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INDIANA
CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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ORIGINAL

PROCEEDINGS

PUBLIC MEETING OF APRIL 25, 2014

BEFORE THE STATE OF INDIANA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

in the above-captioned matter, before the Indiana Civil Rights Commission, David C. Carter, Chairman, taken before me, Lindy L. Meyer, Jr., a Notary Public in and for the State of Indiana, County of Shelby, at the Indiana Government Center South, Conference Center, Room A, 402 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, on Friday, April 25, 2014 at 10:28 o'clock a.m.

William F. Daniels, RPR/CP CM d/b/a
ACCURATE REPORTING OF INDIANA
12922 Brighton Avenue
Carmel, Indiana 46032
(317) 848-0088

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1	APPEARANCES:
2	COMMISSION MEMBERS:
3	David C. Carter, Chairman Barry Baynard
4	Charles D. Gidney Tehiji G. Crenshaw
5	Teniji G. Crensnaw
6	INDIANA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION By Akia Haynes, Deputy Director
7	Indiana Government Center North 100 North Senate Avenue, Room N103
8	Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 On behalf of the Commission.
9	on behalf of the commission.
10	OTHER COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:
11	Noell Allen Pamela Cook
12	Debbie Rincones-Chavez
13	ORAL ARGUMENTS:
14	Reginald Baker vs. Roman Marblene
15	Michael C. Healy, counsel for Complainant Wayne E. Uhl, counsel for Respondent
16	Andrew Straw vs. Indiana Democratic Party
17	Andrew Straw, counsel for Complainant A. Scott Chinn, counsel for Respondent
18	ii. seeds enim, counsel for kespondent
19	OTHERS PRESENT:
20	Reginald Baker David Hunter
21	Jim Triantos Stuart Showalter
22	John Zody
23	

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10:28 o'clock a.m. April 25, 2014

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. I'll call our monthly meeting to order, even though we don't have a quorum and can't vote on anything, so we can get the meeting out of the way, and hopefully by then -- oh, that's bad English. We hope that by 11:00 that we will have a quorum for

So, Item A on the agenda is "Chair Convenes Meeting," which I've just done, "& Establishes a Quorum," which I cannot do, and therefore we can't approve, or vote to approve, on the Meeting Minutes. So, we will move to the Financial Report.

Ms. Cook.

the oral arguments to follow.

MS. COOK: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Good morning.

COMM. BAYNARD: Good morning.

MS. COOK: You've had an opportunity to review the March Financial Report. At this point we are still on target to meet our goal for fiscal year end. If you have any questions

regarding the report, I'd like to entertain those at this time.

(No response.)

MS. COOK: Okay. Hearing none, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you.

Well, we could report on the Complainant
Appeals, but since we can't have a vote to
approve the recommendations, I think we can skip
that. We might have a discussion later as to the
legality of, if other Commissioners should show
up, doing the voting part in the gap between the
two -- two oral arguments, and whether that
violates the Open Door Law or not, so that we can
get some business done.

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And assigning the New Appeals, there are five, and I don't know if -- do we want -- do we want to redistribute them? Let's put that off.

That's not really so much a matter of -- on the record. So, on Findings of Fact, we can't vote on. There are no Consent Agreements, and for the moment, we'll skip the Oral Arguments, because it's not 11:00 yet, and we'll have an

Administrative Update. Ms. Haynes. MS. HAYNES: Good morning. COMM. BAYNARD: Good morning. I think there were two dismissals in here, and it seems as though they actually agreed on one of the dismissals. Does that mean that -- are we involved in that particular Complaint being dismissed or is it -- I think it's the case of Brooks versus Republic Airways Holdings. MS. HAYNES: Yes, a settlement was 11 reached in those matters, and that did involve our agency. 13 COMM. BAYNARD: And you all resolved 14 it? And there was another one as well, Matthews 15 versus Genuine Parks, NAPA Auto Parts. That was 16 a settlement that didn't involve us as well? 17 18 MS. HAYNES: That's correct. COMM. BAYNARD: Okay. I just wanted 19 to be clear. Thank you. 20 21 MS. HAYNES: Thank you. So, good morning. 23 COMM. BAYNARD: Good morning.

MS. HAYNES: And we've been quite busy as of late. As of last week, we had five PC's issued, the majority of which were on the basis of disability, but there were also some on

the basis of race and gender.

And summing up our events, we have recently completed the Indiana Fair Housing Summit. That contained the CLE as well as CE credit, in the amount of eight credits. We had in excess of 150 individuals who attended. It was a very good turnout. People were very interested in what occurred, and we also debuted our preliminary testing results from Region 7.

So, in that case, we, amongst the peer tests that were conducted, found that approximately 29 percent showed differential treatment, and so now we are preparing to conduct testing in Regions 1 and Regions 8 for this quarter.

On April 5th, there was the Black
Barbershop Statewide Health Initiative, and that
occurred in 13 cities as well as, too, a great
turnout.

And then this coming Wednesday, on the 30th, is Holocaust Memorial Day of Remembrance event, and that will be from 12:00 until noon -or 2:00, excuse me -- in the Statehouse rotunda. 5 Following that, in our CLE series on May 23rd, we will have a CLE entitled "Title VII: Bankruptcy, Credit [and] Corporations." That will be for three credit hours and will occur in Hammond. 10 And in June, the 2nd through the 6th, we invite you to attend the NFHTA Week Two Regional 11 12 Training. This training will be on-site here in Government Center South, in Conference Room 14, and as mentioned, it will take place during the 14 15 entire week from 8:00 until 5:00 p.m. 16 Do you have any questions? 17 CHAIRMAN CARTER: (Shook head no.) 18 MS. HAYNES: Thank you. 19 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you. 20 All right. So, that brings us to Announcements. Do you have any announcements? 21 22 COMM. BAYNARD: No, I do not. 23 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Anyone else have

any announcements?

(No response.)

mention that I spent Wednesday at a training for -- largely intended for building inspectors and architects on the -- Chapter 11 of the Indiana Building Code, which has to do with accessibility matters, that do not very closely follow the ADA, unfortunately, although it should.

So, I spent from 8:00 in the morning until 4:00 in the afternoon hearing all about Building Code details, which was not as thrilling as it sounds.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN CARTER: But I think I learned something. I learned that that guy, the guy doing it, who used to be a professional building inspector, didn't like the way that the Building Commission is now under the blanket of Homeland Security, and he didn't like the way they approached accessibility issues at all, and made that very clear. But what -- what is there,

we learned about.

If that is it, unless anyone has anything else, we will then adjourn, making note of the meeting dates for the rest of the year, although since we're here, we seem to have already made note of what our responsibilities are. And I will then declare adjournment for the business meeting.

(Recess taken.)

(Comm. Gidney arrived.)

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. I'll call us back to order, and the Indiana Civil Rights

Commission is here to hear oral arguments as a result of Complainant's objections to proposed findings of fact, conclusions of law and order, Reginald Baker versus Roman Marblene, is that how that's pronounced? If the appearances could be identified, please. Oh, I'm -- well, I've got -- well, I believe the order is here.

MR. UHL: Your Honor, my name is
Wayne Uhl. I'm attorney for Roman Marblene. I'm
here with my client, Jim Triantos, who's the
President and co-owner of the company.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay.

MR. HEALY: For Complainant, Your
Honor, my name is Michael Healy, staff counsel to
the Civil Rights Commission for the public
interest, on behalf of Reginald Baker, who is
standing to the left of me, and also is David
Hunter, who is also -- was an employee of Roman
Marblene Company.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. All right.

So, the way we'll do this is that you each will have 20 minutes, Complainant beginning, to make your case, and then the Respondent will have 20 minutes to respond to that, and then you will each have five minutes for rebuttal, after which there will be five or ten minutes for questions from the Commissioners, and we hope --

MR. HEALY: Yeah, I have a preliminary procedural matter, Your Honor.

Mr. Uhl and I and some of the persons here were concerned about the absence of a quorum. Is that a -- not an issue now?

CHAIRMAN CARTER: As long we don't vote on anything, and there will be a transcript

available, so I think -- a written transcript of the proceeding of the argument. We already have your submitted arguments or briefs anyway, so we -- I -- in the 20-some years that I've been doing this, that hasn't been an issue when we have oral arguments. MR. HEALY: I think, Your Honor, that -- a similar situation happened in years past when there were -- was less than a quorum, but we'd oral argument anyway, and eventually 10 four Commissioners signed off --11 12 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Right. 13 MR. HEALY: -- so, that's perfectly fine --14 15 CHAIRMAN CARTER: We haven't had quorums before. MR. HEALY: That's perfectly fine 17 18 with Complainant. 19 MR. UHL: That's fine, Chairman. I don't have a problem with that. I think probably under the rules we don't even have to have an 21 oral argument; the Commission could decide on the

23 briefs that we've already submitted.

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CHAIRMAN CARTER: Yeah.

MR. UHL: So, if the oral arguments help those of you sitting here today, and then the Commissioners who look at it later, that's perfectly fine with me.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: That's often a little less onerous than reading what lawyers laughingly call a brief.

(Laughter.)

MR. UHL: I would like to ask this: When you refer to the papers, Chairman, we have filed a lot of papers with the ALJ.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Uh-huh.

MR. UHL: And then we filed some paperwork respecting the objections, and would the Commission also be reviewing the papers that we had originally filed with the ALJ? Because we incorporated our arguments.

(Ms. Cook left.)

MR. UHL: I tried to be brief in the things we filed, and tried to incorporate the arguments on the assumption that the Commission would have available to it --

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Yeah. MR. UHL: -- the briefing that we had done. CHAIRMAN CARTER: They are available, yes. MR. UHL: Okay. CHAIRMAN CARTER: So, if the Complainant would begin, please. 9 MR. HEALY: Good morning. 10 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Good morning. 11 MR. HEALY: At the outset, I think it is important that we discuss just what the issues 12 are before you. The issue here is not whether 13 the Complainant has proved his case by a 14 15 preponderance of the evidence at a hearing. There was no hearing. Complainant has not yet 16 had his opportunity for a hearing on the merits of the claim, because the Respondent has filed a 18 motion for summary judgment. This is a summary 19 judgment proceeding only. Therefore, ultimately the burdens of proof are technically different. 22 In order for the Complainant to overcome a motion for summary judgment, he has to show that 23

there is, and only that there is, in existence a genuine issue of material fact which is in dispute.

We believe that the Complainant has not only done this, but has overwhelmingly done so, has shown to the Administrative Law Judge that adverse employment actions were taken against him on a number of occasions, first by wrongfully placing him on unpaid medical leave, which is, we believe, an adverse employment action. He didn't work another day after that day in question.

And then on top of that, being refused repeatedly the opportunity to come back to work, despite showing medical evidence that he was able to perform the work throughout. And it's not just the word of the employer versus the employee, it is the word of some long-term employees who worked closely with the Respondent in this very, very small company.

Baker is the only -- was the only

African-American employee working at the

Respondent, Roman Marblene Company. All other

employees were Caucasian. Baker was able to

perform all of the essential functions of the job throughout the time he was there, with or without reasonable accommodation, at the standard set by the employer.

For the record, Baker did not request any accommodations for any injuries. He didn't receive any. He was, however, placed on involuntary unpaid medical leave by Respondent, and similarly situated employees with similar or more severe injuries or disabilities or impairments were not placed on involuntary unpaid medical leave, and also, Respondent's proffered reasons for its actions were pretextual.

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This is a very small company. There are less than 15 employees; therefore, the EEOC doesn't -- did not issue a charge number. As a small company, different employees would be involved in cross-working, cross-training, helping one another out.

During his employment with this company,

Baker was in charge of maintenance, and he

performed spraying and setup work. It required

him to operate a spray gun, occasionally lift

heavy material such as marble vanity tops and buckets of pigment.

According to the testimony that was presented by way of affidavits, many company employees help each other out. More importantly, and this is one of the issues that has been raised by the Respondent, these employees are similarly situated, not because they held the identical job as Mr. Baker, but because they were subject to the same rules and regulations of the employer.

There is no evidence that anyone other than the employer, the Respondent owner,
Mr. Triantos, or the co-owner had the authority to hire and fire employees or place them on medical leave. The legal requirement has been met that these employees be similarly situated, not identically situated.

The issue or the question is whether the employer subjected these employees to different policies. Well, we know that the Respondent had a form for employees to submit if they were absent or had to see a doctor, but employees, as

a matter of custom and usage, also notified the Respondent by phone without penalty when they needed to see a doctor.

Now Baker called off work one day in

January of 2014 -- or rather 2010. He was docked

pay for failing for submit a required form, the

first employee ever to be so treated. Others

were not docked pay for doing this, so the

Respondent had changed, at the outset, its rules

from the day that Baker called off work.

Now, in order to understand what has been going on here, we have to look at the chronology of events that took place. Mr. Uhl has very skillfully, I think, tried to start us off on the last page of the last chapter of the book, that being the termination. In fact, it must be said that Mr. Baker was employed there since 1999.

