	Page 1
1	NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING COMMISSION
2	REGIONAL TRIBAL CONSULTATION
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9	Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings held
10	at the Seminole Hard Rock, 1 Seminole Way,
11	Hollywood, Florida, Commencing at 9:21 a.m., on
12	Tuesday, February 3, 2011 Before Randi J.
13	Garcia, RPR.
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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Good morning. To begin, I would like to turn the meeting over to Chairman Mitchell Cypress of the Seminole Tribe for opening and invocation.

5 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL CYPRESS: Thank you. Good morning, everybody. I welcome 6 7 everyone here, all the tribal leaders and their staff. And I know that everyone is happy to be 8 9 here because we see on the news it's white 10 everywhere. You pass, I guess, Central Florida 11 and it gets cooler, but the weather changes 12 from there on out. I understand there is some 13 other places where the roof caved in like the 14 Tulsa Hard Rock. It slows you down on your 15 game. And we will probably need a lot of 16 prayer for that, for them to arrive through the 17 snow area.

But down here snow never hit the ground and the frost is the one that killed us out here.

I want to go ahead and start introducing the staff here. First of all, I would like to go ahead and introduce Mr. Jim Shore, his assistant Agnes, members of staff, Marty, Alan Huff, Senior. And we have Ross, the staff

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attorneys and Joe Webster, Ed Jenkins and Mike 1 2 Tiger, our treasurer. I just see a McDonald's sign there. Also, over here we have Suresh 3 from accounting, and Jim Raker, and one of our 4 5 accountants, Marsha Green. I think we have a very fine staff that has 6 7 been pushing us all the way up today and make sure we have some others that we will be 8 9 discussing that we need to share, the

information you all share with us.

I am going to introduce one of our tribal member counsel, Mr. Max Osceola.

MAX OSCEOLA: I will stand so you can see me. Welcome to paradise. Like they say on American Idol, "Welcome to Hollywood."

I want to give you a little history with a perspective of where you're at. In December of 18 1977 we started bingo, high-stakes bingo right across the street. You call it the classic. 20 That is when Indian gaming started here.

The sheriff of Broward County was going to come on the reservation and force state regulation and we said "no, you are not." We got an injunction. We wanted the lower levels. Supreme Court said they're not going to hear

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it. That's right. If it's legal in the State of Florida, it is legal on the Indian reservation and it's a sovereign nation, we can regulate that activity. It was called Butterworth versus Seminole Tribe, who was the sheriff of Broward County. They said "what is butter worth? "About nickel a pound."

So we have progressed from '77 to where, I 8 9 guess, we were under BIA. They didn't know 10 want to do with gaming. They said how do we 11 regulate this, states and congress, when they 12 said how do we get our cut? When the natives 13 were making the money selling trinkets, they 14 didn't care. When we got into big business, 15 then they wanted their cut. So they passed the 16 National Gaming Act.

17 One time we were in Washington D.C. and I 18 was talking to our senator, Senator Graham. Ι 19 said "Senator Graham, there is a National 20 Indian Gaming Act." I said "is there a 21 national non-Indian Gaming Act?" He kind of --2.2 well, states regulate that activity. I said 23 "BC, before Columbus, native tribes were here. 24 We can regulate our own activity."

So I am happy to welcome you here. I am

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glad to see the staff from DC. I am glad to see you're a native too. Because in your heart you know where you're at. You may be working for the government, but you were born native. Welcome to Seminole Country.

Thank you.

7 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you, 8 Chairman Cypress. My name is Tracy Stevens. I am a member of Tulalip Tribes from Washington 9 State. I am the chairwoman of the National 10 11 Gaming Commission. I want to extend my thanks 12 and gratitude to the Seminole Tribe for 13 allowing us to come into your territory and be 14 such gracious hosts. This is a wonderful 15 facility here. It's a great example of what 16 tribes can do when they govern themselves. And 17 it is a beautiful facility. We are really glad 18 that we are here today.

19I do want to recognize we have former20commissioners that are here, Joel Frank, the21former national gaming commissioner, and also22Teri Poust. I think Liz is here. Liz is in23the other room. And also I want to recognize24our staff that is here. We have outside Rita25Homa. She is the executive secretary of the

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commission, and works really, really hard. 1 Ιf 2 she doesn't speak a lot today, she has 3 laryngitis. We appreciate all the work she has done to help us get here. We also have Mavis 4 5 Harris here. She is right back here. She was 6 handing out packets earlier. She's from our DC 7 office. We have Cindy Altimus. She is over here with the transcriptionist. 8 She's the 9 regional director of the Eastern Region, Keith 10 Hicks works in enforcement. Many of you may 11 know him. Also, we have Larry Roberts, who is 12 our new general counsel right over here, Paxton 13 Myers, who is our chief of staff, and next to me is Lael Echo-Hawk, and last but not least 14 Associate Commissioner Dan Little. 15

I want to say thanks to all the staff. We could not have -- this is our eighth stop. We could not have done this without the support of our staff. And where I come from you support the people that help you do your work. So I want to extend thanks to them.

I appreciate everyone coming out. This is the last stop on our eighth-stop tour on our Notice of Inquiry and regulatory review discussions. And I realize that many of you had to arrange your -- rearrange your travel so you could miss that storm or had to wait out the storm. There are many people who were not able to make it today because of the weather. So we appreciate everyone who is here today. Like I said, this is the last stop on this particular consultation tour.

8 There will be more. That is something 9 that they have been trying to make sure we say. 10 This is just the beginning. This is not a 11 one-shot deal. We will be having more of these 12 discussions as we -- while we are in office.

13 Many of you may have heard me in separate 14 discussions or in conferences over the past six months since I have been in office. 15 I have 16 been in office since the beginning of July. 17 This commission has come together to identify areas we believe need attention. They have 18 19 come -- we have come down to basically four 20 major initiatives.

The first one is consultation relationship building. Today is a demonstration of the changes that we have made to how we consult with tribes. This is a new day for the NIGC. We will be having these -- when we are talking

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about broad policy, like regulations that 1 2 affect tribes all across the country, we will 3 having this open forum dialogue, you know. This is being recorded, so there is a record 4 5 for those tribes who could not make it and can see what -- they can read for themselves what 6 7 was discussed. We can have an open dialogue. We can exchange ideas. We can hear your 8 9 thoughts and your suggestions, and especially 10 for this subject today, your priorities, which 11 regulations we should take a look at first.

12 Now, we certainly don't -- we know this is 13 a change from the way meetings have been done 14 before there -- the practice before was you 15 would get a letter, sign up for a time, and you 16 get 15 to 45 minutes, sort of an assembly line 17 fashion to talk about a universe of things, 18 policy, your individual issues. We still have individual meetings with tribes while we are 19 20 travelling. If you ever come to DC or we are 21 out in your area, if we are at a conference we 2.2 our avail ourselves to make sure that we are 23 available to the tribes to address those 2.4 individual concerns. We don't expect your individual issues to be aired here today. 25 We

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have side meetings, meetings outside of this consultation, to discuss those matters. But I want to let everyone know if you have individual issues, don't feel like that this is your only chance to talk to us about that.

Today's discussion is about the Notice of 6 Inquiry. We will talk more about that in a 7 moment. But this is the beginning of us 8 9 working together, identifying the areas that we 10 need to pay attention to, identifying issues, 11 and also solving the issues, solving any 12 problems we have. What we are learning over 13 these eight consultations is that there are differences between tribes. 14 There are 15 different priorities, which is expected because 16 tribes are just different. They are different 17 culturally, different traditionally. Their 18 gaming is different. Their demographics are 19 different. Their operations are different. 20 And what we are hearing is that tribes like to 21 be able to sit in this format and say "I didn't 2.2 know that that was an issue for tribe X, or I 23 have a similar issue at my tribe." 2.4 Moreover, we have the opportunity to solve

it together. We can do this together. And

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this is the beginning of building an agenda and then going to work together. So that is our first initiative.

Our second initiative is technical 4 assistance and training. It is required by the statute, but we think it should be more than just a statutory requirement that we have to meet. We should be helping tribes protect their operations. You know, we should be a 10 partner with you. And if we are providing 11 training that doesn't help your situation, then 12 we are not doing our jobs.

13 We are in a process of relying on our 14 program, our technical assistant and training, 15 so that we hit our target, we hit the target 16 that you tell us needs to be hit for your 17 facility or for your operations.

18 We recently put out a survey to tribes on 19 internets, on web sites, by mail, fax, snail 20 mail, e-mail. We have a number of responses. 21 The survey was basically asking what kind of 2.2 training do you need? Is there training that 23 we are not offering? Do we need different levels of training? 2.4

So it's a very simple survey that we have

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gotten quite a bit of response back. And what we are going to do with that is take a look at our training catalog and make sure that we are providing the training that tribes need.

I think that survey closed yesterday, but I am sure we are getting more and more. We will consider them as they trickle in, so that we can really examine this program and make sure that it is a streamline process, and it is doing what it is intended to do, bring out and prevent problems, help tribes stay in compliance and safeguard the operations that you all regulate on a day-to-day basis.

14 The third thing that we are doing is 15 agency operation review. This is actually 16 taking a lot more of our time than I had 17 anticipated. And what that means basically is 18 we should be just as concerned about how we run 19 our operations. Our agency is we are about how 20 you run your operations. What is good for the 21 goose is good for the gander. We are spending 2.2 a lot of time, that is, you know -- along with what Paxton is doing. He's chief of staff. 23 2.4 And this is something that Associate Commissioner Dan Little is taking up as one of 25

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his initiatives, to make sure that we are 1 2 accounting, that we are transparent, and that our operations are efficient, they're running 3 in the best way possible, so that we are 4 5 providing the services that tribes need. So that is actually turning out to be 6 7 quite a monumental task. I thought the reg review was going to be a big task. It turns 8 9 out that agency operation review is the one 10 that is really taking a lot of our time and our 11 attention. And it should, you know. 12 How we run internally will reflect on what 13 we provide to you externally. And, you know, 14 we are committed to making sure that we are 15 running a streamline agency. 16 Lastly, regulatory review, which is the 17 topic of today's consultation. Many of you know we released a Notice of Inquiry which Lael 18 19 will talk about briefly after we are done 20 speaking, to ask tribes what regulations, which 21 regulations and how should we go about 2.2 addressing regulatory review. 23 Every administration comes in and they 24 have a prerogative to say, "okay, where are we 25 at?" Look to the past and say, okay, which

regulations were put in place, and are they 1 relevant still? That is what we are doing. 2 Because we are in such a short time 3 frame -- I have been in office for six months. 4 5 It is a three-year term. I have two and a half years left. And as the staff is learning, I am 6 7 pushing everyone to go, go, go, go. Because I have minutes. I don't have two and a half 8 years. I have minutes to try to do as much as 9 10 I can to provide a better agency to all of the 11 tribes. That means in terms of regulations. 12 We are asking -- we are involving tribes 13 so that we work on the things that need to be 14 worked on, and we don't get caught up in things 15 that may not be necessarily a priority or that 16 we work on multiple things and not have one 17 issue, one regulation stop us from addressing others that need attention as well. 18 19 So Lael will talk more about that in a 20 minute. I will say some of this is going to be 21 a challenge. There will be points in time 2.2 where we are not going to agree. But we will 23 be very clear about why we disagree or why we 2.4 made the decision. And we will share that with 25 everyone.

I do want to turn it over at this point. Those are our four major priorities. Today we are kind of hitting on two. This is a new consultation format. At the beginning we are at the cusp of regulatory review. This is just an agenda building activity for tribes to have the opportunity to weigh in and say, okay, this is what needs to be addressed first. This is how we think it should go.

10 So four things we are working on: 11 Consultation, technical assistance, agency 12 operations review and regulatory review. You 13 will keep hearing me talk about that, because 14 that is how I am going to keep you informed on 15 what we say that we are going to do. You will 16 keep hearing us talk about those four things, 17 so you always know where we are at, and we are keeping up with what we said we would do. 18

19So at this time I want to hand it over to20Associate Commissioner Dan Little for some21comments, and then we will turn it over to22Lael. Most of today will be opening notes, the23microphone and the record for your concerns.24But I do want to give Associate Commissioner25Little some time to chat.

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COMMISSIONER DANIEL LITTLE: Good morning. Thank you. I want to welcome all the tribal leaders and all the tribal elders and thank the Seminole Tribe and Chairman Cypress for the very warm hospitality. We left Rapid City yesterday morning and it was 18 below. So I am happy to be here.

Just a couple of quick things. Like the 8 9 chairwoman said, this session is for us to hear 10 from the tribes, the issues that you're having. 11 It's very important that we, as a commissioner 12 here, you know, gets the feedback before we 13 make decisions. And as Lael goes though the 14 NOI there is a number of specific issues and 15 questions. Please just keep in mind these are 16 only suggestions. These are not any positions 17 that the commission has taken. It is about the 18 process where these point of discussions were 19 brought up was through discussions with tribal 20 leaders, with tribal commissioners, with our 21 staff over the years folks have come up with 2.2 these group of issues that could need 23 reviewing. That is how they are. They are 2.4 just suggestions. We are just really looking forward to hearing what you think about them. 25

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Once again, welcome, and I look forward to hearing from you all. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thanks. It does seem like we are doing a lot of the talking upfront, but, really, what we want to do is let you know what we are up to and briefly review the Notice of Inquiry that was published in the federal register in November.

9 Lael Echo-Hawk is heading up this 10 particular initiative. She sat on the other 11 side of the table, as all of us did. We come 12 from the tribal side, and she has a lot of 13 experience with codes and regulations, and she 14 has been tasked with this particular monumental 15 task. She is doing a good job managing 16 process. If we don't get the process right, 17 then we lose the substance.

18 So I will turn it ever to Lael to briefly 19 do PowerPoint, go over what the Notice of 20 Inquiry says. Then we will open the floor. 21 Many tribal leaders come to these and they have 2.2 prepared statements. First of all, you all have busy schedules, much busier than ours will 23 2.4 ever be. We recognize your time is limited. 25 We know that many of you come with prepared

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statements. We don't want to get stuck on one particular area. So we are just going to open the floor after we review the Notice of Inquiry.

Again, thank you. And I really look forward to working with the tribes together over the next two years. So I will turn it over to Lael.

9 LAEL ECHO-HAWK: Good morning. My name is 10 Lael Echo-Hawk. I am a member of the Pawnee 11 Nation of Oklahoma. Counsel and Chairwoman 12 Stevens, and I also would like to thank the 13 Seminole Nation for allowing us to be here today. Like chairwoman said, it's much warmer. 14 15 It's like 120-degree difference with a negative 16 40 below, with the wind chill when we were in 17 Rapid City. This is much, much nicer.

18 I will briefly go over what the Notice of 19 Inquiry is about, what the regulatory review 20 process is going to be for the NIGC, obviously 21 my contact information on the PowerPoint 2.2 screen. You should all have a copy of the 23 PowerPoint in your packet. If you didn't 24 receive a packet, please raise your hand and we 25 will have Mavis get some out to everyone so you

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can follow along. There are a couple of -- I see two over here. This can help you kind of follow along.

That is my contact information. Any issues or concerns you have regarding the regulatory review process on the agenda you can reach me at this phone number, this e-mail address, talk to me today. But we do want to hear from you. That is really what the intent of this Notice of Inquiry and this whole process is about.

12 So why regulatory review? As you guys all 13 know, probably better than I do, the Indian 14 Regulatory Act tasked the National Gaming 15 Commission with putting together regulations to 16 implement that. And so, you know, we do have a 17 regulatory framework, but it is something that 18 when this commission came on they agreed that 19 it was something that we needed to review, take 20 a look at, see how we can improve the industry.

Additionally, as most of you all likely know, President Obama issued a directive within the past two weeks telling agencies to take another look at their regulatory structure, to streamline it, streamline it, make it more

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efficient, update regulations. And so we kind of got up -- we are patting ourselves on the back, this is our idea. But, you know, that is what we are doing.

Additionally, we are required by the executive order and the Regulatory Flexibility Act to put together a semiannual regulatory review agenda. So that is something that will come out in April, and this whole process will lead to that agenda.

The Commission has also taken the 11 12 executive order. We are all very familiar with 13 it 13175, the consultation and coordination with Indian Tribal Government executive order. 14 15 We take that very seriously. We are committed 16 to the intent of that order. It is now on our 17 web site. There is actually a button -- this 18 is due in large part to Mavis right here, part of our web site staff, Mavis and Mark. We have 19 20 a great staff who has been really great about 21 updating our web site. We do have a new web 2.2 page that is dedicated to tribal consultation. The executive order is on that web site. You 23 24 click it, there is another button that will 25 lead you to the regulatory review web page as

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well where all this information can be found. 1 But this commission is committed to the 2 3 intent of that executive order. A particular section of the commission that it's really 4 5 paying close attention to is section 3C3. Ιt 6 says "when undertaking to formulate and 7 implement policies that have tribal implications, agency shall -- shall in 8 9 determining whether to establish federal 10 standards consult with tribal officials as to the need to those standards." 11 12 That is what we are doing today. That is 13 what we have been doing for the past month. 14 Before we start working on standards, we want 15 to talk to you, we want to understand what the 16 needs truly are and how we can best go about 17 making those changes that need to happen in

18 regulations.

19So what is a Notice of Inquiry? A Notice20of Inquiry is something I haven't seen used21with agencies when interacting with tribal22governments. However, it is a tool that is23used by a number of federal agencies when24communicating with their constituents. So a25Notice of Inquiry is questions. We hear that

there is an issue regarding certain policies. Please tell us, you know, you people that are going to be the most affected by the changes or this policy, tell us what the issues are and how we can best work to address those issues. That is what this Notice of Inquiry is.

I will ask three primary questions. What regulations do we need to be looking at? When, sort of and what priority level. As the chairwoman mentioned, we are operating on a very short time frame. By best guess for how long we can continue ruling before the presidential election process really gets 14 going, and they tell federal agencies to stop issuing rules is probably about 18 months.

16 So 18 months to consult, to do revisions, 17 to put the notice in the federal register is 18 really not a long time. We have pretty -- it 19 looks like we are going to have a lot on our 20 plate. We will really need your assistance. 21 We need to know the priorities. What are the 2.2 most important things that need to be 23 addressed? Then, finally, how? The how leads to tribal advisory committees, do we do this 24 25 through negotiated rule making. Are there some

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instances where a notice of written -- written notice of proposal we are making and then just asking for written comments, if that is sufficient. We need to know. We really need input from tribal leaders and your staff on how we should go about doing this. In the best way, that brings in the best comments from the industry, from the Indian Country, from the gaming operations, the tribal leadership.

10 So this is our road show. I keep hearing 11 that we are going to get T-shirts made, but I 12 haven't seen them yet. But this is where we 13 have been. Since January 11 we have been in 14 eight locations holding eight consultations. 15 This is our last stop, obviously, but the idea 16 was that we bring the agency to you that tribes 17 should not have to travel to DC to talk to us. 18 We need to be in Indian Country. So you guys 19 can continue doing what is very important in 20 your communities and you don't have to go all 21 the way to DC.

22 So the Notice of Inquiry published 23 November 18th. If you're at G2E or at NCAI you 24 might have heard the chairwoman make the 25 announcement. The commentary closes

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That is in a week from now. February 12th. 1 We 2 are going to give everyone here the opportunity 3 to kind of think about what you heard today and look at what is on the web site and make your 4 5 comments. All written comments and 6 consultation transcripts are going to be posted 7 on the tribal consultation page of the web There are already probably 12 comments 8 site. 9 There is at least one transcript. up. I am 10 hoping to get a couple more up by the end of 11 this week. Again, thanks to Mavis and the 12 staff that we have in DC. But we are really 13 committed to transparency and accountability. 14 And one way to do that is put all the 15 information that we have out and make it 16 accessible to you, so you know what we have 17 heard from other tribes. You can take a look 18 and see what other tribes are saying and make comments based on that as well. 19 20 So, again, what Commissioner Little said 21 we want to emphasize, these are suggestions 2.2 only. We are not committed to anything that 23 was -- that we put into the Notice of Inquiry or federal register. These are just issues

that have been raised as we have done

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consultations over the summer, as we have had meetings with tribes and as we met with people at conferences. We haven't taken a position on what is included in the notice.

So very, very briefly, what regulations were included in the Notice of Inquiry? What were the issues we heard? We heard some concerns about revenue, the definitions that are in the regulations today. Also, we've heard some concerns about the bulletin that is out there and the use of net gaming revenues and whether that should be revisited as well.

13 Management contracts and a number of 14 issues that come up with management contracts 15 that we have been asked to take a look at. 16 Some very simple things, like changing the 17 calculation of fees from calendar year to a 18 tribe's fiscal year.

19We've heard from our finance department20that makes more sense and makes the calculation21easier and simplifies the process. Using22industry standards, definitions. One thing we23heard about and we haven't heard anyone say24that it has not been a good idea, that is to25put together some sort of ticketing type system

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for when tribes submit their fees late, instead of issuing notice of violation.

3 As you all know, and you know, I represented a tribe for six and a half years, 4 5 notice of violations are significant. They're 6 not insignificant. They're very important, 7 both internally for the tribe and for the people looking at the tribe. We don't want to 8 9 issue a notice of violation for something that 10 could have been an oversight in personnel 11 changes. We heard -- was it maybe in Rapid 12 City -- that someone, their CFO was going in 13 for like a lung transplant, so the fees were 14 submitted three days late and they get a notice of violation. It took them a substantial 15 16 amount of time to resolve that issue. But they 17 still -- even though they settled, they still have a notice of violation. And whether or not 18 19 that is a -- that is the right way to go about 20 dealing with late fees submissions.

The self-regulation -- regulation, whether or not the burden for obtaining that certificate, really -- there is really the benefit, if the benefit really outweighs the burden. We heard that it's not a successful

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regulation, that we need to take a look at it.

Management contracts, there is a number of issues on management contracts, that if you have some of those, if you heard about those, we do want to hear what your thoughts are on these issues.

7 Proceeding before the commission. I am an attorney. I like to know what the process is. 8 9 I don't want to file an appeal and have it sit 10 there until I am about ready to retire and then 11 all of a sudden it is going to be addressed. 12 We've heard that this is something that should 13 give -- we should provide them notice. People 14 should know what their due process is when they 15 come before the commission and they're filing a 16 notice of appeal or, et cetera. So that is 17 something else that people have said that we should consider working on. 18

19The issue with the most press, the issue20that the chairman woman said, it just sucks the21air out of the room, and that is the MICS.22Sucks the air out of this room and it's over in23the next room right now. But this is obviously24a very important issue in Indian Country. It25is something we heard about in every single

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meeting, different opinions on how to deal with these issues.

