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## **REPORT:**

### **A. Border Related News Media**

#### **New plaza opens on Canadian side of bridge, expected to speed flow Buffalo News - January 27, 2011**

Bagpipes and an honor guard welcomed more than 150 guests to what was called a "significant milestone" Thursday, as the ribbon was cut on a new \$62 million plaza on the Canadian side of the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge. The plaza — crafted in glass and metal in a modernistic style — was part of a second phase of improvements to the bridge, one of four international crossings in the Buffalo Niagara region, and the span that has become known in recent years for its long wait times on busy travel weekends. The upgrades will help ease the traffic crunch. They include new inspection booths for trucks and passenger vehicles, and a separate bus lane that can process several buses simultaneously. Lew Holloway, general manager of the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission, said the first plaza opened in Queenston in 1962. The commission "put a lot of extra effort" into the latest incarnation to make it last another 50 years, he said. Rob Nicholson, a member of Parliament who represents Niagara Falls, called the opening a great moment in the continuing work to upgrade the international crossing. "This is one of the busiest border crossings in the country. The Queenston-Lewiston Bridge is vital to our trade with the United States," Nicholson said. "Last year, roughly 675,000 commercial trucks and over 2.5 million cars used this bridge." He predicted those numbers will increase and said it was essential to move traffic efficiently across the bridge to prevent costly delays. The Canadian plaza was called a "modern welcoming gateway" by Tony Geoghegan, Canada Border Services' acting regional director for Niagara-Fort Erie. Traffic inspection lanes have increased from six to 10, he said, and commercial inspection lanes have increased from three to five and will include new Nexus lanes and a bus clearance facility that will allow border agents to inspect several buses at once. "This will become our central bus clearance facility for the Niagara-Fort Erie Region," he said. "The flow of traveler trade is key to Canada's prosperity." Incoming Bridge Commission Chairman Patrick D. Brown, of Lewiston, N.Y., said the refurbished plaza will process traffic into Canada more quickly, but that is just half the challenge. "Our next project, which we have been working on for years, is redesigning the Lewiston port of entry to complement this," he told The Buffalo News. "This [improvement] provides greater ability for coach lines traffic and tour buses, but the

problem is getting them back to the Lewiston side without a bottleneck," he added. "It's a funding issue, but hopefully we will get some improvements [on the U.S. side]." Mayor Paul A. Dyster of Niagara Falls, N.Y., agreed. "We are a binational region," he said. "Anything that can be done at any of our crossings in the region is very important. Hopefully, it will spur some interest in a parallel project in Lewiston."

**Border stops concern colleges**  
**Watertown Daily Times – January 23, 2011**

Most north country residents are accustomed to slight traffic delays at checkpoints set up along highways by border patrol agents. Most of the time, a few quick questions get the line moving again. But to the nearly 1,000 international students in St. Lawrence County's four colleges, those lines and those green and white patrol cars can cause a big hassle. International students here have run into problems over the past few years. In most cases, border patrol agents ask questions or request more documentation or verification by the university of a student's status. However, some students have been detained for hours or even overnight; in one case at SUNY Potsdam, a student was arrested and eventually went home because he had missed too many classes to catch up, according to college officials. All of the students in those cases were in the country legally. "We do kind of scare the bejesus out of them that you do need to carry your documents at all times," said Bethany A. Parker-Goeke, international education and program coordinator, who oversees the more than 200 international students at SUNY Potsdam. "We're in this 100-mile corridor where constitutional rights seemingly don't exist." With 300 miles of border to patrol in the Swanton, Vt., sector, which covers that state, as well as New Hampshire and Northern New York from Plattsburgh to Alexandria Bay, the agents have their work cut out for them. They set up the traffic checks to prevent terrorists and weapons of mass destruction entering the country from Canada, as well as attempt to deter the smuggling that plagues the area, according to border patrol operations officer Mark R. Henry. That means it is almost inevitable that international students eventually will run into the officers. Colleges across the region tell their international students as soon as they set foot on campus that they should carry their original passports, visas and other immigration forms with them at all times. Students are questioned when they are taking buses or trains from the airport to campuses, but since they have their documents to get through customs, that is rarely a problem. Nearly all of the 54 students at the spring semester new student orientation at Clarkson University, Potsdam, raised their hands when asked if they had been questioned by border patrol agents to show their immigration papers, according to Tess C. Casler, director of international students and scholars. Clarkson has approximately 400 international students, between exchange and full-time students. The issues arise when they get here and start traveling around the county. "A couple of summers ago we had some students at McDonald's in Canton; they were asked for their documents and the border patrol officers followed them back to campus," said Carol L.G. Bate, assistant dean of student life at St. Lawrence University, Canton. "They weren't detained or anything." SLU has approximately 150 international students on campus. SUNY Canton has about 80, most of whom come over the summer. In addition to following students back to campus, officers have called university staff to request more information. But that is getting off easy, according to college officials. Students, and occasionally visiting professors, have been questioned, pulled off buses and trains, detained for hours or even arrested. "There are a number of issues if they don't have their documents. The main one is, if they don't have their documents, we have to determine 'Who is this person?' and 'Are they in status?'" Mr. Henry said. "People lie to us all the time about their names and birth dates. I'm not saying international students lie all the time, but people who encounter law enforcement lie all the time." "We have to be right," he said. In recent years, the Department of Homeland Security has

beefed up funding to the north country and other areas of the northern border with Canada. That funding has gone into new hires, overtime pay and enforcement equipment. Mr. Henry could not say how many border patrol officers are in the Swanton sector. Students occasionally have run into problems if they were only carrying photocopies of their original documents. Several years ago, photocopies were enough, but those days are long gone, it seems. "In 1935, you didn't have to have anything. The times have changed," Mr. Henry said. "We know the importance of the international students and the professors and the importance of the colleges to that area, but we have a mandate to protect the borders."

