

BEFORE THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

1
2
3 In the Matter of the Application
4 of Frasier Solar, LLC for a Case No.
5 Certificate of Environmental 23-796-EL-BGN
6 Compatibility and Public Need
7 to Construct a Solar-Powered
8 Electric Generation Facility.
9

10 HEARING

11 DAY 3

12 DATE: Wednesday, May 29, 2024

13 TIME: 5:00 p.m.

14 BEFORE: Attorney Examiner David Hicks
15 Attorney Examiner Matthew Sandor
16 Attorney Examiner Manette Asta

17 LOCATION: Knox Memorial Theater
18 112 East High Street
19 Mount Vernon, OH 43050

20 REPORTED BY: Nic Joseph

21 JOB NO.: 6665493
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A P P E A R A N C E S

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT FRASIER SOLAR, LLC:

MICHAEL SETTINERI, ESQUIRE
JOSHUA R. ECKERT, ESQUIRE
Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease LLP
52 East Gay Street
P.O. Box 1008
Columbus, OH 43215
mjsettineri@vorys.com
jreckert@vorys.com
(614) 464-5462

ON BEHALF OF INTERVENOR OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL:

CHRIS TAVENOR, ESQUIRE (by videoconference)
The Ohio Environmental Council
1145 Chesapeake Avenue, Suite I
Columbus, OH 43212
ctavenor@theoec.org
(614) 487-7506

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A P P E A R A N C E S (Cont'd.)

ON BEHALF OF INTERVENORS KNOX SMART DEVELOPMENT AND
JARED YOST:

DOUGLAS HOLTHUS, ESQUIRE
Freeman Mathis & Gary
65 East State Street, Suite 2550
Columbus, OH 43215
doug.holthus@fgmlaw.com
(614) 683-8411

ALSO PRESENT:

Jennifer French, Chair of the Ohio Power Siting
Board
Gene Philips, Designee for the Ohio Department of
Health

I N D E X

		DX	CX	RDX	RCX
1					
2	WITNESSES:				
3	ANDREA STEWART	433			
4					
5	ANTONIO DITOMMASO	437			
6	By Mr. Holthus		440		
7					
8	BILL BOGANTZ	444			
9					
10	SCOTT SMITH	449			
11					
12	LYNN ROWE	452			
13					
14	SALLIE BOWEN	456			
15	By Mr. Settineri		461		
16					
17	JASON ROW	462			
18	By Mr. Settineri		466		
19					
20	ROGER MCCONNELL	477			
21	By Mr. Settineri		481		
22					
23	MARY BEBOUT	487			
24					
25	JULIET STRINKA	492			

I N D E X (Cont'd)

		DX	CX	RDX	RCX
1					
2	WITNESSES:				
3	DANIEL PETERS	497			
4					
5	MICHAEL MILLER	500			
6	By Mr. Settineri		502		
7					
8	DEREK POSEY	510			
9					
10	CRAIG COLOPY	515			
11					
12	BETH BARTLEY	522			
13	By Mr. Settineri		524		
14					
15	KARI THOMAS	528			
16	By Mr. Settineri		531		
17					
18	RHONDA NOBLE	536			
19	By Mr. Settineri		540		
20	By Mr. Tavenor		552		
21					
22	KAREN SCHMITT	556			
23	By Mr. Settineri		560		
24	By Mr. Tavenor		563		
25					

I N D E X (Cont'd)

		DX	CX	RDX	RCX
1					
2	WITNESSES:				
3	BRENDA MCCAMENT	567			
4	By Mr. Settineri		570		
5					
6	RICK MCCAMENT	573			
7	By Mr. Settineri		575		
8					
9	SUSAN MOORE	579			
10	By Mr. Settineri		582		
11					
12	PATTI DICE	587			
13	By Mr. Settineri		592		
14					
15	SARAH ANN DEAN	594			
16	By Mr. Settineri		597		
17					
18	POLLY HOCOTT	604			
19					
20	HANNAH GLEESPEN	607			
21	By Mr. Settineri		609		
22					
23	CANDACE HOCOTT	614			
24	By Mr. Settineri		616		
25					

I N D E X (Cont'd)

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WITNESSES:	DX	CX	RDX	RCX
EMILY ROWLEY	620			
JOHNNY HOCOTT	626			
By Mr. Settineri		628		
SAMUEL GLEESPEN	631			
By Mr. Settineri		632		

E X H I B I T S

NO.	DESCRIPTION	ID/EVD
1	Frasier:	
2	Exhibit PH1	Frasier Solar Map, Thomas'
3		Address Marked
4		533/535
5	Exhibit PH2	Frasier Solar Map, Nobles'
6		Address Marked
7		543/554
8	Exhibit PH3	Letter in Opposition to
9		Frasier Solar, Beth Bartley
10		545/554
11	Exhibit PH4	Preserve Knox County Website
12		Printout
13		547/554
14	Exhibit PH5	Letter in Opposition to
15		Frasier Solar, Karen Schmitt
16		561/565
17	Exhibit PH6	Letter in Opposition to
18		Frasier Solar, Karen Schmitt
19		561/565
20	Exhibit PH7	Frasier Solar Map, Deans'
21		Address Marked
22		599/603
23	Exhibit PH8	Google Map Printout 6041
24		Sharp Road
25		600/603
26	Exhibit PH9	Frasier Solar Map, Gleespens'
27		Address Marked
28		610/612
29	Exhibit PH10	Frasier Solar Map, Holcotts'
30		Address Marked
31		617/618

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 JUDGE HICKS: We'll go ahead and go on
3 the record. I want to welcome everyone here again.
4 We are reconvening for round three in the local public
5 hearing on case number 23-796-EL-BGN, which is In the
6 Matter of the Application of Frasier Solar, LLC for a
7 Certification of Environmental Compatibility and
8 Public Need.

9 My name is David Hicks. With me once
10 again is Matt Sandor and Manette Asta. And we are the
11 administrative law judges assigned to hear this case.
12 I also want to introduce with us, again, is the chair
13 of the Ohio Power Siting Board, Jennifer French, and
14 on her left, as designee for the Ohio Department of
15 Health, is Gene Phillips.

16 Just a couple of quick introductory
17 comments again, sort of like I did last week, and
18 we'll take appearances of counsel. I just want to
19 reiterate that everything we had said previously in
20 the last two sessions still applies. The limit of
21 five minutes for your testimony. We will try to flash
22 you this 30-second sign when you have 30 seconds.
23 Sometimes I know people don't see it because you're
24 looking down, but we are going to, once again, cut you
25 off at the five minutes just to stay consistent with

1 what we've done with everyone up until now.

2 Just, once again, not a
3 question-and-answer session. If it's your turn to
4 talk, if you have questions, please feel free. There
5 are representatives from the company here down front,
6 which I'm sure would be happy to speak with you or
7 board staff at the entrance there when you came in.
8 Also please refrain from the clapping and cheering.
9 It just makes it difficult to keep things going and
10 also hard on our court reporter who is trying to get
11 an accurate transcript.

12 With that, I want to go ahead and
13 take -- we can just do brief appearances. I think
14 everyone down here has been here at some point, but
15 brief appearances from the parties.

16 MR. SETTINERI: Good evening, Your
17 Honors. On behalf of Frasier Solar LLC, Michael
18 Settineri and Josh Eckert, Law Firm of Vorys Sater
19 Seymour & Pease.

20 MR. TAVENOR: Good evening, Your
21 Honors. Chris Tavenor, on behalf of Ohio
22 Environmental Council.

23 MR. HOLTHUS: Doug Holthus, with
24 Freeman Mathis & Gary, on behalf of KSD and Jared
25 Yost.

1 JUDGE HICKS: Thank you. Okay.
2 Anything from counsel before we get it going here?

3 Okay. We are going to just go down the
4 order of the names that were attached to the entry
5 that came out. These are the folks that are scheduled
6 to testify tonight. And with that, we will begin.

7 JUDGE ASTA: Andrea Stewart. Please
8 raise your right hand. Do you swear that the
9 testimony you are about to provide is the truth?

10 MS. STEWART: I do.

11 JUDGE ASTA: And please state and spell
12 your name for the record.

13 THE WITNESS: My name is Andrea
14 Stewart, A-N-D-R-E-A S-T-E-W-A-R-T.

15 JUDGE ASTA: And your address,
16 including township?

17 THE WITNESS: 7193 Possum Street, Mount
18 Vernon, Ohio, Liberty Township.

19 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
20 the project area?

21 THE WITNESS: No.

22 JUDGE ASTA: Are you a member of an
23 intervening group in this proceeding?

24 THE WITNESS: No.

25 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.

1 DIRECT STATEMENT

2 THE WITNESS: Okay. My name is Andrea
3 Stewart. I oppose the Frasier Solar Project. I live
4 approximately one mile from the proposed site.

5 My concerns are property values will
6 decrease. Deer population and health, as we use the
7 deer as a food source. Drinking water. We are on a
8 well, and I am concerned about the contaminated
9 runoff. The propensity of fire and the chemicals that
10 would be used to extinguish that fire. The glare that
11 would affect the airplanes flying in and out of Knox
12 County Airport, as I understand those board of
13 directors is also against this project.

14 It is also my understanding that if
15 Frasier or Open Roads would go out of business, as
16 many solar companies do, the landowner is then
17 reliable -- is liable for the remaining equipment and
18 any liens that are on the property. We have solar
19 panels. And, in fact, the company that we used,
20 Freedom Solar, went out of business, and a subsequent
21 company went out of business. Further to that, we
22 were promised a return on investment, which we have
23 not seen from our solar panels.

24 Let me clarify. I absolutely support
25 farmers and their rights. However, farmland is for

1 farming, not industrial solar fields. The farmers
2 should petition to have their land rezoned just as any
3 other landowner would be required to do.

4 I do have a question. I spoke with a
5 landscape architect at the meeting of the Naz last
6 year. She's from New York City. She's planting the
7 vegetation. I'd like to know why locals were not
8 hired.