3 My concern is from a process standpoint is how do we address the MICS, Class II, Class 4 5 III, technical standards? How do we address the issue that the Colorado River Indian Tribe 6 7 told me that they didn't give the agency the authority to promulgate or enforce Class III 8 9 MICS? How do we deal with that, given that we 10 have Class III MICS regulations today? What do 11 we do about that? What do we do about that in 12 the context of tribes that have included that 13 in the NIGC Class III MICS in their compact and 14 then given the NIGC authority to enforce the 15 ordinance.

16 So we have a number of issues around Class 17 III MICS specifically, and very different 18 opinions. We do need some help figuring out 19 how to address those.

But, you know, back to process, from my perspective, how do we also do this in a way that doesn't sort of obliterate all these other concerns and all the other issues that are as important to Indian Country and need to be addressed in the regulations. How do we do

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both things and make sure that we do the most? We need your help on that. The pilot program for background

investigations for licensing --

MS. ALTIMUS: Can you slow down, please. LAEL ECHO-HAWK: I have to slow down and speak slower.

8 The pilot program for background 9 investigations, it has been in place for a 10 number of years, and should we consider 11 formalizing that in a regulation. We had a 12 number of tribes ask us to allow access to 13 finger printing, the finger printing process and the database that we use with the FBI for 14 15 non-primary management officials or key 16 employees.

17 If we were to do this it requires a change 18 to our MOA with the FBI, but if it is something 19 the tribes are interested in, then it is 20 something we can look at, but we need some 21 input.

The facility licensing regulation, we've heard over and over and over again that this regulation should be opened back up for comment, that we need to take another look at

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it. There have been some concerns that this regulation was put into place without proper consultation, that the agency fell down in the process of putting that regulation together, and that we need to go back and take another look at it.

Access and -- inspection and access to records held off site. For example, a former management company may have some financial records that they have at their facility in Vegas, and the tribe cannot get access to them. Should we specify a regulation that the NIGC has the authority to access those regulations or access those records at those sites.

15 Another issue that has been raised is 16 whether or not the chairwoman or the chair of 17 NIGC should have the authority to withdraw a 18 notice of violation. And along those lines, we 19 heard that perhaps we need to go back and take 20 another look at the enforcement regulations 21 themselves and put into regulation form a 2.2 pre-notice of violation with an opportunity to 23 comply and cure so that we don't end up just issuing a notice of violation. As I said 2.4 25 before, they are very important. They are

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substantial -- they have a substantial impact. 1 2 And we need to be cognizant of that. If we can 3 work with the tribe to come into compliance, perhaps we can avoid it and it will be all 4 5 together. So we heard a number of consultations that that is something the NIGC 6 7 should consider doing. Other federal agencies should have similar regulation. Perhaps we 8 9 need to look at those types of models.

So those are the issues that have come up with current regulations. The potential new regulations that we have been thinking about or we heard issue should be formalized into 14 regulations.

15 The Tribal Advisory Committee, now I know 16 that the last couple of, probably, tribal 17 advisory committees that the agency has worked 18 with or has set up has been very controversial 19 in Indian Country and people have felt like 20 they were not heard or utilized properly. This 21 is something we need to set the regulation how 22 those committees will be selected and set up, 23 what the process will be, when those committees 2.4 are in -- when they are set up, and even how the meetings are conducted, the facilitator. 25

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Those kind of issues, and whether or not that 1 2 needs to be put into regulatory form. 3 Sole proprietary interest, we had a number of tribes come to us on this issue as well, 4 5 dealing with, you know, contract or combination 6 of contracts that perhaps looked okay at the 7 beginning but now appear to, at least to the tribe, to violate this local proprietary 8 9 interest provisions of the act. And, you know, 10 a lot of tribes have raised a concern that we 11 need to put something out formally, whether a 12 regulation, or what have you, that defines what 13 sole proprietary interest means. And how to do 14 that we had suggestions in California that 15 perhaps one of the ways to do it would be 16 redefining primary beneficiary. It is 17 something that if you're interested in and you 18 have concerns about, we definitely need to hear 19 input from the tribes on that.

A communication policy regulation, however this works, we have been very concerned with how we communicate with you. How do we even notify you of consultations? You may or may not have noticed -- hopefully you noticed -that when we introduced the Notice of Inquiry

1	we did everything we possibly could to reach
2	you. We did your tribal leader letters. We
3	made announcements at various venues. We
4	published the federal register, we sent it out,
5	put it on the web site. We mailed it. We
6	faxed it. We will smoke signal, Pony Express
7	it. We'll do whatever we need to do to get
8	this information to you. But there are other
9	things as we do engage in
10	government-to-government consultation our
11	obligation is to the tribal elected officials,
12	and that situation could lead to contact, and
13	then how do we make sure that some information
14	that we send to tribal counsel also gets to
15	your staff and that gaming commission or at the
16	operations. It can get very confusing.
17	Working at a tribe myself, I was just
18	lucky that I was friends with the tribal
19	counsel's staff and they made sure that any
20	information they got got to me and then I
21	filtered it down to the commission or to the
22	gaming operation. But I know that as tribal
23	leaders you get a lot of paperwork. Sometimes
24	things get lost in the shuffle.
25	We want to make sure when we put some

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information out that it reaches everyone it should. So we need your help because you guys know how tribes work, certainly better than we do. How can we do that and be effective?

5 Finally, the Buy Indian Act. I know that the National Gaming Association has had an 6 7 initiative for several years, let tribal operations Buy Indian from each other and we 8 9 are looking at our agency. When the agency 10 goes out to, for example, purchase meeting 11 space like this, that we should be putting some 12 money that funds the money from tribes, that 13 funds the agency, putting it back into Indian 14 Country. So that when we are purchasing goods 15 or services, whatever they may be, that the 16 agency is obligated by regulation to buy it and 17 put the money that we -- that you pay in to 18 fund our agency, that we put it back into Indian Country, so considering the binding act. 19 20 We hope, you know, following the example of the 21 National Gaming Association, we think it is an important thing, so --2.2

Again, these are only suggestions. The commission has not taken a position on any of these, you know. We like some more than

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others. We heard lots of comments. As I keep getting more comments, I'm like, "oh, we didn't think about that." So it is so vital that we get your input, that you provide us some guidance on how do we it.

Just a note, if you take a look -- the 6 7 first comment we got was from San Manuel Tribe and not speaking to the substance of what their 8 9 comments were, but if you look at the format, 10 it was very helpful for us as we went through, 11 they identified the regulation, they identified 12 whether or not it was a issue for them, sort of 13 what priority level, what method we could 14 consider revising that regulation.

There is some good examples on the web site of how it might be helpful to frame your comments. But it doesn't matter how you frame them. Send them to us. We want to hear from you. We need to hear from you.

20 One other thing, going back to the 21 executive order. Again, in the same section, 22 section 3C2, this time it says "when 23 undertaking to formulate and implement policies 24 that tribal implications agency shall, where 25 possible, defer to Indian tribes to establish

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standards."

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2 So we really can look to you and, if 3 possible, defer to the standards that you forward to us in regard to these regulations. 4 5 That is something that we are hopeful will happen, that we can be -- that Indian Country 6 7 can come forward and provide us with some options that we can take a look at. 8 We're 9 getting to be very sophisticated. We can 10 borrow some things from what tribes are doing. 11 The commentary is closed next week. 12 Everything will be posted on line. There is a 13 bunch of information on line, including a 14 number of comments and transcripts. You can 15 send those comments to me at 16 reg.review@NIGC.gov and they will be on the web 17 site, hopefully within a day or two, but again, 18 Mark has been really great about getting that 19 stuff as soon as we get it. 20 The commitment from the NIGC, the 21 commitment from myself is that every comment 2.2 that is received, we will review it, we will 23 consider it carefully. The regulatory review 2.4 agenda will be accompanied by a summary of why we went a certain direction, why we are taking 25

a look at regulations, and in what order and 1 2 how we are going to work on them. We are going 3 to be accountable to you. We want to be transparent. We want to tell you why we went a 4 5 certain direction. If we disagree with the 6 direction that tribes asked us to go, then we 7 are going to explain why. We want the decision making process to be transparent. We want you 8 to understand that we are considering 9 10 everything that is sent to us.

11 Finally, the agenda will be completed in 12 April, likely at NIGA. You will know what the 13 direction is that we are going. And like I 14 said, from today we have approximately 18 15 months. In April we are going have about 16. 16 And so we need to move very, very fast. And we 17 will be moving very, very fast. I hope that 18 you guys will support us and that you will 19 participate because it is only with your 20 participation that we are going to come up with 21 a product that is really the best for Indian 2.2 Country.

The consultations are being recorded and transcribed. If you speak, please use the microphone. State your name, the tribe that
you represent or the organization that you 1 2 represent. There is still room around the table for tribal leadership. If you're sitting 3 in the back -- you can sit in the back if you 4 5 like, if you're shy, or you can come forward. 6 Let's see what else. If you have a 7 written statement, if you read a written statement, that is great. If possible, give me 8 9 a copy of that so that we can include it in the 10 transcript. 11 And with that, I will turn it over to 12 Chairman Stevens and we will open the floor to 13 comments from you. Thank you. 14 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank vou, 15 Lael. 16 So I know you all have been very patient, 17 as we have been doing a lot of the talking. We 18 wanted to get that out of the way first so we 19 can do an overview and explain the purpose of 20 the meeting, why we are doing what we are 21 doing, remind everyone of what our initiatives 2.2 are so you can hold us accountable and just, 23 you know, do the brief overview of the Notice 24 of Inquiry. If you 25 Can everyone reach a microphone?

need help, let us know. We will get up and move the microphones around for you.

We are just going to open it up for comments by tribal leaders, just for the sake of protocol. I would like to give the floor over to the tribal leader first and tribal elders, or whoever the tribal leaders designate. I am happy to turn it over to tribal leadership first, if we have folks who have comments they would like to read in. If there are any questions, you're not sure about something, let us know.

13 Also, one thing. Her phone number is up 14 there. Any of you who have been trying to call 15 our office for the past week, we broke our 16 phones. We tried to install caller ID and we 17 broke it. We are going to fix it. We 18 apologize. But our e-mail works. We are in 19 South Dakota and we heard that 96 percent of 20 the reservations out there don't have access to 21 internet. But they can call and hope they get 2.2 through. The phone lines will come in, and you 23 may not get through to who you're looking for. 24 So we have it set up so that if the numbers are 25 not going to the right place, they will get the

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information to us. I apologize if you're 1 2 trying to get ahold of us. We are really 3 trying to fix it. But e-mail as well. Part of that internal stuff that we are working on, so 4 5 that we get up to the 21st Century. 6 So I will turn the floor over to anyone 7 who would like to ask any questions or comment. The floor is open. 8 9 Chairman Cromwell. CEDRIC CROMWELL: Cedric Cromwell. 10 I just 11 want to compliment you on what you're doing 12 with the consultation. I think this is going 13 in the right direction. You get the stories of 14 past. Obviously we are on that path. Seeing 15 things that you're working on, I think it is 16 great. I just want to make that comment. That 17 is all. I have nothing negative to say or any 18 suggestions, because I think you've covered 19 what has been on my mind. 20 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you. 21 GUY MICHAEL: I am Guy Michael, legal 2.2 counsel for the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana. 23 John Paul Darden, who is our chairman, is here. 24 He asked me to speak to some of these issues. First of all, on behalf of the chairman, 25

let me thank the Seminole Tribe for your 1 2 hospitality for allowing this conference to take place here, and also, of course, the 3 Commission with whom we have been dealing since 4 5 about 1993, with whom too that we have had a wonderful working relationship. All 6 7 commissioners and staff, Cindy Altimus has been terrific and we worked with Keith in our 8 9 district. He has been enormously cooperative 10 and helpful, and Elaine Trimble Saiz, who has 11 always made herself available to us by phone, 12 fax or any form of communication to answer any 13 questions we have. Very appreciative again of 14 the excellent relationship we have been able to 15 develop. Thank you for these conferences that 16 give us, again, another opportunity to be able 17 to confer and to learn how we can best serve the tribe. 18

19In terms of any substantive remarks20regarding the excellent presentation, there is21one issue that I could address, because we are22in the throws of it now. We don't want to have23individual problems. This is more of a general24nature. It is the idea of the sole proprietary25interest. And given the Wells Fargo decision

and the issues that arise with regard to financing in connection with that sole proprietary interest question.

We as a law firm for the tribe are asked 4 5 when there are financial situations to issue legal opinions as to whether or not a 6 7 particular lending document is a management agreement. It is very difficult, sometimes, to 8 9 do that. We appreciate the various legal 10 opinions that general counsel has issued on 11 that subject and we take from them. But, 12 again, those are all case-by-case kinds of 13 analyses. For us to then analogize those cases 14 to our cases where there may be some variations 15 becomes a little tricky. Anything that can be 16 done to maybe more formalize or standardize the 17 standards by which sole proprietary interest or 18 theory is applied, especially as it relates to 19 the banks and financial institutions. I don't 20 know if it would be workable. But one 21 potential idea might even be to be exempt from 2.2 those determinations, banks and financial institutions that are issuing loans in the 23 2.4 regular course of business, which for the most 25 part, are not intended to be the management, as

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Page 42 we understand it, but have certain conditions 1 2 in them that do implicate those same areas, if that kind of exemption criteria could be 3 developed within it might be very helpful. 4 5 I could go on and on with other comments. 6 LAEL ECHO-HAWK: Will you be submitting 7 written comments? GUY MICHAEL: Yes, I could do that. 8 9 LAEL ECHO-HAWK: If you have ideas, 10 particularly with regard to that issue, we 11 would really love to hear them. 12 GUY MICHAEL: Okay. Great. 13 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: The floor is 14 open for more comments, any questions anyone 15 might have. 16 Yes, sir? 17 ADMINISTRATOR MCGHEE: I am actually 18 here -- our vice chairwoman Stephanie Bryan 19 can't be here. She came down with the flu 20 right before she had to fly out. 21 I have a statement I would like to read on 2.2 her behalf, if I may. My name is Daniel 23 McGhee, with the Poarch Creek Tribe, 24 administrator of the Gaming Commission and Tribal Committee.

"On behalf of the tribe I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide comment on the Commission's Notice of Inquiry. And I especially want to thank you for taking on the ambitious goal of revamping the Commission's regulations.

In our review of the Notice of Inquiry I would say that we share the beliefs of many that we've heard speak today and at other consultations. While some of the changes contemplated by the Commission will benefit Indian Country, we feel that others will not.

13 In particular, we strongly discourage the 14 Commission from expanding the definition of 15 management contract so that it includes any 16 contract merely because it pays a fee based on 17 percentage of gaming revenues. Just because 18 payment to a third party is based on percentage 19 of revenue does not mean that the contract 20 involves management. In our experience, these 21 contracts have nothing to do with management, 2.2 and thus to mandate their submission would be 23 to expand the authority of the Commission 2.4 beyond what was intended by IGRA. Don't get me wrong, we appreciate that the 25

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Commission will review these types of agreements at the request of tribes to ensure that they don't violate IGRA. We simply believe that their submission should remain voluntary.

We also disagree with the idea of adding a 6 7 definition that would require a tribe to consider cash flow out before allocating gaming 8 9 revenues for non-gaming purposes. 10 Considerations such as these go to the very 11 heart of tribal sovereignty and right or wrong 12 tribes should be the ones making these 13 decisions.

14 With all due respect, we think it would be a waste of time or a waste of the Commission's 15 16 time to address this issue. I would venture to 17 guess that most, if not all tribes, already do 18 this. I know we take these type of decisions 19 very seriously. After all, this is our future 20 that we are talking about, the future of our members and our children. These type of 21 2.2 decisions should remain in the hands of the 23 tribes.

24As you know, Poarch Creek operates three25Class II facilities in the State of Alabama.

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Changes in the area of Class II gaming are very important to us. We note in particular that the Notice of Inquiry discusses the changes that are under way with regard to the Class II MICS and Technical Standards.

Along with Daniel McGhee and Linda McGhee 6 and I have been very involved in the Tribal 7 Gaming Working Group's review of the MICS and 8 technical standards. In fact, we spent all day 9 yesterday discussing them and will continue to 10 11 do so today and tomorrow. Tribal regulators, 12 vendors and other industry experts from all 13 over the country have been participating in 14 these meetings in an effort to develop a revised set of regulations that are better 15 16 suited to Class II gaming. I truly hope that 17 the work product of this group will be given great deference as the Commission considers how 18 19 it will ultimately revise its regulations. And 20 Hopefully this group's work product can serve 21 as the starting point as a Tribal Advisory 22 Committee that then works to craft final 23 regulations.

24 But one last substantive note, the idea of 25 revamping the commission regulations on

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self-regulation is of great interest to the 1 2 tribe. If done properly, we think this action alone could alleviate a lot of the pressures 3 experienced by the Commission on a daily basis. 4 5 If the regulations were more practical, and more clear, more tribes would take advantage of 6 7 this program and even more of the daily regulatory responsibilities could shift to the 8 9 tribes. Notably, this is exactly what IGRA 10 envisioned. With the involvement of the Tribal 11 Advisory Committee we believe that today's 12 overly burdensome regulation can be crafted 13 into something that will more closely model 14 what was intended by congress when it enacted IGRA and we look forward to working with 15 16 commission on this.

17 Finally, I wanted to be sure to note a 18 concern that we have with the enormity of the 19 task being undertaken by the Commission. Ι 20 have only discussed a few of the topics raised 21 by the Commission in the notice. There are 2.2 many more that you are considering, most of 23 which will take time to adequately address. As 2.4 you've noted, your terms are not endless. As such, we want to stress how critical it is that 25

the Commission set priorities and that it work closely with Indian Country as it moves forward.

Even where the Commission decides not to 4 5 act, it is important that it leave a record 6 detailing the reasons for such inaction. Doing 7 so will benefit the industry greatly as new commissioners take office and assess their own 8 9 priorities. And by using a combination of both 10 Tribal Advisory Commission and notice and 11 comment rule making and by working closely with 12 the industry we think the Commission will go a 13 long way towards attaining its ambitious goals, 14 otherwise, we fear that very little can be 15 accomplished.

We thank you for your time."

17 I apologize, Ms. Bryan wanted to read this18 herself, but she asked me to do that.

19I would note when she asked me to look at20the regulation or self-regulation, and she21asked if that would be something we would be22able to do, as I was reading it, I could not23answer her question. It was very vague. It24was very subjective. She asked and I said I25don't even know if we would imply or try to

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reach this criteria, if we could do it or if it would be a waste of our time.

In short, I would recommend that you be much clearer. The criteria be set down to where I know I have to do this, this and this. And if I can do those things, then I have a good chance of, you know, obtaining self-regulation.

9 I also think that the criteria should be 10 less objective, meaning if I submit an 11 application on whatever self-regulation, the 12 decision I would get from your commission would 13 be the same the decision I would get from any 14 other commission, because it is very black and 15 white. It is not left up to, you know, how you 16 felt or how you thought. So those are comments 17 on self-regulation.

18 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: And thank you 19 for your comments. Will your tribe be 20 submitting written comments?

ADMINISTRATOR MCGHEE: Yes.

22 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: This is a
23 concern that we have heard throughout our
24 consultations, self-regulation regulation is a
25 bit older, and in that time other regulations

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have been adopted by this agency. We only have 1 2 two tribes, two out of 233 that are certified. One was mandated, so one was voluntary. 3 So we are certainly open to ideas. First 4 5 if this is a priority, but also because it 6 hinges -- self-regulation will also hinge on the other regulations that we are dealing with. 7 We need to know what your priority is on this. 8 9 So the floor is open again for those who 10 have comments. It looks like we have someone 11 in the back. No. 12 MR. BLUEDOG: My name is Kurt Bluedog. Ι 13 am here representing Shakopec Mdewakenton Sioux 14 Tribe. I have a question: When you're talking 15 regulations here, I am curious as to the 16 authority and oversight of the various federal 17 agencies. Are you able to tell the FAC and 18 staff what the oversight role would be with 19 regard to the regulations revised or 20 promulgated by the NIGC with respect to 21 oversight on the part of the Department of 2.2 Justice and perhaps the Department of Interior, 23 particularly with those issues related to 2.4 things like Class II definitions and other sort 25 of maybe more controversial type comments?

I am curious in terms of what the perspective of the commission is with regard to your authority to move forward with regulations. And, obviously, I know that you're mandated by the statute to implement the regulatory act.

7 Have you had any problems, I guess, in terms of oversight or sort of bumping? I know 8 9 several years ago the Department of Justice --10 there was a real split between NIGC and the 11 Department of Justice, particularly with Class 12 II definitions. I think there has been other 13 instances as well. I don't mean to put you on the spot or put you in a bad position, but I am 14 15 curious as to the extent of your authority on 16 these regulations.

17 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Well, as you 18 said, it is mandated in the act. And, you 19 know, I am on the tribal side when there were 20 issues with other agencies, whether it was Interior or Justice. And what I can say about 21 this particular administration is that we are 2.2 23 not having those issues right now. The 2.4 administration has been very clear to all of these agencies, the executive branch that, you 25

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know, we should be providing consistent, good government to those we serve.

So just to address that issue, and you know, I guess any particular commission can interpret the act how they want about what their authorities are, because that is how policy is. That is where policy comes in. It is an interpretation of what we are -- what our statutory mandate is.

10 That may come out more as we move forward 11 in putting this agenda together. But I will 12 say this: We are not necessarily wedded to 13 regulations, because we are here talking about 14 regulations. We are talking about mostly the 15 existing regulations.

16 We had several people say "why do you all 17 keep wanting more regulation?" Today the discussion is not necessarily about more 18 19 regulation. What this discussion is about is 20 what is going to be best to protect the 21 industry. That may not necessarily mean more 2.2 regulation. It may be refining the regulation 23 that exists now. That is a natural response, 24 given the history, to continue to see more, 25 reach and more -- more regulation. For this

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commission that is not necessarily going to be the outcome.

What we are interested in is making sure that we stay within the statutory authority as we understand it, and that we work to -- we work with you to safeguard this industry however that might be. It may not necessarily be regulations.

9 We heard a lot about standards, because 10 the act does talk about standards and 11 regulations. And we are getting lots of 12 suggestions about issuing standards or 13 bulletins or guidelines or industry best 14 practices, especially in areas where it might 15 be gray, especially in light of the Colorado 16 Indian Tribe Decision.

