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MISSOURI GAMING COMMISSION
3417 KNIPP DRIVE
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65109

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING

SEPTEMBER 27, 2010

HELD AT THE
SOUTHEAST MISSOURI UNIVERSITY
RIVER CAMPUS
GLENN CONVOCATION CENTER
518 SOUTH FOUNTAIN STREET
CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI 63701

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (September 27, 2010)

3 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: First of all, we
4 welcome you. Thank you very, very much for taking part of
5 your day to come out and express your thoughts on the
6 mission that this Commission has before it.

7

8 I will kind of lay down some thoughts and
9 some rules for you, but first of all, you don't -- you
10 folks, we don't necessarily know you individually, and you
11 don't know us. Okay. So let me tell you, I want to
12 introduce the Commission to you.

13 My name is Jim Mathewson. I live in
14 Sedalia, Missouri. I had the opportunity to serve 6 years
15 in Missouri House of Representatives and 24 years in the
16 Senate where I was the president of the Senate for 8 years.
17 So I kind of have a little experience in being around
18 government. I've been to this beautiful community many
19 times, working with legislators down here, and I always
20 look forward to coming back. It's one of my favorite parts
21 of the state.

22 So let me -- let me start down at the end.
23 That's Barrett Hatches. He's from Platt County, Missouri.
24 He's an executive and business in that area.

25 Next to me is Noel Shull. Noel is a retired

1 bank executive out of the Kansas City metropolitan areas.

2 Down at this end if Jack Merritt. Jack is
3 former Highway Patrol, retired, and Green County Sheriff
4 for two terms. Lives in the Green County, Springfield
5 area.

6 Next --

7 COMMISSIONER MERRITT: God's country.

8 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: It is mine.

9 Commissioner Jones, is from St. Louis city. He is a
10 business man there. He does a lot of the concessions in
11 the Lambert Airport area.

12 So that -- you kind of get a sense we're
13 from -- scattered around the state, and we do this pretty
14 much as volunteers, just like most of you who are here
15 today, same way.

16 We get a hundreds a month for doing this.
17 Now, so if you want to get mad at someone, get mad at me
18 because one time a month I get \$200 because I'm chairman.
19 I get the big bucks. So basically we are volunteers, okay,
20 and we pay our own expenses, by the way, with that big old
21 \$100 a month to go to those meetings.

22 We're holding four of these hearings. This
23 is our first one. So we wanted to -- we announced back
24 several months ago that as we go through the process, that
25 is a lengthy process. This is the list, and we have copies

1 for anybody that would be interested in having one. It
2 shows all the different steps that the staff will be going
3 through working with the Commissioners to decide if, in
4 fact, we're going to have a 13th casino.

5 And as you probably saw in your local paper,
6 my comment was there doesn't have to be a 13th casino.
7 Okay. That's just one of the options that we have as we go
8 through this. It's a long, lengthy process. Please bear
9 with us on it because we're breaking new ground here,
10 folks. This situation has never occurred before because up
11 until 2008, the election, you know, if you met the
12 guidelines of a casino, there was no limit. Now there is.

13 So we're breaking new ground here, so bear
14 with us as we -- we try to work through this because our
15 feeling as a Commission is that we a responsibility to the
16 people to come out and hear what you say, both for and
17 against, a casino in this area. And that's what we're here
18 for today.

19 We will start taking -- we also have a
20 guideline sheet on time frames. If you're interested in
21 that, we -- we are going to make an effort to try to stay
22 fairly close to that. So if you're interested in that, our
23 staff has those printed out also. So if you're interested
24 in one of those, why, you're certainly welcome to them.

25 We have people as proponents and opponents

1 that have signed up, and we want to take as many of you as
2 we can. We would ask you though, please, because
3 everything we do as it relates to us for the transparency
4 side of it and for the future commissioners to have as a
5 guideline, we are taping everything we do. So that you
6 know that and you're welcome to it. All you have to do is
7 contact us if you want to see that, and we'll be glad to
8 make sure you get a copy of that.

9 If you do, and when you testify, please, as
10 a proponent or an opponent, would you state your name and
11 then spell it so that the recorder can pick that up
12 properly. Okay.

13 So with that, do any of the Commissioners
14 got anything else to say?

15 COMMISSIONER MERRITT: Do we need to
16 have a motion?

17 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: I'm sorry?
18 We do. We do, and thank you for mentioning that because,
19 see, we got a beopening this session to stay legal.

20 So the chair will accept a motion to go --
21 to open this meeting.

22 COMMISSIONER MERRITT: So moved.

23 COMMISSIONER HATCHES: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: I have a motion
25 and a second. Any discussion? Call roll.

1 MS. FRANKS: Chairman Mathewson?

2 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Aye.

3 MS. FRANKS: Commissioner Shull?

4 COMMISSIONER SHULL: Approved.

5 MS. FRANKS: Commissioner Jones?

6 COMMISSIONER JONES: Approved.

7 MS. FRANKS: Commissioner Hatches?

8 COMMISSIONER HATCHES: Approved.

9 MS. FRANKS: Commissioner Merritt?

10 COMMISSIONER MERRITT: Approved.

11 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: We are now in an

12 open meeting. We -- we are doing four of these, as I

13 mentioned. We have set a time frame that we will try to

14 hold you to. Please work with us about that. I know

15 there's a lot of people want to be heard on both sides of

16 the issue, but I found as running hearings for the House

17 and the Senate for many, many, many years it becomes

18 repetitious after a while. Okay.

19 And if you would like to submit something in

20 writing, we would certainly be very happy to have you do

21 that. We will look at it, and so here's our time frame.

22 We have one hour from right now to do both proponents and

23 opponents. So if -- if you are -- know your neighbor feels

24 the same way you do, we'd sure appreciate just one person

25 speaking as it relates to what your subject is. Okay,

1 either side.

2 And is everybody okay with understanding
3 that we drove down from St. Louis because we got two more
4 hearings up there, and we need to go back up there. Okay.
5 So everybody okay with us on this so that we all understand
6 what we're trying to do here. We want to hear from you,
7 but at the same time, we got to move it. Okay. Everybody
8 good?

9 Any other thoughts or questions or anything
10 from the Commissioners? We -- we will -- actually --
11 actually, Barrett, excuse me. At -- at the conclusion of
12 the meeting, if some of the members of the press want to
13 come visit with us, then we'll take a few questions, but
14 not very many. Okay. But our mission here is to hear you,
15 not you hear us. Okay. So -- so we will abide by that,
16 and we don't answer questions from you at this time. Okay.

17 Okay. Everybody good? Okay. Anything else?
18 Are we ready to go? Okay. Very good. We'll take the
19 proponents first. And the first person's name that I see
20 on the proponents list is Danny Essner. Did I say that
21 correct, Dan?

22 MR. ESSNER: That's correct.

23 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Sure. Would you
24 come up to the dais, please, and spell your last name. I
25 think we all know how to spell Danny.

1 MR. ESSNER: E-S-S-N-E-R.

2 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Okay. Thank you.
3 Proceed, Danny, please.

4 MR. ESSNER: Good afternoon. My name
5 is Danny Essner, and I serve as the treasurer for the Yes
6 For Gaming Committee. I'm a banker by profession, but I'm
7 here today as a concerned citizen.

8 I grew up just south of here, and have lived
9 and worked at Cape Girardeau for the last 35 years, where
10 my wife, Debbie, and I have raised our two daughters. I'm
11 very passionate about Cape. I want to see it grow, thrive
12 and prosper.

13 I want to see ongoing job creation so my
14 kids, who also love Cape, have the opportunity to live and
15 work and raise their families here like I have. It has
16 been said that growth is not without conflict. This
17 project is certainly no exception to that. I believe,
18 however, that when the facts of the project and its
19 benefits to our community are laid out, it will be clear
20 that are unquestionable advantages for Cape Girardeau to
21 have the casino.