**Law targets northern border drug trade**  
**Watertown Daily Times – January 23, 2011**

Drug agents in December got a BOLO — "be on the lookout" — alert for a vehicle speeding away from the border with a load of marijuana. Aware he was being followed, the driver pulled into a parking lot in a small town 50 miles inside U.S. territory and walked away. Agents caught up with him and searched the vehicle, popping the trunk to find 119 pounds of extra-strength hydroponic pot. An everyday occurrence along the U.S.-Mexico border? Probably. But this incident unfolded in Saranac Lake. The driver was not an average "mule." Lee Marlowe, 57, was a former Elks Lodge exalted ruler from Malone who worked occasionally as a plumber after losing his job at the General Motors Powertrain plant in Massena. Much of the marijuana had been stashed in hockey equipment bags. Rep. William L. Owens, D-Plattsburgh, cited the Marlowe bust in winning House approval of the Northern Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act last month. With Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., pushing the bill through the Senate, President Barack Obama signed it into law Jan. 4. The legislation requires the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy — the federal drug czar — to come up with a way to deploy U.S. agents and equipment more effectively along the Canadian border, as well as better coordinate anti-drug efforts with state and local law enforcement. It parallels similar efforts along the U.S.-Mexico border. "When you talk about border-related drug issues, most people think of the Southwest border," said Mr. Owens, who represents a district that encompasses the entirety of New York's land border with Canada. "But when you put everything that's going on along the northern border in a package, you see that you have a serious problem there, too." St. Lawrence County District Attorney Nicole M. Duvé said "the focus on the northern border is way overdue."

'DIRTY LITTLE SECRET' - Moving along trails blazed by Prohibition-era alcohol smugglers and northbound cigarette traffickers, drug gangs ratcheted up shipments of marijuana and MDMA — Ecstasy — throughout the 2000s. Seizures of marijuana went from 2,791 kilos in 2007 to 3,423 in 2009 — a 22 percent rise. Seizures of Ecstasy went from 312,389 dosage units in 2004 to 2,167,238 dosage units in 2009, more than a sixfold increase. "It's our dirty little secret," said Franklin County District Attorney Derek P. Champagne, who is prosecuting the Marlowe case. The U.S.-Canada border is 5,525 miles long, including 1,538 miles shared with Alaska. It is the world's longest shared border. Indian reservations that dot the border are particularly vulnerable. With no Border Patrol or immigration-customs ports of entry, drug gang shipments are even less hindered as they make their way through reservations south to major U.S. drug markets, from Seattle to New York and Boston. The St. Regis Mohawk Reservation is a prime entry point, according to Mr. Champagne, who describes it as "a jurisdictional nightmare." Smugglers take advantage of a peninsula formed by the St. Lawrence River in offloading contraband from boats during warm weather and, in winter, driving it in autos and snowmobiles that cross the frozen waters to roads where stone markers delineate the border. Tribal police and surrounding small-

town police forces are ill-prepared to deal with sophisticated smuggling. Marijuana is cultivated at indoor grow sites across Canada, yielding a highly potent blend that sells for \$2,500 to \$5,200 a pound, compared with less-strong Mexican marijuana, which goes for \$1,700 to \$2,000 a pound. It is trafficked in the West mostly by ethnic Vietnamese and Chinese gangs also involved in growing marijuana in the United States. In the East, Hells Angels motorcycle gangs, traditional La Cosa Nostra organized crime groups and the Boston-area "Irish Mafia" all are active in smuggling, said James Burns, the Albany-based Drug Enforcement Administration agent in charge of DEA along the border region, which was incorporated into the New York-New Jersey federal "high-intensity drug trafficking area" in 2009. These groups market marijuana using catchy brand names including BC Bud, Purple Haze and Kush. Others have gotten in on the act, as well. In 2009, authorities broke up a Russian organized-crime gang that hauled up to \$27 million in marijuana to New York, Ohio and elsewhere in the Northeast over two or three years.

**TRIANGULAR TRADING ROUTE** -In 2008, authorities unsealed indictments against 34 members of the Mickey Woods marijuana trafficking organization, named after Woods, then 38, of Cornwall, Ontario, who also went by the names of "Big Buddy" and "Big Boss Man." The gang was alleged to have smuggled 22,000 pounds of marijuana through the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation from 2005 to 2008. Woods remains at large, likely in Canada. Ecstasy smuggling is on the rise, but quantities are dwarfed by marijuana shipments. "It's an add-on," Mr. Burns said. Smugglers have created a triangular trading route that mimics those of the colonial era involving shipments of rum, molasses, tobacco and African slaves. Traffickers sell marijuana and Ecstasy in major Northern cities and then, instead of repatriating cash to Canada, buy cocaine in Los Angeles from sellers linked to Mexican cartels. The cocaine is then sent back to Canada, where it is sold for a handsome profit. DEA agents intercepted two such loads in the past year and conducted "controlled deliveries" of 88 pounds of cocaine destined for Montreal, resulting in six arrests in upstate New York. Mr. Champagne, who coordinates an anti-drug task force in Franklin County composed of local, state and federal officers, said that 95 percent of drug arrests along the New York-Canada border are of U.S. citizens, most of them locals such as Marlowe. "We are one of most depressed regions in the state," Mr. Champagne said, adding that participants view trafficking as "easy money." The task force has tracked loads moving through Franklin County to destinations in 32 states. As law enforcement applies pressure, traffickers increasingly are responding with violence, officials say. "It's clear from our experience there is a large amount of drugs moving through the region," Ms. Duvé said. "It comes with violence and other crimes. It is a very lucrative business." Just last week in the border town of Mooers, police chased Michael Azzarello of Brooklyn for 20 miles before officers stopped his Dodge Durango with a spike strip. Police found 303 pounds of marijuana in the vehicle. In 2008, Daniel Simonds, a drug courier in the Russian organized-crime case, was shot and killed at his home in Stockholm by fellow gang members. St. Lawrence County Sheriff Kevin M. Wells said his office, which handled the Simonds murder, is working to help extradite two suspects from Canada to face charges in relation to the homicide. His agency also oversees the St. Lawrence County Drug Task Force. "All of the law enforcement agencies working on the New York-Canadian border have to work together and communicate well to make a difference," Wells said. "It takes a cooperative effort between federal, state, county, tribal and local law enforcement on both sides of the border to make this happen." And in a chapter torn from the Mexican drug cartel playbook, smugglers reportedly were stalking the homes of Mohawk tribal police officers on the Canadian side. "They were sending a message: 'We know where you live,'" Burns said of the DEA. Last year, a drug hauler on a snowmobile fired shots at a surveillance helicopter before fleeing back to Canada, Mr. Burns said. "It's not the Southwest border, but the potential is there for serious, extreme violence," he said. Times staff writer David Winters contributed to this report.