17 I am not sure if that answers your18 question.

19 MR. BLUEDOG: Just a brief follow up. 20 When you do devise regulation or new regs it 21 would seem that there would be a process to vet 22 those regs with any administrations. I am not 23 sure how that process works. It seems like the 24 office of management and budget is 25 administratively involved in the distribution

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that to the other affected federal agencies, and they have an opportunity then to approve or disapprove and otherwise comment or possibly even more than comment. Maybe you haven't gotten to the point where you've had to deal with that yet in terms of this administration or the NIGC.

I am just wondering if you had any thoughts on that. You don't anticipate any problems, but that may happen. I am just kind of curious as to how that process might work.

12 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Well, thanks 13 for bringing that up, because actually we have 14 been thinking about it. It's one of the first 15 things we started talking about. I am looking 16 for my lawyer, but I think he walked out of the 17 room.

We are talking about that, because the previous commission, it seemed or it appeared to me, as being on the tribal side and now coming in as the new chair -- how do I say this? I am trying to view their independent regulatory status, their independence very broadly.

I am probably not as -- I am not that

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like-minded about that. I think we have independence for purposes of enforcement action, because we want to be free of the politics when we have to, you know. We have to make sure that the industry is protected. We have to do that with you.

7 But if you read the statute, we are within the Department of Interior. The normal courses 8 9 you put out of regulatory review, it does go 10 into OMB. I do a lot of outreach. We do a lot 11 of outreach because we take the president's 12 directive to work with sister agencies 13 seriously. Even if it is not formalized, we 14 are checking in with other agencies to make 15 sure that we are not creating inconsistency or 16 that we are causing a problem that we don't 17 mean to cause.

18 I do that quite a bit, and we reach out to 19 justice. We reach out to -- we are working 20 with the treasury on some things. We worked, 21 of course, with the Department of Interior 2.2 quite a bit. We are looking at that question. 23 It is a question I had immediately coming in as 2.4 having gone through the exercise, working for the Department of Interior for Indian affairs 25

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there was a process you went through that 1 2 always involved everything going over to OMB, to their regulatory folks, and then having to 3 work with other agencies to make sure that we 4 5 didn't get in the crosshairs. That is their 6 job. That was not a practice before. So we 7 are looking at how we go about that, even if it is determined, you know, we do have some 8 9 independence. There is some courtesy involved 10 too, and to make some assurances, to ensure 11 that we are not creating more problems than we 12 are trying to solve inadvertently.

13 So I don't know if that addresses your 14 question. It was on my mind immediately having 15 come out of the DOI, and looking at the process 16 and supporting the government initiative. We 17 don't have an answer yet on that, but we are 18 working with the White House, who the OMB works 19 for, to examine to what extent do we involve --20 we work with OMB. Whether it is mandatory or 21 involuntary, but either way, we don't want to 2.2 get into those crosshairs either. 23 Yes, Chairman Stevens. 2.4 CHAIRMAN STEVENS: Thank you, Madam 25 Chairwoman. I have prepared some statements

here, so I don't want to go too long. I appreciate the opportunity. I was sitting right across from my boss so I will try to be as quick as I can.

Again, good morning. I wanted to say that it is an honor to be here. I appreciate the hospitality, the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

8 I also wanted to acknowledge Kurt Bluedog 9 who just addressed us as a longstanding board 10 member of the National Gaming Association. I 11 just wanted to just take us through a brief 12 statement on behalf of the National Gaming 13 Association.

14The past eight years tribal governments15has had to deal with a commission that has16failed to appropriately acknowledge primarily17regulatory authority of tribal governments. I18hope I said that as best as I could.

Instead of appropriate dialogue in collaboration and its issue overreaching mandates, in spite of these overreaching mandates the tribal leadership has worked within the law to make gaming the success that it is today.

Your track record, the current

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commission's track record, work in progress is an indication that the tribal leadership has had a consistent opportunity to engage in a productive, respectful dialogue. I think that we are encouraged by that, and we're excited by that. But, again, it's a work in progress. The ultimate reflection is what is the most important to leadership. I just want to say quickly that we wish the best to your health, your energies and your families, because we know all these leaders and the teams that represent us live this world of tribal and dialogue, so again, our best to your families.

I wanted to make sure that we made clear 14 15 that when it is all done, it is our hope and 16 desire that the product will reflect a 17 significant voice by the tribal government 18 leaders throughout any country. We are excited 19 by this, but at the same time, because of the 20 history, we continue to assert the need to hear 21 the leadership and their teams in a productive, 2.2 respectful manner. That is something we can 23 bring forward. Of course we invite you and the 2.4 rest of the leadership here to our trade show in April. We think there is a significant 25

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opportunity to have dialogue with a large consortium of leaders in the gaming world. We acknowledge the time and tremendous energy performed by this commission and staff, the commitment and outreach and willingness to seek out tribal leadership position is truly unprecedented. We thank you for that.

At the same time, the hard decisions are yet to be made. And I think that that is really what I want to -- really want to assert to everyone here. We have a lot of work to do.

You know, in closing I would like to say that Indian gaming has always been about self-reliance and self-governing. While we appreciate the strong partnership and working effort, federal regulations must acknowledge that tribal regulatory agencies are the primary regulators of Indian gaming.

19Again, we look forward to the product and20we invite you to the show. I really think, you21know, I am hesitant to be excited about all22this product until we can roll it out, until we23actually take opportunity to roll your work and24our work into the hands of leadership at our25show in April.

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I think at the same time, you know, I am 1 2 hesitant only because history, but the product, 3 the effort put forward we don't want to take anything from that. As a matter of fact, I 4 5 want to make sure that on behalf of the 184 6 tribes that I represent we say thank you. Ιt 7 is a new time of communication and dialogue. That is why I acknowledge you, your family and 8 your team. I thank you for that. 9 10

In closing, I just wanted to acknowledge your chief counsel, Mr. Larry Roberts. He is, by coincidence, we happen to be sitting next to each other. We are not trying to get -- we are not trying to get any pull with him or anything like that.

16 God bless his late grandmother who just 17 passed away and my grandmother who were friends. We both went back and forth in the 18 19 big city. My grandmother is still hanging in 20 there at 100 years old. These two ladies are 21 pioneers, that had preserved Indian culture, 2.2 and allowed us to be who we are. I just wanted 23 to acknowledge Mr. Roberts in that way, these elders that keep our communities going. 2.4 We 25 have so many here in this country. I wanted to

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acknowledge their energy and spirit as we move this forward. Ultimately, what we do here is our success and future. I thank you for your time today, Madam Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you, Chairman Stevens for all those words. I was telling Dan that the Oneida of Wisconsin over there, he said no, it's really the Packer fans over there. All in good words.

And we said -- we all said, all the commissioners said that we recognize the tribes who are the primary regulators. It is a virtual impossibility the way things are now and within our statutory authorities for that to be us. It is impossible.

16 Having come from a tribal operation and 17 working from a tribal leadership we all, you 18 know, have had -- all of us, the commissioners, 19 our products of Indian gaming and the staff 20 that we've appointed, Larry Paxton and we have 21 others, Lael, deputy chief staff. We all are 2.2 from Indian Country. We recognize that the 23 tribes are the ones who are on the ground 24 24 hours, seven days a week. You are the ones who 25 are going to have to implement these

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regulations. You know what is best for your 1 2 operation. If anything, tribal is the one who 3 have the most vested interest in protecting And what we have said, and what we tried 4 them. 5 to do is we try to go outside just the operation because we know that there are lives 6 7 at the other end of this of what we do, the decisions we make ripple out and there are 8 9 people at the other end of these decisions. Ιt 10 affects your operations. It affects the much 11 needed resources you have available to you to 12 serve your community's people. And so we 13 recognize that.

We look forward to working with everyone. It is not always going to be perfect. We are not going to be perfect. We may not always have the answers, but we look forward to everyone coming to the table and identifying the issues, but helping us solve them too.

I understand, and we heard it pretty regularly since we have been on the road, that there is a caution that people have. The tribes have been approaching us because the history over the past eight to 10 years. And what I say to that, and what we were reminded

of by the Oglala and the leaders from the Great 1 2 Sioux Nation, we are going to be judged by our 3 actions. I can come in here and talk and talk, and be vet another federal official that talks. 4 5 I know that my actions will speak more, and that is what the history will show, or what we 6 7 do. So this is just the beginning of the steps that we are taking, the action. 8 So I 9 appreciate that and I understand the caution 10 and the hesitancy that tribes have, in our 11 efforts. But all we can do is ask that you be 12 involved, that we will include you and we will 13 inform you. 14 So thank you, Chairman Stevens. 15 Chairman Cypress. 16 CHAIRMAN MITCHELL CYPRESS: We will 17 probably be submitting written comments 18 regarding the regulations at this time. 19 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Announce 20 yourselves and then after these comments we 21 will take a break to stretch our legs. I don't 2.2 mean to rush you. I want to let everyone know that we will have a break after this comment 23 2.4 and we will come back. 25 Thank you, Chairwoman MR. WEBSTER:

Stevens. I am an attorney with Seminole Tribe here with Ed Jenkins. And we have been asked to provide a few specific comments on the Notice of Inquiry and the regulations that you're reviewing.

As an additional matter, we absolutely 6 7 agree with the comments that were made this morning, the appropriateness of the process the 8 9 commission is using with the Notice of Inquiry, 10 and the respect that it demonstrates in terms 11 of soliciting the views from Indian Country 12 before the Commission makes a decision about 13 which regulation it is going to undertake and 14 both the process and priority.

So, again, we certainly commend the commission and the approach it is taking and look forward to working with the commission over the months ahead as this process moves forward.

In terms of specific regulations, we do believe our priorities of the Commission should focus on, and I will say the tribe will be following up with written comments as well. First of all, the Part 518 self-regulations, we very much agree with the comments that have

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been made earlier and the commission's own recognition that Part 518 has been seriously flawed.

As we read the statute, the statute sets 4 5 out a process for self-regulation and frankly 6 sets that -- we think it is the goal the 7 commission should be working with tribes. You get tribes to the point where tribes are 8 self-regulatory. And the regulations that have 9 10 been in place now for many years are not just burdensome and sort of the cost benefit 11 12 analysis you talked about, we think they're, 13 frankly, contrary to the statute. In terms of 14 imposing of both requirements to achieve 15 self-regulation and then once the tribe has attained self-regulation, imposing requirements 16 17 that go so far beyond the statute that there 18 is, frankly, no benefit to being 19 self-regulated.

20 So we really think this is an area where, 21 for a variety of reasons, this should be at the 22 top of the -- top of the commission's list in 23 terms of areas where the regulations can be 24 revised.

Because this is such an important issue,

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and because we know that certainly tribes 1 2 around the country are going to have their 3 views on this and suggestions in terms as to how this might be done, we think in terms of 4 5 the process that the negotiated rule making model is one that would really work well for 6 7 Part 518. Again, we strongly suggest that the commission prioritize a complete revision of 8 9 Part 518.

10 The issue with both MICS and technical 11 standards that you referred to earlier is one 12 also that is important to deal with and we also 13 agree with the concerns that it not suck all 14 the air out of the room. It's absolutely 15 important to deal with to make technical 16 standards. But these other issues are 17 important as well. We recognize that they're 18 both from the commission side and tribal side, 19 and it will be important to have multiple 20 tracks going on these various rules.

We also believe that, depending on the type of regulations that we are looking at, different focuses make sense. So, for example, on the Part 518 we think that the negotiated rule making model is one that the Commission

should use.

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2 With respect to the MICS and technical 3 standards, we believe that the Advisory Committee model can work, but we also agree 4 5 with the comments that were made in terms of some of the problems in the past. So we really 6 7 think that if the Commission does decide to used Advisory Committees and it's critical the 8 9 process be opened, the tribes be able to 10 participate and have their representatives 11 participate without the sorts of limitations 12 and restrictions that were in place before. 13 But because of the technical nature of the 14 regulations we think the expertise is out there and has been assembled. We think continuing or 15 16 establishing a representative Advisory 17 Committee for these different regulations would 18 be appropriate.

With respect to the facility license regulations, 559, frankly we think the best approach would be for the commission to rescind these regulations. The facility license regulations, the predicate for them is a requirement in the statute that the tribes license their facilities. And as we read the

regulations it really seems as though the commission has coopted that tribal requirement and materials are submitted to the NIGC in advance.

We also think -- this is whether regulations are necessary or not on this next point, I think is an open question. We think that this is one where Mr. Jenkins will have some comments. The process for retaining license information, particularly negative information is one we think has some flaws that could be improved.

I am going to give the mic to Mr. Jenkins.

14 MR. JENKINS: I've had a lot of 15 discussions with Cindy on this. This is where 16 the background investigators to the tribe do 17 the background investigations and suspend and 18 revoke license through a revocation hearing and 19 notification forms is sent into NIGC.

20 When other tribes call in and go through 21 the tax system, I am told by Cindy, that they 22 can't release the negative information to a 23 third party. So what happens is the other 24 tribes are calling in saying "what's the deal?" 25 And I just think if you have a TAP portal,

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the portal there that, if it's a legal hold up, 1 2 whatever, if I put in information and we stand 3 behind them, the commission stands behind them, send it to NIGC, why waste the tribe's time in 4 5 releasing the information? I don't know how it's legally achieved. This is only regarding 6 7 the backgrounds. And I know, unless it has changed, that it's not mandatory for tribes to 8 do vendor registration background, but the same 9 10 thing would hold true. We have over 4,000 11 vendors that we vendorize through the vendor 12 That is an on-line program. So if program. 13 there's a tribe out west or anywhere in the 14 country that wants to know is that a good 15 vendor, what do you think, Seminole, we could 16 use the same database and go in. 17 Thank you. 18 MR. WEBSTER: The tribe may have some 19 other suggestions, but we really think that

these issues are the ones that are, from the Seminole Tribe's perspective, they should be the priority at this point. But, again, we appreciate the approach that the commission has taken and look forward to working with the commission as this process moves forward.

Thank you.

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2 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you. 3 I do want to say I appreciate those comments, in particular, about information and 4 5 how the NIGC can help tribes do their jobs. 6 As I said in my opening statement, a lot 7 of the time that we are spending right now is our internal operations. That means we have to 8 9 come up to the 21st Century. We need to be 10 able to put these systems in place. And 11 frankly, I think we agree with you. 12 We will have to figure out, and I look at 13 my lawyer, how we -- if and how we can do that -- first, if we can do it. And when we 14 15 get over that hurdle, the how is going to be a 16 challenge for us because we are not in the 21st 17 Century. We have some system infrastructure in 18 our technology that needs improvement. I am a 19 big fan -- I come from a tribe that has a very 20 aggressive technology system. I expect the 21 same thing. If there is other federal agencies that -- you know, I am not into reinventing the 2.2 23 wheel so I can call it my wheel. If someone 2.4 else has -- other agencies have systems that we 25 can duplicate or that we get some ideas from so

we can make everyone's minds easier, including, 1 2 more importantly the tribes, that would be We know the limitations of the TAPS. 3 great. So we know the limitations of the TIMIS 4 We want to fix those and streamline 5 program. 6 them. So I appreciate those comments. I do 7 want to put everyone on notice that it does -it's going to take a lot of work on our part. 8 9 We agree to just the concept of being able to 10 have systems in place that work. This is going 11 to take a lot on our part to put them there. 12 If everyone is okay, I would like to take 13 a break so we get up and stretch our legs, use 14 the rest room, get some fresh water and coffee. Come back in 15 minutes, which will be five 15 16 after 11:00. Thank you. 17 (a recess was taken) 18 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: We have others 19 that would like to come up to the microphone. 20 That is Judy? 21 JUDY SHAPIRO: Good morning. My name is 2.2 Judy Shapiro. I have been asked to speak on 23 behalf of Chevenne River Sioux Tribe. I would 2.4 like to thank the Seminole Tribe. 25 Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe is,

unfortunately, still embracing great poverty 1 2 right now up in the plains. They have a very 3 minimal gaming presence there. They are looking to revitalize their gaming life there. 4 5 But they're in South Dakota, and it's not simple. It is not simple because the 6 7 compactness of South Dakota, I'm sure you're aware, is not straightforward. They're looking 8 9 to improve their compact situation. They're 10 also looking with an eye towards even if they 11 can't improve their compact situation, they're 12 probably going to want to do Class II gaming --13 to make sure that we are not talking about more 14 regulations. We are talking about better 15 regulations. We are talking the about the MICS 16 and the technical standards and the work of the 17 last eight years where many of you were on the 18 other side trying to hold the line trying to 19 make sure that it would still be a class II. 20 They're never going to have a market like this. But they need to have a market that will take 21 them to a better level of poverty. 2.2 23 Right now, they're remembering a year ago,

I think it was 17 years without power and wateron rez. They got taken out again in the

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summer. They need to -- you're talking about going to the 21st Century. They need an opportunity to have Class II until such time that they can have meaningful Class III. That may not come. So they need that.

As Joe said, I know, I know that you're aware of efforts that the tribal gaming were going to put in to try to make it a Class II standards. They're much, much better than they would have been, but they're still not what they ought to be.

12 And I agree that the -- that should be a 13 priority, because it is a work that was partly 14 done and partly not so well done. It is an 15 opportunity to take the resources that were 16 developed back then over several years worth of 17 resource commitment and concentration. And it 18 is still going on across the hall, because the 19 same people are doing similar work with the 20 anticipation of it coming up before the 21 commission again.

And when it does, I urge you, I urge you to use these resources. The NIGC is doing good things in terms of where it is trying to go. But it will never have the resources that

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Indian Country is bringing to bear, because it's Indian Country's problem and it's Indian Country's priority to make sure that these opportunities continue to exist.

5 So I urge you as, one, to make Class II 6 improvement a regulatory priority. And then, 7 two, to make sure you use those resources to the best of your ability. And to go with an 8 9 approved Tribal Advisory Committee that can be 10 worked out, and to make sure that not only do 11 you have good representative members of the 12 community, but you have the ability to 13 assimilate the information that all the 14 associated tribal community can bring to you. 15 That's it. That is the most important thing we 16 need to do today.

17 I agree also with what Joe Webster said 18 before. I think the facility licensing 19 regulation should be withdrawn. I think it's a 20 mistake. I think it was improper that it was 21 promulgated and it is defective. I think that 2.2 you're better off going back, consulting the 23 tribe and finding a better regulation, not more 2.4 regulations, but better regulations. Probably a separate consultation of that issue alone 25

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would improve that in that context. I think that is really what I need to do.

3 The other issue is that Cheyenne River, in the course of revitalizing its gaming, has done 4 5 a lot of good training program out there. It's going to want to have a good differentiation of 6 what the NIGC can do and what its 7 responsibilities are, which means addressing 8 9 the aftermath of CRIT more appropriately. 10 Guidance is very good, but it should be clear, what is the NIGC's role and what is the tribal 11 12 role? I think that is something that ought to 13 be a priority in terms of addressing the Class III MICS. 14

Having the information out there as 15 16 quidance, as bulletins, or whatever form turns out to be useful, because I know it's a 17 18 complicated setting, but there should not be 19 confusion that would set tribes up in a bad 20 place where the NIGC really doesn't have 21 authority to regulate, but it's not going to be 22 so clear to outside.

I think that that clarification is
something that we should be focusing on. Thank
you.

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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you, Judy.

I do want to remind everyone that technical assistance and training is a priority of ours. The purpose of the training survey is so you can get a better understanding of what the tribes in each region need, and how we can tailor our training to meet those needs.

9 The survey is in on the web site, if you'd 10 like to take a look at it. But, also, we have 11 to go through all of our training material that 12 exists right now and make sure that it complies 13 with the policy of this commission.

14 That goes to your point, Judy, about 15 making sure that we don't cross lines. So we 16 are in that process. It's part of the 17 technical assistance and training initiative, 18 but it's also part of our management, our 19 agency operations is how we allocate our time. 20 The majority of our budget, 80 percent -- well, 21 let's say 75 percent is human capital staffed, and you all know how that works. Staffing 2.2 23 costs money, salaries, wages, taxes, benefits, 2.4 and all the overhead costs associated with 25 having one person on board. That is the

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majority of our budget. We have a fixed cost that go into that.

The best thing we can do is look at how we are spending our time. How people in the field are spending their time, and refocusing that towards the areas that we want them focused on, one of which is technical assistance and training.

9 We don't want them on other agendas, other 10 priorities. They have to be working on 11 priorities that we set for them and those 12 priorities are based on what we hear from 13 tribes. Technical assistance and training is one of those initiatives, and we are moving our 14 staff towards more of a technical assistance 15 16 and training mode, but there is many moving 17 parts that we have to correct to make sure that 18 we give tribes like Cheyenne River what they 19 need. We would like your patience as we make 20 those changes.

21JUDY SHAPIRO: We will be working to make22sure we get you that information.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Daniel, right
 up to your mouth so we can hear you.
 MR. MCGHEE: I did want to bring up a

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couple of points I thought about while I was here, and that is the regulation 556 and 558, which is when you're doing the background, and the criteria -- because those were a long time ago. I think it would be beneficial to revisit those regulations.

7 I noticed from the slide show earlier that the pilot program for licensing, I don't think 8 9 it is clear how someone can be a part of that. 10 A lot of paperwork for you guys, for us. It is 11 very burdensome. But I also think a lot of the 12 information that was originally requested, 13 requested or required to being on the 14 background application could be revisited. Ι 15 think a lot of information we have to ask for, 16 but necessarily everyone -- help with 17 determining what is actually useful, what we 18 need or don't need. Those are regulations, and 19 I think, maybe that is the same time you can 20 address similar concerns about the TAP Program. 21 Also, the MICS that you're currently working 2.2 on, I think the way which it is going is trying to go in and take a lot of detail, a lot of 23 2.4 things that may be procedures or standards, and 25 I agree with that, to what is happening, but at

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the same time I do have a concern that NIGC 1 2 understands that if that were to be the way 3 that MICS goes in that direction, that they in turn might have to look at a lot more 4 5 bulletins. I think you call them samples, for tribes. Because when we first started out we, 6 7 you know, had nothing so we took a MICS. But, 8 you know, as you grow you start to understand 9 it more, your TICS grow.

10 Also, the Advisory Committees, and I think 11 that was also fair, our suggestion will be I've 12 noticed as being part of some those advisory 13 committees, to not take away some fairness 14 issues and representation issues, that this can 15 figure out a way to make some of the advisory 16 committees smaller. Being that we have a large 17 representation, many different people, but it 18 can sometimes bog it down and make it go 19 forever. I don't know that you have an 20 advisory committee to figure out how to make a 21 better advisory committee, but I think, or if 2.2 you have to have a advisory committee, maybe bring them into a smaller subcommittee to 23 2.4 actually get something accomplished a lot guicker. I think that would be more 25

beneficial.

