

POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE PRIOR FOR THE REGION

PRIOR Engagement

An Update on the Policy Research Institute for the Region
SPRING 2009



PRIOR sponsors forum on “The USA Financial Crisis- Problems and Solutions”

PRIOR presented a conference titled “The USA Financial Crisis- Problems and Solutions,” on Friday, March 27, 2009. Conference participants discussed the multi-pronged financial problems facing our region and our country.

The presentation was made by representatives from the Concord Coalition, a bipartisan political advocacy group that was formed in 1992 and is currently conducting its “Wake-Up Tour” – the intent of which is to promote a balanced budget. The Coalition was represented by fiscal experts from the Peterson Foundation, the Heritage Foundation and the Brookings Institution.

In addition to their presentation, there was ample time to question their thesis and to engage in other discussions concerning the current and future financial problems.

Panelists included Ms. Alice Rivlin, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution and former Vice-Chairman of the Federal Reserve; former Director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO); and former Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB); Mr. Robert Bixby, Executive Director, the Concord Coalition; Mr. Brian Riedl, Grover M. Hermann Fellow for Federal Budgetary Affairs, Heritage Foundation; and Mr. Eugene Steuerle, Vice President, The Peterson Foundation; and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Tax Analysis.

PRIOR sponsors forum on “Transportation & Infrastructure Issues for the Next Decade”

PRIOR, the Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University, and the Wagner Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management, New York University, sponsored a forum titled “Transportation & Infrastructure Issues for the Next Decade,” March 6, 2009.

The current federal surface transportation bill expires in September 2009. This event explored: (1) the status of the next surface transportation authorization legislation; (2) the opportunities for new financing sources; and (3) the ways in which we may want to – and need to – link transportation to broader policy goals in energy, health, and the environment.

The conference’s three panels addressed the above topics, and the panelists included the Commissioners of Transportation from New York City and the states of New York and New Jersey – as well as speakers from the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership, the Brookings Institution, the American Association of State and Transportation Officials, and the Environmental Defense Fund.

The opening address was delivered by the Honorable Anthony R. Coscia, Chairman of the Board of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, who discussed “Transportation and Infrastructure Needs for the Region.”

The lunch speaker was the Honorable Mortimer Downey, Chairman of Pb Consult, Inc. and former Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, who addressed “Philosophical and Fiscal Hurdles Facing Transportation Reauthorization.”

PRIOR sponsors forum on “Emergency Preparedness in the Region: What Have We Done & What is Still Needed?” with keynote speaker, former NJ Governor Thomas Kean

Former Governor and Co-chair of the 9/11 Commission Thomas Kean delivered the keynote address at a conference sponsored by PRIOR on “Emergency Preparedness in the Region: What Have We Done & What is Still Needed?” on Friday, April 3, 2009.

In the first panel, experts in the field discussed what has been done to protect critical infrastructures against the likes of natural disasters and terrorist attacks and made recommendations for models that can be implemented to secure private and public facilities in a systematic way.

Panelists on the second panel discussed cooperation issues among and between governments and with the private sector. They focused on the interplay among and between public sector entities and with the business communities to coordinate efforts beyond jurisdictional boundaries to respond to a regional crisis.

Stephen E. Flynn, Ira A. Lipman Senior Fellow for Counterterrorism and National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and author of “The Edge of Disaster: Rebuilding a Resilient Nation,” delivered the luncheon speech.

The final panel on public health preparedness focused on considerations and decisions with respect to bioterrorism, disease outbreak (e.g., pandemic flu), and natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, flooding). They also addressed some of the financial, legal and ethical issues inherent in this area.

PRIOR hosts book discussion “In Plain Sight: Simple, Difficult Lessons from New Jersey's Expensive Effort to Close the Achievement Gap”

Author Gordon A. MacInnes, a lecturer at Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School and a fellow at The Century Foundation, discussed his book, “In Plain Sight: Simple, Difficult Lessons from New Jersey's Expensive Effort to Close the Achievement Gap” at a lunch seminar on February 27, 2009.

The book explores what happened when the state education department partnered with city school districts in an attempt to close the achievement gap between poor, minority students in urban districts and their counterparts in the predominantly white and more affluent suburban school districts.