22 Jobs are scarce wherever you go, and
23 although Cape Girardeau is faring better than some places,
24 we have seen too many jobs lost in recent years. From Data
25 Corporation moving away to the closing of Stargate

1 Industries to layoffs at AT&T, Blue Cross-Blue Shield, and
2 others, unemployment is no longer just a number. It's now
3 someone that we know.

4 The proposed casino will provide over 400
5 new jobs in this area. This \$125 million facility will
6 also provide much needed construction work for our area
7 contractors. I might add that this \$125 million investment
8 in Cape is coming without a TIF or any other type of type
9 of tax abatement.

10 Due to the increases in unemployment and the
11 decreases in tax revenue that has been experienced over the
12 past 24 months, funding for basic government services and
13 public infrastructure projects are down in all levels of
14 government.

15 While cities in our state struggle to
16 balance their budgets and provide funding for everything
17 from teachers to roads, an investment opportunity of this
18 magnitude would help Cape Girardeau to not only cover
19 existing costs, but also provide for additional services.

20 Of the proposed tax revenues some \$3 million
21 every year will be shared by our city, our county and our
22 schools. Over 20 years, that will be \$60 million to go to
23 repair roads, to beautify our city, to better educate our
24 children, and to booster our police, fire and city services
25 to better serve and protect our citizens.

1 I am for this project because I believe in
2 the benefits it will bring to Cape Girardeau, and I believe
3 it is important for us as a community to plan for our
4 future by investing in the boat now.

5 Are there down sides to gaming? Yes, just
6 like there are down sides to other forms of entertainment.
7 At the end of the day, gaming is a form of entertainment
8 that an every growing segment of our population enjoys.
9 Bringing gaming to Cape will give us the opportunity and
10 resources to make significant improvements to our community
11 that we could otherwise not afford.

12 As the largest community between St. Louis
13 and Memphis, Cape Girardeau as long been a destination for
14 tourists. Our rich history and river heritage draw
15 visitors from a wide area. Due to our central location in
16 the heartland on a major north/south interstate, Cape
17 Girardeau is easily accessible from almost anywhere in the
18 country.

19 As you are no doubt aware, increased tourism
20 to Cape Girardeau would directly result in increased
21 revenue for the state of Missouri. I believe that Cape
22 Girareau is clearly the best choice as the site for the new
23 gaming license because of the potential we have to attract
24 new visitors and new dollars to the state of Missouri from
25 our neighboring states.

1 On any given day, you will find large
2 numbers of Illinois residents working, shopping, and dining
3 in Cape Girardeau. Visitors from not only Illinois but
4 Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky as well will have a new
5 reason to travel through out community for entertainment.

6 Our local business and community leaders
7 recognize the extraordinary opportunity and benefits that a
8 casino will bring to Cape as evidenced by the endorsement
9 of our City Council, our Chamber of Commerce, our
10 Convention and Visitors Bureau, Oldtown Cape, and Magnet,
11 which is our local industrial recruitment agency.

12 This is truly a win/win situation where our
13 city will have one of the greatest economic growth and
14 investment opportunity in its history, while the state will
15 have the opportunity to generate significant new, not
16 cannibalized, revenue that is sorely needed at a time when
17 balancing the budget is a major challenge.

18 Thank you very much for your time.

19 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, Danny.
20 Any questions from members of the Commission?

21 COMMISSIONER SHULL: I did have one
22 question.

23 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Yeah.

24 COMMISSIONER SHULL: You're the
25 treasurer of what organization?

1 MR. ESSNER: The Yes For Gaming
2 Committee.

3 COMMISSIONER SHULL: Thank you.

4 MR. ESSNER: And I do have a copy of my
5 address to give to you.

6 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Okay. Next --
7 thank you, sir. Next is Cord Dombrowski. Did I get close?

8 MR. DOMBROWSKI: As close as my wife
9 can get to it.

10 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: How long you been
11 married, sir?

12 MR. DOMBROWSKI: Thirty-seven years.

13 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Well, you have
14 made a good try, and I want to compliment you for it.

15 MR. DOMBROWSKI: Cord, C-O-R-D,
16 Dombrowski, D-O-M-B-R-O-W-S-K-I.

17 I appreciate the opportunity to come speak
18 before you to support gaming coming to Cape Girardeau. I
19 am founder and managed member of Dalhousie, L. L. C., which
20 is a golf club and golf residential community just west of
21 town here.

22 Roughly ten years ago we kind of started our
23 project with a good business plan, proposals and
24 recommendations we thought might work for a particular
25 investment. We met with a lot of resistance in the

1 community. Some folks thought that it would never happen.
2 Some folks thought it was just a dream. Some folks thought
3 well I'll believe it when I see it.

4 Now, we weren't endorsed by any big business
5 organization or public structure by any sorts. And some
6 folks were just against it because. They didn't have any
7 reason. They said well, I'll -- I'll figure that out
8 later, but I know I'm against it.

9 We had a good business plan. We were well
10 capitalized and well financed, and moved forward, and seven
11 years later after we opened up, we found ourselves with
12 just 550 members, and half of our golfing members are
13 national in nature. We have members everywhere from Palm
14 Springs to -- to Palm Beach.

15 And our business model incorporated the bus-
16 -- the Baby Boomer concept that we're all familiar with,
17 knowing that those folks in our age group were going to be
18 retiring at about this time or the next four or five years,
19 and that was our market. Since we developed our -- our
20 golf club around a regional concept, which for our
21 particular market was a little aggressive. But
22 nonetheless, ten years down the line has worked.

23 We are presently ranked 47th in the United
24 States in golf residential community projects, like -- like
25 we have just out here west of town, and we've been ranked

1 consistently number one in the state of Missouri as far as
2 golf facilities are concerned for the last seven years.

3 My point is that despite their -- the fact
4 that we had resistance and no particular public or
5 business support early on when we were developing our
6 plans, with a good business model and good capitalization
7 and good financing, a good model still works.

8 And I see an interesting parallel here with
9 the folks from Isle of Capri that if they come to town, the
10 would add just one more amenity that from speaking our
11 members would be attracted to. I know that when our folks
12 come in from out of state and out of town, it's not
13 uncommon for us to -- to deliver and pick them up from
14 Metropolis, for example, to have a nice entertainment over
15 there at the casino.

16 Will that happened a lot here? Probably
17 not. Will it happen more than what it does now? Probably
18 so. So my point is that there may be some resistance, but
19 a good plan always tends to -- to seek the proper levels,
20 and we're testimony to that particular fact, and we've been
21 a very proud supporter of Cape Girardeau for -- for a long,
22 long time, and the community has now embraced us
23 tremendously so.

24 And we have been -- been blessed with good
25 success, and the folks in the region and nationally as I

1 mentioned before have embraced our concept, and we look
2 forward to your serious consideration as Cape Girardeau as
3 -- as the site for the next particular license.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, sir.

6 Any questions of Cord from members of the Commission?

7 Thank you, sir.

8 Jim M-A-E-V-E-R-S.

9 MR. MAEVERS: Maevers.

10 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Maevers. Come
11 forward, Jim, please, sir.

12 MR. MAEVERS: Thank you. You spelled
13 it correctly. It's Jim Maevers. M-A-E-V-E-R-S.

14 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, sir.

15 MR. MAEVERS: My wife and I own Pass
16 Times Antiques on Main Street. Thank you for this
17 opportunity to speak in favor of the casino.

18 I have similar comments that I know will be
19 following, and I'll keep mine -- mine short so others can
20 speak in favor.

21 Our customers are made up of local residents
22 and also a lot of tourist. We get people, amazingly, from
23 all over the world. My wife keeps a -- a visitors -- a
24 guest book, and it's fun to see some of the people that
25 come into Cape Girardeau and -- and are antiquers and shop

1 downtown.

2 We always experience more tourist or more
3 uptake in customers whenever there is a specific or a
4 special event such as this last weekend with Family Weekend
5 at the University or with the car show just a couple of
6 weeks ago or with the upcoming Music Festival. So anything
7 that would bring additional tourist to downtown or the Cape
8 Girardeau area would certainly be beneficial for our
9 business.

