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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing
January 26, 2015
Cape Girardeau, Missouri
Volume 9

In The Matter Of Union Electric)
Company d/b/a Ameren Missouri's) File No.
Tariff To Increase Its Revenues) ER-2014-0258
For Electric Service)

KENARD JONES, Presiding
CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE
ROBERT KENNEY, Chairman
COMMISSIONER

REPORTED BY:
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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 JUDGE JONES: Okay. We have a number of
3 people signed up to testify on the record so let's go
4 ahead and get started. My name is Kenard Jones,
5 commission residing over this local public hearing
6 Chairman Robert Kenney. Let's go ahead first and take
7 names of appearances beginning with Ameren UE.

8 MR. MITTEN: Your Honor, appearing on behalf
9 of Union Electric Company doing business as Ameren,
10 Missouri is Russ Mitten, Brydon, Swearengen, and
11 England, 312 East Capital Avenue, Jefferson City,
12 Missouri.

13 JUDGE JONES: And for the established
14 commission?

15 MS. HAMPTON: Whitney Hampton appearing for
16 the staff, 200 Madison Street, Jefferson City,
17 Missouri.

18 JUDGE JONES: For the office of the public
19 counsel?

20 MR. POSTEN: Marc Posten appearing for the
21 office of the public counsel.

22 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. Those of you who
23 have signed up, I will call your name, and if you'll
24 come to the microphone at the front of the room, I
25 will swear you in as a witness, and then you can make

1 your statement. After you've made your statement,
2 pause for a moment to be sure we don't have questions
3 of you, and then you can -- you can have a seat.

4 Now, I'll remind you that the question and
5 answer session that you-all just finished was your
6 opportunity to ask questions. Of course if you have
7 other questions, you can pose those questions to
8 parties that are in the room but not of myself or the
9 chairman.

10 Mr. Chairman, would you like to make any
11 comments?

12 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Good afternoon, everybody.
13 I just want to take a moment to thank you for
14 attending this local public hearing. This is 1 of 12
15 or 13 total that I believe we're having throughout the
16 Ameren service territory.

17 So this is your opportunity to provide your
18 perspective and your thoughts with respect to Ameren's
19 request for a re-increase. So we take very seriously
20 public input and public participation, so we very much
21 appreciate you taking the time to be here on a Monday
22 afternoon.

23 There are five commissioners on the
24 commission, so four of our -- of the members of the
25 commission were unable to be here, but you shouldn't

1 read anything into that. As the judge indicated, the
2 court reporter is taking down all the testimony, and
3 there will be written record of every word that's
4 spoken here so that the other commissioners will have
5 an opportunity to read your testimony and take into
6 account your thoughts and the opinions that you
7 express as a part of our ultimate deliberations after
8 the evidentiary hearing is concluded.

9 So again, on behalf of the commission, thank
10 you again for taking the time to be here this
11 afternoon, and I'm very much looking forward to
12 hearing what you have to share with us.

13 JUDGE JONES: Let's jump right in. First
14 listed is Representative Don Rone. Step forward, sir.

15 Will you please raise your right hand?

16 The witness, MR. DON RONE, after first
17 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

18 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
19 present your testimony.

20 DON RONE: Good afternoon. My name is Don
21 Rone, and I have the privilege to represent the good
22 people of New Madrid, Mississippi, Pemiscot --

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't hear him.

24 DON RONE: Can you hear me now?

25 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: It's not turned on.

1 DON RONE: Don't ask me how to do that. How
2 about now? Is that better?

3 JUDGE JONES: Yes, sir. Thank you.

4 DON RONE: I'll just start over. Okay?

5 JUDGE JONES: That's fine.

6 DON RONE: Good afternoon. My name is Don
7 Rone, and I represent the good people of New Madrid,
8 Pemiscot, Mississippi, and Scott County in the
9 Missouri House of Representatives.

10 I'm here today to support a rate reduction
11 for Noranda Aluminum Plant.

12 Just over a 100 years ago, my predecessors in
13 the Missouri legislature created a public service
14 commission to serve one purpose, and that purpose was
15 to promote the public welfare. Last week I had the
16 opportunity to hear the governor's state of the state
17 address which had creating and keeping quality jobs as
18 a key virtue.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't hear him.

20 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: We lost the mic again.

21 DON RONE: How about now? Thank you. How
22 about now? Go ahead?

23 JUDGE JONES: Yes, please.

24 DON RONE: Last week I had the opportunity to
25 hear the governor's state of the state address which

1 had creating and keeping quality jobs as a key thing.
2 I know firsthand the leaders in the Missouri
3 legislature are committed to growing Missouri's
4 workforce.

5 In Missouri, promoting the public welfare
6 means creating and maintaining quality jobs. For many
7 families in southeast Missouri, these quality jobs,
8 critical to our public welfare, are found at Noranda
9 Aluminum Plant. In this area, long challenged with
10 persistent poverty, Noranda provides 900 quality good
11 paying jobs.

12 I'm certain you will hear from local mayors
13 about the critically economic impact that Noranda jobs
14 has on our small communities. As a former mayor, I
15 would echo their concerns.

16 I'm certain you will hear from our county
17 officials about the important role Noranda plays in
18 making our county budgets meet. As a former county
19 official, I share those concerns.

20 But most importantly, you will hear from the
21 families of these employed at Noranda about their
22 quality of life and concerns they have over the future
23 of their jobs. This is the public whose welfare is at
24 core of the public service commission duty to serve.

25 Commissioners, over a 100 years ago, your

1 predecessors on the public service commission were
2 granted the power and responsibility to be literally
3 construed with the view of the public welfare. Now
4 over a 100 years later, the public in the Bootheel and
5 the neighboring counties are counting on this rate
6 reduction to provide for our welfare.

7 And I want to thank you for allowing me to
8 speak before you this afternoon. If there's any
9 questions, I'll be glad to --

10 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: I don't have any questions.
11 Thanks for the timing to [inaudible]. We appreciate
12 you.

13 DON RONE: Thank you, sir.

14 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

15 Next listed is Representative Andrew
16 McDaniel.

17 The witness, MR. ANDREW MCDANIEL, after first
18 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

19 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
20 proceed.

21 ANDREW MCDANIEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
22 for allowing me this opportunity to speak at this
23 public hearing. I'm Andrew McDaniel, the state
24 representative for District 150.

25 When I ran for this office, I was committed

1 to bringing jobs to this state, not losing them. I
2 will do whatever it takes to keep [inaudible] jobs
3 here in our great state.

4 To be honest, Mr. Chairman, the Bootheel
5 doesn't have enough jobs as it is. I'm tired of
6 watching our Missouri jobs travel outside of the state
7 for employment. If you're not familiar with my
8 district, I represent Pemiscot and Dunklin, the
9 southern portion of the Bootheel.

10 Noranda makes up about 900 jobs available.
11 Of those 900 jobs, 80 families in my district rely on
12 them. Let's keep Missouri's workforce strong. As one
13 of the largest private employers in the southeast
14 Missouri area, Noranda provides 350 million dollars in
15 economic benefits to the state. I urge the commission
16 to lower Noranda's rate within the Ameren rate case.

17 Mr. Chairman, this has gone on long enough.
18 When are we going to say enough is enough and have
19 this issue resolved? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

21 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: I don't have any questions.
22 Thank you, Representative, for being here.

23 JUDGE JONES: Next listed is
24 Representative -- I believe it's Tila Hubrecht. Did I
25 pronounce your first name correctly?

1 TILA HUBRECHT: Close enough. I'm Tila
2 Hubrecht.

3 JUDGE JONES: Tila Hubrecht? Okay, thank
4 you.

5 TILA HUBRECHT: I answer to any variation.

6 JUDGE JONES: Will you raise your right hand,
7 please?

8 The witness, MS. TILA HUBRECHT, after first
9 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

10 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

11 TILA HUBRECHT: I am from -- I am the State
12 Representative from the 151st District, which is
13 Stoddard --

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I can't hear her.

15 TILA HUBRECHT: How about if I just hold this
16 a little bit closer. Is that better? I am the state
17 representative from the 151st District, which is all
18 of Stoddard County and the western portion of Scott
19 County. You'll in fact be in my district, my
20 hometown, later this evening in Dexter, but I'm
21 required to be in Jefferson City, so I wanted to speak
22 here, and I appreciate that.

23 I'm very concerned about the utility rate
24 issues that we are having recently in the southeast
25 Missouri area. As you are aware, southeast Missouri

1 area is struggling financially. Our families, our
2 senior citizens, we're just having a hard go of it.

3 The concerns that I have are electricity
4 rates have been increased in the past, even when
5 Ameren has reportedly seen profits beyond what is
6 allowed and no reimbursement of the overages has been
7 sent to anyone in my area that I know.

8 The increase in electricity rates has caused
9 an unnecessary financial burden on families in the
10 southeast Missouri area. When you have this increased
11 burden, you know what usually comes into the family;
12 strains with the marriage, strains with the kids, and
13 we need to support the families.

14 The situation between Noranda and Ameren has
15 also caused an increased strain on the families in
16 southeast Missouri families. Families are now worried
17 about are they going to be able to keep their jobs or
18 is their job going to go away, and if it does, what
19 happens.

20 Noranda is a major employer as you have
21 heard. And the loss of Noranda, just in my county
22 alone, Stoddard County, would cause an estimated \$3
23 million dollars loss in just the first year, not
24 counting what it would -- what it would cost in
25 subsequent years.

1 So as you can see, if Noranda or any of our
2 other major employers choose to leave because of rate
3 increase, it would devastate the southeast Missouri.
4 So when I ask you to please look at the -- what is
5 best for the individual customer.

6 Competition is important to any business to
7 keep prices in check, and my concern is with this
8 regulated monopoly, as it has been put, that the
9 customers are being lost in the race for the profits.
10 And our customers are not only just individuals but
11 they are also businesses which benefit the
12 individuals.

13 So I ask you to please look at what is best
14 for the individual customers and the individual
15 businesses and help our southeast Missouri to not have
16 it any harder than what we already do have it.

17 So I thank you, and I have a written
18 statement if you'd like that for your records.

19 JUDGE JONES: Is the written statement what
20 you just said?

21 TILA HUBRECHT: Yes, sir.

22 JUDGE JONES: Well, it'll be in the record.

23 TILA HUBRECHT: Okay. Thank you so much.

24 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Representative.

1 JUDGE JONES: Next is a former state
2 representative, Steve Hodges.

3 The witness, MR. STEVE HODGES, after first
4 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

5 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
6 proceed.

7 STEVE HODGES: Thank you very much. First of
8 all, thank you for the opportunity to be here today
9 along with the other folks.

10 I want to speak just briefly from two
11 perspectives. We've talked about Noranda, which is
12 one of my interests. The other interest is the people
13 that live in my district, my former district.

14 I was a businessman in East Prairie, Missouri
15 for over 40 years prior to being elected to the House
16 in 2006. So I kind of looked at this from both sides.
17 Southeast Missouri, their economy is twofold,
18 agriculture and Noranda Aluminum.

19 Now, we all know that we're the ag center of
20 the State of Missouri. Very rich in corn, soybeans,
21 wheat, cotton, and some people are aware that we do
22 grow rice here. But when Noranda Aluminum was being
23 built in the '60s, I was in high school, and I saw the
24 impact that construction had on the economy and our
25 neighbor -- in our neighboring towns and in my

1 hometown of East Prairie.

2 When they went into production I think in
3 1969, it has done nothing but grow. People came into
4 my grocery store that were employees of Noranda.
5 People came into my grocery store that were senior
6 citizens and low income. This is one of the poorest
7 areas in the state, the Bootheel and the congressional
8 district.

9 And I think it's very important that we
10 consider these things when we make this decision on
11 the rate increase that is being proposed by Ameren.
12 And I'd like to ask that you take all of those things
13 in consideration.

14 I'll tell you one quick story that happened
15 last night at my church. Two retired teachers, and I
16 started telling them I was coming up here today to
17 testify. And I said, you know, there's a possibility
18 that Noranda may vacate if this rate increase goes
19 through. And she told me, she said, well, you know,
20 Eddie and I both have Ameren stock, but she said, we
21 can't afford to lose Noranda.

22 Thank you so much for allowing me to appear.

23 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, sir.

24 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

25 Next listed is Jason Schrumpt. Did I

1 pronounce your name correctly?

2 JASON SCHRUMPT: Close enough. Schrumpt.

3 JUDGE JONES: Can you raise your right hand?

4 The witness, MR. JASON SCHRUMPT, after first
5 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

6 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
7 proceed.

8 JASON SCHRUMPT: Thank you, Chairman, for
9 allowing me to proceed with my testimony today. My
10 name is Jason Schrumpt. I'm the president --

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can't hear.

12 JASON SCHRUMPT: I'm the president and CEO of
13 Missouri Delta Medical Center, a 144 bed hospital in
14 Sikeston. We have a workforce of over 750 full-time
15 equivalents and an operating budget of \$90 million and
16 a payroll budget of \$44 million.

17 Noranda provides jobs for 930 men and women
18 of southeast Missouri, providing them and 2,070 family
19 members with good health insurance. These jobs and
20 benefits are provided through direct employment. They
21 don't include the jobs and the benefits induced
22 indirectly by the presence of Noranda.

23 One economic study that I found estimated a
24 multiplier of 3.3 indirect jobs for every aluminum
25 worker. This suggests the total employment impact of

1 Noranda to be around 4,000 jobs and many more with
2 solid health insurance in and around the Bootheel, a
3 region that we all know needs that level of economic
4 boost and health benefits.

5 These parallel support industries range from
6 aluminum recyclers, barge operators, to the Super 8
7 Hotel and Mom and Pop's Barbecue in [inaudible], to my
8 hospital, Missouri Delta Medical Center, just 30 miles
9 up Highway 61 from the plant.

10 Last year, 94 percent of my patients came
11 from the four county region around Noranda plant; New
12 Madrid, Mississippi, Scott, and Stoddard counties.
13 According to the latest data from the census bureau,
14 17 percent of the non-elderly population in these
15 counties are un-insured.

16 As a benchmark, this is 7 percent higher than
17 the rest of the state. To conservatively estimate
18 that 6,000 workers and their families will lose jobs
19 and lose health insurance with Noranda means that the
20 un-insured rate in the four county region would rise
21 to 24.2 percent, a 43 percent increase.

22 Unemployment and un-insured people have
23 [inaudible] outcomes. Job loss reduces wages which
24 results in poor mental and physical health resulting
25 in higher mortality rates. Research has also shown

1 that parental job loss has a negative impact on their
2 children's educational attainment, which follows their
3 future earnings and the cycle repeats itself. Mental
4 illness in particular -- particularly is hard when
5 people lose their job and insurance benefits. They
6 are twice as likely to be treated for depression
7 compared to individuals with jobs and this
8 relationship with the duration of unemployment.

9 People unemployed for 27 or more weeks, which
10 is considered by the bureau's labor of statistics to
11 be long-term unemployment, are three times as likely
12 to be treated for depression. Last year, Missouri
13 Delta treated over 800 people for psychological
14 disorders or substance abuse. Statewide the number of
15 emergency room visits for these conditions has
16 increased 55 percent over the last 10 years. For
17 un-insured patients, we've seen a 123 percent
18 increase, more than double, in the last 10 years.

19 Aside from the implications for the mental
20 and physical health and the residents over the four
21 country region, this would also adversely impact the
22 financial health of my hospital. Un-insured patients
23 frequently turn to hospitals for care regardless of
24 the severity of the condition because they have no
25 other outlets for primary care and hospitals are

1 required by law to treat all patients regardless of
2 their ability to pay. This aspect of our health care
3 system leads to all hospitals absorbing high levels of
4 bad debt or providing care at no cost for the
5 un-insured patient.

6 Last year, Missouri Delta Medical Center
7 provided nearly \$12 million dollars worth of
8 uncompensated care for un-insured patient in our
9 community. We also operated on a negative 0.4 percent
10 margin. Because of this tremendous physical pressure
11 facing hospitals today, especially states like ours
12 who have chosen to pass on Medicaid reform, the
13 Missouri Hospital Association conducts annual
14 financial stress tests for acute care hospitals in the
15 state.

16 This test -- the test looks at financial
17 indicators like uncompensated care, operating margin,
18 any reimbursement rate reductions from policies and
19 pair mix. The pair mix indicator is taken as a ratio
20 of government and un-insured patient revenue compared
21 to commercially insured patient revenue. The higher
22 the ratio, the more stressed the hospital becomes.
23 This is because government payers reimburse hospitals
24 at or below cost.

25 As I mentioned, in-unsured revenues typically

1 go uncollected. Commercial insurances are the best
2 for hospitals bottom-line because they reverse
3 hospitals at or above cost.

4 Last year, out of 113 acute care hospitals,
5 Missouri Delta Medical Center was the 23rd most
6 stressed in the state. Estimated the impact -- excuse
7 me, of losing 6,000 commercial insurance policy
8 holders in our region will remove my hospital from the
9 23rd to the 12th most stressed hospital in the state.

10 Last year, my pair mix ratio was \$3.22. We
11 provided \$3.22 of care to un-insured and government
12 paid patients for every dollar of commercial pay. We
13 estimate that losing Noranda would move our pair mix
14 ratio to nearly \$4 to \$1 with just under \$17 million
15 of uncompensated care that I'm not sure we could
16 absorb. For Missouri Delta and other parallel
17 industries in our region, this would not be
18 sustainable.

19 Missourians have already lost two rural
20 hospitals in the last six months due to the financial
21 stress. [Inaudible] was one of them. They ranked
22 tenth highest in Missouri Hospital Association's
23 stress test last year.

24 I can't speak for other industries in our
25 area that depend on Noranda or how large the actual

1 ripple effect would be, but I'm responsible for over
2 750 full-time equivalents in Missouri Delta, and
3 unhealthy for Noranda would be unhealthy for
4 businesses throughout the region.

5 More importantly, the loss of high paying
6 jobs and good health insurance would be unhealthy for
7 the community as a whole.

8 Thank you for your time and your thoughtful
9 consideration in the rate reduction request.

10 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: No questions. Thanks for
11 being here.

12 JUDGE JONES: Next listed is Scott Matthews.

13 The witness, MR. SCOTT MATTHEWS, after first
14 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
16 proceed.

17 SCOTT MATTHEWS: Thank you. Judge Jones,
18 ladies and gentlemen of the public service commission,
19 as a lifelong member of the Sikeston, Missouri
20 business community, I've been asked by Noranda to give
21 my personal perspectives as to the importance of
22 Noranda to Sikeston and the surrounding area.

23 While Sikeston is the largest community in
24 Noranda's local sphere of influence, my comments today
25 can also be reflective of thoughts shared by so many

1 others in similar locals.

2 In my line of work, it's been my personal
3 goal in life to see how many of our own young people
4 we can attract back into our communities. These towns
5 and these people are the future of our cities. Since
6 the late '60s, Noranda has been the catalyst to make
7 that happen.

8 My perspective today is somewhat unique and
9 that through my work and my community involvement,
10 I've seen Noranda issues from many different angles.

11 As a retired 33 year member of the board of
12 directors of a local bank, I know firsthand how
13 Noranda is directly responsible for the lifestyles of
14 so many folks both in Sikeston and even across state
15 lines.

16 As a former chairman of the Sikeston board of
17 municipal utilities, I'm keenly aware of how electric
18 rates can positively and negatively influence the
19 development and growth of the business and residential
20 community served by an efficiently run electrical
21 service.

22 As a past chairman of the board of the local
23 hospital in Sikeston, Sikeston's largest employer, I
24 can tell you the importance of commercial paying
25 patients to the survival of small community hospitals.

1 As a former board member of the local YMCA, I
2 know firsthand how Noranda impacts quality of life
3 issues in the Sikeston area by allowing our community
4 to be able to provide such a wide range of individual
5 and family growth opportunities.

6 As a donor of the property of the new Three
7 Rivers College academic campus in Sikeston and a
8 member of the board of the Three Rivers endowment
9 trust, I'm well positioned to appreciate the value of
10 an affordable centrally located post-secondary
11 education to an industrial work force.

12 As a developer of the first major [inaudible]
13 district in Sikeston, I enjoy firsthand knowledge of
14 the difficulties of attracting and maintaining larger
15 retail shopping opportunities for area residents.

16 As the developer of a 400 lot residential
17 subdivision, I know how crucial Noranda's payrolls are
18 in providing opportunities for families to own their
19 own homes, which is the fundamental backbone of any
20 city or town.

21 As a commercial real estate developer, I know
22 firsthand how important Noranda has been to the
23 approximately 45 different retail establishments my
24 father and I located in Sikeston since my return from
25 college in 1973.

1 We know that the success of any community is
2 built on a many legged platform. Educated both free
3 and post-secondary with specialized job training,
4 residential, especially single family dwellings for --
5 sorry, sustained growth. Retail opportunities to help
6 pay the sales taxes that drive community services and
7 police and fire protection. First class medical
8 facilities with the medical professionals to staff
9 them. And most important, employment opportunities
10 for the citizenry.

11 All these components mentioned have to be in
12 place to make a plan fall together, but make no
13 mistake, the single most important component is that
14 of job opportunity. Without the continued presence of
15 Noranda, southeast Missouri would be just another
16 dwindling farm community with no future whatsoever.

17 Sir, I am unaffiliated with Noranda in any
18 matter. However, it is my plea that any consideration
19 of a rate increase for Noranda's electricity simply
20 must take these points into consideration. And all
21 Noranda sees is an ROI for it's stockholders. From my
22 perspective, all I see are communities and lives and
23 ancillary businesses and schools and hospitals and I
24 envision the incredible negative impact such rate
25 increase could wreak so many effective private

1 citizens.

2 I'm categorically and firmly to a rate
3 increase in Noranda's electricity at this time. Thank
4 you for your consideration of my [inaudible].

5 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

6 SCOTT MATTHEWS: Any questions?

7 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: No questions. Thanks, Mr.
8 Matthews. Thank you for being here.

9 JUDGE JONES: Next listed is Ed Barnes.

10 The witness, MR. ED BARNES, after first
11 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

12 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
13 proceed.

14 ED BARNES: My name is Ed Barnes, and I
15 worked at Noranda for almost 39 years, actually
16 started in 1975. And prior to working at Noranda, I
17 worked at the federal mobile chicken yard and I owned
18 a farm.

19 Before I got called to work, I had worked in
20 the cotton fields. And so I know what it's like to
21 chop cotton, I know what it's like to pick cotton, to
22 pick strawberries. And before me, all of my sisters,
23 five of them, they all left southeast Missouri.

24 Fortunately for me, I got a call for Noranda,
25 and I can tell you that it was a wonderful place to

1 work. It was hard. It was hot. But for 39 years, I
2 got a paycheck and not one of them bounced, and it was
3 a pretty good paycheck.

4 I was able to send my kids to college. I was
5 able to buy a home. And my mother is 90 years old,
6 and I've been able to help her. And I retired last
7 year, and I'm concerned about my retirement. And the
8 reason I'm so concerned is because in 1999, my wife
9 who worked at Fleming Foods, that company went
10 bankrupt, and she lost half her retirement money.

11 And so I ask this commission to consider by
12 raising Noranda rates what that would do to southeast
13 Missouri and to people like me and a lot more like me
14 that have the same situation that I have. Thank you.

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Noranda.

17 JUDGE JONES: Next is Terry -- I believe it's
18 Swinger. Did I pronounce your last name correctly?

19 TERRY SWINGER: Yes, sir, you did.

20 The witness, MR. TERRY SWINGER, after first
21 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
23 proceed.

24 TERRY SWINGER: Thank you, Judge.

25 Mr. Chairman, my name is Terry Swinger, and southeast

1 Missouri has been my home all my life. I grew up in
2 Stoddard County and after attending the University of
3 Missouri in Southern Columbia, I moved to Pemiscot
4 County. And two weeks from tomorrow, I will have
5 practiced optometry in Caruthersville for 50 years.
6 And it's been a great place to live and work and raise
7 my family.

8 I had the privilege of representing Pemiscot
9 County and parts of New Madrid and [inaudible] County
10 in the Missouri legislature from 2004 through 2012,
11 and I'm currently the collector of revenue in Pemiscot
12 County. So I'm keenly aware of the economic
13 challenges we've faced. There are not enough jobs in
14 our area, and the many that we have do not pay a
15 living wage.

16 When I was first elected to the legislature,
17 I went along with other newly elected representatives
18 on a state -- a tour of the state. And when we toured
19 southwest Missouri, it was stated that one out of
20 every four new jobs in Missouri that were created were
21 created in Springfield.

22 And then we traveled down to Branson and we
23 went past Ozark, and they said within two decades
24 Ozark had grown from 3,000 to 10,000 people.

25 And then when we got to Branson, they said

1 one out of every six hotel rooms that were being built
2 in the State of Missouri were being built in Branson.

3 And I'm pleased that the southwest Missouri
4 has had such tremendous growth, but that's not been
5 the case in other places. For instance, in Pemiscot
6 County where I live, the population was 12,115 in
7 1900. Well, 1950, it had grown to 45,624, and today
8 that population is 18,000. And I know how hard it is
9 to create jobs. What makes it so important is to
10 retain the jobs that we have now. I believe the
11 retention of this -- of these jobs is critical to the
12 fragile economic health of our area.

13 There's a lot of documented facts about
14 Noranda. Nearly \$100 million annual payroll,
15 \$350 million annual impact on our state and our area,
16 and those families that depend on Noranda for a
17 living.

18 And I know personally what Noranda has been
19 to our optometric practice. I'd been a practice less
20 then ten years when the plant was built in New Madrid,
21 and this entity has always had a positive impact on
22 our practice. The company paid our full fee for the
23 first several years.

24 A little over 20 years ago, we bought an
25 additional practice in [inaudible], Missouri and an

1 additional practice in Kennett, Missouri, and we are
2 now serving second and third generation employees from
3 this very important viable plant in our area.

4 I've read where Noranda pays \$160 million a
5 year, and that's a \$44 million a year increase since
6 2008. That percentage increase in any business would
7 be unsustainable. I'm not here to degrade or talk
8 negative about Ameren. On the contrary, when we had
9 the devastating tornado in Caruthersville in 2006,
10 Ameren did an exemplary job. Many of the employees
11 worked 18 hours a day basically rebuilding the system
12 that was destroyed in our town.

13 And then in 2009, we had the crippling ice
14 storm, and it was nothing short of amazing what
15 Noranda did. It looked like a military operation and
16 an entire system that had taken 70-something years to
17 build was taken down in two or three days and they put
18 it back up in 18 days, not only the Noranda system but
19 they helped with the electric co-op's, too.

20 Noranda has a power issue. It's just
21 simply -- it's just that simple. 30 years ago there
22 were 30 smelters in the United States and now there's
23 nine, and Noranda pays the second highest utility rate
24 of any of those smelters. You have an opportunity to
25 save these plant -- this plant and these jobs in an

1 area of the state that cannot afford the alternative.

2 Policymakers would bend over backwards to
3 attract an industry to any part of our state that
4 would have a \$350 million impact, employee 900 people
5 a year with nearly \$100 million payroll. And I'll bet
6 our good corporate partner, Ameren Missouri would help
7 attract a plant that would add an additional \$160
8 million income. I think they would help us attract an
9 industry like that.

10 Well, Commissioners, that industry is here.
11 It's much more efficient to retain employers when
12 infrastructure's already in place. We have an
13 opportunity, a wonderful opportunity, to retain these
14 important jobs and keep this economic driver that
15 floats more economic ships in our area than any other.

16 Thank you for the privilege of letting me
17 make this presentation today. I'm very familiar with
18 the past record of every member on the commission, Mr.
19 Chairman. I know most of the -- most of them, and I
20 know that you and the rest of the commissioners will
21 make the right decision that will help our state and
22 our part of the state. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
23 Thank you, Judge.

24 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thanks for being here.

25 TERRY SWINGER: Thank you, sir.

1 JUDGE JONES: Next is Charles Kimber.

2 The witness, MR. CHARLES KIMBER, after first
3 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

5 CHARLES KIMBER: Yes. My name is Charles
6 Kimber. I'm a process engineer at Noranda, and I'm
7 here and I want to talk in support of the families of
8 the individuals in this -- in this community and the
9 Sikeston community and those that work at Noranda.

10 I've got 30 years plus in the aluminum
11 industry. Now, only nine of them have been in this
12 area. Six years in Sikeston -- excuse me, in New
13 Madrid and a couple, two and a half years, in the
14 Century plant in Kentucky. The rest of my experience
15 had been in the northwest where I worked in three
16 smelters.

