>	Corzine is inaugurated as governor of New Jersey. On this day, he also nominates Susan Bass Levin as commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, a position she had held under Governors Jim McGreevey and Dick Codey before leaving to join the Corzine campaign. He also announced David Socolow would serve as acting commissioner of the Department of Labor. Socolow would later (in June 2006) be nominated and confirmed as commissioner.
<b>JANUARY 18</b>	Corzine reappoints Jeanne Fox to be president of the Board of Public Utilities.
<b>JANUARY 31</b>	Corzine nominates Kris Kolluri as commissioner of the Department of Transportation and Steven Goldman as commissioner of the Department of Banking and Insurance. He also nominates Gary Rose to be the head of the newly-created Governor's Office of Economic Growth.

As of February 1, 2006, Corzine had not announced nominees for commissioners for the Departments of Education, Corrections, and Labor. Later in the year, he would nominate all three of the officials he had named on an acting basis to serve as commissioner and all three would be confirmed by the state senate.

### Governor Jon Corzine to Governor Christopher Christie

NOVEMBER 3, 2009	Chris Christie is elected governor of New Jersey, defeating incumbent Jon Corzine.
NOVEMBER 4	Christie and Corzine have a phone conversation to discuss the transition.
NOVEMBER 5	Christie meets with his transition team leaders, Bill Palatucci, David Samson, and Jeffrey Chiesa.
NOVEMBER 11	Christie officially announces his full transition team. He names ten “transition leaders” to provide policy guidance, a significantly smaller team than those of previous governors-elect. The team includes two Democrats.
NOVEMBER 12	Christie and his transition team leaders meet with outgoing Governor Jon Corzine and members of Corzine’s departure transition team led by outgoing Chief of Staff Rick Wright.
NOVEMBER 16	Christie and two members from his transition task force on taxes and the state budget meet with treasury officials and declare that the budget shortfall is more serious than they had expected.
NOVEMBER 25	As the projected budget shortfall hits \$400 million, Christie and Corzine work to freeze state spending and find additional cuts, while clashing over emergency funding for food banks and soup kitchens.
DECEMBER 1	Christie criticizes the Corzine administration for what he deems inaccurate budget projections, “unqualified” nominations, and lame duck proposals he calls inappropriate.
DECEMBER 3	Christie fills four key staff positions: Rich Bagger as chief of staff; Jeff Chiesa as chief counsel; Bill Stepien as deputy chief of staff; and Kevin O’Dowd as deputy chief counsel.
DECEMBER 9	After consultation with the Corzine administration, Christie endorses borrowing \$1.2 billion via a bond deal to fund the Transportation Trust Fund.
DECEMBER 12	The Christie and Corzine teams discuss—and reportedly argue over—whether Corzine should make appointments to vacancies in judgeships and state authorities.

DECEMBER 15	Christie nominates a Democrat—Essex County Prosecutor Paula Dow—as attorney general.
DECEMBER 16	Christie announces that in addition to serving as the state’s first lieutenant governor, Kim Guadagno will serve as secretary of state.
DECEMBER 22	While Corzine unveils spending cuts, Christie warns that at the current rate, the state could fail to have enough money to make payroll by March 2010.
JANUARY 6, 2010	Christie names Charles McKenna to direct the State Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness.
JANUARY 7, 2010	Christie nominates Gary Lanigan as corrections commissioner.
JANUARY 11	Christie nominates Jim Simpson as transportation commissioner.
JANUARY 13	Christie nominates two more cabinet members, Bret Schundler as education commissioner and Bob Martin as commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.
JANUARY 14	Christie nominates former New York City Councilman and NY State Finance Commissioner Andrew Sidamon-Eristoff as state treasurer. Christie also announces that Robert Grady will telecommute from Wyoming to chair a five-member Council of Economic Advisers.
JANUARY 15	Christie nominates Thomas Considine as commissioner of the Department of Banking and Insurance. He also announces he will retain Human Services Commissioner Jen Velez and Adjutant General Glenn Reith in their current jobs.
JANUARY 19	Chris Christie is inaugurated as governor of New Jersey.
JANUARY 25	Christie makes two more cabinet nominations: Lori Grifa as commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs and Sussex County Freeholder Al Wirths as labor commissioner.
JANUARY 27	Christie nominates Poonam Alaigh to be commissioner of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

As of February 1, Christie had not named a commissioner of the Department of Children and Families or Agriculture. Christie had also not named a public advocate and had indicated that he might restructure the position.