### **Bridge traffic at 4-year high**

**Watertown Daily Times – January 22, 2011**

Traffic at the Thousand Islands Bridge was at a four-year high in 2010 and is likely to continue to increase in the next year, according to bridge operators. Robert G. Horr III, executive director of the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority, said the international bridge saw a 4.6 percent increase — or 81,366 more crossings — in 2010 over 2009, largely owing to the economic recovery in the U.S. and Canada. According to the authority's latest traffic report, in 2010 a total of 1,861,098 vehicles — 1,556,618 passenger cars and 304,480 trucks — crossed the bridge between March, when the authority's fiscal year begins, and December. The 2010 traffic volume was slightly above 2008's and almost reached the bridge's 2007 traffic levels, when 1,909,090 vehicles — 1,559,121 passenger cars and 349,969 trucks — crossed, according to a January 2008 traffic report. W. Howard Kelly, director of the Capital Corridor Trade and Tourism Initiative, predicted an increase in travelers and a healthy hike in the overall value of goods traded over the U.S.-Canada bridge in the coming year. "Passenger traffic, to a very large extent, ties into weather, the value of the Canadian dollar and the general economy. The economy's improving. The Canadian dollar forecast is to remain strong. So we've got two out of the three we need. Now if we can get a break on the weather, I would expect to see passenger traffic continue to grow," he said. "In 2008, we reached our peak in terms of value of trade at about 12.3 billion before a 20-percent drop-off in 2009 to 9.8 billion. I'm pleased to report that this year is a whole lot different," Mr. Kelly said. "We've already surpassed 2009's figures. And looking at typical November, December dollar values, I think we'll be back at the high 11 billion range this year and might be able to reach a record high the next year." However, in terms of the total volume of truck traffic, the bridge is "still a long way away" from reaching late-1990s, early-2000s levels — a time when the U.S. automobile industry was at its economic peak, Mr. Kelly said. "The early 2000s, that's when we peaked in volume, as did almost any other bridge on the northern border. I think the Ambassador Bridge — which we use as an example because it's the busiest bridge between Canada and the United States — is down over 40 percent since 2000 in commercial traffic," he said. "The automotive industry is never going to be like what it was in North America in 2000. And so much of that commercial traffic is because of the automotive industry. I would candidly doubt that our truck traffic volume will go back to being as big as it was in 2000. You'd have to see some pretty impressive growth in a lot of different industry sectors."

**T.I. Bridge weighs E-ZPasses for tolls**  
**Watertown Daily Times – January 21, 2011**

The Thousand Islands Bridge might start accepting E-ZPasses, allowing travelers to breeze through bridge tolls, depending on the outcome of a 12-month traffic study. Robert G. Horr III, executive director of the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority, said a consulting firm will install electronic pass readers at bridge toll booths, hopefully in April, to determine how many E-ZPass users cross the international bridge. Upon completion of the study in spring 2012, the authority will determine whether investing in this \$100,000-per-lane system — not including "back office costs" or processing fees — would be beneficial to a significant number of its customers. In the near future, however, motorists will be able to travel throughout North America using a unified

standard of electronic tolling, Mr. Horr said. "We need to start somewhere because it is going to change at some point," he said. "We want to be prepared and know what we're looking at in terms of the amount of traffic. But we've also got to make a business case for it. Is it going to be sustainable? Or is it going to be a loss? We will have to determine what percentage of our traffic already has E-ZPasses to know that." The bridge authority also needs to determine whether the expense is worth the benefit. "Our toll is \$2.50 for passenger cars and our current expense to collect that is significantly lower than what the expenses to install and maintain the E-ZPass system would be. So we would chew up more of our bottom line," Mr. Horr said. The bridge authority hired TransCore Inc., based in Middleburg Heights, Ohio, for \$23,420 to install the monitoring equipment at bridge tolls and provide a monthly "tag-penetration study" report. "I think what we will find is that the penetration rate for commercial traffic will be very high, because trucks go all over the place and use toll lanes. Cars? I don't know," he said.

**Canadian National Railway averts strike**  
**Buffalo News - January 24, 2011**

A union representing nearly 4,000 employees of the Canadian National Railway Co., operator of one of North America's biggest railroads, has reached a tentative labor agreement that averts a planned strike on Tuesday. Bob Chernecki, assistant to Canadian Auto Workers union president Ken Lewenza, said Monday the strike deadline helped them reach a deal. The union represents 3,400 shopcraft, office, clerical, and mechanical workers at the Montreal-based railway, along with 575 owner-operator truck drivers for CNTL, a CN subsidiary. Details of the agreements are to be released upon ratification. Voting is slated to begin next week and wrap up within three weeks.

**Cross-border introductions friendly**  
**Watertown Daily Times - January 24, 2011**

Community leaders and officials of Kingston and Watertown took part in a tête-à-tête Friday in an effort to familiarize the two areas — and to plan for what they hope will be increased trade and commerce. "A major part of it is to understand each other's systems, to know who to contact on the other side of the border," said Assemblywoman Addie J. Russell, D-Theresa, whose office initiated the talks. Kingston Mayor J. Mark Gerretsen echoed her sentiments. "We need a bit of an education process on our end," Mr. Gerretsen said. "For example, we think it's very difficult to get over the border. But (Mrs. Russell) had someone there from the border crossing agency to tell us exactly what we need to do. And it's not that difficult." Likewise, Americans might be surprised to learn that, contrary to popular belief, Canadian products aren't much more expensive than American products, Mr. Gerretsen said. A few dozen people — business, military and civic leaders from both sides of the border — met for five hours at a hotel in Kingston. The results, some of the participants said, are hard to specify at this point. "I can honestly say that everybody was offering really good comments," Mr. Gerretsen said. "Some great ideas were generated from this." They included:

- Programs that would bring chambers of commerce together on both sides for economic development.
- Setting up an office in Kingston for the NEXUS card, an alternative to the passport, which would allow people crossing to the border to do so more easily.
- Offering U.S. products at Kingston farmers markets, and Canadian products at ones in Watertown.