17 I worked in the Tacoma smelter and in two
18 smelters in southern Washington, Goldendale smelter
19 and the Dallas smelter. Prior to the two -- and the
20 last two smelters I worked in in the northwest were
21 the Goldendale smelter and the Dallas smelter, and I
22 was the [inaudible] manager over those two smelters.
23 So I knew a lot of the people that worked in both
24 those smelters.

25 The -- to kind of give you just a little bit

1 of background, the Dallas smelter, it was built by the
2 Harvey brothers. They had a rolling mill in Torrance,
3 California, and they saw an opportunity where there
4 was an abundance of inexpensive electrical power in
5 the northwest. It was a dam, actually right there at
6 the [inaudible]. So they were able to build a plant
7 in the -- an aluminum smelter.

8 After about two years, there were -- the
9 community wasn't too happy with the smelter. Yes, it
10 was -- it was right on the river. They thought it was
11 an eyesore. They didn't think it was contributing to
12 the community. So what the Harvey brothers did, for a
13 couple of pay periods, they paid their employees in
14 silver dollars. It made a big difference. They were
15 able to see the restaurants, the gas stations, the
16 banks, the supermarkets, where the dollars came, how
17 the smelter helped that community, because it
18 supported all of that infrastructure.

19 In the Goldendale smelter, it has a history
20 similar to the New Madrid smelter. The first two
21 lines in that smelter were started in the late '60s,
22 early '70s, similar to New Madrid. In the early
23 1980s, they started another new line, similar to New
24 Madrid. They also had three operating lines.

25 It was around 700 people that were employed

1 in that Goldendale smelter. And if you include those
2 that were indirectly supported by the smelter, almost
3 a seventh of the jobs in Klickitat County, Washington,
4 were directly -- were related to that smelter when
5 that smelter was in operation. They paid over 18 and
6 a half million dollars in taxes. This was back in
7 early 2000.

8 Power prices went up and the plant could not
9 maintain profitability with the power rates. The
10 Dallas plant went down first. The Goldendale smelter,
11 they tried to hang on. We reduced the output to less
12 than 10 percent in an effort to try to keep that plant
13 running, possibly getting some sort of rate decrease
14 so we could bring the plant back. It couldn't happen.
15 It went down.

16 My family, I have a daughter -- two daughters
17 and two son-in-laws. One of them lived two blocks
18 from me, the other one lived across the river about
19 six miles. My son-in-law, one son-in-law, he was a
20 mortgage broker. When the plant started going down,
21 he could not support his family. He had to move. He
22 moved clear back to Ohio with his other family
23 because -- to support that family.

24 My other son-in-law, he became a registered
25 nurse. Knowing that he wanted to improve in his life,

1 he went to Idaho to become -- to get a bachelor's
2 degree. He looked to going back to Dallas, Oregon but
3 saw that there was no future there. There was no way
4 that he could support his family and improve his --
5 his life by going back to that community. I was able
6 to stay there for a while because we had hoped that
7 that plant could come back.

8 One of the worse things that I saw while
9 working there was the steel and the plant turn red.
10 The plant got cold. It rusted. You could see red on
11 the structure of that plant. It was cold.

12 Here not too long ago, the New Madrid
13 facility faced the same thing during the ice storm.
14 We lost two lines. I remember walking in the plant
15 the day those lines were down, and I could see right
16 then and there, families being broken up, families
17 having to move someplace else to find a job. It's all
18 about families.

19 I thank you for the opportunity that I've had
20 to talk to you. It's families. Families, families,
21 families. That's what we need to think about.

22 And what I would like to leave, if I may,
23 this is a 2000 -- August 2000 from a Washington State
24 aluminum industry, an impact study.

25 JUDGE JONES: Do you want that to be a part

1 of the record here today?

2 CHARLES KIMBER: Yes, I would.

3 JUDGE JONES: Would you do me a favor and
4 hand that to the table of attorneys there and have
5 them look that over?

6 CHARLES KIMBER: Yes, I will.

7 JUDGE JONES: While we continue with the rest
8 of you here, so we can consider entering it into the
9 record.

10 CHARLES KIMBER: Thank you.

11 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

12 CHARLES KIMBER: Any questions.

13 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: No, thanks, Mr. Kimber.
14 Thanks for being here.

15 JUDGE JONES: And for the record, we will
16 return to the admission of that document after we go
17 through some more testimony here.

18 Next listed is -- is it Harvey or Harry
19 Cooper?

20 HARVEY COOPER: Good morning.

21 JUDGE JONES: Can you raise your right hand?

22 The witness, MR. HARVEY COOPER, after first
23 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

24 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. And is your
25 first name Harvey or Harry?

1 HARVEY COOPER: Harvey.

2 JUDGE JONES: And is it -- it is Cooper?

3 HARVEY COOPER: Cooper.

4 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Thank you, sir. You may
5 proceed.

6 HARVEY COOPER: Thank you. I appreciate you
7 allowing me to come and speak. I'm the executive
8 director of Community Shelter Workshop for the
9 developed mentally challenged people in three
10 counties, Scott, New Madrid, and Mississippi County.

11 You know, in 1970, I came out of the Navy
12 back to southeast Missouri, and that was about the
13 time Noranda opened up. And you know, I thought prior
14 to that time, all we had was cotton fields, you know,
15 soybeans, didn't -- I don't think we even grew rice
16 back then.

17 But what we see today -- you know, I raised
18 my family here and presently I have an extended family
19 of over 100, and those are the challenged people that
20 I work with every day. Now, these people, if you ask
21 them where they work, they're probably going to tell
22 you they work for Noranda, because that's who we do
23 jobs for.

24 And that -- in the past 30 years that we have
25 worked for Noranda, you know, we have -- we have sent

1 Noranda over \$10 million in product to their plant.
2 Now, that \$10 million went back to pay salaries for
3 these challenged individuals, it kept the doors open
4 at the workshop for three counties to be affiliated
5 with, but it also provided 100s of thousands of
6 dollars for materials that we bought from saw mills
7 and places like that that all was part of the
8 community and all benefited from Noranda.

9 You know, we -- the public service commission
10 presently has an opportunity, and that opportunity is
11 either to say yes or no. If they say yes to an
12 increase or to -- or no to a reduction, they can be
13 forcing us right back into that cotton field
14 mentality, and we don't want that.

15 You know, New Madrid County, Mississippi
16 County, Scott County, you know, we've all seen the way
17 that Noranda has improved the economy in our area.
18 And you know, we're just so close to being forced into
19 Arkansas, and we -- and there's nothing wrong with
20 Arkansas, I was born there, but we don't need to push
21 a depressed area which we live in in the Bootheel back
22 even further, and that's what I'm saying.

23 I think that it's very important that we
24 realize that -- you know, I heard the comment made
25 earlier about we don't have a choice. It's like a

1 fish with a hook in it's mouth, you know, it's never
2 going to get rid of that hook. It's going to dangle
3 there until the cows come home, so to speak.

4 But -- and it's also important to realize
5 that -- you know, a comment was made about Ameren is a
6 regulated agency or company. There's a reason for
7 that. You know, five increases in six years and over
8 50 percent increases, somebody better be regulating
9 them.

10 And so, you know, that -- I appreciate you
11 letting me come and speak today, you know. I hope
12 that -- you know, the commission has an opportunity to
13 either stabilize this area, this community, and it
14 needs to be stabilized. I mean, it's just not
15 something that we can afford to lose, and so they need
16 to be thinking about that when they make a decision.
17 Thank you very much and I appreciate it.

18 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Cooper.
19 Thanks for being here.

20 JUDGE JONES: Have the attorneys had an
21 opportunity to look at the documents? Do we have any
22 objections to its admission to the record?

23 MR. MITTEN: No.

24 JUDGE JONES: Any concerns?

25 MR. MITTEN: Judge, I believe the content of

1 the documents are purely hearsay. It also deals with
2 Washington State, so I'm not sure what relevance it
3 has to this particular rate case at this particular
4 time, but Ameren doesn't object to its admission to
5 the record.

6 JUDGE JONES: Okay. When your concerns noted
7 then we will -- I'll mark that as Local Public Hearing
8 Exhibit 1 and admit it to the record.

9 MR. POSTEN: Judge, there was another sheet
10 that was tucked in here of USA primary smelters. I
11 didn't know if he intended this to be a part of it.
12 It doesn't appear to be part of this study, but maybe
13 it is.

14 JUDGE JONES: Mr. Kimber?

15 CHARLES KIMBER: I'm sorry about that. That
16 was just the aluminum smelters. You can either put it
17 in or I'll take it back. It doesn't matter.

18 MR. POSTEN: You can give it back to him.

19 JUDGE JONES: Next listed is Jon Gillespie.

20 The witness, MR. JON GILLESPIE, after first
21 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
23 proceed.

24 JON GILLESPIE: Number one, I am not employed
25 or paid by Noranda for being here. I was not asked by

1 Noranda to be here or speak on their behalf. We want
2 them to receive the energy savings they need to stay
3 open, and that's my primary objection to being here.

4 A note for Noranda's benefit is they've
5 receive their ISO9001 which proves they're in for the
6 long haul, they want to be the top of their class.
7 That's a huge undertaking. So that's -- to me, that's
8 hats off for Noranda for even attempting that.

9 Noranda has over 800 direct employees, I
10 would say at least that many indirect subcontractors,
11 Gillespien Powers being one of them. And when you
12 sub-tier that down, Noranda directly effects
13 approximately 1600 people. I'm sorry, 1600 families
14 nearly and with four to a family group, nearly 6500
15 people. This is only outlining one location, which
16 they have Huntington, Tennessee, Salisbury, North
17 Carolina, and Newport, Arkansas. And their sub-tier
18 contractors, this will have a much further devastating
19 effect.

20 To me, this is much more than a percentage
21 rate hike or reduction. This is about people's lives
22 and livelihoods, good people that deserve to be able
23 to support their families. We're talking family bread
24 winners here since 1969. Moms, dads, aunts and
25 uncles, these are taxpayers. They buy gasoline,

1 groceries, and they buy electric. Well, these jobs,
2 the electric ultimately is going to be reduced if they
3 close. This will have devastating and long lasting
4 effects throughout our region.

5 This one facility represents about 15 percent
6 of the US primary production. While other plants are
7 closing and production going off shores, taking our
8 jobs, our tax space. Off shore facilities don't need
9 or buy our electric or pay our taxes. Just something
10 to think about while doing your decision making.

11 Back to my point at interest. The company I
12 work with, Gillespien Powers, is a family run company
13 in St. Louis, Missouri. Noranda represents probably
14 10 percent of our sales over the last ten years.
15 Noranda represents income to about 50 families at our
16 company alone, reaching into Missouri, Iowa, Ohio,
17 Illinois, and Kentucky. Noranda's closing would
18 represent a financial hardship to Gillespien Powers
19 and our extended employees and subcontractors.

20 I thank the panel for considering all the
21 indirect effects that not granting this reduction has
22 on all of us in the Noranda sub-tier.

23 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Gillespie.
24 Thank you for taking the time to be here. What is the
25 ISO9001 that you refer to? What is that?

1 JON GILLESPIE: It's a standard operating
2 procedures. It's a quality control.

3 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thanks for your time.

4 JON GILLESPIE: Yes, sir. Thank you.

5 JUDGE JONES: Next is Michelle Reynolds.

6 The witness, MS. MICHELLE REYNOLDS, after
7 first having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

8 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, ma'am. You may
9 proceed.

10 MICHELLE REYNOLDS: I'm here today on behalf
11 of the Sikeston bootheel-area United Way Board and our
12 executive director who was unable to attend. We
13 represent over a dozen -- or we every year support
14 more than a dozen agencies in southeast Missouri. One
15 of them, the Delta Area [inaudible], we were the sole
16 source of support for them.

17 I can tell you right now that Noranda has
18 been huge in supporting the United Way for the past
19 several years. Typically they -- their contributions
20 through employee payroll represent about 25 percent of
21 the total campaign amounts that we bring in.

22 This year alone we have already seen a slight
23 decrease from the layoffs, and we know that if this --
24 if layoffs continue or if the smelter closes,
25 obviously that would be extremely devastating, not

1 only to the United Way but to all those agencies that
2 we do support.

3 We also realize the rollover effect of this.
4 It's not only the jobs provided by Noranda, the jobs
5 and other entities that are affected by Ameren, as
6 well as those that are supported by Noranda and may
7 close as a result.

8 We understand that the smelters do typic- --
9 do sometimes close because of the cost of electricity,
10 and we're here today -- I'm here on behalf of our
11 board to ask that you do consider a rate design that
12 gives Noranda an affordable electric rate and allows
13 the smelters to thrive for future generations. Thank
14 you.

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you. No questions.
17 Thanks for being here.

18 JUDGE JONES: Next is Vincent Berry.

19 The witness, MR. VINCENT BERRY, after first
20 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

21 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
22 proceed.

23 VINCENT BERRY: Before I begin, Your Honor, I
24 have five items I'd like to enter into the record to
25 document my testimony.

1 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Let's start with the
2 first one. Can you describe it for us?

3 VINCENT BERRY: First one is a -- is a graph
4 or it's a document showing the history of Ameren's
5 rate request over the past six year -- I'm sorry,
6 since 2006.

7 The second one is a Morning Star report
8 documenting the executive pay for Ameren executives
9 since 2009.

10 The third one is a graph showing the natural
11 gas cost nationwide. It's from 1998 until present.

12 The fourth one is a graph showing the cost of
13 low sulfur coal from 2001 to present.

14 And the fifth one is pages five through seven
15 of the 2013 Ameren investor's guide or investor's --
16 report to investors.

17 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Well, while you give
18 your testimony, will you hand those documents to the
19 table of attorneys so they can review them, please.
20 And you may proceed.

21 VINCENT BERRY: Thank you. I'd like to thank
22 the members of the public service commission for the
23 opportunity to offer testimony for proposed Ameren
24 \$264 million rate increase.

25 This represents the sixth rate increase for

1 Ameren since 2006. During that time, Ameren has
2 requested a total of \$1,862,100,000 in rate increases
3 and has been awarded a total of \$866,900,000 in
4 increases as well as several additional surcharges
5 that has been passed along to it's customers. During
6 this time, Ameren's revenue from business operation
7 has risen from \$2 billion to \$3 billion per year.

8 These are the facts. They're indisputable.
9 In June of last year, I appeared before this
10 commission to testify. I appear again today as I did
11 before to speak not as a Noranda employee, a proud
12 member of the United Steel workers, but as an elected
13 [inaudible] and a father of three. I plan to speak
14 frankly, and I ask for your indulgence in doing so.

15 The case boils down to a simple question of
16 how much is too much. Ameren's current rate increase
17 request would raise electric rates by an additional 10
18 percent for customers and an additional 14 percent for
19 Noranda Aluminum. Ameren has stated that the reason
20 for these rate increase is threefold; first due to
21 increase in fuel and delivery cost, next to the
22 recovery of energy cost from rebates from customers,
23 installed solar generation as well as infrastructure
24 improvements, and finally to increase outside
25 investment in Ameren and to raise the PSC allowable

1 return on equity from 9.8 to 10.4 percent.

2 First, the idea that Ameren needs more
3 additional funds for increased energy costs is
4 ludicrous. One only needs to look at local gas prices
5 to understand that energy costs are falling. In fact,
6 the US Energy Information Administration reports that
7 natural gas cost average is \$3.48 cents per million
8 BTU, down from a high of \$12.69 in June of 2008 with
9 ultra low sulfur coal prices have also fallen as shown
10 in the USEIA graph I provided for you.

11 In addition, Ameren already has a mechanism
12 in place to protect itself and recover 95 percent of
13 additional energy cost it incurs by way of the fuel
14 surcharge on every Ameren utility bill. In fact,
15 commission has ordered a reduction of the fuel
16 adjustment charge by an average of \$0.53 per fund.
17 This fact alone shows that the additional fuel cost
18 that Ameren is basing 50 percent of its rate request
19 on is not based in fact.

20 Ameren had asked for a rate increase to
21 offset anticipated cost for renewable energy
22 generation in rebates. However, the Ameren rebate
23 program was capped by a legislature at a total of
24 \$91.9 million which has already been expended. What
25 additional costs are there?

1 As reported by the St. Louis Post Dispatch on
2 05 May, 2014, "Ameren expects to be able to reach his
3 voter mandated 15 percent of total power outfits
4 through Ameren renewable energy plants and not for
5 paying customers for power from privately held solar
6 panel rates."

7 So again the question remains, what renewal
8 energy costs?

9 Finally, Ameren has requested rate increases
10 to cover additional returns on investment. The 2013
11 Ameren annual report on investors gives some insight
12 into Ameren's financial position as well as its
13 corporate philosophy. Ameren takes great pride in the
14 fact that it ranks in the top 25 percent of all
15 utilities in the country for dividends returned to
16 shareholders according to the Philadelphia Utility
17 Index.

18 From 2009 to 2013, Ameren's stock prices have
19 increased 57 percent while it has paid a total of \$1.7
20 billion in dividends. Ameren's executive compensation
21 has risen from \$11.3 million in 2009 to \$18.62 million
22 in 2013. In fact, 2013 executive compensation, the
23 last year available, rose 15.38 percent over 2012.
24 Martin Lyons, Jr., executive president and CFO of
25 Ameren, expects earnings per share to grow 7 to 10

1 percent compounded annually through 2018.

2 This anticipated increase in earnings must be
3 paid for somehow. Possibly it's the request Ameren
4 has put forward to allow profits margins from its
5 current 9.8 percent to be raised by the public service
6 commission to 10.4 percent. Even with the fact that
7 Ameren has over-earned reportedly for 33 consecutive
8 months, it has the audacity to ask for even more
9 profit. This puts profit over people, pure and
10 simple.

11 Finally, the Ameren rate proposal would cost
12 Missouri jobs. The PSCS had opportunities to protect
13 both Missouri electric customers and Missouri jobs by
14 simply considering the office of public counsel's
15 compromise proposal of August 2014. The OPC's sole
16 responsibility is to advocate with Missouri electric
17 consumer. With that in mind, why would the PSC deny a
18 request to simply hear the compromised deal?

19 The requested 14 percent rate increase
20 Noranda would face would cost an additional \$22
21 million per year. There are two irrefutable facts in
22 this case.

23 First, Missouri electric customers would be
24 worse off without Noranda aluminum using 10 percent of
25 Ameren's generated electricity. Ameren would be

1 forced to sell that unused electricity on the open
2 market at a substantially reduced price then what
3 Noranda would have paid.

4 Secondly, Noranda's current electricity rates
5 makes their long-term operation unsustainable and
6 threatens to bring economic collapse for the southeast
7 Missouri region with a loss of over \$350 million and
8 economic impact per year. Noranda currently pays the
9 second highest electricity rate of nine remaining
10 aluminum smelters in the United States. Aluminum
11 smelters close for one reason and one reason only,
12 high electricity rates.

13 Inaction from this commission will lead to
14 the name of New Madrid joining the list of closed
15 American smelters. Ormet, Goldendale, Frederick,
16 Ferndale. This is our bleak future without
17 compromise.

18 Gentlemen, I'm an elected official. I have
19 some limited experience in government, albeit on a
20 much smaller scale than what you have to deal with. I
21 understand that many of you feel that the issue of
22 compromised electric rates should be decided in the
23 Office of Economic Development or in the state
24 legislature.

25 However, the governor who appointed you and

1 the legislature that confirmed your appointment has
2 placed this decision in your care. It is not your
3 place to debate whether you should make the decision.
4 It is your place to decide.

5 Will you decide to back a corporation who
6 have over-earned allowable profits for 33 straight
7 months, who has the audacity to ask for more profit?
8 A corporation that asks Missourians to pay more while
9 it raises executive pay over 15 percent because as
10 former Ameren CEO Thomas Ross said, "It's what the
11 market will bear." Or will you back Missouri electric
12 consumers who have endured electric rates that have
13 risen 50 percent over five years? Will you back
14 Missouri jobs that provide the economic lifeline in
15 southeast Missouri?

16 In short, gentlemen, will you choose St.
17 Louis company profits over affordable electricity and
18 southeast Missouri jobs? The decision is yours.
19 Thank you.

20 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Mr. Berry. Can you
21 remain up here for a moment? The documents that
22 you-all have reviewed -- I'm speaking to the attorneys
23 for the record.

24 Are there any objections to those documents?

25 MR. MITTEN: Judge, Ameren Missouri has no

1 objection to three of the documents, the excerpt from
2 the company [inaudible] reporting stockholders, the
3 Morning Star report on executive compensation, and the
4 list of prior rate cases since 2007.

5 I do have some concerns about two of the
6 documents. One appears to have been taken off of the
7 Internet. It's a document that reports to show
8 thermal coal cap prices and simply identifies a
9 website, infomind.com as the source of that
10 information, and the other is a USEIA chart showing
11 natural gas prices. I don't think there's been proper
12 foundation or a basis for relevancy established for
13 those two exhibits.

14 That said, however, if they're being offered
15 for the very limited purpose of supplementing and
16 amplifying Mr. Berry's public testimony, we have no
17 objection on that basis.

18 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Mr. Mitten. Anyone
19 else? Are there five pages?

20 MR. MITTEN: There are more than five pages
21 but five separate exhibits, Judge.

22 JUDGE JONES: Okay. I'm not sure the order
23 that you had those in. Okay. I'm going -- I'm going
24 to mark these, and let's start over with the numbering
25 and labeling of the exhibits. The first exhibit,

1 let's call it CGLPH meaning Cape Girardeau Local
2 Public Hearing Exhibit 1. And these documents will
3 begin with CGLPH Exhibit 2, CGLPH Exhibits 3, 4, and
4 5.

5 (CGLPH Exhibits 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5 marked for
6 identification.)

7 JUDGE JONES: Next is Eric Phillips.

8 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Berry.

9 MR. POSTEN: Judge, I believe there were five
10 exhibits. I think you said 2, 3, 4, and 5.

11 JUDGE JONES: Oh, including the first.

12 MR. POSTEN: Well, I think there was five --
13 there was five in what he gave, right?

14 JUDGE JONES: This last one will be 6, and --
15 well, beginning with 2.

16 (CGLPH Exhibit Number 6 marked for
17 identification.)

18 MR. POSTEN: 2 through 6? All right.

19 JUDGE JONES: Right.

20 Can you raise your right hand, sir?

21 The witness, MR. ERIC PHILLIPS, after first
22 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

23 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

24 ERIC PHILLIPS: It's been said that you can
25 create true wealth three different ways: You can farm

1 it, you can mine it, you can manufacture it. At
2 Noranda, we manufacture aluminum.

3 What I like to impress on you today is the
4 importance of those manufacturing jobs not only to the
5 Bootheel of this part of the county but also to the
6 United States of America. My name is Eric Phillips.
7 I'm the technical manager at the New Madrid smelter.
8 This is my 35th year in the smelting business.

9 I started in a small plant in Rockdale, Texas
10 in 1980 working for Alcoa. Rockdale actually reminds
11 me a lot of the Bootheel, and I'll come back to that.
12 At the time Rockdale had the largest US smelter in
13 operation. As a country, we had 33 aluminum smelters.
14 We owned 36 percent of the world-wide aluminum
15 production capacity. 36 percent.

16 It was a fun time to be in the aluminum
17 business. We were spending a lot of capital. We were
18 thriving. We were making a lot of money. But late in
19 the 1980s and into the 1990s, things started to
20 change. Subsidized state owned enterprises such as
21 Russia and China started to flood the markets with
22 their products. Oil embargo aftereffects started to
23 creep in. The energy crisis came up. And aluminum
24 became a global commodity as can be purchased on the
25 London metal exchange.

1 We started to hear threats of shutdown at our
2 plant, and we had to come up with ways to cut cost in
3 order to get ourselves out of what was called and is
4 still called the worldwide cash cost curvage, which we
5 were in the top 25 percent, not a good place to be.

6 When you look at the price of aluminum and
7 what -- and the cost of aluminum, what goes into it,
8 it's apparent you can -- your two major components are
9 labor and power. You can only do so much with labor.
10 You have to have people to make the metal, and you
11 have a contract with your Union that you have to pay
12 certain wages. So you -- you -- you optimize your
13 labor as best you can and what you're left with is
14 rate relief. What you need is rate relief.

15 So at Rockdale, every week it seemed like we
16 would hear about the plant might shut down. We've got
17 to cut cost. But, you know, after 15 or so years or
18 10 years you hear that, pretty soon you stop hearing
19 it. You don't hear about it much and you don't
20 believe that anymore. It always happens to the other
21 guy.

22 So when I left Rockdale for my next
23 assignment, other US smelters started to close. You
24 recall I started with 33. Lake Charles, Louisiana,
25 closed. Point Comfort, Texas, closed. Scottsboro,

1 Alabama, closed. Chalmette, Louisiana, closed.
2 Corpus Christi, Texas, closed. Anderson County,
3 Texas, closed. Jones Mill, Arkansas, closed. Gulf
4 Springs, Arkansas, closed. Listerhill, Alabama,
5 closed. New Johnsonville, Tennessee, closed. We are
6 down to 23, and probably a direct 500 to 1,000
7 American jobs for each of those smelters that shut
8 down.

9 In 2000, I took a transfer to the east coast
10 to work at a plant in Frederick, Maryland called East
11 Alcoa. It was a new challenge for me because the
12 plant was on the bubble, and that was made clear to me
13 when I went there. It was probably one of Alcoa's
14 highest cost plants, and we knew if we didn't get the
15 cost of producing aluminum down that we would be shut
16 down.

17 So we worked hard to reduce our costs. We
18 introduced process efficiency improvements. We
19 restructured our jobs and downsized. We sourced
20 alternate materials. We contracted out things that we
21 could. And of course, we worked on rate relief with
22 allocating power on 350 megawatts that we used.

23 But in spite of all that, in spite of running
24 incredibly well, it wasn't enough. And on December
25 the 19th, 2005, the plant shut down. We had become

1 the other guy. 22 smelters remained. 600 employees
2 lost their jobs, down from the 1,000 that we probably
3 started with, but we [inaudible] 400 trying to get our
4 cost down.

5 Let me give you some statistics. The average
6 age of the employee that was let go was 45 years and
7 16 years of service. Only 190 employees thus were
8 eligible to draw their pensions, and maybe 20 or so
9 salary people went to other plants. So 390 of my
10 associates lost their jobs, their salaries, their
11 medical insurance, their dental insurance, their
12 livelihood. What were they supposed to do?

13 There were local businesses that said they
14 could hire them. Can-am Steel was one of those
15 businesses. Can-am Steel said they had specialized
16 jobs. They had five positions, two engineers, two
17 production workers, and a traffic controller. That
18 was it.

19 So as a member of the management team, I had
20 to stand at the gate, and I had to say goodbye to
21 those employees as they collected their personal
22 effects and walked out of the plant for the last time.
23 You know, you get -- you get so many emotions.
24 There's so much sadness. There's so much fear.
25 People don't know what they're going to do. Where are

1 they going to go work?

2 You hug. You talk about how you can't
3 believe it. You talk about how hard you worked. You
4 talk about how disappointed you are. But in the end,
5 you just didn't do it.

6 So I personally ran what was left of the
7 plant for two years. We harvested all we could, we
8 removed all the metal we could, we sold everything,
9 equipment machinery, that we could, we tried to
10 generate as much cash as we could. And then in 2007,
11 I was given my layoff. I had become the other guy.

12 Demolition followed. Once you shut it down,
13 they don't stay very long. Well, we weren't alone.
14 Tacoma, Washington, closed. Vida, Oregon, closed.
15 Longview, Washington closed. Vancouver, Washington,
16 closed. [Inaudible], Washington, closed. Goldendale,
17 Washington, closed. We are down to 15 from the
18 original list of 33. And another 5,000 or so direct
19 American jobs were lost.

20 Remember when I told you when I started
21 Rockdale how it was apparent that they would never
22 shut us down? Well, after my layoff in 2008, a
23 strange and awful thing happened. They finally shut
24 the Rockdale plant down. They had finally reached the
25 point where they could not be competitive. The people

1 in Rockdale had finally become the other guy.

2 We are down to 14 smelters. As I stated at
3 the beginning, Alcoa and Rockdale reminded me a lot of
4 the Bootheel. It's just a 3,000 person small town in
5 the middle of nowhere. It took an hour to go
6 anywheres, to make a big city. There were no other
7 major employers in Rockdale. It was just the smelter.
8 The smelter was Rockdale, and from it came a
9 [inaudible] share of the tax revenue.