10 I also own Main Street Lanes in Jackson, and
11 similar to Mr. Dombrowski, we -- we host tournaments from
12 all over the state, and we have people that come in from
13 the -- from the far corners of Missouri for our state
14 tournaments.

15 And this last year, we had one group, one
16 team, that actually stayed at Metropolis and traveled back
17 and forth to Jackson and the Cape Girardeau area to bowl on
18 Saturday and Sunday. So I know there is a -- a need for
19 that, or there's people that would be willing to take that
20 type of casino entertainment, if they were -- had that
21 opportunity, in Cape Girardeau.

22 Also with the new casino located in Cape,
23 it's my opinion that it would generate the additional tax
24 dollars from additional casino revenue, other than
25 cannibalizing the St. Louis market or the other markets

1 that are applying for licenses.

2 Today's my mom's birthday. She's actually
3 in St. Louis at a casino. So she said it was okay to say
4 that.

5 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: I'm glad you
6 cleared that.

7 MR. MAEVERS: But I do thank you. I am
8 in favor of the casino in the location of downtown Cape
9 Girardeau. I think it would benefit our area and benefit
10 our business. Thank you for this opportunity.

11 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, sir.
12 Any questions? Thank you. Judy Cantona (sic).

13 MS. CANTONI: Good afternoon. Actually
14 it's Judy Cantoni.

15 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Cantoni.

16 MS. CANTONI: And it's spelled
17 C-A-N-T-O-N-I.

18 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you.
19 Proceed, Judy, please.

20 MS. CANTONI: Not a problem. Good
21 Italian name here in this region.

22 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: You bet you.

23 MS. CANTONI: My name is Judy Cantoni,
24 and I have lived and worked in Cape Girardeau all my life.
25 I'm here today because I believe this casino project will

1 improve our community, it will grow our economy, and it
2 will help renovate a currently blighted area of the city, a
3 city very important to me, obviously, and important to the
4 state.

5 As parents of two children, my husband,
6 Phil, who is a local vice president, and I are both very
7 determined, both very concerned about businesses and job
8 opportunities leaving Cape Girardeau. As a life-long
9 resident of the city, I have been heartbroken to watch
10 Broadway on our downtown area fall into such disrepair.

11 Many buildings lining the streets of Main
12 and Broadway have crumbled store fronts. Some with boarded
13 up windows, and still others that are near condemnation.

14 I understand this project would immediately
15 provide \$1 million for renovation of the Broadway corridor,
16 and it would generate close to half a million dollars
17 annually in money specifically earmarked for downtown
18 beautification.

19 Cape loves its downtown. Just think of what
20 we could do if we had that influx of new funding to
21 renovate our historic area. For over 20 years of my career
22 life, I have worked in education finance, and I'm keenly
23 aware of the relationship between a strong education system
24 and a quality job base.

25 At the statewide level, I have always

1 supported a partnership between Missouri gaming and
2 education since its inception in 1994. I worked closely
3 with the Missouri College Guarantee Program, and I have
4 witnessed first hand how students in this great state have
5 benefitted from the annual funding that comes from the
6 residual of the admission tax.

7 In addition to that, the funding received
8 through the current school foundation formula, the
9 estimated \$3 million in annual new tax revenues for our
10 city would be a tremendous boost to build upon and enhance
11 the existing strength of our education system. And
12 education is a very important factor of this process.

13 I have also had the opportunity to meet and
14 talk with some of the Isle of Capri team. This group has
15 impressed me from the beginning, not just because they're a
16 Missouri-based casino operator, but because they're a group
17 of Midwestern-minded business folks who understand and
18 believe that Cape's success is their success.

19 I am impressed with the development is
20 without TIF funding, or other incentives, and that Isle has
21 provided contingencies in their development agreement with
22 the City to provide much needed money for our downtown, not
23 only now but in the future. Isle will be a partner in
24 Cape's growth, and I for one am excited to welcome them to
25 town.

1 There are some critics of this project who
2 cited increasing crime as a reason to oppose it. To me it
3 seems reasonable to investing millions of dollars in an
4 area that is currently dilapidated and rundown would
5 actually reduce crime. Bringing an additional one million
6 visitors to our city will increase visibility and activity
7 in areas where the lack of commerce and traffic currently
8 provides, what I consider, a breeding ground for crime.

9 In fact, a significant increase in jobs and
10 economic development for our community will not generate
11 crime, but it will bring jobs and commerce we desperately
12 need.

13 for those living in Cape Girardeau now and
14 wishing to see a revitalization of the historic and
15 beautiful natural resource we have with our river front and
16 for those like me who want to guarantee that our children
17 have the opportunity to stay and raise their families in
18 this wonderful heartland community, I believe that this
19 project is something Cape and the state must embrace and
20 support.

21 As a community, we cannot go forward while
22 standing still. Change does not occur without opposition,
23 but competition certainly creates vibrant returns. I feel
24 strongly that it's not just about the millions of dollars
25 that Isle will bring to our community, but it is about our

1 citizens embracing progress and welcoming a new day and a
2 new chance for our town.

3 This project is good for Cape, and it's the
4 best choice for our state. I thank you for providing me
5 the opportunity to express my support for this project.

6 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Good. Any
7 questions? Thank you, Judy, --

8 MS. CANTONI: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: -- very much.
10 Charles Bertrand. Please, sir.

11 MR. BERTRAND: My name is Charles
12 Bertrand. B-E-R-T-R-A-N-D.

13 I was born in Cape Girardeau and have lived
14 here for the last seven years. I own and operate a
15 business downtown Cape Girardeau. I live downtown Cape
16 Girardeau. I live on North Longer Street, and I have a
17 business on Spanish Street.

18 I'm here today to convey the message as a
19 citizen and downtown merchant that Cape Girardeau needs
20 this prospect, proposed casino very much. Thirty years
21 ago, downtown Cape Girardeau looked vastly different than
22 it does today. Store fronts were -- were filled with
23 retail business, such as clothing, shoes and hardware
24 stores. One of the hardware stores is the store that I am
25 in now. Like I said, I have an antique business and a

1 collectable business, getting ready to put in an ice cream
2 shop.

3 So this is a building that was inhabited by
4 a hardware store that left and moved to the west end of
5 town, probably many years ago.

6 Since then, much of the commercial
7 development in Cape Girardeau has migrated west away from
8 downtown and closer to the interstate. What business is
9 left in downtown struggles to attract visitors, and one by
10 one many shops have closed.

11 Cape has a rich history inter- --
12 intertwined with the river front. Our downtown could be a
13 driving historical tourism and entertainment district that
14 draws visitors from across the region to our beautiful
15 city.

16 Some of the people opposing this project
17 would agree that yes, we do need redevelopment in the
18 downtown, and we need to attract people to this area and
19 provide entertainment and shopping and other things and a
20 taxable dollar.

21 From my vantage point, this project is the
22 less best and only remaining solution to revitalize Cape
23 Girardeau's downtown. Gaming is regulated, it's legal, and
24 they want to pay taxes. And as a business owner and a
25 property owner downtown, I am taxed and taxed to what I

1 think is a fair amount of tax.

2 The more people that we get into the
3 downtown area and into the city of Cape Girardeau, the more
4 we'll have an equitable share of taxation for our city.
5 The benefits of this project are clear and unquestionable.
6 An additional one million visits to downtown every year,
7 three million projected in annual tax revenue for the city,
8 and an estimated \$500,000 set aside each year for downtown
9 renovation and beautification.

10 Let me be absolutely clear that there is no
11 other project with the potential to inject life and
12 resources into our downtown. Seven years ago our new
13 Mississippi bridge was built, and you probably saw that as
14 you came in. You may have seen it today. It's a beautiful
15 structure paid for by tax dollars.

16 We have a new Fountain Street exit going in
17 right now, paid for by tax dollars, and this River Campus
18 that we're in right now today paid for by tax dollars.
19 With this casinoproject, we could ensure that downtown
20 Cape Girardeau is once again the thriving area of community
21 entertainment and commerce.