One thing that the group did decide on was to meet again. That should happen sometime in the spring, Mrs. Russell said.

**Business Council head to run state development agency**  
**Buffalo News - January 28, 2011**

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo has selected Kenneth Adams, president of the Business Council of New York State, to run the state's economic development agency and picked an adviser on urban parks to head the state parks agency. Adams will be CEO of Empire State Development Corp. and commissioner of the state Department of Economic Development if confirmed by the State Senate. Under Adams, the Business Council endorsed a candidate for governor for the first time, backing Cuomo over Republican Carl Paladino, a Buffalo businessman. Rose Harvey, tapped as commissioner of the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, is a senior fellow at the Jonathan Rose Companies and former national director of urban programs at the Trust for Public Land. Adams would be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the state's economic development efforts. Cuomo pledged Thursday that the as-yet-named chairman of the agency's board will have expertise in upstate matters, which was viewed by observers to mean that the person will come from upstate. Still uncertain is how the agency will change if Cuomo goes ahead with plans -- still not detailed -- to create regional councils around the state to decide how state economic development money should be spent in places like Western New York. Brian McMahon, executive director of the New York State Economic Development Council, which represents a variety of job-creation entities around the state, said Adams spent much of his time upstate during his years as head of the Business Council. "I think he has a good understanding of what needs to be done in upstate New York, and I think he'll be a strong advocate for upstate," McMahon said. Last week, Cuomo named Leecia R. Eve, a Buffalo resident who has served in top legal posts inside and outside government for many years, to be senior vice president and counsel to Empire State Development Corp. Eve is the daughter of former Deputy Assembly Speaker Arthur O. Eve, D-Buffalo, and a one-time aide to then-Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton.

**U.S. Capitol Flag To Fly Over 1851 Storm Victims**  
**Watertown Daily Times - January 25, 2011**

An American flag that flew over the U.S. Capitol will honor the graves on Prince Edward Island in Canada of American sailors who died in a catastrophic 1851 storm. The flag was procured by Rep. William L. Owens, D-Plattsburgh, at the request of Fine Supervisor Mark C. Hall on behalf of Newton Falls Fine Paper President Scott C. Travers. "He wanted a flag that had significance," Mr. Hall said. There were 400 Canadian and American schooners fishing mackerel in the Gulf of St. Lawrence when the Yankee Gale hit. The storm killed 160 men. "My great-great-grandmother had a son who found bodies on their property in the morning," Mr. Travers said. "He buried the bodies in sailcloth." The Travers family buried the three sailors wrapped together in what had been a family graveyard. Twelve other bodies were found and buried in the graveyard. A few years later, a church was built at the graveyard near Kildare Capes. Summer

residents of various denominations from North Carolina, Connecticut, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick support the church, where Mr. Travers is a warden. The exact location of the three sailors was unknown until 1996 when gravediggers uncovered their remains, including pieces of sailcloth. The Travers family decided to memorialize the lost men and erected a monument that has become a tourist landmark. A Canadian and American flag are flown at the site, but the U.S. flag was stolen by vandals. "We very much appreciate what Congressman Owens has done for us," Mr. Travers said. The congressman was happy to help, as his office does for anyone who makes a request for a flag, his spokesman, Sean R. Magers, said. "This is a pretty special case," Mr. Magers said. "This was a project Bill was excited about. We had it flown over the Capitol and sent to him." The story is in keeping with the way Nova Scotia sends Boston its official Christmas tree every year as thanks for its help after the Halifax explosion of 1917, when a ship loaded with wartime munitions collided with another vessel in Halifax harbor. The blast remains the world's largest man-made accidental explosion. "We have a great appreciation of our neighbor to the south," Mr. Travers said. "We acknowledge our relationship, our partnership to each other."

**Exchange rate a boost for business**  
**Plattsburgh Press Republican - January 24, 2011**

A strong Canadian dollar continues to benefit business in the North Country. The two dollars were virtually equal last week, with the Canadian dollar worth \$1.01 U.S. on Jan. 17, according to x-rates.com. The U.S. dollar was worth \$1.04 Canadian in January 2010 and \$1.22 in January 2009. The last time the Canadian dollar averaged more than a U.S. dollar for a month was in February 2008.

LIKELY TO LAST - North Country Chamber of Commerce President Garry Douglas said a strong Canadian dollar is good for regional economic development. It causes Canadian companies to revisit establishment of U.S. locations so they can be more competitive in the U.S. market. It also gives them more bang for the buck when they invest in those facilities. There is a lot of interest, which increases the likelihood that some of it will come to fruition, Douglas said. And it makes the low fares at Plattsburgh International Airport even more attractive. Douglas said the Canadian dollar appears poised to stay strong for some time. He said the U.S. dollar is weak, and few expect it to gain strength, given the nation's debt levels. "And the Canadian dollar is strong, and people see it getting stronger."

BEING PREPARED - Adirondack Coast Visitors Bureau Director Michele Powers said they are gearing up for a strong year on the tourism front. "The backbone of that is Canadians," she said. To help attract more Canadian visitors, the chamber recently started the first round of French classes. Twenty people are taking part, including some chamber employees. "This will help us welcome the francophones when they are here," Powers said. The chamber is also taking part in six trade shows in Montreal and Quebec this year. Powers said more and more area attractions have come to realize the importance of marketing to Canadians, which gives the chamber more partners for its efforts to do so. A huge opportunity to attract shoppers exists, she said, but also outdoor enthusiasts and those interested in the history of Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River valley. "I'm really excited about bringing more Canadians here this year and for more diverse attractions."

APPRECIATIVE - Nephews Discount Liquor and Wine owner Matt Nephew said he's taking Canadian money at par, even though credit-card companies charge 2 to 3 percent on Canadian transactions. The long-range forecast for a strong Canadian dollar is good news to him, as the number of Canadians who shop at the store peaks during the summer boating season. "In June, July and August, more than 50 percent of my clientele is Canadian," he said. Nephew said he does get some Canadian business during the remainder of the year, often skiers on the way to resorts in New York and Vermont. Even when their dollar is around 90 cents U.S., Canadians

find it worth their while to shop on the U. S. side of the border, Nephew said. That's because of higher prices and taxes in Canada. Nephew said many of the wines and liquors he offers cost up to twice as much in Canada. He's had the Champlain store for 15 years. That first year, Canadians needed \$160 to get \$100 U.S. He has seen many fluctuations since then, so it would be good news if the Canadian dollar stayed strong for a while, he said.