9 Lastly, I'd like to congratulate the
10 Village of Gambier in their foresight to protect their
11 farmland through zoning. Here are just a few of the
12 excerpts from their zoning ordinance document. "Their
13 purpose is to protect landowners from adverse impacts
14 in adjoining developments, to conserve the natural
15 environment, and to achieve the efficient use of land
16 without major disruption of the natural environment."

17 The Village of Gambier's zoning also
18 goes on to talk about solar. It says that, "The solar
19 shall be placed such that the solar glare shall not be
20 directed onto nearby properties. They cannot exceed
21 250 feet."

22 They talk about a mixed-use district
23 and that they want to protect adjacent residential,
24 institutional, and business developments and the
25 general public by restricting the types of uses which

1 could be hazardous, noisy, have glare, odor, or any
2 other objectionable influences. They have good
3 neighbor standards. The purpose of these is to
4 protect the Village in general and the neighboring
5 landowners from any potential and negative impacts
6 that uses may have on the physical environment or the
7 quality of the -- enjoyed by Gambier.

8 For additional protections, the Village
9 of Gambier also has a Philander Chase Conservancy,
10 which was formed in the year 2000, to protect farmland
11 in the area. It protects 5,600 acres. Its purpose is
12 to conserve open space in a five-mile radius
13 surrounding Kenyon College. It works with farmers,
14 landowners, and environmental groups to ensure the
15 rural character of the surrounding area is maintained.

16 Kenyon College is the only college or
17 university in the country to establish its own land
18 trust. Its mission is to protect the natural beauty
19 of the farms and spaces surrounding Kenyon College and
20 to preserve the rural character of the region at
21 large. The Local Agriculture Easement Purchase
22 Program, L-A-E-P-P, has allowed farmers to sell their
23 rights to future non-agricultural development to
24 Philander Chase Conservancy in order to keep the land
25 in agricultural use in perpetuity. The state pays a

1 portion of that.

2 Now I understand why so many Gambier
3 folks are in favor of industrial solar in our area.
4 They don't want it in their backyard.

5 JUDGE ASTA: Ms. Stewart? Ms. Stewart?
6 If you can come back up --

7 MR. SETTINERI: There will be no
8 questions.

9 JUDGE ASTA: Oh, there are no
10 questions.

11 MS. STEWART: No questions?

12 JUDGE ASTA: But for our remaining
13 witnesses, if you could please remain at the stand so
14 that counsel has the opportunity to ask questions.

15 Moving on, we have Janet Core [ph].
16 Hearing none, Antonio diTommaso.

17 MR. DITOMMASO: Good evening.

18 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
19 hand. Do you swear that the testimony you're about to
20 provide is the truth?

21 MR. DITOMMASO: Yes.

22 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
23 your name for the record.

24 THE WITNESS: Antonio diTommaso, Jr.
25 A-N-T-O-N-I-O D-I-capital T-O-M-M-A-S-O.

1 JUDGE ASTA: And your address,
2 including township?

3 THE WITNESS: 107 Drummond Avenue,
4 Hubbard, Ohio.

5 JUDGE ASTA: Do you live or work in the
6 project area?

7 THE WITNESS: Work.

8 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of an
9 intervening group to this proceeding?

10 THE WITNESS: No.

11 JUDGE ASTA: Please continue.

12 DIRECT STATEMENT

13 THE WITNESS: I'll put this here so I
14 don't forget. I'd like to first thank the Ohio Power
15 Siting Board for their diligence to allow all those
16 that came prepared to speak the opportunity to do so.
17 I've already told you my name.

18 I'm a representative of the Central
19 Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters. We have 130
20 brothers and sisters who live in Knox County, and may
21 not have been able to attend these areas due to their
22 working hours are longer, their traveling farther, so
23 I came to speak on their behalf. Part of this is due
24 to a lot of the growth that's going on in Ohio. We're
25 booming. There's a lot of work going, and our members

1 are traveling farther and working longer hours.

2 So I'm sure we've all heard the myths
3 about the runoffs, including into the waters, and all
4 that stuff. Our members don't want to live in those
5 backyards if they're polluting themselves. Ohio
6 doesn't want to do that either.

7 You know, solar has been proven to be a
8 safe -- solar panels have proven to be safe
9 alternatives to the power of our future. But what
10 most of us fail to see here is that -- sorry, I lost
11 my place. Let me get back here. Change is
12 uncomfortable, and most people, including big
13 business, do not like or want change. But what most
14 fail to see is that change provides opportunity.

15 And opportunity is what I would like to
16 talk to you about tonight. The Central Midwest
17 Carpenters represent over 34,000 carpenters,
18 millwrights, piledrivers, floor layers living in Ohio,
19 Kentucky, and Indiana. Our members have installed
20 over three gigawatts of solar, with over 5,000 trained
21 members, who have received training in one of our 13
22 training centers.

23 We've also opened up doors for high
24 school students to get training hours on our
25 curriculum, not just in solar, but other things,

1 through a thing called Career Connections. There's
2 over 183 schools in Ohio alone that are signed in
3 this. And that allows juniors and seniors in high
4 school to get credits towards their apprenticeship
5 program, which would also allow them the opportunity
6 to create an associate's degree in industrial applied
7 science if they fulfill our apprenticeship program.

8 So projects like Frasier's Solar can
9 provide an opportunity for Knox County Career Center,
10 whose scientists -- that those students to start a
11 career with carpenters by partnering with the United
12 Brotherhood of Carpenters, where they can receive
13 solar installation training along with the rest of the
14 curriculum while earning a living wage. We were given
15 a good example of this at our first meeting with the
16 young lady from Portsmouth, who has been doing solar
17 installation for the past three years and told us how
18 she struggled to provide for her children before these
19 opportunities were made available. And she is hoping
20 to have the opportunity to work on the Frasier
21 Project.

22 So I'm asking Frasier Solar to commit
23 to using local skilled workers who have an invested
24 interest in the project and their community, as well
25 as the board and the community to support an

1 investment being made in this community and receive
2 the benefits and opportunity that the Frasier Solar
3 Project can provide. That's my testimony.

4 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

5 Any questions for this witness? Yes?

6 MR. HOLTHUS: -- testimony.

7 CROSS-EXAMINATION

8 BY MR. HOLTHUS:

9 Q Mr. diTommaso, my name is Doug Holthus. I
10 represent an intervening group and a landowner.

11 A Pardon?

12 Q And one of the landowners.

13 A Okay.

14 Q And a -- do I understand that Frasier has
15 not yet committed to union labor on this project?

16 A That's not of my knowledge. I'm just coming
17 here on my own behalf to represent my members.

18 Q Sure. But there's no guarantee that Frasier
19 has wanted to hire any of your union labor brothers
20 and sisters to perform any work on this project.

21 A I'm not asking for union. I'm asking for
22 skilled workers to perform the work on this project to
23 make money here, spend money here, and create jobs and
24 opportunities for the future.

25 Q Didn't you just say you wanted Frasier to

1 commit --

2 A To using local skilled workers.

3 Q Local skilled workers. So Frasier hasn't
4 done that yet.

5 A I don't know that, sir.

6 Q Okay. And you don't live in the area?

7 A Pardon?

8 Q You don't live in the area?

9 A I don't live in Knox County, but I do work.

10 Q Where are you working now?

11 A Currently right here.

12 Q Doing what?

13 A Representing solar opportunities.

14 Q No, I mean working to earn a wage. Where
15 are you working?

16 A I work in Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio.

17 Q Are you working in Knox County currently?

18 A When I'm in the area, yes.

19 Q Are you currently working, earning a wage in
20 Knox County, Ohio?

21 A Sir, my job is to go throughout the entire
22 area, and, yes, I do go on projects in Knox County. I
23 go to schools in Knox County. I go wherever I'm
24 necessary. My boss tells me, "Get up today, Tony, and
25 go to Rossford."

1 Q Are you currently working, applying your
2 trade, earning a wage in Knox County, Ohio?

3 A I would say yes, as I'm representing my
4 members.

5 Q Where are you working? Using a nail gun or
6 anything the carpenters do.

7 A You misunderstand.

8 Q No, I don't. I think you're
9 misunderstanding my question.

10 JUDGE HICKS: Your Honor, if I may, he
11 may want to ask what position --

12 MR. SANDOR: I think you've made your
13 point.

14 MR. HOLTHUS: All right. Thank you.
15 I'll move on.

16 BY MR. HOLTHUS:

17 Q You mentioned the myths of solar power,
18 correct?

19 A Yeah, I mentioned it, yes.

20 Q What is your basis for saying that facts are
21 myths?

22 A Again, I don't know how to answer that, sir.
23 I know that there are misinformation on both sides of
24 the field on this, and that's why I just said myths in
25 general. I'm not here to debate facts. You might

1 know them better.

2 MR. HOLTHUS: Okay. thank you. I have
3 nothing else.

4 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you for your
5 testimony.

6 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

7 JUDGE ASTA: Next is Bill Bogantz.
8 Please raise your right hand. Do you
9 swear that the testimony you're about to provide is
10 the truth?

11 MR. BOGANTZ: Yes.

12 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your name for
13 the record.

14 THE WITNESS: Bill, B-I-L-L, Bogantz,
15 B-O-G-A-N-T-Z.

16 JUDGE ASTA: And your address,
17 including township?

18 THE WITNESS: 4709 Sportsman's Club
19 Road, Johnstown, Ohio, Liberty Township, Licking
20 County.

21 JUDGE ASTA: So do you work in the
22 project area?

23 THE WITNESS: I do not.

24 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of
25 any intervening party?

1 THE WITNESS: I am not.

2 JUDGE ASTA: Please continue.

3 DIRECT STATEMENT

4 THE WITNESS: Okay. I am Bill Bogantz.
5 I am a township trustee in Liberty Township in Licking
6 County, Ohio. Though I live in Licking County, I
7 wanted to speak tonight to support our neighbors to
8 the north here in Knox County.