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2 For instance, with the MICS you have all 3 these different sections that you can pick one person from the tribe, but no one person is 4 5 going to know IT, case surveillance. Usually it takes different kind of people submitting 6 7 That will be something we had different data. committees handle different portions. I don't 8 9 know how it has to work, but that is something 10 you can get products produced quicker, and a 11 better sense of everyone's thoughts, just to 12 consider those things.

13 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you. Ι 14 appreciate you bringing up, sort of, the 15 challenge that we are faced with, and technical 16 advisory committees is one example. Just 17 generally MICS and Class III and mechanisms, because it is so different. We are in 18 19 California in two cities, and there was a clear divide between the tribes, Class III and the 20 21 MICS regulation and enforcement. And there was 2.2 a clear set of tribes that did not.

I think what this highlights to me is the need for mechanisms that are flexible to work for as many of the tribes -- all the tribes.

My desire is there are flexible mechanisms in 1 2 place to meet all of these diversities of 3 tribes and that we have as much coverage as we can and make sure that we protect the industry 4 5 at the level of protection being led by the 6 tribes is primarily regulators. There is 7 nobody left behind. So we are going to be looking to tribes for solutions. I think that 8 9 what we are hearing, and we are open to the 10 flexibility, not just with the Class III MICS, 11 but also with tribal advisory committees. They 12 suit the need of the committee, the objective 13 of the committee.

14 I am a big fan of facilitators, having come from the tribal side, but also from 15 16 Department of Interior. They serve as a great 17 traffic control. They serve as a neutral party 18 to help the group come to a decision and move 19 them toward to their objective rather than get 20 bogged down, because I sat in all those 21 meetings for years. I got stranded in Dallas, like everyone else. It's beneficial to have 2.2 23 that kind of environment. I know that early 2.4 advisory committees had facilitators.

You know, in a perfect world to me you get

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a diverse enough group and you check with tribes that are on that group should look like, and it's well represented by those who have interest but you set the ground rules when they there is this agreement. You don't bog down for hours going over one word. You break up the fights. You have a referee in the room, and everyone has to stay on the ground rules, so that you can get to -- you can finish.

I am all for flexibility on whatever the subject is. And if that means we have subgroups, I want them to be timely. I want them to be thorough. Maybe I just want my cake and want to eat it too. They have to be quick, timely but they have to be thorough.

So I think there is a way we can do this.
I think the overall goal is flexible, and not rigidity.

19It looks like Judy has something to say.20JUDY SHAPIRO: I want to add one more21thing in response to what you're saying. As22you look toward developing these regulations,23one of the things that would break up some of24the fights and disagreements would be to make25more use of tiered regulation. And this is

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something that we talked about a lot, and the 1 2 earlier MICS you used more, and I think it is 3 important to keep that in mind because there are tiny places and there are big places. 4 And 5 I think that once that flexibility is built into the regulations, I think that you may find 6 7 you have fewer cause for arguments, because there are some people that say this should be 8 9 our standard, and you will have others that say 10 we can't possibly meet that standard. If you 11 take into account the contextual basis for 12 those arguments, you might be able to solve 13 problems.

14 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thanks, Judy. 15 She was talking about for the people who could 16 not hear her back there, the tiered that the 17 regulations -- some folks behind you -- tiered 18 regulations for large, medium, small size 19 operations. What might be completely doable 20 for one tribe will undo another tribe in terms 21 of requirements.

Do we have other folks that want to step
up to the microphone that have questions,
clarifications, statements?
MR. GREEN: I promise to be nice. My

comment is going to be about the tiering issue. 1 2 The previous commission, I don't think, fully 3 grasped, although a number of us did, that in its regulations what it sought to do was make 4 5 audits easier. And if you're a sizable 6 operation, your gaming commission management is 7 all in favor of that. If you're a sizeable operation you want to make your audits easy. 8 9 But if you're a place, as Judy pointed out, 10 that is in Montana or in the Dakotas where you 11 are just barely making a profit, the addition 12 of an accounting requirement for you to add a 13 certain type of electronic accounting which you 14 have to go purchase, can make your entire 15 operation unprofitable.

16 If you have been doing it with a hand 17 count for 20 years we should not make it 18 illegal to continue doing it by hand count. Ι 19 understand it's not as accurate as, perhaps, a 20 double electronic check, but the whole point of 21 the tiering is that we allow those small 2.2 operations to continue in the manner that they 23 have proven over the last 20 years to be 2.4 capable of operating. 25 It is -- the smaller place is too with

tribes that are the least profitable for what they are mostly likely to open or maintain. And the tiering is essential because it doesn't put the financial requirements in front of you to get the doors open with a small operation.

6 That is the point I want to be sure that I 7 got across today, that tiering, smaller operations in places that need that smaller 8 9 amount of income more than any other location. 10 Get the doors opened and keep the doors open. 11 While you're going to see larger tribal 12 operations suggest, yes, these are great ideas, 13 because we need the same concept. That is what 14 you accomplished with the tiering.

Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you. Do we have other comments, questions?

18 I know many tribes are, again, back to the 19 caution element here, but also listening. That 20 is the beauty of having an open forum. Many 21 tribes are listening to hear what other tribes 2.2 have to say and will respond to see if it 23 offers opportunity for agreement or 2.4 disagreement, ideas, suggestions that the tribe 25 can necessarily think of when developing their

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Page 85 comments. So I understand that there is more 1 2 listening happening. 3 We are a little early for lunch. If you folks would like to break for lunch, if there 4 5 is a burning desire to speak right now. 6 Oh, yes, sir, Mr. Frank. 7 I am one of the old dinosaurs MR. FRANK: of the gaming commission. I am still in the 8 9 18th, 20th Century -- 19th, 20th Century. But 10 I guess during my time when the gaming 11 commission was created, I think NIGC had a lot 12 of role involved in creating the passage of the 13 law and a number of tribes that are sitting 14 around here that were very active, and their 15 attorneys in developing the law, as well as 16 helping me especially when I was on the 17 commission to talk about the regulations in the 18 tiering process with some of the things that we 19 had discussed. But also, at the same time, I 20 think they also brought up a number of issues 21 where the staff attorney brought up regarding 2.2 background checks, things of that nature, in the establishment of the relationship with the 23 2.4 FBI, creating the avenue for tribes to get 25 access to background.

A lot of issues were laid out and are still issues today. So I am glad that it wasn't too far off on issues that other associate commissioners at that times were discussing. I do think that there is time to review the process and update, as it has been pointed out this morning.

But the most bottom line thing that I 8 9 think that every tribe has expressed during my 10 tenure, as well as you today, especially when 11 we had the listening conference in Mobile last 12 year, last July. You had just come on board at 13 that time. And your associate was chairing the 14 meeting at that time while you were going 15 through your process of the appointment to 16 chair. And I think that if nothing else what 17 was really expressed about that belief -- I 18 want to reiterate what was said -- you said at 19 the conference back in July that the 20 communication was very vital between the 21 federal government and the tribal governments 2.2 in terms of the government-to-government relationship. I think we offered that over the 23 24 years. Also, maintaining the business relationship which the NIGC has created, which 25

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is a whole different animal in which tribes were used to working with, and so for the past 20 years now or 23 years, which we are now calling protecting the industry is something that is still new in to Indian country, even after 20 some odd years, being involved in gaming.

8 So it's something that I think -- it is a 9 partnership with the federal government and 10 you're the lead agency for the government's 11 side, federal government side, as well as those 12 that are entering into the gaming industry.

13 And so with that thought, the sovereignty was the main issue which was created. 14 As a 15 result of that laws were passed that stabilized 16 as to how gaming could be operated on Indian 17 reservations, and that the role of the commission at that time was to establish 18 19 standards in which the tribal government are 20 the ones that decide whether they are going to 21 have gaming or not, and how it's going to be 2.2 played on your respective reservation or lands.

23 So I think, if nothing else, I think I 24 heard that several times today directly where 25 talking around is that communications, the most

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vital thing would be the two sovereigns here. Whether it is the United States Government or the Tribal Government.

I just wanted to remind everyone that, you 4 5 know, in order to accomplish what we are looking at today and reviewing some of the old 6 7 standards that was established by the first commission was part of, responsible for. So if 8 9 there is something in there that you guys want 10 to talk to me about privately. I do believe 11 that needs to be the major dialogue as far as 12 whether you have future hearings or future 13 discussions with tribal leadership. I think 14 that the tribes also have to play a role in 15 that in terms of who they designate as far as 16 their spokesperson, but also at the same time 17 reminding you that the tribal leadership still 18 makes decisions. They're the ones that have to 19 live with the consequences of their decision in 20 terms of whether -- how the business is run or Some of the issues, like Jess just 21 not. 2.2 brought up, in terms of still doing things that 23 are not electronically or electronically 2.4 possible today. And so I am a big proponent of 25 new technologies as well. I will support that,

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the communications and understanding of 1 2 operations, whether it is a business or just line of communication. But I do know and still 3 remember those comments of some of the tribal 4 5 leaders that stated, you know, we can't afford 6 to do this or provide us equipment. We can 7 still do it manually and still be able to get the information that is vital to the 8 9 reviewing -- making sure that the standards are 10 in place, for the purpose of entertainment and 11 economic development.

12 Thank you. Congratulations on your 13 leadership. And I know it's pretty tough coming from the tribal side to be a federal 14 15 regulator, but at that time we were not 16 regulators. So we are into the 21st Century, 17 and I am still dragging my feet back in the 18 20th Century, but I am still here. But if 19 there is anything that helps, I am always 20 willing to do so, or as Mr. Cypress indicated, 21 that if there is anything I can do to help the 2.2 Thank you. process.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you,
 sir, for your comments. Thank you for your
 time services as commissioner laying the ground

work for us to do our work today. 1 2 Let's take a break. Let's get some nourishment and make all those phone calls our 3 cell phones are buzzing about right now. We 4 5 will come back at 1:30. 6 (a recess was taken.) 7 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: I think we might have all said what we are compelled to 8 9 say today. Let's get started. 10 So returning from lunch, I want to reopen 11 the floor. If there is any other comments, any 12 questions? Do we need to the clarify anything? 13 I do want to turn the microphone over to Dan for a little bit and see if there is 14 15 anything he would like to say. He was giving 16 me a hard time at lunch that he wasn't given a 17 chance to talk. 18 Any issues that didn't come up already? I 19 understand the tribes are really just listening 20 at this time. 21 MR. BLUEDOG: Tracy, you're probably 2.2 getting warn down from an eight-city tour. 23 Just kind of wondering, though, you have had 24 many opportunities to listen to tribal concerns 25 from across the country, from a wide array of

establishments and travel entities. And maybe 1 2 you can't answer this question, but are you 3 leaning -- are you looking at regs? You have a pretty thorough look. You have been in office 4 for over six months. Some other folks have been here longer. Are you looking at any 7 particular regs in terms of which you ones you want to move on first or do you have any inclination which direction you want to take 10 this regulatory review and follow up?

11 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you for 12 the question. Really, the purpose of these 13 meetings is to let -- to have tribes tell us 14 what regs needs to come first. And, Lael, if 15 you do not mind, I will have Lael address what 16 we are hearing, not necessarily that it's our 17 priority of what we are hearing in these eight 18 places that we have gone and what we are seeing 19 in comments that are being submitted as the 20 priority, because that is what will drive us, 21 is what the tribes are saying. So I will let 2.2 Lael comment on that.

LAEL ECHO-HAWK: I think we have heard --23 24 I mean, MICS is obviously a hot topic. Class II and Class III technical standards. 25 Those

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are big issues. Licensing regulations, also we 1 2 hear about every single time. The ticketing system for late fees submitted, that has also 3 been a concern. Pre-compliance enforcement 4 5 proceedings, management contracts, 6 clarification on that, it's all proprietary 7 interest. There has been a lot of concern about that particular issue. These are issues 8 that the Tribal Advisory Committee formats. 9 10 These are issues that come up, self-regulation 11 is also a concern. Those are sort of the hot 12 issues. There is some lower, sort of, hanging 13 fruit, like changing the calendar year, to a 14 formula based on calendar year based to fiscal 15 year. Makes a lot of sense. Maybe some of 16 those kinds of things that they might not get 17 all the press, but they certainly are 18 important.

19 If we can get some of those smaller 20 things, you know, smaller, but not less 21 important things done, then hopefully we can do 22 that.

I don't know if you guys think I am a little crazy. I plan on moving as fast and hard as I can. I hope that people go along

Page 92

with that. However we do it in multiple 1 2 tracks, if we are doing it in kind of in a series, we will do it as fast as we can, as 3 well as we can, so that by the time our time is 4 5 up we will have done the best we can. Those 6 are the issues that percolated to the top as 7 the most important, but they're also large substantial issues. 8

So I anticipated a time frame from those 9 10 to be a little longer. We are just going to 11 move as fast as we can in order of priority, 12 but also trying to get as much done as 13 possible. That means addressing some of the smaller issues first and sort of concurrent 14 15 with the bigger issues. That hopefully is 16 something that we can do.

17 COMMISSIONER DAN ROSE: End of the session 18 I would like to address the appreciation from 19 the chair to the Commission for conducting 20 these consultations. I would like to remind 21 you we all have functioning commissions now in 2.2 place. I would caution as you go forward, if 23 it ain't broke, don't fix it. Because it winds 2.4 up in our hands and we have to change our 25 processes and accommodate it.

We are looking for a big change and we hope you will keep us involved in terms of the MICS.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: 4 To be aware, 5 that we should be cognizant of the effects, any change that we make will have on tribes on the 6 7 regulatory bodies and coming in compliance with, even if they are modified or streamlined 8 9 modifications, they are still the impact of 10 making that change on all tribes. And we will, 11 as we move forward in revisions, continue to 12 ask tribes as we are making those revisions how 13 does this effect you when we make these 14 changes? What are the costs to you? Is this 15 feasible? Is it possible, because you're the 16 one on the ground every day. And you are 17 better able to answer for your tribe or your 18 operations or your regulatory body, your 19 ability to comply even with what would be not 20 necessarily more regulations, but as Judy was 21 saying, better regulations. There is still 2.2 cost involved. There is resources involved to 23 come into compliance with the changes, and we 2.4 will be aware of that. We will continue to remind ourselves and ask tribes what that might 25

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1 be for them.

2 So that is a good reminder to us as we move forward to always ask that question. We 3 don't want to inadvertently, what might sound 4 5 good to us, inadvertently be problematic for the tribes. 6 7 Do we have any other comments? If not, I might be inclined to -- we are moving. I have 8 9 to keep an eye on Jess. 10 JESS GREEN: I will visit with you 11 privately. 12 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: If there are 13 no other questions, we do have a good 14 announcement to make. 15 We have been talking and we have been 16 asked about, in these preferences, hiring a 17 agency, and we have adopted an Indian 18 preference in hiring policy for the agency, 19 just so you all know. 20 We have talked about it. We had to sort 21 of iron it out and make sure that it was 2.2 appropriate for our purposes. This was applied 23 to the agency as their new agencies that open 24 up for promotions. We believe that, similar to 25 other agencies, like an Indian Health, BIA, BIE

that we serve just Indian Country -- to be able to work on with tribes in those situations. So that is going forward. It is not going back. It is moving forward.

Just wanted to let you all know that we have done that. We have been talking about it. Now it is done.

Did you have anything, Lael?

9 LAEL ECHO-HAWK: As you formulate your 10 comments and send them to us, because there are 11 so many issues that were percolated up, one of 12 the key things, I think, is going to be the 13 process.

I am a big fan of what we have done over the past eight consultations since November, which is the Notice of Inquiry, I think the process has been good.

18 I remember sitting on the other side of 19 the table and not being that thrilled of the 20 process, the complications, sat in front of it 21 and whined about the process. I never felt it was that great. We literally had people come 2.2 23 up to us and say it was great, the meeting was 24 perfect, which shocks me because I certainly would never have said that on the other side. 25

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We do appreciate the tone that the tribes are taking with us and I appreciate everyone's goodwill in trying to do a good job.

In moving forward we hope for the same to 4 5 When we think about what process, it be true. doesn't have to -- I don't think one -- we can 6 7 be really innovated. We can go about these revisions in a number of different ways. So if 8 certain ways are -- if the Tribal Advisory 9 10 Committee is more appropriate or negotiating 11 role making process is more appropriate in time 12 for written comments is okay for another, then please let us know that. We don't want to be 13 14 quessing. We don't want to go about it, you 15 know, in a way that tribes are not comfortable 16 with. At the same time, we have such a small 17 So we need to figure out a way to do window. 18 this and make the process move along in a good 19 way, and while accomplishing this massive 20 undertaking.

21 So please consider that. That is one of 22 the keys to how we are going to be able to get 23 this done. We need your input.

24CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: With that, all25the volunteers for the comments, I do encourage

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Page 98 you to submit in writing written comments to 1 2 us. If you have questions, please contact us. This concludes our road trip. 3 I was thinking about getting one of those rock 4 5 T-shirts, and having all the cities listed. But I want to emphasize, this is just the 6 7 beginning of a new way for the NIGC to communicate with tribes. 8 9 I think, Max, you said something to me in 10 the hallway about, you know, you talk first, 11 and I don't remember exactly, but you can go 12 ahead and say it. 13 MAX OSCEOLA: Talking about this in the 14 beginning, keeping it going is progress. But 15 working together is a success. 16 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: That is a good 17 model to remind us of what we are doing. 18 There is going to be many more steps that 19 follow this. When we effect, you know -- their 20 policies were tribal implications. Our 21 responsibility is to work with tribes, come up 2.2 with solutions, and have tribes tell us how it 23 affects them, also show us the way on how to solve issues. 24 25 So this is one of many more steps to come

in the future that you will be at the table 1 2 with us, not just telling us what your concerns 3 are -- I keep emphasizing that -- but you all have to help with me with solutions too, 4 5 especially in the face of differences. 6 With that, I don't know if, Max, if there 7 is anything you want to say on behalf of the Seminole Tribe before we close. 8 9 MAX OSCEOLA: I would like to thank you 10 for this consultation. To me, it's real. 11 You're all speaking from your heart. And in 12 the end, we are all here to make sure the tribe runs efficient. You have your 13 14 responsibilities. We do too as the tribal 15 members. 16 Thank you for all the tribes that have 17 come in to hear, because the only way that evil 18 can succeed is for good to do nothing. 19 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: I wish you 20 safe travels home. I appreciate that you had 21 to manage your travel around inclement weather. 2.2 Be sure you're travelling safe home. 23 My hands up to the Seminole Tribe of 2.4 Florida for your gracious hospitality here. Ι 25 look forward to everyone's contact. Please do

contact us for anything, not just about what we 1 2 are doing here, but anything that you might 3 need or any questions you might have. The premise that we operate under as 4 5 we move forward, we are here to help, we are here to assist, we are here to partner and we 6 7 are going to do this collaboratively on everything. 8 9 So, Dan, anything you would like to say? 10 COMMISSIONER DANIEL LITTLE: I too would 11 like to obviously thank the Seminole Tribe for 12 their hospitality. 13 I also want to thank our staff who did all 14 the work and logistics in putting this thing 15 together. Thank you. And please have safe 16 travels home. 17 CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: With that, 18 that concludes this meeting and wish you all 19 well. Thank you very much for attending. 20 (Proceedings concluded at 2:00 p.m.) 21 22 23 2.4 25

	Page 101
1	CERTIFICATE
2	STATE OF FLORIDA )
3	COUNTY OF DADE )
4	I, the undersigned authority, hereby
5	certify that the foregoing transcript, page 1
6	through 99 is a true and correct transcription of my
7	stenographic notes, taken before me at the time and
8	place set forth on the title page hereof, that the
9	foregoing proceedings were reported
10	stenographically by me and later transcribed into
11	typewriting under my direction; that the foregoing
12	is a true record of the proceedings taken at that
13	time.
14	IN WITNESS WHEREOF I hereunto set
15	my hand and affix official seal this 15th day of
16	February, 2011.
17	
18	
19	RANDI GARCIA, COURT REPORTER, RPR
20	NOTARY PUBLIC
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# [1 - ahead]

accounting 2:4 12:2 advance	49:1 95:17
	67:4
$\begin{array}{ c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c$	
10 01.24 03.9,24 accurate 22:10 advisory	
<b>100</b> 39.20 <b>350</b> 77.2 ashiovo 64.14 20.15 1	7 45:21
<b>11</b> 22:13 <b>538</b> 77:2 achieved 69:6 46:11 4	7:10 66:3,8
$\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	3:9 78:10,12
<b>12</b> 23:8 <b>7</b> 56:16 59:2 16 50:9 79:15 2	20,21,22
<b>120</b> 1/:15 <b>75</b> 75·21 50:10 22 60:1 70:16 9	30:11,24 92:9
$\begin{array}{ c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c$	0.11,2+ 72.7
<b>13175</b> 19:13	54.25
15 8:10 /0:13 47:5 50:6 19 51:5 offect 9	
15th 101.15 50 75.20 52.10 offix 10	
<b>10</b> 50:15 <b>9</b> potion $46:254:2$ offered S	
17 71:24 <b>96</b> 38:19 62.8 aftermet	
18 15:0 21:15,10 99 101:6 actions 62:2.5 according	
<b>9:21</b> 1:11 $20:21 2$	23 21:14 30:7
<b>184</b> 59:5	50:20,25 53:1
<b>18</b> 22:23 83:9	4 55:4 58:17
<b>19/7</b> 5.18 add 91:20.92:12 (0:21.2)	24 95:23,25
<b>1993</b> 40.5	
19th 63.9	5 13:10 14:11
	2:16 27:7
7	):17 33:9,9
	6,18 34:24
02.12 09.7 94.17	5:19 87:10
<b>20th</b> 85:9,9 89:18 <b>absolutely</b> 63:6 21:5 27:4,5,19 95:17,1	
ubbolutely 05.0	10:1 14:6
05.14	9:8,10 35:24
<b>23</b> 87:3 29:11,13,14 38:20 93:18 36:11 5	,
<b>233</b> 49:2 <b>addressed</b> 14:8 <b>agendas</b>	
	ve 69:20
<b>2:00</b> 100:20 <b>accommodate</b> 93:25 56:9 <b>agnes</b> 2	
	9 71:23 77:5
accompanied 55.21	3:22 63:7,25
	6:4 69:11
JCZ J4.22 accompnished 17.15	2:12 73:17
accountlishing administration 77.25	
4 accomplishing 97:19 12:23 50:22,24 53:6 agreed	18:18
4,000 68:10 account 82.11 administrations agreemen	nt 41:8 81:5
<b>40</b> 17:16 accountability 52:22 84:23	
45 0.16 accounters here	nts 44:2
	2:21,23 63:18
37:22 <b>administrator</b> 42:17 98:12	
42:24 48:21	