MacInnes offered recommendations for policies and practices that will narrow the achievement gap and improve the academic prospects for all students.

PRIOR sponsors conference on “The Newspaper Crisis”

PRIOR sponsored a conference titled “The Newspaper Crisis,” on Friday, May 1, 2009. Panelists from both traditional print media and web-based alternative news sources met to discuss newspaper closures, lay-offs, decreased circulation, alternative forms of journalism and future funding, and other important issues currently facing the newspaper industry.

In the first panel experts discussed the decline of the local newspaper industry, particularly the decreased coverage of the NJ Statehouse. They discussed the dimensions of the crisis in the region, the changes in local journalism, and how those changes impact urban policy.

Panelists on the second panel discussed the emerging on-line news services, alternative funding for newspapers through non-profits or philanthropy, and the changing face of news in light of the diminished number of traditional newspapers and the increased use of the Internet as a source of information.

Paul E. Starr, Stuart Professor of Communications and Public Affairs in the Woodrow Wilson School, Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs, delivered the opening address.

PRIOR publishes “Regional and National Financial Crises: Roots, Results and Responses”

PRIOR released two publications entitled “Regional and National Financial Crises: Roots, Results and Responses.” An Executive Summary and a complete, edited transcript of the forum held earlier this year at the Woodrow Wilson School are now published.

Former Congressman James A. Leach, Woodrow Wilson School Professor Alan Blinder, former Federal Reserve Board Vice Chairman, and Susan Wachter, Professor of Finance at the Wharton School were the key note speakers who analyzed the causes of the current financial crises and offered recommendations for solutions. They were joined by other notable experts in the field who placed these historical crises in context, and offered their opinions on how we got into this mess, and the possible resolutions of these enormous problems.

The morning session focused on the anatomy of the mortgage crisis and the macro and micro level motivations and decisions that triggered the present phenomena. The second session discussed the looming threats in the public finance arena caused by the inappropriate use of auction, derivatives and interest rate swaps entered into by state and local governments that resulted in significant costs to the taxpayers.

The Executive Summary and edited transcripts are available at the PRIOR website:

http://www.princeton.edu/prior/publications/conference_papers/. If you would like more information or a printed copy of either of the publications, please contact Georgette Harrison gharriso@princeton.edu.

PRIOR publishes “Access to Universal Health Care: New Jersey, The Nation and the Globe”

PRIOR released a publication entitled, “Access to Universal Health Care: New Jersey, The Nation and the Globe.” The publication is an Executive Summary of the symposium held September 12, 2008. A complete, edited transcript of the symposium will be published shortly.

Participants included Senator Joseph F. Vitale, who is the sponsor of a universal health care initiative in New Jersey; New Jersey Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard; Princeton professor Uwe Reinhardt; Dr. Maggie Mahar, a Fellow at the Century Foundation; and Dr. Ezekiel J. Emmanuel of the National Institutes of Health.

The first panel addressed the problem of providing health care to people who are eligible for inclusion in the system, but are not enrolled, the challenge of making it affordable for small business owners to provide coverage for employees, and making a reform plan sustainable.

The second panel discussed worldwide options for financing health care, the systems implemented in other countries, the need for comparative-effectiveness research, and a focus on sustainability that addresses costs and quality, as well as an effective delivery system for health care.

The luncheon address was delivered by Dr. Len Nichols, Director of the Health Policy Program at the New America Foundation, who discussed the prospects of national health care reform from a Washington perspective.

The final panel discussed the Massachusetts experience—where health care is mandated for virtually all citizens-- and the lessons learned from their initiative.

The Summary is available at PRIOR’s website: http://www.princeton.edu/prior/publicatons/conference_papers/. If you would like more information or a printed copy of the Summary publication, please contact Georgette Harrison gharris@princeton.edu.

PRIOR publishes “Regional Models for Economic Development: Planning, Implementation and Financing

PRIOR released the publication of an edited transcript of the conference held at the Woodrow Wilson School in the winter of 2008, titled “Regional Models for Economic Development: Planning, Implementation and Financing.”

The conference was sponsored by the Policy Research Institute for the Region (PRIOR) and the Regional Plan Association (RPA), and brought together the region’s foremost leaders in the field of economic development.