Mr. Triantos did not hire him. Baker worked for at least six years before Mr. Triantos took over in 2005. During Triantos' tenure, unfortunately Mr. Baker claimed that he was subjected to viewing unrequested interracial pornography.

Baker, according to his deposition testimony, said -- claimed Mr. Triantos said, "This is why white people have problems with black people." Baker was also subjected to

black people." Baker was also subjected to racial slurs during this time uttered by the

co-owner, Mr. Triantos' own brother, Frank.

Critically, in December of 2009, the plant was shut down. During the same week, the

Complainant, Baker, was involved in an automobile accident. He came to work -- excuse me. On

January 4th, he had a doctor's appointment, and that was the day he was off work. In fact, that was the only day he was off work. But he came back one day later, January 5th.

Between January 5th and January 22nd, there was no evidence of any substandard performance, but January 22nd is the critical date, because that was the date Baker was placed on unpaid medical leave. Respondent has its version as to why the Complainant was placed on medical leave on that day and, Complainant has his version as to why it took place.

We have -- the Complainant has, I think, a

substantiated version as to the events that took place, thus creating a genuine issue of material fact. According to the Lacey Gleitz affidavit, who was the office manager, she was present at work and she personally witnessed Mr. Triantos ask Baker to change the head on a spray gun.

Baker replied that he could not work on the gun solely because a co-worker, Mr. Brown, was presently in the process of using the only spray gun there, spraying granite with the gun. This was the same day -- this was just after Mr. Baker had complained to Mr. Triantos that he shouldn't have been docked his pay.

Mr. Triantos thereafter placed him on unpaid medical leave. According to Gleitz's eyewitness affidavit, Baker was not insubordinate, but Triantos was hostile. At no time did Gleitz ever hear Baker say to Triantos or anyone else that he could not use a spray gun because of physical limitations. In fact, there's no evidence than anyone, anyone here, other than Mr. Triantos, ever saw Mr. Baker not perform his job at the standard required.

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So, Mr. Baker tried to get his job back between February and October. He was not allowed to get his job back despite presenting medical release forms. March 18th of 2010, he filed his Civil Rights Commission complaint.

As late as five months later, more than that, seven months later, Mr. Baker kept continuing to try to come back to work. He was given a full, clean bill of health in October of 2010, without any restrictions. Mind you, he had no problems working anyway, doing any job to begin with, but Mr. Triantos kept saying, "This isn't enough, this isn't enough, this isn't enough."

Finally, he had a statement from

Triantos -- or rather Baker's doctor -- which
said that there was absolutely nothing the matter
with Baker that he could not perform this job at
the stand -- at any standard, no restrictions
whatsoever, and Mr. Triantos' response was to
this, "Well, now I'm going to have to see the -your entire medical history."

It could be surmised that one of the

reasons why Triantos terminated Baker was because of Triantos' animus due to Baker filing his complaint. Triantos already decided, we believe, that he was not going to allow Baker to come back to work because of his animosity.

Other employees attribute dishonest motives to Mr. Triantos. The Hunter affidavit, the Gleitz affidavit. They worked closely with both Baker and Triantos. The ALJ chose to believe the employer's story in its entirety without considering Complainant's own version of the events. Each of these facts reveals that there are genuine issues of material fact.

Some of the comparators I've mentioned in my brief are Larry Bauer, a truck driver who delivered products to customers, had a defibrillating device used to shock a patient's heart. He also performed heavy lifting, though he wasn't supposed to do this. He was not placed on involuntary medical leave.

Shawn Belty was a grinder. He had a blood-clotting disease affecting heart and lungs. He would have to leave work to undergo heart

therapy. Respondent did not give him any problems concerning returning to work, although he wasn't at 100 percent.

Finally, Lacey Gleitz, the office manager, had a serious back injury. She had to ask some co-workers for assistance in performing her lifting tasks, unlike Complainant.

Now, Mr. Uhl is making much of the fact that these employees did different jobs. Well, in a small company such as this, we're not talking about the Detroit GM Allison plant, where everyone's on an assembly line. This is a very small plant, where everyone has to pitch in and help one another out in different assigned tasks.

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And the rule is not that they have the same job, but are they subject to the same rules? Here, there is in fact an absence of rules, except for the one rule here, which was that employees needed to call in ahead of time or submit a note. As a matter of custom and usage, nobody else did.

So, these are legitimate comparators.

There's no evidence that anyone other than

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Mr. Triantos could or had authority to place anyone on leave, and that's significant, with the Seventh Circuit decision of Coleman versus Donahue.

David Hunter was Respondent's production manager. Mr. Hunter was also a supervisor during the entire time that Mr. Baker worked for Respondent. In this company, Hunter was in a clear position to see what Baker was able to do and not do. He said that he saw Mr. Baker use a spray gun. He said that he could -- that Baker helped him, not the reverse, Baker helped him in his job in carrying weights of over 100 pounds, even after Baker suffered his Jan -- his injury in December of 2009.

Now, the entire case that Respondent has for placing him on medical leave rests on one incident, that Baker was unable to change the head on a spray gun because it would take more than ten pounds of force. This has been completely contradicted by the testimony of the employees, all of whom were Caucasian, present on work on the day in question.

Triantos asked Baker to change the head of the spray gun, believed to be the only one on the premises. Baker said that Mr. Brown was using it, and this has been corroborated. It's not that he couldn't use it because it took ten pounds of force. This is highly suspect, and we believe it is clear evidence of pretext.

Pretext means that the legitimate reasons proffered by the Respondent are unworthy of credence. Respondent has tried to put on evidence, legitimate evidence, that Baker was unable to put on -- to perform this work, and therefore, because of his injury, he couldn't work there. He was placed on medical leave. We say that that's pretext.

There's more pretext. On the last day that Complainant went in to work, in October of 2010, having presented time after time different medical release forms saying that -- each one having less and less restrictions, and finally no restrictions, Mr. Triantos failed to hire him, and we believe there was a deliberate provocation to Mr. Baker.

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correct when she stated in her proposed decision, if I may quote from her, "Such language, absent provocation, is unprofessional conduct and should be grounds for termination." She hit it on the head, "absent provocation."

The Administrative Law Judge got it

There was sufficient provocation given to the Complainant because of the way that

Mr. Triantos had been treating Mr. Baker and not allowing him to come back, dis -- being dismissive of him, being hostile to him, brushing him off entirely, and acting this way. There wasn't going to be any chance that Baker was going to have a chance to get his job back. We feel that this was not just racially discriminatory, but we also believe that that was retaliatory conduct at once.

Both Mr. Uhl and the ALJ make much of Mr. Baker's deposition testimony, which says that after his injury, he couldn't lift a can of soda pop. Well, that is simply not the case. An actual reading of the testimony was that Baker could not open a can of soda pop with his left

hand on the day after his injury. "I couldn't pick up a 12-ounce can with that hand, " he said. Question: "So, did you do all of the other things with the other hand? "Yes, sir. "Was there any work that was done on that day?" Answer: "I put the gun together, sprayed all of the way up until it was time for the party, carried tops, double bowl tops, single bowl tops, cleaned up my booth, took all of the 11 paper out, lifted up the pot, pressure pots, cleaned it out. 13 "So, you went back to work -- " Question: 14 "You went back to work the next day, January 5th? 15 "Yes, sir. I worked for two weeks doing 16 everything, carrying tops, spraying, putting the 17 gun together, taking the qun apart." 18 19 Question: "So, you were doing that with your right hand?" 21 Answer: "Yes." Question: "But did you do spraying with 22 the gun like any other day?" 23

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Answer: "Just like any other day. I could do everything with my right hand, and it would be in working order."

This, of course, is consistent. It's not one word against the other. It's the word of several people against one. The eyewitness testimony of Gleitz and Hunter, stating that they were present, Mr. Hunter oversaw Baker's work every day. Baker, without limitations, according to Hunter, was able to and did operate the spray gun.

Hunter testified, "I was present and I oversaw Baker's work every day. Throughout, he was able to and did operate a spray gun. Despite his injury, he was able to perform all job duties. He helped me carry and lift items between 120 and 150 pounds. He never refused to perform an assigned task."

We realize there are conflicting reports regarding the date of the termination, one being the belligerent behavior. We state that because of Baker's presenting numerous medical release forms over a period of several months and was

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rejected, this made Mr. Baker very understandably upset, but Triantos again refused to consider allowing him to return to work.

This, we believe, was a setup. We believe it was retaliatory. It was a desperate attempt to prevent Baker from coming back to work. Or, in the alternative, it was designed, we believe, to provoke an outburst from Baker, which was designed to permit Triantos -- to give him his door to open, precisely what occurred.

We say that there was provocation. We say that this was retaliatory conduct. The Complainant had already filed a Civil Rights complaint against the Respondent several months before this. We believe that once the Respondent got that Civil Rights complaint, they were not going to have him return regardless.

We believe that the Complainant has overwhelmingly made its -- entered into its -- met its burden of proof. We think that summary judgment should never have been granted in this case.

Again, the only thing that Complainant

wants to have here is his right to have a fair trial and prove to the Administrative Law Judge that, A, he was discriminated against, B, that the assertions of the Respondent, assuming that they proffer what they think is a legitimate explanation, can be shown to be pretextual.

We think we've done that on summary judgment, and this should not have been granted. We think there was a miscarriage of justice here, because Mr. Baker is not going to be able to, if the decision stands, have his day in court, and that's all we're asking for.

Thank you very much.

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CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Healy.

Mr. Uhl, 20 minutes.

MR. UHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. It's an honor to be here before you today.

I remember many, many years ago as a Deputy Attorney General, I actually had the opportunity to represent this Commission in 23 Federal Court when a complainant sued after the

Commission found that she -- that the Commission lacked jurisdiction over her case. So, it's nice to be back before you in a different role now as representing Mr. Triantos and the Roman Marblene Company.

First, we think that the Administrative

Law Judge got it right on all counts, and I'll

explain to you why, and I also appreciate your

looking through the briefs and the papers that we

filed. But overall, you know, there's no doubt

that this is a very unfortunate situation. We

have a man who was injured off the job, which is

always a bad situation, because Workers'

Compensation doesn't cover it.

He's injured in a way that makes it very difficult to perform his job, and, we think the undisputed evidence is, unable to perform his job.

(Comm. Crenshaw arrived.)

MR. UHL: Hi.

COMM. CRENSHAW: Sorry. I couldn't

find a parking space because of the NRA.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: No kidding.

seated.

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COMM. CRENSHAW: Thank you.

MR. UHL: Oh, I'll wait until you get

COMM. CRENSHAW: Oh, no, you're fine. Go ahead, go ahead. I'm running late because it took me 20 minutes before I finally managed to get me a parking space. Okay. Go ahead. Go ahead.

MR. UHL: Okay. Fine. Commissioner, just to let you know who I am, I'm Wayne Uhl, attorney for the Company, Roman Marblene, that's the Respondent in the Reginald Baker case, and we're arguing now Mr. Baker's objections to the Administrative Law Judge's findings of fact and conclusions of law.

MR. HEALY: Excuse me. I apologize. The -- as a matter of order and procedure, Comm. Crenshaw has just arrived. She has not been able to listen to any portion of the Complainant's argument here, and I don't think that she should be permitted to listen to one-half of the argument. I will ask that she please recuse herself from the remainder of this

hearing, and that she be able to read the transcript later. CHAIRMAN CARTER: That's --MR. HEALY: Thank you. COMM. CRENSHAW: That's fine. That's fine. MR. UHL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think I would take issue with that objection, for the record. We've already said earlier in this case that all of the Commissioners will have the 10 11 opportunity to read the transcript of the 12 argument and to know what the parties have argued and to read the briefs and et cetera, and I don't 13 know that Comm. Crenshaw's presence here and 14 15 hearing our verbal oral arguments is all that different from being able to read the briefs and 16 17 read the transcript. 18 CHAIRMAN CARTER: We did already receive the briefs via e-mail, to read them the 19 past week. Did you? 21 COMM. CRENSHAW: Uh-huh, uh-huh. 22 CHAIRMAN CARTER: So, she has heard -- heard your argument by reading it 23

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already. That -- do you still object?
                MR. HEALY: Well, yes. She didn't
    listen to anything that I said today.
                CHAIRMAN CARTER: Well, did you say
    anything different from what you said in your
    written argument?
                MR. HEALY: Well, I think I
    extemporized a little bit.
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. So, the
    vocabulary might not have been exactly the same,
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    but the argument was, wasn't it?
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                MR. HEALY: I'll defer to the
    Commissioners' decision, sir.
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay.
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           What do you think?
                COMM. BAYNARD: After reading all of
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    the briefs, it sound -- it still is the same.
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                COMM. GIDNEY: I agree.
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: All right. I think
    that Comm. Crenshaw can stay. That doesn't
    raise -- of course, that would give you
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    ammunition later on perhaps to appeal.
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                MR. HEALY: I understand. Thank you
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for listening.

