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March 20, 2015

Dianne Feinstein's husband wins near-billion dollar California 'high speed rail' contract

By [Thomas Lifson](#)

Update: questions have been raised as to whether or not Richard Blum still owns a substantial or any interest in Tutor Perini. A number of published accounts, [in addition](#) to those cited, claim he does. This [report](#) indicates he sold 3 million shares in 2005. It is unclear what portion of his holding, if any, remains. - TL

Further update: Sen. Feinstein's [financial disclosure form](#) contains no reference to Tutor-Perini, though it does indicate holdings in a number of Blum Capital Partners funds.

To the surprise of absolutely no one familiar with the ways of Corruptifornia, the one-party state completely in the hands of the Democrats, a consortium whose lead firm is controlled by Richard Blum, husband of Sen. Dianne Feinstein, was awarded a nearly billion-dollar contract for the construction of the first phase of the so-called high-speed rail line to link San Francisco and Los Angeles. Those paying attention to the project call it the “half-fast” rail line because it will share trackage with conventional commuter rail trains in the sprawling Los Angeles and San Francisco areas, lowering its average speed to levels achieved by American railways a century ago.

[Crazifornia.com](#) writes:

The Perini-Zachary-Parsons bid was the lowest received from the five consortia participating in the bidding process, but “low” is a relative term. The firms bid \$985,142,530 to build the wildly anticipated first section of high speed rail track that will tie the megopolis of Madera to the global finance center of Fresno. Do the division, and you find that the low bid came in at a mere \$35 million per mile.

And that doesn't include the cost of rolling stock (that's engines and cars to the normal among us). Nor does it include the cost of electrifying the route. Does it at least include the cost of land acquisition? No, it does not.

As this fiasco progress, remember that this \$35 million per mile represents the best California can do on the section of track the High on Crack Speed Rail Authority selected to go first because it will be the cheapest.

Tutor-Perini, the lead contractor controlled by Di-Fi's hubby, has an (ahem) interesting history. From [The National Black Chamber of Commerce](#):

According to the New York US Attorney's office: “Following a four-week trial, a federal jury in Brooklyn yesterday (March 9, 2011) found Zohrab B. Marashlian, the former president of Perini Corp.'s Civil Division, an international construction services corporation, guilty of fraud and conspiracy to launder money. The charges arose out of Marashlian's false representation to New York government agencies that Disadvantaged Business Entities (DBE's) were performing work in connection with major public works contracts, when, in reality, Marashlian had non-disadvantaged businesses favored by Perini Corp. do the work.” Tutor Perini paid Marashlian \$14 million in salary while all this was going on. Two days before Marashlian was to receive a multi-year prison sentence he committed suicide. A fellow employee is currently doing a long prison term for the same case.

Perini has been caught doing such things over and over again. They are absolutely ridiculous in California projects. ... According to the Seattle News some of the Perini headlines read: “In February, Tutor-Saliba and Perini agreed to pay \$19 million to settle racketeering and fraud allegations in a San Francisco airport project.” ... “The companies are embroiled in an 11 – year legal battle over \$16 million in extra costs on a Los Angeles subway job.”

Just another day in Jerry Brown's world of imaginary high-speed rail that is sure to cost at least twice what it is budgeted at (just south of a hundred billion dollars), take five hours for a journey that takes an hour or so by air, and which will have to charge much more than airlines do for the trip.

Hat tip: Clarice Feldman

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