	• • • • • • • • •	10 5	<b>77</b> 1 4 0 <b>7</b> 00 0 <b>7</b>
ahold 39:2	appointment 86:15	assistance 10:5	77:14 85:22,25
<b>ain't</b> 93:23	appreciate 6:3,22	14:11 21:20 75:4,17	backgrounds 68:7
<b>air</b> 26:21,22 65:14	7:5 41:9 43:25 56:2	76:7,13,15	<b>bad</b> 50:14 74:19
aired 8:25	56:6 58:15 62:9	assistant 2:24 10:14	<b>banks</b> 41:19,22
alabama 44:25	68:23 69:3 70:6	<b>associate</b> 6:15 11:24	<b>barely</b> 83:11
<b>alan</b> 2:24	79:14 97:1,2 99:20	14:20,24 86:4,13	<b>based</b> 23:19 43:16
alleviate 46:3	appreciation 93:18	associated 73:14	43:18 76:12 92:14
allocate 75:19	appreciative 40:13	75:24	92:14
allocating 44:8	approach 63:16	association 33:6,21	basically 7:19 10:21
<b>allow</b> 28:12 83:21	66:21 68:23	56:10,13	11:17
allowed 59:22	approaching 61:23	assurances 55:10	<b>basis</b> 11:13 46:4
<b>allowing</b> 5:13 17:13	appropriate 56:19	attained 64:16	82:11
40:2	66:18 95:22 97:10	attaining 47:13	<b>bc</b> 4:23
altimus 6:7 28:5	97:11	attending 100:19	<b>bear</b> 73:1
40:7	appropriately 56:16	attention 7:18 9:10	beautiful 5:17
ambitious 43:5	74:9	12:11 13:18 20:5	beauty 84:20
47:13	appropriateness	<b>attorney</b> 26:8 63:1	beginning 7:10,16
american 3:15	63:8	85:21	9:8 10:1 14:4 31:7
amount 25:16 84:9	approve 53:2	<b>attorneys</b> 3:1 85:15	62:7 98:7,14
analogize 41:13	approved 73:9	audits 83:5,8	<b>behalf</b> 39:25 42:22
analyses 41:13	approximately	authorities 51:6	43:1 56:12 59:5
analysis 64:12	36:14	60:14	70:23 99:7
animal 87:1	april 19:9 36:12,15	authority 27:8,14	<b>belief</b> 86:17
announce 62:19	57:25 58:25	29:13,17 43:23	beliefs 43:8
announcement	area 2:17 8:21 17:2	49:16 50:3,15 52:4	<b>believe</b> 7:18 44:4
22:25 95:14	45:1 64:20	56:17 74:21 101:4	46:11 63:21 65:21
announcements	areas 7:18 9:9 42:2	avail 8:22	66:3 88:10 95:24
32:3	52:14 64:23 76:6	<b>available</b> 8:23 40:11	<b>beneficial</b> 77:5 79:1
<b>answer</b> 40:12 47:23	arguments 82:7,12	61:11	80:22
55:17 91:2 94:17	arrange 7:1	<b>avenue</b> 85:24	beneficiary 31:16
answers 52:17 61:17	array 90:25	avoid 30:4	<b>benefit</b> 25:24,24
anticipate 53:9	arrive 2:16	aware 71:8 72:7	43:11 47:7 64:11,18
anticipated 11:17	asked 24:15 36:6	94:4,24	benefits 75:23
93:9	39:24 41:4 47:18,19	b	<b>best</b> 12:4 20:16 21:5
anticipation 72:20	47:21,24 63:2 70:22	<b>back</b> 6:5 11:1 19:3	21:11 22:6,7 36:21
apologize 38:18	95:16	27:20 28:24 29:5,19	40:17 51:20 52:13
39:1 47:17	asking 10:21 13:12	33:13,18 34:20 37:4	56:18 57:9,13 61:1
appeal 26:9,16	22:3	37:4 49:11 59:18	66:20 73:8 76:3
appear 31:7	assembled 66:15	62:24 70:15 72:16	93:5
appeared 53:19	assembly 8:16	73:22 82:16 84:18	<b>better</b> 13:10 18:13
application 48:11	assert 57:20 58:10	86:19 89:17 90:5	33:3 45:15 71:14,22
77:14	assess 47:8	96:3	72:9 73:22,23,24
<b>applied</b> 41:18 95:22	assimilate 73:13	background 28:3,8	75:6 78:21 79:11
appointed 60:20	<b>assist</b> 100:6	67:16,17 68:9 77:3	94:17,21

[beyond - classic]

-			
<b>beyond</b> 43:24 64:17	<b>brought</b> 15:19 85:20	carefully 35:23	82:14 84:16 89:23
<b>bia</b> 4:9 95:25	85:21 88:22	case 41:12,12 79:5	90:7 91:11 94:4
<b>bie</b> 95:25	<b>broward</b> 3:21 4:6	cases 41:13,14	95:12 97:24 98:16
<b>big</b> 4:14 12:8 59:19	bryan 42:18 47:17	<b>cash</b> 44:8	99:19 100:17
69:19 80:14 82:4	<b>budget</b> 52:24 75:20	catalog 11:3	challenge 13:21
88:24 92:1 94:1	76:1	<b>caught</b> 13:14	69:16 79:15
96:14	building 7:22 10:1	cause 54:17 82:7	<b>chance</b> 9:5 48:7
<b>bigger</b> 93:15	14:6	causing 54:16	90:17
binding 33:19	built 82:5	caution 61:22 62:9	change 8:13 28:17
<b>bingo</b> 3:18,18	bulletin 24:10	84:19 93:22	93:24 94:1,6,10
<b>bit</b> 11:1 48:25 54:18	bulletins 52:13	caved 2:13	changed 68:8
54:22 90:14	74:16 78:5	<b>cedric</b> 39:10,10	<b>changes</b> 2:11 7:23
<b>black</b> 48:14	bumping 50:8	<b>cell</b> 90:4	20:17 21:3 25:11
<b>bless</b> 59:16	<b>bunch</b> 35:13	central 2:10	43:10 45:1,3 76:20
bluedog 49:12,12	burden 25:22,25	<b>century</b> 39:5 69:9	94:14,23
52:19 56:8 90:21	burdensome 46:12	69:17 72:2 85:9,9	changing 24:16
board 56:9 75:25	64:11 77:11	89:16,18	92:13
86:12	burning 85:5	certain 21:1 35:25	<b>chat</b> 14:25
bodies 94:7	<b>busier</b> 16:23	36:5 42:1 83:13	check 81:1 83:20
body 94:18	business 4:14 41:24	97:9	checking 54:14
bog 78:18 81:5	86:24 88:20 89:2	certainly 8:12 33:3	checks 85:22
<b>bogged</b> 80:20	busy 16:23	49:4 63:15 65:1	cheyenne 70:23,25
<b>born</b> 5:4	butter 4:7	92:17 96:24	74:3 76:18
<b>borrow</b> 35:10	butterworth 4:5	certificate 25:23	<b>chief</b> 6:13 11:23
<b>boss</b> 56:3	<b>button</b> 19:17,24	101:1	59:11 60:21
<b>bottom</b> 86:8	buy 33:5,8,16	certified 49:2	children 44:21
branch 50:25	buzzing 90:4	certify 101:5	<b>chill</b> 17:16
break 62:21,23	c	cetera 26:16	chitimacha 39:22
70:13 81:6,23 85:4		<b>cfo</b> 25:12	<b>cindy</b> 6:7 40:7 67:15
90:2	cake 81:13	<b>chair</b> 29:16 53:21	67:21
<b>brief</b> 37:23 52:19	calculation 24:17,20	60:4 86:16 93:19	<b>cities</b> 79:19 98:5
56:11	calendar 24:17	chairing 86:13	<b>city</b> 15:5 17:17
briefly 12:19 16:7	92:13,14	<b>chairman</b> 2:3,5 5:8	25:12 59:19 90:22
16:18 17:18 24:5	california 31:14	15:4 26:20 37:12	clarification 74:23
bring 11:10 22:16	79:19	39:9,23,25 55:23,24	92:6
57:23 73:14 76:25	<b>call</b> 3:19 38:14,21	60:6 62:14,15,16	clarifications 82:24
78:23	67:20 69:23 78:5	chairwoman 2:1 5:7	clarify 90:12
bringing 53:13 73:1	called 4:4	5:10 15:9 16:3	class 27:4,4,8,10,13
79:14	<b>caller</b> 38:16	17:11,14 21:10	27:16 44:25 45:1,4
brings 22:7	calling 67:24 87:4	22:24 29:16 37:14	45:16 49:24 50:11
broad 8:1	calls 90:3	39:20 42:13,18	71:12,19 72:3,4,8
broadly 53:24	capable 83:24	48:18,22 50:17	73:5 74:13 79:17,20
broke 38:15,17	capital 75:21	53:12 55:25 60:5	80:10 91:24,25
93:23	<b>care</b> 4:14	62:19,25 69:2 70:18	classic 3:19
>0.20		75:1 76:23 79:13	
		10.110.2017.10	

## [clear - consultation]

<b>clear</b> 13:23 46:6	83:1 91:22	committed 12:14	concerned 11:18
50:24 57:14 74:10	commentary 22:25	19:15 20:2 23:13,22	31:21
	35:11	committee 30:15	<b>concerns</b> 8:24 14:23
74:22 77:9 79:19,22 clearer 48:4	<b>comments</b> 14:21	42:25 45:22 46:11	18:5 24:8,10 27:23
click 19:24			,
	22:3,7 23:5,5,8,19	66:4,17 73:9 78:20	29:1 31:18 65:13
close 20:5 99:8	34:1,2,9,17 35:14	78:21,22 80:12,13	77:20 90:24 99:2
closed 11:5 35:11	35:15 37:13 38:4,10	92:9 97:10	concluded 100:20
<b>closely</b> 46:13 47:2	42:5,7,14 48:16,19	committees 21:24	concludes 98:3
47:11	48:20 49:10,25	30:17,22,23 66:8	100:18
closes 22:25	62:17,20 63:3,7,23	78:10,13,16 79:8,16	concurrent 93:14
closing 58:12 59:10	63:25 66:5 67:9	80:11,24	conditions 42:1
<b>codes</b> 16:13	69:4 70:6 84:17	communicate 31:22	conducted 30:25
coffee 70:14	85:1 89:4,24 90:11	98:8	conducting 93:19
<b>cognizant</b> 30:2 94:5	91:19 95:7 96:10	communicating	<b>confer</b> 40:17
coincidence 59:12	97:12,25 98:1	20:24	conference 8:21
collaboration 56:20	commission 1:1	communication	40:2 86:11,19
collaboratively	5:11 6:1 7:17 15:17	31:20 40:12 59:7	conferences 7:14
100:7	18:15,18 19:11 20:2	86:20 89:3	24:3 40:15
<b>colorado</b> 27:6 52:15	20:4 26:7,15 32:15	communications	confusing 32:16
columbus 4:23	32:21 33:24 40:4	87:25 89:1	confusion 74:19
combination 31:5	42:24 43:11,14,23	communities 22:20	congratulations
47:9	44:1 45:18,25 46:4	59:24	89:12
come 3:22 5:13 6:19	46:16,19,21 47:1,4	community 73:12	<b>congress</b> 4:11 46:14
7:17,19,19 8:20	47:10,12 48:12,14	73:14	connection 41:2
15:21 16:11,21,25	50:2 51:4 52:1	<b>community's</b> 61:12	consequences 88:19
19:9 24:14 26:15	53:19 56:15 58:4	<b>compact</b> 27:13 71:9	<b>consider</b> 11:7 26:18
30:3,10 31:4 35:7	63:9,12,16,17,21	71:11	28:10 30:7 34:14
36:20 37:5 38:22	64:7 65:8,18,25	compactness 71:7	35:23 44:8 79:12
51:10 55:15 60:16	66:7,21 67:2 68:3	company 29:9	97:21
62:3,24 69:9,19	68:23,25 72:21	compelled 90:8	considerations
70:15,19 72:5 80:15	75:13 83:2,6 85:8	complete 65:8	44:10
80:18 86:12 90:5,18	85:11,17 87:18 88:8	completed 36:11	considering 33:19
91:14 92:10 94:23	93:19	completely 82:19	36:9 46:22
96:22 98:21,25	<b>commission's</b> 43:3,6	<b>compliance</b> 11:12	considers 45:18
99:17	44:15 57:1 64:1,22	30:3 92:4 94:7,23	consistent 51:1 57:3
comes 12:23 51:7	<b>commissioner</b> 5:21	complicated 74:18	consortium 58:2
comfortable 97:15	6:15 11:25 14:20,24	complications 96:20	constituents 20:24
<b>coming</b> 6:22 53:21	15:1,11 23:20 89:25	<b>complies</b> 75:12	<b>consult</b> 7:23 20:10
54:23 61:18 72:20	93:17 100:10	<b>compliment</b> 39:11	21:16
89:14 94:7	commissioners 5:20	comply 29:23 94:19	<b>consultation</b> 1:2 7:7
commencing 1:11	15:20 40:7 47:8	concentration 72:17	7:21 9:2 12:17 14:4
<b>commend</b> 63:15	60:11,18 86:4	<b>concept</b> 70:9 84:13	14:11 19:13,22 23:6
<b>comment</b> 28:25 34:7	commissions 93:21	<b>concern</b> 27:3 31:10	23:7 29:3 32:10
35:21 39:7,16 43:3	<b>commitment</b> 35:20	46:18 48:23 78:1	39:12 73:25 99:10
47:11 53:3,4 62:23	35:21 58:5 72:17	92:4,7,11	

Veritext/NJ Reporting Company

## [consultations - direction]

consultations 9:13	68:14 73:1 87:5	<b>daily</b> 46:4,7	<b>degree</b> 17:15
22:14 24:1 30:6	90:25 96:1	dakota 38:19 71:5,7	demographics 9:18
31:23 36:23 43:10	<b>country's</b> 73:2,3	<b>dakotas</b> 83:10	demonstrates 63:10
48:24 93:20 96:15	<b>county</b> 3:21 4:6	<b>dallas</b> 80:21	demonstration 7:22
consulting 73:22	101:3	<b>dan</b> 6:15 11:25	department 24:19
<b>contact</b> 17:21 18:4	<b>couple</b> 15:8 18:1	14:20 60:7 90:14	49:21,22 50:9,11
32:12 98:2 99:25	23:10 30:16 77:1	93:17 100:9	54:8,21,25 80:16
100:1	<b>course</b> 40:3 41:24	daniel 15:1 42:22	depending 65:21
contemplated 43:11	54:21 57:23 74:4	45:6 76:23 100:10	<b>deputy</b> 60:21
<b>context</b> 27:12 74:1	courses 54:8	darden 39:23	designate 38:8
contextual 82:11	<b>court</b> 3:25 101:19	<b>data</b> 79:7	88:15
continue 21:12	courtesy 55:9	database 28:14	<b>desire</b> 57:16 80:1
22:19 45:10 51:24	coverage 80:3	68:16	85:5
57:20 73:4 83:18,22	covered 39:18	day 7:24 11:13,13	<b>detail</b> 77:23
94:11,24	<b>craft</b> 45:22	35:17 45:9 94:16	detailing 47:6
continuing 66:15	crafted 46:12	101:15	determinations
<b>contract</b> 31:5 43:15	<b>crazy</b> 92:24	days 25:14 60:24	41:22
43:16,19	created 85:11 86:25	<b>dc</b> 5:1 6:6 8:20	determined 55:8
<b>contracts</b> 24:13,14	87:14	22:17,21 23:12	determining 20:9
26:2,3 31:6 43:21	creating 54:15	<b>deal</b> 7:11 27:1,9	77:17
92:5	55:11 85:12,24	53:5 56:15 65:12,15	<b>develop</b> 40:15 45:14
contrary 64:13	<b>creek</b> 42:23 44:24	67:24	developed 42:4
<b>control</b> 80:17	<b>crit</b> 74:9	dealing 25:20 31:5	72:16
controversial 30:18	<b>criteria</b> 42:3 48:1,4	40:4 49:7	developing 81:22
49:25	48:9 77:4	december 3:17	84:25 85:15
<b>cooler</b> 2:11	critical 46:25 66:8	<b>decide</b> 66:7 87:20	development 89:11
cooperative 40:9	<b>cromwell</b> 39:9,10,10	decides 47:4	<b>devise</b> 52:20
coopted 67:2	<b>cross</b> 75:15	decision 13:24 36:7	dialogue 8:3,7 56:19
coordination 19:13	crosshairs 55:5,22	40:25 48:12,13	57:4,13 58:1 59:7
<b>сору</b> 17:22 37:9	culturally 9:17	52:16 63:12 80:18	88:11
<b>correct</b> 76:17 101:6	culture 59:21	88:19	difference 17:15
<b>cost</b> 64:11 76:1	<b>cure</b> 29:23	decisions 15:13	differences 9:14
94:22	<b>curious</b> 49:15 50:1	44:13,18,22 58:8	99:5
<b>costs</b> 75:23,24 94:14	50:15 53:11	61:8,9 88:18	<b>different</b> 9:15,16,16
<b>counsel</b> 3:12 6:12	<b>current</b> 30:11 56:25	dedicated 19:22	9:17,18,19,19 10:23
17:11 32:14 39:22	currently 77:21	defective 73:21	27:1,17 65:23 66:17
41:10 59:11	<b>cusp</b> 14:5	<b>defer</b> 34:25 35:3	78:17 79:3,6,7,8,18
counsel's 32:19	<b>cut</b> 4:12,15	deference 45:18	87:1 97:8
<b>count</b> 83:17,18	<b>cypress</b> 2:3,5 5:8	defines 31:12	differentiation 74:6
<b>country</b> 5:5 8:2 22:8	15:4 62:15,16 89:20	definitely 31:18	difficult 41:8
22:18 26:24 27:24	d	definition 43:14	dinosaurs 85:7
30:19 33:14,19 35:6	<b>d.c.</b> 4:17	44:7	direction 35:25 36:5
36:22 43:12 45:13		definitions 24:8,22	36:6,13 39:13 78:3
47:2 57:18 59:25	<b>dade</b> 101:3	49:24 50:12	91:9 101:11
60:22 63:11 65:2			
L		l	

# [directive - fair]

			0
directive 18:22	duplicate 69:25	employees 28:16	<b>excellent</b> 40:14,20
54:12	e	enacted 46:14	exchange 8:8
directly 87:24	e 10:20 18:7 38:18	encourage 97:25	<b>excited</b> 57:5,18
director 6:9	39:3	encouraged 57:5	58:21
disagree 13:23 36:5	<b>earlier</b> 6:6 64:1	endless 46:24	<b>executive</b> 5:25 19:6
44:6	65:11 77:7 82:2	energies 57:10	19:12,14,23 20:3
disagreement 84:24	early 80:23 85:3	<b>energy</b> 58:3 60:1	34:21 50:25
disagreements	easier 24:21 70:1	<b>enforce</b> 27:8,14	<b>exempt</b> 41:21
81:24	83:5	enforcement 6:10	exemption 42:3
disapprove 53:3	eastern 6:9	29:20 54:2 79:21	exercise 54:24
discourage 43:13	easy 83:8	92:4	exist 73:4
discuss 9:2	easy 85.8 eat 81:14	engage 32:9 57:3	existing 51:15
<b>discussed</b> 8:7 46:20		enormity 46:18	exists 51:23 75:12
85:19	echo 6:14 16:9 17:9 17:10 28:6 42:6,9	enormously 40:9	expand 43:23
discusses 45:3	,	<b>ensure</b> 44:2 55:10	expanding 43:14
discussing 3:9 45:10	91:23 96:9	entering 87:12	expect 8:24 69:20
86:5	economic 89:11	entertainment	expected 9:15
discussion 9:6 51:18	ed 3:1 63:2	89:10	experience 16:13
51:19	effect 94:13 98:19	entire 83:14	43:20
discussions 6:25	effective 33:4	entities 91:1	experienced 46:4
7:12,14 15:18,19	effects 94:5	environment 80:23	expertise 66:14
67:15 88:13	<b>efficient</b> 12:3 19:1	envisioned 46:10	experts 45:12
distribution 52:25	99:13	equipment 89:6	<b>explain</b> 36:7 37:19
district 40:9	<b>effort</b> 45:14 58:16	especially 8:9 41:18	express 32:6
diverse 81:1	59:3	43:4 52:14,15 85:16	expressed 86:9,17
diversities 80:2	<b>efforts</b> 62:11 72:7	86:10 99:5	<b>extend</b> 5:11 6:21
<b>divide</b> 79:20	<b>eight</b> 9:13 22:14,14	essential 84:3	extent 50:15 55:19
<b>doable</b> 82:19	56:14 61:24 71:17	establish 20:9 34:25	externally 12:13
document 41:7	90:22 91:17 96:15	87:18	eye 71:10 95:9
<b>doi</b> 55:15	<b>eighth</b> 6:17,23	established 88:7	f
<b>doing</b> 10:12 11:10	either 55:21,22	establishing 66:16	
11:14,23 13:2 16:4	elaine 40:10	establishment 85:23	<b>fac</b> 49:17
16:15 19:4 20:12,13	elders 15:3 38:7	establishments 91:1	face 99:5
22:6,19 30:7 35:10	59:24	et 26:16	faced 79:15
37:17,20,21 39:11	elected 32:11	everybody 2:6	facilitator 30:25
47:6 72:19,23 77:3	election 21:13	everyone's 70:1	facilitators 80:14,24
83:16,18 88:22 93:2	electronic 83:13,20	79:11 97:2 99:25	facilities 44:25
98:17 100:2	electronically 88:23	evil 99:17	66:25
doors 84:5,10,10	88:23	exactly 46:9 98:11	<b>facility</b> 5:15,17
double 83:20	element 84:19	examine 11:8 55:19	10:17 28:22 29:10
dragging 89:17	embracing 71:1	example 5:15 29:8	66:19,22 73:18
<b>drive</b> 91:20	emphasize 23:21	33:10,20 65:23	<b>fact</b> 45:9 59:4
due 19:18 26:14	98:6	79:16	<b>failed</b> 56:16
44:14	emphasizing 99:3	examples 34:15	<b>fair</b> 78:11
-77.17		Champico J4.15	

[fairness - go]