10 When I go home now to visit my friends, I see
11 huge numbers of for sale signs in what used to be
12 exclusive neighborhoods. Businesses have closed.
13 Roads that used to be in good shape are no longer
14 repaired, and there's fewer people because they have
15 moved on to find jobs. Tax revenues are marginal at
16 best. It's been a horrible blow to the little town of
17 Rockdale.

18 But I'm not finished yet. Ravenswood, West
19 Virginia, closed. Alcoa, Tennessee, closed. Columbia
20 Falls, Montana, closed. Baden, North Carolina,
21 closed. And the last one in 2014, just last year,
22 Hannibal, Ohio, closed. We are down to 9. From 33 to
23 9. From 36 percent of the worldwide production
24 capacity to less than 4 percent in the United States
25 is what we make. We're probably over 30,000 good

1 paying manufacturing jobs to less than 7,000.

2 So here we are today. Does the number become
3 eight as another US smelter closes its doors because
4 it can't get rate relief? You know there's a plant in
5 Iceland. It gets its power from a glacier that melts
6 into a riv- -- into a lake they've created, that they
7 put a dam on and they generate hydro-electric power.
8 That glacier will make -- will melt for more than
9 multiple lifetimes. How can you compete with a cost
10 like that?

11 In Saudi Arabia, they use waste gas, flare
12 gas, to power their smelter. In China, you know the
13 labor is cheap. How do we get to where we can compete
14 with people like that? But if we don't figure it out,
15 then I'll be agonizing over another 900 of my
16 colleagues as they leave the plant.

17 Do we become the other guys in the Bootheel
18 and watch yet another segment of American
19 manufacturing give way? Do we follow in the Bootheel
20 the path of another industrial ghost town like my
21 hometown in Rockdale is slowly becoming? And I wonder
22 what will our grandchildren and children talk and ask
23 about when they say, why did you let all those
24 manufacturing jobs in the United States go to those
25 other countries?

1 The burden to not let that happen is on you,
2 Mr. Commissioner and Ameren executives, and I beg you
3 to consider our plea for rate relief, and please don't
4 let the Bootheel be thrown on that trash heap of
5 American manufacturing jobs that are going to waste.
6 Thank you.

7 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Mr. Phillips.

8 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thanks, Mr. Phillips.

9 JUDGE JONES: Next is Missy Marshall.

10 MISSY MARSHALL: Good afternoon.

11 JUDGE JONES: Good afternoon. Can you raise
12 your right hand, please?

13 The witness, MS. MISSY MARSHALL, after first
14 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

16 MISSY MARSHALL: Thank you for allowing me
17 this time this afternoon. My name is Missy Marshall,
18 and I'm with Three Rivers College in Sikeston.

19 As one who lives and works in southeast
20 Missouri, I'm quite frankly frightened by the prospect
21 that the Noranda smelting plant located in New
22 Madrid Country may be driven out of our area.

23 As business people, we all know operating
24 expenses can make or break a business. Approximately
25 one third of Noranda's operating cost, as you've heard

1 today, are tied to power. And with the proposed rate
2 increase, their power expenses will increase by \$22
3 million a year. This increase in operating their
4 business can make the company less competitive in the
5 global marketplace, putting valuable Noranda employees
6 and their futures in jeopardy.

7 Noranda provides some of the most coveted
8 jobs in southeast Missouri with good salaries and
9 benefits. Because of this, the company does not see a
10 high rate of turnover, something that is very
11 important in our area. This is important -- this is
12 important, also, considering the company's over 900
13 employees live in some of the poorest in the state, in
14 the region, and in the country.

15 Employee income and the company's business
16 operations, as you've heard, contribute over
17 \$350 million to a state economy that quite frankly
18 needs it. Besides the obvious impact of employees
19 losing their livelihood, the rollover effect would be
20 disastrous to the region. People would leave the
21 area. Home values would decline. Businesses would
22 close due to a loss of their client base.
23 Municipalities would suffer with lower tax revenue
24 coming in to support their infrastructure. With job
25 loss occurring in this area, it would send the region

1 into a downward spiral.

2 We all say we need to do whatever we can to
3 support business that provide good jobs. If a rate
4 plan is not designed to support businesses like
5 Noranda, then the statements are simply empty words.

6 Noranda continually invests in new equipment
7 and training of their workforce to improve
8 efficiencies and continue to stay competitive. So I
9 think you can say they appreciate the cost as an
10 investor owned company of operating and improving
11 efficiency to improve competitiveness.

12 I think they would understand Ameren's -- you
13 could say they understand Ameren's position. And they
14 are willing to pay these costs, as long as they're
15 reasonable. The power business is changing and we
16 know that. Upgrades and improvements are to be
17 expected. We all understand that. But if the power
18 rates force businesses to shut down, then the
19 residential consumer, and what few businesses would be
20 left are then the ones shouldering the cost.

21 If the region goes into an economic spiral
22 because of the 900 plus high paying jobs leaving, it
23 would quickly be felt in Perryville down to the
24 Arkansas state line, all the way over to Poplar Bluff
25 to the west. But the ripple effect actually goes

1 beyond that. It does go into the St. Louis market.

2 It goes into the multi-state region.

3 I guess if people leave the area and
4 businesses close down and municipalities cut back,
5 there may not be residents and businesses left to use
6 the improvements. I just don't see where anybody wins
7 in that scenario.

8 I guess some might say that what I'm talking
9 about seems a little extreme, but I really don't think
10 so. Look around the region. We have seen communities
11 lose population and die a slow death because the high
12 paying jobs have left their community.

13 I ask the commission to take into
14 consideration all the factors involved and support a
15 rate design that will best meet the needs of all the
16 parties involved. I thank you for your time today.

17 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you for being here.

19 JUDGE JONES: Next is Michael Comer. Did I
20 pronounce your last name correct, sir?

21 MICHAEL COMER: Yes, sir.

22 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Can you raise your right
23 hand?

24 The witness, MR. MICHAEL COMER, after first
25 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

1 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
2 proceed.

3 MICHAEL COMER: Thank you for allowing me to
4 speak today. My name is Michael Comer. I'm here as
5 the vice president of the Chamber of Commerce Board of
6 Directors for the City of New Madrid.

7 You've heard most of the arguments. I think
8 you can tell that this is a pretty important issue to
9 us since just about everyone that's come up here has
10 testified about the same subject.

11 If a company like Noranda were to close down
12 because of increased rates and such, it would be
13 devastating to our local community. It would be
14 devastating to the tax payers. It would be
15 devastating to the school system. It would be
16 devastating to the small businesses that still stay,
17 you know, in the New Madrid area.

18 New Madrid's a small town. Always has been.
19 But it's not as vital and viable as it was maybe
20 several decades ago. It's like many small towns in
21 the country, in southeast Missouri in particular, that
22 have struggled. If Noranda is gone, there are no
23 fallback jobs for these people to keep them in the
24 community, and so you lose population. You lose the
25 people that buy homes there. You lose the people that

1 do spend their money into the businesses that have
2 remained in New Madrid and also in the surrounding
3 area. So I think it's very vital that that be taken
4 into consideration.

5 I, for one, don't see where it's a win
6 situation for Ameren either. It seems to me that if
7 they raise this, these rates, and Noranda has to close
8 down and leave, they've lost their money that they're
9 already taking in on their regular -- regular rates
10 that they do collect, and they'll lose the rates of
11 those people that work there and the approximate or
12 estimated \$10 a month increase they want to put on the
13 residential bills. So I don't think anyone is winning
14 here.

15 And the last thing I'd like to say is when we
16 get to the end of the day, the gentlemen from Ameren
17 that were here today, if this doesn't go through,
18 Ameren won't close down. The gentlemen that were here
19 today for Ameren are not going to lose their jobs.
20 But the people at Noranda, it's a very real
21 possibility, and it would devastate our part of the
22 state. Thank you.

23 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

24 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: No questions. Thanks,
25 Mr. Comer.

1 JUDGE JONES: Michael Allred. Can you raise
2 your right hand?

3 The witness, MR. MICHAEL ALLRED, after first
4 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

5 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
6 proceed.

7 MICHAEL ALLRED: First of all, I'd like to
8 thank -- thank you for the opportunity to be here
9 today and testify. I'm here on behalf of Portageville
10 School District and our community in Portageville.

11 Noranda is southeast Missouri's largest
12 employer contributing over \$350 million in economic
13 benefit annually to the State of Missouri. I'm here
14 not because anyone asked me. I'm here out of support
15 for Noranda. They support our community through
16 different programs [inaudible] over the years and
17 other communities, as well as emergency situations,
18 ice storms, tornadoes, different situations such as
19 that and down to scholarship programs for our
20 students.

21 So this rate hike, if approved, will cost
22 Noranda \$22 million a year to make aluminum, the
23 largest increase in Missouri. What our community
24 would like to see is a rate design that gives Noranda
25 an affordable electric rate which will allow high

1 paying manufacturing jobs to thrive for generations to
2 come in the Missouri Bootheel.

3 Also, Noranda already pays \$44 million more
4 annually than it did in 2008. These rate increases
5 are putting the future of southeast Missouri's largest
6 private employer and the families it supports in
7 jeopardy. As I stated earlier, Noranda is very
8 supportive of not only our community but other
9 communities in the area.

10 I'd like to thank you-all for your time.

11 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you for being here.

13 JUDGE JONES: Next we'll hear from Steven
14 Brewen. Can you raise your right hand?

15 The witness, MR. STEVEN BREWEN, after first
16 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

17 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
18 proceed.

19 STEVEN BREWEN: I am here on behalf of east
20 Missouri Action Agency. We are the Community Action
21 Agency that covers eight counties from Washington down
22 to Cape Girardeau, this one. And I'm speaking on
23 behalf of the low income people in this area, the
24 working poor, the single mothers, the elderly, folks
25 who cannot afford another rate hike and who cannot

1 afford another hit in their daily, weekly, monthly
2 budget.

3 If you go to a town like Mineral Point in
4 Washington County or down here in South Cape, you're
5 going to run across people who are living on very low
6 income, don't have a good job to go to, don't have a
7 good home to live in through no fault of their own.
8 And another chunk of money out of their pocket is only
9 going to drive them further into the hole, it's only
10 going to drive the poverty rate up, it's only going to
11 hurt our communities, our towns, our citizenry.

12 And there has been a lot of talk around our
13 agency about this hearing coming up. We did some
14 preparation for it. And kind of what we thought was
15 is that if this rate increase is to cover things that
16 Ameren is doing to make themselves more profitable,
17 then wouldn't investing their own money into the
18 profitability of their own company be the wise thing
19 to do? If it's profitable, then it would make sense
20 to invest their own money into that project rather
21 then do it on the backs of the working poor, the
22 working class, and folks -- folks at Noranda, which
23 we've heard a lot about today.

24 And I can say this, where I come from, St.
25 Francis in Madison County is where -- is where I work

1 and live, that was a huge lead mining industry from
2 the beginning of people coming there up into the '50s
3 and '60s, and while it did not close because electric
4 rates went up, when the mines ran out, the economy
5 stopped, people left, and they are stalled where they
6 were when the lead ran out 30, 40 years ago. And I
7 can see that happening in southeast Missouri and New
8 Madrid and areas around here that it would stall out.

9 So on behalf of east Missouri Action Agency,
10 on behalf of the poor families and individuals,
11 working class who we represent, we would like to
12 roundly -- we would like to roundly suggest that this
13 rate increase by Ameren Missouri is rejected. Thank
14 you.

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

16 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thanks, Mr. Brewen.

17 JUDGE JONES: Donnie Brown.

18 The witness, MR. DONNIE BROWN, after first
19 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

20 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
21 proceed.

22 DONNIE BROWN: My name is Donnie Brown. I'm
23 the mayor of the City of New Madrid. I also represent
24 the New Madrid County Mayor's Association, which is
25 made up of the 15 cities in New Madrid County. And

1 we're here today to voice our concern about the rate
2 increase and also to show our support for Noranda
3 Aluminum.

4 Noranda's been an integral part of our
5 community for the last 47 years. Noranda provides
6 great paying jobs. Noranda creates a great tax base
7 that allows our city and our community and our county
8 to provide crucial services to our citizens. Noranda
9 also supports our local businesses. The local
10 hardware store. The local gardening shop. Without
11 them, without Noranda, those small businesses couldn't
12 make it.

13 Not only is Noranda the company important to
14 us, but their employees and their employee's families
15 are the lifeblood of our community. Without them,
16 without those jobs, without those families, our
17 schools would suffer. Our churches would suffer. All
18 of our charitable organizations would suffer. Quite
19 honestly, I don't think we could make it without them.

20 So we're here today to voice that concern,
21 and we ask that you would take that into consideration
22 as you make your decision against this rate increase
23 and for Noranda. Thank you very much.

24 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

25 JUDGE JONES: Michael Newman.

1 MICHAEL NEWMAN: Good afternoon.

2 The witness, MR. MICHAEL NEWMAN, after first
3 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
5 proceed.

6 MICHAEL NEWMAN: I have just a couple of
7 points I want to make, but in order to make my points,
8 I have to give a little background. It seems like
9 every time I talk for the PSC, I have a hoarse voice.

10 I started in the business at Kaiser-Mead just
11 north of Spokane 41 years ago this coming April 1st.

12 I clearly remember the impact I felt upon first seeing
13 the interior of what we call the pot rooms, the
14 smelter. The overhead cranes holding loads of anodes
15 and full of old metal. I remember first watching and
16 learning the art of anode setting and then having to
17 successfully set an entire room of anodes and keep up
18 with veteran anode setters with decades of experience.

19 I remember watching metal [inaudible] holding
20 metal to the pots and later to having transfer molten
21 [inaudible]. It was all new to me. I remember it
22 didn't take long to figure out that in the pot rooms,
23 everything is either hot or heavy or hot and heavy. I
24 remember figuring out that all the work occurred on a
25 big unending repeating cycle. I remember being in awe

1 at the enormity of the work area and then realizing I
2 was only just one of eight pot lines.

3 During my time at Kaiser-Mead, I started as a
4 pot room laborer. Learned to tab, learned to run
5 pots, learned to drive -- I realized running pots
6 vernacular means nothing to you, but it means
7 operating a [inaudible] that produces alumina. I
8 worked very hard, and after two years, I was asked to
9 become a supervisor. Eventually I was asked to become
10 general portman over the pot lines and work another
11 side of the business, operation.

12 Following years, after a few years, I was
13 asked to work at [inaudible] self-directing work teams
14 to work on implementing behavioral safety initiatives
15 in the workplace, and eventually I was asked to move
16 to our new anode baking furnace at Kaiser-Mead which
17 we called Billy-300, which at the time represented a
18 \$50 million investment by Kaiser into the Mead plant
19 to again work on self-directed work teams. I spent a
20 few occasions in Europe working on other projects for
21 the Mead plant. And that's the background part I was
22 talking about.

23 Now to my point. When the Mead installed
24 plants were shut down in 2000 along with a sizeable
25 portion of the Trentwood Rolling Mill due to the cost

1 of electricity, thousands of employees were suddenly
2 left without a job. I think most of us believed at
3 the time that the issues with the cost of power would
4 be resolved and we would at some point reopen our
5 plant since with a Mead plant closed is running about
6 as efficiently and safely as it ever had, but that was
7 not to be.

8 The point I'm getting to also is that the
9 skill set that I had personally developed in all my
10 years and some successes at Kaiser-Mead was to a large
11 degree non-transferable, and that's what scares me
12 about our present scenario. I thought that my
13 potential future employers would be impressed with all
14 the efficiency records I was involved in achieving and
15 that I had been involved in shutting down and
16 restarting pot lines several times, and that they
17 might be impressed that I knew how to tap pot or set
18 anodes or drive an overhead bridge crane and that I
19 knew the intricacies of producing aluminum.

20 Sadly, that was not the case. Wages and
21 benefits for Kaiser-Mead employees were among the best
22 in the entire region, as is Noranda's here. And
23 finding suitable replacement employment for myself was
24 not occurring. I became aware of Noranda in 2002,
25 came down here in August of that year, and when I was

1 offered a job at Noranda, my wife and I had to make
2 the hardest choice of our life. And that being to
3 move 2,000 miles away from our young adult sons and
4 grandchildren or to climb the job [inaudible] where
5 future employment possibilities looked increasingly
6 bleak.

7 The Noranda plant in New Madrid is populated
8 with good decent hardworking family people. Over the
9 last several years, the New Madrid plant survived an
10 ice storm, set production records, folks performed
11 countless hours of community service, and we are now
12 in the process of restarting many of our pots, most of
13 which filled predictably as an eventual consequence of
14 the 2009 ice storm because being restarted
15 [inaudible] -- only otherwise had.

16 My last point is that my wife and I know
17 exactly what it feels like to have plans in place for
18 your future with the expectation to being around your
19 kids and grandkids on a daily basis. We know exactly
20 how it feels to have that future torn out from beneath
21 us due to the closure of an aluminum plant. We know
22 exactly how it feels to have to sell our home and move
23 away to another state to find good employment.

24 We are in Missouri because a huge aluminum
25 smelter closed down because of electricity cost. We

1 know exactly what it feels like to be very successful
2 in the business by employing the skills, talents, and
3 understanding developed over decades in a business and
4 then finding out those skills, talents, and trades are
5 not necessarily transferable across the street.

6 Noranda is a good employer, and Noranda
7 employees are good people. We believe in and support
8 Noranda. We hope and pray that Noranda does not go
9 the way of Kaiser-Mead, closing and throwing thousands
10 out of work due to electricity prices and to find
11 Noranda employees desperately looking for employment
12 and finding out there are not a lot of positions open
13 which require the skill set and experience necessary
14 to work in an aluminum smelter.

15 Please remember to a degree that our future
16 literally is in your hands. Thank you.

17 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

18 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: No questions, Mr. Newman.
19 Thanks again for being here.

20 JUDGE JONES: Susan Glasgow Lawrence. Can
21 you raise your right hand, please?

22 The witness, MS. SUSAN GLASGOW LAWRENCE,
23 after first having been duly sworn, testified as
24 follows:

25 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

1 SUSAN GLASCOW LAWRENCE: Thank you very much
2 for allowing me to speak this afternoon. I appreciate
3 the form and time of this commission, and today I
4 would like to speak to you on behalf of all business
5 in southeast Missouri. As the executive director of
6 Sikeston Regional Chamber, I will personally and
7 professionally see and feel the impact of this
8 commission's decision regarding Noranda Aluminum.

9 First and foremost, from a practical business
10 perspective, I understand the underlying concept of
11 profit in this case. I understand both companies
12 position. Ameren would like to maximize profits, and
13 Noranda needs to keep overhead low. In its simplest
14 form is a basic accounting and business principle. It
15 is also the foundation of many economic developers and
16 business recruiters look to our area and specifically
17 southeast Missouri for the operating costs and low
18 cost of doing business.

19 Yet despite that attractive statistic in
20 Missouri, Noranda as it's reiterated here today pays
21 the second highest rate of the nine remaining smelters
22 in the United States. Your decision unfortunately,
23 maybe fortunately, has not just a corporate or even
24 [inaudible] impact, the snowball can trickle down
25 results that will affect our local landscape the

1 heaviest.

2 As the largest regional employer, any Ameren
3 rate increase will cause layoffs not only at Noranda
4 but from numerous regional business employers down to
5 mom and pop shops throughout the southeast Missouri
6 families and their respected communities. Noranda had
7 a \$350 to \$400 million rollover impact in the
8 Bootheel, and without that financial investment or
9 even a significant decrease in that, families and
10 businesses all over the region will carry the burden.

11 On a personal level, the rate hike will
12 affect my family and business negatively in the
13 following ways. As stressed here today by many
14 concerned citizens, I too can appreciate the basic
15 business concept that I operate my organization and
16 personal household on. Income minus expenses equals
17 net profit. As the Sikeston Regional Chamber is
18 negatively affected by employee layoffs and financial
19 implications to Noranda's rate increase, our
20 businesses will -- will lose numerous members and
21 possible even closing of our member businesses.

22 Without Noranda as a customer, Ameren will
23 feel the squeeze and unfairly pass that along to
24 customers across all [inaudible]. What I think for
25 any of us is felt -- excuse me, is felt by less

1 disposable income and purchasing power to spread
2 throughout our communities. Fortunately for all of
3 you, you're not dependent on the bottom line of the
4 Sikeston Regional Chamber or my personal household,
5 but as a whole, southeast Missouri cannot say that
6 with regard to Noranda Aluminum.

7 Potential population increases will be
8 incurred as displaced employees seek other employment
9 outside our service area and state to counteract and
10 overcompensate in providing for their families.
11 Again, basic 101 Econ, manufacturing, retail,
12 products, services, healthcare, public schools and
13 education municipalities will suffer the consequences
14 of this decision.

15 Finally, I strongly believe that a more
16 humble rate schedule design will meet the needs of
17 both parties. Ameren will be able to accomplish its
18 goals for providing competitive utility rates for
19 shareholders profit returns and upgrades to its
20 system, and Noranda will be able to keep its overhead
21 low, operating costs down, and workforce stable.

22 A common sense mutually beneficial rate will
23 allow your commission to balance the service needs of
24 southeast Missouri residents fairly with the utilities
25 ability to provide safe and reliable energy at

1 reasonable rate.

2 I don't envy your position, but this
3 commission can protect and balance the public interest
4 all the while [inaudible] a utilities ability to
5 foster systems and technologies to remain competitive
6 in the global energy market. And an overall
7 compromised rate agreement will not inhibit nor be a
8 detriment to capitalism but rather allow and expand
9 economic development for all of our communities and
10 ultimately both Ameren and Noranda.

11 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Ms. Lawrence, thanks for
13 being here.

14 JUDGE JONES: Walt Wildman.

15 The witness, MR. WALT WILDMAN, after first
16 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

17 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
18 proceed.

19 WALT WILDMAN: With your permission, what I'd
20 like to do is just read like the first paragraph of my
21 written statement and submit the rest for the record.
22 All this does is support what I'm saying here.

23 It says, "On the behalf of 40 percent of
24 Missouri families living with incomes that are
25 inadequate to consistently provide for basic human

1 needs, [inaudible] asks that the public service
2 commission reject Ameren Missouri's latest request for
3 an absorptive rate hike as contained in file number
4 ER-2014-0258. We are speaking" -- sorry, if I can
5 explain, "the entire Missouri association nor welfare
6 [inaudible], but elderly peoples with disabilities and
7 low wage workers and their families will be harmed if
8 Ameren is allowed to raise their rates so steeply."

9 That's basically my position, and I think the
10 information I have is about poverty levels in Missouri
11 and how that will be affected by the rate increases.
12 Any questions.

13 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: No, sir. Thanks for being
14 here.

15 WALT WILDMAN: Thanks.

16 JUDGE JONES: John Garner.

17 The witness, MR. JOHN GARNER, after first
18 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

19 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
20 proceed.

21 JOHN GARNER: I'm here this afternoon
22 representing New Madrid County R-1 and the school
23 district. So on behalf of our communities that we
24 serve, which are not only New Madrid but also include
25 Matthews, Wilbern, Larson, and surrounding areas, we

1 are concerned -- deeply concerned with the proposed
2 increase in electricity rates and how it will affect
3 our school district.

4 We serve many communities in our area and
5 many, many of our families work at Noranda that we
6 educate their children. We have many employees at
7 Noranda that have come through New Madrid R-1 over the
8 last 30 years since we became a R-1 school district
9 enlarged. We are not in support of any increase that
10 would affect our tax revenue for our school district,
11 which Noranda's tax revenue in 2014 was \$3 million,
12 which is a third of our tax revenue in our county.

13 It would also affect our families having to
14 relocate to other areas for more jobs, which would
15 hurt our overall student population, which as you well
16 know will hurt our student aid at New Madrid County
17 R-1 if we lose the number of students that we have
18 already.

19 Over the last ten years we have gone from
20 1700 students down to 1400. If we lose 900 jobs in
21 our county, our New Madrid County, I'm sure that would
22 decrease sharply. Noranda has always been a big
23 supporter of New Madrid County R-1, and I know they
24 will continue to be.

25 The New Madrid district, again, does not

1 support any increase whatsoever. We ask that you
2 please, please consider our families, our children
3 that we're educating daily, when you make this
4 decision. Thank you.

5 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

6 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thanks, Mr. Garner. Thanks
7 for your testimony.

8 JUDGE JONES: Next is Neil, I believe
9 Priggel, P-R-I-G-G-E-L. Is that correct, sir?

10 NEIL PRIGGEL: Yes, sir.

11 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Can you raise your right
12 hand?

13 The witness, MR. NEIL PRIGGEL, after first
14 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

16 NEIL PRIGGEL: My name's Neil Priggel. I'm
17 the superintendent of pots service. I've been
18 employed for Noranda Aluminum for 20 years. I
19 graduated from the Portageville high school, attended
20 the University of Missouri where I received an
21 engineering degree, and was one of the lucky few that
22 got to return home to work at Noranda.

23 There's five quick points that I want to try
24 to make.

25 First point is vision, the kind of vision it

1 takes in order to start a company like Noranda and how
2 to get that kind of manufacturing in southeast
3 Missouri. Plant history is, back in 1960s, the
4 Bootheel was a mostly farming area. Technology was
5 progressing and slowly removing the need for farm
6 labor like it is today. There's no farm jobs really
7 left in southeast Missouri.

8 So if we lose the plant, you're not going to
9 go work on the farm, because round-up and technology
10 has gotten rid of it. So a local -- local small town
11 banker by the name of Sam Hunter realized that some
12 type of manufacturing needed to advance the Bootheel
13 economy, good paying jobs. The individual took a year
14 off from the bank and he worked on his project.

15 Many residents of the Bootheel thought that
16 his endeavor was a lost cause. And in 1967,
17 Mr. Hunter was almost certain that he had lost the
18 plant to Kentucky, and that's when we were still
19 building plants. We didn't have the regulations that
20 we have now and you could -- you were actually
21 manufacturing.

22 Mr. Sam did not give up and worked with the
23 local Cole and Hire company and was able to -- to win
24 Noranda back to New Madrid. Mr. Hunter's successful
25 envision was such an event that even a Super Bowl

1 commercial was made depicting the community
2 accomplishment. So in order to get a plant like
3 Noranda, if we lose it, to come back would be like
4 getting a Super Bowl commercial made on that
5 accomplishment.

6 So today we have that opportunity to ensure
7 that we continue that operation as the New Madrid
8 smelter. If we lose this plant, we will more than
9 likely never get another plant. So it is much easier
10 to save a company than to start a new company, and for
11 the public good, we need to support the manufacturing
12 that we have left.

13 Second point, poverty. The Bootheel
14 currently has three of the top ten counties with the
15 lowest median household in the state. Pemiscot, 30
16 percent of the people live below the poverty level.
17 New Madrid, 22 percent of the people live below the
18 poverty level. In comparison, St. Charles, 5 percent
19 of the people live below the poverty level.

20 We're experiencing this type of poverty even
21 with Noranda's contributions. Noranda contributes to
22 the local community is enormous. Yearly payroll is
23 over \$95 million. Noranda impact supports about 3,900
24 Missouri jobs with annual wages and salaries of \$158.
25 They pay close to 18 percent of the taxes in New

1 Madrid County. They pay 28 percent of the taxes for
2 the New Madrid R-1 schools, and they have continued to
3 invest in the plant with approximately \$304 million
4 over the past decade.

5 If we should ever lose the plant, I think
6 it's safe to say that southeast Missouri will be the
7 three lowest in the state. The state would have a
8 serious social problem that will require increased
9 taxes to provide support for southeast Missouri.

10 Third point is never close. Noranda is such
11 a viable part of the southeast Missouri area many
12 local state citizens think that it's impossible for
13 the plant to close. We heard an excellent
14 presentation from Mr. Phillips on the number of plants
15 that have closed. I used to think that Noranda never
16 could close. I visited those plants trying to buy
17 their equipment. It can happen, and it will happen if
18 our electric rates stay up.

19 So we're standing here, and one thing I
20 haven't heard, it's almost like Noranda's asking for a
21 handout. We're not asking for a handout. I'm going
22 to go over the things that we've done to survive
23 because we've been -- we've realized that the wolves
24 are at the door, and we've been making improvements
25 for years trying to stay in front.

1 So my fourth point is plant survival. What
2 is Noranda doing to prevent becoming number 24 on the
3 list? Noranda has realized that we must improve our
4 operation if we're going to prevent the facility from
5 closing.