9 Solar farms, such as the proposed
10 Frasier Project, are wanted by only a handful of
11 people: Those that are selling or leasing their land
12 to companies such as Open Roads Renewables and others
13 who will profit from those projects, such as the
14 unions that are represented here tonight and that have
15 spoken the previous two nights. How many of these
16 union representatives and workers live here in Knox
17 County? I suspect none of them do. How many of them
18 live close to the project area? I suspect none of
19 them do.

20 It's easy to support something that you
21 only profit from. And I'm not against unions. My
22 father was a carpenter president of the Carpenters
23 Union in Mansfield, Ohio for 20 years. Then you have
24 the so-called conservative groups from Ohio Land and
25 Liberty Coalition. They send a team from Columbus to

1 Knox County to advocate for the Frasier Solar Project.
2 How many of them live near -- anywhere near a solar
3 project? I suspect none of them do. Again, it is
4 easy to support something that does not negatively
5 impact you.

6 Most of the landowners profiting from
7 these contracts do not even live adjacent to the
8 project area, and many do not even live in the county.
9 My understanding is that eight of the nine landowners
10 that have contracted with Open Road Renewables for the
11 Frasier Project do not live near the project, and four
12 of them do not even live in the county. Hence, they
13 have no vested interest in preserving the land and no
14 vested interest in protecting the property values of
15 the neighboring homes and properties.

16 Some argue property owners' rights,
17 arguing that a landowner should be allowed to do with
18 their land whatever they please, whatever profits
19 then. I understand that argument, and I largely agree
20 with that argument. However, I disagree with this
21 philosophy when a property owner decides to do
22 something that negatively impacts their neighbors.
23 That is why we have zoning. Township zoning is there
24 to protect the community, protect owners' rights. And
25 owners' rights are already governed by the state,

1 county, and township zoning regulations.

2 What about the property owners' rights
3 for those who own property near these facilities? The
4 property values will fall because of the Frasier Solar
5 Project. In March of 2023, Inside Climate News cited
6 a study conducted by Lawrence Berkeley National
7 Laboratory. The study analyzed the sales prices of
8 1.8 million homes near utility-scale solar plants in
9 six states.

10 At first glance, the report does not
11 look terrible. The report suggests that, on average,
12 home values within one half mile of the project are
13 negatively impacted by only 1.5 percent. That's a
14 loss of \$7,500 on a \$500,000 home. On the surface,
15 that doesn't sound bad, but it's still a loss.

16 However, reading the study more closely
17 reveals that in three of the states in the study, the
18 impact was negligible, one of those states being
19 California. And in the other three states, Minnesota
20 and North Carolina and New Jersey, there was a
21 significant impact. I would argue that we are much
22 more like North Carolina than we are California.

23 North Carolina homes within one half
24 mile of the project area had, on average, a 5.8
25 percent reduction in property values. That is a loss

1 of \$29,000 on a \$500,000 home. Considering the margin
2 of error in the analysis, the impact could be as high
3 as 8.75 percent or a \$40,000 loss on a \$500,000 home.
4 Also, I'll note, they didn't consider the homes within
5 a half mile. This was beyond a half mile because the
6 impact was much greater. It was not quoted in the
7 report.

8 In addition to being a township
9 trustee, I'm also a full-time real estate broker. And
10 I know firsthand the impact that these facilities have
11 on property values. It's real. I am happy to report
12 that our county commissioners in Lincoln County
13 approved our township's request to designate Liberty
14 Township as an exclusionary zone for large solar.

15 I am here tonight to ask that the Ohio
16 Power Siting Board not approve the Frasier Solar
17 Project. Thank you.

18 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

19 Any questions for this witness?

20 Thank you for your testimony.

21 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

22 JUDGE ASTA: Next is Scott Smith.

23 Please raise your right hand.

24 MR. SMITH: Scott Smith.

25 JUDGE ASTA: Oh, please raise your

1 right hand.

2 MR. SMITH: Oh, sorry about that.

3 JUDGE ASTA: No, you're good. Do you
4 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to
5 provide is the truth?

6 MR. SMITH: Yes.

7 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
8 your name for the record.

9 THE WITNESS: My name is Scott Smith.
10 Do you want my address?

11 JUDGE ASTA: Yes, including township.

12 THE WITNESS: Okay. 783 South Ridge
13 Drive, Mount Vernon, Ohio.

14 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
15 the project area?

16 THE WITNESS: No. I live close to
17 that.

18 JUDGE ASTA: And are you --

19 THE WITNESS: It's within eyesight.

20 JUDGE ASTA: Are you a member of an
21 intervening party?

22 THE WITNESS: Pardon?

23 JUDGE ASTA: Are you a member of an
24 intervening group tonight?

25 THE WITNESS: No, I'm not.

1 JUDGE ASTA: You can proceed.

2 DIRECT STATEMENT

3 THE WITNESS: Okay. Using solar on
4 agricultural land does not make good common sense.
5 Therefore, taking out currently good producing
6 agricultural ground. There's a lot of places to put
7 solar panels that aren't used for agriculture or
8 forestation.

9 Our natural resources are important and
10 should be not taken for granted. There are many
11 technologies out there that are more efficient and
12 offer far greater benefits for the power industry.
13 You cannot replace a forest overnight, which provides
14 carbon balance that we're all concerned about.
15 Forests offer a natural cooling effect for the Earth.
16 They also offer a cleaning effect for our air that we
17 breathe.

18 Currently, China is building multiple
19 coal-fired power plants to produce solar panels for
20 the USA. It does not make sense to create a product
21 of low-efficiency return for electricity, as well as
22 using high-polluting fossil fuel to manufacture a
23 panel. Globally, there are food shortages. We need
24 to be good stewards of our agricultural land. Once
25 you take away for 40 years, it is very hard to get it

1 back.

2 For example, look at what's happened to
3 our forests. By clearcutting and not putting back or
4 maintaining, it is causing a lot of climate
5 destabilization on the world today. Our resources are
6 very valuable and should be taken care of here in the
7 USA.

8 We need to use common sense for
9 creating and protecting our future environment for the
10 future generation. We have become a society that
11 looks for what we can get today and do not consider
12 what happens tomorrow. Jobs for construction, they're
13 only temporary, until the projects are complete. Like
14 buying a new car, once it gets used, it's gone.

15 Solar power is a temporary supplement
16 with sunny, clear weather. They provide a little more
17 energy for consumption. However, when night comes,
18 bad weather comes, or cloudy conditions develop, they
19 do not produce. But the interesting thing is power
20 demand does not stop. Do you want to wait until the
21 sun comes out to take a shower or turn on your lights?

22 Also, if you have a snowstorm, do you
23 want to wait until the snow melts off before you can
24 use electric again? Think about it. Just recently, a
25 hailstorm took out a solar field in Texas. Do the

1 people in Texas want to live without electricity until
2 they replace them?

3 Have you ever seen what happens to a
4 person who has a cell phone that cannot get recharged
5 when they want it? Not a good thing. Also, solar
6 panels are very expensive to recycle.

7 In closing, solar appears to not be a
8 very smart idea for our producing agricultural system
9 in short term. Therefore, I oppose the solar project
10 in this area, Project Number 23-0796-EL-BGN. Thank
11 you.

12 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

13 Any questions?

14 Thank you for your testimony.

15 Next is Lynn Rowe.

16 MR. ROWE: Good evening.

17 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
18 hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony
19 you're about to provide is the truth?

20 MR. ROWE: I do.

21 JUDGE ASTA: And please state and spell
22 your name for the record.

23 THE WITNESS: Lynn G. Rowe, address
24 13825 Sycamore Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio.

25 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in

1 the project area?

2 THE WITNESS: You've got to speak up a
3 little, ma'am.

4 JUDGE ASTA: Do you live or work in the
5 project area?

6 THE WITNESS: No.

7 JUDGE ASTA: Are you a member of an
8 intervening party tonight?

9 THE WITNESS: No.

10 JUDGE ASTA: Please proceed.

11 DIRECT STATEMENT

12 THE WITNESS: I have a resolution here.
13 I'm a Miller Township trustee. Resolution Number
14 2024-04-01, a resolution stating the opposition of the
15 Miller Township Board of Trustees to the Open Road
16 Renewables Large Solar Facility Project known as
17 Frasier Solar LLC. Whereas, pending before the Ohio
18 Power Citing Board is the purpose for your solar
19 energy development project intended to be located in
20 Knox County, mostly within the boundaries of Miller
21 Township and whereas the Board of Trustees of the
22 Miller Township trustees, Knox County, Ohio, that has
23 responsibility for supporting the preservation of the
24 general health, safety, welfare, rural integrity,
25 agriculture priorities, and listening to the community

1 input within the boundaries of the township.

2 Whereas the board has considered the
3 potential impacts of the Frasier Solar Energy Project
4 as well as interest of property owners in making their
5 land available for development and whereas it is the
6 recruit to the above concerns, the board has
7 determined that the development of Frasier Solar
8 Energy Project is not in the best interest of the
9 citizens and the community at large.

10 And, whereas the township wishes to
11 document its position via resolution to the Ohio Power
12 Citing Board. And, whereas the township wishes to
13 document its position via resolution to aid and
14 provide guidance to the Board of County Commissioners
15 of Knox County in making decisions under the authority
16 granted to them by law and representing the interest
17 of the township in letters and to the public hearings
18 before the Ohio Power Citing Board.

19 Now for, upon motion by Lynn Rowe,
20 second by Jason Row, be it resolved that the Board of
21 Trustees Miller Township, Knox County, Ohio, that the
22 board has hereby expresses its opposition to the
23 pending request before the Ohio Power Siting Board to
24 approve the development and operation of Frasier Solar
25 Energy Development Project in Knox County and request

1 such developments be denied. The Board of Trustees of
2 Miller Township Trustees, Knox County, Ohio, does
3 hereby find that it is the best interest of the Miller
4 Township to request that the Knox County Board of
5 Commissioners oppose the development of Frasier Solar
6 LLC project by Open Road Renewables.