			]
fairness 78:13	<b>final</b> 45:22	91:5	<b>fresh</b> 70:14
familiar 19:12	<b>finally</b> 21:23 33:5	follow 18:1,3 52:19	<b>friends</b> 32:18 59:18
<b>families</b> 57:10,13	36:11 46:17	91:10 98:19	<b>front</b> 84:4 96:20
family 59:8	<b>finance</b> 24:19	following 33:20	<b>frost</b> 2:19
<b>fan</b> 69:19 80:14	<b>financial</b> 29:9 41:5	63:23	<b>fruit</b> 92:13
96:14	41:19,22 84:4	<b>force</b> 3:22	<b>fully</b> 83:2
<b>fans</b> 60:8	financing 41:2	foregoing 101:5,9	functioning 93:21
<b>far</b> 64:17 86:3 88:11	<b>find</b> 82:6	101:11	<b>fund</b> 33:18
88:15	finding 73:23	<b>forever</b> 78:19	<b>funds</b> 33:12,13
fargo 40:25	<b>fine</b> 3:6	form 29:21 31:2	<b>future</b> 44:19,20 60:3
fashion 8:17	<b>finger</b> 28:13,13	40:12 74:16	88:12,12 99:1
fast 36:16,17 92:24	finish 81:9	formalize 41:16	g
93:3,11	<b>firm</b> 41:4	formalized 30:13	<b>g2e</b> 22:23
<b>favor</b> 83:7	<b>first</b> 2:22 7:21 8:11	54:13	game 2:15
fax 10:19 40:12	10:3 14:8 16:22	formalizing 28:11	gaming 1:1 3:20
<b>faxed</b> 32:6	34:7 37:18 38:6,9	formally 31:11	4:10,16,20,21 5:11
<b>fbi</b> 28:14,18 85:24	39:25 49:4 53:14	format 9:21 14:4	5:21 9:18 18:14
<b>fear</b> 47:14	63:24 69:14 78:6	34:9	
feasible 94:15	88:7 91:8,14 93:14	formats 92:9	22:9 24:11 32:15,22 33:6,21 42:24 43:17
february 1:12 23:1	98:10	former 5:19,21 29:8	44:8,9 45:1,8,16
101:16	<b>fiscal</b> 24:18 92:14	forms 67:19	
<b>federal</b> 16:8 20:9,23	<b>five</b> 70:15	formula 92:14	56:10,12,23 58:2,13
21:14,17 23:24 30:7	<b>fix</b> 38:17 39:3 70:5	formulate 20:6	58:18 60:19 71:3,4 71:12 72:7 74:4
32:4 49:16 53:1	93:23	34:23 96:9	
58:16 62:4 69:21	<b>fixed</b> 76:1	forth 59:18 101:8	83:6 85:8,10 87:7 87:12,16,21
86:21 87:9,11 89:14	flawed 64:3	forum 8:3 84:20	gander 11:21
<b>fee</b> 43:16	<b>flaws</b> 67:11	forward 15:25 16:1	gander 11.21 garcia 1:13 101:19
feedback 15:12	flexibility 19:6	17:6 35:4,7 37:5	general 6:12 40:23
<b>feel</b> 9:4 43:12	80:10 81:10 82:5	46:15 47:3 50:3	41:10
fees 24:17 25:1,13	flexible 79:24 80:1	51:10 57:23 58:19	generally 79:17
25:20 92:3	81:17	59:3 60:2 61:14,17	<b>U</b>
<b>feet</b> 89:17	floor 16:20 17:3	63:17,19 68:24,25	<b>getting</b> 11:6 34:2 35:9,18 52:11 90:22
<b>fell</b> 29:3	37:12 38:5 39:6,8	93:22 94:11 95:3	98:4
felt 30:19 48:16	42:13 49:9 90:11	96:3,4 97:4 99:25	<b>give</b> 3:16 14:24 23:2
96:21	<b>florida</b> 1:11 2:10 4:2	100:5	26:13 27:7 37:8
<b>fewer</b> 82:7	56:7 99:24 101:2	<b>found</b> 20:1	38:5 40:16 67:13
<b>field</b> 76:4	<b>flow</b> 44:8	<b>four</b> 7:19 14:2,10,16	76:18
fights 81:7,24	<b>flu</b> 42:19	<b>frame</b> 13:4 21:11	<b>given</b> 27:9,14 40:25
<b>figure</b> 69:12 78:15	<b>fly</b> 42:20	34:16,17 93:9	45:17 51:24 90:16
78:20 97:17	focus 63:22	framework 18:17	<b>giving</b> 43:2 90:15
figuring 27:18	focused 76:6	<b>frank</b> 5:20 85:6,7	glad 5:1,1,17 86:2
<b>file</b> 26:9	<b>focuses</b> 65:23	frankly 64:5,13,18	<b>go</b> 2:21,23 12:21
<b>filing</b> 26:15	focusing 74:24	66:20 69:11	<b>go</b> 2.21,23 12.21 13:7,7,7,7 14:9
filtered 32:21	folks 15:21 38:9	<b>free</b> 54:3	16:19 17:18 20:16
	55:3 82:17,22 85:4		10.17 17.10 20.10

Veritext/NJ Reporting Company
22.6 20 25.10 20.5	11.01	00.0 02.22	01.16.17
22:6,20 25:19 29:5	goose 11:21	88:9 92:23	91:16,17
29:19 36:6 42:5	gotten 11:1 53:5	h	hearings 88:12
44:10 47:12 54:9	<b>govern</b> 5:16	half 13:5,8 25:4	heart 5:2 44:11
55:7 56:1 61:5	governing 58:14	hall 72:18	99:11
64:17 67:20 68:16	government 5:4	hallway 98:10	held 1:9 29:8
72:24 73:8 75:11	19:14 32:10,10 51:2	hand 14:19 17:24	help 6:4,20 10:11
76:2 77:23 78:18	55:16 57:17 86:21	83:16,18 101:15	11:11 18:2 27:18
83:14 92:25 93:22	86:22,22 87:9,11,19	handing 6:6	28:2 33:2 38:1 69:5
97:7,14 98:11	88:2,3	handle 79:8	77:16 80:18 89:21
<b>goal</b> 43:5 64:6 81:17	government's 87:10	hands 44:22 58:24	99:4 100:5
<b>goals</b> 47:13	governments 20:22	93:24 99:23	<b>helpful</b> 34:10,16
<b>god</b> 59:16	56:14,17 86:21	hanging 59:19 92:12	40:10 42:4
<b>goes</b> 15:13 33:10	gracious 5:14 99:24	happen 20:17 35:6	helping 10:8 61:19
75:14 78:3	graham 4:18,19	53:10 59:12	85:16
<b>going</b> 3:11,21,25	grandmother 59:16	happening 77:25	helps 89:19
10:2 11:2 12:8	59:17,19	85:2	hereof 101:8
13:20,22 14:14,15	grasped 83:3	happens 67:23	hereunto 101:14
17:2,20 21:3,14,19	gratitude 5:12	happy 2:8 4:25 15:7	hesitancy 62:10
22:11 23:2,6 25:12	gray 52:15	38:8	hesitant 58:21 59:2
26:11 34:20 36:2,2	great 5:15 19:20,20	hard 1:10 2:14 6:1	<b>hicks</b> 6:10
36:7,13,15,20 38:3	35:18 37:8 39:16	58:8 90:16 92:25	high 3:18
38:17,25 39:12	42:12 45:18 46:1		highlights 79:23
51:20 52:1 55:2	62:1 70:3 71:1	harris 6:5	hinge 49:6
59:24 60:25 61:15	80:16 84:12 96:22	hawk 6:14 16:9 17:9	hinges 49:6
61:16 62:2 63:13	96:23	17:10 28:6 42:6,9	hiring 95:16,18
65:2,20 67:13 69:15	greatly 47:7	91:23 96:9	history 3:16 51:24
70:8,10 71:12,20	green 3:5 82:25	heading 16:9	57:20 59:2 61:24
72:2,8,18 73:22	95:10	health 57:9 95:25	62:6
74:6,21 77:22 79:5	ground 2:18 60:23	hear 3:25 8:8 15:9	<b>hit</b> 2:18 10:15,15,16
80:7 81:6 83:1	81:4,8 89:25 94:16	18:9 20:25 26:5	hitting 14:3
84:11 86:14 87:20	group 15:22 45:17	31:18 34:18,19	<b>hold</b> 37:22 68:1,10
87:21 93:10 96:3,3	80:18 81:1,2	42:11 57:20 76:12	71:18
96:12 97:22 98:14	group's 45:8,20	76:24 82:16 84:21	holding 22:14
98:18 100:7	grow 78:8,9	92:2 99:17	hollywood 1:11 3:15
good 2:1,6 11:20,21	guess 2:10 4:9 21:11	heard 7:13 22:24	homa 5:25
15:1 16:15 17:9	44:17 50:7 51:4	23:3,17 24:7,7,10	home 99:20,22
24:24 34:15 48:7	85:10	24:19,23,23 25:11	100:16
51:1 56:5 60:9	guessing 97:14	25:25 26:4,12,25	honor 56:6
68:14 70:21 72:23	guidance 34:5 74:10	28:23 29:19 30:5,13	hope 33:20 36:17
73:11 74:5,6,10	74:16	30:20 34:1 38:19	38:21 45:16 56:18
95:2,5,13 96:17	guidelines 52:13	43:9 48:23 52:9	57:15 92:25 94:2
97:3,18 98:16 99:18	guy 39:21,21 42:8	61:20 87:24 91:23	97:4
<b>goods</b> 33:14	42:12	hearing 9:20 14:13	hopeful 35:5
<b>goodwill</b> 97:3	<b>guys</b> 18:12 22:18	14:16 15:25 16:2	hopefully 31:24
5000 mm 71.5	33:2 36:18 77:10	22:10 67:18 80:9	35:17 45:20 92:21
	55.2 50.10 / /.10		55.17 45.20 72.21

# [hopefully - issued]

93:15	important 15:11	indicated 89:20	<b>intent</b> 18:9 19:16
hoping 23:10	21:22 22:19 25:6	indication 57:2	20:3
hospitality 15:5	26:24 27:24 29:25	individual 8:18,19	interacting 20:21
40:2 56:7 99:24	33:22 45:2 47:5	8:24,25 9:4 40:23	interest 31:3,9,13
100:12	57:8 64:25 65:12,15	industry 18:20 22:8	40:25 41:3,17 46:1
hosts 5:14	65:17,19 73:15 82:3	24:22 45:12 47:7,12	61:3 81:4 92:7
<b>hot</b> 91:24 92:11	92:18,21 93:7	51:21 52:6,13 54:5	interested 28:19
hours 60:24 81:6	importantly 70:2	80:4 87:4,12	31:17 52:3
house 55:18	<b>imposing</b> 64:14,16	<b>inform</b> 62:13	<b>interior</b> 49:22 50:21
huff 2:25	impossibility 60:13	information 3:10	54:8,21,25 80:16
human 75:21	impossible 60:15	17:21 18:4 20:1	<b>internal</b> 39:4 69:8
<b>hurdle</b> 69:15	improper 73:20	23:15 32:8,13,20	internally 12:12
i	improve 18:20 71:9	33:1 35:13 39:1	25:7
	71:11 74:1	67:10,11,22 68:2,5	internet 38:21
idea 19:3 22:15	improved 67:12	69:4 73:13 74:15	internets 10:19
24:24 40:24 41:21	improvement 69:18	76:22 77:12,15 89:8	interpret 51:5
44:6 45:24	73:6	informed 14:14	interpretation 51:8
ideas 8:8 42:9 49:4	inaction 47:6	infrastructure	<b>introduce</b> 2:23 3:11
69:25 84:12,24	inadvertently 55:12	69:17	introduced 31:25
identified 34:11,11	95:4,5	initiative 10:3,4	introducing 2:21
identify 7:17	inclement 99:21	16:10 33:7 55:16	investigations 28:4
identifying 9:9,10	inclination 91:9	75:17	28:9 67:17
61:18	inclined 95:8	initiatives 7:20 12:1	investigators 67:16
idol 3:15	<b>include</b> 37:9 62:12	37:21 76:14	<b>invite</b> 57:23 58:20
<b>igra</b> 43:24 44:3 46:9	included 24:4,6	injunction 3:24	invocation 2:4
46:15	27:12	innovated 97:7	involuntary 55:21
<b>ii</b> 27:4 44:25 45:1,4 45:16 49:24 50:12	includes 43:15	<b>input</b> 22:5 28:21	involve 55:19
	including 35:13	31:19 34:4 97:23	<b>involved</b> 45:7 52:25
71:12,19 72:3,8 73:5 91:25	70:1	inquiry 6:24 9:7	55:2,9 62:12 85:12
	income 84:9	12:18 16:7,20 17:4	87:6 94:2,22,22
<b>iii</b> 27:5,8,10,13,17 72:4 74:14 79:17,20	inconsistency 54:15	17:19 18:10 20:19	involvement 46:10
	independence 53:23	20:20,25 21:6 22:22	involves 43:20
80:10 91:25	54:2 55:9	23:23 24:6 31:25	involving 13:12
illegal 83:18 immediately 54:23	independent 53:22	37:24 43:4,7 45:3	<b>iron</b> 95:21
55:14 54:23	<b>indian</b> 1:1 3:20 4:2	63:4,9 96:16	<b>issue</b> 9:22,23 13:17
<b>impact</b> 30:1 94:9	4:20,21 18:13 19:14	insignificant 25:6	21:1 25:9,16 26:19
<b>implement</b> 18:16	22:8,18 26:24 27:6	inspection 29:7	26:19,24 27:6 29:15
20:7 34:23 50:5	27:24 30:19 33:5,8	install 38:16	30:13 31:4 34:12
60:25	33:13,19 34:25 35:6	instance 79:2	40:21 41:5 42:10
<b>implicate</b> 42:2	36:21 43:12 47:2	<b>instances</b> 22:1 50:13	44:16 51:3 56:20
implications 20:8	52:16 54:25 58:13	institutions 41:19	64:25 65:10 73:25
34:24 98:20	58:18 59:21 60:19	41:23	74:3 83:1 87:14
imply 47:25	60:22 63:11 73:1,2	intended 11:10	92:8
mpiy 77.23	73:2 87:5,16 95:17	41:25 43:24 46:14	<b>issued</b> 18:22 41:10
	95:25 96:1		

<b>issues</b> 8:18,25 9:4,10	<b>keith</b> 6:9 40:8	<b>laid</b> 86:1	levels 3:24 10:24
9:11 15:10,14,22		lands 87:22	
	<b>key</b> 28:15 96:12		license 66:19,22,25
18:5 21:4,5 23:24	keys 97:22 killed 2:19	large 19:18 58:1	67:10,18
24:7,14 26:3,6 27:2		78:16 82:18 93:7	licensing 28:4,22
27:16,23 30:10 31:1	<b>kind</b> 4:21 10:21	larger 84:11	73:18 77:8 92:1
39:24 41:1 49:23	14:3 18:2 19:1 23:3	<b>larry</b> 6:11 59:11	<b>life</b> 71:4
50:20,23 61:19	31:1 42:3 53:10	60:20	light 52:15
65:16 68:20 78:14	79:6 80:23 90:23	laryngitis 6:3	limitations 66:11
78:14 85:20 86:1,2	93:2	lastly 12:16	70:3,4
86:3 88:21 90:18	<b>kinds</b> 41:12 92:16	late 25:1,14,20	limited 16:24
92:1,8,10,12 93:6,8	<b>know</b> 2:8 4:9 5:3	59:16 92:3	<b>linda</b> 45:6
93:14,15 96:11	6:11 8:3,12 9:3,22	<b>law</b> 41:4 56:23	<b>line</b> 8:16 35:12,13
98:24	10:9 11:22 12:11,13	85:13,15	68:12 71:18 86:8
issuing 21:15 25:2	12:18 14:17 15:12	laws 87:15	89:3
29:24 41:23 52:12	16:6,25 18:13,16,22	lawyer 53:16 69:13	lines 29:18 38:22
j	19:3 21:2,21 22:4	laying 89:25	75:15
<b>j</b> 1:12	23:16 25:3,3 26:8	lead 19:10,25 32:12	list 64:22
0	26:14 27:20 30:15	87:10	listed 98:5
january 22:13	31:5,9 32:22 33:3,5	<b>leader</b> 32:2 38:6	<b>listen</b> 90:24
<b>jenkins</b> 3:1 63:2	33:20,25 36:12	leaders 2:7 15:3,20	listening 84:19,21
67:8,13,14	37:16,23 38:1,12	16:21 22:5 32:23	85:2 86:11 90:19
<b>jess</b> 88:21 95:9,10	41:20 44:18,24	38:4,7 57:11,18	literally 96:22
<b>jim</b> 2:23 3:4	47:25 48:5,7,15	58:2 62:1 89:5	<b>little</b> 3:16 6:15 11:25
<b>job</b> 1:25 16:15 55:6	49:8 50:4,8,19 51:1	leadership 22:9 37:3	14:20,25 15:1 23:20
97:3	51:4 54:4 55:8,13	38:9 56:22 57:2,8	41:15 47:14 85:3
<b>jobs</b> 10:12 69:5	57:11 58:12,21 59:1	57:21,24 58:6,24	90:14 92:24 93:10
<b>joe</b> 3:1 72:6 73:17	60:18 61:1,6 62:5	60:17 88:13,17	100:10
<b>joel</b> 5:20	62:22 65:1 68:5,7	89:13	live 57:12 88:19
<b>john</b> 39:23	68:14 69:22 70:3,4	leads 21:23	lives 61:6
judged 62:2	72:6,6 74:17 75:22	leaning 91:3	liz 5:22,22
judy 70:20,21,22	78:7,8,19 79:5,9	learn 40:17	loans 41:23
75:2,14 76:21 81:19	80:23,25 84:18 88:5	learning 9:12 13:6	local 31:8
81:20 82:14 83:9	89:3,5,13 92:20,23	leave 47:5	location 84:9
94:20	95:19 96:5 97:13,15	led 80:5	location 22:14
<b>july</b> 7:16 86:12,19	98:10,19 99:6	left 13:6 15:5 48:15	
<b>justice</b> 49:22 50:9			logistics 100:14
50:11,21 54:19	<b>kurt</b> 49:12 56:8	80:7	long 21:12,18 47:13
k	<b>I</b>	legal 4:1,2 39:21	56:1 77:4
	ladies 59:20	41:6,9 68:1	longer 91:6 93:10
<b>keep</b> 14:13,14,16 15:15 22:10 34:1	lael 6:14 12:18	legally 68:6	longstanding 56:9
51:17 59:24 82:3	13:19 14:22 15:13	legs 62:21 70:13	look 8:11 11:2 12:25
	16:9,18 17:8,9,10	lending 41:7	16:1 17:5 18:20,24
84:10 94:2 95:9	28:6 37:15 42:6,9	letter 8:15	23:4,17 24:15 26:1
99:3	60:21 91:14,15,22	letters 32:2	28:20,25 29:6,20
keeping 14:18 98:14	91:23 96:8,9	level 21:9 34:13	30:9 34:6,9 35:2,8
	,-	71:22 80:5	36:1 46:15 47:19

# [look - national]

50 10 (1 14 17	1. 4 10 10 14	: 61 70 4	
58:19 61:14,17	making 4:13 12:14	meaningful 72:4	mistake 73:20
63:17 68:24 69:12	20:17 21:25 22:2	means 11:17 13:11	<b>mitchell</b> 2:3,5 62:16
75:10 76:3 78:4	36:8 44:12 47:11	31:13 69:8 74:8	moa 28:18
81:2,22 91:4 99:25	52:3 65:5,25 75:15	81:11 93:13	<b>mobile</b> 86:11
looked 31:6	83:11 89:9 94:10,12	mechanisms 79:17	<b>mode</b> 76:16
looking 15:24 21:8	97:11	79:24 80:1	<b>model</b> 46:13 65:6,25
25:8 33:9 38:23	manage 99:21	<b>medium</b> 82:18	66:4 98:17
53:15 54:22 55:7,15	management 24:13	<b>meet</b> 10:8 75:8 80:2	models 30:9
65:22 71:4,8,10	24:14 26:2,3 28:15	82:10	modifications 94:9
80:8 88:6 91:3,6	29:9 41:7,25 43:15	<b>meeting</b> 2:2 27:1	modified 94:8
94:1	43:20,21 52:24	33:10 37:20 86:14	moment 9:8
looks 21:19 49:10	75:18 83:6 92:5	96:23 100:18	<b>money</b> 4:13 33:12
81:19	managing 16:15	meetings 8:13,19	33:12,17 75:23
<b>lose</b> 16:17	mandate 43:22 51:9	9:1,1 24:2 30:25	montana 83:10
lost 32:24	<b>mandated</b> 49:3 50:5	45:14 80:21 91:13	<b>month</b> 20:13
lot 2:15 6:2 11:16,22	50:18	<b>member</b> 3:12 5:9	months 7:15 13:4
12:10 16:4,12 21:19	<b>mandates</b> 56:21,22	17:10 56:10	21:15,16 36:15
31:10 32:23 37:17	mandatory 55:20	members 2:24 44:21	63:18 91:5
46:3 52:9 54:10,10	68:8	73:11 99:15	monumental 12:7
58:11 67:14 69:6	<b>manner</b> 57:22 83:22	mentioned 21:10	16:14
70:8,11 74:5 77:10	manually 89:7	<b>merely</b> 43:16	morning 2:1,6 15:1
77:11,15,23,23 78:4	manuel 34:7	<b>met</b> 24:2	15:6 17:9 56:5 63:8
78:24 82:1 85:11	mark 19:19 35:18	<b>method</b> 34:13	70:21 86:7
86:1 92:7,15	market 71:20,21	<b>mic</b> 67:13	<b>mouth</b> 76:24
lots 34:1 52:11	marsha 3:5	michael 39:21,21	<b>move</b> 36:16 38:2
louisiana 39:22	marty 2:24	42:8,12	50:3 51:10 60:1
love 42:11	massive 97:19	microphone 14:23	80:18 91:8 93:11
lower 3:24 92:12	material 75:11	36:25 37:25 70:19	94:11 95:3 97:18
lucky 32:18	materials 67:3	82:23 90:13	100:5
<b>lunch</b> 85:3,4 90:10	matter 34:17 59:4	microphones 38:2	<b>moves</b> 47:2 63:18
90:16	63:6	mics 26:21 27:4,9,10	68:25
lung 25:13	matters 9:2	27:13,17 45:5,8	<b>moving</b> 36:17 76:14
m	mavis 6:4 17:25	65:10 66:2 71:15	76:16 92:24 95:8
	19:18,19 23:11	74:14 77:21 78:3,7	96:4 97:4
madam 55:24 60:4	max 3:12,13 98:9,13	79:2,17,21 80:10	multiple 13:16
mail 10:19,20,20	99:6,9	82:2 91:24 94:3	65:19 93:1
18:7 38:18 39:3	mcdonald's 3:2	<b>mike</b> 3:1	<b>myers</b> 6:13
mailed 32:5	mcghee 42:17,23	<b>mind</b> 15:15 39:19	n
main 87:14	45:6,6 48:21 76:25	55:14 82:3 91:15	
maintain 84:2	mdewakenton 49:13	minded 54:1	name 5:8 17:9 36:25
maintaining 86:24	mean 43:19 50:13	minds 70:1	42:22 49:12 70:21
<b>major</b> 7:20 14:2	51:21 54:17 62:22	minimal 71:3	<b>nation</b> 4:3 17:11,13
88:11	91:24	minute 13:20	62:2
<b>majority</b> 75:20 76:1	meaning 48:10	minutes 8:16 13:8,9	national 1:1 4:16,19
	B 10110	70:15	4:21 5:10,21 18:14
		, 0.15	