22 Without this project, tourism will continue
23 to flee the downtown, and the creeping blight and vacancy
24 will continue spreading.

25 I thank you all for visiting our fine

1 community and providing the forum for these public
2 comments, and as a citizen and downtown business owner, I
3 sincerely ask for your support for the downtown Cape
4 Girardeau casino.

5 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you,
6 Charles. Any questions? Jeff M-A-U-R-E-R. Am I saying
7 that -- you can say it.

8 MR. MAURER: I'm very close to Mr.
9 Hagers.

10 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Okay.

11 MR. MAURER: My name is Jeff Maurer.
12 It's M-A-U-R-E-R.

13 Good afternoon. As I said, my name is Jeff
14 Maurer, and I'm a principal with Mason Capital Partners.
15 We're a private investment firm based here in Cape
16 Girardeau. Our business investments in Southeast Missouri
17 include a chain of convenience stores, community banks and
18 an urgent medical care center, along with several
19 commercial real estate developments.

20 Our businesses are typical of many in the
21 area in that we are ancillary service businesses rather
22 than primary industries. People don't travel to our
23 markets specifically to patronize our stores, banks or
24 urgent care centers.

25 Businesses like ours depend on strong

1 primary institutions like our two great health systems, our
2 Dalhousie Golf Course or Southeast Missouri State to draw
3 people to Cape.

4 The addition of a gaming industry would
5 obviously create a new primary industry with the capacity
6 to draw many hundreds of thousands of new people to Cape
7 each year. Surely some of these visitors will be people
8 who would not otherwise visit Cape, and thus are also
9 likely to generate incremental growth in ancillary service
10 businesses like ours, along with the hotels and restaurants
11 and retail shops that depend on a big regional draw.

12 We employ over 500 people across our
13 businesses in Southeast Missouri. We are certainly mindful
14 of the potential impact any new employer may have on the
15 labor force by adding several hundred new jobs. In our
16 opinion, the proposed gaming jobs are the best matched for
17 the hundreds of manufacturing jobs lost in recent years
18 when several plants closed their doors.

19 The people who lost those jobs did not
20 necessarily transition into our growing health care
21 industry, and their pay and benefits were different than
22 what the service industry typically are.

23 We acknowledge and respect the fact that
24 some of our neighbors oppose the gaming industry. The very
25 existence and vigor of this debate are good reminders of

1 why this country is so great. But to be frank, our
2 country, and specifically the state of Missouri, already
3 determined that a regulated gaming industry is acceptable
4 and appropriate as a business concern.

5 Assuming the Cape voters support this issue
6 in November, we perceive the decision to award a 13th
7 license as fundamentally a business decision. the license
8 is effectively an asset owned by the State of Missouri, and
9 should be deployed where it can generate the best economic
10 return. We believe that the Cape project has the best
11 probability of making the greatest economic impact on our
12 immediate region, as well as generating the most
13 incremental tax revenues for the state of Missouri.

14 Thanks for coming to Cape to hear our
15 thoughts.

16 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you. Any
17 questions? Thank you very much, Jeff. Rich Payne. Hi,
18 Rich.

19 MR. PAYNE: Good afternoon, my name is
20 Rich Payne. P-A-Y-N-E. I'm the director of the Cape
21 Girardeau Career and Technology Center. It's a workforce
22 development training institution that has a regional
23 approach.

24 I am here basically to support the
25 employment opportunities that the casino would bring for

1 employees in the region.

2 Presently over the last couple of years, we
3 have been dealing with a lot of unemployment. The adult
4 workers have been coming to us for retraining, and these
5 individuals are in need of opportunities that may be
6 available to them. We provided opportunities in
7 hospitality services, culinary arts, EMT and paramedic that
8 are specific to this industry, and those are the areas that
9 we would be able to support the casino. At the same time,
10 we would support them in any training opportunities that
11 they may need from our institution and those types of
12 things.

13 That's it.

14 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, sir.
15 Thanks, Rich. Mike Warren. Mike, come forward, sir,
16 please?

17 MR. WARREN: My name is Mike Warren.
18 W-A-R-R-E-N. I am a homeowner here in historic downtown
19 Cape. I'm a neighbor of Mr. Bertrand. I live on North
20 Longer Street. I moved here about a year ago from
21 Tennessee, and we are not tenants. We actually own the
22 home that we live in. And I pumped \$50,000 into the local
23 economy because I like and love downtown Cape Girardeau.

24 How many of us here live in downtown Cape?
25 (Show of hands.) I know that you like it too. A lot of

1 you don't, but that's okay. I am for the -- the people
2 that are -- that are going to be directly impacted are
3 probably not here today because they're working jobs. Most

4 Of you have been excused from your job for
5 this afternoon, or perhaps you're executives or you're
6 retired like I am, and have the time and the leisure and
7 the interest to come down here to express their views as a
8 proponent of the casino that's proposed for Cape.

9 I see it as a very major opportunity.
10 Fourteen million dollar payroll. Four hundred and fifty
11 jobs. Compensation, benefits. I'm retired. You know, I
12 have a pension. I have benefits. Most of your do too.
13 The people like my step-son and his girlfriend barely have
14 barely have jobs, and if they do have a job, they do not
15 have a benefit package.

16 So there's some things to be said for having
17 a good compensation and a good benefits package. Those
18 people need to be thought about. I see this as a win/win
19 situation. You know, Scott City has been contacted. So
20 has Jackson been contacted about possible spinoff revenue
21 for those two other cities, not only Cape.

22 Thank you, gentlemen, for your time.

23 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, sir.
24 Any questions of Mike? Okay. We're about to run out of
25 time. We have time for one more. Jean -- I'm sorry. I'm

1 trying to make it out, Jean. Looks like -- Hampton?

2 MS. HAMPTON: Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: I'm sorry. Did I
4 get close? Come forward, Jean, please.

5 MS. HAMPTON: Good afternoon. My name
6 is Jean Hampton. H-A-M-P-T-O-N.

7 I'm neither a business owner nor an
8 executive. I'm an employee of a local business that's
9 located on Broadway. I live on Good Hope Street. The
10 house is in the midst of all the construction, and we're
11 very excited about it.

12 The saddest thing is having buildings that
13 are boarded up. My family has been here since 1813, so
14 I've heard stories through people who have already passed
15 on about how vibrant and exciting downtown was.

16 I would like to see that again. The
17 positives definitely outweigh the negatives. There's too
18 many people who are unemployed at this time. We also only
19 have just a handful of small factories and one large
20 factory. If the small factories keep closing, it's just
21 going to increase our problems.

22 If the larger factory leaves, Cape Girardeau
23 is done for. A stable economy will only help bring more
24 factory-owned businesses to Cape. So I hope you all will
25 definitely consider us.

1 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, ma'am.

2 MS. HAMPTON: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Any questions of
4 Jean? Thank you. If my watch is close, that's 30 minutes,
5 maybe 31. Okay. Yes, sir.

6 MR. HILL: Excuse me, sir.

7 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Yes.

8 MR. HILL: I really think that you guys
9 should listen to what I have to say. I have -- I'm for the
10 casino, and I have an entirely different view from just
11 about everyone who has spoken.

12 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: You've got three
13 minutes. Come up, sir.

14 MR. HILL: Thank you, sir. I
15 appreciate it.

16 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Come up here.
17 State your name, and then we'll move on. Okay. Did you
18 sign in?

19 MR. HILL: I did.

20 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Okay.

21 MR. HILL: My name is Jackson Hill.
22 J-A-C-K-S-O-N, H-I-L-L.

23 I was born here in Cape at Southeast
24 Missouri State -- or Southeast Hospital. I lived here
25 until just a couple of years ago, at which point, I moved

1 to northern California. I spent the last year and nine
2 months working for Blue Lake Casino and Hotel located on
3 the Blue Lake Rancheria.

4 Our casino was the second casino built in
5 the area. It had been around for seven years. The
6 previous casino had been around for 22 years, and when I
7 got there, there was a third casino that was finished being
8 built approximately a couple of months after I showed up.
9 It was called Bear River Casino.