6 Unfortunately, we're in a commodity business
7 that cannot pass our costs on in order to survive. We
8 have to pursue -- pursue lowering our cost structure.
9 We have invested over \$304 million in capital projects
10 since 1997. We've increased production over 22
11 percent. That's 105 million pounds.

12 Labor, we've made the tough decisions on
13 decreasing the amount of labor we have at the plant.
14 We had purchased raw materials that we have learned
15 how to use different grades. And we do have the new
16 rod mill that's over half built but construction has
17 stopped due to our financial situation.

18 And that is a good visual, when you see the
19 building built and there's no one working on it and
20 everybody has left. You would think that we could
21 survive, but a lot of it comes down basically to
22 competitive electrical rates.

23 So that brings me to my fifth -- fifth point,
24 and that is hope. I would like to close with the
25 request that you consider the impact on southeast

1 Missouri when making your decisions.

2 I always think that a visual aid is the best
3 way for someone to get a point across. As you leave
4 today, you're going to drive to Dexter. As you leave
5 Cape, there's 23 jobs that would be lost in Cape.
6 Cape is going to survive. But as you come over the
7 hill at -- the Benton hill, and you look as far down
8 as Arkansas state line, that's where the poverty
9 already is, and that's where poverty will be extremely
10 bad. And that ridge goes all the way over to Dexter.
11 So basically, your entire drive will be an economic
12 disaster if we lose this plant, because this is all we
13 have. Thank you.

14 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

15 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Priggel, for
16 being here. Thank you.

17 JUDGE JONES: Next is Michelle Fayette.

18 The witness, MS. MICHELLE FAYETTE, after
19 first having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

20 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

21 MICHELLE FAYETTE: My name is Michelle
22 Fayette, and I'm the executive director of Kenny
23 Rogers Children Center. What we are is an outpatient
24 pediatric therapy center. We've been around since
25 1973, and during that time we provide physical,

1 occupational, and speech therapy to kids throughout
2 the region, and we have never charged any family for
3 any of the services that they receive. So we're very
4 proud of that.

5 When we started, we started with one
6 full-time employee and volunteers and we treated about
7 five kids. Today we treat over 500 kids in southeast
8 Missouri. We have a staff of about 23 full-time
9 employees. In 2009, Kenny came back for his fourth
10 benefit concert, and we underwent a million dollar
11 expansion at the center.

12 And to date, we currently have the only
13 clinical lab in the state of Missouri. That includes
14 the Kansas City area. That includes the St. Louis
15 area. There certainly are motion analysis labs, but
16 they are usually in buildings with universities that
17 are used for research. This is the only clinical lab.

18 And today, as a matter of fact, we have an
19 outstanding pediatric orthopedic surgeon from St.
20 Louis who comes to our lab once a quarter. And kids
21 from all over the region today are coming so that they
22 can be run in our lab.

23 We also got a grant last year from the
24 Missouri Foundation for Health for a half a million
25 dollars, and again, kids from St. Louis who can't

1 otherwise get this service are coming to this area.

2 We -- we've been very proud of the service
3 that we've provided, and during the time, just to give
4 you an idea, one of the ways that we continued to do
5 that is every year we have a telethon. That's our
6 biggest fundraiser. And in 2014 -- again, you've
7 heard about the economic area. The size of our
8 communities is very small.

9 The center is in Sikeston, which has a
10 population of about 17,000 people. In 2014 in this
11 region, our telethon raised \$417,255. Just to give
12 you an idea, \$208,000 of that came from Scott County.
13 \$118,000 of that came from New Madrid County. Almost
14 \$40,000 came from Mississippi County. \$2,600 came
15 from Pemiscot County, and over \$10,000 came from
16 Stoddard County.

17 Those are directly the counties that we are
18 talking about should -- that are affected by Noranda
19 employees. That comes to a total of \$380,000 of the
20 \$417,000 that were raised so that we could continue to
21 provide the services that we provide to kids
22 throughout the region. That total is about \$91,000 of
23 our annual telethon revenue. That's very significant.

24 If jobs are lost in the Bootheel due to the
25 closing of Noranda, I can assure you you will have

1 just shut the doors on the Kenny Rogers Children
2 Center that is 43 years rich in history of providing
3 services for the children in this area.

4 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you for your time,
6 ma'am. Thank you for your testimony.

7 JUDGE JONES: Wayne Godwin. Will you raise
8 your right hand?

9 The witness, MR. WAYNE GODWIN, after first
10 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

11 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
12 proceed.

13 WAYNE GODWIN: We've heard a lot of testimony
14 about Noranda today, and I appreciate all the
15 testimony that we've heard, and I go along with them.
16 And I hope that the PSE will take into consideration
17 all the testimony that we've heard for Noranda.

18 But I'm here for John Q. Public, me. I was
19 here about two years ago when we had another public
20 hearing for the same reason, Ameren wanted to raise
21 rates. They got a rate increase. Here we are two
22 years later, want another rate increase. We've had,
23 what, six rate increases since '06, I believe is what
24 we've heard.

25 This 9.8 percent increase that Ameren is

1 looking for right now, I'm not the only one that
2 thinks it's entirely too high. The seniors got a 1.7
3 percent increase in pay from Social Security this
4 year. That's -- and then the increase that Ameren is
5 asking for is way above what we got increased in our
6 pay.

7 Something that I brought up earlier, and I
8 still don't understand. Are they going to have the
9 same rate increase for people on fixed income, like
10 myself on Social Security, as for the people that earn
11 a hundred thousand or more a year? You know, they've
12 got to take the little guy into consideration. You
13 know, what are they going to do, force us to not eat,
14 take our medicine? You know, we've got to take that
15 into consideration.

16 Another point that it said on the handout
17 that we received a while ago that one of the reasons
18 for a rate increase is rising fuel cost. Well, they
19 admitted a while ago that the fuel costs have went
20 down. And I know that they don't use gasoline but
21 they do use diesel fuel, and the price of that has
22 went down considerably. But no, they want 9.8 percent
23 increase.

24 The population of Cape and Jackson keeps
25 going up. And that way Ameren gets more customers,

1 and they get more money, and they're wanting more
2 money. So I'm not understanding if you get more
3 customers using more electricity, then more people
4 paying for it, why do the rates keep going up and up
5 and up? Because you have more people paying for it.

6 Not only would my household rates go up but
7 the utility rates for businesses, for schools, for
8 restaurants, everything else, their utility rates
9 would be going up, too. So I'm not only be going to
10 pay a 9.8 percent increase in my rates, but I have to
11 pay an increase that the customer -- that the
12 businesses is going to have to charge to recoup their
13 rate increase, also.

14 So it's going to cost me a lot more than just
15 9.8 percent. Every place I go, everything that I buy
16 is going to have to be increased because of Ameren's
17 increasing their rates. And I hope you-all take that
18 into consideration, too. Thank you.

19 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Godwin, for
21 being here.

22 JUDGE JONES: Robert Harless.

23 The witness, MR. ROBERT HARLESS, after first
24 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

25 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may

1 proceed.

2 ROBERT HARLESS: My name is Robert Harless.
3 I'm a resident of Sikeston, Missouri, and I'm a
4 retiree from Noranda Aluminum, having been retired for
5 about three years now. Once I retired, I became what
6 I referred to as a professional volunteer, and I
7 volunteer with several entities in Sikeston,
8 historical downtown Sikeston, the Depot Museum,
9 Mission Missouri, and the Good Neighbor Food Pantry.
10 Even of these entities that I volunteer with, I
11 constantly hear good reports on how Noranda Aluminum
12 is a good community citizen, how volunteer money helps
13 support every one of these entities, and in fact keeps
14 them alive. I hope that we can find a good solution
15 to the cost of electricity and that we can keep
16 Noranda contributing to our community. Thank you very
17 much.

18 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Mr. Harless, thank you for
20 being here.

21 JUDGE JONES: Michael Susic. Did I pronounce
22 your last name correctly?

23 MICHAEL SUSIC: Susic. It's close enough.

24 JUDGE JONES: Will you raise your right hand?

25 The witness, MR. MICHAEL SUSIC, after first

1 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

2 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
3 proceed.

4 MICHAEL SUSIC: Good afternoon,
5 Commissioners. I appreciate the opportunity to speak
6 to you on behalf of the United Steelworkers. I'm the
7 servicing staff representative. I've been assigned to
8 represent the members at Noranda, local 7686 since
9 2006.

10 There's two servicing representatives in
11 eastern Missouri, myself and another one. We
12 represent approximately 34 locations, about 5,000
13 members. Let me put this up here. Since -- since
14 taking over the -- the assignment as a service
15 representative in 1996, I've had the opportunity to
16 service well over a 100 different types of locations,
17 different industries. And each industry has its own
18 issues and concern. And in many cases those --
19 whoops, excuse me. Those issues if not addressed
20 could be extremely detrimental.

21 As a steelworker representative and also as a
22 Union, we take these concerns very serious. You heard
23 Mr. Phillips here earlier go down the list of plants,
24 steelworker plants. Most of those plants that he
25 detailed were actually steelworker plants as well, and

1 we saw that -- the loss of those jobs. There's
2 nothing more gut wrenching than receiving that last
3 minute call from a company asking you to come down to
4 the plant about subject matter they won't talk to you
5 about on the phone, you pretty much know what it is
6 when you get from.

7 The first question that we always ask is, is
8 there something we can do to keep the plant open?
9 Unfortunately in almost every case, the decision's
10 already been made. There's really nothing we can do.
11 As a Union, we long ago committed that we're going to
12 try to proactively do everything we can before that
13 decision is made. And we're here today -- last year
14 we were testifying trying to do everything we could to
15 make the plant as competitive as possible, retaining
16 the jobs for the members that we represent, and
17 prevent another plant closure.

18 You heard that in the last 35 years there
19 were 32 smelters here in the United States of which
20 there's nine left. Those are real numbers. Those
21 aren't -- those aren't just numbers that are made up.
22 Those are real people. Those are real lives. In many
23 of those cases, in fact I think in most of those
24 cases, the cost of electricity was the primary factor
25 for those plants closing.

1 I know that last year you heard the story of
2 Ormet in Ohio and how they closed. In fact, I
3 personally delivered and received letters from the
4 Ormet employees and their families that were sent to
5 the State of Missouri on behalf of Noranda employees
6 and the steelworkers here in the state asking the
7 commission, asking Ameren, and everybody involved in
8 trying to do the right thing to avoid additional job
9 losses as they personally had experienced.

10 I think it's pretty [inaudible] that someone
11 from Ohio would actually get involved in trying to
12 save jobs here in the State of Missouri. They lived
13 through that experience. Had they have had an
14 effective power rate, their plant would still be open.
15 But it's not. It's down, and it's probably down for
16 good.

17 It's my understanding that Noranda pays the
18 second highest rates of the nine remaining smelters in
19 the US. We've heard those facts. It's my
20 understanding that the rate increase, if it goes in,
21 that's another \$20 million, \$20 plus million in energy
22 cost over and above the \$160, \$170 million in energy
23 costs that they're paying right now.

24 I recently met a gentleman that was a retired
25 manufacturer buyer. He bought -- he bought

1 manufactured supplies worldwide. And when we were
2 talking about the evolution of the jobs being
3 offshores, he made some observations about what he had
4 noticed.

5 And one of the things that he was proud of
6 was the fact that he had tried to buy as much as he
7 could from US manufactures. And he said his
8 experience was that both of the unionized plants and
9 non-unionized plants, the ones that were surviving
10 were the ones that were adapting and their working
11 with the communities, working with their suppliers,
12 with their natural resource vendors.

13 And I think that's all that we're asking here
14 as steelworkers is we're asking that all the parties
15 involved here arrive at an affordable rate, a rate
16 that will keep the plant profitable.

17 I've heard the number of \$350 million and
18 economic benefit to southern Missouri. That's a lot
19 of money. That's a lot of money in this -- in this
20 area of the country. I've heard today the statements.
21 We've had schools here. We've had former politicians.
22 We've had current legislatures. We've had the -- the
23 small businesses. We've had chamber of commerce.
24 Almost every entity you could possibly imagine has
25 come here and just basically saying, hey, we need a

1 fair shake, because if they don't get it, it's going
2 to have such a devastating impact that a lot of these
3 social programs, these charities, they're testifying
4 today that they will close down, and I don't think
5 there's any doubt that they probably would.

6 So all we're asking is that the commissioners
7 listen to the concerns of all the folks in this area.
8 It seems like almost without exception everybody has
9 come here and said, you know, give Noranda a fair
10 shake. The steelworkers would appreciate it and it
11 certainly will make a difference to us being able to
12 keep and maintain these jobs here, these good paying
13 jobs. That if we lost \$350 million in revenue to this
14 area would probably be devastating and seriously don't
15 think the area would ever come back from it.

16 So again, we appreciate you hearing our
17 concerns and giving us the time to speak to you today.

18 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Mr. Susic, thanks for your
20 testimony.

21 MICHAEL SUSIC: Thank you.

22 JUDGE JONES: Susie Pobst, P-O-B-S-T.
23 Wynetta Wyant. Roger Williams. Frank Davis.

24 The witness, MR. FRANK DAVIS, after first
25 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

1 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
2 proceed.

3 FRANK DAVIS: Your Honor, Chairman Kenney, my
4 name is Frank Davis. Until 26 days ago, I made
5 aluminum. I retired from Noranda after 10 years of
6 service and 43 years of service in the industry.

7 1959 was my first time in a smelter. I was
8 five years old. My dad spent 40 years plus making
9 aluminum, and he took me into one of the smelters that
10 he worked in. I was amazed at what I saw, the noise,
11 the sounds, the cranes, the huge mobile equipment.
12 And it looked like chaos, but I loved it. I knew then
13 what I wanted to do.

14 As you've heard from previous people, when I
15 started, there were about 40 smelters operating in the
16 United States. They were grouped in geographic
17 reasons -- regions for specific reasons. The
18 northwest for hydropower. The Tennessee valley for
19 hydro. The Gulf Coast for abundant gas. The Ohio
20 River for plentiful coal. And the northeast of the US
21 for hydro.

22 I had a great career that provided for my
23 family. I lived all over the world from Germany to
24 West Africa. I lived all over the US. I got to work
25 in some great smelters, and I got to work in some

1 pre-World War II smelters that weren't so great. But
2 these smelters all had three things in common: Good
3 jobs, good working people, and a need for
4 appropriately priced power in large steady quantities.

5 So when I started, there lots of
6 opportunities in the aluminum industries. We were
7 moving into a market previously held by steel. The
8 sky seemed the limit. Good jobs were plentiful and
9 the opportunity for advancement was there. So off I
10 went. New Orleans, Washington State, West Virginia,
11 Africa, those are just some of the places that I got
12 to call home.

13 The biggest problem of my career was that I
14 chose a career that is commodity based. Neither I nor
15 my company got to choose how much we sold a pound of
16 aluminum for. It sold just like coffee, orange juice,
17 pork bellies, or soybeans. And worst yet, a pound of
18 aluminum made by me is no different than a pound of
19 aluminum made in China, Africa, or by a competing
20 company.

21 Aluminum is aluminum. It's all the same.
22 Same color, same density, same physical properties,
23 made with the same process, and it all sells for the
24 same. The only differentiation is the cost to make
25 it. To survive, you have to be able to make it

1 cheaper than your competitor.

2 As electricity is our biggest raw material,
3 you don't have to -- if you don't have reasonable
4 priced power, your days are numbered. Ask the people
5 in Scottsboro, Alabama. There used to be a smelter
6 there. Ask the people in Goldendale, Washington.
7 There used to be a smelter there. Ask the people in
8 [inaudible], Louisiana. There used to be a smelter
9 there. Ask the people in New Johnsonville, Tennessee.
10 There used to be a smelter there. Ask the people in
11 Northwest Alabama. There used to be a smelter there.

12 There were four smelters in the Tennessee
13 valley. Now there are none. The price of price of
14 power got them. There were eight smelters in the
15 Pacific Northwest. Now there are two. The price of
16 power got them. There were four smelters on the Gulf
17 Coast. The price of gas for generated power got them.
18 Yes, there used to be smelters there.

19 When these smelters could not get reasonably
20 priced power, they closed. Thousands of high paying
21 jobs left, people left, taxpayers left, and these
22 communities suffered. I know, I was there. But I was
23 one of the lucky ones that got transferred. Thousands
24 of others were not so lucky.

25 The New Madrid smelter does not have to be

1 like these others. It has plenty of life left in it
2 with appropriate priced power. It does not have to
3 become a casualty in the world of operating smelters.
4 I don't want to have my son who's working at New
5 Madrid say, there used to be a smelter there. Thank
6 you.

7 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Davis, for
9 your testimony.

10 JUDGE JONES: Wanda Kirkpatrick. Nora
11 Stran -- I'm not sure if I'm reading the last name
12 correctly, but the first name is Nora. Shirley -- I
13 can't read the last name. Glastellar, maybe. Don
14 Moore. Don Moore.

15 The witness, MR. DON MOORE, after first
16 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

17 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir. You may
18 proceed.

19 DON MOORE: My name is Don Moore, and I live
20 in Sikeston, Missouri, and I serve as sales manager at
21 Steward Steel Inc. which has been a supplier of metal
22 products to Noranda Aluminum for over 40 years. I'm
23 also an Ameren electric customer, and I don't need
24 another increase in my utility bill.

25 I'm probably one of the few people here that

1 remembers when Noranda did not exist. There's stories
2 about [inaudible]. I remember the fairly consistent
3 migration of young people as they moved away in order
4 to find work to sustain them and their families. And
5 I also remember whole families leaving together toward
6 larger cities outside southeast Missouri.

7 JUDGE JONES: Could you hold the mic in your
8 hand?

9 DON MOORE: I will. I remember when that
10 migration slowed to a trickle.

11 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Is it on?

12 DON MOORE: Can you hear me? Now it's on.

13 I was speaking about migration that was
14 occurring in this area in the early '60s. People were
15 moving away to find work. Whole families left this
16 area. I remember when that migration slowed to a
17 trickle, and I remember when operating values all over
18 the area increased significantly. I remember when a
19 hope for a better life and future for the citizens of
20 this area became a reality.

21 In the late 1960s before many of you were
22 born, visions and dreams were brought into a reality.
23 St. Jude Industrial Park of which Noranda was its
24 first tenant, the largest employer in southeast
25 Missouri. All of us who have lived here since that

1 time have benefited directly or indirectly from an
2 industrial complex like Noranda Aluminum in our area.

3 I couldn't guess the number of individuals
4 who have been directly employed by Noranda Aluminum
5 over the 45 years of its existence. I was one of
6 those employees. But I suspect whatever that number
7 is, just as many have indirectly benefited by the
8 increase in the value of their own personal talents
9 and abilities as the overall area labor market
10 improved due to the influence of Noranda Aluminum.

11 I'm here to convey the assessment of Steward
12 Steel, where I work, of the impact to its business if
13 Noranda Aluminum were to shut down. Steward Steel has
14 110 employees and two major divisions. The
15 instructional division, where I work, has 67 employees
16 and usually seven to nine of them are working on
17 projects for Noranda Aluminum. And there are times
18 when it is up to 50 percent of our workforce, working
19 with Noranda. All of those jobs would be directly
20 affected by the loss of Noranda Aluminum.

21 This kind of loss would be multiplied many
22 times over the area as other businesses associated
23 with Noranda Aluminum cope with its closure. The
24 entire area has benefited from the construction and
25 operation of Noranda Aluminum for over 45 years.

1 Those who were born after Noranda Aluminum's
2 economic impact matured and who do not fully realize
3 the ways that -- the way they have benefited may be
4 surprised at their suffering through the years
5 following a potential closure of Noranda Aluminum as
6 Noranda's positive economic impact diminishes and
7 drains every southeast Missouri community and the
8 migration of the young begins again. Thank you--all.

9 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Moore.
11 Thank you for your testimony.

12 JUDGE JONES: Bob Heatherton. And I think
13 it's Sher Meredith or -- it's Sher and Meredith.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She had to leave.

15 JUDGE JONES: Well, we've come to the end of
16 the list now. Is there anyone here who hasn't spoke
17 who would like to make a statement on the record?

18 I saw your hand first and your hand second.
19 Please step forward.

20 The witness, MR. MARY CAMPBELL, after first
21 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

22 JUDGE JONES: Please state and spell your
23 first and last name.

24 MARY CAMPBELL: Okay. My name is Mary
25 Campbell, C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L.

1 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may proceed.

2 MARY CAMPBELL: Okay. My concern is the
3 increase with it's going to increase everything that I
4 pay for. I live here in Cape. Whenever I bought my
5 house I could afford, I made sure I could afford what
6 I wanted. I know any improvements has to come out of
7 my pocket. That's my business.

8 I resent being told that there's going to be
9 an increase for improvements that's got to come out of
10 my pocket. I resent being told, well, if you can't
11 afford it, we have benefits. We have programs that
12 you can sign up for. I have been -- I've raised my
13 kids as -- I am a single parent. I have been on the
14 welfare. I have -- I have gotten my position to the
15 point of where I -- at the moment, I don't have to ask
16 for assistance.

17 But as of right now, I am on medical leave
18 because I had a heart attack. They told me if I
19 wouldn't have come in, I would've died. Okay, now I
20 have medicine that I'm going to have to take for the
21 rest of my life. I have to adjust how I live. I
22 think Ameren needs to account -- they're making a
23 profit. They're wanting more profit.

24 I can understand improvements. Everybody
25 needs to improve. But a business -- running a

1 business, you have to make sacrifices within your
2 business. Your higher-up people and other ones cannot
3 keep making more and more and more money and saying,
4 well, we're going to let this person go so that we're
5 making improvements. It's not how it's done.

6 It's -- my point is I -- I resent being told
7 that I have to pay more whenever I don't feel like I
8 should. And that's it.

9 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thanks, Ms. Campbell.

11 JUDGE JONES: And the gentleman to my left
12 here.

13 The witness, MR. STAN TRIPLETT, after first
14 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. And can you state
16 and spell your name?

17 STAN TRIPLETT: Stan Triplet,
18 T-R-I-P-L-E-T-T. Your Honor, I've come here today --
19 I've sat in two of these hearings, and you know, when
20 I think about my job -- I work at Noranda. When I
21 think about my job, I consider it a dream job. It's a
22 job when my dad got out of the service in Korea and
23 was looking for a job, Noranda was where he wanted to
24 get on at, and he never did make it.

25 Well, I got the job at Noranda. I consider

1 it a dream job. I'm blessed. I'm blessed beyond --
2 you know, but when you look at it, it's not just 900
3 people that this is going to affect. I've sat and
4 listened and listened to all these organizations and
5 all this other stuff that this snowball is going to
6 affect if 900 jobs go out of that plant. You're
7 facing probably, just on a guesstimation, 10,000
8 people that are going to be out of jobs, that are not
9 going to be able to work nowhere. You're not going to
10 have organizations that are working.

11 And you know, you have that obligation or
12 that burden on you to fix this. And when you look at
13 it and you think, all these people that's with this
14 and they're affected by it, it tears me up inside just
15 to even think about it. And I know that burden has to
16 be hard on you.

17 These people need jobs. This area needs job.
18 Because the 900 that's down there, the five or six
19 thousand that are after that are tax paying citizens.
20 People in Jeff City are getting their wages off these
21 people that are working. It affects you too. At the
22 end of it, it affects you too.

23 And you know, whenever you sit and look at
24 that and you think, Ameren UE, the man just sit here
25 and told us earlier, they're cutting back jobs.

1 They're cutting back jobs. Those are taxpayers that
2 they're cutting back. They're not putting anything
3 into this. And Noranda is hiring people. They're
4 creating jobs for people that are paying taxes that is
5 going to Jeff City.

6 You know, I'm against the rate increase, not
7 for Noranda. I'm against the rate increase for John
8 **Q. Public, like the man was talking a while ago. I**
9 **got a 75-year-old mother that's on fixed income. I**
10 **went and talked to her the other day just out of**
11 **curiosity, how much is your electrical bill, Mom? She**
12 **makes \$800 a month. Her rent is over \$200 a month in**
13 **a housing project. She gets a rate increase -- her**
14 **light bill is \$165 a month. It's going to get down to**
15 **it where you're either going to eat or you're going to**
16 **pay for lights, and that's something that's on you and**
17 **your organization, your public service commission.**

18 I want to thank you for your time today.
19 Hell, I sat back, and I wasn't going to say anything,
20 but it just tears me up to hear this going on like
21 this. I know everybody's got to make a profit. You
22 don't make a profit, you can't stay in business very
23 long.

24 There's a difference in profiting and
25 gauging. To me, when you're making that much profit

1 and you're not turning it back over to the people that
2 are actually helping you make that profit, to me
3 that's gauging. It's no different then gas prices. I
4 thank you for your time.

5 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN KENNEY: Thank you, Mr. Triplett.

7 JUDGE JONES: Is there anyone else who'd like
8 to make a statement on the record? I don't see a show
9 of hands.

10 So with that, we'll go off the record, and I
11 thank you all for attending.

12 (The hearing concluded at 3:25 p.m.)