# [national - outreach]

r	1	1	1
33:6,21 56:10,12	98:7	26:2 27:16 28:10,12	39:8 42:14 49:4,9
<b>native</b> 4:23 5:2,4	news 2:9	30:5 31:3 35:14	67:7 80:9 84:2,5,10
natives 4:12	nice 82:25	38:13 83:3 85:13,20	84:20 95:23
natural 51:23	<b>nicer</b> 17:17	97:8	<b>opened</b> 28:24 66:9
nature 40:24 66:13	nickel 4:7	numbers 38:24	84:10
85:22	<b>niga</b> 36:12	0	opening 2:4 14:22
<b>ncai</b> 22:23	nigc 7:24 17:20	obama 18:22	69:6
necessarily 13:15	27:13,14 29:12,17	<b>objective</b> 48:10	operate 100:4
51:12,18,21 52:1,7	30:6 35:20 49:20	80:12,19	operated 87:16
77:16 84:25 91:16	50:10 53:7 67:3,19	<b>obligated</b> 33:16	operates 44:24
94:20	68:4 69:5 72:23	obligation 32:11	operating 21:10
necessary 67:6	74:7,20 78:1 85:11	obliterate 27:22	83:24
<b>need</b> 2:15 3:9 7:18	86:25 98:7	obtaining 25:22	operation 11:15
9:10 10:22,23 11:4	nigc's 74:11	48:7	12:9 32:22 60:16
12:5 13:13,18 15:22	nigc.gov 35:16	obviously 17:20	61:2,6 83:6,8,15
20:11,17 21:8,20,21	nj303781 1:25	22:15 26:23 39:14	84:5
21:22 22:4,4,18	<b>noi</b> 15:14	50:4 91:24 100:11	operations 9:19
26:1 27:18,24 28:2	non 4:21 28:15 44:9	odd 87:6	10:9,17 11:12,19,20
28:20,25 29:5,19	normal 54:8	offered 86:23	12:3 14:12 22:9
30:2,9,21 31:11,18	notably 46:9	offering 10:23	32:16 33:8 61:10
32:7 33:2 34:19	notary 101:20	offers 84:23	69:8 75:19 82:19
36:16 38:1 49:8	note 34:6 45:2,24	office 6:7 7:12,15,16	83:22 84:8,12 89:2
57:20 69:9 71:21	46:17 47:19	13:4 38:15 47:8	94:18
72:1,2,5 73:16 74:2	<b>noted</b> 46:24	52:24 91:4	opinions 27:1,18
75:7 76:19 77:18,18	notes 14:22 101:7	official 62:4 101:15	41:6,10
79:24 80:12 84:8,13	<b>notice</b> 6:24 9:6	officials 20:10 28:15	opportunities 73:4
90:12 97:17,23	12:18 16:7,19 17:3	32:11	90:24
100:3	17:18 18:10 20:19	oglala 62:1	opportunity 9:24
needed 18:19 61:11	20:19,25 21:6,17	oh 34:2 85:6	14:7 23:2 29:22
<b>needs</b> 10:16 14:8	22:1,2,22 23:23	okay 12:24,25 14:7	40:16 43:2 53:2
20:16 31:2 69:18	24:4,6 25:2,5,9,14	31:6 42:12 70:12	56:2 57:3 58:1,23
75:8 88:11 91:14	25:18 26:13,16	97:12	72:3,15 84:23
negative 17:15	29:18,22,24 31:25	oklahoma 17:11	options 35:8
39:17 67:10,22	37:23 43:3,7 45:3	old 59:20 85:7 88:6	order 19:6,12,14,16
negotiated 21:25	46:21 47:10 63:4,9	older 48:25	19:23 20:3 34:21
65:5,24	70:7 96:16	omb 54:10 55:2,18	36:1 88:5 93:11
negotiating 97:10	<b>noticed</b> 31:24,24	55:20	ordinance 27:15
<b>net</b> 24:11	77:7 78:12	once 16:1 64:15 82:5	organization 37:1
<b>neutral</b> 80:17	notification 67:19	oneida 60:7	originally 77:12
<b>never</b> 2:18 71:20	<b>notify</b> 31:23	ones 44:12 60:23,24	osceola 3:12,13
72:25 96:21,25	nourishment 90:3	68:20 87:20 88:18	98:13 99:9
<b>new</b> 6:12 7:24 14:3	november 16:8	91:7	ought 72:11 74:12
19:21 30:11 47:7	22:23 96:15	open 8:3,7 16:20	outcome 52:2
52:20 53:21 59:7	number 10:20 15:14	17:2 37:12 38:3	outreach 54:10,11
87:5 88:25 95:23	18:7 20:23 24:13		58:5

# [outside - probably]

<u>[</u>	T	1	
<b>outside</b> 5:24 9:1	<b>pass</b> 2:10	places 2:13 82:4,4	practical 46:5
61:5 74:22	passage 85:12	84:8 91:18	<b>practice</b> 8:14 55:6
outweighs 25:24	passed 4:15 59:17	plains 71:2	practices 52:14
overall 81:17	87:15	<b>plan</b> 92:24	prayer 2:16
overhead 75:24	path 39:14	<b>plate</b> 21:20	<b>pre</b> 29:22 92:4
<b>overly</b> 46:12	patience 76:19	play 88:14	predicate 66:23
overreaching 56:20	patient 37:16	played 87:22	preference 95:18
56:21	patting 19:2	please 15:15 17:24	preferences 95:16
oversight 25:10	paul 39:23	21:2 28:5 36:24	premise 100:4
49:16,18,21 50:8	<b>pawnee</b> 17:10	97:13,21 98:2 99:25	<b>prepared</b> 16:22,25
overview 37:19,23	paxton 6:12 11:23	100:15	55:25
р	60:20	poarch 42:23 44:24	prerogative 12:24
	pay 9:10 33:17	<b>point</b> 14:1 15:18	presence 71:3
<b>p.m.</b> 100:20	paying 20:5	45:21 53:5 64:8	presentation 40:20
<b>packer</b> 60:8	payment 43:18	67:7 68:22 75:14	preserved 59:21
packet 17:23,24	<b>pays</b> 43:16	83:20 84:6	president 18:22
packets 6:6	people 6:20 7:3 21:2	pointed 83:9 86:7	president's 54:11
page 19:22,25 23:7	24:2 25:8 26:13,17	points 13:21 77:1	presidential 21:13
101:5,8	30:19 51:16 61:9,12	policies 20:7 21:1	press 26:19 92:17
<b>paperwork</b> 32:23	61:22 72:19 76:4	34:23 98:20	pressures 46:3
77:10	78:17 79:6 82:8,15	policy 8:1,18 21:4	pretty 21:18 61:20
<b>paradise</b> 3:14	92:25 96:22	31:20 51:7,7 75:13	89:13 91:4
part 19:18,18 39:3	percent 38:19 75:20	95:18	prevent 11:11
41:25 49:21 63:24	75:21	politics 54:4	previous 53:19 83:2
64:2 65:7,9,24 70:8	percentage 43:17,18	<b>pony</b> 32:6	primarily 56:16
70:11 75:16,18 77:9	percolated 93:6	<b>portal</b> 67:25 68:1	80:6
78:12 88:8	96:11	portions 79:8	primary 21:7 28:15
participate 36:19	perfect 61:15,16	position 24:3 33:24	31:16 58:17 60:12
66:10,11	80:25 96:24	50:14 58:6	printing 28:13,13
participating 45:13	performed 58:4	positions 15:16	<b>priorities</b> 8:10 9:15
participation 36:20	person 75:25 79:4,4	<b>possible</b> 12:4 34:25	14:2 21:21 47:1,9
<b>particular</b> 7:7 16:10	personnel 25:10	35:3 37:8 88:24	63:21 76:10,11,12
16:14 17:2 20:3	perspective 3:17	93:13 94:15	prioritize 65:8
41:7 43:13 45:2	27:21 50:2 68:21	possibly 32:1 53:3	priority 13:15 21:9
50:22 51:4 69:4	<b>phone</b> 18:7 38:13,22	82:10	34:13 49:5,8 63:14
91:7 92:8	40:11 90:3	posted 23:6 35:12	68:22 72:13 73:3,6
<b>particularly</b> 42:10	phones 38:16 90:4	potential 30:11	74:13 75:4 91:17,20
49:23 50:11 67:10	<b>pick</b> 79:3	41:21	93:11
partly 72:13,14	<b>pilot</b> 28:3,8 77:8	pound 4:7	privately 88:10
partner 10:10 100:6	pioneers 59:21	poust 5:22	95:11
partnership 58:15	place 13:1 28:9 29:2	poverty 71:1,22	probably 2:15 18:13
87:9	38:25 40:3 64:10	power 71:24	21:15 23:8 30:16
parts 76:17	66:12 69:10 70:10	powerpoint 16:19	53:25 62:17 71:12
party 43:18 67:23	74:20 80:2 83:9,25	17:21,23	73:24 90:21
80:17	89:10 93:22 101:8		

	1		1
<b>problem</b> 54:16 73:2	proper 29:2	q	67:1 68:19 74:2,20
problematic 95:5	<b>properly</b> 30:20 46:2	question 41:3 47:23	86:17 90:19 91:12
problems 9:12	proponent 88:24	49:14 52:18 54:22	97:7
11:11 40:23 50:7	proposal 22:2	54:23 55:14 67:7	rearrange 7:1
53:10 55:11 66:6	proprietary 31:3,8	91:2,12 95:3	reasons 47:6 64:21
82:13	31:13 40:24 41:3,17	questions 15:15	<b>receive</b> 17:24
procedures 77:24	92:6	20:25 21:7 38:11	received 35:22
proceeding 26:7	<b>protect</b> 10:8 51:20	39:7 40:13 42:14	recess 70:17 90:6
proceedings 1:9	80:4	82:23 84:17 90:12	recognition 64:2
92:5 100:20 101:9	protected 54:5	95:13 98:2 100:3	recognize 5:19,23
101:12	<b>protecting</b> 61:3 87:4	quick 15:8 56:4	16:24 60:11,22
process 10:13 11:9	protection 80:5	81:14	61:13 65:17
15:18 16:16,16	protocol 38:5	<b>quicker</b> 78:25 79:10	recommend 48:3
17:20 18:6,11 19:9	<b>proven</b> 83:23	<b>quickly</b> 57:9	record 8:4 14:23
21:13 24:21 26:8,14	<b>provide</b> 12:13 13:10	quite 11:1 12:7	47:5 56:25 57:1
27:3,20 28:13 29:4	26:13 34:4 35:7	54:18,22	101:12
30:23 36:8 52:21,23	43:3 63:3 89:6		<b>recorded</b> 8:4 36:23
53:11 55:1,15 63:8	providing 10:10	r	records 29:8,10,14
63:14,18 64:5 65:5	11:4 12:5 51:1	<b>raise</b> 17:24	redefining 31:16
66:9 67:9 68:25	provisions 31:9	raised 23:25 29:15	referee 81:7
75:16 85:18 86:6,15	<b>public</b> 101:20	31:10 46:20	referred 65:11
89:22 96:13,17,20	published 16:8	raker 3:4	refining 51:22
96:21 97:5,11,18	22:22 32:4	randi 1:12 101:19	<b>reflect</b> 12:12 57:16
processes 93:25	<b>pull</b> 59:14	rapid 15:5 17:17	reflection 57:7
<b>produced</b> 79:10	purchase 33:10	25:11	refocusing 76:5
<b>product</b> 36:21 45:17	83:14	reach 18:7 32:1	<b>reg</b> 12:7
45:20 57:16 58:19	purchasing 33:14	37:25 48:1 51:25	reg.review 35:16
58:22 59:2	<b>purpose</b> 37:19 75:5	54:18,19	regard 35:4 41:1
productive 57:4,21	89:10 91:12	reaches 33:1	42:10 45:4 49:19
products 60:19	<b>purposes</b> 44:9 54:2	read 8:6 37:7 38:10	50:2
79:10	95:22	42:21 47:17 54:7	<b>regarding</b> 18:5 21:1
<b>profit</b> 83:11	<b>pushing</b> 3:7 13:7	64:4 66:25	40:20 62:18 68:6
profitable 84:1	<b>put</b> 10:18 13:1 19:7	reading 47:22	85:21
<b>program</b> 10:14 11:8	21:17 23:14,23	<b>ready</b> 26:10	region 6:9 75:7
28:3,8 46:7 68:12	24:25 29:2,21 31:2	real 50:10 99:10	<b>regional</b> 1:2 6:9
68:12 70:5 74:5	31:11 32:5,25 33:17	realize 6:25	register 16:8 21:17
77:8,20	33:18 50:13,14 54:9	really 5:17 6:1,1	23:24 32:4
progress 57:1,6	59:3 68:2 69:10	11:8 12:10 15:24	registration 68:9
98:14	70:7,11 72:8 84:4	16:5 17:5 18:9	<b>regs</b> 52:20,22 91:3,7
progressed 4:8	<b>putting</b> 18:15 29:4	19:20 20:4 21:13,18	91:14
promise 82:25	33:11,13 51:11	21:20 22:4 23:12	regular 41:24
promotions 95:24	100:14	25:23,23,24 35:2,18	regularly 61:21
promulgate 27:8		36:21 39:2 42:11	<b>regulate</b> 4:4,11,22
promulgated 49:20		58:10,10,20 60:8	4:24 11:13 74:21
73:21		64:20 65:6 66:6	

	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	• • • 10.7	15.00
regulated 64:19	reinventing 69:22	requirement 10:7	reviewing 15:23
regulation 3:23	reiterate 86:18	66:24 67:2 83:12	63:5 88:6 89:9
13:17 25:21,21 26:1	related 49:23	requirements 64:14	revise 45:19
28:11,22,24 29:2,4	relates 41:18	64:16 82:21 84:4	revised 45:15 49:19
29:12,21 30:8,21	relationship 7:21	requires 28:17	64:24
31:12,20 33:16	40:6,14 85:23 86:23	rescind 66:21	revising 34:14
34:11,14 46:1,12	86:25	reservation 3:22 4:3	revision 65:8
47:20,20 48:8,11,17	release 67:22	87:22	revisions 21:16
48:24,24 49:6 51:17	released 12:18	reservations 38:20	94:11,12 97:8
51:19,22,22,25	releasing 68:5	87:17	revisit 77:5
52:20 63:13 64:5,15	relevant 13:2	resolve 25:16	revisited 24:12
64:16 73:19,23 77:2	reliance 58:14	resource 72:17	77:14
79:21 81:25 92:10	relying 10:13	resources 61:11	revitalize 71:4
regulations 8:1,11	remain 44:4,22	72:15,23,25 73:7	revitalizing 74:4
12:20,21 13:1,11	remarks 40:19	94:22	revocation 67:18
16:13 18:15 19:1	remember 89:4	respect 44:14 49:20	<b>revoke</b> 67:18
20:18 21:8 24:5,9	96:18 98:11	63:10 66:2,19	<b>rez</b> 71:25
27:10,25 29:13,20	remembering 71:23	respectful 57:4,22	<b>right</b> 3:18 4:1 6:5,12
30:11,12,14 35:4	remind 37:21 75:3	respective 87:22	16:16 19:18 25:19
36:1 43:6 45:15,19	88:4 93:20 94:25	respond 84:22	26:23 38:25 39:13
45:23,25 46:5 48:25	98:17	<b>response</b> 11:1 51:23	42:20 44:11 50:23
49:7,15,19 50:4,16	reminded 61:25	81:21	56:3 69:7 71:2,23
51:13,14,15 52:8,11	reminder 95:2	responses 10:20	75:12 76:23 85:5
58:16 61:1 62:18	reminding 88:17	responsibilities 46:8	90:4
63:4,20,24 64:9,23	<b>reopen</b> 90:10	74:8 99:14	rigidity 81:18
65:22 66:14,17,20	reported 101:9	responsibility 98:21	ripple 61:8
66:22,23 67:1,6	<b>reporter</b> 101:19	responsible 88:8	<b>rita</b> 5:24
71:14,15 73:24,24	reporter's 1:9	rest 57:24 70:14	river 27:6 70:23,25
77:6,18 81:22 82:6	represent 37:1,2	restrictions 66:12	74:3 76:18
82:17,18 83:4 85:17	57:12 59:6	result 87:15	road 22:10 61:21
92:1 94:20,21	representation	retaining 67:9	98:3
regulator 89:15	78:14,17	<b>retire</b> 26:10	roberts 6:11 59:11
regulators 45:11	representative	returning 90:10	59:23
58:18 60:12 80:6	66:16 73:11	revamping 43:5	<b>rock</b> 1:10 2:14 98:4
89:16	representatives	45:25	<b>role</b> 49:18 74:11,12
regulatory 6:24	66:10	<b>revenue</b> 24:8 43:19	85:12 87:17 88:14
12:16,22 14:5,12	represented 25:4	revenues 24:11	97:11
17:19 18:6,12,14,17	81:3	43:17 44:9	<b>roll</b> 58:22,23
18:24 19:6,7,25	representing 49:13	review 6:24 11:15	<b>roof</b> 2:13
31:2 35:23 46:8	request 44:2	12:8,9,16,22 14:5	<b>room</b> 5:23 26:21,22
50:6 53:23 54:9	<b>requested</b> 77:12,13	14:12,12 16:7 17:3	26:23 37:2 53:17
55:3 56:17 58:17	require 44:7	17:19 18:6,12,19	65:14 70:14 81:7
64:9 73:6 91:10	required 10:5 19:5	19:8,25 35:22,23	<b>rose</b> 93:17
94:7,18	77:13	43:7 44:1 45:8 54:9	<b>ross</b> 2:25
		86:6 91:10	