## Summary charts

The following charts provide approximate statistics on the number of appointments officially announced by each governor-elect within specific date ranges. Information is based on *Star-Ledger* reports. Some cabinet nominations were not officially announced

or reported by the press and are therefore not reflected in the chart. The numbers are intended only as a guide to general approaches taken by past governors and not as a preferred schedule nor as a judgment on each governor's transition. Some, for example, chose to announce each appointment as it was made; others held back on official announcements until January, making them en masse. While press reports may compare future appointment progress to these historical examples, there may also be compelling reasons to take more time with particular appointments. As the chart reflects, each governor since Tom Kean has delayed at least one cabinet appointment until after February 1.

<i>Cabinet</i>					
<b>Governor</b>	<b>Election Day - November 30</b>	<b>December 1 - December 31</b>	<b>January 1 - Inauguration</b>	<b>Inauguration - February 1</b>	<b>Post February 1</b>
<b>Kean</b>	0	1	3	5	11*
<b>Florio</b>	0	6	3	1	8
<b>Whitman</b>	0	5	7	3**	3***
<b>McGreevey</b>	0	0	15	0	3
<b>Corzine</b>	0	0	11	3	3
<b>Christie</b>	0	2	9	3	3

<i>Staff Appts.</i>					
<b>Governor</b>	<b>Election Day - November 30</b>	<b>December 1 - December 31</b>	<b>January 1 - Inauguration</b>	<b>Inauguration - February 1</b>	<b>Post February 1</b>
<b>Kean</b>	0	2	1	0	0
<b>Florio</b>	0	0	9	0	0
<b>Whitman</b>	2	1	0	0	0
<b>McGreevey</b>	0	0	4	0	0
<b>Corzine</b>	0	8	0	0	0
<b>Christie</b>	0	4	0	0	0

*\*Many of Kean's official cabinet announcements came at the end of January and beginning of February, the delay due in part to the late start to the transition process. By mid-February, the number of commissioners yet to be announced was down to seven.*

*\*\*This includes Len Fishman, who was named acting commissioner of the Department of Health. He would later become commissioner, after legislation passed changing the rule that previously required the health commissioner to be a medical doctor.*

*\*\*\*This includes two positions—higher education chancellor and public advocate—that Whitman would later successfully argue should be eliminated.*

## APPENDIX IV: EXECUTIVE ORDERS ISSUED IN THE FIRST 100 DAYS

Modern era New Jersey governors have increasingly embraced the executive order as a tool to set policy priorities, launch study of pressing issues, and respond to emergency situations as well as to acknowledge specific people and events. With heightened media and public attention in the early stages of a new gubernatorial term, executive orders issued during a governor's first 100 days in office can take on added symbolic importance. This is particularly true for those that can be read to indicate and begin to implement policy priorities and, in other ways, fulfill campaign promises.

Since Brendan Byrne took office in 1974, each new New Jersey governor has issued executive orders early in his or her term. Leaving aside orders that were ceremonial in nature or procedural responses to a set of circumstances such as a weather emergency, the number of substantive executive orders issued within the first 100 days has ranged from two to 17 with three for Byrne, two for Tom Kean, nine each for Jim Florio and Christine Todd Whitman, 15 for Jim McGreevey, six for Jon Corzine, and 17 for Chris Christie. Governors Whitman and Corzine both issued orders on their first days in office, with Whitman signing her first—establishing the New Jersey Economic Master Plan Commission—during her Inaugural Address. While Governor Christie did not issue any executive orders on his Inauguration Day, the next day – his first full day in office – he issued eight.