MR. UHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, that used up about three or four minutes of my time.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Sure.

 $$\operatorname{MR}.$$ UHL: I don't know if anybody's keeping time.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: I am.

MR. UHL: I certainly don't intend to be here for 20 minutes, but just in case that becomes an issue.

Again, members of the Commission, as I was saying, this is no doubt an unfortunate situation. Mr. Baker suffered an injury off the job that was -- turned out to be an injury not only that made it difficult for him to perform his job when he came back in January, as Mr. Healy has indicated, but ultimately required him to have surgery on the hand, and doctors saying that he couldn't work for long periods of time during this stretch of 2010.

Now, Mr. Healy has tried to characterize this as just being a situation about two weeks in

January, but there's a lot more history, and I'll talk about that in a minute. But Mr. Baker was a long-time and a valued employee. In fact, it's undisputed in this case that when he was injured, that Mr. Triantos said to him, "I want you to go get medical attention because you're a valuable asset to this company."

Unfortunately, the relationship

deteriorated when it became clear that Mr. Baker

was not going to be able to return to work for an

extended period of time because of this injury,

not going to be able to perform the essential

functions of the job.

And then, unfortunately, we have the incident in October that I'll talk about, where Mr. Baker engaged in what is indisputably insubordinate, crude, insulting conduct with his supervisor and the owner of the company that left the supervisor really with no choice but to terminate the employment, notwithstanding the efforts of Mr. Baker to get better and come back.

You know, Mr. Healy talked about what the issues are. What I'd like to remind you is: The

issue is not whether or not the situation was handled correctly, not whether you might have done something different if you had been the owner of this business, not whether you agree or disagree with either of these gentlemen about exactly what happened.

The ultimate question in this case, and the question that the Administrative Law Judge addressed, is whether or not there's evidence here that would support a finding that the reason for the actions that the company took were intentional race discrimination.

That's not here, and the Administrative

Law Judge correctly found that Mr. Baker had not

presented prima facie evidence of a racial

motivation behind what happened here. But I'd

like to ask you to divorce in your minds whether

you think you might have handled this

differently. The question is whether the

evidence shows that Mr. Triantos did these things

because of Mr. Baker's race, and we think the

answer is "no" to that question.

The case really divides into two different

parts, and I would ask the Commissioners to consider each of those parts separately, not as one whole, in terms of analyzing the case. And Mr. Healy, I think, has already indicated that he also believes this case falls into two different parts.

Part one is this medical leave issue.

It's undisputed that Mr. Baker was injured in a car accident off duty, and that he was seen at the Christmas party to be holding his hand in a funny way. Mr. Triantos asked him about it.

Mr. Baker said, "Well, I injured my wrist and my hand in a car accident." And Mr. Triantos said to him, "You're a valuing employ -- you're a valued employee. Over our two-week Christmas break, I want you to seek medical attention for that, because I want you to be able to come back."

Mr. Baker did not seek medical attention over the Christmas break. He waited until the first day back to work, then called in to work and said, "Oh, I have a doctor's appointment today. I won't be able to work today," even

though he didn't really have an appointment.

They had just told him that they would try to work him in.

So, later in the day, Mr. Triantos asked him, "Will you please come in and at least help us put together these spray guns that we have?"

And Mr. Baker said, "No, I'm not going to come in and even help you put together the spray guns."

Now, let me tell you about the job that

Mr. Baker did. His job required him to hold a

20-to-25-pound spray gun with one hand and be

able to manipulate the cords and the cables that

fed that spray gun with another hand, so it's a

two-handed job. And everyone in the plant is

required to be able to lift 60 pounds by

themselves, or 125 pounds with the help of

another employee.

When Mr. Baker came back the next day, he had a doctor's excuse that said that he could not lift any more than ten pounds or use ten pounds of force with his left hand. Basically he was completely without the use of his left hand. At that point, we think Mr. Triantos could have

said, "Sorry. You'll need to come back when you're able to lift 60 pounds by yourself and able to lift this 20-to-25-pound spray gun and do your job."

Instead, Mr. Triantos said, "Well, let's see if you can still do the job with the help of the other employees." And that was the way things went for just this two-week period of time. However, at the end of the two weeks, it became clear that Mr. Baker was not going to be able to do the job.

And the incident that came to a head was when he refused to help somebody change the head on a spray gun because he didn't have the ability in his left hand to be able to do that. At that point, Mr. Triantos said, "I'm sorry. We're just going to have to have you go until you can come back fully able to do the essential functions of your job."

This sounds a lot like an ADA case, doesn't it? But it's not an ADA case, it's a race discrimination case. So -- and again, what's been omitted here is the fact that after

Mr. Baker left with his ten-pound lifting restriction, he then ultimately went to his doctor and had to undergo physical therapy for the hand, which did not work, and then he had to have surgery on the hand in April of 2010.

So, we know that through April of 2010, his hand was simply unable to be able to do the job that he was hired to do. After April, his physicians continued to issue statements restricting his ability to do the job. There was a six-week period where he couldn't do anything. There was then another six-week period where he could only lift very small amounts or have light duty, which this factory doesn't have light duty. It's a very small factory with a limited number of employees.

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And finally, we get to mid-October of 2012 [sic], when there's still confusion over whether or not the doctor notes actually return him to come back to work, and that's the termination, which I'll get to in a minute.

But here's the first question that's been asked: Was it race discrimination for

Mr. Triantos to insist that with -- that

Mr. Baker come back fully able to perform the

job, or face the prospect of having Mr. Baker

come back and risking that he reinjure the hand

while trying to do the job that he was clearly

not qualified to do?

And again, you might answer that question differently, but Mr. Triantos answered it in the way that he could not take that risk. He could not have this employee with these medical restrictions come back going this heavy-duty job and risk him reinjuring it on the job, which then implicates Workers' Compensation issues.

Now, we don't think there's any evidence here that this was racially discriminatory. I do want to point out that in fact Roman Marlene ultimately ended up agreeing that Mr. Baker would receive unemployment benefits during this period of time, based on the fact that he had a medical disability, and that was the basis on which the Department of Workforce Development paid him his unemployment benefits, because he was deemed and agreed by everyone to be medically disabled from

being employed by Roman Marblene.

Mr. Baker has pointed to three Caucasian employees in comparison -- in comparing his situation to their situations and trying to argue that these white employees were treated differently, but in fact, if you go through the record, based on the undisputed evidence here, those white employees were not situated similarly to Mr. Baker.

We had first a woman named Lacey Gleitz. She did not work on the factory floor. She was an office manager. She had back problems that came and went, and came in with different restrictions as -- in terms of her sitting, standing and being able to do things.

But even by her affidavit, the only real restriction in her job function was that she couldn't push the vacuum cleaner. She could do everything else in the office. So, during those periods of time when she had her back problems, another employee would vacuum the office. That was it. This was not a situation like

Mr. Baker's, where she simply couldn't do the

major, essential functions of her job.

The second employee is Shawn Belty, who did work on the factory floor. Mr. Belty was out for medical reasons, and, as with Mr. Baker, he was not allowed to come back until he could at least lift the 60 pounds by himself or lift the 125 pounds with another worker. And he did come back.

Now, he was allowed to go to therapy appointments at the end of the day or during the day for a period of time, but he was also allowed to work because he could do the essential functions of the job. He did not have a doctor's note that said he could only lift ten pounds or whatever. So, clearly he's not in the same circumstance as Mr. Baker.

And the third Caucasian employee, who's been referred to here as an employee name Larry Bauer. He did return from a medical issue with restrictions on lifting. The response of Roman Marlene at that point was to say, "We will find you another job that we have," which was a part-time truck-driving job that would meet his

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restrictions.

And here's what I think is important in thinking about this case, is that with respect to these three employees, Roman Marblene actually did what it had to do under the ADA. It looked for accommodations, it found accommodations, and it applied them.

So, Roman Marlene here is trying to comply with the ADA. But with respect to Mr. Baker as someone who is completely unable to perform the essential functions of his job, Roman Marblene was unable to accommodate him. Roman Marblene didn't have a light-duty job.

So, really what he's asking for in this case is that Roman Marlene be punished for complying with the ADA by giving accommodations to these white employees and not accommodating him. But for the reasons I've discussed, there was really a big difference here, and that difference in accommodating the white employees and unable to accommodate Mr. Baker has nothing to do with race. It has to do with what his circumstances were.

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Now, this brings us up to the termination.

As Mr. Healy's indicated, the restrictions that the doctors were putting on Mr. Baker got better and better, but the notes continued to make references to, "Well, he can come back to work, but he has numbness in his left hand," or "He can come back to work, but he needs to improve the strength."

And Mr. Triantos at that point was dubious. At one point he called the doctor's office and asked them to explain the doctor's handwriting, which was illegible on the note, and didn't get an answer to that question.

At this point, again, Mr. Triantos was very concerned that if Mr. Baker came back, that he might reinjure himself, and he would be subject to a Workers' Compensation claim, and his Workers' Comp premiums would go way up or he would lose the carrier.

So, at that point, what Mr. Triantos asked Mr. Baker to do was to sign a release of any Workers' Comp injury that would be an exacerbation of this injury that he originally

had, and this was the basis for the discussions that they had.

Actually, Mr. Baker came back on October

5th, and he had a friend with him to sort of help
him plead his case that he should come back, and
that friend became very hostile and wouldn't
leave until Mr. Triantos threatened to call the
police.

Two weeks later, Mr. Baker showed up without any new order of -- well, I'm sorry.

There was a new doctor's order on October 13th, but this is the doctor's order that said he still has maybe impaired strength. We can't tell from reading it, because the doctor's handwriting is a little bit difficult to see.

And again Mr. Triantos questions whether or not he can really allow Mr. Baker to come back at that point. This is where Mr. Baker makes the comments that led to his termination, and I don't want to offend anybody, but I think it's important for us to have those in the record.

Mr. Baker said -- and this is his quote of what he said, not what Mr. Triantos remembers --

"You keep screwing me and screwing me and coming up short," and then he said, "You're trying to put it up my ass." No employer should have to put up with that kind of conduct. No employer should have to say, "Oh, well, you're going to come back and work for me when you get better."

At that point, this became a much different case. It was no longer a case about medical disability and whether or not this employee could come back. This is now a case of insubordination, and really "insubordination" isn't a strong-enough word for what happened at this point.

At that point, Mr. Triantos really had no choice but to say, "I'm sorry, Mr. Baker, but this employment relationship is over. There's no hope of it being salvaged at this point." And there has been no reference at all by Mr. Baker, no evidence submitted, of any white employees who engaged in that kind of conduct but were retained by the company, because, frankly, there were no other employees who engaged in that kind of conduct.

So, certainly with respect to the termination decision, there's no evidence here that would support even holding a hearing on the question of race discrimination. The Administrative Law Judge got it right. She held that, first of all, the denial of medical leave was not an adverse consequence or an adverse employment action, and that's correct.

But even if it weren't correct, there's no sufficient evidence here to go to a hearing that the actions that Roman Marlene took, the actions that Mr. Triantos took, were discriminatory based on race. Under the prima-facie-case test, the Respondent has -- the Complainant has to come forward with evidence that he was treated differently from similarly situated white employees. He's failed to do that, so the Administrative Law Judge correctly held that summary judgment should be granted on that score.

And as I've said, in October of 2010, on the separate issue of determination, Mr. Baker engaged in undisputably insubordinate conduct, and for -- and has not shown any evidence that

would indicate that the termination for that conduct was racially discriminatory, and for that reason, too, the Administrative Law Judge correctly found that summary judgment should be granted.

I would like to address a couple of the points that Mr. Healy made here. He made a reference to some allegations that were made about racial comments in the workplace. Because Mr. Healy's made that comment, I need to respond to that. First of all, there's never been a claim in this case argued to the ALJ or anyone else of a racially hostile atmosphere in this workplace.

But second of all, if there had been such a claim, we would have to also point out that Mr. Baker engaged in racially inflammatory conduct on his own. There's evidence here that he would talk -- he would refer to his fellow employees as "the Grand Dragon." We all know what that means. Or that he would refer to his fellow employees as "the Master." We know what that means.

So, I don't want you to look at the racially hostile atmosphere issue at all, because I don't think it's been raised here, but if you do, you've got to understand there's two sides to that story.

Second, Mr. Healy has argued in the objections and here today that there's a retaliation claim in this case, that the company was retaliating against Mr. Baker for having filed the Civil Rights charge in the first place.

That's a new claim. I've looked through the summary judgment papers that were submitted to the Administrative Law Judge, and I haven't seen -- I'm willing to be corrected, because there's a lot of paper there. I have not seen that Mr. Baker has ever taken the position in this case, until his objections to this Commission, that there's a separate claim of retaliation here.

