

MICHIGAN

TRUTH SQUAD



Who: Detroit International Bridge Co.
Featured material: TV and Internet ad
Truth Squad call: Flagrant foul.

QUESTIONABLE STATEMENTS:

This is the ramp the Ambassador Bridge company built to connect with the interstate. But the state won't finish their side. ON SCREEN: MI DOT official: "... the state is responsible for the missing ramp, not the bridge company..." Toll Road News, Jan. 17, 2012

The ad implies that an official from the Michigan Department of Transportation provided a direct quote. In reality, the story referenced in Toll Road News paraphrases an unidentified MDOT employee.

LINK <http://www.tollroadsnews.com/node/5702>

The state had to stop construction on its portion of the ramp, which is supposed to allow truck traffic to go directly from customs inspections to Interstates 96 and 75 without using city streets, because federal highway dollars would have been endangered if it proceeded with the project without permanent easements for the property. The Federal Highway Administration gave the state permission to continue with the ramp construction last week.

LINK <http://www.freep.com/article/20120125/NEWS01/120125058/Feds-approve-work-on-Ambassador-Bridge-ramp-MDOT-says?odyssey=nav|head>

... an activist Detroit judge, whose son the governor just appointed to the bench, put the Ambassador Bridge people in jail.

The ad correctly states the actions and relationships. On Jan. 12, Wayne County Judge Prentis Edwards, Sr. jailed Manuel "Matty" Moroun and Detroit International Bridge Co. executive Dan Stamper for not complying with a 2010 order to proceed with work on the ramp project connecting the Ambassador Bridge with area interstates.

LINK <http://www.myfoxdetroit.com/dpp/news/local/ambassador-bridge-owner-manuel-%27matty%27-moroun-order-to-jail-20120112>

Six weeks earlier, Edwards' son, Prentis Edwards, Jr., was appointed by Snyder to the 36th District Court in Detroit.

LINK <http://michiganlawyerblog.wordpress.com/tag/prentis-edwards-jr/>

However, the identification of Prentis Edwards, Sr. as an “activist judge” implies, without providing any evidence, that he allows his personal views to influence his decision-making.

Oh, and the governor’s bridge? You have to pay for it. (While the words “Snyder’s \$2 Billion Bridge ... YOU pay for it” are displayed on-screen.)

While several consultants for the bridge company have made that claim, no independent analyst has. The Canadian government has offered to pay Michigan's share of the project, [\\$550 million](#), a sum to be paid back in tolls. [Snyder struck a deal](#) with the Federal Highway Administration to use that \$550 million toward federal highway matching funds that are required for other road and bridge projects.

[Brickey](#) on Oct. 12, 2011, testified that the legislation last year to authorize Michigan's participation on the New International Trade Corridor shielded taxpayers from being on the hook for bridge construction costs.

Overall impression

This is at least the fourth television ad run by the owners of the Ambassador Bridge with similar claims and inflammatory language. The bridge company spent in the vicinity of \$5 million on such ads in 2011 alone. DIBC opposes a public-private bridge backed by Gov. Rick Snyder, as it would be competition.

<http://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20110919/FREE/110919899/report-ambassador-bridge-owners-spend-4-7-million-on-ads-opposing-rival-detroit-river-crossing>

Foul or no foul

Flagrant foul for suggesting, without evidence, that the state is intentionally delaying ramp construction to further its case for a new bridge, and that the bridge will cost taxpayers \$2 billion.