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Ms. Whitney Hampton
Public Service Commission

1	I N D E X	
2	WITNESS NAME	PAGE
3	Don Rone	4
4	Andrew McDaniel	7
5	Tila Hubrecht	3
6	Steve Hodges	12
7	Jason Schrumpt	14
8	Scott Matthews	19
9	Ed Barnes	23
10	Terry Swinger	24
11	Charles Kimber	29
12	Harvey Cooper	33
13	Jon Gillespie	37
14	Michelle Reynolds	40
15	Vincent Berry	41
16	Eric Phillips	50
17	Missy Marshall	58
18	Michael Comer	61
19	Michael Allred	64
20	Steven Brewen	65
21	Donnie Brown	67
22	Michael Newman	69
23	Susan Glasgow Lawrence	74
24	Walt Wildman	77
25	John Garner	78

1	I N D E X	
2	WITNESS NAME	PAGE
3	Neil Priggel	80
4	Michelle Fayette	85
5	Wayne Godwin	88
6	Robert Harless	91
7	Michael Susic	92
8	Frank Davis	97
9	Don Moore	100
10	Mary Campbell	103
11	Stan Triplett	105

12

13

14

15 E X H I B I T S

16 RECORDED

17 CGLPH #1 50

18 CGLPH #2 50

19 CGLPH #3 50

20 CGLPH #4 50

21 CGLPH #5 50

22 CGLPH #6 50

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Megan K. Kohler, Certified Court Reporter,
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otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

Megan K. Kohler

CSR 1383

A	<p>admission 33:16 36:22 37:4</p> <p>admit 37:8</p> <p>admitted 89:19</p> <p>adult 72:3</p> <p>advance 81:12</p> <p>advancement 98:9</p> <p>adversely 16:21</p> <p>advocate 46:16</p> <p>affect 74:25 75:12 79:2,10 79:13 106:3,6</p> <p>affiliated 35:4</p> <p>afford 13:21 28:1 36:15 65:25 66:1 104:5,5,11</p> <p>affordable 21:10 41:12 48:17 64:25 95:15</p> <p>Africa 97:24 98:11,19</p> <p>aftereffects 51:22</p> <p>afternoon 3:12 3:22 4:11,20 5:6 7:8 58:10 58:11,17 69:1 74:2 78:21 92:4</p> <p>ag 12:19</p> <p>age 54:6</p> <p>agencies 40:14 41:1</p> <p>agency 36:6 65:20,21 66:13 67:9</p> <p>ago 5:12 6:25 26:24 27:21 32:12 62:20 67:6 69:11 88:19 89:17,19 93:11 97:4 107:8</p> <p>agonizing 57:15</p> <p>agreement 77:7</p> <p>agriculture 12:18</p>	<p>ahead 2:4,6 5:22</p> <p>aid 79:16 85:2</p> <p>Alabama 53:1,4 99:5,11</p> <p>albeit 47:19</p> <p>Alcoa 51:10 53:11 56:3,19</p> <p>Alcoa's 53:13</p> <p>alive 91:14</p> <p>allocating 53:22</p> <p>allow 46:4 64:25 76:23 77:8</p> <p>allowable 43:25 48:6</p> <p>allowed 10:6 78:8</p> <p>allowing 7:7,22 13:22 14:9 21:3 34:7 58:16 62:3 74:2</p> <p>allows 41:12 68:7</p> <p>Allred 64:1,3,7 110:19</p> <p>alternate 53:20</p> <p>alternative 28:1</p> <p>alumina 70:7</p> <p>aluminum 5:11 6:9 12:18,22 14:24 15:6 29:10 30:7 32:24 37:16 43:19 46:24 47:10,10 51:2 51:13,14,16,23 52:6,7 53:15 64:22 68:3 71:19 72:21,24 73:14 74:8 76:6 80:18 91:4,11 97:5,9 98:6,16 98:18,19,21,21 100:22 102:2,4 102:10,13,17 102:20,23,25 103:5</p> <p>Aluminum's 103:1</p>	<p>amazed 97:10</p> <p>amazing 27:14</p> <p>Ameren 1:14 2:7 2:9 3:16 8:16 10:5,14 13:11 13:20 27:8,10 28:6 36:5 37:4 41:5 42:8,15,23 43:1,1,19,25 44:2,11,14,18 44:20,22 45:2,4 45:9,11,13,25 46:3,7,11,25 48:10,25 58:2 63:6,16,18,19 66:16 67:13 74:12 75:2,22 76:17 77:10 78:2,8 88:20,25 89:4,25 94:7 100:23 104:22 106:24 109:3</p> <p>Ameren's 3:18 42:4 43:6,16 45:12,18,20 46:25 60:12,13 90:16</p> <p>America 51:6</p> <p>American 47:15 53:7 55:19 57:18 58:5</p> <p>amount 84:13</p> <p>amounts 40:21</p> <p>amplifying 49:16</p> <p>analysis 86:15</p> <p>ancillary 22:23</p> <p>Anderson 53:2</p> <p>Andrew 7:15,17 7:21,23 110:4</p> <p>angles 20:10</p> <p>annual 17:13 26:14,15 45:11 82:24 87:23</p> <p>annually 46:1 64:13 65:4</p> <p>anode 69:16,18 70:16</p>	<p>anodes 69:14,17 71:18</p> <p>answer 3:5 9:5</p> <p>anticipated 44:21 46:2</p> <p>anybody 61:6</p> <p>anymore 52:20</p> <p>anywheres 56:6</p> <p>apparent 52:8 55:21</p> <p>appear 13:22 37:12 43:10</p> <p>appearances 2:7</p> <p>appeared 43:9</p> <p>appearing 2:8,15 2:20</p> <p>appears 49:6</p> <p>appointed 47:25</p> <p>appointment 48:1</p> <p>appreciate 3:21 7:11 9:22 21:9 34:6 36:10,17 60:9 74:2 75:14 88:14 92:5 96:10,16</p> <p>appropriate 100:2</p> <p>appropriately 98:4</p> <p>approved 64:21</p> <p>approximate 63:11</p> <p>approximately 21:23 38:13 58:24 83:3 92:12</p> <p>April 69:11</p> <p>Arabia 57:11</p> <p>area 6:9 8:14 9:25 10:1,7,10 18:25 19:22 21:3,15 25:14 26:12,15 27:3 28:1,15 29:12 35:17,21 36:13 40:15 58:22</p>
----------	--	--	--	---

59:11,21,25 61:3 62:17 63:3 65:9,23 70:1 74:16 76:9 79:4 81:4 83:11 86:14,15 87:1,7 88:3 95:20 96:7 96:14,15 101:14,16,18 101:20 102:2,9 102:22,24 106:17 areas 13:7 67:8 78:25 79:14 arguments 62:7 Arkansas 35:19 35:20 38:17 53:3,4 60:24 85:8 arrive 95:15 art 69:16 Aside 16:19 asked 19:20 37:25 44:20 64:14 70:8,9,13 70:15 asking 83:20,21 89:5 93:3 94:6 94:7 95:13,14 96:6 asks 48:8 78:1 aspect 17:2 assessment 102:11 assigned 92:7 assignment 52:23 92:14 assistance 104:16 associated 102:22 associates 54:10 association 17:13 67:24 78:5 Association's 18:22 assure 87:25 attack 104:18	attainment 16:2 attempting 38:8 attend 40:12 attended 80:19 attending 3:14 25:2 108:11 attorney 112:10 attorneys 33:4 36:20 42:19 48:22 attract 20:4 28:3 28:7,8 attracting 21:14 attractive 74:19 audacity 46:8 48:7 AUDIENCE 4:23 5:19 9:14 14:11 103:14 August 32:23 46:15 71:25 aunts 38:24 available 8:10 45:23 Avenue 2:11 109:5 average 44:7,16 54:5 avoid 94:8 awarded 43:3 aware 9:25 12:21 20:17 25:12 71:24 awe 69:25 awful 55:23	96:15 106:25 107:1,2,19 108:1 backbone 21:19 background 30:1 69:8 70:21 backs 66:21 backwards 28:2 bad 17:4 85:10 Baden 56:20 baking 70:16 balance 76:23 77:3 bank 20:12 81:14 banker 81:11 bankrupt 24:10 banks 30:16 Barbecue 15:7 barge 15:6 Barnes 23:9,10 23:14,14 110:9 base 59:22 68:6 based 44:19 98:14 basic 74:14 75:14 76:11 77:25 basically 27:11 78:9 84:21 85:11 95:25 basing 44:18 basis 49:12,17 72:19 bear 48:11 becoming 57:21 84:2 bed 14:13 beg 58:2 beginning 2:7 50:15 56:3 67:2 begins 103:8 behalf 2:8 4:9 38:1 40:10 41:10 64:9 65:19,23 67:9 67:10 74:4 77:23 78:23 92:6 94:5	behavioral 70:14 believe 3:15 8:24 24:17 26:10 36:25 50:9 52:20 55:3 73:7 76:15 80:8 88:23 believed 71:2 bellies 98:17 benchmark 15:16 bend 28:2 beneath 72:20 beneficial 76:22 benefit 11:11 38:4 64:13 86:10 95:18 benefited 35:8 102:1,7,24 103:3 benefits 8:15 14:20,21 15:4 16:5 59:9 71:21 104:11 Benton 85:7 Berry 41:18,19 41:23 42:3,21 48:20 50:8 110:15 Berry's 49:16 best 11:5,13 18:1 52:13 56:16 61:15 71:21 85:2 112:5 bet 28:5 better 5:2 9:16 36:8 101:19 beyond 10:5 61:1 106:1 big 30:14 56:6 69:25 79:22 biggest 87:6 98:13 99:2 bill 44:14 100:24 107:11,14 billion 43:7,7 45:20	bills 63:13 Billy-300 70:17 bit 9:16 29:25 bleak 47:16 72:6 blessed 106:1,1 blocks 31:17 blow 56:16 Bluff 60:24 board 20:11,16 20:22 21:1,8 40:11 41:11 62:5 Bob 103:12 boils 43:15 boost 15:4 Bootheel 7:4 8:4 8:9 13:7 15:2 35:21 51:5,11 56:4 57:17,19 58:4 65:2 75:8 81:4,12,15 82:13 87:24 bootheel-area 40:11 born 35:20 101:22 103:1 bottom 76:3 bottom-line 18:2 bought 26:24 35:6 94:25,25 104:4 bounced 24:2 Bowl 81:25 82:4 Branson 25:22 25:25 26:2 bread 38:23 break 58:24 Brewen 65:14,15 65:19 67:16 110:20 bridge 71:18 briefly 12:10 bring 31:14 40:21 47:6 bringing 8:1 brings 84:23 broken 32:16
	B			
	B 111:15 bachelor's 32:1 back 20:4 27:18 31:6,14,22 32:2 32:5,7 34:12,16 35:2,13,21 37:17,18 39:11 48:5,11,13 51:11 61:4 81:3 81:24 82:3 86:9			

<p>broker 31:20 brothers 30:2,12 brought 89:7 101:22 Brown 67:17,18 67:22,22 110:21 Brydon 2:10 109:4 BTU 44:8 bubble 53:12 budget 14:15,16 66:2 budgets 6:18 build 27:17 30:6 building 81:19 84:19 buildings 86:16 built 12:23 22:2 26:1,2,20 30:1 84:16,19 burden 10:9,11 58:1 75:10 106:12,15 bureau 15:13 bureau's 16:10 business 2:9 11:6 19:20 20:19 27:6 43:6 51:8 51:17 58:23,24 59:4,15 60:3,15 69:10 70:11 73:2,3 74:4,9 74:14,16,18 75:4,12,15 84:6 102:12 104:7 104:25 105:1,2 107:22 businesses 11:11 11:15 19:4 22:23 54:13,15 56:12 59:21 60:4,18,19 61:4 61:5 62:16 63:1 68:9,11 75:10 75:20,21 90:7 90:12 95:23</p>	<p>102:22 businessman 12:14 buy 24:5 38:25 39:1,9 62:25 83:16 90:15 95:6 buyer 94:25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <hr/> <p>C 2:1 109:1 California 30:3 call 2:23 23:24 50:1 69:13 93:3 98:12 called 23:19 52:3 52:4 53:10 70:17 campaign 40:21 Campbell 103:20 103:24,25 104:2 105:10 111:10 campus 21:7 Can-am 54:14,15 cap 49:8 capacity 51:15 56:24 Cape 1:11 50:1 65:22 66:4 85:5 85:5,6 89:24 104:4 capital 2:11 51:17 84:9 capitalism 77:8 Capitol 109:5 capped 44:23 care 16:23,25 17:2,4,8,14,17 18:4,11,15 48:2 career 97:22 98:13,14 Carolina 38:17 56:20 carry 75:10 Caruthersville 25:5 27:9</p>	<p>case 8:16 26:5 37:3 43:15 46:22 71:20 74:11 93:9 cases 49:4 92:18 93:23,24 cash 52:4 55:10 casualty 100:3 catalyst 20:6 categorically 23:2 cause 10:22 75:3 81:16 caused 10:8,15 CCR(MO) 1:22 census 15:13 center 12:19 14:13 15:8 17:6 18:5 85:23,24 86:11 87:9 88:2 centrally 21:10 cents 44:7 Century 29:14 CEO 14:12 48:10 certain 6:12,16 52:12 81:17 certainly 86:15 96:11 CERTIFICATE 112:1 Certified 112:2 certify 112:4 CFO 45:24 CGLPH 50:1,3,3 50:5,16 111:17 111:18,19,20 111:21,22 chairman 1:19 2:6 3:9,10,12 4:25 5:20 7:10 7:21 8:4,17,19 8:21 11:25 13:23 14:8 19:10 20:16,22 23:7 24:16,25 28:19,22,24 33:13 36:18</p>	<p>39:23 40:3 41:16 50:8 58:8 61:18 63:24 65:12 67:16 68:24 73:18 77:12 78:13 80:6 85:15 88:5 90:20 91:19 96:19 97:3 100:8 101:11 103:10 105:10 108:6 challenge 53:11 challenged 6:9 34:9,19 35:3 challenges 25:13 Chalmette 53:1 chamber 62:5 74:6 75:17 76:4 95:23 change 51:20 changing 60:15 chaos 97:12 charge 44:16 90:12 charged 86:2 charitable 68:18 charities 96:3 Charles 29:1,2,5 29:5 33:2,6,10 33:12 37:15 52:24 82:18 110:11 chart 49:10 cheap 57:13 cheaper 99:1 check 11:7 chicken 23:17 CHIEF 1:18 children 57:22 79:6 80:2 85:23 88:1,3 children's 16:2 China 51:21 57:12 98:19 choice 35:25 72:2 choose 11:2</p>	<p>48:16 98:15 chop 23:21 chose 98:14 chosen 17:12 Christi 53:2 chunk 66:8 church 13:15 churches 68:17 cities 20:5 67:25 101:6 citizen 91:12 citizenry 22:10 66:11 citizens 10:2 13:6 23:1 68:8 75:14 83:12 101:19 106:19 city 2:11,16 9:21 21:20 56:6 62:6 67:23 68:7 86:14 106:20 107:5 109:5,10 class 22:7 38:6 66:22 67:11 clear 31:22 53:12 clearly 69:12 client 59:22 climb 72:4 clinical 86:13,17 close 9:1 14:2 35:18 39:3 41:7 41:9 47:11 52:23 59:22 61:4 62:11 63:7 63:18 67:3 82:25 83:10,13 83:16 84:24 91:23 96:4 closed 47:14 52:25,25 53:1,1 53:2,3,3,4,5,5 55:14,14,15,16 55:16,17 56:12 56:19,19,20,21 56:22 71:5 72:25 83:15 94:2 99:20</p>
--	---	--	--	--

<p>closer 9:16 closes 40:24 57:3 closing 39:7,17 73:9 75:21 84:5 87:25 93:25 closure 72:21 93:17 102:23 103:5 coal 42:13 44:9 49:8 97:20 coast 53:9 97:19 99:17 coffee 98:16 cold 32:10,11 Cole 81:23 collapse 47:6 colleagues 57:16 collect 63:10 collected 54:21 collector 25:11 college 21:7,25 24:4 58:18 color 98:22 Columbia 25:3 56:19 come 2:24 32:7 34:7 36:3,11 51:11 52:2 62:9 65:2 66:24 79:7 82:3 85:6 93:3 95:25 96:9,15 103:15 104:6,9 105:18 Comer 61:19,21 61:24 62:3,4 63:25 110:18 comes 10:11 84:21 86:20 87:19 Comfort 52:25 coming 13:16 59:24 66:13 67:2 69:11 86:21 87:1 comment 35:24 36:5 comments 3:11</p>	<p>19:24 commerce 62:5 95:23 commercial 18:1 18:7,12 20:24 21:21 82:1,4 commercially 17:21 commission 1:4 2:5,14 3:24,25 4:9 5:14 6:24 7:1 8:15 19:18 24:11 28:18 35:9 36:12 42:22 43:10 44:15 46:6 47:13 61:13 74:3 76:23 77:3 78:2 94:7 107:17 109:14 Commissioner 1:20 58:2 commissioners 3:23 4:4 6:25 28:10,20 92:5 96:6 commission's 74:8 committed 6:3 7:25 93:11 commodity 51:24 84:6 98:14 common 76:22 98:2 communities 6:14 20:4 22:22 61:10 64:17 65:9 66:11 75:6 76:2 77:9 78:23 79:4 87:8 95:11 99:22 community 17:9 19:7,20,23 20:9 20:20,25 21:3 22:1,6,16 29:8 29:9 30:9,12,17 32:5 34:8 35:8</p>	<p>36:13 61:12 62:13,24 64:10 64:15,23 65:8 65:20 68:5,7,15 72:11 82:1,22 91:12,16 103:7 companies 74:11 company 1:14 2:9 24:9 26:22 36:6 39:11,12 39:16 48:17 49:2 59:4,9 60:10 62:11 66:18 68:13 81:1,23 82:10 82:10 93:3 98:15,20 company's 59:12 59:15 compared 16:7 17:20 comparison 82:18 compensation 45:20,22 49:3 compete 57:9,13 competing 98:19 Competition 11:6 competitive 55:25 59:4 60:8 76:18 77:5 84:22 93:15 competitiveness 60:11 competitor 99:1 complex 102:2 component 22:13 components 22:11 52:8 compounded 46:1 compromise 46:15 47:17 compromised 46:18 47:22 77:7</p>	<p>concept 74:10 75:15 concern 11:7 68:1,20 92:18 104:2 concerned 9:23 24:7,8 75:14 79:1,1 concerns 6:15,19 6:22 10:3 36:24 37:6 49:5 92:22 96:7,17 concert 86:10 concluded 4:8 108:12 condition 16:24 conditions 16:15 conducts 17:13 confirmed 48:1 congressional 13:7 consecutive 46:7 consequence 72:13 consequences 76:13 conservatively 15:17 consider 13:10 24:11 33:8 41:11 58:3 80:2 84:25 105:21 105:25 considerably 89:22 consideration 13:13 19:9 22:18,20 23:4 61:14 63:4 68:21 88:16 89:12,15 90:18 considered 16:10 considering 39:20 46:14 59:12 consistent 101:2 consistently</p>	<p>77:25 constantly 91:11 construction 12:24 84:16 102:24 construed 7:3 consumer 46:17 60:19 consumers 48:12 contained 78:3 content 36:25 continually 60:6 continue 33:7 40:24 60:8 79:24 82:7 87:20 continued 22:14 83:2 87:4 contract 52:11 contracted 53:20 contractors 38:18 contrary 27:8 contribute 59:16 contributes 82:21 contributing 30:11 64:12 91:16 contributions 40:19 82:21 control 40:2 controller 54:17 convey 102:11 Cooper 33:19,20 33:22 34:1,2,3 34:3,6 36:18 110:12 cope 102:23 core 6:24 corn 12:20 corporate 28:6 45:13 74:23 corporation 48:5 48:8 Corpus 53:2 correct 61:20</p>
---	--	--	--	--

<p>80:9 correctly 8:25 14:1 24:18 91:22 100:12 cost 10:24 17:4 17:24 18:3 41:9 42:11,12 43:21 43:22 44:7,13 44:17,21 46:11 46:20 52:2,4,7 52:17 53:14,15 54:4 57:9 58:25 60:9,20 64:21 70:25 71:3 72:25 74:18 84:8 89:18 90:14 91:15 93:24 94:22 98:24 costs 44:3,5,25 45:8 53:17 60:14 74:17 76:21 84:7 89:19 94:23 cotton 12:21 23:20,21,21 34:14 35:13 counsel 2:19,21 109:8,9 112:7 112:10 counsel's 46:14 counteract 76:9 counties 7:5 15:12,15 34:10 35:4 65:21 82:14 87:17 counting 7:5 10:24 countless 72:11 countries 57:25 country 16:21 45:15 51:13 58:22 59:14 62:21 95:20 county 5:8 6:16 6:18,18 9:18,19 10:21,22 15:11</p>	<p>15:20 25:2,4,9 25:9,12 26:6 31:3 34:10 35:15,16,16 51:5 53:2 66:4 66:25 67:24,25 68:7 78:22 79:12,16,21,21 79:23 83:1 87:12,13,14,15 87:16 couple 29:13 30:13 69:6 course 3:6 53:21 court 4:2 112:2 cover 45:10 66:15 covers 65:21 coveted 59:7 cows 36:3 co-op's 27:19 crane 71:18 cranes 69:14 97:11 create 26:9 50:25 created 5:13 25:20,21 57:6 creates 68:6 creating 5:17 6:1 6:6 107:4 creep 51:23 crippling 27:13 crisis 51:23 critical 6:8 26:11 critically 6:13 crucial 21:17 68:8 CSR 112:16 curiosity 107:11 current 43:16 46:5 47:4 95:22 currently 25:11 47:8 82:14 86:12 curvage 52:4 customer 11:5 75:22 90:11</p>	<p>100:23 customers 11:9 11:10,14 43:5 43:18,22 45:5 46:13,23 75:24 89:25 90:3 cut 52:2,17 61:4 cutting 106:25 107:1,2 cycle 16:3 69:25 C-A-M-P-B-E-... 103:25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <hr/> <p>D 2:1 110:1 111:1 dad 97:8 105:22 dads 38:24 daily 66:1 72:19 80:3 Dallas 29:19,21 30:1 31:10 32:2 dam 30:5 57:7 dangle 36:2 data 15:13 date 86:12 daughter 31:16 daughters 31:16 Davis 96:23,24 97:3,4 100:8 111:8 day 27:11 32:15 34:20 63:16 107:10 days 27:17,18 97:4 99:4 deal 46:18 47:20 deals 37:1 death 61:11 debate 48:3 debt 17:4 decade 83:4 decades 25:23 62:20 69:18 73:3 December 53:24 decent 72:8</p>	<p>decide 48:4,5 decided 47:22 decision 13:10 28:21 36:16 39:10 48:2,3,18 68:22 74:8,22 76:14 80:4 93:13 decisions 84:12 85:1 decision's 93:9 decline 59:21 decrease 31:13 40:23 75:9 79:22 decreasing 84:13 deeply 79:1 degrade 27:7 degree 32:2 71:11 73:15 80:21 deliberations 4:7 delivered 94:3 delivery 43:21 Delta 14:13 15:8 16:13 17:6 18:5 18:16 19:2 40:15 Demolition 55:12 density 98:22 dental 54:11 deny 46:17 depend 18:25 26:16 dependent 76:3 depicting 82:1 Depot 91:8 depressed 35:21 depression 16:6 16:12 describe 42:2 deserve 38:22 design 41:11 61:15 64:24 76:16 designed 60:4 desperately</p>	<p>73:11 despite 74:19 destroyed 27:12 detailed 92:25 detriment 77:8 detrimental 92:20 devastate 11:3 63:21 devastating 27:9 38:18 39:3 40:25 62:13,14 62:15,16 96:2 96:14 developed 34:9 71:9 73:3 developer 21:12 21:16,21 developers 74:15 development 20:19 47:23 77:9 Dexter 9:20 85:4 85:10 die 61:11 died 104:19 diesel 89:21 difference 30:14 96:11 107:24 different 20:10 21:23 50:25 64:16,18 84:15 92:16,17 98:18 108:3 differentiation 98:24 difficulties 21:14 diminishes 103:6 direct 14:20 38:9 53:6 55:18 direction 112:6 directly 20:13 31:4 38:12 87:17 102:1,4 102:19 director 34:8 40:12 74:5</p>
--	--	---	---	---

<p>85:22 directors 20:12 62:6 disabilities 78:6 disappointed 55:4 disaster 85:12 disastrous 59:20 disorders 16:14 Dispatch 45:1 displaced 76:8 disposable 76:1 district 7:24 8:8 8:11 9:12,17,19 12:13,13 13:8 21:13 64:10 78:23 79:3,8,10 79:25 dividends 45:15 45:20 division 102:15 divisions 102:14 document 33:16 41:25 42:4 49:7 documented 26:13 documenting 42:8 documents 36:21 37:1 42:18 48:21,24 49:1,6 50:2 doing 2:9 39:10 43:14 66:16 74:18 84:2 dollar 18:12 86:10 dollars 8:14 10:23 17:7 30:14,16 31:6 35:6 86:25 Don 4:14,16,20 4:20,24 5:1,4,6 5:6,21,24 7:13 100:13,14,15 100:19,19 101:9,12 110:3</p>	<p>111:9 Donnie 67:17,18 67:22,22 110:21 donor 21:6 door 83:24 doors 35:3 57:3 88:1 double 16:18 doubt 96:5 downsized 53:19 downtown 91:8 downward 60:1 dozen 40:13,14 drains 103:7 draw 54:8 dream 105:21 106:1 dreams 101:22 drive 22:6 66:9 66:10 70:5 71:18 85:4,11 driven 58:22 driver 28:14 due 18:20 43:20 59:22 70:25 72:21 73:10 84:17 87:24 102:10 duly 4:17 7:18 9:9 12:4 14:5 19:14 23:11 24:21 29:3 33:23 37:21 40:7 41:20 50:22 58:14 61:25 64:4 65:16 67:19 69:3 73:23 77:16 78:18 80:14 85:19 88:10 90:24 92:1 96:25 100:16 103:21 105:14 Dunklin 8:8 duration 16:8</p>	<p>duty 6:24 dwelling 22:4 dwindling 22:16 d/b/a 1:14</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <hr/> <p>E 2:1,1 109:1,1 110:1 111:1,15 earlier 35:25 65:7 89:7 92:23 106:25 early 30:22,22 31:7 101:14 earn 89:10 earnings 16:3 45:25 46:2 easier 82:9 east 2:11 12:14 13:1 53:9,10 65:19 67:9 109:5 eastern 92:11 eat 89:13 107:15 echo 6:15 Econ 76:11 economic 6:13 8:15 14:23 15:3 25:12 26:12 28:14,15 47:6,8 47:23 48:14 60:21 64:12 74:15 77:9 85:11 87:7 95:18 103:2,6 economy 12:17 12:24 35:17 59:17 67:4 81:13 Ed 23:9,10,14,14 110:9 Eddie 13:20 educate 79:6 Educated 22:2 educating 80:3 education 21:11 76:13 educational 16:2</p>	<p>effect 19:1 38:19 41:3 59:19 60:25 effective 22:25 94:14 effects 38:12 39:4 39:21 54:22 efficiencies 60:8 efficiency 53:18 60:11 71:14 efficient 28:11 efficiently 20:20 71:6 effort 31:12 eight 57:3 65:21 70:2 99:14 either 35:11 36:13 37:16 63:6 69:23 107:15 elderly 65:24 78:6 elected 12:15 25:16,17 43:12 47:18 electric 1:14,15 2:9 20:17 27:19 39:1,2,9 41:12 43:17 46:13,16 46:23 47:22 48:11,12 64:25 67:3 83:18 100:23 electrical 20:20 30:4 84:22 107:11 electricity 10:3,8 22:19 23:3 41:9 46:25 47:1,4,9 47:12 48:17 71:1 72:25 73:10 79:2 90:3 91:15 93:24 99:2 eligible 54:8 embargo 51:22 emergency 16:15</p>	<p>64:17 emotions 54:23 employed 6:21 30:25 37:24 80:18 102:4 112:8,11 employee 28:4 40:20 43:11 54:6 59:15 75:18 86:6 112:10 employees 13:4 27:2,10 30:13 38:9 39:19 54:1 54:7,21 59:5,13 59:18 68:14 71:1,21 73:7,11 76:8 79:6 86:9 87:19 94:4,5 102:6,14,15 employee's 68:14 employer 10:20 20:23 64:12 65:6 73:6 75:2 101:24 employers 8:13 11:2 28:11 56:7 71:13 75:4 employing 73:2 employment 8:7 14:20,25 22:9 71:23 72:5,23 73:11 76:8 empty 60:5 endeavor 81:16 endowment 21:8 endured 48:12 energy 38:2 43:22 44:3,5,6 44:13,21 45:4,8 51:23 76:25 77:6 94:21,22 engineer 29:6 engineering 80:21 engineers 54:16 England 2:11</p>
--	--	---	---	--

<p>109:4 enjoy 21:13 enlarged 79:9 enormity 70:1 enormous 82:22 ensure 82:6 enter 41:24 entering 33:8 enterprises 51:20 entire 27:16 69:17 71:22 78:5 85:11 102:24 entirely 89:2 entities 41:5 91:7 91:10,13 entity 26:21 95:24 envision 22:24 81:25 envy 77:2 equals 75:16 equipment 55:9 60:6 83:17 97:11 equity 44:1 equivalents 14:15 19:2 Eric 50:7,21,24 51:6 110:16 ER-2014-0258 1:15 78:4 especially 17:11 22:4 established 2:13 49:12 establishments 21:23 estate 21:21 estimate 15:17 18:13 estimated 10:22 14:23 18:6 63:12 Europe 70:20 evening 9:20 event 81:25</p>	<p>eventual 72:13 eventually 70:9 70:15 everybody 3:12 84:20 94:7 96:8 104:24 everybody's 107:21 evidentiary 4:8 evolution 95:2 exactly 72:17,19 72:22 73:1 excellent 83:13 exception 96:8 excerpt 49:1 exchange 51:25 exclusive 56:12 excuse 18:6 29:12 75:25 92:19 executive 34:7 40:12 42:8 45:20,22,24 48:9 49:3 74:5 85:22 executives 42:8 58:2 exemplary 27:10 exhibit 37:8 49:25 50:2,3,16 exhibits 49:13,21 49:25 50:3,5,10 exist 101:1 existence 102:5 expand 77:8 expansion 86:11 expectation 72:18 expected 60:17 expects 45:2,25 expended 44:24 expenses 58:24 59:2 75:16 experience 29:14 47:19 69:18 73:13 94:13 95:8</p>	<p>experienced 94:9 experiencing 82:20 explain 78:5 express 4:7 extended 34:18 39:19 extreme 61:9 extremely 40:25 85:9 92:20 eyesore 30:11</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">F</p> <hr/> <p>face 46:20 faced 25:13 32:13 facilities 22:8 39:8 facility 32:13 39:5 84:4 facing 17:11 106:7 fact 9:19 44:5,14 44:17,19 45:14 45:22 46:6 86:18 91:13 93:23 94:2 95:6 factor 93:24 factors 61:14 facts 26:13 43:8 46:21 94:19 fair 96:1,9 fairly 76:24 101:2 fall 22:12 fallback 62:23 fallen 44:9 falling 44:5 Falls 56:20 familiar 8:7 28:17 families 6:7,21 8:11 10:1,9,13 10:15,16,16 15:18 21:18 26:16 29:7 32:16,16,18,20</p>	<p>32:20,20,21 38:13,23 39:15 65:6 67:10 68:14,16 75:6,9 76:10 77:24 78:7 79:5,13 80:2 94:4 101:4 101:5,15 family 10:11 14:18 21:5 22:4 25:7 31:16,21 31:22,23 32:4 34:18,18 38:14 38:23 39:12 72:8 75:12 86:2 97:23 far 85:7 farm 22:16 23:18 50:25 81:5,6,9 farming 81:4 father 21:24 43:13 fault 66:7 favor 33:3 Fayette 85:17,18 85:21,22 111:4 fear 54:24 federal 23:17 fee 26:22 feel 47:21 74:7 75:23 105:7 feels 72:17,20,22 73:1 felt 60:23 69:12 75:25,25 Ferndale 47:16 fewer 56:14 field 35:13 fields 23:20 34:14 fifth 42:14 84:23 84:23 figure 57:14 69:22 figuring 69:24 file 1:14 78:3 filled 72:13</p>	<p>finally 43:24 45:9 46:11 55:23,24 56:1 76:15 financial 10:9 16:22 17:14,16 18:20 39:18 45:12 75:8,18 84:17 financially 10:1 112:11 find 32:17 56:15 72:23 73:10 91:14 101:4,15 finding 71:23 73:4,12 fine 5:5 finished 3:5 56:18 fire 22:7 firmly 23:2 first 2:6 4:13,16 7:17 8:25 9:8 10:23 12:3,7 14:4 19:13 21:12 22:7 23:10 24:20 25:16 26:23 29:2 30:20 31:10 33:22,25 37:20 40:7 41:19 42:2,3 43:20 44:2 46:23 49:25 50:11,21 58:13 61:24 64:3,7 65:15 67:18 69:2,12,15 73:23 74:9 77:15,20 78:17 80:13,25 85:19 88:9 90:23 91:25 93:7 96:24 97:7 100:12,15 101:24 103:18 103:20,23</p>
---	---	--	--	--