I think you should hold -- or not even consider that, because it hasn't been briefed and raised before the Administrative Law Judge; therefore, it wasn't decided by the

Administrative Law Judge, and for that reason it has been waived.

Mr. Healy said something about Mr. Baker lifting weights over a hundred pounds. Well -and having help to do that. As I've indicated to you, the job requirement was that a single person, a lone person -- he could be married or not -- but a lone person had to be able to lift something 60 pounds by himself, 125 pounds with the help of someone else.

So, if Mr. Baker was lifting things that were over a hundred pounds with the help of others, that was perfectly acceptable and what was expected in this workplace. The problem is that by himself, he couldn't lift 60 pounds. He was basically a one-armed paper hanger. He only had the use of one hand, but was doing this very heavy physi -- very heavy work, and for that reason was simply unable to do -- do the job.

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So, for those reasons, members of the Commission, we would ask that you carefully review the evidence, look at the briefs, and 23 review your Administrative Law Judge's

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recommended findings, and find that those recommended findings are correct and affirm them in every respect.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you.

Mr. Healy, you have five minutes to reply.

MR. HEALY: Thank you.

Mr. Uhl has asked: Where is the element of race discrimination in this case? Well, here it is: According to the Gleitz affidavit,
Mr. Baker, the only African-American employed there, called off work one day during January of 2010.

Baker was docked pay that day for calling off work, the first employee to be so treated. Though other employees have done this as well, Roman Marblene, Inc. had never docked the pay of any other employee who called off work in this manner. Roman Marblene, Inc. changed its rules as of the day that Baker called off work.

After that, Mr. Baker, understandably, sent a letter to his supervisors requesting pay for the day he called off work. In response, the

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owner, Mr. Triantos, removed Baker from work because he was not a hundred percent. Therein lies a pretextual reason.

Despite Mr. Baker's injury following the accident, he was able to return to work and perform his jobs, and Mr. Triantos would not let Baker return to work, despite submitting numerous medical releases. Therein lies discriminatory animus, and it doesn't come just from Mr. Baker, it comes from disinterested employees and supervisors who have no stake in the outcome of this case.

We have shown that the Complainant was discriminated against. You don't have to believe the Complainant necessarily. You can choose to believe the Respondent if you want, but the point is: There are disputed issues of material fact here that need to be resolved by the Administrative Law Judge when she listens to the testimony of the individual Complainant and the individual Respondent manager, so as to make a fair determination.

There is no evidence, he says, Mr. Uhl

says, of any white employees acting this way toward the employer. Unfortunately, that's a little bit of sleight of hand. The reason for that is because no other white employees were ever treated this way, in a discriminatory manner. No other white employees were docked pay for being off work one day. No other white employees in this record were denied the right to come back to work.

Mr. Uhl is -- tries to make it plain that "We go out of our way to try to accommodate employees." Correction: The Respondent has gone out of its way to accommodate its white or Caucasian employees. It did not go out of its way to accommodate the Complainant. The attitude was, "Don't call us, we'll call you."

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In truth, Mr. Triantos actually saw -actually knew, or should have known, that Baker was doing heavy lifting. Baker undoubtedly was at work between January 5th and January 22nd. There's no evidence that he couldn't do any work then. Why was January 22nd critical? Why choose 23 that day to take the Complainant and put him onto

the work.

That was the day that Triantos saw this letter from Baker saying that he wanted to have his pay back, his docked pay back. That was the day that, according to him, he was to use a spray gun and couldn't. But Lacey Gleitz knew better. Lacey Gleitz saw through the pretext and the sham, and knew that Complainant was not trying to get out of doing work and was not unable to do

medical leave if he wasn't doing the job right?

Mr. Triantos docked him his pay, wouldn't pay him back. Mr. Triantos put him on medical leave, and we believe he was not going to give him a chance to come back to work. The proof comes from this document here, the final medical release form, and this was, I believe, the fifth or the sixth one that Mr. Baker presented, says, "Patient may return to regular duty October 12th."

No restrictions. No restrictions
whatsoever. It doesn't matter that back in

January, Baker was able to do all of the work.

Now he gets a clean bill of health, and he still

is told, "Get out of here. Don't call us, we'll call you. Show me your medical file." Therein lies the provocations of the Complainant. I'm not going to say that Mr. Baker didn't act -- react angrily. He did. But who wouldn't when faced with this overwhelming evidence of unfair treatment and, yes, race discrimination?

You don't have to necessarily believe the Complainant's side, you don't have to believe the Respondent's side, but there is the evidence that needs to be determined at a public hearing, where the credibility of the witnesses can be attested to.

The Administrative Law Judge did not get to hear the Complainant's side of this story in -- up front, in person, nor the Respondent's side. That is what needs to be done in order to come to a -- the only fair evaluation of this case.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you,

Mr. Healy.

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Mr. Uhl, five minutes.

MR. UHL: I have very little further. I think I've made all of the points that I wanted to make, Mr. Chairman. The only thing that I would say is that this issue with the docked pay is really an eyedropper in a teacup. He did get the docked pay back, so that's -- I just wanted to let you know that. The record shows that that one day of docked pay was -- there was a dispute there, and he was given that pay back. 9 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. Thank you. Are there --MR. HEALY: Is there evidence of that? Is that in the record? CHAIRMAN CARTER: I think so. MR. HEALY: I didn't think it was in the record. CHAIRMAN CARTER: Do Commissioners have questions? 18 COMM. BAYNARD: Yeah. Do we need to swear them in? CHAIRMAN CARTER: We do need -- if 22 you're going to ask him a direct question. Okay. Would you, I guess, raise your --23

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whichever hand? MR. HEALY: You mean -- who are you referring to, sir? CHAIRMAN CARTER: The --MR. HEALY: The Complainant? CHAIRMAN CARTER: -- Complainant. We need -- you know, we need to swear him in if Commissioners are going to ask him questions. MR. UHL: May I make a point of order 9 on that, Your Honor? 10 11 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Yes. 12 MR. UHL: As a general rule, on 13 summary judgment, a court would be limited to the 14 briefing and the affidavits and the evidence that have already been submitted by the parties, and it would be my position that it would be 17 inappropriate for the Commission at this point to 18 take additional evidence from what we have 19 submitted. So, I thought the question period would be questions directed to counsel --20 21 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. MR. UHL: -- but not evidence, and I 22 would object to the presentation of evidence at

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this time.
                CHAIRMAN CARTER: I would tend to
    agree with you.
           Can you ask the question of --
                COMM. BAYNARD: Well, the questions
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    that I want to ask basically are -- I just wanted
     to hear from --
                CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay.
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                MR. UHL: To the counsel?
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                COMM. BAYNARD: To -- no, to the
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    Complainant.
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: I'll -- do you
    understand the argument against asking him
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    questions?
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                COMM. BAYNARD: So, I can ask -- I
    can ask counsel, then. Now, during the time from
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    January 5th up to Mr. Baker coming back to work,
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    through the 22nd, did he perform all aspects of
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    the job?
                MR. HEALY: Who -- excuse me. Who
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    are you directing the question to, sir? Is it --
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: Mr. Uhl.
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                MR. HEALY: Oh, Mr. Uhl? Okay.
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Sure.

MR. UHL: Commissioner, we would say the evidence shows that he may have had some assistance with some of the heavy lifting, but he simply couldn't perform all of the aspects of the job. He was under a medical restriction that said he could not use more than ten pounds of force with his left hand.

And in fact, we know that -- and on January 22nd, the last day he worked, when he was asked to put a spray gun back together, he said he could not do that because it would take more than ten pounds of force. Mr. Triantos tried to let him come back, but it just wasn't working out.

And in fact, we know he wasn't getting better, because after that, he failed the physical therapy, and they had to do surgery, a time when he would have had to be out anyway.

So, he may have been able, with the work -- help of some of the other workers, to try to get by, but he was not able to perform the functions of the job.

COMM. BAYNARD: In the briefs that I read, I did not see where he needed help to perform his duties --MR. UHL: I believe --COMM. BAYNARD: -- in either your 5 briefs or Mr. Healy's briefs. MR. UHL: I believe -- and I'll let Mr. Healy correct me. I believe that Mr. Baker actually testified, and then some of these affidavits that they've submitted specifically say, that during that two-week period of time, he 11 was getting by with the help of other employees. 12 13 COMM. BAYNARD: What I saw was that --14 15 COMM. CRENSHAW: Uh-huh. COMM. BAYNARD: -- he helped one 16 employed by lifting more than 100 pounds, and the 17 briefs that Mr. Healy presented showed that he 18 actually did work lifting, I guess, double bowl 19 sinks as well as single bowl sinks by himself, and not needing help. MR. UHL: If he was doing that, it 22 was beyond what his doctor had said he could

do.

COMM. BAYNARD: Well, what -- was he able to do the functions of the job? That's what I'm asking.

MR. UHL: It's our position that he wasn't able to do any of the functions of the job. I mean if he managed to lift a 60-pound sink with one arm, great. But then he's subjecting himself and the employer to all kinds of adverse consequences if he injures himself, if he drops it, if he drops it on the foot of another employee. You just can't have someone working in this industrial situation only able to use one arm.

COMM. BAYNARD: Can he personally lift a double-bowl sink with one arm?

MR. UHL: Could one person lift a -COMM. BAYNARD: Yes.

MR. UHL: -- 60-pound sink with one arm? Possibly so, but in this environment, you have to be able to do it for eight hours, you have to be able to move it from one part of the shop to the other, you have to be able to do this

as part of the production process. So, just being able to bench press 60 pounds with one arm is not the answer to the question. The answer to the question is: Could he perform --COMM. BAYNARD: How many times a day would a person -- would a person like Mr. Baker have to move or lift 60 pounds? MR. UHL: I don't know that the record reflects that. I think it would be probably dozens of times, because they're 10 processing these double-bowl sinks, spraying 11 them, and then moving on to the next one in the 12 production line. 14 MR. HEALY: And again -- excuse me --Mr. Uhl is doing exactly what he said we 15 shouldn't be doing, which is putting evidence 16 into the record that's not there. His statement 17 just now is not in the briefs. 18 19 Is that correct? MR. UHL: Absolutely. The record was 20 21 not --22 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Right. 23 MR. HEALY: The rule has to go both

ways.

COMM. CRENSHAW: He should be allowed to testify, then.

MR. UHL: No, I agree. I agree. I absolutely agree with that, Comm. Crenshaw. So, what I -- I was trying to answer the question, though, and -- the question that was put to me.

And I guess the correct answer,

Commissioner, is the record does not reflect how

many times a day someone would have to lift those
things.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Are there any other questions?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN CARTER: All right. We will take this matter under advisement and let you know our determination in due course. Everyone present and absent has a chance to review the written materials.

MR. UHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your attention to our arguments today.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: You are welcome.

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MR. HEALY: One thing that is in the record is that Complainant has stated, and it's undisputed, that he was ambidextrous, he was able to use both hands. It wasn't just that he was left-handed or right-handed. COMM. BAYNARD: I have one more CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. Go ahead. COMM. BAYNARD: In the workplace here, normal conversation, would it include MR. UHL: I think -- I think, Mr. Commissioner, that yes, there was evidence that there was lots of that kind of banter in this workplace. Except for the office manager, I think the evidence is that they were all men who were working there in this shop, and yes, there was some kind of -- there was bantering of that COMM. BAYNARD: Obscenities worse

than what was presented in the briefs that caused Mr. Baker to be fired? MR. UHL: I don't -- here's my answer

to that: I don't remember whether the record
would show worse or not, but what the record
would show is that any obscenities in the
workplace were in the, let's say, relaxed
atmosphere of the workplace and not thrown to
actually insult somebody or be insubordinate to a
supervisor.

This is a very different situation. What Mr. Baker was saying was angrily to his supervisor the things that I've already quoted, and that's different from workplace banter.

MR. HEALY: And that, of course, is outside of the scope of the record. I don't think there's anything in the record regarding workplace banter.

MR. UHL: I thought there was in one of the depositions. I could stand corrected, but I thought there was.

MR. HEALY: Well, I think you should be corrected.

COMM. CRENSHAW: I have a question.

If the employer or supervisors were aware of this banter, so to speak, why didn't the people in

authority make an attempt to maybe have someone come in professionally to sit down with the employees to -- you know, "This is what you do on the job, this is what you not do on the job," to stop some of this banter back and forth, or to -- in my opinion, a responsible employer, supervisor, would do that to prevent any more conflict between employees -- an employee and employer.

MR. UHL: I -- and if I had been their lawyer at that time, I would have given them exactly that advice, Commissioner, that an employer needs to be proactive in kind of prohibiting that sort of hostile environment activity. The other thing I'll point out to you, though, is that none of the employees, including Mr. Baker, came to the employer and complained about that workplace banter.

So, in terms of liability, the employer's not liable unless there's a complaint and the employer thinks that there's somebody there who's not consenting to that kind of conduct. But you are absolutely right about what employers should

do in those kinds of circumstances to discourage that kind of thing.