7 The township physical officer Gary
8 Small or his designee is authorized and directed to
9 transmit a copy of this resolution to the Knox County
10 Board of Commissioners for its consideration. The
11 resolution shall be in full force and effective
12 immediately upon its adoption. Voting A, Jason Row,
13 Roger McConnell, Lynn Rowe. Voting A, none. Attested
14 by Gary Small, Township physical officer. Dated
15 4/1/2024.

16 Now, I have an email from Joe Zimmerman
17 [ph]. He's Knox County Airport Authority. He's the
18 president. "As your local elected official in the
19 proximity of Knox County Airport, I wanted to share
20 with you a recent resolution passed unanimously by the
21 Airport Board regarding the proposed industrial solar
22 fields nearby. In addition to the resolution, the
23 reference material from the FAA and summary and letter
24 from me are included.

25 "I would like for you and your township

1 to be aware of our findings and our firm stance on the
2 side of safety and caution of this matter. Feel free
3 to share with your colleagues who are also elected
4 officials for the township. Thank you for your time
5 and consideration, Joe Zimmerman [ph], KCRAA, Knox
6 County Airport of Ohio." I've got 30 seconds?

7 JUDGE HICKS: Right.

8 THE WITNESS: Okay. I've got the
9 resolution here. It is signed by Chip McConville,
10 prosecuting attorney of Knox County. It's a two-page
11 resolution. I won't have time to read it. I don't
12 read that fast, but it's here. It'll be in the box,
13 along with everything else. Thank you for your time.

14 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you, Mr. Rowe.

15 Any questions for this witness?

16 MR. SETTINERI: No questions.

17 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you for your
18 testimony.

19 Next is Sallie Bowen.

20 Please raise your right hand. Do you
21 swear that the testimony you're about to provide is
22 the truth?

23 MS. BOWEN: Yes.

24 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
25 your name for the record.

1 THE WITNESS: Sallie Bowen, S-A-L-L-I-E
2 B-O-W-E-N.

3 JUDGE ASTA: And your address,
4 including the township?

5 THE WITNESS: It's 2821 Berger Road,
6 Mount Vernon, and it's in Miller Township.

7 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
8 the project area?

9 THE WITNESS: Just down the street.

10 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of an
11 intervening party tonight?

12 THE WITNESS: No, I'm not.

13 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.

14 DIRECT STATEMENT

15 THE WITNESS: Okay. Do you all recall
16 at the beginning of COVID when things were unknown and
17 lots of these unknowns were kind of made us fearful?
18 Shortly after the beginning of the crisis came a man
19 who took center stage, appearing to be the expert, who
20 gave us many assurances to quiet our fears, followed
21 by a company or two who made safe and effective
22 promises to us about their products, assuring us into
23 accepting their untried medical products.

24 These safe and effective products are
25 now being revealed to be the damaging and destructive

1 products that they have always been. It's just the
2 majority of people couldn't see through the
3 gaslighting to the truth. For me personally, that
4 reminds me to some degree of what is being proposed by
5 Frasier Solar and Open Road Renewable currently.

6 Out of nowhere, these folks appeared in
7 our small towns, putting up storefronts along our main
8 streets and suddenly financing a whole host of our
9 small-town events, slowly working their way into our
10 consciousness. There were a lot of appearances to the
11 public of being straight shooters and potential good
12 neighbors until reports of hush money payments
13 surfaced here in our community. Money given to
14 silence our neighbors, who were not amenable to these
15 large out-of-state solar farm projects they propose
16 near them.

17 Have you asked yourself why these
18 companies would need to bribe our fellow neighbors
19 into silence to move along their agendas? So much for
20 honesty and transparency from these two companies.
21 That is neither acceptable nor is that of a business.

22 And then came news that these solar
23 farms would be constructed on farm grounds so
24 agricultural, not commercial, near all of us. We
25 belatedly learned that the state in 2021 passed State

1 Bill 52. Of course, at a time when we all were more
2 focused on getting through COVID than anything else.
3 And that this enabled townships and county officials
4 to decide if they wanted to exclude industrial sized
5 wind and solar projects from the rural areas.

6 One of the Open Road Renewable
7 representatives, who is ever present in our community,
8 began to promote his proposed solar farm project to
9 us, stating it would generate "clean, quiet energy,"
10 while listing a whole myriad of potential financial
11 benefits to our county. Forty-year contracts were
12 drawn up with our farmers and promises of funding were
13 made to our local schools and fire departments, just
14 to name a few.

15 The problem to me appears to be who is
16 providing the factual assurances being offered as
17 proof that these farms won't harm our beautiful
18 communities? In an Open Road Renewables brochure from
19 last year that was entitled "Correcting Misinformation
20 About Utility Solar Energy in Knox County," potential
21 environmental impacts of solar farms were minimized
22 with a quote from our own Ohio Department of Health
23 stating that, "Non-toxic, non-porous substances, like
24 glass, would fully encapsulate the hazardous chemicals
25 that are known to be present in these solar panels."

1 Well, that's well and good until the
2 components of the panels start to degrade over time,
3 and the glass is damaged, allowing the innards to
4 leach into our farmland and potentially into our
5 groundwater. Thunderstorms and tornadoes are not
6 uncommon occurrences in this part of Ohio. So what
7 assurances do we have that there won't be damage to
8 acres upon acres of glass solar panels?

9 All we need to think of are the images
10 that the gentleman mentioned just a moment ago out of
11 Texas, when the storms ripped through their region
12 earlier this year, obliterating hundreds of rows of
13 solar panels. I watched it on TV. And, I can't lie,
14 I will forever remember the cleanup crews that were
15 dressed in full hazmat suits trying hard to protect
16 their land and the groundwater. It was awful.

17 But what about the promises made to us
18 by Open Road, that there is virtually no light, noise,
19 dust, or odor with these farms? It only takes a
20 simple search on Google to see comments from those
21 living near solar projects who were given these exact
22 same assurances. But they have learned the hard way
23 that panels do make noise, as aging and rusting
24 inverters track the sun, and that they can cause
25 hideous glare that can be blinding on very sunny days.

1 We're told that they don't produce
2 dust, but let's just discuss the extra dust produced
3 by all of the construction vehicles during the lengthy
4 construction phase. Many of us are already not happy
5 with our old asphalt and gravel roads here. Can you
6 imagine when a constant stream of construction
7 vehicles are on our roads on a regular basis? How
8 much worse will it be then?

9 During the first of these three public
10 hearings, much mention was given to the proposal to
11 graze sheep around the panels to counter the argument
12 that the land will no longer be used for true
13 agricultural purposes that it's zoned for. This
14 sounds fine until you study the actual document
15 language. It doesn't say Open Road will be doing and
16 allowing the grazing. It's just that they have the
17 option for it. Those are two totally different
18 things.

19 They can propose it now, but they can
20 decline it later. Again, if we've learned anything --

21 JUDGE ASTA: And that's five minutes.

22 THE WITNESS: Okay, thank you.

23 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you. Just one
24 moment.

25 THE WITNESS: Sure.

1 MR. SETTINERI: Quick question.

2 CROSS-EXAMINATION

3 BY MR. SETTINERI:

4 Q Good evening, Ms. Bowen. Mike Settineri, on
5 behalf of Frasier Solar. Have you reviewed the staff
6 report that came out on this project?

7 A The staff report?

8 Q Yes, the Ohio --

9 A I don't know what that is.

10 Q Are you aware the Ohio Power Siting Board
11 staff issued a report and recommendation on the
12 project?

13 A I've read that in a periodical that was
14 mailed to our home.

15 Q All right. And so you haven't reviewed the
16 conditions that were recommended for the project?

17 A No, I don't. No, I don't.

18 Q Would you like to receive a copy of that?

19 A I would.

20 Q I'm glad to send it to you. Thank you.

21 A You're very welcome.

22 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

23 Jeanine Baldrige?

24 Hearing none, Andrew Murray?

25 Hearing none, Jason Row.

1 Please raise your right hand. Do you
2 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to
3 provide is the truth?

4 MR. ROW: Yes.

5 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
6 your name for the record.

7 THE WITNESS: It's Jason Row. And it's
8 J-A-S-O-N R-O-W.

9 JUDGE ASTA: And your address,
10 including township?

11 THE WITNESS: 12863 Watson Road, Mount
12 Vernon, Ohio, and that's Miller Township.

13 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
14 the project area?

15 THE WITNESS: Both. I live and work in
16 it.

17 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of an
18 intervening party tonight?

19 THE WITNESS: No, ma'am.

20 JUDGE ASTA: You may proceed.

21 DIRECT STATEMENT

22 THE WITNESS: Okay. My name is Jason
23 Row. I'm a Miller Township trustee. I am on the Knox
24 and Soil Water Board also. And I am a five-year
25 generation person living on our farm in Miller

1 Township. And I am one of the three houses that will
2 be closest to the solar project proposed.

3 Over the last year and a half, it's
4 been a very stressful time at the Miller Township
5 Trustee Township meetings. We've had a lot of
6 resistance on the project. And I'll be honest with
7 you, when we first started out, all three trustees
8 were very neutral and tried to understand everything
9 that would be coming with the project.

10 But over a lot of research on some of
11 the other farms in Ohio and what we've seen on issues
12 with erosion, topsoil loss, property values
13 decreasing. All of us have done our own research and
14 heard from a lot of people, got tons of letters from
15 people in the townships -- in the township and out of
16 the township. And I'll be honest, it was probably a
17 75/25 against it to go forward.

18 So in my mind, you know, I represent
19 everybody in Miller Township, not only the landowners
20 that might want to be in a project, but the ones that
21 aren't landowners that also live in a project. So the
22 majority is telling us trustees when we passed a
23 resolution that is what we needed to do.

