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Port Authority Chief Hesitant Towards Restructuring Agency

By: Bobby Cuza



Last week, an internal investigation commissioned by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie not only cleared Christie of wrongdoing in the George Washington Bridge scandal, it also recommended a major restructuring of the Port Authority, but the head of the agency isn't totally sold on the idea. NY1's Bobby Cuza filed the following report.

The report released last week by Randy Mastro and a team of attorneys commissioned by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie was 344 pages long. Port Authority chief Patrick Foye didn't quite get through it all.

"The only parts of the Mastro report I've read are page 269 and 270, I think I have the numbers right, which are the reform pages. I've not read the remainder and don't intend to," he said.

The report did recommend major structural changes at the Port Authority, like possibly dividing it into separate New York and New Jersey divisions, an idea Christie said he was intrigued by.

"I think that the idea, you know, of splitting the Port Authority into two may have some real merit to it," he said Friday.

However, it's one that Governor Andrew Cuomo has said is much easier said than done.

Foye, a Cuomo appointee, echoed that sentiment Tuesday, noting that the Port Authority's assets, finances and revenue streams are all bi-state.

"I think the degree of difficulty of doing that would be extraordinary," he said.

Foye, who put a stop to the lane closures when he learned about them, generally sidestepped questions about the controversy, declining to comment on the resignation of chairman David Samson other than to thank him for his service, and noting that no career Port Authority employees were involved.

"It's unfortunate that the excellence of the people who work there has gotten lost in the current controversies," Foye said.

Foye was speaking Tuesday at a breakfast hosted by the New York Building Congress, which is pushing the Port Authority and other officials to move forward on a handful of key projects, like bringing Metro-North to Penn Station and completing the Moynihan Station project in the old Farley Post Office building.

Foye said phase one of that project is well underway, with the iconic post office steps soon to be removed and replaced with a more waterproof set.