

# **New York Officials Reassure IOC; Bid Leaders Allay Concerns Over Immigration Policy, Financing and Venues**

The Washington Post

February 24, 2005 Thursday, Final Edition

Copyright 2005 The Washington Post



**Section:** Sports; D05

**Length:** 749 words

**Byline:** Amy Shipley, Washington Post Staff Writer

**Dateline:** **NEW YORK** Feb. 23

## **Body**

---

-- A day after an exhaustive **venue** tour, the International Olympic Committee evaluation team that is reviewing **bids** for the 2012 Summer Games spent Wednesday morning behind closed doors with **New York**'s most powerful political **leaders** and used the opportunity to raise **concerns** about the city's **bid** and America's support of it.

Gov. George Pataki and Mayor Michael Bloomberg said after the one-hour meeting that the 13-member **IOC** evaluation team peppered them and other **officials** with questions about U.S. **immigration policy**, the city's and state's **financial** commitment to the Games and the controversy surrounding the West Side Rail Yard land projected to be the site of a **new** Olympic stadium.

"They did have **concerns**, as they must," Pataki said. "The Olympics are a major event."

**IOC** evaluation team members also wanted reassurance that Olympic security matters would receive the highest priority and that **New** Yorkers supported having the Games here, Pataki said.

"They have to go through this process," Pataki said. "I think the answers they have been getting are appropriate."

The **IOC** evaluation team, which includes **IOC** members as well as organization outsiders, has been sequestered from the media since its arrival Sunday and has refused to take reporters' questions. Representatives from the group have scheduled a news conference for the conclusion of the visit Thursday. Since their arrival, they have toured **venues** for 19 sports and met with dozens of local, state and federal **officials** along with business and union **leaders** and athletes. Wednesday evening, they attended a jazz performance at Lincoln Center and had dinner at Bloomberg's residence.

In July, the 100-plus members of the **IOC** will select the site of the 2012 Games from among **New York**, Paris, London, Madrid and Moscow. As a result of the reforms that followed the Salt Lake City Olympic **bid** scandal of 1999, **IOC** rules now prohibit members from visiting the **bidding** cities, so many rely on the impressions and grades of the evaluation team.

New York Officials Reassure IOC; Bid Leaders Allay Concerns Over Immigration Policy, Financing and Venues

**New York bid leaders** and government **officials** said they told the **IOC** evaluators that athletes, **officials** and Olympic visitors would be admitted to the United States without problems for the 2012 Games. They said government **leaders** were committed to putting on a fiscally sound and athlete-centered Olympics, and they expressed optimism that work on the planned Olympic stadium -- projected to be built on land currently for sale in an open **bidding** process -- likely would begin before the July 6 **IOC** vote, despite recent problems obtaining the land.

Though President Bush, who is touring Europe, has not had a direct role in this week's visit, he spoke to the **IOC** evaluation team through a video shown to the group today, expressing the federal government's support for the **bid**, several **officials** said.

**New York** developer Roland Betts, a Yale friend of Bush who was recently appointed by Bush to the NYC 2012 board, participated in the morning session and assured **IOC** team members that an Olympics in **New York** in 2012 would be designated a National Special Security Event -- as were the Salt Lake Games in 2002 -- ensuring the highest level of federal attention. Later, **New York** City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said **New York's** police force of 31,000 would ensure a safe and secure Olympics with the least interruption possible to the daily lives of **New York** residents.

"We had on virtually every topic extremely strong statements of support from every level of government," said **bid leader** Dan Doctoroff, also deputy mayor of economic development.

Meantime, in comments at a luncheon at the United Nations -- the **IOC** team was not in attendance -- U.S. ambassador Richard Holbrooke offered assurances of his own that **New York** would put on a safe and smooth Olympic Games. While acknowledging that some visitors had been "unnecessarily detained" since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, he said such problems would be ironed out by the time of the Olympics.

He further said that any image problems the Bush administration has around the world and particularly in Europe should not affect **New York's** chances of winning the Games.

"**New York**, while an American city and proudly an American city, is also the most international city in the world," Holbrooke said. "I don't see any reason in the world for political factors to play in this decision."

Said Betts, during a separate news conference: "I think the president is getting more popular in Europe by the hour."

## Classification

---

**Language:** ENGLISH

**Publication-Type:** Newspaper

**Subject:** SUMMER OLYMPICS (90%); OLYMPIC COMMITTEES (90%); OLYMPICS (90%); SPORTS & RECREATION (89%); STADIUMS & ARENAS (89%); TALKS & MEETINGS (89%); WINTER OLYMPICS (89%); 2012 LONDON SUMMER OLYMPICS (89%); SPORTS GOVERNING BODIES (78%); SPORTS & RECREATION EVENTS (78%); SPORTS & RECREATION FACILITIES & **VENUES** (78%); ASSOCIATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS (78%); CITY GOVERNMENT (77%); PUBLIC **POLICY** (77%); US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2012 (76%); US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2016 (76%); US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2008 (76%); US FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (75%); **IMMIGRATION** (73%); MUNICIPAL **FINANCE** (72%); PRESS CONFERENCES (65%)

**Organization:** INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE (84%)

New York Officials Reassure IOC; Bid Leaders Allay Concerns Over Immigration Policy, Financing and Venues

**Industry:** MUSIC INDUSTRY (64%)

**Person:** MICHAEL BLOOMBERG (57%); GEORGE W BUSH (56%)

**Geographic:** MADRID, SPAIN (79%); SALT LAKE CITY, UT, USA (79%); **NEW YORK**, NY, USA (79%); LONDON, ENGLAND (77%); PARIS, FRANCE (53%); **NEW YORK**, USA (94%); UNITED STATES (92%)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2005

---

End of Document