24 I will tell you you have some of the
25 best farmers in the state of Ohio in Miller Township.

1 Maybe a lot of you don't know, there's probably 50,000
2 acres tillable, I think in Knox County, if I remember
3 right, and 60,000 acres tillable in Licking County.

4 So my business that I run is a seed
5 business for a seed company. And I talked to a lot of
6 fertilizer dealers, chemical reps, other seed dealers,
7 people in the state. And most of these guys that are
8 farmers sitting in this room will tell you that Knox
9 and Licking County are the garden spots of the state
10 when reps come through because the crops are
11 excellent. So to me, why you want to pull crops out
12 of an area that does that well in the state does not
13 make good sense to me.

14 And farmers, when you think about it, a
15 lot of these people sitting in the room I don't think
16 are against solar, okay? But you've got to make a fit
17 for it somewhere. Whether it's the federal
18 government, the state government, whoever, like, when
19 you're going to grow oranges, you're not going to grow
20 oranges in the state of Ohio. You're going to grow
21 them in Florida. It's like the Corn Belt when you
22 look at it, it's in Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and some
23 of Ohio now. So I'm saying you just need to find a
24 fit.

25 I remember a representative from solar,

1 they brought an engineer in, and it was this past
2 winter. He sat, as I'm sitting at the township house
3 on the right side of me, down there, and I asked him,
4 "Why don't they take any of these coal burning plants,
5 it's like down on the river, and convert them over to
6 solar plants?" And I do remember his response to me
7 is, "We looked into that, about buying some of that
8 ground close to those old facilities, clearcutting,
9 not having to lease or rent that ground, clearcutting
10 some of that, doing some work to it, putting panels
11 in, and using that old facility."

12 And that's why they need -- you know,
13 they need a place to put the power into to get it out
14 of their own grid, okay? And I understand that, but I
15 think you could find some areas that better suit for
16 solar and maybe not eat farm ground up. We lose
17 thousands of acres a year for development of houses
18 and everything else in the United States. The farm
19 ground acreage on 85 million of corn or 90, in
20 between, our own corn and beans gets knocked down
21 every year. There's just so many unknowns too.

22 I guess, talking to a few other guys,
23 they're not sure, you know, in 40 years when this
24 stuff comes out, how productive will that ground be?
25 How much organic matter will have to be added to it?

1 You're going to have to retile those farms completely.
2 You're not just going to fix tile.

3 So, in closing, on behalf of myself, my
4 wife, and Miller Township, we are opposing the Frasier
5 Solar Project. Thank you.

6 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

7 Any questions for this witness?

8 MR. SETTINERI: Yeah. Mr. Row --

9 THE REPORTER: Mr. Settineri, could you
10 please not put your binder on top of my microphone?

11 THE REPORTER: Sorry.

12 MR. SETTINERI: Just trying to hide.
13 Let me lean forward here.

14 CROSS-EXAMINATION

15 BY MR. SETTINERI:

16 Q Mr. Row, Mike Settineri, on behalf of
17 Frasier Solar. It's nice to see you tonight. You
18 have a copy of that resolution from Miller Township by
19 chance?

20 A I don't have one with me, no. I put one in
21 the box right here -- copy.

22 Q The first question I had is, what do you say
23 to the landowner that can make more through solar than
24 through crops on their foundation?

25 A What do I say to them? Well, I guess I'm

1 going to explain to them like I explained to you about
2 the land that's being cropped or whatever. Not
3 everything's always about money. And farmers are
4 farmers, and they're good people.

5 And I really didn't appreciate you the way
6 you questioned Charlie von Zell [ph] in the very first
7 meeting. You had it out with him about the Open Road
8 Agreement, how much he wanted paid. You asked him six
9 or seven times because I wrote it down.

10 Q I don't think that was me, sir, but --

11 A Yes, it was. I guarantee you it was. I'll
12 bet the farm on that.

13 Q Okay. Well, let me ask you this.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Just as a reminder, this
15 is for counsel to questions.

16 MR. SETTINERI: That's fine.

17 BY MR. SETTINERI:

18 Q So you didn't appreciate my prior question,
19 but going back to my question: A landowner owns
20 property, a farmer owns property. We had, I think, a
21 testimony from Mr. Dilt [ph] maybe last week, and
22 pretty emotional testimony about his decisions and
23 what he can make for income.

24 A Yeah.

25 Q And so what do you say to someone like Mr.

1 Dilt [ph] who, you know, if you're against the
2 project, you're taking away an opportunity for him to
3 make more off of his land than just crops?

4 A I'm going to give an opportunity to him to
5 if he's planting crops. I'm going to try to sell him
6 better seed and get better yield so he can make more
7 money for acre. That's my rebuttal to that.

8 Q Okay. Fair enough. You said you're a five-
9 year generation farmer.

10 A Yep.

11 Q What kind of agricultural activity are you
12 engaged in?

13 A I sell seed, corn, beans, wheat, hay
14 products, forages, and my son and I, we started last
15 year, he's 16, making a little hay. That was my main
16 business when I farmed.

17 Q Okay. So paraphrasing, selling seed, and
18 then also you raised a little hay?

19 A Yep.

20 Q How many acres of hay do you do?

21 A I don't know, probably 100 altogether.

22 Q Okay.

23 A But I farmed a lot more than that when I
24 farmed.

25 Q Yeah. Now, have you read the staff report

1 recommendation that was issued?

2 A Yes, I do.

3 Q Did you read the conditions in that?

4 A I do. And my problem with that is, is if
5 this goes through, if we can deal with you, sir, or
6 Craig all the time, but if the project gets sold, then
7 I'm just worried about how everything gets followed up
8 and taken care of, and that gets taken care of all the
9 time.

10 Q If the board approves the project and issues
11 a certificate, do you understand -- and if the board
12 adopts staff's recommended conditions, then those will
13 be permanent conditions, right?

14 A Yep.

15 Q Okay. And even if the project sold, whoever
16 holds that permit has to abide by the conditions,
17 right?

18 A Yeah. But, I mean, you're talking to people
19 like, say, farmers that deal with people face to face
20 and take care of things kind of face to face and they
21 don't want to have to go through two or three chains
22 of command. We had to deal with on -- that we fought
23 forever when they put new power lines up to get
24 everything taken care of. And we still haven't got
25 everything that we want done with that because we had

1 to talk to this person, that person, Roger behind me
2 took care a lot of that, and it took forever.

3 Q As a township trustee, you issue permits as
4 the township, don't you?

5 A Yep. Well, our zoning inspector issues the
6 permits.

7 Q Okay. And county engineer issues permits?

8 A Yeah.

9 Q And you expect a permit holder, that the
10 township or the county engineer issues a permit to, to
11 abide by the permit, right?

12 A That's right.

13 Q So going back to the conditions. Do you
14 believe those conditions can address some of the
15 concerns that you have with this project?

16 A I think some of the conditions in there on
17 the tile agreements and everything -- I got ground
18 right behind me -- I'm not worried about the tile
19 agreements because when that tile was put in, one the
20 gentleman that will talk about them, I'm guessing
21 later tonight, they broke hard pan on that. And where
22 that tile needs to actually be now is creating a lot
23 of runoff that goes onto them, and it's a surface
24 water runoff. It's not the tile agreements. I get
25 you'll look in the main tiles, you've got to maintain

1 them. But the surface water is going to be an issue.

2 Q How do you deal with surface water?

3 A Well, I suggested to Craig at a meeting or
4 whatever, if it goes in then you put a curtain drain
5 clear around that project and get it back into a main
6 or something so neighbors won't have all that runoff.
7 That's what I'm worried about. I mean, I can see that
8 being a problem because there's a lot of difference in
9 Ron Power's [ph] old ground, where it's next to the
10 gravel pit. The majority of it you've got in Miller
11 Township, it's heavy clay. I don't think you
12 understand the runoff difference that's going to
13 cause.

14 Q Let me ask this: Can surface water be
15 engineered -- can a design -- let me ask it a
16 different way. Can a design be done to address
17 surface water, such as using retention ponds, things
18 of that nature?

19 A It can be, but a lot of these -- we don't
20 get regular rainfalls anymore. Like, this spring has
21 been one of the ones in the last eight or ten years,
22 we're getting like three, four, five-tenths of rain,
23 okay? Usually, we get those inch and two-inch rains
24 that there's serious runoff out of that.

25 And I think we just run into a different

1 kind of spring this year and more of a regular one.
2 But we haven't had a regular one. So when you get
3 those inch or two rains, or maybe even three or four-
4 inch rains, some of those proposals would work, but
5 not for that amount of rainfall, I don't believe.

6 Q Would you, as a Miller Township trustee, be
7 willing to meet with the company and some engineers to
8 talk about the run off?

9 A We have. We met back behind the house
10 there, and there were some issues already with it
11 that's going to get even greater. But I never really
12 got anything back to know what that was going to be.

13 Q Would you be willing to continue those
14 discussions as the Miller Township Trustee?

15 A Yes, sir, I would be.

16 Q And if the Miller Township Trustees can
17 address regarding it -- let me ask it this way. If
18 the Miller Township Trustee is concerned about this,
19 it can be addressed. And I think you mentioned
20 erosion, topsoil loss, property values. Would Miller
21 Township consider reversing its position on the
22 project?

23 A No, because this is an agriculture -- I'll
24 tell you that right up. That's not going to be the
25 case.

1 Q Regardless of whether concern is going to be
2 addressed, Miller Township is against the project?

3 A Yes.

4 Q If you go look at that resolution, you have
5 a phrase in there in that resolution. "Rural
6 integrity," it's the second -- probably the third
7 paragraph down. It says, "whereas," and it talks
8 about the responsibility for supporting the
9 preservation of the general health, safety, welfare.
10 There's that phrase, "rural integrity." Do you see
11 that?