<p>105:13 firsthand 6:2 20:12 21:2,13 21:22 fish 36:1 five 3:23 23:23 36:7 41:24 42:14 48:13 49:19,20,21 50:9,12,13 54:16 80:23 86:7 97:8 106:18 fix 106:12 fixed 89:9 107:9 flare 57:11 Fleming 24:9 floats 28:15 flood 51:21 folks 12:9 20:14 65:24 66:22,22 72:10 96:7 follow 57:19 followed 55:12 following 70:12 75:13 103:5 follows 4:17 7:18 9:9 12:4 14:5 16:2 19:14 23:11 24:21 29:3 33:23 37:21 40:7 41:20 50:22 58:14 61:25 64:4 65:16 67:19 69:3 73:24 77:16 78:18 80:14 85:19 88:10 90:24 92:1 96:25 100:16 103:21 105:14 Food 91:9 Foods 24:9 force 21:11 60:18 89:13 forced 35:18 47:1</p>	<p>forcing 35:13 foremost 74:9 form 74:3,14 former 6:14,18 12:1,13 20:16 21:1 48:10 95:21 fortunately 23:24 74:23 76:2 forward 4:11,14 46:4 103:19 foster 77:5 found 6:8 14:23 foundation 49:12 74:15 86:24 four 3:24 15:11 15:20 16:20 25:20 38:14 99:12,16 fourth 42:12 84:1 86:9 fragile 26:12 Francis 66:25 Frank 96:23,24 97:3,4 111:8 frankly 43:14 58:20 59:17 Frederick 47:15 53:10 free 22:2 frequently 16:23 friends 56:10 frightened 58:20 front 2:24 83:25 fuel 43:21 44:13 44:15,17 89:18 89:19,21 full 26:22 69:15 fully 103:2 full-time 14:14 19:2 86:6,8 fun 51:16 fund 44:16 fundamental 21:19 fundraiser 87:6</p>	<p>funds 44:3 furnace 70:16 further 35:22 38:18 66:9 112:9 future 6:22 16:3 20:5 22:16 32:3 41:13 47:16 65:5 71:13 72:5 72:18,20 73:15 101:19 futures 59:6</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">G</p> <hr/> <p>G 2:1 gardening 68:10 Garner 78:16,17 78:21 80:6 110:25 gas 30:15 42:11 44:4,7 49:11 57:11,12 97:19 99:17 108:3 gasoline 38:25 89:20 gate 54:20 gauging 107:25 108:3 general 70:10 generate 55:10 57:7 generated 46:25 99:17 generation 27:2 43:23 44:22 generations 41:13 65:1 gentleman 94:24 105:11 gentlemen 19:18 47:18 48:16 63:16,18 geographic 97:16 Germany 97:23 getting 31:13 71:8 82:4 106:20</p>	<p>ghost 57:20 Gillespie 37:19 37:20,24 39:23 40:1,4 110:13 Gillespien 38:11 39:12,18 Girardeau 1:11 50:1 65:22 give 19:20 29:25 37:18 42:17 54:5 57:19 69:8 81:22 87:3,11 96:9 given 55:11 gives 41:12 45:11 64:24 giving 96:17 glacier 57:5,8 glad 7:9 Glasgow 73:20 73:22 74:1 110:23 Glastellar 100:13 global 51:24 59:5 77:6 go 2:3,6 5:22 10:2,18 18:1 33:16 54:6 55:1 56:5,10 57:24 61:1 63:17 66:3 66:6 73:8 81:9 83:22 88:15 90:6,15 92:23 105:4 106:6 108:10 goal 20:3 goals 76:18 Godwin 88:7,9 88:13 90:20 111:5 goes 13:18 52:7 60:21,25 61:2 85:10 94:20 going 8:18 10:17 10:18 31:20 32:2,5 34:21 36:2,2 39:2,7</p>	<p>49:23,23 54:25 55:1 58:5 63:19 66:5,9,10,10 81:8 83:21 84:4 85:4,6 89:8,13 89:25 90:4,9,9 90:12,14,16 93:11 96:1 104:3,8,20 105:4 106:3,5,8 106:9,9 107:5 107:14,15,15 107:19,20 Goldendale 29:18,21 30:19 31:1,10 47:15 55:16 99:6 good 3:12 4:20 4:21 5:6,7 6:10 14:19 19:6 24:3 28:6 33:20 38:22 52:5 56:13,25 58:10 58:11 59:8 60:3 66:6,7 69:1 72:8,23 73:6,7 81:13 82:11 84:18 91:9,11 91:12,14 92:4 94:16 96:12 98:2,3,8 goodbye 54:20 gotten 81:10 104:14 government 17:20,23 18:11 47:19 governor 47:25 governor's 5:16 5:25 grades 84:15 graduated 80:19 grandchildren 57:22 72:4 grandkids 72:19 grant 86:23 granted 7:2</p>
---	--	--	---	---

granting 39:21	handout 83:21	52:18,19 65:13	hike 38:21 64:21	hotel 15:7 26:1
graph 42:3,10,12	83:21 89:16	91:11 101:12	65:25 75:11	hour 56:5
44:10	hands 73:16	107:20	78:3	hours 27:11
great 8:3 25:6	108:9	heard 10:21	hill 85:7,7	72:11
45:13 68:6,6	hang 31:11	35:24 58:25	hire 54:14 81:23	house 5:9 12:15
97:22,25 98:1	Hannibal 56:22	59:16 62:7	hiring 107:3	104:5
grew 25:1 34:15	happen 20:7	66:23 83:13,20	historical 91:8	household 75:16
groceries 39:1	31:14 58:1	87:7 88:13,15	history 30:19	76:4 82:15 90:6
grocery 13:4,5	83:17,17	88:17,24 92:22	42:4 81:3 88:2	housing 107:13
group 38:14	happened 13:14	93:18 94:1,19	hit 66:1	Hubrecht 8:24
grouped 97:16	55:23	95:17,20 97:14	hoarse 69:9	9:1,2,3,5,8,11
grow 12:22 13:3	happening 67:7	hearing 1:9 2:5	Hodges 12:2,3,7	9:15 11:21,23
45:25	happens 10:19	3:14 4:8,12	110:6	110:5
growing 6:3	52:20	7:23 37:7 50:2	hold 9:15 101:7	hug 55:2
grown 25:24	happy 30:9	52:18 66:13	holders 18:8	huge 38:7 40:18
26:7	hard 10:2 16:4	88:20 96:16	holding 69:14,19	56:11 67:1
growth 20:19	24:1 26:8 53:17	108:12 112:9	hole 66:9	72:24 97:11
21:5 22:5 26:4	55:3 70:8	hearings 105:19	home 24:5 25:1	human 77:25
guess 61:3,8	106:16	hearsay 37:1	36:3 56:10	humble 76:16
102:3	harder 11:16	heart 104:18	59:21 66:7	hundred 89:11
guesstimation	hardest 72:2	Heatherton	72:22 80:22	Hunter 81:11,17
106:7	hardship 39:18	103:12	98:12	Hunter's 81:24
guide 42:15	hardware 68:10	heaviest 75:1	homes 21:19	Huntington
Gulf 53:3 97:19	hardworking	heavy 69:23,23	62:25	38:16
99:16	72:8	held 45:5 98:7	hometown 9:20	hurt 66:11 79:15
gut 93:2	Harless 90:22,23	Hell 107:19	13:1 57:21	79:16
guy 52:21 54:1	91:2,2,19 111:6	help 11:15 22:5	honest 8:4	hydro 97:19,21
55:11 56:1	harmed 78:7	24:6 28:6,8,21	honestly 68:19	hydropower
89:12	Harry 33:18,25	helped 27:19	Honor 2:8 41:23	97:18
guys 57:17	harvested 55:7	30:17	97:3 105:18	hydro-electric
	Harvey 30:2,12	helping 108:2	hook 36:1,2	57:7
	33:18,20,22,25	helps 91:12	hope 36:11 73:8	
H	34:1,1,3,6	hey 95:25	84:24 88:16	I
H 111:15	110:12	high 12:23 17:3	90:17 91:14	ice 27:13 32:13
half 24:10 29:13	hats 38:8	19:5 44:8 47:12	101:19	64:18 72:10,14
31:6 84:16	haul 38:6	59:10 60:22	hoped 32:6	Iceland 57:5
86:24	health 14:19 15:2	61:11 64:25	horrible 56:16	Idaho 32:1
Hampton 2:15	15:4,19,24	80:19 89:2	hospital 14:13	idea 44:2 87:4,12
2:15 109:14	16:20,22 17:2	99:20	15:8 16:22	identification
hand 4:15 9:6	19:6 26:12	higher 15:16,25	17:13,22 18:8,9	50:6,17
14:3 33:4,21	86:24	17:21	18:22 20:23	identifies 49:8
42:18 50:20	healthcare 76:12	higher-up 105:2	hospitals 16:23	II 98:1
58:12 61:23	heap 58:4	highest 18:22	16:25 17:3,11	Illinois 39:17
64:2 65:14	hear 4:23,24 5:16	27:23 47:9	17:14,23 18:2,3	illness 16:4
73:21 80:12	5:19,25 6:12,16	53:14 74:21	18:4,20 20:25	imagine 95:24
88:8 91:24	6:20 9:14 14:11	94:18	22:23	impact 6:13
101:8 103:18	46:18 52:1,16	Highway 15:9	hot 24:1 69:23,23	12:24 14:25
103:18				

<p>16:1,21 18:6 22:24 26:15,21 28:4 32:24 47:8 59:18 69:12 74:7,24 75:7 82:23 84:25 96:2 102:12 103:2,6 impacts 21:2 implementing 70:14 implications 16:19 75:19 importance 19:21 20:24 51:4 important 6:17 11:6 13:9 21:22 22:9,13 26:9 27:3 28:14 35:23 36:4 59:11,11,12 62:8 68:13 importantly 6:20 19:5 impossible 83:12 impress 51:3 impressed 71:13 71:17 improve 31:25 32:4 60:7,11 84:3 104:25 improved 35:17 102:10 improvements 43:24 53:18 60:16 61:6 83:24 104:6,9 104:24 105:5 improving 60:10 Inaction 47:13 inadequate 77:25 inaudible 7:11 8:2 15:7,23 18:21 21:12 23:4 25:9 26:25 29:22 30:6</p>	<p>40:15 43:13 49:2 54:3 55:16 56:9 64:16 69:19,21 70:7 70:13 72:4,15 74:24 75:24 77:4 78:1,6 94:10 99:8 101:2 include 14:21 31:1 78:24 includes 86:13 86:14 including 50:11 income 13:6 28:8 39:15 59:15 65:23 66:6 75:16 76:1 89:9 107:9 incomes 77:24 increase 1:15 10:8 11:3 13:11 13:18 15:21 16:18 22:19,25 23:3 27:5,6 35:12 42:24,25 43:16,20,21,24 44:20 46:2,19 59:2,2,3 63:12 64:23 66:15 67:13 68:2,22 75:3,19 79:2,9 80:1 88:21,22 88:25 89:3,4,9 89:18,23 90:10 90:11,13 94:20 100:24 102:8 104:3,3,9 107:6 107:7,13 increased 10:4 10:10,15 16:16 44:3 45:19 62:12 83:8 84:10 89:5 90:16 101:18 increases 36:7,8 43:2,4 45:9</p>	<p>65:4 76:7 78:11 88:23 increasing 90:17 increasingly 72:5 incredible 22:24 incredibly 53:24 incurred 76:8 incurs 44:13 Index 45:17 indicated 4:1 indicator 17:19 indicators 17:17 indirect 14:24 38:10 39:21 indirectly 14:22 31:2 102:1,7 indisputable 43:8 individual 11:5 11:14,14 21:4 81:13 individuals 11:10 11:12 16:7 29:8 35:3 67:10 102:3 induced 14:21 indulgence 43:14 industrial 21:11 57:20 101:23 102:2 industries 15:5 18:17,24 92:17 98:6 industry 28:3,9 28:10 29:11 32:24 67:1 92:17 97:6 inexpensive 30:4 influence 19:24 20:18 102:10 infomind.com 49:9 information 44:6 49:10 78:10 infrastructure 30:18 43:23 59:24</p>	<p>infrastructure's 28:12 inhibit 77:7 initiatives 70:14 input 3:20 inside 106:14 insight 45:11 installed 43:23 70:23 instance 26:5 instructional 102:15 insurance 14:19 15:2,19 16:5 18:7 19:6 54:11 54:11 insurances 18:1 insured 17:21 integral 68:4 intended 37:11 interest 12:12 39:11 77:3 interested 112:12 interests 12:12 interior 69:13 Internet 49:7 intricacies 71:19 introduced 53:18 invest 66:20 83:3 invested 84:9 investing 66:17 investment 43:25 45:10 70:18 75:8 investor 60:10 investors 42:16 45:11 investor's 42:15 42:15 invests 60:6 involved 61:14 61:16 71:14,15 94:7,11 95:15 involvement 20:9 in-unsured 17:25 Iowa 39:16 irrefutable 46:21</p>	<p>ISO9001 38:5 39:25 issue 8:19 27:20 47:21 62:8 issues 9:24 20:10 21:3 71:3 92:18 92:19 items 41:24 it'll 11:22</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">J</p> <hr/> <p>Jackson 89:24 January 1:10 Jason 13:25 14:2 14:4,8,10,12 110:7 Jeff 106:20 107:5 Jefferson 2:11,16 9:21 109:5,10 jeopardy 59:6 65:7 job 10:18 15:23 16:1,5 22:3,14 27:10 32:17 59:24 66:6 71:2 72:1,4 94:8 105:20,21,21 105:22,23,25 106:1,17 jobs 5:17 6:1,6,7 6:11,13,23 8:1 8:2,5,6,10,11 10:17 14:17,19 14:21,24 15:1 15:18 16:7 19:6 25:13,20 26:9 26:10,11 27:25 28:14 31:3 34:23 39:1,8 41:4,4 46:12,13 48:14,18 51:4 53:7,19 54:2,10 54:16 55:19 56:15 57:1,24 58:5 59:8 60:3 60:22 61:12 62:23 63:19</p>
---	---	---	--	---

65:1 68:6,16 79:14,20 81:6 81:13 82:24 85:5 87:24 93:1 93:16 94:12 95:2 96:12,13 98:3,8 99:21 102:19 106:6,8 106:17,25 107:1,4 John 78:16,17,21 88:18 107:7 110:25 Johnsonville 53:5 99:9 joining 47:14 Jon 37:19,20,24 40:1,4 110:13 Jones 1:17 2:2,4 2:13,18,22 4:13 4:18 5:3,5,23 7:14,19 8:20,23 9:3,6,10 11:19 11:22,24 12:1,5 13:24 14:3,6 19:12,15,17 23:5,9,12 24:15 24:17,22 29:1,4 32:25 33:3,7,11 33:15,21,24 34:2,4 36:20,24 37:6,14,19,22 40:5,8 41:15,18 41:21 42:1,17 48:20 49:18,22 50:7,11,14,19 50:23 53:3 58:7 58:9,11,15 61:17,19,22 62:1 63:23 64:1 64:5 65:11,13 65:17 67:15,17 67:20 68:25 69:4 73:17,20 73:25 77:11,14 77:17 78:16,19 80:5,8,11,15	85:14,17,20 88:4,7,11 90:19 90:22,25 91:18 91:21,24 92:2 96:18,22 97:1 100:7,10,17 101:7 103:9,12 103:15,22 104:1 105:9,11 105:15 108:5,7 Jr 45:24 Jude 101:23 judge 1:18 2:2,13 2:18,22 4:1,13 4:18 5:3,5,23 7:14,19 8:20,23 9:3,6,10 11:19 11:22,24 12:1,5 13:24 14:3,6 19:12,15,17 23:5,9,12 24:15 24:17,22,24 28:23 29:1,4 32:25 33:3,7,11 33:15,21,24 34:2,4 36:20,24 36:25 37:6,9,14 37:19,22 40:5,8 41:15,18,21 42:1,17 48:20 48:25 49:18,21 49:22 50:7,9,11 50:14,19,23 58:7,9,11,15 61:17,19,22 62:1 63:23 64:1 64:5 65:11,13 65:17 67:15,17 67:20 68:25 69:4 73:17,20 73:25 77:11,14 77:17 78:16,19 80:5,8,11,15 85:14,17,20 88:4,7,11 90:19 90:22,25 91:18 91:21,24 92:2	96:18,22 97:1 100:7,10,17 101:7 103:9,12 103:15,22 104:1 105:9,11 105:15 108:5,7 juice 98:16 jump 4:13 June 43:9 44:8 <hr/> K <hr/> K 112:2,15 Kaiser 70:18 Kaiser-Mead 69:10 70:3,16 71:10,21 73:9 Kansas 86:14 keenly 20:17 25:12 keep 8:2,12 10:17 11:7 28:14 31:12 62:23 69:17 74:13 76:20 90:4 91:15 93:8 95:16 96:12 105:3 keeping 5:17 6:1 keeps 89:24 91:13 Kenard 1:17 2:4 Kennett 27:1 Kenney 1:19 2:6 3:12 4:25 5:20 7:10 8:21 11:25 13:23 19:10 23:7 24:16 28:24 33:13 36:18 39:23 40:3 41:16 50:8 58:8 61:18 63:24 65:12 67:16 68:24 73:18 77:12 78:13 80:6 85:15 88:5 90:20 91:19	96:19 97:3 100:8 101:11 103:10 105:10 108:6 Kenny 85:22 86:9 88:1 Kentucky 29:14 39:17 81:18 kept 35:3 key 5:18 6:1 kids 10:12 24:4 72:19 86:1,7,7 86:20,25 87:21 104:13 Kimber 29:1,2,5 29:6 33:2,6,10 33:12,13 37:14 37:15 110:11 kind 12:16 29:25 66:14 80:25 81:2 102:21 Kirkpatrick 100:10 Klickitat 31:3 knew 29:23 53:14 71:17,19 97:12 know 6:2 10:7,11 12:19 13:17,19 15:3 20:12 21:2 21:17,21 22:1 23:20,21 26:8 26:18 28:19,20 34:11,13,14,17 34:25 35:9,15 35:16,18,24 36:1,5,7,10,11 36:12 37:11 40:23 52:17 54:23,25 57:4 57:12 58:23 60:16 62:17 72:16,19,21 73:1 79:16,23 89:11,13,14,20 93:5 94:1 96:9 99:22 104:6	105:19 106:2 106:11,15,23 107:6,21 Knowing 31:25 knowledge 21:13 Kohler 1:22 112:2,15 Korea 105:22 <hr/> L <hr/> lab 86:13,17,20 86:22 labeling 49:25 labor 16:10 52:9 52:9,13 57:13 81:6 84:12,13 102:9 laborer 70:4 labs 86:15 ladies 19:18 lake 52:24 57:6 landscape 74:25 large 18:25 71:10 98:4 larger 21:14 101:6 largest 8:13 19:23 20:23 51:12 64:11,23 65:5 75:2 101:24 Larson 78:25 lasting 39:3 late 20:6 30:21 51:18 101:21 latest 15:13 78:2 law 1:18 17:1 Lawrence 73:20 73:22 74:1 77:12 110:23 layoff 55:11,22 layoffs 40:23,24 75:3,18 lead 47:13 67:1,6 leaders 6:2 leads 17:3 learned 70:4,4,5
---	--	--	--	---

84:14 learning 69:16 leave 11:2 32:22 57:16 59:20 61:3 63:8 85:3 85:4 103:14 104:17 leaving 60:22 101:5 left 23:23 52:13 52:22 55:6 60:20 61:5,12 67:5 71:2 81:7 82:12 84:20 93:20 99:21,21 99:21 100:1 101:15 105:11 legged 22:2 legislature 5:13 6:3 25:10,16 44:23 47:24 48:1 legislatures 95:22 letters 94:3 letting 28:16 36:11 let's 2:3,6 4:13 8:12 42:1 49:24 50:1 level 15:3 75:11 82:16,18,19 levels 17:3 78:10 life 6:22 20:3 21:2 25:1 31:25 32:5 72:2 100:1 101:19 104:21 lifeblood 68:15 lifeline 48:14 lifelong 19:19 lifestyles 20:13 lifetimes 57:9 light 107:14 lights 107:16 limit 98:8 limited 47:19 49:15	line 20:2 30:23 60:24 76:3 85:8 lines 20:15 30:21 30:24 32:14,15 70:2,10 71:16 list 47:14 49:4 55:18 84:3 92:23 103:16 listed 4:14 7:15 8:23 13:25 19:12 23:9 33:18 37:19 listen 96:7 listened 106:4,4 Listerhill 53:4 literally 7:2 73:16 Litigation 1:23 little 9:16 26:24 29:25 56:16 61:9 69:8 89:12 live 12:13 25:6 26:6 35:21 59:13 66:7 67:1 82:16,17,19 100:19 104:4 104:21 lived 31:17,18 94:12 97:23,24 101:25 livelihood 54:12 59:19 livelihoods 38:22 lives 22:22 38:21 58:19 93:22 living 25:15 26:17 66:5 77:24 loads 69:14 local 1:9 2:5 3:14 6:12 19:24 20:12,22 21:1 37:7 44:4 50:1 54:13 62:13 68:9,9,10 74:25 81:10,10,23 82:22 83:12	92:8 locals 20:1 located 21:10,24 58:21 location 38:15 locations 92:12 92:16 London 51:25 long 6:9 8:17 32:12 38:6 39:3 55:13 60:14 69:22 93:11 107:23 longer 56:13 Longview 55:15 long-term 16:11 47:5 look 11:4,13 33:5 36:21 44:4 52:6 61:10 74:16 85:7 106:2,12 106:23 looked 12:16 27:15 32:2 72:5 97:12 looking 4:11 73:11 89:1 105:23 looks 17:16 lose 13:21 15:18 15:19 16:5 36:15 61:11 62:24,24,25 63:10,19 75:20 79:17,20 81:8 82:3,8 83:5 85:12 losing 8:1 18:7 18:13 59:19 loss 10:21,23 15:23 16:1 19:5 47:7 59:22,25 93:1 102:20,21 losses 94:9 lost 5:20 11:9 18:19 24:10 32:14 54:2,10	55:19 63:8 81:16,17 85:5 87:24 96:13 lot 21:16 24:13 26:13 29:23 51:11,17,18 56:3 66:12,23 73:12 84:21 88:13 90:14 95:18,19 96:2 lots 98:5 Louis 1:24 39:13 45:1 48:17 61:1 86:14,20,25 Louisiana 52:24 53:1 99:8 loved 97:12 low 13:6 42:13 44:9 65:23 66:5 74:13,17 76:21 78:7 lower 8:16 59:23 lowering 84:8 lowest 82:15 83:7 lucky 80:21 99:23,24 ludicrous 44:4 Lyons 45:24	100:5 Madrid's 62:18 maintain 31:9 96:12 maintaining 6:6 21:14 major 10:20 11:2 21:12 52:8 56:7 102:14 making 6:18 39:10 51:18 83:24 85:1 97:8 104:22 105:3,5 107:25 man 106:24 107:8 management 54:19 manager 29:22 51:7 100:20 mandated 45:3 manufacture 51:1,2 manufactured 95:1 manufacturer 94:25 manufactures 95:7 manufacturing 51:4 57:1,19,24 58:5 65:1 76:11 81:2,12,21 82:11 Marc 2:20 109:8 Marc.poston@... 109:10 margin 17:10,17 marginal 56:15 margins 46:4 mark 37:7 49:24 marked 50:5,16 market 47:2 48:11 61:1 77:6 98:7 102:9 marketplace 59:5
--	--	---	--	--

M

machinery 55:9
Madison 2:16
66:25 109:9
Madrid 4:22 5:7
15:12 25:9
26:20 29:13
30:20,22,24
32:12 34:10
35:15 47:14
51:7 58:22 62:6
62:17 63:2 67:8
67:23,24,25
72:7,9 78:22,24
79:7,16,21,23
79:25 81:24
82:7,17 83:1,2
87:13 99:25

<p>markets 51:21 marriage 10:12 Marshall 58:9,10 58:13,16,17 110:17 Martin 45:24 Mary 103:20,24 103:24 104:2 111:10 Maryland 53:10 material 99:2 materials 35:6 53:20 84:14 matter 1:14 22:18 37:17 86:18 93:4 Matthews 19:12 19:13,17 23:6,8 78:25 110:8 matured 103:2 maximize 74:12 mayor 6:14 67:23 68:24 mayors 6:12 Mayor's 67:24 ma'am 40:8 88:6 McDaniel 7:16 7:17,21,23 110:4 Mead 70:18,21 70:23 71:5 mean 36:14 meaning 50:1 means 6:6 15:19 70:6,6 mechanism 44:11 median 82:15 Medicaid 17:12 medical 14:13 15:8 17:6 18:5 22:7,8 54:11 104:17 medicine 89:14 104:20 meet 6:18 61:15 76:16</p>	<p>Megan 1:22 112:2,15 megawatts 53:22 melt 57:8 melts 57:5 member 4:23 5:19 9:14 14:11 19:19 20:11 21:1,8 28:18 43:12 54:19 75:21 103:14 members 3:24 14:19 42:22 75:20 92:8,13 93:16 men 14:17 mental 15:24 16:3,19 mentality 35:14 mentally 34:9 mentioned 17:25 22:11 Meredith 103:13 103:13 met 94:24 metal 51:25 52:10 55:8 69:15,19,20 100:21 mic 5:20 101:7 Michael 61:19,21 61:24 62:3,4 64:1,3,7 68:25 69:1,2,6 91:21 91:23,25 92:4 96:21 110:18 110:19,22 111:7 Michelle 40:5,6 40:10 85:17,18 85:21,21 110:14 111:4 microphone 2:24 middle 56:5 Midwest 1:23 migration 101:3 101:10,13,16</p>	<p>103:8 miles 15:8 31:19 72:3 military 27:15 mill 30:2 53:3 70:25 84:16 million 8:14 10:23 14:15,16 17:7 18:14 26:14,15 27:4,5 28:4,5,8 31:6 35:1,2 42:24 44:7,24 45:21 45:21 46:21 47:7 59:3,17 64:12,22 65:3 70:18 75:7 79:11 82:23 83:3 84:9,11 86:10,24 94:21 94:21,22 95:17 96:13 mills 35:6 mind 46:17 mine 51:1 Mineral 66:3 mines 67:4 mining 67:1 minus 75:16 minute 93:3 Mission 91:9 Mississippi 4:22 5:8 15:12 34:10 35:15 87:14 Missouri 1:3,11 1:24 2:10,12,17 5:9,13 6:2,5,7 8:6,14 9:25,25 10:10,16 11:3 11:15 12:14,17 12:20 14:13,18 15:8 16:12 17:6 17:13 18:5,16 18:22 19:2,19 22:15 23:23 24:13 25:1,3,10 25:19,20 26:2,3</p>	<p>26:25 27:1 28:6 34:12 39:13,16 40:14 46:12,13 46:13,16,23 47:7 48:11,14 48:15,18,25 58:20 59:8 62:21 64:13,23 65:2,20 67:7,9 67:13 72:24 74:5,17,20 75:5 76:5,24 77:24 78:5,10 80:20 81:3,7 82:24 83:6,9,11 85:1 86:8,13,24 91:3 91:9 92:11 94:5 94:12 95:18 100:20 101:6 101:25 103:7 109:5,10 112:3 Missourians 18:19 48:8 Missouri's 1:14 6:3 8:12 64:11 65:5 78:2 Missy 58:9,10,13 58:16,17 110:17 mistake 22:13 Mitten 2:8,10 36:23,25 48:25 49:18,20 109:4 mix 17:19,19 18:10,13 mobile 23:17 97:11 molten 69:20 mom 15:7 75:5 107:11 moment 3:2,13 48:21 104:15 Moms 38:24 Monday 3:21 money 24:10 51:18 63:1,8 66:8,17,20 90:1</p>	<p>90:2 91:12 95:19,19 105:3 monopoly 11:8 Montana 56:20 month 63:12 107:12,12,14 monthly 66:1 months 18:20 46:8 48:7 Moore 100:14,14 100:15,19,19 101:9,12 103:10 111:9 morning 33:20 42:7 49:3 mortality 15:25 mortgage 31:20 mother 24:5 107:9 mothers 65:24 motion 86:15 mouth 36:1 move 18:13 31:21 32:17 70:15 72:3,22 moved 25:3 31:22 56:15 101:3 moving 98:7 101:15 multiple 57:9 multiplied 102:21 multiplier 14:24 multi-state 61:2 municipal 20:17 municipalities 59:23 61:4 76:13 Museum 91:8 mutually 76:22</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <hr/> <p>N 2:1 109:1 110:1 111:1 name 2:4,23 4:20 5:6 8:25 14:1</p>
--	--	--	--	--