While geography and proximate resources have interwoven the commercial, residential and transportation patterns of New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia, distinctions in governance have yielded a diverse array of economic development philosophies and practices. The day-long program featured representatives from the public and private sectors in New Jersey, Philadelphia

and New York who exchanged ideas and shed light on the policies and processes that guide projects from inception to completion in each area.

The forum featured an overview of economic development in the United States by Bruce Katz, the Director of the Brookings Institution’s Metropolitan Policy Program. Other speakers included the CEO’s and Senior Officials from the NYC Economic Development Corporation, the NJ Economic Development Authority, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the New Brunswick Development Corporation, and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation. Luncheon comments were provided by Gary Rose, Governor Jon Corzine’s Director of Economic Growth, and Congressman Rush Holt.

The publication is available on the PRIOR website at: http://www.princeton.edu/prior/publicatons/conference_papers/

PRIOR publishes “Summit for Children’s Health in New Jersey.”

PRIOR released two publications entitled “Summit for Children’s Health in New Jersey.” An Executive Summary and a complete, edited transcript of the forum held earlier this year at the Woodrow Wilson School are now published.

Children’s health care in New Jersey continues to encounter serious challenges, as evidenced by the state’s bottom-quartile ranking in the Commonwealth Fund’s recent Child Health System Performance State Scorecard.

In response, the Woodrow Wilson School’s Policy Research Institute for the Region and Princeton University’s Department of Molecular Biology convened a symposium that brought together scholars, practitioners and leaders in the field to examine topics of prenatal care; infant mortality; the pediatric workforce; children’s hospitals; the medical home; SCHIP; and fragile families.

Speakers were: Dr. Edward L. Schor, Vice President, the Commonwealth Fund; Dr. Renee Jenkins, President, The American Academy of Pediatrics; Dr. James M. Perrin, Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School; Dr. Irwin Redlener, President, The Children’s Health Fund, and Professor of Clinical Population and Family Health, Columbia University; Nancy Reichman, PhD, Professor of Pediatrics,

UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Visiting Professor, Princeton University; Deborah S. Briggs, Senior Vice President, Health Policy and Advocacy, New Jersey Council of Teaching Hospitals; Sara McLanahan, Ph.D. Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs, and Director for Research on Child Well Being, Woodrow Wilson School; Mary Sibley, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Human Services, State of New Jersey; and Dr. Daniel A. Notterman, Professor of Molecular Biology, Princeton University.

The Summit explored best-practice models, presented the opportunity for comparative analysis, allowed for a consideration of the measures required to achieve progress, and made recommendations for practical and effective policies that will lead to better health care in New Jersey.

The Executive Summary and the complete report are available at the PRIOR website: http://www.princeton.edu/prior/publications/conference_papers/. For further information or a printed copy of the Executive Summary, please contact Georgette Harrison at gharriso@princeton.edu.

PRIOR Director appointed to Governor's Accountability Task Force

PRIOR Director Richard F. Keevey was appointed by Governor Jon S. Corzine to serve as a member of an oversight group, the New Jersey Recovery Accountability Task Force, to review the distribution and award of federal stimulus funds. The task force is charged with oversight of the State implementation efforts to ensure that funds are directed efficiently and effectively to appropriate programs and to review the distribution and award of federal stimulus funds.

PRIOR Innovative Practice Lunch Series Continues

PRIOR continued the Innovative Practice Lunch Series for WWS graduate students with guest speakers. For the spring semester, the following Executives participated:

- Christopher Christie, former U.S. Attorney, New Jersey
- Richard Roper, Director, Planning Department of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
- Michael Aron, Senior Political Correspondent, NJ Public Broadcasting
- Martin Johnson, President and CEO, Isles, Inc., Trenton, New Jersey
- John White Jr., CEO the Consortium; former PA Secty of Welfare; former Executive Director of Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Mary Gay Abbott Young, CEO, The Rescue Mission, Trenton, New Jersey
- Lisette Nieves, Executive Director, Year Up NYC, New York
- Howard H. Roberts, President, MTA New York City Transit.

[For more information, please visit our web site at http://www.princeton.edu/prior/](http://www.princeton.edu/prior/)

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