**MALL POPULAR** - Champlain Centre Marketing Director Joan LaPier said that while the exchange rate is good news, they haven't seen a large increase in Canadian shoppers. That's mainly due to the time of year, she said, as January is typically a slow month. The number of shoppers is up slightly from last year, LaPier said. "But we're not seeing the numbers we would see in the spring." The mall and its tenants are likely to benefit if the Canadian dollar stays strong throughout the year as predicted. "We enjoy having the Canadians come down. It makes our tenants very happy," LaPier said. She said Target remains especially popular with shoppers from across the border.

**LODGING** - Nine Platt Hospitality Group President Bob Smith said an exchange rate that is level or better has a positive effect on the number of Canadians who stay at the company's Best Western Inn at Smithfield and its Ground Round restaurant. "We have seen quite a bit of Canadian business in the hotel on weekends," he said. Those numbers have helped offset business lost due to the economic crisis of the last few years. He said overall occupancy was down throughout the Plattsburgh marketplace during the last year. Smith said the Adirondack Coast's new Destination Master Plan will be a key piece of reversing that trend. "As that unfolds, I think we will see their (Canadian's) length of stay increase."

**Save the River conference to have diverse agenda**  
**Watertown Daily Times – January 28, 2011**

The latest information on the environmental effects of industrial wind turbines, the new water level management plan for Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River and other topics concerning the Thousand Islands region will be discussed at Save the River's Winter Weekend Conference next weekend. The 22nd annual conference will be Feb. 5 at the Clayton Opera House, 405 Riverside Drive, with the first presentation starting at 10:30 a.m. Jennifer J. Caddick, executive director of the environmental organization, said this year's conference will cover a broad range of topics rather than focusing on one or two key issues. "We have a really diverse agenda this year, which I am very excited about, and we have a lot of good speakers coming to Clayton," she said. Among the 11 speakers, William R. Evans, director of the nonprofit Old Bird Inc. in Ithaca, will report his findings on the bird and bat collision mortality rate at the Wolfe Island Wind Farm using data collected from January through June last year. "Bill sort of worked on both sides of the issue. He worked for the wind company in the past but also worked as a consultant for environmental groups, including Save the River," Ms. Caddick said. "He was our key adviser when we proposed the three-year moratorium on wind." Last August, Save the River called for a three-year moratorium on wind development along the upper St. Lawrence River after learning that 602 birds and 1,270 bats were killed at the 86-turbine wind farm in Canada over a six-month period, from July through December 2009. Also at the conference, two state Department of Environmental Conservation officials — Judy Drabicki, DEC's regional director, and Kenneth L. Kogut, the regional supervisor of natural resources — will give an update on discussions between the federal governments of the United States and Canada regarding the new water level management plan for the lake and river and how DEC plans to deal with state budget cuts. From Massena, Darren Bonaparte, a member of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and Jessica Jock, an environmental scientist with the tribe's environmental division, will talk about the history of

industrial pollution and how to clean up the toxic waste dumped into the St. Lawrence between Massena and Cornwall, Ontario. Jennifer Nalbene, director of navigation and invasive species at Great Lakes United, will make a presentation on how to prevent the introduction of invasive species to the Great Lakes region. Other topics include Save the River's school programs, ongoing efforts to restore common tern habitats and ways to use and restore wetlands to increase native fish populations. Registration starts at 10 a.m. Feb. 5 at the Opera House and the fee, which includes lunch and a reception, is \$30. Participants are encouraged to make reservations in advance as space is limited. For more information or to make a reservation, call Save the River at 686-2010.

**Chesapeake Bay, Marcellus Shale environmental issues could collide at hearing at Capitol**  
**Harrisburg Patriot News/Express Times – January 26, 2011**

Pennsylvania's two biggest environmental issues could collide today in a public policy hearing at the Capitol. State officials will hear about statewide financial impacts from natural gas drilling. The details come just as Pennsylvania struggles to calculate its bill for cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. In all the hand-wringing and cost-crunching that followed the Dec. 29 news that Pennsylvania must do more to cut pollution it sends to the bay, apparently no one factored in the potential water-quality problems from drilling in the Marcellus Shale. Could looming cleanup cost estimates be thrown out and replaced by even higher numbers? "Potentially. You're layering another problem into that [bay] watershed that will have to be dealt with," said state Sen. Ted Erickson, R-Delaware County, who's hosting the hearing. The cleanup is costing Pennsylvanians millions of dollars in the form of higher sewage bills for the 184 new sewage-treatment plants. Farmers and other landowners in the multi-state bay watershed must cut fertilizer use and runoff. Wastewater-treatment plants must put out recycled water that's no dirtier — and in some cases cleaner — than water in the streams that carry it off. A peek at the federal Environmental Protection Agency's multi-colored pie charts explains why: The Susquehanna River is a giant conduit for nitrogen, phosphates and sediment that get in the bay. And the channel's path begins in Shale country. "The Susquehanna River basin is where the majority of drilling activity is taking place," said Jeff Schmidt, senior director for the Sierra Club's Pennsylvania Chapter. "The drillers export their problems beyond the immediate vicinity they're drilling in," he said. So drilling that might taint the river headwaters would have an effect downstream. Yet Marcellus Shale isn't mentioned once in EPA's tally of the states' pollution contributions. It's not in the state Department of Environmental Protection's bay plan, either. For now, DEP is limiting phosphates and nitrogen that get into water to improve bay health. "At this time, DEP doesn't see Marcellus Shale drilling itself as a cause for concern in relation to the health of the Chesapeake Bay. Nitrogen and phosphorus are not issues caused by Marcellus drilling," spokesman John Repetz said. "Numerous regulations and permitting requirements have been established to ensure that Shale drilling does not impact water quality," he said. A spokesman for EPA didn't immediately