And again, I'll remind you what I said at the beginning: There's not a hostile environment claimed in this case. There's been some talk here about things that were said, but there's not been a claim here that we were maintaining that Mr. Baker was injured by a hostile environment.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: All right. Thank you.

It seems we're veering somewhat off

course. So, I guess it's not official until I

hit this little piece of wood.

MR. UHL: Thank you again, Commissioners.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you.

(Recess taken.)

CHAIRMAN CARTER: All right. I'm reopening the public meeting of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission for April. I misspoke earlier when I used the word "adjourn," and I should have said, as I indicated elsewhere, that we would wait to see if we got a quorum eventually, and

then act on the matters that we had to leave behind earlier because we did not have a quorum. 3 So, I will go back to the beginning of the agenda, and the Chair convenes the meeting and establishes a quorum. We have four Commissioners, thus a forum. Does anyone remember the minutes? I read them. 9 COMM. CRENSHAW: Yes. 10 CHAIRMAN CARTER: May I have a motion to approve the minutes? 11 12 COMM. CRENSHAW: So moved. 13 COMM. BAYNARD: Second. 14 CHAIRMAN CARTER: All in favor? 15 COMM. CRENSHAW: Aye. 16 COMM. BAYNARD: Aye. 17 COMM. GIDNEY: Aye. 18 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Aye. 19 And any opposed? 20 (No response.) 21 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you. And we had the Financial Report. Do we 22 have any news from Comm. Blackburn? 23

MS. RINCONES-CHAVEZ: No, we do not. CHAIRMAN CARTER: So, that will be --Lonnie -- the two cases of Lonnie Johnson, First Cash Pawn and City of Indianapolis Fire Department, will be continued. And my case of Janice Taylor versus Securitas Security Services, USA, Inc., I would recommend that we uphold the no probable cause finding. May I have a motion 9 to accept that recommendation? 10 COMM. GIDNEY: So moved. 11 CHAIRMAN CARTER: And a second? 12 COMM. CRENSHAW: Second. 13 CHAIRMAN CARTER: All in favor? 14 COMM. CRENSHAW: Aye. 15 COMM. BAYNARD: Aye. 16 COMM. GIDNEY: Aye. 17 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Aye. 18 Any opposed? 19 (No response.) 20 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you. So, for the Assignment of New Appeals, I 21 22 will take the first two cases, Joseph Lewis versus Lockhart Cadillac, Inc. and Lonnie L. 23

Johnson versus Advanced Auto Parts; Comm. Baynard, if you would review Ingrid Shaw versus Modern Door Corporation; and Comm. Gidney, Patricia A. Sciarra, I think it is, S c i a r r a, verses Indiana University Health; and Comm. Crenshaw, if you would review Darla -is it Darla or Daria? Daria, it looks like. 8 COMM. CRENSHAW: Uh-huh. CHAIRMAN CARTER: My blurry old 9 eyes -- B. Scott versus Select Rehabilitation, Inc. And were those -- let's see. Findings of fact -- oh, yes. Okay. I remember now. There are two Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and 13 Order, Christopher Brooks versus Republic Airways 14 Holdings, Inc. and Terrence Matthews versus Genuine Parts Company doing business as NAPA Auto Parts. May I have a motion to accept those two findings? COMM. GIDNEY: So moved. 19 20 COMM. CRENSHAW: Second. 21 CHAIRMAN CARTER: All in favor? 22 COMM. CRENSHAW: Aye. 23 COMM. BAYNARD: Aye.

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COMM. GIDNEY: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Aye.

Any opposed?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you.

No Consent Agreements, and we'd better not vote on the oral argument we just heard, because obviously there hasn't been time to review the materials we said we would review.

That being done, I will say, are there -does anyone have anything else, any announcements
from the Commissioners who've gotten here since
we had the last announcements?

MS. ALLEN: Sorry. May I?

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Yes.

MS. ALLEN: It just occurred to me
that since our last meeting, I don't think it was
mentioned, but there was a recent bill, House
Bill 1121, that was passed into law March 24th by
Governor Pence, and essentially it's about
administrative law judges and higher authority,
which would be you all, for purposes of this
Commission.

And there's language in that law -- and I'll prepare an amendment of some sort to you all for your records -- that will prohibit parties to a case to have ex parte communications with Commissioners if you are making the ultimate decision on cases, among other things.

So, the part of the new law that will affect you as a Commissioner directly would be the prohibition of ex parte communication with those individuals who are involved in civil rights complaints. So, again, I will present a memo to you all for your understanding and knowledge in the coming months.

Specific question. There was one of the staff members from the Housing Group who came to this training I was at Wednesday made reference to a thing. Does adding one of us calling the investigator and -- to clarify points in an appeal that has been found no probable cause?

MS. ALLEN: No, so long as your communications are limited to an investigator to a case, that's fine, or even counsel, but you are

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prohibited from speaking to the complainant
directly --

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Or the respondent.

MS. ALLEN: -- or the respondent, and I think this will come -- come up in the event, for example, there is an objection to a notice of finding, and the individual seeks you out in public. That has happened in the past.

COMM. CRENSHAW: I had that happen.

MS. ALLEN: That behavior or that conduct will be prohibited. If that should happen, you would have to think of ways to resolve that issue, maybe a recusal or at least disclosing on the record that you've had such communication, so that all parties are made aware.

The effective date of this law is not until July 1st, so we have a little bit of time to understand the nature of the new law and what that means to you as a Commissioner.

COMM. BAYNARD: Now, are we affected when, say, during a public meeting and there is a -- one of the complainants shows up and we'll

speak. Are we affected then?

MS. ALLEN: You are not. Again, if
that is during a public meeting, everything is on
the record at that point, and all parties are at
least made aware of the appearance, at least they
have the opportunity to come and present and
appear before the Commission. But again, I can
think of a number of scenarios where ex parte
communication may occur, but it would be upon us
to be a bit more proactive to understand what
those scenarios are and then how to resolve them.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Yeah, I -- there was a case a number of months ago where a woman addressed us from the audience, and I talked with her afterwards about -- not about her case so much as it had to do with disabilities, and I was talking to her about other disability resources and things like that. I -- it didn't seem to me that that was specifically pertinent to the case, although her case did have to do with disability, but it wasn't -- we weren't discussing the merits of it or anything.

MS. ALLEN: Right. And so, that goes

to the definition of what ex parte communication is. It's communication that directly deals with the nature of the case, the substantial facts that you would consider in making a decision.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: It would be -- you know, what's clearer is what wouldn't I think because it was -- it would be the case of the kid with food allergies and the --

MS. ALLEN: Fishers Adolescence?

CHAIRMAN CARTER: -- and these

parents who came who were homeschooled, and we
homeschooled our kid right through high school,
and so I had a brief conversation with them
afterwards about homeschooling, about the
experience of homeschooling, but really the case
had nothing to do with homeschooling
specifically.

MS. ALLEN: And to your point,

Comm. Carter, I think it would be in our best

interest to put on some sort of training or

inform you all of training of where -- ex parte

communication and many other issues, so that you

are aware of what it is and what it is not,

because it's one thing to say, "Do not participate in ex parte communication," but if you don't know what that is, then how can you -
CHAIRMAN CARTER: Right.

MS. ALLEN: -- be proactive in it?

Your conversations with the parents of the homeschool case may have been very innocent -- I was at a loss for words there -- but it could have been very innocent, had nothing to do with the merits of the case. So, again, we'll know what that is, and you will know. I'll draft up a memo, and if there are any trainings available, I'll keep you apprised of them.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Obviously it's something that ALJ's elsewhere were doing, because it wasn't us, that caused somebody to come up with the law.

MS. ALLEN: I'm not sure, and I'll just leave it at that, regarding the legislative intent behind it. Again, the House Bill 1121 contains far more language than just that.

For example, it allows state agencies to share ALJ's, to -- in the event, for example,

with our Commission, we only have one ALJ, so if there's an issue of conflict of interest or in the event that I have to recuse myself, where do we go? Well, now we have the ability to seek ALJ's from other agencies.

It also requires the agencies to create some sort of code of conduct, and the Inspector General for the state, Dave Thomas, among -- and his staff is creating that code of conduct for ALJ's.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: I don't remember, in 20-plus years, there ever being another ALJ associated with cases for us. Even back when we had six attorneys, it was always Bob Lange. And there -- it was sort of common knowledge that other agencies didn't have any ALJ's, and so they had to go with a pool. All right.

MS. ALLEN: Any other questions regarding that?

COMM. GIDNEY: No.

MS. ALLEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you.

Were we on the record with that -- that

whole thing? THE REPORTER: Yes. CHAIRMAN CARTER: So, now we can prove that we were informed. THE REPORTER: I keep writing until you tell me to stop. CHAIRMAN CARTER: Oh, okay. I think we're in recess. I'll hit it again. 9 (Recess taken.) 10 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Good afternoon. We -- the Indiana Civil Rights Commission is reconvening. We had the rest of our meeting at 12 another hearing this morning. We're now 13 reconvening to hear Respondent's objections and 14 request -- excuse me -- for oral argument in the 15 case of Andrew Straw versus Indiana Democratic 16 17 Party. If the people representing both sides 18 would identify themselves, please, we'll talk 19 about it. Let's see, it's the Respondent's 20 objection, so Respondent goes first. 21 22 MR. CHINN: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Scott -- for the record, Scott 23

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Chinn, C h i n n. I'm from the Faegre Baker Daniels law firm here in Indianapolis, representing Respondent, Indiana Democratic Party. 5 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. MR. STRAW: Good morning -- or afternoon. My name is Andrew Straw, and I'm the Complainant. I live in Cook County, Illinois. 9 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. All right. If it's agreeable to you, we will have first the Respondent's presentation of his case for 20 11 12 minutes, and then the Complainant -- the Complainant will have 20 minutes, and then five 13 minutes each for rebuttal, I guess it is, and 14 15 then about five minutes for Commissioners to ask questions. 16 17 MR. CHINN: No objection from us. CHAIRMAN CARTER: And so, Respondent, 18 if you would --19 20 MR. CHINN: All right. 21 CHAIRMAN CARTER: -- Mr. Chinn. 22 MR. CHINN: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission.

Again, my name is Scott Chinn, and I'm a lawyer here in Indianapolis with Faegre Baker Daniels law firm, and I represent the Indiana Democratic Party, who's the Respondent in the matter now.

I might, if it's okay will you and the court reporter, for shorthand today refer to the Indiana Democratic Party as IDP. I'm going to say it a lot, so it might make sense to abbreviate that, and you'll know what I mean when I say, "IDP."

Another real party in interest in this case, as you'll hear more about, which is the St. Joseph County Democratic Party, again, a mouthful, so I might offhandedly refer to that entity as the St. Joe County Party, just to be short about it. That's a little bit easier to say.

The Chairman of the Indiana Democratic

Party, my client, John Zody, is here today as

well, and we're here because of the Commission's

March 15th, 2014 issuance of the Notice of Intent

to Reverse the Deputy Director's Finding of No

Cause in this case. We -- you're right, we asked

for oral argument. We very much appreciate that you granted that, an opportunity to address you here today with respect to that Notice of Intent to Reverse.

And with respect to that Notice that you issued and that's pending before us, respectfully, a decision to reverse the Deputy Director's finding would not be supported by the facts or the law or anything that's in the Commission's file.

And the standard the Commission gave in that Notice, that the Respondent should be, quote, truly accessible for all, end quote, is vague and completely unworkable in the context of this case, and I want to make three points today that I think demonstrates the proper context for the Commission to judge the merits.

So, the first point is that this case is in some dire need of perspective. Because of the Commission's Notice of Intent to Reverse the Deputy Director's No Cause finding, the IDP and the St. Joe County Party are on the verge, I would submit to you, of being punished for no

legitimate reason and, in some measure, for having done a good deed.

What do I mean by that? This case is primarily about the accessibility of the St. Joe County Party headquarters in South Bend, Indiana. Now, there is serious question, as you would note from the assumptions made in the Deputy Director's Notice of Finding of No Cause, about whether that building's even a public accommodation under the law.

But assuming it is, the Deputy Director found that nonetheless, no cause existed, for reasons that we'll talk about, but with respect to that issue, while the public is welcome to come and visit the County Party when it's open, it doesn't have regular business hours, and, of course, it mainly exists as an office to transact internal business for the County Party organization.

For example, during the year in which most of the life of this case has occurred, 2013, there aren't elections in Indiana, as you probably know, and so there was just not much

business transacted at all at the County Party headquarters in St. Joe County.

I say that only to underscore the notion that this isn't Wal-Mart. This isn't even a normal sort of office building where people come in a need to transact business. This is something different than that.

Moreover, the Deputy Director found that there was no evidence that Mr. Straw ever tried to enter that building, raising the question of what harm would occur or accrue to him as the charging party in any event, even assuming, as the Deputy Director did, arguendo, that the St. Joe County Party headquarters is a public accommodation.