10 From the time Bear River Casino showed up
11 and opened its doors, it took away revenue from both our
12 casino and the pervious existing casino. We saw our
13 attendance drop. We saw our machines run into disrepair.
14 We saw less and less people.

15 And putting a casino in to St. Louis or in
16 to Kansas City would oversaturate the market in either of
17 those places, and take away from the potential for growth.
18 And basically the best spot would be here in Cape Girardeau
19 because there is only one slight competition, possibly two
20 if you count Metropolis and Caruthersville. And truthfully
21 we need the jobs, the people that are my age that are 22,
22 25. We don't have benefits in our jobs right now.

23 We can't get jobs where we can get the
24 health care, where we can get a 401k or we can get vision,
25 and we had that at the Blue Lake Casino. We had to pay for

1 part of it, but they helped us out, and I was able to start
2 a 401k. I was able to get my vision, my dental. I had a
3 gym membership that was partially paid for. They did a lot
4 of great things for us, and it was really, really helpful.

5 And basically that's it. This is the place
6 to put it. The people here need it. We need the jobs.

7 That's all I have to say.

8 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Good. Thank you.
9 Any questions? Thank you. Okay. Thirty-two or
10 thirty-three minutes. Okay. We're going to move now to
11 the opponents. The first person that signed is Melvin
12 Gateley?

13 MR. GATELEY: Yes, sir.

14 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Okay. Melvin,
15 please, sir, proceed.

16 MR. GATELEY: Good afternoon. My name
17 is Melvin, M-E-V-I-N, Gateley, G-A-T-E-L-E-Y. I express
18 our appreciation to our Chairman and to the Commissioners
19 for this opportunity.

20 Cape Girardeau was founded with the spirit
21 of doing and achieving great things for our citizens.
22 Cape's founder, Lewis Longer, declared, "This place has a
23 great promise."

24 His declaration has been our working model
25 for over 200 years. Cape Girardeau today is a beautiful

1 city that provides its residents with a wholesome quality
2 of life. Parents and schools have high standards of
3 conducts and achievement for their children. Their
4 educational needs are met by attending public, private and
5 parochial schools.

6 Yes, indeed, we are fortunate to have
7 Southeast Missouri State University in our town. Cape
8 Girardeau like a city over the hill has been a beacon --
9 beacon eliminate -- illuminating a visionary standard of
10 keeping out city a great place to live, learn, work and
11 worship.

12 Like the determined youngster that won't let
13 go of the cookie in the narrow necked cookie jar, the lure
14 of a non-tax revenue stream traps many liberal thinking
15 officials into approving casinos for their jurisdiction.

16 The officials do not see the bigger picture
17 of entrapment have become complacent of those who exploit
18 the voter and also put at risk the social and economic
19 stability of the region.

20 Statistics show that taking into account the
21 social and overall business impact of a community a casino
22 brings a negative cash flow rather than a positive one.
23 Presently, Cape Girardeau County is among the lowest in
24 percentage of employment in the state. For those
25 communities with casinos, quality of life takes a

1 nose-dive. Crime increases, more families are fractured,
2 school budgets or shift, and mom-and-pop businesses
3 disappear.

4 Officials are elected to make responsible
5 decisions that reflect the big picture of a successful
6 community, not just the bottom -- just the financial bottom
7 line. They have a moral responsibility to protect the
8 community and promote a wholesome atmosphere where families
9 and business can thrive.

10 Can anyone in this room describe a casino as
11 a wholesome and family oriented. Casinos extract more life
12 and money out of the whole economy than they put into it.
13 Most of the casino's revenues leave town. Remember, the
14 house always wins because the gamblers lose. That's how
15 casinos stay in business, and today, ladies and gentlemen,
16 that's a bad bus- -- that's bad business as far as I'm
17 concerned.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you,
20 Melvin. Please, please. Doug Austin. Doug, please, sir.

21 MR. AUSTIN: Doug Austin. A-U-S-T-I-N.
22 Proud resident of Cape Girardeau, America.

23 Just like you folks from the Gaming
24 Commission, I'm drinking from wells that I did not dig.
25 I'm resting in the shade of trees that I did not plant. I

1 owe my thanks, my honor and my homage to the great men and
2 women that have gone on before me, but provided for me a
3 great legacy.

4 It is now time for me to consider the legacy
5 that I will leave. What worth will I portray? Something
6 for nothing? Hard work is not necessary? Go ahead and
7 hurt your neighbor? Go ahead and harm your friends? Just
8 do it in the name of progress, and that will justify it in
9 the end. God forbid!

10 Are you familiar with the great legacy left
11 to this area by the sweat, blood and tears, and sacrifice
12 of those that's gone on before us. Within 20 miles of this
13 very spot, you'll find Old Bethel Baptist Church, the
14 first, non-Catholic church west of the Mississippi. You'll
15 find Old McKindry Methodist Church, the first Methodist
16 church west of the Mississippi. Both are over 200 years
17 old, and speak volumes of the legacy left to us. Not a
18 legacy of morals, nor money, nor growth at all cost, but a
19 legacy built solidly on the Word of God.

20 What a legacy for future generations. What
21 an inspiration to live a life based on helping our fellow
22 man. Our hearts are broken, but our resolve is strong. We
23 are good citizens of Cape Girardeau. We have not and will
24 not import any outside help. We have not and will not take
25 any outside money. We have not and will not employee paid

1 consultants.

2 This is an issue that we feel strongly is
3 for Cape Girardeau citizens to decide and only Cape
4 Girardeau citizens. We're a grass roots group of Cape
5 citizens that love this city, and want to see our city
6 succeed, but not at the expense of our friends and
7 neighbors.

8 Remember the famous line from "Gone With The
9 Wind"?

10 "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn."
11 The entire nation went into shock over that one sentence,
12 but freedom of speech prevailed. Now you can't sit through
13 a movie without being subjected to filth. How's that
14 working for us?

15 Remember the beginning of the internet?
16 Someone put a picture up of partial nudity. A shock going
17 across the nation, but we had to have freedom of choice.
18 Now addiction to pornography is the number two problem
19 facing this nation. How's that working for us?

20 I want the city of Cape to stand on
21 principles. To keep the casino business in a good light,
22 and that's the delusion that it does more harm than good,
23 the gambling industry must keep the focus away from the
24 problems it causes. Casino owners have already
25 indoctrinated our city leaders into a way of thinking and

1 speaking that supports the casino business public imagine
2 at all costs, even abandoning their own culture norms and
3 values.

4 I stand in solid opposition to casino boat
5 gambling in this city that is know to be a great place to
6 visit, work, live and raise a family -- and raise a family.
7 I do not want the character of Cape Girardeau, Missouri
8 changed forever.

9 Thank you for your time.

10 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, Doug.
11 Terry Rollins, please.

12 MR. ROLLINS: My name is Terry Rollins.
13 T-E-R-R-Y, R-O-L-L-I-N-S.

14 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, Terry.

15 MR. ROLLINS: A little different
16 approach here. I lived in Coruthersville for 40 years
17 before I moved to Cape Girardeau. So all this going on
18 here today, as Yogi Berra would say, is "nausa vu all over
19 again."

20 We bought the same story down there we're
21 buying here -- we're buying here in Cape right now. All
22 these promises, all these illusions, they're starting to
23 form. And let me tell you that some of these illusions are
24 merely that.

25 When we -- the boat came into

1 Caruthersville, the first thing they had to do was find a
2 good spot for it. They wanted the best spot on the river
3 because at that time a boat had to cruise. So they bought
4 an old box factory down there that was barely operating,
5 had about 30 or 40 employees. They gave them, we were
6 told, about \$6 million for this rundown property. So those
7 people were big winners right off the bat.

8 Well, the boat did cruise. I know it did
9 because I rode on it. They gave a bunch of us a ride on it
10 when they first started. But the boat owners pretty
11 quickly found out that that's entirely too bothersome and
12 too expensive. So they contacted whoever you contact and
13 said let's don't fool with this anymore, let's stop this
14 cruising.