<b>rpr</b> 1:13 101:19	49:6 58:14,14 63:24	<b>shocks</b> 96:24	sizeable 83:7
<b>rule</b> 21:25 47:11	64:5,9,15,16,19	<b>shore</b> 2:23	slide 77:7
65:5,25	92:10	<b>short</b> 13:3 21:11	<b>slow</b> 28:5,6
<b>rules</b> 21:15 65:20	selling 4:13	48:3	slower 28:7
81:4,8	semiannual 19:7	<b>shot</b> 7:11	slows 2:14
<b>ruling</b> 21:12	seminole 1:10,10 2:3	<b>show</b> 22:10 57:24	small 82:18 83:21
<b>run</b> 11:18,20 12:12	4:5 5:5,12 15:4	58:20,25 62:6 77:7	84:5 97:16
88:20	17:13 40:1 56:7	98:23	smaller 78:16,23
<b>running</b> 12:3,15	63:1 68:15,21 70:24	shuffle 32:24	83:25 84:7,8 92:19
<b>runs</b> 99:13	99:8,23 100:11	<b>shy</b> 37:5	92:20 93:14
<b>rush</b> 62:22	senator 4:18,18,19	side 9:1 16:11,12	<b>smoke</b> 32:6
S	<b>send</b> 32:14 34:18	50:19 53:20 65:18	<b>snail</b> 10:19
safe 99:20,22 100:15	35:15 68:4 96:10	65:18 71:18 80:15	<b>snow</b> 2:17,18
<b>safeguard</b> 11:12	senior 2:25	87:11,11 89:14	<b>sole</b> 31:3,13 40:24
52:6	sense 24:20 65:23	96:18,25	41:2,17
saiz 40:10	79:11 92:15	sign 3:3 8:15	soliciting 63:11
sake 38:4	<b>sent</b> 32:4 36:10	signal 32:6	solutions 80:8 98:22
sake 58.4 salaries 75:23	67:19	significant 25:5	99:4
samples 78:5	separate 7:13 73:25	57:17,25	solve 9:24 55:12
samples 78.5 san 34:7	series 93:3	similar 9:23 30:8	61:19 82:12 98:24
<b>sat</b> 16:10 80:20	seriously 19:15	72:19 77:20 95:24	solving 9:11,11
96:20	44:19 54:13 64:2	simple 10:25 24:16	soon 35:19
90.20			
	<b>serve</b> 40:17 45:20	71:6,6	sophisticated 35:9
<b>saying</b> 23:18 67:24	serve 40:17 45:20 51:2 61:12 80:16,17	71:6,6 simplifies 24:21	<b>sophisticated</b> 35:9 <b>sort</b> 8:16 21:9 24:25
<b>saying</b> 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21		,	-
<b>saying</b> 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21 <b>says</b> 16:20 20:6	51:2 61:12 80:16,17	simplifies 24:21	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25
<pre>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21 says 16:20 20:6 34:22</pre>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1	simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3	<b>sort</b> 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24</li> <li>81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6</li> <li>34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15	<b>simplifies</b> 24:21 <b>simply</b> 44:3 <b>single</b> 26:25 92:2	<b>sort</b> 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25	simplifies24:21simply44:3single26:25sioux49:1362:2	<b>sort</b> 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24</pre>	<b>sort</b> 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 <b>sorts</b> 66:11
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4
<pre>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21 says 16:20 20:6 34:22 schedules 16:23 screen 17:22 seal 101:15 second 10:4 secretary 5:25 section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</pre>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</li> <li>sections 79:3</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</li> <li>sections 79:3</li> <li>see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</li> <li>sections 79:3</li> <li>see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1 sovereignty 44:11
<pre>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21 says 16:20 20:6 34:22 schedules 16:23 screen 17:22 seal 101:15 second 10:4 secretary 5:25 section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22 sections 79:3 see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18 37:6 51:24 84:11,22</pre>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17 seven 60:24	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14 sitting 37:3 56:2</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1 sovereignty 44:11 87:13
<pre>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21 says 16:20 20:6 34:22 schedules 16:23 screen 17:22 seal 101:15 second 10:4 secretary 5:25 section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22 sections 79:3 see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18 37:6 51:24 84:11,22 90:14</pre>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17 seven 60:24 shakopec 49:13	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14 sitting 37:3 56:2 59:12 85:13 96:18</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1 sovereignty 44:11 87:13 space 33:11
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</li> <li>sections 79:3</li> <li>see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18 37:6 51:24 84:11,22 90:14</li> <li>seeing 39:14 91:18</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17 seven 60:24 shakopec 49:13 shapiro 70:21,22	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14 sitting 37:3 56:2 59:12 85:13 96:18 situation 10:11</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1 sovereignty 44:11 87:13 space 33:11 speak 6:2 28:7
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</li> <li>sections 79:3</li> <li>see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18 37:6 51:24 84:11,22 90:14</li> <li>seeing 39:14 91:18</li> <li>seek 58:5</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17 seven 60:24 shakopec 49:13 shapiro 70:21,22 76:21 81:20	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14 sitting 37:3 56:2 59:12 85:13 96:18 situation 10:11 32:12 71:9,11</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1 sovereignty 44:11 87:13 space 33:11 speak 6:2 28:7 36:24 39:24 43:9
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</li> <li>sections 79:3</li> <li>see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18 37:6 51:24 84:11,22 90:14</li> <li>seeing 39:14 91:18</li> <li>seek 58:5</li> <li>seen 20:20 22:12</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17 seven 60:24 shakopec 49:13 shapiro 70:21,22 76:21 81:20 share 3:9,10 13:24	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14 sitting 37:3 56:2 59:12 85:13 96:18 situation 10:11 32:12 71:9,11 situations 41:5 96:2</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1 sovereignty 44:11 87:13 space 33:11 speak 6:2 28:7 36:24 39:24 43:9 62:5 70:22 85:5
saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21 says 16:20 20:6 34:22 schedules 16:23 screen 17:22 seal 101:15 second 10:4 secretary 5:25 section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22 sections 79:3 see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18 37:6 51:24 84:11,22 90:14 seeing 39:14 91:18 seek 58:5 seen 20:20 22:12 selected 30:22	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17 seven 60:24 shakopec 49:13 shapiro 70:21,22 76:21 81:20 share 3:9,10 13:24 43:8	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14 sitting 37:3 56:2 59:12 85:13 96:18 situation 10:11 32:12 71:9,11 situations 41:5 96:2 six 7:14 13:4 25:4</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereignty 44:11 87:13 space 33:11 speak 6:2 28:7 36:24 39:24 43:9 62:5 70:22 85:5 speaking 12:20 34:8
<ul> <li>saying 23:18 67:24 81:21 91:21 94:21</li> <li>says 16:20 20:6 34:22</li> <li>schedules 16:23</li> <li>screen 17:22</li> <li>seal 101:15</li> <li>second 10:4</li> <li>secretary 5:25</li> <li>section 20:4,5 34:21 34:22</li> <li>sections 79:3</li> <li>see 2:9 3:2,13 5:1,2 8:6 18:2,20 23:18 37:6 51:24 84:11,22 90:14</li> <li>seeing 39:14 91:18</li> <li>seek 58:5</li> <li>seen 20:20 22:12</li> </ul>	51:2 61:12 80:16,17 96:1 services 12:5 33:15 89:25 session 15:9 93:17 set 30:18,21,22,24 38:24 45:15 47:1 48:4 74:19 76:11 79:22 81:4 101:8,14 sets 64:4,6 setting 74:18 settled 25:17 seven 60:24 shakopec 49:13 shapiro 70:21,22 76:21 81:20 share 3:9,10 13:24 43:8 sheriff 3:21 4:6	<pre>simplifies 24:21 simply 44:3 single 26:25 92:2 sioux 49:13 62:2 70:23,25 sir 42:16 85:6 89:24 sister 54:12 sit 9:21 26:9 37:4 site 19:17,19,21,23 23:4,8 29:8 32:5 34:16 35:17 75:9 sites 10:19 29:14 sitting 37:3 56:2 59:12 85:13 96:18 situation 10:11 32:12 71:9,11 situations 41:5 96:2 six 7:14 13:4 25:4 91:5</pre>	sort 8:16 21:9 24:25 27:22 34:12 49:24 50:8 64:11 79:14 92:11,12 93:14 95:20 sorts 66:11 sought 83:4 sound 95:4 south 38:19 71:5,7 sovereign 4:3 sovereigns 88:1 sovereignty 44:11 87:13 space 33:11 speak 6:2 28:7 36:24 39:24 43:9 62:5 70:22 85:5 speaking 12:20 34:8 99:11

# [specifically - talked]

specifically 27:17	states 4:11,22 88:2	subgroups 81:12	38:11 46:17 52:3,17
specify 29:12	status 53:23	<b>subject</b> 8:10 41:11	52:23 54:5,15 55:4
<b>spending</b> 11:21 69:7	statute 10:6 50:5	81:11	57:14 59:5 71:7,13
76:4,5	54:7 64:4,4,13,17	subjective 47:24	71:19 73:3,7,10
spent 45:9	66:24	submission 43:22	75:12,15 76:17,22
<b>spirit</b> 60:1	<b>statutory</b> 10:7 51:9	44:4	80:4 84:6 89:9
<b>spite</b> 56:21	52:4 60:14	submissions 25:20	95:21 99:12,22
<b>split</b> 50:10	stay 11:11 52:4 81:8	<b>submit</b> 25:1 48:10	suresh 3:3
spokesperson 88:16	stenographic 101:7	98:1	surveillance 79:5
<b>spot</b> 50:14	stenographically	submitted 25:14	survey 10:18,21,25
stabilized 87:15	101:10	67:3 91:19 92:3	11:5 75:5,9
staff 2:8,22,24,25	<b>step</b> 82:22	submitting 42:6	suspend 67:17
3:6 5:1,24 6:13,16	stephanie 42:18	48:20 62:17 79:6	system 24:25 67:21
6:19 11:23 13:6	<b>steps</b> 62:7 98:18,25	substance 16:17	69:17,20 92:3
15:21 19:19,20 22:5	stevens 2:1 5:7,8	34:8	systems 69:10,24
23:12 32:15,19 40:7	16:3 17:12 37:12,14	substantial 25:15	70:10
49:18 58:4 60:19,21	39:20 42:13 48:18	30:1,1 93:8	t
76:15 85:21 100:13	48:22 50:17 53:12	substantive 40:19	t 22:11 98:5
staffed 75:21	55:23,24 60:5,6	45:24	table 16:11 37:3
staffing 75:22	62:14,19 63:1 69:2	succeed 99:18	61:18 96:19 99:1
stakes 3:18	70:18 75:1 76:23	success 56:23 60:3	tailor 75:8
stand 3:13 68:2	79:13 82:14 84:16	98:15	take 8:11 11:2 18:19
standard 82:9,10	89:23 90:7 91:11	successful 25:25	18:23 19:15 23:17
standardize 41:16	94:4 95:12 97:24	<b>suck</b> 65:13	24:15 26:1 28:25
standards 20:10,11	98:16 99:19 100:17	sucks 26:20,22	29:5,19 34:6 35:8
20:14 24:22 27:5	<b>stop</b> 6:17,23,23 7:6	<b>sudden</b> 26:11	40:3 41:11 44:18
35:1,3 41:17 45:5,9	13:17 21:14 22:15	sufficient 22:4	46:6,23 47:8 54:11
52:9,10,12 65:11,16	stories 39:13	suggest 65:7 84:12	56:11 58:23 59:3
66:3 71:16 72:9	storm 7:2,3	suggestion 78:11	62:21 70:8,11,12
77:24 87:19 88:7	straightforward	suggestions 8:9	71:21 72:15 75:10
89:9 91:25	71:8	15:16,24 23:21	
standpoint 27:3	stranded 80:21	31:14 33:23 39:18	77:23 78:13 82:11 90:2 91:9
stands 68:3	streamline 11:9	52:12 65:3 68:19	<b>taken</b> 15:17 19:11
start 2:21 20:14	12:15 18:25,25 70:5	84:24	24:3 33:24 68:24
78:8	streamlined 94:8	<b>suit</b> 80:12	70:17 71:25 90:6
started 3:18,20	street 3:19	<b>suited</b> 45:16	101:7,12
53:15 78:6 90:9	stress 46:25	summary 35:24	takes 79:6
starting 45:21	stretch 62:21 70:13	summer 24:1 72:1	
state 3:22 4:1 5:10	strong 58:15	support 6:18,19	talk 8:17 9:5,7 12:19
36:25 44:25 101:2	strongly 43:13 65:7	36:18 88:25	13:19 14:13,16 18:8
stated 89:5	structure 18:24	supporting 55:16	20:15 22:17 52:10
statement 37:7,8	<b>stuck</b> 17:1	supreme 3:25	62:3,3 85:17 88:10
42:21 56:12 69:6	<b>stuff</b> 35:19 39:4	sure 3:8 7:9 8:22	90:17 98:10
statements 16:22	subcommittee 78:23	11:3,6,9 12:1,14	talked 64:12 82:1
17:1 55:25 82:24		28:1 32:13,19,25	95:20
		orting Company	1

# [talking - transcribed]

		1	
talking 4:18 7:25	37:13,14 39:20 40:1	83:2 84:25 85:11,20	<b>tiny</b> 82:4
16:5 37:17 44:20	40:15 43:2,4 47:16	86:5,9,16,23 87:8	<b>title</b> 101:8
49:14 51:13,14	48:18 55:24 58:7	87:23,23 88:13 90:7	today 3:7 5:18 6:2
53:15,18 71:13,14	59:6,9 60:3,5 62:14	91:23 92:23 96:12	7:4,5,22 8:10,25
71:15 72:1 82:15	62:25 68:17 69:1,2	96:16 97:5,6 98:9	14:2,22 17:14 18:8
87:25 95:15 96:6	70:16,24 74:24 75:1	thinking 30:12	20:12 23:3 24:9
98:13	79:13 84:15,16	53:14 98:4	27:10 36:14 43:9
talks 62:4	89:12,22,23,24	third 11:14 43:18	45:11 51:17 56:24
tap 67:25 77:20	91:11 99:9,16	67:23	60:4 73:16 84:7
taps 70:3	100:11,13,15,19	thorough 81:13,15	86:2,10 87:24 88:6
target 10:15,15	thanks 5:11 6:16,21	91:4	88:24 90:1,9
task 12:7,8 16:15	16:3 23:11 53:12	thought 12:7 48:16	today's 9:6 12:17
46:19	82:14	77:1 87:13	46:11
tasked 16:14 18:14	<b>theory</b> 41:18	thoughts 8:9 26:5	told 27:7 67:21
<b>tax</b> 67:21	thing 11:14 24:22	53:9 79:11	tomorrow 45:11
taxes 75:23	33:22 34:20 38:13	<b>three</b> 13:5 21:7	tone 97:1
<b>team</b> 59:9	68:10 69:21 73:15	25:14 44:24	tool 20:22
teams 57:11,21	76:3 81:21 86:8	thrilled 96:19	top 64:22,22 93:6
technical 10:4,14	88:1 100:14	throws 40:22	topic 12:17 91:24
14:11 27:5 45:5,9	things 8:17 13:13,14	ticketing 24:25 92:2	<b>topics</b> 46:20
65:10,15 66:2,13	13:16 14:10,16 15:8	tics 78:9	tough 89:13
71:16 75:4,17 76:7	21:22 24:16 28:1	tiered 81:25 82:16	tour 6:23 7:7 90:22
76:13,15 79:15	32:9,24 35:10 39:15	82:17	tracie 2:1 5:7 16:3
91:25	48:6 49:24 53:15	tiering 83:1,21 84:3	37:14 39:20 42:13
technologies 88:25	54:20 60:13 72:24	84:7,14 85:18	48:18,22 50:17
<b>technology</b> 69:18,20	77:24 79:12 81:23	tiger 3:2	53:12 60:5 62:19
tell 10:16 21:2,4,14	85:18,22 88:22	time 4:17 8:15 11:16	69:2 70:18 75:1
36:4 49:17 91:13	92:16,20,21 96:12	11:22 12:10 13:3,21	76:23 79:13 82:14
98:22	<b>think</b> 3:6 5:22 10:6	14:19,25 16:24	84:16 89:23 90:7
telling 18:23 60:7	11:5 14:9 15:25	21:11,18 25:16	91:11 94:4 95:12
99:2	23:3 33:21 34:3	34:22 44:15,16	97:24 98:16 99:19
<b>tenure</b> 86:10	39:12,15,18 44:14	46:23 47:16 48:2,25	100:17
<b>teri</b> 5:22	46:2 47:12 48:9	57:19 58:3,8 59:1,7	track 56:25 57:1
<b>term</b> 13:5	50:12 53:16 54:1	60:4 62:18 68:4	tracks 65:20 93:2
terms 13:11 40:19	57:4,25 58:9,20	69:7 72:3 75:19	tracy 5:8 90:21
46:24 50:1,8 53:6	59:1 64:6,12,20	76:4,5 77:4,19 78:1	<b>trade</b> 57:24
63:10,20 64:13,23	65:4,24 66:7,14,15	85:10,19 86:5,13,14	traditionally 9:17
65:3,4 66:5 72:24	66:20 67:5,7,7,11	87:18 88:16 89:15	<b>traffic</b> 80:17
74:13 82:20 86:22	67:25 68:15,19	89:25 90:16,20 92:2	training 10:5,11,14
88:15,20,22 91:7	69:11 71:24 73:18	93:4,4,9 97:11,16	10:22,22,24 11:3,4
94:2	73:19,20,21 74:1,12	101:7,13	74:5 75:4,5,8,11,17
terrific 40:8	74:23 77:5,8,11,15	timely 81:12,15	76:8,13,16
territory 5:13	77:19,22 78:5,10,21	times 86:4 87:24	transcribed 36:24
thank 2:5 5:6,7 15:2	78:25 79:23 80:8	timis 70:4	101:10
15:3 16:2 17:5,12	81:16,17 82:2,5,6		
L	1	1	1

# [transcript - wait]

transcript 1:9 23:9	56:7 63:1,22 64:15	59:13,14 71:18,18	update 19:1 86:6
37:10 101:5	67:16 68:13,18	72:24 77:22 93:12	updating 19:21
transcription 101:6	69:19 70:23,24,25	97:3	upfront 16:5
transcriptionist 6:8	73:23 79:4 82:20,20	tuesday 1:12	<b>urge</b> 72:22,22 73:5
transcripts 23:6	84:24 86:9 94:17	tulalip 5:9	<b>use</b> 24:11 28:14
35:14	99:8,12,23 100:11	tulsa 2:14	36:24 66:1 68:16
transparency 23:13	tribe's 24:18 68:4,21	<b>turn</b> 2:2 14:1,21	70:13 72:23 73:7
transparent 12:2	<b>tribes</b> 4:23 5:9,16	16:18 17:7 37:11	81:25
36:4,8	7:24 8:2,5,19,23	38:8 39:6 78:4	useful 74:17 77:17
transplant 25:13	9:14,16,20 10:8,18	90:13	usually 79:5
travel 7:1 22:17	11:4,11 12:5,20	turning 12:6	utilized 30:20
91:1 99:21	13:11,12 14:6 15:10	turns 12:8 74:16	v
travelling 8:20	17:6 22:16 23:17,18	<b>two</b> 13:5,8 14:3 17:7	
99:22	24:2 25:1 27:12	18:2,23 35:17 49:2	vague 47:23
travels 99:20 100:16	28:12,19 31:4,10,19	49:2 59:20 73:7	variations 41:14
treasurer 3:2	33:3,12 34:25 35:10	79:19 88:1	variety 64:21 various 32:3 41:9
treasury 54:20	36:6 44:2,12,17,23	<b>type</b> 24:25 44:18,21	49:16 65:20
tremendous 58:3	46:6,9 49:2 59:6	49:25 65:22 83:13	
tribal 1:2 2:7 3:11	60:11,23 61:23	<b>types</b> 30:9 44:1	<b>vegas</b> 29:11 <b>vendor</b> 68:9,11,15
15:2,3,19,20 16:12	62:10 64:7,8,8 65:1	typewriting 101:11	vendor 68:9,11,15 vendorize 68:11
16:21 19:14,22 20:7	66:9,24 67:20,24	u	vendorize 08.11 vendors 45:12 68:11
20:10,21 21:24 22:5	68:8 69:5 70:2	ultimate 57:7	venture 44:16
22:9 23:7 30:15,16	74:19 75:7 76:13,18		venues 32:3
32:2,11,14,18,22	78:6 79:20,22,25,25	<b>ultimately</b> 45:19 60:2	venues 52:5 versus 4:5
33:7 34:24 37:3	80:3,6,8 81:2 84:1	undersigned 101:4	versus 4.5 vested 61:3
38:4,6,6,7,9 42:25	84:18,21,21 85:13	understand 2:12	vested 01.3 vet 52:21
44:11 45:7,11,21	85:24 87:1 88:14	20:15 36:9 42:1	vice 42:18
46:10 47:10 50:19	90:19 91:13,21 94:6	52:5 61:20 62:9	view 53:22
53:20 56:14,17,22	94:10,12,25 95:6	78:8 83:19 85:1	views 63:11 65:3
57:2,12,17 58:6,17	96:2 97:1,15 98:8	90:19	violate 31:8 44:3
60:16,17 61:2 65:18	98:21,22 99:16	understanding 75:6	violation 25:2,9,15
67:2 72:7 73:9,14	trickle 11:7	89:1	25:18 29:18,22,24
74:11 80:11,15	tricky 41:15	understands 78:2	violations 25:5
84:11 86:21 87:19	<b>tried</b> 38:16 61:4	undertake 63:13	virtual 60:13
88:3,13,17 89:4,14	<b>trimble</b> 40:10	undertaken 46:19	visit 95:10
90:24 92:9 97:9	trinkets 4:13	undertaking 20:6	vital 34:3 86:20 88:1
98:20 99:14	trip 98:3	34:23 97:20	89:8
tribe 2:4 4:5 5:12	<b>true</b> 68:10 97:5	undo 82:20	voice 57:17
9:22,23 15:4 25:4,7	101:6,12	unfortunately 71:1	voluntary 44:5 49:3
25:8 27:6 29:11	truly 20:16 45:16	united 88:2	voluntary 44.549.5 volunteers 97:25
30:3 31:8 32:17	58:6	universe 8:17	
34:7 36:25 39:22	<b>try</b> 13:9 47:25 56:3	unprecedented 58:7	W
40:1,18 41:4 42:23	61:5 72:8	unprofitable 83:15	wages 75:23
43:1 44:7 46:2	trying 7:9 38:14		wait 7:2
48:19 49:14 52:16	39:2,3 53:22 55:12		

# [walked - yesterday]

walked 53:16	weather 2:11 7:4	47:1 52:5,6 53:11	86:24 87:3,3,6
want 2:21 3:16 4:10	99:21	54:12 55:4,20 57:1	<b>yesterday</b> 11:5 15:6
5:11,19,23 6:16,21	web 10:19 19:17,19	57:6 58:11,23,24	45:10
9:3 14:1,19,24 15:2	19:21,21,23,25 23:4	65:6 66:4 70:8,10	45.10
16:5 17:1 18:8	23:7 32:5 34:15	71:16 72:13,19 79:9	
20:14,15 23:21 25:8	35:16 75:9	79:24 90:1,1 96:2	
26:5,9 32:25 34:18	webster 3:1 62:25	98:21 100:14	
36:3,4,7,8 39:11,16	68:18 73:17	workable 41:20	
40:22 43:4 46:25	wedded 51:12	worked 13:14 30:17	
40.22 43.4 40.23 51:5 54:3 55:21	week 23:1,11 35:11	40:8 54:20 56:22	
	38:15 60:24	73:10	
56:1 57:8 58:10,10 59:3,5 62:22 69:3	weeks 18:23		
,		<b>working</b> 5:3 9:9 14:10 17:6 20:14	
70:5,7 71:12 74:6	weigh 14:7 welcome 2:6 3:14,15		
75:3 76:6,9,25	4:25 5:5 15:2 16:1	26:18 32:17 39:4,15 40:6 45:8 46:15	
81:12,12,13,14,20 82:22 83:8 84:6	wells 40:25		
		47:11 54:19,24	
86:18 88:9 90:10,13	went 34:10 35:25	55:18 58:15 60:17	
91:8,9 95:4 97:13 97:14 98:6 99:7	36:4 55:1 59:18	61:14 63:17 64:7	
100:13	west 68:13	68:24 76:10,21 77:21 87:2 98:15	
wanted 3:24 4:15	wheel 69:23,23 whereof 101:14		
	whereor 101:14 whined 96:21	works 6:1,10 31:21 38:18 45:22 52:23	
37:18 46:17 47:17			
56:5,8,11 57:14	white 2:9 48:15 55:18	55:18 75:22 world 57:12 58:2	
59:10,22,25 88:4 96:5	wide 90:25	80:25	
wanting 51:17	willing 89:20	worth 4:7 72:16	
wanting 51.17 wants 68:14	willingness 58:5	writing 98:1	
warm 15:5	wind 17:16	written 22:1,1,3	
warmer 17:14	window 97:17	23:5 37:7,7 42:7	
warn 90:22	winds 93:23	48:20 62:17 63:23	
washington 4:17 5:9		97:12 98:1	
waste 44:15,15 48:2	wish 57:9 99:19	wrong 43:25 44:11	
68:4	100:18	0	
water 70:14 71:24	withdraw 29:17	X	
way 1:10 3:7 8:13	withdrawn 73:19	<b>x</b> 9:22	
12:4 22:7,21 23:14	witness 101:14	У	
25:19 27:21 37:18	woman 26:20	year 13:5 24:17,18	
45:4 47:13 55:21	<b>wonderful</b> 5:14 40:6	71:23 86:12 92:13	
59:23 60:13 77:22	wondering 53:8	92:14,15	
78:2,15 81:16 97:15	90:23	years 13:6,9 15:21	
97:17,19 98:7,23	word 81:6	17:7 25:4 28:10	
99:17	words 60:6,9	33:7 50:9 56:14	
ways 31:15 97:8,9	work 6:3,20 10:2	59:20 61:24 64:10	
we've 24:9,19 26:12	13:13,16 21:5 30:3	71:17,24 72:16	
28:22 43:9 60:20	33:3 36:2 45:17,20	80:21 83:17,23	