14:10 23:14 24:18,25 29:5 33:25 47:14 51:6 58:17 61:20 62:4 67:22 81:11 85:21 91:2,22 97:4 100:11,12 100:13,19 103:23,24 105:16 110:2 111:2 names 2:7 name's 80:16 nationwide 42:11 natural 42:10 44:7 49:11 95:12 Navy 34:11 nearly 17:7 18:14 26:14 28:5 38:14,14 necessarily 73:5 necessary 73:13 need 10:13 32:21 35:20 36:15 38:2 39:8 52:14 60:2 81:5 82:11 95:25 98:3 100:23 106:17 needed 81:12 needs 15:3 36:14 44:2,4 59:18 61:15 74:13 76:16,23 78:1 104:22,25 106:17 negative 16:1 17:9 22:24 27:8 negatively 20:18 75:12,18 neighbor 12:25 91:9 neighborhoods 56:12 neighboring 7:5 12:25	Neil 80:8,10,13 80:16,16 111:3 neither 98:14 112:7 net 75:17 never 36:1 55:21 82:9 83:10,15 86:2 105:24 new 4:22 5:7 15:11 21:6 25:9 25:20 26:20 29:12 30:20,22 30:23,23 32:12 34:10 35:15 47:14 51:7 53:5 53:11 58:21 60:6 62:6,17,18 63:2 67:7,23,24 67:25 69:21 70:16 72:7,9 78:22,24 79:7 79:16,21,23,25 81:24 82:7,10 82:17,25 83:2 84:15 87:13 98:10 99:9,25 100:4 newly 25:17 Newman 68:25 69:1,2,6 73:18 110:22 Newport 38:17 night 13:15 nine 27:23 29:11 47:9 74:21 93:20 94:18 102:16 noise 97:10 non-elderly 15:14 non-transferable 71:11 non-unionized 95:9 Nora 100:10,12 Noranda 5:11 6:8,10,13,17,21	8:10,14 10:14 10:20,21 11:1 12:11,18,22 13:4,18,21 14:17,22 15:1 15:11,19 18:13 18:25 19:3,20 19:22 20:6,10 20:13 21:2,22 22:15,17,21 23:15,16,24 24:12,16 26:14 26:16,18 27:4 27:15,18,20,23 29:6,9 34:13,22 34:25 35:1,8,17 37:25 38:1,8,9 38:12 39:13,15 39:22 40:17 41:4,6,12 43:11 43:19 46:20,24 47:3,8 51:2 58:21 59:5,7 60:5,6 62:11,22 63:7,20 64:11 64:15,22,24 65:3,7 66:22 68:2,5,6,8,11 68:13,23 71:24 72:1,7 73:6,6,8 73:8,11 74:8,13 74:20 75:3,6,22 76:6,20 77:10 79:5,7,22 80:18 80:22 81:1,24 82:3,21,23 83:10,15 84:2,3 87:18,25 88:14 88:17 91:4,11 91:16 92:8 94:5 94:17 96:9 97:5 100:22 101:1 101:23 102:2,4 102:10,13,17 102:19,20,23 102:25 103:1,5 105:20,23,25	107:3,7 Noranda's 8:16 19:24 21:17 22:19 23:3 38:4 39:17 47:4 58:25 68:4 71:22 75:19 79:11 82:21 83:20 103:6 north 1:23 38:16 56:20 69:11 northeast 97:20 northwest 29:15 29:20 30:5 97:18 99:11,15 Notary 1:22 112:3 note 38:4 noted 37:6 noticed 95:4 number 2:2 16:14 37:24 50:16 57:2 78:3 79:17 83:14 84:2 95:17 102:3,6 numbered 99:4 numbering 49:24 numbers 56:11 93:20,21 numerous 75:4 75:20 nurse 31:25	occasions 70:20 occupational 86:1 occurred 69:24 occurring 59:25 71:24 101:14 offer 42:23 offered 49:14 72:1 office 2:18,21 7:25 46:14 47:23 109:9 official 6:19 47:18 officials 6:17 offset 44:21 offshores 95:3 Oh 50:11 Ohio 31:22 39:16 56:22 94:2,11 97:19 Oil 51:22 Okay 2:2 5:4 9:3 11:23 34:4 37:6 42:1,17 49:22 49:23 61:22 80:11 103:24 104:2,19 old 24:5 69:15 97:8 once 55:12 86:20 91:5 ones 60:20 95:9 95:10 99:23 105:2 OPC's 46:15 open 35:3 38:3 47:1 73:12 93:8 94:14 opened 34:13 operate 75:15 operated 17:9 operating 14:15 17:17 30:24 40:1 58:23,25 59:3 60:10 70:7 74:17 76:21
--	--	---	--	--

O

O 2:1
object 37:4
objection 38:3
49:1,17
objections 36:22
48:24
obligation
106:11
observations
95:3
obvious 59:18
obviously 40:25

<p>97:15 100:3 101:17 operation 27:15 31:5 43:6 47:5 51:13 70:11 82:7 84:4 102:25 operations 59:16 operators 15:6 opinions 4:6 opportunities 21:5,15,18 22:5 22:9 46:12 98:6 opportunity 3:6 3:17 4:5 5:16 5:24 7:22 12:8 22:14 27:24 28:13,13 30:3 32:19 35:10,10 36:12,21 42:23 64:8 82:6 92:5 92:15 98:9 optimize 52:12 optometric 26:19 optometry 25:5 orange 98:16 order 49:22 52:3 69:7 81:1 82:2 84:7 101:3 ordered 44:15 Oregon 32:2 55:14 organization 75:15 107:17 organizations 68:18 106:4,10 original 55:18 Orleans 98:10 Ormet 47:15 94:2,4 orthopedic 86:19 outcome 112:12 outcomes 15:23 outfits 45:3 outlets 16:25 outlining 38:15 outpatient 85:23</p>	<p>output 31:11 outside 8:6 43:24 76:9 101:6 outstanding 86:19 overages 10:6 overall 77:6 79:15 102:9 overcompensate 76:10 overhead 69:14 71:18 74:13 76:20 over-earned 46:7 48:6 owned 23:17 51:14,20 60:10 Ozark 25:23,24</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <hr/> <p>P 2:1 109:1,1 Pacific 99:15 PAGE 110:2 111:2 pages 42:14 49:19,20 paid 18:12 26:22 30:13 31:5 37:25 45:19 46:3 47:3 pair 17:19,19 18:10,13 panel 39:20 45:6 Pantry 91:9 paragraph 77:20 parallel 15:5 18:16 parent 104:13 parental 16:1 Park 101:23 part 4:7 28:3,22 32:25 35:7 37:11,12 51:5 63:21 68:4 70:21 83:11 participation 3:20</p>	<p>particular 16:4 37:3,3 62:21 particularly 16:4 parties 3:8 61:16 76:17 95:14 112:8,11 partner 28:6 parts 25:9 pass 17:12 75:23 84:7 passed 43:5 path 57:20 patient 17:5,8,20 17:21 patients 15:10 16:17,22 17:1 18:12 20:25 pause 3:2 pay 17:2 18:12 22:6 25:14 30:13 35:2 39:9 42:8 48:8,9 52:11 60:14 82:25 83:1 89:3 89:6 90:10,11 104:4 105:7 107:16 paycheck 24:2,3 payers 17:23 62:14 paying 6:11 19:5 20:24 45:5 57:1 60:22 61:12 65:1 68:6 81:13 90:4,5 94:23 96:12 99:20 106:19 107:4 payroll 14:16 26:14 28:5 40:20 82:22 payrolls 21:17 pays 27:4,23 47:8 65:3 74:20 94:17 pediatric 85:24 86:19 Pemiscot 4:22</p>	<p>5:8 8:8 25:3,8 25:11 26:5 82:15 87:15 pensions 54:8 people 2:3 4:22 5:7 12:12,21 13:3,5 15:22 16:5,9,13 20:3 20:5 24:13 25:24 28:4 29:23 30:25 34:9,19,20 38:13,15,22 46:9 52:10 54:9 54:25 55:25 56:14 57:14 58:23 59:20 61:3 62:23,25 62:25 63:11,20 65:23 66:5 67:2 67:5 72:8 73:7 82:16,17,19 87:10 89:9,10 90:3,5 93:22 97:14 98:3 99:4 99:6,7,9,10,21 100:25 101:3 101:14 105:2 106:3,8,13,17 106:20,21 107:3,4 108:1 peoples 78:6 people's 38:21 percent 15:10,14 15:16,21,21 16:16,17 17:9 31:12 36:8 39:5 39:14 40:20 43:18,18 44:1 44:12,18 45:3 45:14,19,23 46:1,5,6,19,24 48:9,13 51:14 51:15 52:5 56:23,24 77:23 82:16,17,18,25 83:1 84:11</p>	<p>88:25 89:3,22 90:10,15 102:18 percentage 27:6 38:20 performed 72:10 periods 30:13 permission 77:19 Perryville 60:23 persistent 6:10 person 56:4 105:4 personal 19:21 20:2 54:21 75:11,16 76:4 102:8 personally 26:18 55:6 71:9 74:6 94:3,9 perspective 3:18 20:8 22:22 74:10 perspectives 12:11 19:21 Philadelphia 45:16 Phillips 50:7,21 50:24 51:6 58:7 58:8 83:14 92:23 110:16 philosophy 45:13 phone 93:5 physical 15:24 16:20 17:10 85:25 98:22 pick 23:21,22 place 22:12 23:25 25:6 28:12 44:12 48:3,4 52:5 72:17 90:15 placed 48:2 places 26:5 35:7 98:11 plan 22:12 43:13 60:4 plans 72:17</p>
---	---	--	---	---

<p>plant 5:11 6:9 15:9,11 26:20 27:3,25,25 28:7 29:14 30:6 31:8 31:10,12,14,20 32:7,9,10,11,14 35:1 51:9 52:2 52:16 53:10,12 53:25 54:22 55:7,24 57:4,16 58:21 70:18,21 71:5,5 72:7,9 72:21 81:3,8,18 82:2,8,9 83:3,5 83:13 84:1,13 85:12 93:4,8,15 93:17 94:14 95:16 106:6 plants 39:6 45:4 53:14 54:9 70:24 81:19 83:14,16 92:23 92:24,24,25 93:25 95:8,9 platform 22:2 plays 6:17 please 22:18 58:3 4:15 5:23 9:7 11:4,13 42:19 58:3,12 73:15,21 80:2,2 103:19,22 pleased 26:3 plentiful 97:20 98:8 plenty 100:1 plus 29:10 60:22 94:21 97:8 Pobst 96:22 pocket 66:8 104:7,10 point 39:11 52:25 55:25 66:3 70:23 71:4 71:8 72:16 80:25 82:13 83:10 84:1,23</p>	<p>85:3 89:16 104:15 105:6 points 22:20 69:7 69:7 80:23 police 22:7 policies 17:18 policy 18:7 Policymakers 28:2 politicians 95:21 poor 15:24 65:24 66:21 67:10 poorest 13:6 59:13 pop 75:5 Poplar 60:24 populated 72:7 population 15:14 26:6,8 61:11 62:24 76:7 79:15 87:10 89:24 Pop's 15:7 pork 98:17 Portageville 64:9 64:10 80:19 portion 8:9 9:18 70:25 portman 70:10 pose 3:7 position 45:12 60:13 74:12 77:2 78:9 104:14 positioned 21:9 positions 54:16 73:12 positive 26:21 103:6 positively 20:18 possibilities 72:5 possibility 13:17 63:21 possible 75:21 93:15 possibly 31:13 46:3 95:24</p>	<p>Post 45:1 Posten 2:20,20 37:9,18 50:9,12 50:18 Poston 109:8 post-secondary 21:10 22:3 pot 69:13,22 70:2 70:4,10 71:16 71:17 potential 71:13 76:7 103:5 pots 69:20 70:5,5 72:12 80:17 pound 98:15,17 98:18 pounds 84:11 poverty 6:10 66:10 78:10 82:13,16,18,19 82:20 85:8,9 power 7:2 27:20 30:4 31:8,9 45:3,5 52:9 53:22 57:5,7,12 59:1,2 60:15,17 71:3 76:1 94:14 98:4 99:4,14,16 99:17,20 100:2 Powers 38:11 39:12,18 practical 74:9 practice 26:19,19 26:22,25 27:1 practiced 25:5 Prairie 12:14 13:1 pray 73:8 predecessors 5:12 7:1 predictably 72:13 preparation 66:14 presence 14:22 22:14 present 4:19</p>	<p>42:11,13 71:12 109:13 presentation 28:17 83:14 presently 34:18 35:10 president 14:10 14:12 45:24 62:5 Presiding 1:17 pressure 17:10 pretty 24:3 52:18 62:8 93:5 94:10 prevent 84:2,4 93:17 previous 97:14 previously 98:7 pre-World 98:1 price 47:2 52:6 89:21 99:13,13 99:15,17 priced 98:4 99:4 99:20 100:2 prices 11:7 31:8 44:4,9 45:18 49:8,11 73:10 108:3 pride 45:13 Priggel 80:9,10 80:13,16,16 85:15 111:3 primary 16:25 37:10 38:3 39:6 93:24 principle 74:14 prior 12:15 23:16 29:19 34:13 49:4 private 8:13 22:25 65:6 privately 45:5 privilege 4:21 25:8 28:16 proactively 93:12 probably 34:21 39:13 53:6,13</p>	<p>54:2 56:25 94:15 96:5,14 100:25 106:7 problem 83:8 98:13 procedures 40:2 proceed 7:20 9:10 12:6 14:7 14:9 19:16 23:13 24:23 29:4 34:5 37:23 40:9 41:22 42:20 50:23 58:15 62:2 64:6 65:18 67:21 69:5 73:25 77:18 78:20 80:15 85:20 88:12 91:1 92:3 97:2 100:18 104:1 PROCEEDIN... 1:7 process 29:6 53:18 72:12 98:23 produces 70:7 producing 53:15 71:19 product 35:1 production 13:2 39:6,7 51:15 54:17 56:23 72:10 84:10 products 51:22 76:12 100:22 professional 91:6 professionally 74:7 professionals 22:8 profit 46:9,9 48:7 74:11 75:17 76:19 104:23 104:23 107:21 107:22,25 108:2</p>
---	---	--	--	---

profitability 31:9 66:18	68:5	quarter 86:20	46:11,19 47:9	realizing 70:1
profitable 66:16 66:19 95:16	providing 14:18 17:4 21:18	question 3:4 43:15 45:7 93:7	49:4 52:14,14	really 61:9 81:6 93:10
profiting 107:24	76:10,18 88:2	questions 3:2,6,7 3:7 7:9,10 8:21	53:21 57:4 58:3	reason 24:8 36:6 43:19 47:11,11
profits 10:5 11:9 46:4 48:6,17 74:12	PSC 43:25 46:17 69:9	19:10 23:6,7	59:1,10 60:3	88:20
program 44:23	PSCS 46:12	33:12 41:16	61:15 64:21,24	reasonable 60:15 77:1 99:3
programs 64:16 64:19 96:3 104:11	PSE 88:16	63:24 73:18	64:25 65:4,25	reasonably 99:19
progressing 81:5	psychological 16:13	78:12	66:10,15 67:13	reasons 89:17 97:17,17
project 66:20 81:14 107:13	public 1:4,9,22 2:5,18,21 3:14	quick 13:14 80:23	68:1,22 74:21	rebate 44:22
projects 70:20 84:9 102:17	3:20,20 5:13,15	quickly 60:23	75:3,11,19	rebates 43:22 44:22
promote 5:15	6:5,8,23,24 7:1	quite 58:20 59:17 68:18	76:16,22 77:1,7	rebuilding 27:11
promoting 6:5	7:3,4,23 19:18	<hr/> R <hr/>	78:3,11 88:21	recall 52:24
pronounce 8:25 14:1 24:18 61:20 91:21	35:9 37:7 42:22	R 2:1 109:1	88:22,23 89:9	receive 38:2,5 86:3
proper 49:11	46:5,14 49:16	race 11:9	89:18 90:13	received 80:20 89:17 94:3
properties 98:22	50:2 76:12 77:3	raise 4:15 9:6 14:3 25:6 33:21	94:14,20 95:15	receiving 93:2
property 21:6	78:1 82:11	43:17,25 50:20	95:15 107:6,7 107:13	record 2:3 4:3 11:22 28:18
proposal 46:11 46:15	88:18,19 107:8	58:11 61:22	rates 10:4,8 15:25 20:18	33:1,9,15 36:22
proposed 13:11 42:23 59:1 79:1	107:17 109:8,9	63:7 64:1 65:14	24:12 31:9	37:5,8 41:24
prospect 58:20	109:14 112:3	73:21 78:8	43:17 45:6 47:4	48:23 77:21
protect 44:12 46:12 77:3	purchased 51:24 84:14	80:11 88:7,20	47:12,22 48:12	103:17 108:8 108:10
protection 22:7	purchasing 76:1	91:24	60:18 62:12	RECORDED 111:16
proud 43:11 86:4 87:2 95:5	pure 46:9	raised 34:17 46:5 87:11,20 104:12	63:7,9,10 67:4	records 11:18 71:14 72:10
proves 38:5	purely 37:1	87:11,20	76:18 78:8 79:2	recoup 90:12
provide 3:17 7:6 21:4 48:14 60:3	purpose 5:14,14 49:15	104:12	83:18 84:22	recover 44:12
68:8 76:25	pursue 84:8,8	raises 48:9	88:21 90:4,6,7	recovery 43:22
77:25 83:9	push 35:20	raising 24:12	90:8,10,17	recruiters 74:16
85:25 87:21,21	put 11:8 27:17 37:16 46:4 57:7	ran 7:25 55:6 67:4,6	94:18	recyclers 15:6
provided 14:20 17:7 18:11 35:5	63:12 92:13	range 15:5 21:4	ratio 17:19,22 18:10,14	red 32:9,10
41:4 44:10 87:3 97:22	puts 46:9	ranked 18:21	Ravenswood 56:18	reduce 53:17
provides 6:10 8:14 14:17 59:7	putting 59:5 65:5 107:2	ranks 45:14	raw 84:14 99:2	reduced 31:11 39:2 47:2 112:6
	P-O-B-S-T 96:22	rate 5:10 7:5 8:16,16 9:23	reach 45:2	reduces 15:23
	P-R-I-G-G-E-L 80:9	11:2 13:11,18	reached 55:24	reduction 5:10 7:6 19:9 35:12
	p.m 108:12	15:20 17:18	reaching 39:16	38:21 39:21 44:15
	<hr/> Q <hr/>	19:9 22:19,24	read 4:1,5 27:4 77:20 100:13	reductions 17:18
	quality 5:17 6:1 6:6,7,10,22	23:2 27:23	reading 100:11	
	21:2 40:2	31:13 37:3	real 21:21 63:20	
	quantities 98:4	38:21 41:11,12	93:20,22,22	
		42:5,24,25 43:2	reality 101:20,22	
		43:16,20 44:18	realize 35:24 36:4 41:3 103:2	
		44:20 45:9	realized 70:5 81:11 83:23 84:3	

<p>refer 39:25 referred 91:6 reflective 19:25 reform 17:12 regard 76:6 regarding 74:8 regardless 16:23 17:1 region 15:3,11,20 16:21 18:8,17 19:4 39:4 47:7 59:14,20,25 60:21 61:2,10 71:22 75:10 86:2,21 87:11 87:22 regional 74:6 75:2,4,17 76:4 regions 97:17 registered 31:24 regular 63:9,9 regulated 11:8 36:6 regulating 36:8 regulations 81:19 REGULATORY 1:18 reimburse 17:23 reimbursement 10:6 17:18 reiterated 74:20 reject 78:2 rejected 67:13 related 31:4 112:7 relationship 16:8 relative 112:10 relevance 37:2 relevancy 49:12 reliable 76:25 relief 52:14,14 53:21 57:4 58:3 relocate 79:14 rely 8:11 remain 48:21 77:5</p>	<p>remained 54:1 63:2 remaining 47:9 74:21 94:18 remains 45:7 remember 32:14 55:20 69:12,15 69:19,21,24,25 73:15 101:2,5,9 101:16,17,18 remembers 101:1 remind 3:4 reminded 56:3 reminds 51:10 remove 18:8 removed 55:8 removing 81:5 renewable 44:21 45:4 renewal 45:7 rent 107:12 reopen 71:4 repaired 56:14 repeating 69:25 repeats 16:3 replacement 71:23 report 42:7,16 45:11 49:3 reported 1:21 45:1 reportedly 10:5 46:7 reporter 4:2 112:1,2 reporting 49:2 reports 44:6 49:7 91:11 represent 4:21 5:7 8:8 39:18 40:13,20 67:11 67:23 92:8,12 93:16 representative 4:14 7:15,24 8:22,24 9:12,17</p>	<p>11:25 12:2 92:7 92:15,21 representatives 5:9 25:17 92:10 represented 70:17 representing 25:8 78:22 represents 39:5 39:13,15 42:25 request 3:19 19:9 42:5 43:17 44:18 46:3,18 78:2 84:25 requested 43:2 45:9 46:19 require 73:13 83:8 required 9:21 17:1 research 15:25 86:17 resent 104:8,10 105:6 resident 91:3 residential 20:19 21:16 22:4 60:19 63:13 residents 16:20 21:15 61:5 76:24 81:15 residing 2:5 resolved 8:19 71:4 resource 95:12 respect 3:18 respected 75:6 responsibility 7:2 46:16 responsible 19:1 20:13 rest 15:17 28:20 29:14 33:7 77:21 104:21 restarted 72:14 restarting 71:16 72:12</p>	<p>restaurants 30:15 90:8 restructured 53:19 result 41:7 resulting 15:24 results 15:24 74:25 retail 21:15,23 22:5 76:11 retain 26:10 28:11,13 retaining 93:15 retention 26:11 retired 13:15 20:11 24:6 91:4 91:5 94:24 97:5 retiree 91:4 retirement 24:7 24:10 return 21:24 33:16 44:1 80:22 returned 45:15 returns 45:10 76:19 revenue 17:20,21 25:11 43:6 56:9 59:23 79:10,11 79:12 87:23 96:13 revenues 1:15 17:25 56:15 reverse 18:2 review 42:19 reviewed 48:22 Reynolds 40:5,6 40:10 110:14 re-increase 3:19 rice 12:22 34:15 rich 12:20 88:2 rid 36:2 81:10 ridge 85:10 right 4:13,15 9:6 14:3 28:21 30:5 30:10 32:15 33:21 35:13</p>	<p>40:17 50:13,18 50:19,20 58:12 61:22 64:2 65:14 73:21 80:11 88:8 89:1 91:24 94:8,23 104:17 ripple 19:1 60:25 rise 15:20 risen 43:7 45:21 48:13 rising 89:18 riv 57:6 river 30:10 31:18 97:20 Rivers 21:7,8 58:18 Rmitten@bry... 109:6 Roads 56:13 Robert 1:19 2:6 90:22,23 91:2,2 111:6 Rockdale 51:9,10 51:12 52:15,22 55:21,24 56:1,3 56:7,8,17 57:21 rod 84:16 Roger 96:23 Rogers 85:23 88:1 ROI 22:21 role 6:17 rolling 30:2 70:25 rollover 41:3 59:19 75:7 Rone 4:14,16,20 4:21,24 5:1,4,6 5:7,21,24 7:13 110:3 room 2:24 3:8 16:15 69:17 70:4 rooms 26:1 69:13 69:22 rose 45:23</p>
---	--	---	---	---

<p>Ross 48:10 roundly 67:12,12 round-up 81:9 run 20:20 39:12 66:5 70:4 86:22 running 31:13 53:23 70:5 71:5 104:25 rural 18:19 Russ 2:10 Russell 109:4 Russia 51:21 rusted 32:10 R-1 78:22 79:7,8 79:17,23 83:2</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">S</p> <p>S 2:1 109:1 111:15 sacrifices 105:1 Sadly 71:20 sadness 54:24 safe 76:25 83:6 safely 71:6 safety 70:14 salaries 35:2 54:10 59:8 82:24 salary 54:9 sale 56:11 sales 22:6 39:14 100:20 Salisbury 38:16 Sam 81:11,22 sat 105:19 106:3 107:19 Saudi 57:11 save 27:25 82:10 94:12 savings 38:2 saw 12:23 30:3 32:3,8 35:6 93:1 97:10 103:18 saying 35:22 77:22 95:25 105:3</p>	<p>says 77:23 scale 47:20 scares 71:11 scenario 61:7 71:12 schedule 76:16 scholarship 64:19 school 12:23 62:15 64:10 78:22 79:3,8,10 80:19 schools 22:23 68:17 76:12 83:2 90:7 95:21 Schrump 13:25 14:2,2,4,8,10 14:12 110:7 Scott 5:8 9:18 15:12 19:12,13 19:17 23:6 34:10 35:16 87:12 110:8 Scottsboro 52:25 99:5 seat 3:3 second 27:2,23 42:7 47:9 74:21 82:13 94:18 103:18 Secondly 47:4 Security 89:3,10 see 11:1 20:3 22:22 30:15 32:10,15 34:17 56:10 59:9 61:6 63:5 64:24 67:7 74:7 84:18 108:8 seeing 69:12 seek 76:8 seen 10:5 16:17 20:10 35:16 40:22 61:10 sees 22:21 segment 57:18 self-directed</p>	<p>70:19 self-directing 70:13 sell 47:1 72:22 sells 98:23 send 24:4 59:25 senior 10:2 13:5 seniors 89:2 sense 66:19 76:22 sent 10:7 34:25 94:4 separate 49:21 serious 83:8 92:22 seriously 3:19 96:14 serve 5:14 6:24 78:24 79:4 100:20 served 20:20 service 1:4,15 3:16 5:13 6:24 7:1 19:18 20:21 35:9 42:22 46:5 54:7 72:11 76:9 76:23 78:1 80:17 87:1,2 92:14,16 97:6,6 105:22 107:17 109:14 services 1:23 22:6 68:8 76:12 86:3 87:21 88:3 servicing 92:7,10 serving 27:2 session 3:5 set 69:17 71:9,17 72:10 73:13 setters 69:18 setting 69:16 seven 42:14 102:16 seventh 31:3 severity 16:24 shake 96:1,10 shape 56:13 share 4:12 6:19</p>	<p>45:25 56:9 shared 19:25 shareholders 45:16 76:19 sharply 79:22 sheet 37:9 Shelter 34:8 Sher 103:13,13 ships 28:15 Shirley 100:12 shop 68:10 shopping 21:15 shops 75:5 shore 39:8 shores 39:7 short 27:14 48:16 shouldering 60:20 show 49:7 68:2 108:8 showing 42:4,10 42:12 49:10 shown 15:25 44:9 shows 44:17 shut 52:16 53:7 53:15,25 55:12 55:22,23 60:18 70:24 88:1 102:13 shutdown 52:1 shutting 71:15 side 70:11 sides 12:16 sign 104:12 signed 2:3,23 significant 75:9 87:23 significantly 101:18 signs 56:11 Sikeston 14:14 19:19,22,23 20:14,16,23 21:3,7,13,24 29:9,12 40:11 58:18 74:6</p>	<p>75:17 76:4 87:9 91:3,7,8 100:20 Sikeston's 20:23 silver 30:14 similar 20:1 30:20,22,23 simple 27:21 43:15 46:10 simplest 74:13 simply 22:19 27:21 46:14,18 49:8 60:5 single 22:4,13 65:24 104:13 sir 4:14,18 5:3 7:13,14,19 8:20 11:21 12:5 13:23 14:6 19:15 22:17 23:12 24:19,22 28:25 33:24 34:4 37:22 40:4 41:21 50:20 61:20,21 62:1 63:23 64:5 65:11,17 67:15 67:20 69:4 73:17 77:17 78:13,19 80:5,9 80:10 85:14 88:11 90:25 91:18 92:2 97:1 100:17 sisters 23:22 sit 106:23,24 situation 10:14 24:14 63:6 84:17 situations 64:17 64:18 six 18:20 26:1 29:12 31:19 36:7 42:5 88:23 106:18 sixth 42:25 size 87:7 sizeable 70:24</p>
--	---	--	--	---