15 So they did. As they say down in -- there's
16 still some kind of a connection to water. I don't know
17 what it is. As they say down in Tunica, you now got a boat
18 and a moat, whatever that means.

19 Then the boat owners, casino owners, being
20 the good folks they are, they said let's don't let the guy
21 lose his whole paycheck on one visit. So they instituted a
22 \$500 win/loss per day. Well, guess what, people weren't
23 winning fast enough, as you can imagine. So they contacted
24 the people again to deal with that. There was no longer a
25 \$500 a day win/loss mechanism. Wonder why.

1 In the beginning, they told us all this
2 piles of money they're going to produce for the schools.
3 Well, just last week our state auditor said where is that
4 money. One of the legislators said it's there. The state
5 auditor said it may be there, but I can't find it.

6 So are they producing money, or are they
7 not? Who knows? It's all part of the illusion that's
8 going on with the whole thing.

9 Yeah, they paid their taxes down in
10 Caruthersville for a while. Then after a while, they
11 decided they would appeal their tax assessment, and they
12 did. This dragged through the court for several years.
13 They finally came to some kind of a conclusion. The
14 conclusion is they only pay a fraction -- a fraction of the
15 tax they once paid.

16 So what I'm saying is there's an illusion
17 going on here right now. It's sort of like the kids when
18 they go to the parade. Look at all this free candy they're
19 throwing out. Let's get our bag and go down and get us a
20 sackful. What the kids don't realize, they don't care, but
21 we're -- as adults, we're supposed to know this candy is
22 not free. It's paid for by somebody.

23 So just recently I noticed the Business
24 Development Group had gotten on board for this thing and
25 said this is probably the best thing for downtown Cape in

1 40 years, more than 40 years. Well, I don't think I agree
2 with that at all.

3 All you got to do is look at their business
4 plan for a gaming casino, and it can be summed up in one
5 line: We will be successful providing our customers fail.
6 Now, is that a business plan or not?

7 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, Terry.
8 Vivian Selby.

9 MS. SELBY: Vivian S-E-L-B-Y. And I'm
10 just a person from Cape Girardeau, and I love this city.
11 So before our city marries and partners with the casino, I
12 had some questions, and that's where the internet comes in
13 handy, because you can learn an awful lot.

14 And Cape Girardeau is not the first
15 community to balance the benefits of a casino versus the
16 negative aspect of the casino. So I wanted to see what
17 casino operators' real attitudes were. So I get the "Post
18 Dispatch" every day, and I know that some of you all from
19 St. Louis, so you probably read this. So stress
20 repetition.

21 But the AmeriStar is in St. Charles, and
22 they opened a upscale club, nightclub, called the Homes.
23 And from the "Post Dispatch" it says:

24 "There's no place like Home,
25 one of the glitzy \$15 million

1 nightclub in the AmeriStar Casino
2 in St. Charles opened during
3 Christmas of 2007.

4 "Months before it opened,
5 fliers circulated around town
6 promising that Home would reshape
7 the nightlife industry in the
8 Midwest forever."

9 Well, how does that affect the downtown St.
10 Louis? Well, of course, when the Home opened, Mark Loval
11 owned Club 15 downtown lost customers, but he -- and he
12 won't mourn the closing of Home. He said he never felt the
13 playing field was even once Home opened. Home was solidly
14 backed by the Vegas based event company, Angel Music
15 Company Group, and during its first two years, it allowed
16 Home to pay celebrities huge fees.

17 Well, it's closed now, and AmeriStar said --
18 their attitude is, "At the end of the day, what we are is a
19 casino, and we use whatever we can to try to bring guest to
20 our facility."

21 So what they found in St. Charles, changing
22 all of the Midwest, that's gone. That's not true. They
23 gave it up. They threw it away, and just care for
24 themselves.

25 So I wanted to look deeper, and I found

1 Casino Mogul Steve Winn did not whence (sic) words when he
2 warned local businessmen what a casino would mean to them
3 in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Steve Winn's words exactly
4 are:

5 "There is no reason not for
6 any of you to expect more than a
7 second that just because there are
8 people here, they're going to run
9 into your restaurants and stores
10 just because we build this casino
11 building here."

12 That's the truth. And then consider an
13 analysis by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, and their
14 quote is this, "Casinos can provide a boost if they attract
15 tourists, but even then the benefits go to the casino, not
16 to the surrounding area."

17 And who is Isle of Capri really? When we
18 read about them and hear about them, it sounds like they're
19 a bunch of good old boys from the Midwest sitting around
20 their table saying by, golly, let's just help Cape
21 Girardeau.

22 And the truth is they're a big group sold on
23 the New York Stock Exchange, and it wasn't in the paper in
24 Cape Girardeau, but it was posted in the "St. Louis Post
25 Dispatch" that Isle of Capri finances fell 21 percent in

1 the three months ending July 25th. Twenty-one percent.

2 That's what Cape Girardeau is banking their future on.

3 So I wanted to see what patrons who go to
4 Isle of Capri, their experience, because if we want to
5 invite people to Cape Girardeau, let's see what we're
6 inviting them too. And there a lot of websites that give
7 opinions on travel experiences, but I found one called
8 American Casino Guide.

9 And one -- there are many, many reviews, but
10 this one summed it up when he said, "We travel nationwide
11 in an RV, and this place," -- it's an Isle of Capri casino,

12 ". . . this place is
13 characteristic of Isle of Capri
14 casinos all over the country.
15 These places have been milked of
16 their profits with nothing
17 returned for the property with
18 rare exception, Isle of Capri
19 casinos are dirty, the food is
20 bad, and treatment of customers is
21 worse. Avoid them at any cost."

22 And then there's collateral damage, I found
23 out, when you have a casino. Higher police costs, that's a
24 fact of course, low-paying jobs mean increased cost to a
25 family who use the most social services. In any event, in

1 our school, we've got teachers teaching classrooms and
2 doing special services out of closets. We're packed.

3 We have 400 hundred new jobs. Our city
4 leaders are learning how to address the issue of are we
5 going to build a new school, and if we build a new school,
6 where would be put the new school, who's going to pay for
7 the new school, and is that ultimately going to have
8 increased property taxes.

9 And that's -- that's all. I have a lot of
10 questions about what -- what a casino would do to our city,
11 and I just want some answers. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you,
13 Vivian. Bob Kameth? Hi, Bob.

14 MR. KAMETH: Respectful Commissioners.
15 My name is Bob Kameth, K-A-M-E-T-H. I'm a local
16 psychiatrist. I've been in practice in Cape Girardeau for
17 the past 33 years, and over the past 28 years, I have seen
18 1,000 new patients every year. Almost all of them were
19 victims of some kid of vices.

20 And gambling is one vice that brings into
21 focus all the remaining vices. I was going to speak for
22 five minutes, but with your permission, may I give two
23 minutes of my time to one of my clients who has paid a dear
24 price for the gambling of the -- by the father.

25 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Sure.

1 MR. KAMETH: Okay. Thank you. Let me
2 just say quickly, gambling is one of seven harmful vices by
3 which people cope with their everyday life stresses. It is
4 inextricably linked with the other six vices family:
5 drinking alcohol to excess, abusing illicit drugs, smoking
6 cigarettes, promiscuity, over eating and reckless spending.

7 The harmful effects of these vices on
8 children of gamblers are both immediate and long-term. Most
9 are victims of these vices before being exposed to them as
10 children. Children of gamblers are twice as likely to
11 suffer from serious psychiatric and drug abuse problems.

12 Mental illness of one family member has
13 equal effect on other members and even the next generation.
14 In a small community such as Cape Girardeau which has less
15 than one-fifth the population of St. Louis metropolitan
16 area could in the long run ruin the lives of hundreds of
17 people living within a 60 mile radius.