respond to questions about Pennsylvania's bay cleanup plan. Until now, drilling's only known impact in the midstate was the introduction, in November, of drill cuttings. Cuttings are dirt and rock pulled from deep drill holes where pipes will be inserted to carry natural gas from pockets in centuries-old shale formations. Cumberland County Landfill is one area landfill that accepts cuttings. On a recent tour of the facility, Dusty Hilbert, compliance manager for owner Interstate Waste Services, explained the meticulous steps in burying waste at the Hopewell Twp. site. Drill cuttings are handled in the same manner, he said. The landfill gets no waste from water fracking, the process that pumps water and chemicals underground to release gas from shale. But some landfill neighbors still are concerned. Dirt and rock from thousands of feet in the Earth can contain such radioactive substances as barium. Residents needn't fear radiation poisoning, said Tom Imphong, Cumberland's recycling and waste authority executive director. Radioactive waste isn't accepted at state landfills. Today, Erickson, who spent 10 years as a regional EPA director, is hosting town, county and emergency service officials, along with drilling industry representatives. He said he aims to set up a fund that would pay engineers, overseen by DEP, to routinely inspect wells. He expects proposals for local impact fees from drillers to be funneled to municipalities and conservation groups. Dickinson College could be a fee recipient. Its 25-year-old Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring — ALLARM — is training volunteer water-quality monitors who live near drilling sites. The alliance spent six months establishing a protocol for the process, said alliance Director Julie Vastine. Flowback water — that which seeps from drilling sites into streams — will be tested for solids. One will be salt that comes from an ancient, underground, inland sea in the region. Such water is two to six times saltier than ocean water. Vastine said samples gathered by EPA in 2009 in the area revealed solids at 93,200 parts per million, more than 186 times DEP's water-quality limit of 500 parts per million. ALLARM will help with the science, but it will be up to communities to apply what they learn. "In communities we have found that water-quality concerns are the number-one issue," Vastine said.

**Pa. investigating Marcellus well blowout**  
**Philadelphia Inquirer – January 26, 2010**

Pennsylvania environmental officials said Tuesday that they were investigating a blowout at a Marcellus Shale natural gas well in Tioga State Forest last week. The state Department of Environmental Protection said specialists regained control over the Talisman Energy Inc. well in Ward Township, Tioga County, after 3 1/2 hours on Jan. 17, a national holiday. There were no injuries. The DEP said the incident occurred during a hydraulic-fracturing operation. Talisman reported that 21,000 gallons of fracturing fluids and sand spewed onto the well site. The agency said the fluids appeared to have been contained on the plastic-lined well pad. "It does not appear that any significant amount of natural gas was released, and there was no fire or explosion," the DEP said in a news release. The department sent a notice of violation to Talisman on Monday requiring the Canadian company to submit an analysis of the incident's cause and proposed changes to its Marcellus drilling operations. The department's public response eight days after the incident stands in stark contrast with the DEP's all-hands-on-deck reaction last June to a blowout at an EOG Resources Inc. well in Clearfield County, which spewed wastewater and gas for 16 hours before it was capped. The DEP hired an outside consultant to assist its investigation and assessed fines of about \$400,000 against EOG and a drilling contractor. "The one last year in

Clearfield was much more serious," DEP spokesman Dan Spadoni said. Last week's incident occurred the day before Gov. Corbett was sworn in to replace Ed Rendell. Spadoni said Talisman alerted the agency's emergency-response hotline about 90 minutes after the company lost control of the well at 12:10 p.m. By the time the DEP arrived on-site before 4 p.m., a contractor had already brought the well under control, he said. The relatively quick response time was one reason the DEP did not consider the incident as serious as last year's blowout, Spadoni said. CUDD Well Control Services, one of several well-emergency contractors that have located operations to Pennsylvania after last year's Clearfield County blowout, is based in Canton, Bradford County, just a few miles from the blowout site. DEP said Talisman had been cooperating with the investigation. The agency on Tuesday permitted Talisman to resume hydraulic-fracturing operations in Pennsylvania, which the company had voluntarily suspended after the incident. Hydraulic fracturing involves the high-pressure injection of water, chemicals, and sand into an underground well to stimulate production. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is restudying the controversial practice.

**Town vows to outlaw hydrofracking**  
**Buffalo News - January 26, 2011**

Members of the Wales Town Board vowed Tuesday to craft a law against hydrofracking -- the practice of drilling for natural gas. Wales is one of the last towns in Erie County that still depends on wells for potable water, and town officials and many residents have expressed concerns about contamination. Councilwoman Jude Hatrich told those attending a work session Tuesday night that once ground water is compromised with chemicals, "It's all over." A state moratorium on fracking is scheduled to expire in July, and Hatrich and Councilman Michael Simon want the town to approve a resolution that will ban the process despite exemptions in federal and state regulations. The gas is part of the Marcellus Shale formation in both New York and Pennsylvania that contains natural gas. Hatrich pointed to recent media reports that gas drillers are growing impatient with environmentalists opposed to hydrofracking. Simon, who is in charge of drafting the town law, said he wants a draft that will stand up in the courts. "The ones written now that are in the courts are too vague," he said. "I want it defined." The Wales Town Board is urging residents to attend an informational meeting on hydrofracking at 2 p.m. Feb. 20 in Aurora Town Hall Auditorium, 300 Gleed Ave. East Aurora. The meeting is being organized and sponsored by Wales Protecting Our Water Rights, or POWR.

**B. Border Communications**

No. H008/11  
For release - January 27, 2011

**QUEENSTON-LEWISTON BRIDGE PLAZA  
IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED**

QUEENSTON, ONTARIO — The Honourable Rob Nicholson, Member of Parliament for Niagara Falls, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, and Dr. Kenneth E. Loucks, chair of the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission, today celebrated

the completion of the central plaza building at the Queenston-Lewiston International Bridge.

"The Government of Canada is proud to have invested in the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, one of the busiest Canada-U.S. border crossings," said Minister Nicholson. "Investments in the Queenston Plaza will help to reduce traffic congestion, facilitate local border crossings and improve this important trade link in the Niagara region."

"Completion of the Queenston central plaza building on the northernmost of our three bridges will provide even more rapid border crossings for our cars, trucks and buses moving into Canada," said Dr. Loucks. "As a binational commission, we work extremely hard to provide the highest-quality services to aid and guide the motorists who use our bridges. This building is another example of the success of that effort."