12 A Yep.

13 Q What does rural integrity mean to you?

14 A I guess rural integrity, yes, for the
15 ground, and make sure it's taken care of. And I feel
16 like, you know, if it's in solar -- I'm not talking
17 just about now, when you put in the solar. What's it
18 going to be down the road, and what gets taken out of
19 that ground? Because you can't honestly tell me that,
20 what's going to happen with it, what kind of
21 production it'll be when it comes to that in 40 years.

22 Q Have you read the staff condition on
23 recommended condition on soil reconditioning in the
24 project's life?

25 A Yep. Well, you must save all your questions

1 for me.

2 Q Not quite.

3 A Okay.

4 Q What about agricultural priorities? That
5 same phrase is used in the resolution. What does
6 agricultural priorities mean to you?

7 A Agricultural priorities?

8 Q Yeah, you see it there.

9 A I think in Knox County and in Miller
10 Township, it's agronomy production and agricultural
11 production.

12 Q Sheep, raising sheep is agriculture?

13 A Sheep, cattle, hogs, chickens, corn, beans.

14 Q And you're aware the project would have
15 sheep grazing?

16 A Yeah.

17 Q Okay.

18 A Knox County was the largest sheep producing
19 county east of the Mississippi for a lot of years,
20 thanks to Banburys and Danville.

21 Q You said the last year is pretty darn
22 stressful for the trustees.

23 A Very stressful. Yeah, it divided -- here's
24 the problem. It divided a lot of friendships and
25 families because of how they stood on this position of

1 this. And to me, if this hadn't happened, none of
2 that stuff would have happened between them families.
3 There's people that don't speak to people, talk to
4 people now, and I think that's terrible.

5 Q Okay. And I'm sure there are a lot of
6 concerns raised from folks that don't want the
7 project. So for instance, solar panel toxicity, was
8 that discussed in your meetings at all?

9 A Yeah, it was. And I talked to a couple fire
10 chiefs the last couple days and they can't give me a
11 straight-up answer if they had to fight it. Because
12 I'm the representative that's on the Homer Fire
13 District [ph]. If they had to fight it, they couldn't
14 give me a cost or tell me how much it would be in the
15 toxic and the suits they would need. Because I just
16 asked them for a number, so I kind of knew a little
17 bit. And they couldn't give me a straight-up number
18 because they really haven't faced it, I should say, in
19 your defense.

20 Q Okay. And then you've heard concerns about
21 leaching toxic materials in the soil and groundwater?
22 You've heard that a lot, haven't we?

23 A Yep.

24 Q What are your concerns about topsoil erode
25 loss?

1 A Well, in some of the other projects where
2 they have scraped it off, you know, got down to not
3 having the topsoil, I mean, when that ground, to me,
4 goes back into production, if you know anything about
5 dirt, I mean, it takes -- if you take -- I forget --
6 -- an inch, the topsoil off of it, how long it takes to
7 rebuild that back up, I think, it's four to five
8 years. So when you scrape eight or ten inches off of
9 it, you're talking -- it's going to take some serious
10 time to build that back up. So even if it comes out
11 40 years, it might take 60 years before you get them
12 back to really good productive ground.

13 Q And do you realize there's, a I'll call it
14 topsoil condition, regarding managing topsoil and soil
15 during construction in the staff report?

16 A Yep, I do.

17 MR. SETTINERI: Nothing further,
18 Mr. Row. Thank you.

19 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

20 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you.

21 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

22 THE WITNESS: Anybody else?

23 JUDGE ASTA: Next is Robert McConnell.

24 MR. MCCONNELL: It's Roger McConnell's,
25 that's how I signed up. I don't know where the Robert

1 came from.

2 JUDGE ASTA: Oh. Please raise your
3 right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony
4 you're about to provide is the truth?

5 MR. MCCONNELL: I do.

6 JUDGE ASTA: And then please state and
7 spell your name for the record.

8 THE WITNESS: Roger McConnell R-O-G-E-R
9 M-C-capital C-O-N-N-E-L-L.

10 JUDGE ASTA: And your address,
11 including township?

12 THE WITNESS: 3288 Granville Road,
13 Mount Vernon, Ohio.

14 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
15 the project area?

16 THE WITNESS: Yes. I'm also a trustee
17 in the Miller Township.

18 JUDGE ASTA: Okay. And are you a
19 member of an intervening group?

20 THE WITNESS: No.

21 JUDGE ASTA: Please continue.

22 DIRECT STATEMENT

23 THE WITNESS: Once again, my name is
24 Roger McConnell. I'm a lifelong resident of Knox
25 County in Miller Township. My grandfather moved here

1 after selling his coal mine in Pennsylvania in 1924.
2 I farmed alongside my grandfather and father until
3 they passed away in 1985 and 2000. I continue to work
4 and be the caretaker of the family farm with my son,
5 Nick.

6 Once again, I'm a trustee, and we as
7 trustees have been dealing with this project --
8 proposed project, and gathering information since we
9 found out about it quite some time ago, as it was
10 grandfathered in. There was no input from the Knox
11 County commissioners, trustees, or the community.
12 That flaw in the process was eliminated in the passing
13 of Senate Bill 52.

14 After several meetings of information
15 and discussion, I've come to the conclusion that the
16 project could cause tension between neighbors and
17 disruption within the community. I have concerns with
18 the project creating extra water runoff to neighboring
19 properties. This has happened in other solar projects
20 initiated by Open Roads.

21 To damage roads that they say they will
22 fix at the finish of the project, to extra traffic,
23 along with contractors coming in, and possibly not
24 caring about the neighboring properties and how they
25 are affected. Again, this has happened in other

1 projects that Open Roads Renewables have initiated.

2 We're also losing valuable farm ground
3 that produces renewable fuels. The township doesn't
4 have the manpower resources to work on the roads and
5 correct mistakes.

6 I would also like to note that there's
7 a flaw in the process, in my opinion, that all the
8 voting members are not at these hearings to listen to
9 the testimony in person. I would hope the voting
10 members of the Ohio Power Siting Board will value the
11 opinions of the local residents and people most
12 affected by this project.

13 The commissioner election results from
14 March 19th of 2024 speaks volume of the Knox County
15 residents. As much as I support rights of owners
16 committed to the project, there are also the concerns
17 for neighboring property and their rights. So after
18 careful consideration, let it be known that I do not
19 feel that this project is good for Miller Township and
20 the community.

21 Just a couple things from the staff
22 report. Topsoil being disturbed, Craig has told
23 everybody and says 5 percent, 5 percent. It says 5
24 percent, up to 20 percent, unless there's more needed
25 to be removed.

1 He brought in a representative from
2 Brown County. We signed up with that project down
3 there, and after she spoke for probably three or four
4 minutes, I asked -- I had asked her, "Was there
5 additional flooding and runoff because of the
6 project?" Three or four minutes went by. Finally, I
7 said, "Was there additional runoff? Yes or no? Was
8 there additional flooding? Yes or no?" "Yes, because
9 of the project." That was somebody there with him.

10 The report also notes that integrity of
11 the topsoil is disrupted once you move it and disturb
12 it. So 20 percent or more of that integrity is going
13 to be disrupted, way past my lifetime, probably past
14 my son's lifetime.

15 In the report, it also says, "Notify if
16 there's any endangered or protected species in the
17 project area, plant or animal." Blue heron crane,
18 bald eagles. So, I guess, I'm notifying you right
19 now, but that's in the project area.

20 It also says to report mortality in the
21 project. So they're anticipating mortality in the
22 project because of the solar, evidently. That's the
23 only way I can read that.

24 The word "anticipate" is in that
25 report, I don't know how many times. They don't

1 anticipate things.

2 I've also asked for extra money for the
3 fire department because of what Jason said. We don't
4 know how much it's going to cost, maybe \$1 million for
5 a truck and phone. They want to give the fire
6 department \$300,000 up front. That comes after the
7 project is completed, and so they're protecting them
8 for the right to begin with and compensation --

9 JUDGE ASTA: And that's time.

10 THE WITNESS: Okay, that's fine.

11 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

12 Any questions for this witness?

13 CROSS-EXAMINATION

14 BY MR. SETTINERI:

15 Q Mr. McConnell, it's nice to see you.

16 A Thank you.

17 Q You mentioned some other projects initiated
18 by Open Road. Do you know the names of those
19 projects?

20 A I've talked -- I spoke with people in Brown
21 County, several people in Brown County. Actually, I
22 had a trustee farmer call me and tell me about the
23 project and the problems with that.

24 Q And when you say they "have initiated," what
25 do you -- what do you mean by "have initiated"?

1 A Just like this project, they're the front
2 person getting the project started, then they sell it.

3 Q So for the projects in Brown County, another
4 company would have been involved in design -- design
5 construction.

6 A Well, we don't have a design for this
7 project yet either, so it has to be somebody else.

8 Q When a residential subdivision is built, and
9 there's a multi-family development team built around
10 Mount Vernon, right?

11 A Correct.

12 Q Across from the hospital center, northeast
13 side of Mount Vernon?

14 A I'll take your word for that.

15 Q Topsoil is stripped in those kind of jobs,
16 right?

17 A I assume it is, because they have to get
18 down to a perfect foundation.

19 Q And you wouldn't expect that to return to
20 farm ground once those residential subdivision or
21 multi-family -- complex is put in, right?

22 A No, that's common sense.

23 Q Is your goal, as a township trustee, to
24 maintain agricultural character of Miller Township?

25 A My goal as a trustee, I represent the people

1 in the township, represent myself, and I try to come
2 to conclusion what is best for the township and the
3 community.

4 Q Going back, as a township trustee --

5 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry, I can't hear
6 you.

7 BY MR. SETTINERI:

8 Q In regards to Miller Township, let me ask
9 you: In your opinion, is preserving the agricultural
10 character of Miller Township important to you?

11 A I think that is part of the attraction of
12 Miller Township or Knox County. So, yeah, I think
13 that agriculture is definitely a -- in my opinion, to
14 preserve the agriculture. And solar is not
15 agricultural, in my opinion.

