



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
INDEPENDENT BUDGET OFFICE

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March 17, 2005

Mr. L. Jay Cross
President
New York Jets LLC
50 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019

Dear Mr. Cross:

It is clear from the most recent ad the Jets have been running that you place a great deal of importance on the public's perception of the New York City Independent Budget Office as impartial and objective. There is a real need for objective analysis in many of the policy decisions the city faces and it is a role we work hard to fill. It is because I take this role and its accompanying responsibilities so seriously that I am so concerned by your latest television ad.

While the interplay of voice over and screen text is carefully crafted to not directly declare that IBO says the sports and convention center project will generate \$900 million in tax revenues, the implication is certainly there. But as I am sure you already know, IBO has never said the project would make \$900 million in tax revenues.

As IBO *did* say in a report released on February 10 and in testimony to the City Council that same week, the net present value of the revenue stream over 30 years from the proposed public investment on the sports and convention center project is \$210 million for the city and state. This is the very same figure Mayor Bloomberg used—and credited to IBO—earlier this month at a breakfast of several hundred businesspeople sponsored by Crain's. Summing 30 years of revenues without discounting would be a rookie mistake.

Declaring to hundreds of thousands of television viewers the project will garner \$900 million in tax revenues is at best disingenuous. Using IBO as cover to give the figure legitimacy is deliberately misleading. If this was a football game, surely the Jets would be called for unsportsmanlike conduct and the play stopped—or in this case, the ad withdrawn.

Sincerely,

Ronnie Lowenstein