This project was the second phase of improvements to the Canadian Plaza and included the construction of a central building for Canada Border Services Agency and Canadian Food Inspection Agency functions; 10 passenger vehicle primary inspection booths; and a separate bus-processing lane. These improvements will result in increased peak traffic capacity and faster processing times for travellers, strengthening trade and tourism between Canada and the United States.

Phase Two construction builds on the \$49-million Phase One redevelopment project undertaken and funded entirely by the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission. Phase One included the construction of a new elevated parking structure, a toll complex, a primary commercial customs processing facility, a retaining/security wall and a new maintenance storage facility.

The total cost for Phase Two improvements is \$78 million, with the Government of Canada contributing up to \$62 million through the Gateways and Border Crossings Fund (Building Canada Plan). The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission contributed \$16 million.

A [backgrounder](#) with further information about the Queenston Plaza Redevelopment project and the Queenston-Lewiston bridge crossing is attached.

# In Wake of President's Call for Infrastructure Investment, Export Expansion and Job Creation, Higgins Pushes for Peace Bridge Construction

## Congressman Says Federal Government Should Be Advancing WNY Project

As Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) listened to the President lay out his agenda for job creation and economic opportunity in Tuesday's State of the Union Address he was struck by how one project in particular had the potential meet many of the goals outlined – Peace Bridge expansion.

"If this nation is serious about creating jobs, doubling our exports and helping to sustain and create businesses in America we can start by moving forward on construction of a new Peace Bridge," said Congressman Higgins, a member of the House Homeland Security and Foreign Affairs Committees.

In his State of the Union Address President Obama stressed the importance of "rebuilding America." He said, "To attract new businesses to our shores, we need the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information..." and continued with, "America is the nation that built the transcontinental railroad, brought electricity to rural communities, constructed the Interstate Highway System. The jobs created by these projects didn't just come from laying down track or pavement. They came from businesses that opened near a town's new train station or the new off-ramp."

Passenger vehicles entering the U.S. from Canada spend an estimated \$235 million annually in the U.S., supporting businesses and jobs locally and nationwide. The recent World Junior Hockey championship in Buffalo, NY, which brought thousands of Canadians across the border to spend money in the U.S. each day and led to hours long delays at the existing three-lane Peace Bridge, was an urgent reminder of the need for increased capacity.

The President went on to call for a two-fold increase in exports, adding "But to help our companies compete, we also have to knock down barriers that stand in the way of their success. To help businesses sell more products abroad, we set a goal of doubling our exports by 2014 — because the more we export, the more jobs we create here at home."

Over \$30 billion in trade moves across the Peace Bridge annually, associated with \$227.4 billion in U.S. sales, income and federal taxes, and linked to 60,000 jobs in Western New York one million jobs across the U.S. The U.S. and Canada's bilateral trade relationship equates to approximately \$1.5 billion in goods and 300,000 people crossing the border each and every day.

Higgins added, "I often say, 'Western New York doesn't have a hard time getting the big projects finished, we have a hard time getting them started.' We are so close to finally putting that shovel in the ground but having the federal government as a willing and active partner in getting us to that greatly needed, long-awaited moment is critical for the economy of Western New York and the entire nation."

Congressman Higgins [sent a letter](#) to the Department of Homeland Security Secretary and Department of Transportation Secretary urging expedience on the Peace Bridge expansion project:

*January 26, 2011*

*The Honorable Janet Napolitano*

*Secretary*

*Department of Homeland Security*

*3801 Nebraska Avenue NW*

*Washington, DC 20393*

*The Honorable Ray LaHood*

*Secretary*

*Department of Transportation*

*1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE*

*Washington, DC 20590*

*Re: The Peace Bridge Expansion Project*

*Dear Secretary Napolitano and Secretary LaHood:*

*President Obama's State of the Union address established very clear themes and goals for our country and the federal government. His remarks on increasing exports, repairing and modernizing our infrastructure, and finding new and creative ways to finance infrastructure all reiterated in my mind the importance of the Peace Bridge Expansion Project. I know you share the President's goals, and that is why I encourage you today to use all the tools you possess to make sure that in 2011, the environmental process on the Peace Bridge can finally come to a successful conclusion, allowing construction to commence.*

*The President has made a clear commitment to establishing a path to doubling American exports because it will create jobs and increase economic activity. The Peace Bridge project has, and should be seen to have, an important role in achieving that goal. Already the third busiest Northern Border crossing with Canada, our country's largest trading partner, more than \$30 billion in trade moves across the Peace Bridge every year, and that trade is linked to \$227.4 billion in economic generation at companies that do business in our country, supporting 1 million jobs. Businesses in Western New York and around the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions benefit from this trade linkage. If we are to actually achieve the ambitious goals set forth by the President, we need to increase capacity at the Peace Bridge to increase economic opportunity and create jobs.*

*Another theme in the President's speech was the importance of rebuilding our infrastructure to increase American economic productivity. The Peace Bridge was constructed with three lanes. On many days, functional traffic movement is decreased to one lane because of the high volume of freight crossing the border. The Peace Bridge expansion project would add four lanes at this crossing, availing people to move across the border with considerable ease. Buffalo and Western New York have long struggled to turn around our economy even though the region is situated next to the second fastest growing region in North America, southern Ontario. In order to unlock the untapped economic potential of this mega-region, and to inject new economic life into Buffalo and Western New York, this new infrastructure project is essential.*

*The Peace Bridge expansion project would also be an excellent candidate for the unique competitively-based financing mechanisms the President mentioned to fund new infrastructure projects. Unlike many infrastructure projects, the Peace Bridge has several built-in revenue sources – tolls and duty free shops – that decrease the barriers to entry in attracting private investment. In addition, the return on investment should be obvious given significant economic investment opportunities that will logically be unlocked by a capacity expansion. Given the strategic economic return of strong projects like the Peace Bridge, we should be working at full speed in finding ways to finance them.*

*Given all this promise and all this potential, we know that the hurdles toward getting to construction lie within your agencies. We know the government review process is arduous and deliberative, and that the NEPA process has considerable merit, but if your agencies cannot work collaboratively to take accountability for a project that is clearly within the strong economic interest, not just for Buffalo and Western New York, but for the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions of our country, the results could be devastating in the economic opportunities lost. I urge you to assert leadership roles in this process so that we can finally make this project a reality this year.*

*I look forward to working with you on this project. Thank you for the work that you do.*

*Sincerely,*

**BRIAN HIGGINS**  
*Member of Congress*

## **CBP Officers in Buffalo Arrest Imposter**

(Wednesday, January 26, 2011)

**Niagara Falls, N.Y.** — U. S. Customs and Border Protection announced the arrest of a citizen of Albania on charges of false statements and misuse of a passport.