16 Q Now, you said --

17 JUDGE SANDOR: Please refrain -- time,
18 please.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 1: Same rules,
20 same rules.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 2: Sir, I don't
22 care, right?

23 BY MR. SETTINERI:

24 Q Mr. McConnell, just, you mentioned, at least
25 in your -- I think what you read tonight was a public

1 -- that's from your public comment, you put on docket
2 in the case, right?

3 A Pardon me?

4 Q Your statement tonight that you read, was
5 that the public comment?

6 A Oh, yes.

7 Q Okay. And the same question as for Mr. Row:
8 Has the last year been stressful for the Township
9 trustees in regards to this project?

10 A I would say it's stressful, but I deal with
11 stress every day in my job. So it's -- and I've dealt
12 with parents and basketball teams, so you know,
13 talking to a mom that wants their kid to play is more
14 stressful than what this has been.

15 Q Okay. And you're currently a farmer. Is
16 that right?

17 A Correct.

18 Q All right. What crops or agricultural
19 activities do you engage in?

20 A Corn, beans, wheat, hay, cattle.

21 Q No further questions. Thank you. Oh, one
22 last question.

23 A Sure.

24 Q Let me come back. I think Mr. Row said the
25 concerns were, I believe, topsoil removal, erosion,

1 and property value decreasing. Are those the primary
2 concerns of the township trustees?

3 A Yes, those are some of the concerns. I
4 mean, property values will drop. I know the extra
5 money supposedly that Open Roads will be putting into
6 the community from their tax has to be substantial to
7 make up for the loss of the property values that it's
8 going to devalue. So I don't know whether it's going
9 to be a wash. It might be a wash in year five, but in
10 year 20, we might be losing money because it's a set
11 amount for the entire project.

12 Q And so erosion, topsoil laws, property
13 values decreasing, any other concerns?

14 A The roads, because that report, I kind of --
15 I've dealt with ABD [ph], like Jason said. That
16 report is guidelines. I look at that as, like, a
17 speed limit sign and no littering sign. You can
18 either obey it or you don't. And in my experience
19 dealing with it, they did not obey what they were
20 supposed to do. And they didn't do it in some of
21 these other projects too. So there is history to
22 support that.

23 Q So you're concerned about compliance with
24 the conditions?

25 A Absolutely. Because I don't think it'll

1 happen. Because their number one goal is to get the
2 job done, because I've experienced this. Get the job
3 done. We'll take the chance. The risk is worth the
4 reward. If we get it done quicker, if we don't get
5 caught, we won't get fined or penalized.

6 Q And do you know that the Power Siting Board
7 has a compliance team that monitors projects and
8 construction as well as operation?

9 A Yes, they do. They don't do it exactly. If
10 we have a problem today, and they're there in three
11 days, they might not to see that problem.

12 Q But you know they're available as a resource
13 if the project's approved for them?

14 A Pardon me?

15 Q They're available as a resource for the
16 township if the project's approved, right?

17 A Yes. We tried to get the EPA out for
18 another problem in the township. That was probably
19 five years ago, they still don't come out. So you
20 have to get them to show up first.

21 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.
22 Thank you.

23 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

24 Thank you for your testimony.

25 Next witness is Mary Bebout.

1 Please raise your right hand. Do you
2 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to
3 provide is the truth?

4 MS. BEBOUT: Yes, I do.

5 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
6 your name for the record.

7 THE WITNESS: Mary Bebout, and Mary,
8 M-A-R-Y, Bebout, B-E-B-O-U-T.

9 JUDGE ASTA: And your address, as well
10 as township?

11 THE WITNESS: 15893 Vance Road, Mount
12 Vernon, Ohio.

13 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
14 the project area?

15 THE WITNESS: It's just up the road.

16 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of an
17 intervening party?

18 THE WITNESS: No.

19 JUDGE ASTA: Please proceed.

20 DIRECT STATEMENT

21 THE WITNESS: Okay. I would like to
22 state that I'm opposed to the Frasier Solar Project
23 slated for Miller and Clinton Township. I am totally
24 against all the agricultural ground being taken up
25 with the project.

1 I come from a long line of farmers.
2 And I don't care what their views or data say, you
3 cannot replace topsoil, the life and blood of the
4 plant overnight. It takes years and years to rebuild
5 it, and it can't be done at all -- if it could be done
6 at all. This ground, contrary to what they say, is
7 ruined for farming in the future.

8 I also wonder if people have thought
9 about what would happen if China or other countries
10 buy these solar fields. They then control our power
11 supply. This would put the United States in a very
12 difficult situation. It was in the news the other day
13 that President Biden is not replenishing our reserve
14 petroleum supply, which again means we could be in
15 trouble down the road.

16 We have lost hundreds and hundreds of
17 acres of farm ground each and every year. We cannot
18 withstand this continually, year after year, and feed
19 our people. We farmers and growers are faced with
20 government restrictions on what we can use to produce
21 our product, all the while trying to maintain or
22 improve our production level.

23 Last year, the US imported more food
24 than ever and who knows what conditions they were
25 raised under. The consumer is wanting to know more

1 and more how their food is being raised, and they like
2 to buy locally produced products.

3 Again, if all the big companies like
4 Intel -- or Intel, Amazon, and all these coming to
5 Ohio, why don't they -- taking up our farm ground,
6 then why aren't they mandated to install solar panels
7 on their roofs, parking lots, and stop double dipping
8 on our productive farm ground?

9 However, I believe they know it is not
10 a profitable or safe project, and they don't want to
11 do it, which leads to the theory that these solar
12 fields are not profitable. They seem to be sold
13 multiple times, and if there's money makers, then why
14 are they being sold over and over again?

15 I believe the United States can come up
16 with a better way to produce electricity in the
17 future. Europe has come up with a nuclear fusion that
18 brings the world a step closer to the dream of
19 limitless, clean power. I believe we can match that
20 or come up with something even better without gobbling
21 up farm ground.

22 On the way up here this morning, or
23 tonight, I was thinking, take your simple breakfast.
24 Eggs, bacon, toast. It took a farmer, a wheat farmer,
25 to grow that wheat. It took people to grind it. It

1 took people to package and sell it. There's a lot of
2 people put to work.

3 Take your eggs. It took a poultry
4 farmer to raise the chickens. It took feed to make
5 that chicken grow. There again, you got grain. Farm
6 production. Bacon. We all know that comes from a
7 hog, and it took a hog farmer to raise it, care for
8 it, nurture it. There again, you've got grain going
9 into it that some farmer had to grow.

10 Just a simple thing like that, toast,
11 bread. Took a wheat farmer. To put butter on it, you
12 have a dairy farmer, you put jam on it. Lady behind
13 me was talking tonight about strawberries she's
14 growing. If she's going to put freezer jam up, she's
15 going to have to use a bunch of sugar there again,
16 that comes from a farmer. Farmers are included in
17 everything. If you're wearing cotton underwear, you
18 had to be a cotton farmer somewhere. Farmers are in
19 everything we use.

20 So in closing, I'd just like to say, we
21 are a small part of this world, but we need to take
22 care of it wisely. And I don't feel this is a good
23 investment. Thank you.

24 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

25 Any questions?

1 No questions. Thank you, ma'am.

2 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

3 JUDGE ASTA: Next witness is Juliet
4 Strinka.

5 Please raise your right hand. Do you
6 swear affirm that the testimony you're about to
7 provide is the truth.

8 MS. STRINKA: I do.

9 JUDGE ASTA: And please state and spell
10 your name for the record.

11 THE WITNESS: Okay. It's Juliet
12 Strinka, with an R.

13 JUDGE ASTA: My apologies.

14 THE WITNESS: It's okay. We get it a
15 lot. It's J-U-L-I-E-T S-T-R-I-N-K-A.

16 JUDGE ASTA: And your address, as well
17 as township?

18 THE WITNESS: Sure. It's 3879 Weaver
19 Road, and that's in Mount Vernon. That's Miller
20 Township.

21 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
22 the project area?

23 THE WITNESS: Yes. I live down the
24 road, and I also work from home.

25 JUDGE ASTA: Okay. And are you a

1 member of an intervening party?

2 THE WITNESS: I am not.

3 JUDGE ASTA: Please proceed.

4 DIRECT STATEMENT

5 THE WITNESS: Okay. I'm going to set
6 my timer just so I know where I'm at in the five
7 minutes.

8 I oppose the Frasier Solar Project. Do
9 you have a place that is special to you? In our
10 family, we call it a thin place, a location where the
11 distance between Earth and Heaven seems thinner than
12 other places.

13 When we were newly married, my husband
14 took a job nearby. We had never been to Mount Vernon,
15 so I drove in via 661, and when I came over the hill
16 and caught that expansive view of the valley, where
17 Mount Vernon stretches before you, I had the
18 instinctual sense that this was home. It was a thin
19 place experience. That singular view shaped our
20 entire future. We started a family and became rooted
21 in this vibrant community.

22 During a particularly difficult season,
23 I experienced pregnancy loss and debilitating
24 postpartum depression. I would take long country
25 drives to clear my mind -- sorry, I didn't expect to

1 get emotional. I kid you not, my route was Rangeline
2 Road to Sycamore Road, looping back on 661 to catch
3 that same feeling of awe and peace. This was before
4 this project and these people were over here. Those
5 scenic drives helped me survive the heartbreak of the
6 human experience.

7 Soon after, a small farmhouse came up
8 for sale right in the heart of that thin place. Our
9 humble American dream finally achieved, despite so
10 many ups and downs. So do you have your own thin
11 place? I ask you to imagine it right now. How would
12 you react if a developer was given unfettered access
13 to set up a power plant there? Even though your
14 community had done everything in its power to protect
15 it.

16 I share this personal story because I
17 want you to remember that we are whole people whose
18 lives are in the balance. Your decision affects not
19 just finances in the viewshed, but living, breathing
20 human beings who are just trying to protect our home.