<p>skill 71:9 73:13 skills 73:2,4 sky 98:8 slight 40:22 slow 61:11 slowed 101:10,16 slowly 57:21 81:5 small 6:14 20:25 51:9 56:4 62:16 62:18,20 68:11 81:10 87:8 95:23 smaller 47:20 smelter 29:17,18 29:19,21,21 30:1,7,9,17,19 30:20,21 31:1,2 31:4,5,10 40:24 51:7,12 56:7,8 57:3,12 69:14 72:25 73:14 82:8 97:7 99:5 99:7,8,10,11,25 100:5 smelting 58:21 smelters 27:22 27:24 29:16,18 29:20,22,24 37:10,16 41:8 41:13 47:10,11 47:15 51:13 52:23 53:7 54:1 56:2 74:21 93:19 94:18 97:9,15,25 98:1 98:2 99:12,14 99:16,18,19 100:3 smelting 51:8 snowball 74:24 106:5 social 83:8 89:3 89:10 96:3 solar 43:23 45:5 sold 55:8 98:15 98:16 sole 40:15 46:15</p>	<p>solid 15:2 solution 91:14 somebody 36:8 someplace 32:17 somewhat 20:8 son 100:4 sons 72:3 son-in-law 31:19 31:19,24 son-in-laws 31:17 soon 52:18 sorry 22:5 37:15 38:13 42:5 78:4 sort 31:13 sounds 97:11 source 40:16 49:9 sourced 53:19 South 66:4 southeast 6:7 8:13 9:24,25 10:10,16 11:3 11:15 12:17 14:18 22:15 23:23 24:12,25 34:12 40:14 47:6 48:15,18 58:19 59:8 62:21 64:11 65:5 67:7 74:5 74:17 75:5 76:5 76:24 81:2,7 83:6,9,11 84:25 86:7 101:6,24 103:7 southern 8:9 25:3 29:18 95:18 southwest 25:19 26:3 soybeans 12:20 34:15 98:17 space 39:8 speak 7:8,22 9:21 12:10 18:24 34:7 36:3,11</p>	<p>38:1 43:11,13 62:4 74:2,4 92:5 96:17 speaking 48:22 65:22 78:4 101:13 specialized 22:3 54:15 specific 97:17 specifically 74:16 speech 86:1 spell 103:22 105:16 spend 63:1 spending 51:17 spent 70:19 97:8 sphere 19:24 spiral 60:1,21 spite 53:23,23 Spokane 69:11 spoke 103:16 spoken 4:4 spread 76:1 Springfield 25:21 Springs 53:4 squeeze 75:23 St 1:24 39:13 45:1 48:16 61:1 66:24 82:18 86:14,19,25 101:23 stabilize 36:13 stabilized 36:14 stable 76:21 staff 2:16 22:8 86:8 92:7 stall 67:8 stalled 67:5 Stan 105:13,17 105:17 111:11 stand 54:20 standard 40:1 standing 83:19 Star 42:7 49:3 start 5:4 42:1 49:24 81:1</p>	<p>82:10 started 2:4 13:16 23:16 30:21,23 31:20 51:9,19 51:21,22 52:1 52:23,24 54:3 55:20 69:10 70:3 86:5,5 97:15 98:5 state 1:3 5:16,16 5:25,25 7:23 8:1,3,6,15 9:11 9:16 12:1,20 13:7 15:17 17:15 18:6,9 20:14 25:18,18 26:2,15 28:1,3 28:21,22 32:23 37:2 47:23 51:20 59:13,17 60:24 63:22 64:13 72:23 76:9 82:15 83:7 83:7,12 85:8 86:13 94:5,6,12 98:10 103:22 105:15 112:3 stated 25:19 43:19 56:2 65:7 statement 3:1,1 11:18,19 77:21 103:17 108:8 statements 60:5 95:20 states 17:11 27:22 47:10 51:6 56:24 57:24 74:22 93:19 97:16 Statewide 16:14 stations 30:15 statistic 74:19 statistics 16:10 54:5 stay 32:6 38:2 55:13 60:8 62:16 83:18,25</p>	<p>107:22 steady 98:4 steel 32:9 43:12 54:14,15 98:7 100:21 102:12 102:13 steelworker 92:21,24,25 steelworkers 92:6 94:6 95:14 96:10 steeply 78:8 step 4:14 103:19 Steve 12:2,3,7 110:6 Steven 65:13,15 65:19 110:20 Steward 100:21 102:11,13 stock 13:20 45:18 stockholders 22:21 49:2 Stoddard 9:13 9:18 10:22 15:12 25:2 87:16 stop 52:18 stopped 67:5 84:17 store 13:4,5 68:10 stories 101:1 storm 27:14 32:13 72:10,14 storms 64:18 story 13:14 94:1 straight 48:6 strain 10:15 strains 10:12,12 Stran 100:11 strange 55:23 strawberries 23:22 street 1:23 2:16 73:5 109:9 stress 17:14 18:21,23</p>
--	--	--	--	--

<p>stressed 17:22 18:6,9 75:13 strong 8:12 strongly 76:15 structure 32:11 84:8 struggled 62:22 struggling 10:1 student 79:15,16 students 64:20 79:17,20 study 14:23 32:24 37:12 stuff 106:5 subcontractors 38:10 39:19 subdivision 21:17 subject 62:10 93:4 submit 77:21 subsequent 10:25 Subsidized 51:20 substance 16:14 substantially 47:2 sub-tier 38:12,17 39:22 success 22:1 successes 71:10 successful 73:1 81:24 successfully 69:17 suddenly 71:1 suffer 59:23 68:17,17,18 76:13 suffered 99:22 suffering 103:4 suggest 67:12 suggests 14:25 suitable 71:23 sulfur 42:13 44:9 Super 15:6 81:25 82:4</p>	<p>superintendent 80:17 supermarkets 30:16 supervisor 70:9 supplementing 49:15 supplier 100:21 suppliers 95:11 supplies 95:1 support 5:10 10:13 15:5 29:7 31:21,23 32:4 38:23 40:13,16 41:2 59:24 60:3 60:4 61:14 64:14,15 68:2 73:7 77:22 79:9 80:1 82:11 83:9 91:13 supported 30:18 31:2 41:6 supporter 79:23 supporting 40:18 supportive 65:8 supports 65:6 68:9 82:23 supposed 54:12 surcharge 44:14 surcharges 43:4 sure 3:2 18:15 37:2 49:22 79:21 100:11 104:5 surgeon 86:19 surprised 103:4 surrounding 19:22 63:2 78:25 survival 20:25 84:1 survive 83:22 84:7,21 85:6 98:25 survived 72:9 surviving 95:9 Susan 73:20,22</p>	<p>74:1 110:23 Susic 91:21,23,23 91:25 92:4 96:19,21 111:7 Susie 96:22 suspect 102:6 sustain 101:4 sustainable 18:18 sustained 22:5 swear 2:25 Swearengen 2:10 109:4 Swinger 24:18 24:19,20,24,25 28:25 110:10 sworn 4:17 7:18 9:9 12:4 14:5 19:14 23:11 24:21 29:3 33:23 37:21 40:7 41:20 50:22 58:14 61:25 64:4 65:16 67:19 69:3 73:23 77:16 78:18 80:14 85:19 88:10 90:24 92:1 96:25 100:16 103:21 105:14 system 17:3 27:11,16,18 62:15 76:20 systems 77:5</p>	<p>88:16 89:12,14 89:14 90:17 92:22 104:20 taken 17:19 27:16,17 49:6 63:3 112:5,9 takes 8:2 45:13 81:1 talents 73:2,4 102:8 talk 27:7 29:7 32:20 55:2,3,4 57:22 66:12 69:9 93:4 talked 12:11 107:10 talking 38:23 61:8 70:22 87:18 95:2 107:8 tap 71:17 Tariff 1:15 tax 39:8 56:9,15 59:23 62:14 68:6 79:10,11 79:12 106:19 taxes 22:6 31:6 39:9 82:25 83:1 83:9 107:4 taxpayers 38:25 99:21 107:1 teachers 13:15 team 54:19 teams 70:13,19 tears 106:14 107:20 technical 51:7 technologies 77:5 technology 81:4 81:9 telethon 87:5,11 87:23 tell 13:14 20:24 23:25 34:21 40:17 62:8 telling 13:16 ten 26:20 39:14</p>	<p>79:19 82:14 tenant 101:24 Tennessee 38:16 53:5 56:19 97:18 99:9,12 tenth 18:22 territory 3:16 Terry 24:17,19 24:20,24,25 28:25 110:10 test 17:16,16 18:23 testified 4:17 7:18 9:9 12:4 14:5 19:14 23:11 24:21 29:3 33:23 37:21 40:7 41:20 50:22 58:14 61:25 62:10 64:4 65:16 67:19 69:3 73:23 77:16 78:18 80:14 85:19 88:10 90:24 92:1 96:25 100:16 103:21 105:14 testify 2:3 13:17 43:10 64:9 testifying 93:14 96:3 testimony 4:2,5 4:19 14:9 33:17 41:25 42:18,23 49:16 80:7 88:6 88:13,15,17 96:20 100:9 103:11 112:4 tests 17:14 Texas 51:9 52:25 53:2,3 thank 2:22 3:13 4:9,18 5:3,21 7:7,13,14,19,21 8:19,20,22 9:3</p>
---	--	---	--	---

T

T 111:15
tab 70:4
table 33:4 42:19
Tacoma 29:17
55:14
take 2:6 3:13,19
4:5 13:12 22:20
37:17 61:13
68:21 69:22

<p>9:10 11:17,23 11:24,25 12:5,7 12:8 13:22,23 13:24 14:6,8 19:8,15,17 23:3 23:5,8,12 24:14 24:15,16,22,24 28:16,22,23,25 29:4 32:19 33:10,11,24 34:4,6 36:17,18 37:22 39:20,23 39:24 40:4,8 41:13,15,16,21 42:21,21 48:19 48:20 49:18 50:8,23 58:6,7 58:15,16 61:16 61:17,18 62:1,3 63:22,23 64:5,8 64:8 65:10,11 65:12,17 67:13 67:15,20 68:23 68:24 69:4 73:16,17,25 74:1 77:11,17 78:19 80:4,5,15 85:13,14,15,16 85:20 88:4,5,6 88:11 90:18,19 90:20,25 91:16 91:18,19 92:2 96:18,21 97:1 100:5,7,8,17 103:8,9,10,11 104:1 105:9,15 107:18 108:4,5 108:6,11 thanks 7:11 19:10 23:7 28:24 33:13,14 36:19 40:3 41:17 58:8 63:24 67:16 73:19 77:12 78:13,15 80:6,6 96:19 105:10</p>	<p>therapy 85:24 86:1 thereto 112:11 thermal 49:8 thing 6:1 32:13 55:23 63:15 66:18 83:19 94:8 things 13:10,12 32:8 51:19 53:20 66:15 83:22 95:5 98:2 think 13:2,9 28:8 30:11 32:21 34:15 35:23 39:10 49:11 50:10,12 60:9 60:12 61:9 62:7 63:3,13 68:19 71:2 75:24 78:9 83:5,12,15 84:20 85:2 93:23 94:10 95:13 96:4,15 103:12 104:22 105:20,21 106:13,15,24 thinking 36:16 thinks 89:2 third 27:2 42:10 58:25 79:12 83:10 Thomas 48:10 thought 30:10 34:13 66:14 71:12 81:15 thoughtful 19:8 thoughts 3:18 4:6 19:25 thousand 89:11 106:19 thousands 35:5 71:1 73:9 99:20 99:23 threatens 47:6 threats 52:1 three 16:11 21:6</p>	<p>21:8 27:17 29:15 30:24 34:9 35:4 43:13 49:1 50:25 58:18 82:14 83:7 91:5 98:2 threefold 43:20 thrive 41:13 65:1 thriving 51:18 throwing 73:9 thrown 58:4 tied 59:1 Tila 8:24 9:1,1,3 9:5,8,11,15 11:21,23 110:5 time 3:21 4:10 19:8 23:3 34:13 34:14 37:4 39:24 40:3 43:1 43:6 51:12,16 54:22 58:17 61:16 65:10 69:9 70:3,17 71:3 74:3 85:25 87:3 88:5 96:17 97:7 102:1 107:18 108:4 times 16:11 71:16 102:17 102:22 timing 7:11 tired 8:5 today 5:10 12:8 13:16 14:9 17:11 19:24 20:8 26:7 28:17 33:1 34:17 36:11 40:10 41:10 43:10 51:3 57:2 59:1 61:16 62:4 63:17,19 64:9 66:23 68:1,20 74:3,20 75:13 81:6 82:6 85:4 86:7,18,21 88:14 93:13</p>	<p>95:20 96:4,17 105:18 107:18 told 13:19 55:20 104:8,10,18 105:6 106:25 tomorrow 25:4 top 38:6 45:14 52:5 82:14 torn 72:20 tornado 27:9 tornadoes 64:18 Torrance 30:2 total 3:15 14:25 40:21 43:2,3 44:23 45:3,19 87:19,22 tough 84:12 tour 25:18 toured 25:18 town 21:20 27:12 56:4,16 57:20 62:18 66:3 81:10 towns 12:25 20:4 62:20 66:11 trades 73:4 traffic 54:17 training 22:3 60:7 TRANSCRIPT 1:7 transfer 53:9 69:20 transferable 73:5 transferred 99:23 trash 58:4 travel 8:6 traveled 25:22 treat 17:1 86:7 treated 16:6,12 16:13 86:6 tremendous 17:10 26:4 Trentwood 70:25 trickle 74:24 101:10,17</p>	<p>tried 31:11 55:9 95:6 Triplet 105:17 Triplet 105:13 105:17 108:6 111:11 true 50:25 trust 21:9 try 31:12 80:23 93:12 trying 54:3 83:16 83:25 93:14 94:8,11 tucked 37:10 turn 16:23 32:9 turned 4:25 turning 108:1 turnover 59:10 twice 16:6 two 12:10 13:15 18:19 25:4,23 27:17 29:13,17 29:19,20,22 30:8,20 31:16 31:17,17 32:14 46:21 49:5,13 52:8 54:16,16 55:7 70:8 88:19 88:21 92:10 99:15 102:14 105:19 twofold 12:17 type 81:12 82:20 types 92:16 typewriting 112:6 typic 41:8 typically 17:25 40:19 T-R-I-P-L-E-T... 105:18</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">U</p> <hr/> <p>UE 2:7 106:24 ultimate 4:7 ultimately 39:2 77:10</p>
---	---	--	--	---

ultra 44:9	unsustainable 27:7 47:5	98:10	wasn't 30:9	105:4,4
unable 3:25	unused 47:1	virtue 5:18	53:24 107:19	we've 12:11
40:12	un-insured 15:15	vision 80:25,25	waste 57:11 58:5	16:17 25:13
unaffiliated	15:20,22 16:17	visions 101:22	watch 57:18	35:16 52:16
22:17	16:22 17:5,8,20	visit 56:10	watching 8:6	66:23 83:22,23
uncles 38:25	18:11	visited 83:16	69:15,19	83:23,24 84:10
uncollected 18:1	upgrades 60:16	visits 16:15	way 32:3 35:16	84:12 85:24
uncompensated	76:19	visual 84:18 85:2	40:11,18 41:1	87:2,3 88:13,15
17:8,17 18:15	urge 8:15	vital 62:19 63:3	44:13 57:19	88:17,22,24
underlying 74:10	USA 37:10	voice 68:1,20	60:24 73:9 85:3	89:14 94:19
understand 41:8	use 57:11 61:5	69:9	85:10 89:5,25	95:21,21,22,22
44:5 47:21	84:15 89:20,21	Volume 1:12	103:3	95:23 103:15
60:12,13,17	USEIA 44:10	volunteer 91:6,7	Wayne 88:7,9,13	whatsoever
74:10,11 89:8	49:10	91:10,12	111:5	22:16 80:1
104:24	usually 10:11	volunteers 86:6	ways 50:25 52:2	wheat 12:21
understanding	86:16 102:16	voter 45:3	75:13 87:4	Whitney 2:15
73:3 90:2 94:17	utilities 20:17		103:3	109:14
94:20	45:15 76:24	W	wealth 50:25	whoops 92:19
undertaking	77:4	wage 25:15 78:7	website 49:9	wide 21:4
38:7	utility 9:23 27:23	wages 15:23	week 5:15,24	wife 24:8 72:1,16
underwent 86:10	44:14 45:16	52:12 71:20	52:15	Wilbern 78:25
unemployed 16:9	76:18 90:7,8	82:24 106:20	weekly 66:1	Wildman 77:14
unemployment	100:24	walked 54:22	weeks 16:9 25:4	77:15,19 78:15
15:22 16:8,11	V	walking 32:14	welfare 5:15 6:5	110:24
unending 69:25	vacate 13:18	Walt 77:14,15,19	6:8,23 7:3,6	Williams 96:23
unfairly 75:23	valley 97:18	78:15 110:24	78:5 104:14	willing 60:14
unfortunately	99:13	Wanda 100:10	went 13:2 24:9	win 63:5 81:23
74:22 84:6 93:9	valuable 59:5	want 3:13 7:7	25:17,23 31:8	winners 38:24
unhealthy 19:3,3	value 21:9 102:8	12:10 29:7	31:10,15 32:1	winning 63:13
19:6	values 59:21	32:25 35:14	35:2 53:13 54:9	wins 61:6
Union 1:14 2:9	101:17	38:1,6 63:12	67:4 89:19,22	wise 66:18
52:11 92:22	Vancouver 55:15	69:7 80:23	98:10 107:10	witness 2:25 4:16
93:11	variation 9:5	88:22 89:22	weren't 55:13	7:17 9:8 12:3
unionized 95:8	vendors 95:12	100:4 107:18	98:1	14:4 19:13
unique 20:8	vernacular 70:6	wanted 9:21	west 56:18 60:25	23:10 24:20
United 27:22	veteran 69:18	31:25 88:20	97:24 98:10	29:2 33:22
40:11,18 41:1	viable 27:3 62:19	97:13 104:6	western 9:18	37:20 40:6
43:12 47:10	83:11	105:23	we'll 65:13	41:19 50:21
51:6 56:24	vice 62:5	wanting 90:1	108:10	58:13 61:24
57:24 74:22	Vida 55:14	104:23	we're 3:15 10:2	64:3 65:15
92:6 93:19	view 7:3	War 98:1	12:19 35:18	67:18 69:2
97:16	Vincent 41:18,19	Washington	38:23 41:10	73:22 77:15
universities	41:23 42:3,21	29:18 31:3	56:25 68:1,20	78:17 80:13
86:16	110:15	32:23 37:2	80:3 82:20	85:18 88:9
University 25:2	Virginia 56:19	55:14,15,15,16	83:19,21 84:4,6	90:23 91:25
80:20		55:17 65:21	86:3 93:11,13	96:24 100:15
unnecessary 10:9		66:4 98:10 99:6	95:13,14 96:6	103:20 105:13

110:2 111:2 witnesses 112:4 wolves 83:23 women 14:17 wonder 57:21 wonderful 23:25 28:13 word 4:3 words 60:5 work 20:2,9 21:11 23:19 24:1 25:6 29:9 34:20,21,22 39:12 53:10 55:1 63:11 66:25 69:24 70:1,10,13,13 70:14,19,19 73:10,14 79:5 80:22 81:9 97:24,25 101:4 101:15 102:12 102:15 105:20 106:9 worked 23:15,17 23:19 24:9 27:11 29:15,17 29:20,23 34:25 53:17,21 55:3 70:8 81:14,22 97:10 worker 14:25 workers 15:18 43:12 54:17 78:7 workforce 6:4 8:12 14:14 60:7 76:21 102:18 working 23:16 32:9 51:10 65:24 66:21,22 67:11 70:20 84:19 95:10,11 98:3 100:4 102:16,18 106:10,21 workplace 70:15	works 58:19 workshop 34:8 35:4 world 97:23 100:3 worldwide 52:4 56:23 95:1 world-wide 51:14 worried 10:16 worse 32:8 46:24 worst 98:17 worth 17:7 wouldn't 66:17 104:19 would've 104:19 wreak 22:25 wrenching 93:2 written 4:3 11:17 11:19 77:21 wrong 35:19 Wyant 96:23 Wynetta 96:23 <hr/> X X 110:1 111:1,15 <hr/> Y yard 23:17 year 10:23 15:10 16:12 17:6 18:4 18:10,23 20:11 24:7 27:5,5 28:5 40:13,22 42:5 43:7,9 45:23 46:21 47:8 51:8 56:21 59:3 64:22 71:25 81:13 86:23 87:5 89:4 89:11 93:13 94:1 Yearly 82:22 years 5:12 6:25 7:4 10:25 12:15 16:16,18 23:15 24:1,5 25:5	26:20,23,24 27:16,21 29:10 29:12,13 30:8 34:24 36:7 39:14 40:19 48:13 52:17,18 54:6,7 55:7 64:16 67:6 68:5 69:11 70:8,12 70:12 71:10 72:9 79:8,19 80:18 83:25 88:2,19,22 91:5 93:18 97:5,6,8 97:8 100:22 102:5,25 103:4 YMCA 21:1 young 20:3 72:3 101:3 103:8 you-all 3:5 48:22 65:10 90:17 103:8 <hr/> \$ \$0.53 44:16 \$1 18:14 \$1,862,100,000 43:2 \$1.7 45:19 \$10 35:1,2 63:12 \$10,000 87:15 \$100 26:14 28:5 \$11.3 45:21 \$118,000 87:13 \$12 17:7 \$12.69 44:8 \$158 82:24 \$160 27:4 28:7 94:22 \$165 107:14 \$17 18:14 \$170 94:22 \$18.62 45:21 \$2 43:7 \$2,600 87:14 \$20 94:21,21 \$200 107:12	\$208,000 87:12 \$22 46:20 59:2 64:22 \$264 42:24 \$3 10:22 43:7 79:11 \$3.22 18:10,11 \$3.48 44:7 \$304 83:3 84:9 \$350 26:15 28:4 47:7 59:17 64:12 75:7 95:17 96:13 \$380,000 87:19 \$4 18:14 \$40,000 87:14 \$400 75:7 \$417,000 87:20 \$417,255 87:11 \$44 14:16 27:5 65:3 \$50 70:18 \$800 107:12 \$866,900,000 43:3 \$90 14:15 \$91,000 87:22 \$91.9 44:24 \$95 82:23 <hr/> # #1 111:17 #2 111:18 #3 111:19 #4 111:20 #5 111:21 #6 111:22 <hr/> 0 0.4 17:9 05 45:2 06 88:23 <hr/> 1 1 3:14 37:8 50:2 50:5 1st 69:11	1,000 53:6 54:2 1-800-280-3376 1:25 1.7 89:2 10 16:16,18 31:12 39:14 43:17 45:25 46:24 52:18 97:5 10,000 25:24 106:7 10.4 44:1 46:6 100 5:12 6:25 7:4 34:19 92:16 111:9 100s 35:5 101 76:11 103 111:10 105 84:11 111:11 11th 1:23 110 102:14 113 18:4 12 3:14 110:6 12th 18:9 12,115 26:6 123 16:17 13 3:15 1383 112:16 14 43:18 46:19 56:2 110:7 1400 79:20 144 14:13 15 39:5 45:3 48:9 52:17 55:17 67:25 15.38 45:23 150 7:24 151st 9:12,17 16 54:7 1600 38:13,13 17 15:14 17,000 87:10 1700 79:20 18 27:11,18 31:5 82:25 18,000 26:8 19 110:8
---	--	--	--	---

<p>19th 53:25 190 54:7 1900 26:7 1950 26:7 1959 97:7 1960s 81:3 101:21 1967 81:16 1969 13:3 38:24 1970 34:11 1973 21:25 85:25 1975 23:16 1980 51:10 1980s 30:23 51:19 1990s 51:19 1996 92:15 1997 84:10 1998 42:11 1999 24:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>2 50:3,5,10,15,18 2,000 72:3 2,070 14:18 20 26:24 54:8 80:18 200 2:16 109:9 2000 31:7 32:23 32:23 53:9 70:24 2001 42:13 2002 71:24 2004 25:10 2005 53:25 2006 12:16 27:9 42:6 43:1 92:9 2007 49:4 55:10 2008 27:6 44:8 55:22 65:4 2009 27:13 42:9 45:18,21 72:14 86:9 2012 25:10 45:23 2013 42:15 45:10 45:18,22,22 2014 45:2 46:15</p>	<p>56:21 79:11 87:6,10 2015 1:10 2018 46:1 22 54:1 82:17 84:10 23 53:6 85:5 86:8 110:9 23rd 18:5,9 24 84:2 110:10 24.2 15:21 25 40:20 45:14 52:5 26 1:10 97:4 27 16:9 28 83:1 29 110:11</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>3 50:3,5,10 110:5 3,000 25:24 56:4 3,900 82:23 3.3 14:24 3:25 108:12 30 15:8 27:21,22 29:10 34:24 67:6 79:8 82:15 30,000 56:25 312 2:11 109:5 314 1:24 32 93:19 33 20:11 46:7 48:6 51:13 52:24 55:18 56:22 110:12 34 92:12 35 93:18 35th 51:8 350 8:14 53:22 36 51:14,15 56:23 37 110:13 39 23:15 24:1 390 54:9</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>4 50:3,5,10 56:24</p>	<p>110:3 4,000 15:1 40 12:15 67:6 77:23 97:8,15 100:22 110:14 400 21:16 54:3 41 69:11 110:15 43 15:21 88:2 97:6 45 21:23 54:6 102:5,25 45,624 26:7 47 68:5</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>5 50:4,5,10 82:18 5,000 55:18 92:12 50 25:5 36:8 39:15 44:18 48:13 102:18 110:16 111:17 111:18,19,20 111:21,22 50s 67:2 500 53:6 86:7 55 16:16 57 45:19 573-635-7166 109:6 573-751-5558 109:11 58 110:17</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>6 50:14,16,18 6,000 15:18 18:7 60s 12:23 20:6 30:21 67:3 101:14 600 54:1 61 15:9 110:18 63101 1:24 64 110:19 644-2191 1:24 65 110:20 6500 38:14</p>	<p>65102 109:5,10 67 102:15 110:21 69 110:22</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p>7 15:16 45:25 110:4 7,000 57:1 70s 30:22 70-something 27:16 700 30:25 711 1:23 74 110:23 75-year-old 107:9 750 14:14 19:2 7686 92:8 77 110:24 78 110:25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p>8 15:6 80 8:11 111:3 800 16:13 38:9 85 111:4 88 111:5</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <p>9 1:12 56:22,23 9.8 44:1 46:5 88:25 89:22 90:10,15 90 24:5 900 6:10 8:10,11 28:4 57:15 59:12 60:22 79:20 106:2,6 106:18 91 111:6 92 111:7 930 14:17 94 15:10 95 44:12 97 111:8</p>
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