On Jan. 25, CBP officers encountered a 29-year-old male at the Rainbow Bridge border crossing in Niagara Falls, N.Y. The subject stated that he was traveling to the area to sightsee for the afternoon. The subject presented an Italian passport and claimed to be an Italian citizen. The CBP officer's suspicions were raised as the passport's biographical page appeared to be tampered with. The subject was referred to CBP secondary enforcement for verification of his citizenship.

During the secondary exam, further examination of the passport revealed that the legitimate photo had been substituted with the subject's actual photo. A query of the subject's fingerprints resulted in a mismatch to the passport information. Further secondary checks revealed the true identity of the subject as Nosh Gjura, a 29-year-old citizen from Albania.

Gjura was arrested by CBP officers and charged with false statements and misuse of a passport. He is currently being detained at the Erie County Holding Center in Buffalo, N.Y. pending prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of New York.

*U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.*

## **Canadian Trucking Chief Calls for End to War on Trucks in Urban Centres in DC Speech**

TORONTO - "It is incredible that so many urban communities that are wholly dependent upon trucking to deliver the consumer goods and necessities of life can be so decidedly anti-truck." So said David Bradley, the president and CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA), in a speech to the annual meeting of the Transportation Research Board held yesterday in Washington, DC. Bradley was invited to speak on panel entitled, Balancing Freight Movement Needs in Liveable Urban Areas, along with academics and planners from the University of Southern California, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and international transportation and infrastructure consulting firm, Wilbur Smith.

Part of the problem, said Bradley, is that too often goods movement in urban settings is "at worst viewed as a necessary evil and at best it is taken for granted."

"Freight transportation is often an after-thought if not for planners then certainly for politicians," he said. "We see it in the debate over funding of transit versus roads; in the design of roads and intersections that don't accommodate modern truck configurations; in the lack of parking for trucks; and inadequate loading/unloading facilities, both old and new."

He said that if urban communities and the people that plan and ultimately approve of transportation policies and plans want to deal more effectively with freight transportation, they need to get beyond the myths about urban goods movement – such as getting the trucks off the road by using more rail; or that trucks are always running around half-empty; or that trucks are the main cause of congestion – and start dealing with realities.

"Trucks are not going away," he said. "So we had better start looking for real solutions."

"Basically, all truckers want is to be able to get into and out of cities quickly, with a minimum of disruption. They want to minimize or reduce the costs of operating in congested urban areas. With the price of fuel and the limits on a driver's hours of service, that is critical." Bradley listed a number of things that could be done to help address the situation:

- Encourage more off-peak deliveries – "All our trucks have lights on them, so operating at night is not a problem for us, so long as there is someone there to receive or ship the goods and that is often not the case. If you want to address this, the supply chain needs to be engaged, not just the truckers."
- Clear traffic incidents more quickly
- Strategic infrastructure investment – "If we're serious about this we need to: Balance and better coordinate funding for transit and roads; examine the feasibility of truck-only lanes; design roads that accommodate modern truck configurations (citing problems with the design of roundabouts which are growing in popularity); de-politicize decisions on truck routes/bans; and come up with sensible ticketing policies.

Bradley said it is not going to be easy, given that the footprint of most cities was established decades ago, "but try we must if we are going to ensure our communities are liveable and competitive."

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**Embassy: Canada's Foreign Policy Newsweekly - <http://www.embassymag.ca/>**

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**C. Editorials/Columns**

**D. Citizens Views (write-in letters)**

**Hydrofracking too risky without an enforcement tool - By Ronald Fraser**  
**Buffalo News - January 27, 2011**

As the end of New York's gas drilling moratorium draws near, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo should recall how 45 years ago city mayors, for the first time, stood up to powerful highway engineers. Gas drilling engineers, like the highway engineers before them, are finding that the public's trust has limits. From the mid-1950s to the mid- 1960s, civil engineers enjoyed near autonomy in designing and building the Interstate Highway System inside cities. Since interstate right of ways would also wipe out city neighborhoods, local businessmen, neighborhood preservationists and environmentalists formed a passionate front against the highway engineers. After 1965, mayors in Baltimore, Boston, Washington, D. C., and other cities told the engineers, "Thanks, but no thanks." The current brouhaha involves the drilling technique called hydraulic fracturing, or hydrofracking. Five million gallons of water laced with assorted hazardous chemicals, such as benzene and antifreeze, are pumped into each well under high pressure to break up shale layers and release trapped gas deep underground. Since the drillers anticipate thousands of wells, and can recover less than 20 percent of the drilling fluid, the risk of underground water pollution is enormous. Like the highway engineers in the 1960s, gas drilling engineers are hoping their status, as technical experts, will trump legitimate public concerns. At a recent professional engineering seminar, speakers belittled their critics and repeatedly asserted that hydrofracking is 100 percent safe and that they have everything under control. But is everything under control? State and federal environmental laws prohibit discharging drilling chemicals into ground water at any depth. How are these laws to be enforced if neither the drillers nor the public regulators in Albany have the technical capabilities to do so? Neither can accurately track the millions of gallons of toxic fluids left underground as they migrate through rock fractures — and possibly into ground water aquifers. The regulators can't prove the drillers are violating the laws, and the drillers can't prove they are not. What good is an unenforceable law? Imagine the state setting the speed limit on the Thruway, but neglecting to build in the means to enforce the law. If the state issues new drilling permits without the means to investigate and enforce these laws, the state would, in effect, surrender its public defender role and give the drillers permission to go forth and pollute. Until state regulators are technically equipped to independently verify whether or not permit holders are complying with the state's laws, Cuomo and the State Legislature should continue to protect the well being of the state's residents and natural environment. They should simply tell the gas drilling engineers, "Thanks, but no thanks." - *Ronald Fraser, Ph. D., lives in the Town of Colden and is a member of the town's Environmental Planning Board.*