And of particular legal significance,
Mr. Straw didn't name the St. Joe County Party as
a Respondent. He named the IDP, the Indiana
Democratic Party, which does not own, which does
not control, which does not superintend in any
way the building in question in this case, the
St. Joe County Party headquarters.

The IDP and the St. Joe County Party,

while related, admittedly, in terms of overall Democratic Party governance and relationships, are separate legal entities. The county is not a subsidiary, for example, or agent of the IDP for this matter, and the IDP, quite simply, has no legal interest in the building that's at issue.

so, with all of those legal problems -and there are more, but hopefully that should
suffice -- that challenge Mr. Straw's charge, you
might imagine that the IDP and the St. Joe Party
in this case just folded their arms and said, "Go
fish, Mr. Straw. We're going to rest on our
legal arguments." But far from it, as the record
clearly discloses.

First, the IDP, while pointing out in its papers in this case that it's the wrong
Respondent, nonetheless provided legal counsel, even up to and including today, to try to facilitate a resolution to Mr. Straw's charge, under the theory that, while it could rest purely on legal issues, as it not being the right
Respondent, this probably not being a public accommodation, and a host of other things, an

agreed resolution is better than a contested one, which I think conforms with the overall mission of the Commission and of its rules and laws in Indiana.

Second, and most significantly, the

St. Joe County Party reviewed the situation on
the merits. It procured a ramp. It installed an
assistance buzzer. It ensured that when the
building was open and staffed, its staff would in
fact be available to assist members of the public
needing assistance into the building. That
conforms with the Deputy Director's findings that
the Respondent did not delay in making the
building accessible.

What does that litany of facts underscore?
That the IDP and St. Joe County Party aren't some sort of private company seeking to enhance a bottom line somewhere, right, or resting just on legal arguments in determining whether to make an accommodation at all. They're a political organization, themselves dedicated to diversity and inclusion as guiding principles, and have tried to be helpful, not strident, about this

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So, with all due respect to the Complainant, it's at a minimum ironic, and frankly, to some offensive, that the Complainant argues that the very rule of the count -- of the state party, designed to promote that diversity and inclusion, is also in this case somehow discriminatory.

And that takes me to the second point I want to make today, which is about Rule 10 of the State Party Rules, Rule 10 of the State Party Rules, which is, again, of course, talked about in the papers of the parties and is mentioned specifically in the Deputy Director's Notice of Finding of No Cause.

What does Rule 10 say? Let me quote it.

This, again, is the Indiana Democratic Party

Internal Rules. "All public Party meetings,"

capital p, party, meaning state party, "All

public Party meetings shall be open to Party

members regardless of their race, sex, age,

color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic

identity, economic status, sexual orientation,

gender identity, physical condition, or philosophical persuasion, end quote.

Now, Mr. Straw claims that language of inclusion in Rule 10 demonstrates an intent to discriminate against persons with mental disabilities, and he's upset when we assert our view, the Party's view, which I think we're entitled to have about what's in our own rule, that physical condition, for example, the term physical condition, would certainly include a mental disability or a mental condition, if that somehow became a barrier to access at a State Party function or a State Party meeting.

In fact, that's what the rule's about.

It's about access to a State Party meeting, not a

County Party headquarters in St. Joe County or

any of the other 91 counties. Rule 10 is an

attack on the State Party's internal rules.

So, the most important fact about that is what the Deputy Director found in her Notice of Probable -- of No Probable Cause, that Mr. Straw hadn't been denied access to State Party functions.

The most important legal fact is a constitutional one, and that we talked about in our objections, that no state government entity can sit in judgment over the internal rules of a political party. I mean I'm going to submit to you that you should feel very squeamish about being asked to do that.

And I submit to you that a Federal Court would feel squeamish about -- about doing that, given the constitutional rights of political organizations to govern themselves, especially when what we're talking about here is an internal rule promoting inclusion and diversity.

And, again, let me be clear about something that, with all due respect, I think Mr. Straw is taking out of context in his response to our objections. In making that point about the constitutional significance regarding a state actor like yourselves, like the Commission, sitting in judgment over an internal party rule, I'm not saying, as Mr. Straw argues, that a political organization is above the law if it engages in actual discrimination prohibited by

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the law.

I'm simply stating that no state
government entity, or court, for that matter, can
undertake to evaluate an internal party rule
designed to promote inclusion without running
afoul of the First Amendment and Article 1,
Section 9 of the Indiana Constitution, the free
expression and free speech clause of the Indiana
Constitution.

And again, just to back up to where we started on this argument on point -- point two, Rule 10 is a rule designed to promote diversity and inclusion, and Mr. Straw's aim is to convince you to parse that rule in a way that it, in his view, demonstrates discrimination on the basis of mental condition. Simply not the case.

Point three and final point is about the unfairness and incongruity of a Commission decision to reverse the Deputy Director's No Cause finding. I submit to you that it would amount to the Commission kicking a can down the road, if it were to in fact reverse that decision, in a way that ignores the

accommodations that we've talked about made at the St. Joe County Party headquarters, and rewards, frankly, Mr. Straw's untoward conduct in this case.

underscore this. I am very conscious that in most cases, it's frankly just counterproductive and, frankly, in my own personal view, wrong to dwell on a charging party's behavior. The charging party, under our system, gets their day in court, if you will, whatever that court or body looks like, gets to state their claim, gets to state their charges. The respondent gets to come back and say things, and ultimately the tribunal makes a decision. So, I respect that process, and we're not complaining about that.

But there's been something of an abuse of that process that's clear. It's clear in the record of this case, and it even persists.

Frankly, in the 20 years that I've been representing state and local governments, nonprofits and political organizations, I've never quite seen anything like this.

I believe that it is clear to see in this case that the charge is being used, that the Commission is being used, and that the process is being used by Mr. Straw to settle prior, past political scores.

I direct you to Exhibit B, attached to our objections that we filed with the Commission, which is a packet of communications over a period of time from Mr. Straw that I think amply makes that point, and I won't recite all of those.

I will say, in summary, that his correspondence indicates that he believes he suffered a train of abuses from Democrats and others, and continues to inundate, even now, Party officials, legislators and the public with diatribes against those persons.

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Throughout the course of this case, by way of a few examples, he has maligned former Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard for an event that preceded, certainly, this matter by years; any number of elected officials and party officials; not such a big deal, but me in my capacity as IDP legal counsel for, quote-unquote, not having a

conscience.

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Remember, these are statements directed about this case and about this litigation and dispute to elected officials and others in the public. He has maligned, in my view, Deputy Director Haynes when he asked her to resign after rendering her No Cause Finding.

And just since the Commission issued its notice of intent to reverse, he's been further emboldened, frankly, and now has threatened a retaliation claim against a party official named Keith Clock, when, after receiving Mr. Straw's missives directed to Mr. Clock and a bunch of other political officials, when Mr. Clock simply had the gall to say back to Mr. Straw in an e-mail, "This is a matter in litigation. Please address this matter with the party's legal counsel, " that statement has drawn Mr. Straw's ire so much so that he's threatened a retaliation claim in writing. I have all of that documentation. I'm certainly happy to tender it as a supplement to the record, but I think to say 23 it is to be concerned about it.

On a personal level, I'm sorry that

Mr. Straw is troubled by what he perceives as

having been wronged by anyone and any -- everyone

and anyone that disagrees with him. But the

condition, keeping this case alive, is -- frankly

just delays the inevitable and will cause

well-meaning political organizations unnecessary

burden in the meantime.

Why do I say that? Some of the best evidence that Mr. Straw isn't trying to vindicate some harm that he has under Indiana law related to the accessibility of the St. Joe County Party headquarters is the nature of his demands. For some time he wanted the IDP to give him a job. That's in the record before you. He wants a claim against supposed insurance proceeds of the Party.

As to money in that regard, we informed the Commission in our objections filed that, among other things, Mr. Straw had demanded \$500,000 in damages -- by the way, related to a building that he never tried to enter. I have to confess, though, that that \$500,000 number is now

incorrect, it's just not right, because since then, Mr. Straw has upped his demand to over one million dollars.

In fact, Mr. Straw has now claimed publicly, since the Commission's Notice of Intent was filed, that he's asking for the following relief from the Commission, and I'm quoting. Quote, my proposed order is for \$1,259,295, plus ownership of the building in South Bend, plus injunctive relief, plus a show-cause order so that all Democratic Party alcohol licenses are removed until the HQ's across the state become accessible, end quote.

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With all due respect, and as against that background, what am I supposed to tell my client? What am I supposed to tell the St. Joe County Party it should do to make itself, quote, truly accessible for all, in light of that?

So, to wrap up in my principle argument, having made those three points, I would ask you to consider relief in this way: First, there's, I hope, no way that you can find cause on 23 Rule 10, on the Rule 10 issue -- that is, the

internal party rule -- as both legal and factual matters. You'd be doing nothing there but sustaining the decision of the Deputy Director and taking note of the serious legal concern about getting into the business, internal business, of a political party if you were to in fact find cause there.

You also can't find cause, I should respectfully submit, on the St. Joe County Party headquarters building issue, since Mr. Straw, as was found, never tried to enter the building, and the County -- and maybe most materially, and the County Party actually took steps to make it accessible.

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And since it isn't even clear that the St. Joe County Party headquarters is a public accommodation that's subject to the law, what message would you be sending future respondents in the position of the St. Joe County Party? "Hey, just rest on your legal position if you've got one, don't even try to make timely and adequate accommodations, because even if the 23 staff, after a full investigation, finds no

probable cause, the Commission might not back you up."

So, the right course is to rescind your

Notice of Intent to Reverse, and if, despite the
accommodations already made at the St. Joe County

Party headquarters, Mr. Straw wants to file a new
charge against the right entity, the right
respondent, and explain why those accommodations
are insufficient, legally and factually, and why
he's harmed by them, then let him do that.

That's fine. We'll deal with that case as it
comes. That's just not this case.

In short, please see this case for what it is and let the Deputy Director's Notice of Finding of No Probable Cause stand.

Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Chinn.

Mr. Straw, 20 minutes.

MR. STRAW: Sure. Thank you very much for the invitation.

I'd like to start out with a little piece of the Democratic Party platform at the national

level, which was agreed to by the party in 2012, and just said -- the first line said, "No one should face discrimination based on disability status," and I really can't see how his argument is even living up to that standard that his own party sets.

And the reason I want to say that is because for 17 years, the party's entrances looked like this (displaying photograph). There was no ramp for 17 years. You may think that I'm just going off or something like that, maybe trying to play on my mental disability or something, but if you look at the actual entrance, this little doorbell right here, ordinary doorbell above the second metal step, all rusty like that, was donated by Brandon Mullin. I'll explain who he is shortly.

The ramp was donated by Pete Buttigieg, who's now the Mayor of South Bend, and if you look carefully up here, you'll notice that this was taken on March 23rd, along with the other photos I've submitted. Mr. Joe Buck is running for Congress, and his face appears above the

entrance.

Now, one of the stories in South Bend -the ABC 57 cover is one of my exhibits -- noted
that Joe Donnelly said he would get this fixed
several years before all of this happened, and it
was never fixed.

Joe Donnelly's campaign manager in 2010

became the District Chair after Butch Morgan, who
was over all of this for 17 years, resigned. And
then Joe Donnelly's campaign manager approved the
solution that they had with the ramp. He became
Pete Buttigieg's chief of staff. Buttigieg
donated the ramp.

Really what I'm saying is, if you want to be involved at the Congressional level in the Second District, you have to support the lack of access. You have to add something. It's all sort of a precondition to even being involved that you accept the discrimination.

Some of the photos that I have are of their parking lot. There are still no handicap parking spaces in their parking lot, and the Democrats have a parking lot. They are -- they

have four spaces that are -- that have signs that say, "Headquarters, South -- or St. Joseph County Democratic Party." You'll be towed if you're not there on party business.

So, I find it hard to believe that they're -- that they're out there doing good deeds by providing a ramp that has no handrails, that's only five feet long, when this is 13 inches high. You know, if you look at the ADA regulations, it's just very clear. This violates the law, and putting it in there is no better than like this. It's no better.

And there may be some indication that you have to go up it in a wheelchair. There's more than one way to enter a building. Not everyone uses a wheelchair. What if you're in a walker? What if you have a cane? What if you're blind? What if you need handrails? It didn't have any. That was neglected in the original No Probable Cause finding.

In fact, I wonder how you could even come to those conclusions about parking, about the ramp, about the inadequate doorbell. This does

not open the door; it's just a regular doorbell. The original solution from 2011 had a different sign, which you can see in a Respondent's photograph submitted to you, and below it, it says, "Please ring doorbell for assistance."

Now, there's a handicap parking sign, and there's no sign of what to do. The front door has no indication that there's an accessible entrance that I can find anywhere. So, if you go along, if you accept the entrance, if you take part in the entrance, you get rewarded, and I think I've explained that in the -- my response.

