

WEIGHT: —

✖ Okay, this may appear to be really catty, but I'm doing it to make a point, so bear with me.

How does a guy who is large enough such that the cops stopping him for multiple traffic violations didn't write his weight on the ticket fit into what appears to be a sedan with his wife, his four kids (one of whom—now 5—would have been in a car seat in 2005) and one of the AUSAs who works for him?

Because that appears to be the story Chris Christie is now telling about his traffic stop in 2005.

The reason the cops now give for letting Christie drive away in an uninsured, unregistered vehicle is that he had his kids with him.

[Lambertville Police Director Bruce] Coccuzza says, "He indentified himself."

Why was Christie allowed to drive away despite having no proof of insurance and no valid registration card? Coccuzza says, "He said he had insurance and he's a person that produced federal I.D. credentials so you could probably assume that what he was saying was the truth.....is it consistent with the policy? No, but you do have special circumstances."

Coccuzza says the "special circumstances" were Christie's children in the car not his job title. He says the fact that Christie was U.S. Attorney probably didn't even register with officer at the scene, "From what I recollect I think she (the officer) even said at the time, 'If wasn't for the fact that you had a car full of children this car would be towed.'"

Of course, they would presumably have already seen the kids when they called the tow truck, but set that aside for the moment.

I'm more interested in how seven people (presumably including at least one car seat) fit in in a 4-door car.

Now there are several possible explanations. Perhaps only some of Christie's kids were with him. Perhaps they left the then-one-year old and the then-four-year old at home with a sitter and brought the then-eleven and then-nine year old. Perhaps the car was an SUV—a five door car that fits seven apparently described as a four door.

But couple that question (and the oddity about the tow truck) with the reluctance on the part of Christie's spokesperson to admit that Michele Brown was with Christie (not to mention the seeming implication that all the kids were in there).

Asked who was in the vehicle, [Maria] Comella said Christie's wife and kids were. Comella balked when asked if Michelle Brown was also in the vehicle. She questioned the relevance of that and at first refused to answer. Comella finally agreed to ask Christie and called back minutes later to confirm Brown was in the vehicle.

Once you get up to all seven people in the four door car, things begin to get suspicious.

Then consider how scribe's explanation of how the three violations turn into two lesser violations. This set of tickets would make sense, according to scribe, if Christie were able to show that the car in question had been insured and registered at the time of the traffic stop.

This is a common resolution of this constellation of tickets. Go to a random municipal court and you'll see this two or three times a week.

The gist of the “failure to exhibit documents” being a resolution of the “no insurance” and the “unregistered vehicle” is that you do have to show up in court and bring the documentation with you to prove that (a) you did in fact have insurance on the date of the ticket and (b) the vehicle was in fact registered to you on that date. The elements of the “failure to exhibit documents” charge are that you did have the required insurance and registration (or whatever document you were missing) but you did not exhibit it to the cop at the time as required. This, as opposed to you did not have the insurance or registration.

Thing is, Christie’s people admit that the car wasn’t registered at the time of the stop.

Coccuzza says Christie produced a registration card, but even Comella admits the car was not registered at the time of the stop. The registration had expired almost two months before the incident.

Which makes this resolution less common. 

Now add this detail (also noted by scribe). There’s a note—apparently written five months later when the tickets were finally resolved—saying,

Pros to discuss w/D [?]
increase fee because 2nd unsafe driving

So you’ve got a guy who was getting hot enough with the cops that they wrote “NO DEAL” on the tickets themselves. A guy who had already had at least one unsafe driving violation. Allowed to drive away from the scene of the traffic stop, ostensibly because he had his wife, subordinate, and kids (potentially four of them) in the car.

But those four kids wouldn't fit in the car with the three adults alleged to be present, certainly not for the hour long trip to the Delaware football game and certainly not with everyone in the appropriate car seat or seat belt.

And that entire story is the alternate explanation, you see, for why Christie was allowed to drive away in an unregistered car with no proof of insurance. It wasn't that he had told the cops he was the top federal prosecutor in the state, you see. It was because there were seven people in a car that probably fits just five people.