18 I stand before you today expressing my
19 opposition to a casino in Cape Girardeau because I believe
20 in doing the right thing regardless of any backlash. I
21 trust the Gaming Commission has diligently examined not
22 only the supposed benefits of the casino for local economy
23 but also take into account long-term detrimental
24 psychological and financial effect on the lives of
25 thousands of people living in the small community.

1 Before the casino we should follow these
2 three simple rules in solving Cape Girardeau's financial
3 problem. First, do no harm. Second, benefits of the
4 proposed solution must clearly over negative side effects.
5 Third, keep in mind that all misguided solutions become
6 problems themselves sooner or later.

7 You must have read in the newspaper about
8 the possible backlash if the license is not given to Cape
9 Girardeau because it has been hyped up to the public that
10 this is a done deal. It is not a done deal. I request the
11 Gaming Commission to do the right thing regardless of
12 praise or backlash from the public or any of the vested
13 interests.

14 Thank you very much, and I'll give two
15 minutes to my client.

16 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you,
17 Doctor.

18 MS. SMITHEY: My name is Donna Smithey.
19 S-M-I-T-H-E-Y. I am the youngest child of a reformed
20 alcoholic and gambler.

21 My father began to drink during his teenage
22 years and shoot craps, whatever that is. And it continued
23 and it only got worse. I asked my Aunt Genevieve last week
24 my mother married my father knowing the way he was. She
25 told me that my mother loved him very much, and love is

1 blind.

2 My mother struggled along. My father had a
3 great job on the pipeline, but he lost it for drinking and
4 gambling on the job. He told me this many, many times.
5 When the gambling began, I asked him once, what was your
6 game of choice, and he said poker. But he was not a very
7 good player, and he almost always lost.

8 Now, we make poker an almost Olympic sport
9 on TV and in casinos. My mother waited every Friday when
10 he cashed his check to try to get at least some of the
11 money out of his hands. Sometimes it was already gone.
12 That meant no groceries, no bills paid, and trying to
13 stretch what the little she tried to hide from him go just
14 that much farther. She couldn't do it.

15 I've been told that my father, and he's told
16 me this too, he was not a nice drunk, and he was not a nice
17 gambler. And if he was here today, he'd tell you the same.

18 When I came along, I never ever saw that
19 side of him. He became a Christian, laid the bottle and
20 the gambling down. The only father I knew was the most
21 loving father a child could see. I never saw him take a
22 drink or gamble, but it was real.

23 My siblings were not so lucky. They saw it
24 all, and they lived it all, and they still pay a price.

25 So if you want to bring your casino to this

1 area, remember, you reap what you sew. Make your battered
2 women's homes bigger, make your jails larger, and build a
3 few more rehab centers. You will need them.

4 My answer -- I ask you does this city need
5 money so bad that so many lives will be destroyed? I'll
6 say it again. Does this city need money so bad that they
7 will let lives be destroyed in the process?

8 You will see so much heartache and despair.
9 I always thought Cape Girardeau was different. If you put
10 a casino here, it will change forever. I ask you, citizens
11 and dignitaries of this fine city, is this how little you
12 care about the people here and family values?

13 I thought you were different. Maybe I was
14 wrong. How sad.

15 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, Donna.
16 Nancy Nussbaum-Robinson.

17 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Yes, ma'am.

19 MS. ROBINSON: My name is Nancy
20 Nussbaum, N-U-S-S-B-A-U-M, Robinson, R-O-B-I-N-S-O-N.

21 And I must commend those people who have had
22 the courage to stand up here and talk. It's -- it's really
23 something, especially now when I look at everybody all over
24 the place and it's fantastic. Thank you so much for coming
25 to allow the public to address you.

1 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. ROBINSON: Appreciate the
3 opportunity.

4 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, ma'am.

5 MS. ROBINSON: My father and his father
6 and his father came to Cape Girardeau and helped build it
7 up in the 1800s. My grandfather came from Switzerland, and
8 he was -- he had a lot of the companies over -- I mean, the
9 establishments on the Good Hope side, the hard district.

10 My -- that was my great grandfather. My
11 grandfather was a bank president for 42 years at the
12 Farmers and Merchants Bank here in town before it became a
13 Salvation Army.

14 And my father, himself, was an electrical
15 engineer for Missouri Utilities before Union Electric
16 bought Missouri Utilities.

17 So my father and my grandfather and my great
18 grandfather dearly loved this town, and there were many,
19 many people who worked so hard to get the land around here
20 and to put wonderful, awe-inspiring businesses upon it.
21 And the people worked together as a team to make Cape
22 really come through with positive energy light.

23 I must commend the Chamber of Commerce and
24 also the Convention and Visitors Bureau especially because
25 of the brochures that they've been putting out noting all

1 of the wonderful activities that we have that are -- well,
2 some of them are four and five every weekend and during the
3 week. Marathons and things that organizations plan for us
4 to do to raise money to help others within the community.

5 The -- there are many, many people who are
6 working together as a team to make Cape Girardeau a great
7 city, and that includes the service clubs, the many
8 organizations, the hospitals, the hotel establishments who
9 bring people in to help, you know, with the economy of the
10 community as well, and the restaurants as well.

11 And what I wanted to say is we have
12 tremendous amounts of opportunities and activities going on
13 all of the time to supply the needed revenue for our city
14 without having something coming in and putting all our eggs
15 in one basket for the revenue, I believe.

16 This is something that I want to commend the
17 Convention and Visitors Bureau for and all the other
18 organizations, for keeping it in our sights and our focus
19 on what we should.

20 There's also something I wanted to say about
21 -- excuse me one moment. I wanted to thank also the
22 churches and the organizations who have also been helping
23 in this measurement.

24 Our job here in Cape for each of us, we are
25 to be held accountable for what we bring to Cape and for

1 what we are doing for the benefit of all mankind in Cape
2 Girardeau, not just of any small interest groups who too --
3 who will line their pockets with the proceeds. But I feel
4 that we do need to make sure that we are here, not to just
5 be merely successful on this earth. We are here to make a
6 difference to the great all kinds of mankind that we have
7 here.

8 And it is important for each of us to know
9 that some day we will each be held accountable for what we
10 have done to glorify our Father in heaven while we've been
11 here on the earth. This is a learning school for each of
12 us, and I was born on Friday the 13th, and there are many
13 who consider that a tremendous risk right there.

14 And something I'm sure that I am a negative
15 risk, but I believe that my heavenly Father has put me here
16 on this earth on that day to make a difference to the
17 benefit of all mankind, not just the special interest
18 groups.

19 So we don't have to be number 13 in the
20 city. We don't have to have a license to operate and to be
21 a success to all mankind. We are doing that merely by
22 being a great city, and God has blessed us so much in this
23 city, and I hope that the positive energy will continue.
24 But if we do decide to go with making more revenue and the
25 strategies and everything that we think we have to with

1 this gambling casino, I am really concerned about the --
2 making us a target for those who on the negative side,
3 let's just say.

4 Another one thing that I -- that a council
5 member pointed out to me is that the revenues that we would
6 get from this casino would be going into infrastructure,
7 things that would help, you know, pave new roads and things
8 for the city. But would you really want the proceeds from
9 people who have brought their checks in, who have not been
10 able to get rich quick any other way, but who have used the
11 slot machines and everything else to get their proceeds?

12 Would you really want their money to build the
13 roads and continue the pavement and the asphaltting and the
14 lubrication of this city built on the backs of these people
15 who have spent the money that they really shouldn't have
16 spent in the first place that they've taken out of the
17 mouths of their own families?

18 This is the question we need to ask, and I
19 ask and pray that each of you would considerably pray about
20 what your vote is going to be November the 2nd because we
21 will be making ourselves, each one of us who votes, is a
22 negative accountable and also those who vote in the
23 positive accountable.

24 When we get ready to go meet our maker,
25 we're going to be asked what did you do on the earth to

1 glorify God. Each one of us has that ahead of us.

2 Thank you so much.

3 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, Nancy.
4 Thank you very much. Our last one on time is Richard
5 Martin. Richard?