Generally, these early executive orders have been meant as steps towards initiating the new governor's priorities with some designed to set up state commissions or offices, or to begin studies to examine particular policy issues. The one area of common focus found is that at least one of the first orders issued by all six of the governors elected since Brendan Byrne has concerned ethics and/or financial reporting requirements. Nevertheless, one of the recommendations of this report, addressed in Section C, is that new administrations hold back any directives in this area until they have gained the perspective of at least several months in office.

Below is a list of the more substantive and significant executive orders issued in the first 100 days of each administration from Governors Brendan Byrne in 1974 through Chris Christie in 2010.

### Governor Brendan Byrne (Inaugurated January 15, 1974)

FEBRUARY 5	EO #1	Established State Energy Office
FEBRUARY 26	EO #2	Three weeks after issuing EO #1, it was repealed and replaced with #2 establishing a State Office of Petroleum Allocation
MARCH 22	EO #3	Created an interdepartmental committee on state water supply needs

### **Governor Thomas Kean (Inaugurated January 19, 1982)**

JANUARY 20	EO #1	Continued provisions in previous Byrne executive orders concerning prison overcrowding
FEBRUARY 11	EO #2	Ethics: Required financial disclosures by executive officers

### **Governor Jim Florio (Inaugurated January 16, 1990)**

JANUARY 18	EO #1	Ethics: Required financial disclosures of certain public employees and officers
JANUARY 24	EO #2	Created position of environmental prosecutor
JANUARY 26	EO #3	Gave commissioner of the DEP specified powers under the federal Clean Water Act
JANUARY 31	EO #4	Authorized treasury to manage and control use of state automobiles
FEBRUARY 9	EO #5	Directed Governor's Study Commission on Discrimination in Public Works Procurement and Construction Contracts to report its findings no later than Feb. 9, 1991. This represented a one-year extension of the original deadline, set as Feb. 9, 1990 when Governor Kean created the commission in his EO #213 (issued August 14, 1989).
MARCH 14	EO #6	Consolidated all attorneys giving legal advice and representation to state entities within the Department of Law and Public Safety (attorney general's office).
APRIL 2	EO #7	Established the Governor's Management Review Commission
APRIL 6	EO #8	Established Emergency Solid Waste Assessment Task Force
APRIL 18	EO #9	Ethics: Amended definition of "public employee" in EO #1

### **Governor Christine Todd Whitman (Inaugurated January 18, 1994)**

JANUARY 18	EO #1	Established New Jersey Economic Master Plan Commission
JANUARY 18	EO #2	Ethics: Ordered financial disclosures and limits interests held by certain state employees in certain types of corporations
JANUARY 27	EO #6	Created an advisory panel on government contracting procedures

JANUARY 28	EO #7	Saved the life of Taro, a dog that had been ordered destroyed under the state's "vicious dog law" after it injured a 10-year-old girl. The EO stipulated that Taro must be permanently moved out of state.
MARCH 15	EO #9	Eliminated the position of environmental prosecutor, which had been established by Governor Florio's EO #2
MARCH 17	EO #10	Reconstituted the Advisory Council on Juvenile Justice
MARCH 30	EO #14	Established the Advisory Panel on Higher Education Restructuring to assist the governor in proposing legislation to restructure the state's higher education system, including eliminating the Department of Higher Education.
APRIL 5	EO #15	Created the Office of the Business Ombudsman
APRIL 18	EO #17	Established the Advisory Commission on Privatization