You get party endorsements. Joe Buck got a party endorsement last month, state level.

Brandon Mullin got endorsed at all levels eight months before the election. And if -- if you don't like it like that, you get punished, and punishment includes, "We're going to yank your voter access database -- voter database access."

And not only at the Democratic level, but the co-director of the Indiana Election

Commission Division, Trent Deckard, also did that. You know, I applied after they yanked my

party voter roll database access. They refused to give me a restricted version, saying that I was going to sell the data somehow. I don't know where they got that information. They don't say. I have a copy of that that I'll give to you, too, if that's okay.

This was my campaign manager. This is

Reverend Greg Brown, and he offered this ramp for

free, with free labor, to weld it and take that

material to make this entrance accessible.

Now, why would he have done that? His mother has been a Democratic Party activist for her whole life in South Bend, and she's now in a wheelchair, and she does not feel safe entering this place. So, he's been trying to find a solution, not throw something together so they can say, "We don't have to be responsible."

But let's make a real solution. I donated money during that summer to say, "Here's some money that I gathered from people for this," and they sent it back and said, "We already have a ramp. We don't need your money," and sent it back.

I -- for 17 years, this sort of thing, offers to help, were rejected, and they were rejected by this guy right here. His name's Butch Morgan. He was the District Chair for 17 years, and it just so happens that today is the one-year anniversary of his conviction for a forgery ring in the 2008 Democratic Presidential Election.

He was calling the shots. He was getting Brandon Mullin to run so that could dump money, dump endorsements, support him, and then his job was to turn around and provide the little doorbell to show that he supports the lack of access.

I'm stunned. I've been a Democratic -- I was a Democratic Party activist myself for 20 years. I founded the IU College Democrats in Bloomington. Now it has over 500 members. I've provided legal counsel to Democrats running for office, local, state level. And, you know, around this state I've just -- I've never run into anything like this.

And when I decided to run for Congress, it

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was -- I had been pushing a platform of disability rights. When I worked at the Indiana Supreme Court and provided trial court services to all 400 Indiana trial courts, I was pushing to get software for a judge who had a vision impairment.

I went to the Indiana Deaf Community on behalf of the Supreme Court to say, "We want to help. When we get our transcription system ready to --" I was the staff person for that "-- it should help people with hearing impairments."

And, you know, it's just important to me. It's important to me.

I worked in a mental hospital, Oak Lawn in Goshen. I've worked with kids with disabilities, tutoring. Somehow I get the feeling from the Respondent that they don't really understand my interests.

I -- they say I've never entered the building. This isn't true. I have entered that building. I entered that building before my hip replacement in 2010, while I was helping Dwight Fish, who was running for the state legislature

in District 21. Dwight said, "I need you to come in here. We've got to meet Butch. We've got things to do."

I said, "That entrance looks dangerous," and it took me twice as long to get in there as it did Mr. Fish, because I went along the edge, holding on and leaning onto the edge as I crawled around to the door, because it was important to me to support my candidate. Did I think that that entrance was safe? Absolutely not.

Absolutely not.

And I protested it to Dwight at the time.

I said, "You know, Dwight, why is it like that?"

And he -- as many people in the Second District

used to say to me, "That's just Butch. That's

just like him. That's just Butch. That's what

he does."

So, as far as the Constitution, really what I have to say is constitutional law says there has to be a compelling state interest to pass a law to protect civil rights, and in this case, Indiana has such a horrible history of disability rights.

There was definitely a state interest, especially for people with mental disabilities, because of the eugenics law of 1907, and that allowed the state to spend money and sterilize people with mental disabilities. Twenty-five hundred were sterilized. Now, that started 19 years before the Nazi government in Germany, and it continued over 20 years after -- wait, 19 years after.

So, to my mind, this state has an obligation, not just an interest, but an obligation, to make sure that people with mental disabilities are not discriminated against.

They've already been attacked by the state. The state legislature, on the 100th anniversary of that, apologized. No one should face discrimination based on disability status.

Compare that with Rule 10. Physical disability is protected. Deadly silent about mental disabilities. And the problem with that is, later on in the rules, under the state chair's duties, the State Chair has a duty to prevent discrimination based on disability, no

qualification, just disability. They know what they're doing when they write these rules.

The Democratic Party talks about pretexts.

They don't prove a pretext for discrimination,

political ones, when it comes to voting rights,

and Congress has said very clearly that "Census

data, national polls, and other studies have

documented that people with disabilities, as a

group, occupy an inferior status in our society,

and are severely disadvantaged socially,

vocationally, economically and educationally."

That's ADA, Section 12101(a)(6).

They're responsible under their rules for what their County Party does, because they say the County Party is part of the Party, and the State Chair can enforce duties on lower levels. The District Chair can enforce duties on lower levels. There has to be responsibility.

I asked for compensation. It's hard for me to gauge exactly what compensation should be.

What -- how did it injure me that I no longer, forever, have access to the voter rolls in Indiana, even though I'm a political activist,

I've run for Congress, may want to run for something else again?

This was the State Chair that did this, immediately after I ran against Butch for his District Chair seat. I don't know. There's just so much. A District Chair is also on the state committee. A District Chair controls the headquarters in the district, because they can. And Butch was both. Mike Schmuhl was Joe Donnelly's campaign manager, and then became District Chair.

To me, it's just -- the reason it feels sloppy is because there's just sort of a cloud of discrimination and a bunch of people in it, puffing away, contributing to it.

I hope that you'll continue with what you're doing as far as reversing, and I -- I trust that you're going to come to the right decision on the types of relief that should be given.

I have also a revised order for civil rights relief, so that the injuries, the retaliation, are crafted to meet the relief

sought, so if you'd like a copy of that, I can give that to you, too.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you.

Mr. Chinn, five minutes.

MR. CHINN: Well, thank you,

Mr. Chairman.

Just briefly, then, on rebuttal, let me clear the record that the IDP certainly has no quibble with Mr. Straw's advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities, and in fact, you know, applauds it.

And I hope it's clear and really just self-evident, I'm part of a party that wants diversity, that wants to be inclusive, that wants its party to be accessible to persons with disabilities, regardless of what those disabilities are.

But that doesn't entitle -- Mr. Straw's advocacy doesn't entitle him to just go around the state and cherry-pick buildings that he may have been in, I don't quibble that he may have been in the building. The Deputy Director's

finding, though, is about the relevant period and the relationship to his claim in this case.

At the end of the day, there's a charge pending in front of the Commission about that, and the finding on -- specifically on page 2 of the Notice of Findings is that he admits that he never tried to access the building using his wheelchair.

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So, because of that, I would also suggest, while I'm thinking about the building and I'm thinking about Mr. Straw's access to the building, or anyone's access to the building, point out, when you go back to where he started, the fact that there's a disagreement, you know, perhaps, about the efficacy of the specific accessibility modifications at the site underscores that within the relevant period after Mr. Straw brought his charge, all right, there were in fact not -- attempts to make the building accessible by the St. Joe County Party that were not unduly delayed in any way.

Again, I accept and appreciate that people 23 can disagree about what's the right thing to do,

and perhaps there's more to be done there. The record, however, doesn't tell us, in any way, that those accommodations are inadequate.

A couple more things real quick, then, that Mr. Straw mentioned. His allegation that if you -- that politically -- as I understand it, that politically in St. Joe County, if you support the entrance -- and I think -- what I understood him to mean by that is the inadequate entrance from his perspective -- if you support the entrance as it's been modified and designed, even United States Senate and United States

Congressional candidates are rewarded by their support of, in his view, an inadequate entrance, because that would mean they are actively discriminating against making the entrance more accessible, and they were rewarded with support from the Party.

Now, there's not a scintilla of evidence in the record about that, and I would respectfully submit that to say that out loud is to know that it is not true. What is true, a fact that I think is not in the record, but I

Mr. Straw addressed it, I feel like I need to.

He suggested that he's been retaliated against

because of his access -- and he said to voter

rolls.

means. He's talking about the Voter Access

Network. He's talking about the data that is held by political parties and by the state that is voter history information; all right? It includes confidential information, or at least includes information that, by law, is not to be given out in certain ways.

So, the reason that Mr. Straw had his VAN access, his access to that data which you can get as a candidate as long as you sign a candidate agreement that limits certain disclosure of it, is because he was posting otherwise confidential information about voters and their voter history on Facebook, in violation both of the agreement with the Party, and he mentioned the state.

Now, believe me, I think he means the Indiana Election Division is what he's talking about, and the co-director and the legal counsel

at the Indiana Election Division superintend, in part, that access that people have to the SDRS system or to the voter access systems as well, and that violates state rule as well, and he was cut off from the state. The Party had nothing to do with that.

But in fact, it is true that his transgressions got him in trouble in that case.

That's hardly retaliation. That's been true of other people who violated that agreement as well.

So, just to sum up, then, again, what I think is clear from the record of facts and from the other discussions that both Mr. Straw and I have had today, and in our papers reported to the Commission, is that this amounts to a political score-settling charge.

Not that accessibility issues aren't real, not that accessibility issues in St. Joe County aren't real. They are; all right? There is now something that there wasn't before; right? A ramp and a buzzer and staff instruction about how to be assisted, how to assist people who need accessibility into the building, and the parking

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issue that has been addressed. That's all true.
That's the point of it; it's been addressed.

So, again, I would just reiterate that the right thing to do is let stand the Deputy

Director's Notice of Finding of No Cause, both with respect to the St. Joe County Party issue and with respect to the Rule 10 issue.

Thanks again for your time.

CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Chinn.

Mr. Straw, five minutes.

MR. STRAW: I don't have a lot to respond to that, but political score settling, he keeps coming back to this political score settling. Does that mean if you're running for office, you no longer have the right to complain that there's discrimination going on?

I thought it was precisely the opposite.

When I go out and I spend my days meeting with

people who have disabilities, and they say,

"There's this discrimination. There's -- the

Democratic headquarters is like that. Why don't

you do something about it? You're running for

office. Why don't you do something about it?

Joe Donnelly wouldn't. The District Chair

won't." Is it political score settling to make

things accessible? It's not, I don't think so.

I think that's a really not accurate way to

portray it.

This -- I just have a few things, if I can give them to you. I'm sure that you have this.

May I?

MS. RINCONES-CHAVEZ: To me.

MR. STRAW: It's just that in this week we've been talking about -- well, first I'll -- this week we've been talking about settling scores and reminding people and all of those sorts of things. I don't live in the Second District anymore, but for some reason I got these in the mail from Mr. Buck in South Bend.

He's running for Congress there. It just happens to be at the same time I'm coming here, and his name is on the door, just -- I don't know. And just a few weeks ago, the state central committee endorsed him before the

primary. So, I don't know. I see it as a pattern. It may have politics written on it, but that's because it's a political party discriminating, and just because it's a political party, does it get to discriminate? 6 If -- and this Rule 10 issue, I see that as no different from -- you have an employee who comes here and says, "There's discrimination. It's in the company's handbook and in their policies. It's written right in there. It's 10 plain as day, black and white." That's what Rule 10 is, black and white. It's not a 12 13 constitutional issue. It's an intent-to-discriminate issue, and it blossoms 15 right out there in Rule 10. So, I thank you very much, and I look 16 forward to your questions. 17 18 CHAIRMAN CARTER: All right. Well, I have a question about your picture of the front 19 20 door, and that is: At what point in all of this process was that picture taken? 22 MR. STRAW: March 23ed of this year. 23 CHAIRMAN CARTER: Well, I don't have,