6 MR. MARTIN: Richard Martin.

7 M-A-R-T-I-N. I'd like to speak on behalf of Greater Cape
8 Girardeau and Southeast Missouri.

9 Cape Girardeau recently voted against the
10 casino vote in the spring of '93, and then six months later
11 by less than 1 percent voted for it. What we voted for at
12 that time was a romantic cruise on the river with a three
13 hour time limit and \$500 money limit.

14 I'm disappointed in the capricious attitude
15 of our City Council, pun intended. Once the city and the
16 state share in the profits and begin to depend on money
17 instead of -- on this money instead of representing the
18 best for their constituents, they will likely become more
19 sensitive to the needs of the Cape -- of the casino owners
20 and their people.

21 We already have seen what that was like.
22 The Boyd Group, the same group that was promoters here in
23 the '90s, was kicked out of the state of Missouri and their
24 illegal actions in Kansas City, and Missouri Speaker,
25 remind you and I'm sure some of you remember, Bob Griffin,

1 and his trip to jail for the RICO actions.

2 There is no doubt that some in Cape
3 Girardeau will profit and there will be lots of lights and
4 glitter, but many -- not as many will profit as you might
5 thing, and those businesses in Southeast Missouri will be
6 in some sense in direct competition with the boat. Those
7 same people, 70 percent of them, will come from a 70-mile
8 radius.

9 The thought that these people may gamble
10 anyway, so they might as well come here, has some truth,
11 but convenient location means that our neighbors will
12 gamble more often. It is a well-known and proven fact that
13 the number of problem and pathologic gamblers double when
14 the gambling is made available in a previously unavailable
15 area.

16 This is why we are described as the
17 prettiest girl in the dance. This is virgin territory
18 relative to the rest of the state, and therefore -- and
19 heretofore untapped by the industry that is based on greed
20 and the willingness and the readiness to take 125 and 150
21 million from the area.

22 Twenty percent of that will go to the state,
23 one percent to the -- to the region or to the Cape
24 Girardeau downtown. The jobs that are offered will mostly
25 be menial, minimum wage. Higher paying jobs will go to

1 people who will come in from out of town, well trained to
2 extract money from the area to the home base. Dealers,
3 money handlers, managers would take four to six months for
4 training, and they would be less sympathetic to the local
5 neighbor who's losing or out of control simply because he
6 doesn't know them or he doesn't recognize them.

7 How many parents are going to reconsider
8 sending their children to Southeast State Missouri
9 University knowing that the college kids are over twice as
10 likely to develop problem gambling than adults.

11 This past week I casually mentioned the
12 gambling issue to one of my patients from Caruthersville.
13 They told me that they're in the process of helping their
14 80-year-old mother declare bankruptcy. She had second
15 mortgaged her house and was -- had lost her house and more
16 with the -- the slot machines.

17 Friday during surgery, my surgical tech had
18 heard the possibility of the boat, stated that she goes to
19 the boat once a month. But she really feared that coming
20 here she wasn't going to be able to resist going more
21 frequently, and she was really concerned and planning to
22 vote against it.

23 The problem gambler doesn't just hurt
24 himself, but on average directly hurts at least eight other
25 people. They end up between 60 and 80 thousand dollars in

1 debt by the time they seek help, if they seek help, and if
2 they don't seek help, they frequently lead to criminal --
3 criminal activity is often associated with breakup of
4 marriage, bankruptcy, and some actually have committed
5 suicide.

6 You don't see these crimes attributed to the
7 boat because they happen back home where in our situation
8 would be Marble Hill and Scott City and Advance, Sikeston,
9 et cetera.

10 Cape Girardeau County is one of the
11 healthiest and wealthiest in the state. We don't need this
12 kind of profit for our community. I would encourage the
13 state and the city officials to consider the social costs
14 which surpasses by three times the income that will be
15 generated by the gambling boat, and begin to act on behalf
16 of their constituents and protect this lovely city and
17 themselves and say no to the boat.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, sir.

20 MR. MARTIN: Okay.

21 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Okay. Time has
22 run out on us.

23 MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman?

24 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Yes, sir.

25 MR. JONES: I have a question to the

1 Commission, if I might address that to you.

2 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: You can ask us,
3 sir, but --

4 MR. JONES: Okay.

5 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: But I had stated
6 to start with, we're -- we -- we're not here to answer, you
7 know. We're here to just listen.

8 MR. JONES: Just a public service --

9 MS. REPORTER: May I have your name?

10 MR. JONES: -- to protect -- Roy Jones
11 here in Cape Girardeau.

12 MS. REPORTER: Thank you.

13 MR. JONES: J-O-N-E-S. A public
14 service commission protects the citizens of the state. My
15 concern is I've not seen any evidence of your commission
16 functioning in that role. Perhaps you would elaborate and
17 not answer to me, but would explain to the media what your
18 role is besides selecting which city would get the 13 if
19 you give it to the commission. Yes, sir.

20 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: There's a list of
21 everything that the Commission and the staff for the
22 Commission, sir, will go through step by step, and there's
23 like 12 or 14 different things that we're going to go
24 through before we ever even reach the point to try to make
25 a decision.

1 MR. JONES: But beyond this decision,
2 is there anything your commission does to make sure there's
3 no money laundering or some of the things that have been
4 famous in other states?

5 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Sir, we place --
6 you know, I will put, you know, with the consent of my
7 commissioners, I'll answer that. I mean, we have a
8 meeting. We'll have one Wednesday this week in Kansas City
9 along with our meeting listening to the folks just like
10 this in Kansas City on the Sugar Creek application.

11 We meet once a month. We spend anywhere
12 from two to four hours going through different
13 investigations that have been made on anything that could
14 probably touch gaming in the state. Plus we investigate
15 the principals that's involved, whether they are foreign or
16 domestic.

17 MR. JONES: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: And it's a very,
19 very thorough process. In fact, nationally, the state of
20 Missouri, not just since we got here, before us even, you
21 know, we were recognized as probably one of the, you know
22 -- what's the proper word? -- most diligent, best regulated
23 state there was as far as gaming in the United States.

24 MR. JONES: And that's good for us to
25 know, and I appreciate that, but you don't see any

1 responsibility for the individuals that have described who
2 are hurt by this industry.

3 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Sir, we have
4 several different ways that people can take themselves out
5 of casinos or we can help them take themselves out of
6 casinos.

7 MR. JONES: We would appreciate
8 anything you can do to increase that possibility.

9 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you.

10 MR. JONES: Whether we have a casino
11 here or wherever in the state.

12 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Thank you, sir.

13 MR. JONES: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Listen I want --
15 let me thank you all, number one, all of you for coming out
16 here today, and thank you. I hope our other hearings are
17 -- are as -- people are as nice and considerate to each
18 other as you all have been.

19 I know that there are serious feelings on
20 each side of this issue. There always is. That's why an
21 issue becomes an issue, isn't it.

22 So thank you very, very much for your
23 courtesy to each other, and thank you for your courtesy to
24 us. It's good to be in Cape Girardeau. Thank you very
25 much.

1 COMMISSIONER HATCHES: You need to make
2 a motion to close the meeting.

3 COMMISSIONER SHULL: Motion.

4 COMMISSIONER HATCHES: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: All in favor?

6 COMMISSIONER SHULL: Approved.

7 COMMISSIONER HATCHES: Approved.

8 COMMISSIONER JONES: Approved.

9 COMMISSIONER MERRITT: Approved.

10 CHAIRMAN MATHEWSON: Adjourned.

11 (Thereupon, the proceedings were
12 concluded 2:22 p.m.)

13 o8o

14 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTIFIED IN WRITING BY THE PARTIES
15 INVOLVED, ALL NOTES IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PROCEEDING WILL
16 BE DESTROYED 12 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS PROCEEDING.

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF MISSOURI)

) ss:

COUNTY OF JEFFERSON)

I, PATSY A. HERTWECK, Professional Court Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Missouri, the officer before whom the foregoing proceeding was taken, do hereby certify that the aforementioned was held at the time and in the place previously described.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal.

Patsy A. Hertweck, C. R.

Notary Public