### **Governor James McGreevey (Inaugurated January 16, 2002)**

JANUARY 17	EO #1	Established rules concerning the use of Project Labor Agreements on appropriate public construction projects, rescinding Whitman EO #11.
JANUARY 17	EO #2	Established the Best Efficiency Savings Team to identify areas of waste, mismanagement, and abuse
JANUARY 24	EO #3	Created the Office of Counterterrorism
JANUARY 31	EO #4	Created the Smart Growth Policy Council
FEBRUARY 9	EO #5	Continued the Office of Recovery and Victim Assistance and the position of recovery coordinator originally established on September 17, 2001 by Governor Don DiFrancesco's EO #132 to coordinate victim assistance efforts for New Jersey victims of the 9/11 attacks and their family members.
FEBRUARY 19	EO #6	Established the Abbott Implementation and Compliance Coordinating Council, restructuring the Abbott Implementation Advisory Council established on May 1, 2000 by Governor Whitman's EO #113.
FEBRUARY 21	EO #7	Established the Governor's Education Cabinet.
FEBRUARY 25	EO #8	Directed the commissioner of education to develop literacy standards and create an early literacy task force
FEBRUARY 27	EO #9	Established the New Jersey Character Education Commission to recommend best practices for teaching character to students
FEBRUARY 28	EO #10	Ethics: Established ethics guidelines for the governor's office and cabinet-level staff



MARCH 5	EO #13	Established the Governor's Teacher Advisory Committee
MARCH 6	EO #14	Established the Commission on Health Science, Education, and Training
MARCH 26	EO #15	Created the Toll Road Consolidation Study Commission
APRIL 11	EO #17	Created the Governor's Hispanic Advisory Council for Policy Development
APRIL 25	EO #19	Created the FIX DMV Commission

**Governor Jon Corzine (Inaugurated January 17, 2006)**

JANUARY 17	EO #1	Ethics: Added 30 boards and 625 individuals to the list of positions requiring financial disclosures
FEBRUARY 7	EO #3	Created position of special counsel to the governor for school construction
MARCH 16	EO #5	Created the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness
MARCH 24	EO #7	Removed the attorney general from the board of directors of the School Construction Corporation and replaced him with a member of the governor's executive staff
APRIL 7	EO #9	Established the New Jersey Commission on Government Efficiency and Reform
APRIL 22	EO #11	Created the position of director of energy savings within the Department of the Treasury

**Governor Chris Christie (Inaugurated January 19, 2010)**

JANUARY 20	EO #1	Froze all proposed regulations and rules not pertaining to public health, safety, or welfare for 90 days
JANUARY 20	EO #2	Ordered all agencies, boards, commissions, departments, and authorities over which the governor has power to veto minutes to implement Common Sense Principles concerning regulations
JANUARY 20	EO #3	Created the Red Tape Review Group
JANUARY 20	EO #4	Ordered the same groups referred to in EO #2 to adhere to Common Sense Principles concerning local governments

JANUARY 20	EO #5	Established Governor's Council of Economic Advisors
JANUARY 20	EO #6	Ordered that monitors and certain other employees of the Casino Control Commission be deemed essential attendance employees under state law
JANUARY 20	EO #7	Ethics: Modified previous pay-to-play restrictions to include labor unions and legislative leadership committees
JANUARY 20	EO #8	Ordered the treasury to publish quarterly reports on all state expenditures
FEBRUARY 3	EO #11	Created New Jersey Gaming, Sports, and Entertainment Advisory Committee
FEBRUARY 9	EO #12	Established the Housing Opportunity Task Force
FEBRUARY 14	EO #14	Declared that a state of fiscal emergency existed in New Jersey
FEBRUARY 23	EO #15	Ordered all spending by state authorities to be examined
MARCH 11	EO #17	Ordered the creation of a New Jersey Privatization Task Force
MARCH 15	EO #19	Rescinded Corzine EO #103 and 135 concerning the certification of state revenue
MARCH 20	EO #20	Rescinded EO #12, which established the Housing Opportunity Task Force; the task force had completed its work and submitted a report
APRIL 23	EO #23	Created the Governor's Passaic River Basin Flood Advisory Commission
APRIL 27	EO #24	Ethics: Ordered every public employee and public officer to file a notarized financial disclosures statement

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