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you know, the dates in my head.
                MR. STRAW: This is how it is today.
                CHAIRMAN CARTER: Okay. Where's the
    ramp? They said there was supposed to be a ramp.
                MR. STRAW: There is a ramp. It's
    there. That's it. That's all that's left of the
    ramp.
                CHAIRMAN CARTER: Oh, okay. So that
    presumably with the ramp, one could reach the
    buzzer, I guess, certainly. It doesn't look very
    useful to have the buzzer up --
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                MR. STRAW: They don't bring the --
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: -- one or two
    steps.
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                MR. STRAW: Yeah, they don't bring
    the ramp out until after you --
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: After you buzz the
    inaccessible buzzer?
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               MR. STRAW: Right.
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                COMM. CRENSHAW: Oh.
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                MR. STRAW: So, it's --
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                CHAIRMAN CARTER: It doesn't --
23
    well --
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MR. STRAW: Well, someone else said to me -- actually, I don't think the issue is the ramp, but the rust. You could get tetanus if you'd fall and hit it. 5 CHAIRMAN CARTER: I don't think the ADA addresses rust. MR. STRAW: No. CHAIRMAN CARTER: But perhaps it should. 10 Does anyone else have a question? 11 (No response.) 12 CHAIRMAN CARTER: No? 13 COMM. CRENSHAW: I've got a question. To go back to this VAN access. 14 15 MR. STRAW: Right. 16 COMM. CRENSHAW: To make sure I understand, supposedly you were posting people's 17 information about how they vote on Facebook? 18 MR. STRAW: That's false. And in 19 fact, when they sent me the letter taking away my 20 21 access, they don't mention any specific reason, just generally a section of the contract. 22 23 COMM. CRENSHAW: Yeah, because I have

that in here. MR. STRAW: Yeah. COMM. CRENSHAW: Do you have any backup to that? 5 MR. CHINN: No, ma'am, I don't have, you know, record evidence about that. That's my understanding, however, from talking to officials. That's why it was removed, the access. COMM. CRENSHAW: So, someone told you 10 11 that? 12 MR. CHINN: That's right. 13 COMM. CRENSHAW: Can you obtain that 14 information? 15 MR. CHINN: I may be able to. I guess the question is: Are -- is the Commission saying it's taking new evidence? Because we 17 could. I --18 19 COMM. CRENSHAW: I mean if you're -if he's basing that the reason why he -- you're saying -- if I hear you correctly, you're saying 21 you're injured because they're saying that you 22 took -- you got access to this VAN network and 23

supposedly posted people's voting histories or what have you on Facebook. 3 MR. STRAW: Uh-huh. COMM. CRENSHAW: And you're saying that's the reason why they restricted your access, that's part of the reason --MR. STRAW: There was --COMM. CRENSHAW: -- you're saying you're injured? 10 MR. STRAW: There was an issue in the campaign about this Brandon Mullin, and I -- I 11 got -- through public records requests in 12 Washington, D.C. and Indiana found that he was 13 registered to vote in both places at the same 15 time. 16 COMM. CRENSHAW: Okay. 17 MR. STRAW: And first he voted in one, and then he voted in the other, while 18 registered in both. 19 20 COMM. CRENSHAW: Right. 21 MR. STRAW: And that means when he signed his name saying that he wasn't registered anywhere else -- it's just an issue in the 23

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MR. CHINN: Thank you.

campaign. MR. CHINN: Mr. Chairman, if I might, just from our -- to try to put a little perspective in there, the reason it's challenging for me to say that is it's not in the complaint; all right? So, if you look at the complaint that was filed by Mr. Straw on November 15th, 2012, there are three allegations, none of which have to do the VAN access. So, you know, I became aware because Mr. Straw has, subsequent to the findings, talked about the VAN access, so I got myself prepared today to respond to what likely would come up, but it's simply not part of what's before you. CHAIRMAN CARTER: Yeah, we're not entertaining new evidence. MR. CHINN: Right. CHAIRMAN CARTER: Is that -- that is your main objection? Well, if there are no more questions, I guess we'll take it under advisement and see what we can do.

1	MR. STRAW: Thank you very much.
2	CHAIRMAN CARTER: Thank you.
3	I suppose there. Now you can stop
4	typing.
5	 Thereupon, the proceedings of
6	April 25, 2014 were concluded
7	at 1:49 o'clock p.m.
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CERTIFICATE I, Lindy L. Meyer, Jr., the undersigned Court Reporter and Notary Public residing in the City of Shelbyville, Shelby County, Indiana, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the proceedings taken by me on Friday, April 25, 2014 in this matter and transcribed by me. 9 10 Lindy L. Meyer, Jr., 11 12 Notary Public in and 13 for the State of Indiana. 14 15 My Commission expires October 27, 2016. 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

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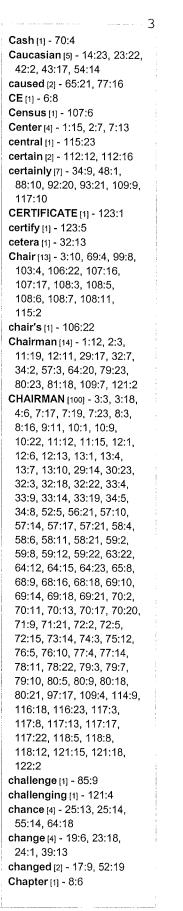
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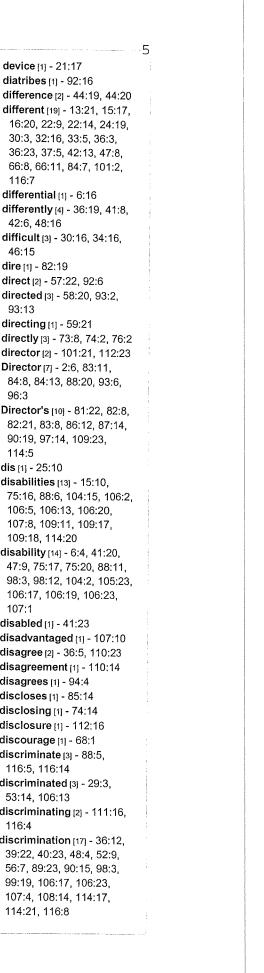
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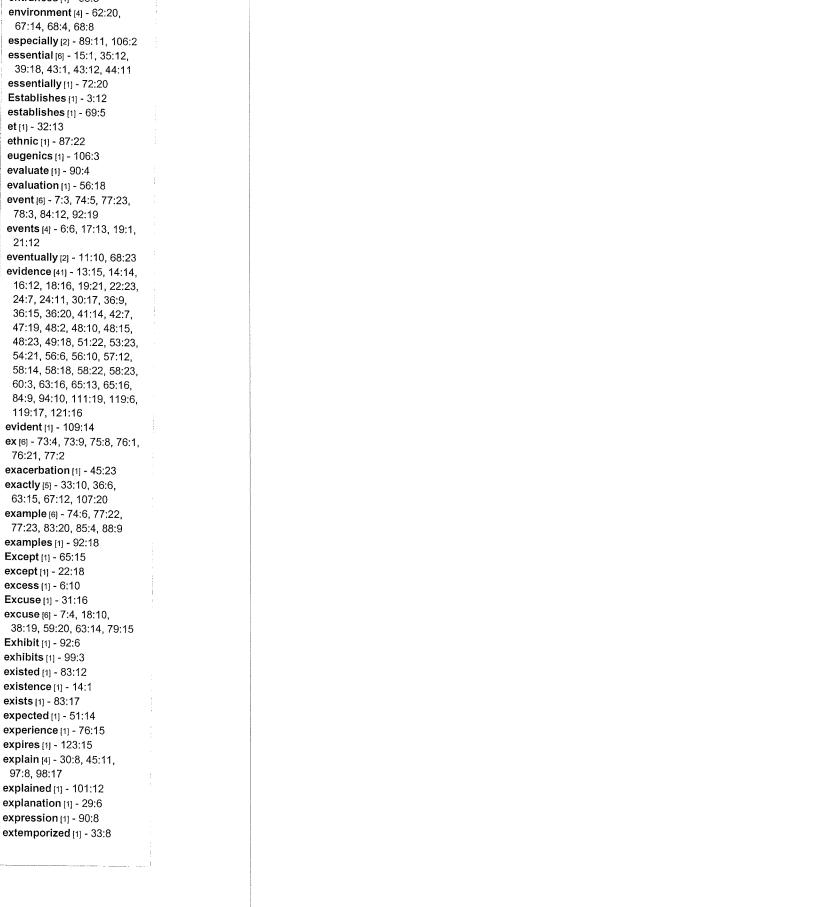
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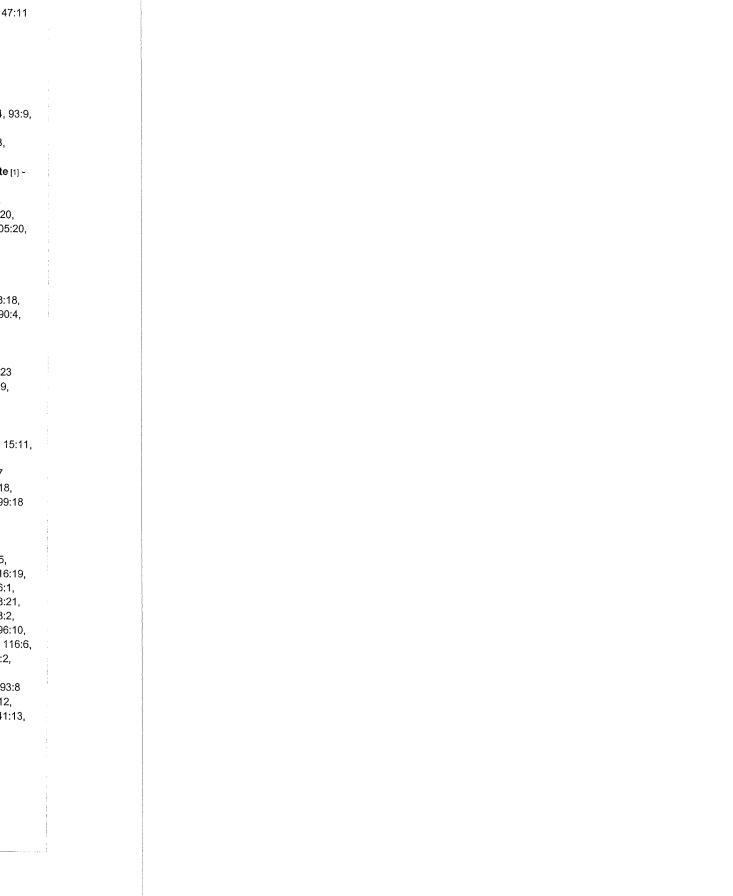
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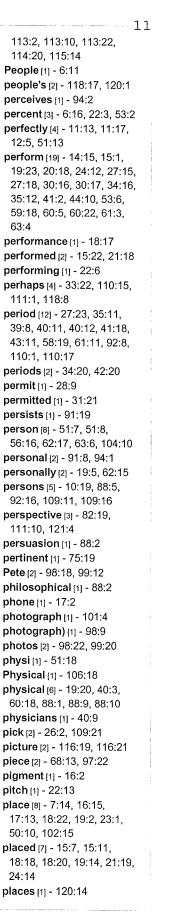
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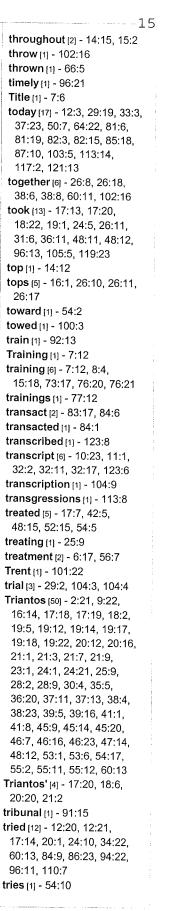
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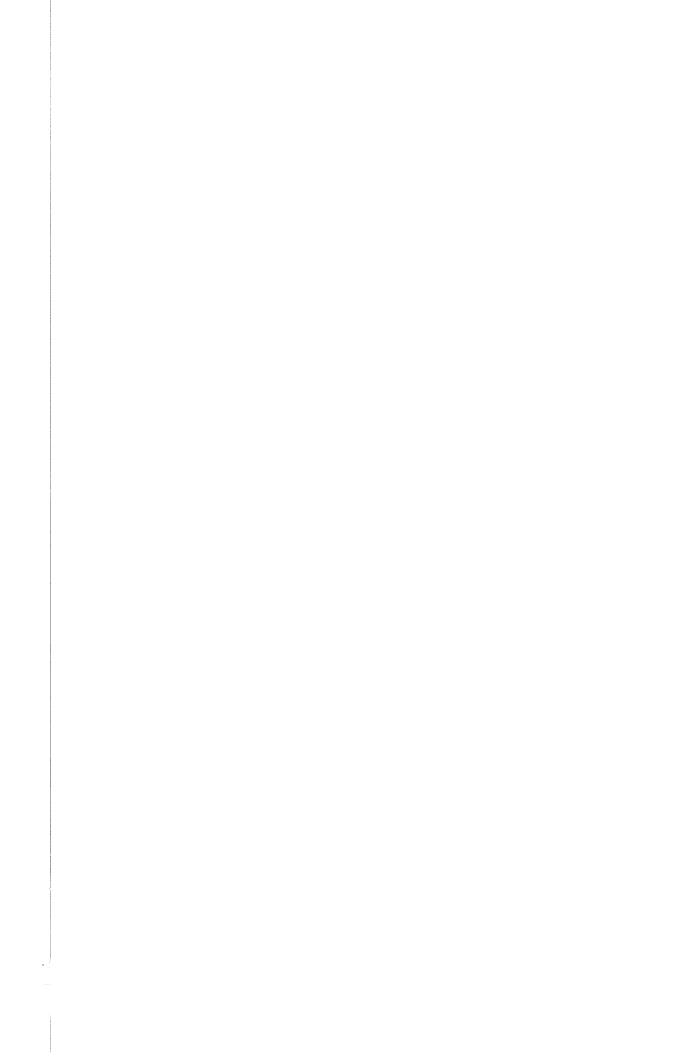
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