21 I have a list of studies that proves
22 the benefits of nature on mental health. Our nation
23 is facing a mental health crisis and the resulting
24 substance abuse epidemic. Living in the country,
25 outside the influence of light and sound pollution

1 resets the central nervous system and circadian
2 rhythms and disarms the fight-or-flight response.
3 Humans are designed to thrive in harmony with nature.
4 The Frasier Project threatens our mental and physical
5 health.

6 Miller Township created its zoning in
7 1983. It reads, "This resolution is enacted for the
8 purpose of public health, safety, morals, comfort, and
9 general welfare to conserve and protect property and
10 property values, to secure the appropriate use of land
11 all in accordance with a comprehensive plan for the
12 desirable future development of Miller Township, all
13 as authorized by the Ohio Revised Code."

14 Before we purchased our home, I looked
15 this up, and I was reassured that I would be able to
16 live life undisturbed by urbanization and
17 industrialization. We hadn't even unpacked the moving
18 boxes when I received a mailer informing me of the
19 Frasier Solar Project. I was naive to think that
20 local laws held any authority in the state of Ohio. I
21 have a right to the way of life that I have earned.

22 The phrase "property rights" has been
23 thrown around so much, I don't think people know what
24 it means. Property rights does not mean you can do
25 whatever you want with your land. We live in a

1 republic where the people decide the future of their
2 communities. Ohio Revised Code Section 713 affirms
3 this. Zoning protects everyone's property against
4 state and government overreach.

5 Zoning protects my hard-won property
6 value by keeping my neighbor in check. Regardless of
7 economic status, acres owned, race or gender, in our
8 great nation, one person gets one vote. The state is
9 undermining the voting rights of vulnerable
10 populations such as women and lower income families by
11 taking these projects off the ballot, elevating them
12 above local zoning and handing the destiny of
13 working-class neighborhoods to wealthy land barons and
14 out-of-state corporations. It's as if we're in a
15 feudal system where the big fancy landowner has more
16 say in the community than the simple mother next door.

17 It's 2024 and local zoning regulations
18 give me an equal say in my community. The state of
19 Ohio agrees with me. That's what Senate Bill 52 is
20 all about. You have ample evidence that our county
21 and townships don't want this. It would be unethical
22 to contradict the intent of Senate Bill 52 and approve
23 this project because of a technicality.

24 Finally, yes, I read the staff report.
25 You don't need studies. You have an auditorium of

1 experts right here, and these generational farmers are
2 living vessels of generations of wisdom and knowledge
3 about this land. Thank you.

4 JUDGE ASTA: Please refrain from
5 applause.

6 Any questions?

7 MR. SETTINERI: No questions.

8 JUDGE ASTA: Okay. Thank you.

9 And next witness is DJ Peters.

10 Do you swear or affirm that the
11 testimony you're about to provide is the truth?

12 MR. PETERS: I do.

13 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
14 your name for the record.

15 THE WITNESS: It's actually Daniel
16 Peters. It's D-A-N-I-E-L P-E-T-E-R-S.

17 JUDGE ASTA: My apologies.

18 THE WITNESS: That's okay.

19 JUDGE ASTA: Please state your address,
20 including township.

21 THE WITNESS: It's 7127 Columbus Road,
22 Centerburg, Ohio, and that's Liberty Township.

23 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
24 the project area?

25 THE WITNESS: Not in it, but near it.

1 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of an
2 party?

3 THE WITNESS: No, I'm not.

4 JUDGE ASTA: Please continue.

5 DIRECT STATEMENT

6 THE WITNESS: Thank you. So I don't
7 have a big lengthy statement, speech, and everything,
8 but what I do have is I have myself, my opinion, and
9 what I see a lot of other people sharing, showing.
10 I've read a lot of things. I've seen a lot of things.
11 I just don't understand where the cons are not
12 weighing out the pros.

13 When you sit there and you look at, you
14 know, you got multiple things of conception rates
15 dropping, the topsoil issue, the runoff, all of that
16 stuff. So it's kind of like when you hire somebody at
17 a fast food restaurant, you expect every employee to
18 do their job. How many times have you went to Wendy's
19 and not got your order right? Even though it's that
20 small, that still spans into other corporations and
21 stuff like that, because, yeah, they can say they're
22 going to hold every employee accountable and all of
23 this and everything else.

24 These guys are in it for the money.
25 That's all they want, money and gone. We're all going

1 to be left stuck with every single bit of it. I have
2 an almost 13-year-old son and a 10-year-old daughter.
3 I'm looking out for them because, as of right now,
4 you've taken away all the right for all of us to vote.
5 This should be a voting matter. This shouldn't be
6 what a group of people decide for the rest of
7 everybody.

8 I know that you guys have been selected
9 and stuff like that, but I really feel that it should
10 be put on a ballot for only the people in the county
11 and the surrounding area. They shouldn't be allowed
12 to be going to Lincoln County and guys coming out of
13 Marion and all that stuff. I understand where people
14 are trying to, you know, better the -- better the
15 future and stuff like that. But there's a lot of
16 other ways to do it.

17 The property rights things, all of that
18 got messed with the zoning. You can't just go out and
19 build what you want. Your property rights got taken
20 away right then and there. You can't go build a
21 Flying J without getting it permitted and everything
22 else.

23 You know, you're going to be bringing
24 in all kinds of other people from all these other
25 places that care about their homes in the way that

1 they want and the way that they like them. But they
2 come here, and I've worked with all kinds of different
3 men throughout my years are working in places and
4 stuff. And those guys don't care when they're at
5 those places because that's not their home. They care
6 at home but not there.

7 So, you know, they leave trash, they
8 tear up the property. I don't know if you've heard
9 about the crime rate and stuff like that. But a lot
10 of these guys are going to come down here and commit
11 crimes. You know, half of it's not going to be taken
12 into consideration because they're not from here.

13 So unless it gets picked up and stuff
14 like that, I just don't understand where there's even
15 a question on where the cons aren't, you know, they're
16 worse than the pros. I don't see enough backing it up
17 to really make it worthwhile. But that's about it.

18 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

19 MR. PETERS: Thank you.

20 JUDGE ASTA: Any questions for this
21 witness?

22 Thank you for your testimony.

23 Next is Mike Miller.

24 Please raise your hand. Do you swear
25 or affirm that the testimony you're about to provide

1 is the truth?

2 MR. MILLER: I do.

3 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
4 your name for the records.

5 THE WITNESS: Michael Miller,
6 M-I-C-H-A-E-L M-I-L-L-E-R.

7 JUDGE ASTA: And your address, as well
8 as township?

9 THE WITNESS: 304 Oak Street, Mount
10 Vernon, Ohio.

11 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
12 the project area?

13 THE WITNESS: No.

14 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of an
15 intervening party?

16 THE WITNESS: No.

17 JUDGE ASTA: Please continue.

18 DIRECT STATEMENT

19 THE WITNESS: Okay, thanks. Hello, my
20 name is Mike Miller, and currently I represent Mount
21 Vernon City Council, Ward 4, as councilman.

22 Prior to this position, I retired from
23 the Ohio Department of Natural Resources with 35 years
24 in natural resources. I have worked in Knox County
25 since 1994 as a wildlife officer, and in the field,

1 retired after completing public service as chief of
2 the Ohio Division of Wildlife and Watercraft. I
3 worked with the OPSB for a time with wind energy,
4 particularly the Icebreaker. So I have a general
5 understanding of how these projects go and what
6 happens behind the scenes down in Columbus.

7 The Mount Vernon City Council has
8 passed a unanimous resolution not in favor of the
9 Frasier Solar Development. The townships that the
10 project is planned for have also passed resolutions
11 not in favor of the project. There are 22 townships
12 in the county, 18 have passed resolutions against the
13 project, including one resolution from the city of
14 Mount Vernon. Most of the county is against this
15 project.

16 Frasier Solar is not in compliance with
17 the Ohio Department of Natural Resources guidance for
18 proposed solar energy facilities in Ohio, updated
19 4/7/22. The project may not be in compliance with the
20 Ohio EPA guidance on post-construction stormwater
21 management for solar fields. This project will
22 displace existing wildlife resources onto adjacent
23 lands, not in the project area, and could cause
24 additive mortality to migratory birds.

25 Knox County is still in a unique

1 position, I feel. We have no large solar developments
2 in the county. The wishes of the county, townships,
3 and city should be followed. As a collective, we are
4 the elected officials representing the best wishes of
5 our community.

6 And in the end, I have attachments
7 including the Mount Vernon City Resolution, the ODNR
8 Solar Guidelines, and the Ohio EPA guidance for the
9 stormwater runoff. So I've also submitted those
10 online, and that's it. Keep it short, sweet, to the
11 point.

12 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

13 Any questions?

14 CROSS-EXAMINATION

15 BY MR. SETTINERI:

16 Q Good evening, Mr. Miller.

17 A Hello.

18 Q It's nice to hear that you've done some work
19 with the Power Siting Board in the past.

20 A Yes.

21 Q I'm Mike Settineri, on behalf of Frasier
22 Solar. Now, you are aware that the director of the
23 Ohio EPA, the director of the Ohio Department of
24 Natural Resources are board members, correct?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Okay. And you're also aware when an
2 application filed at the OPSB that the member
3 agencies, including ODNR and OPA, review that
4 application and provide input to the staff report,
5 right?

6 A They do.

7 Q And did you do that in regard to the
8 Icebreaker Project?

9 A I did.

10 Q Okay. And that project was ultimately
11 approved, correct?

12 A It was.

13 Q Okay.

14 A Not while was there. I understand what
15 happens in Columbus.

16 Q In regards to the Frasier Solar Project,
17 just to clarify the record, you mentioned, I think, 18
18 townships passed resolutions against the project.

19 A Yeah.

20 Q Am I right those -- the number of townships,
21 could be maybe 18, passed resolutions requesting the
22 county do an exclusion zones for their areas, right?

23 A Right.

24 Q So it wasn't directly against the project,
25 right?

1 A It's overall solar.

2 Q Okay.

3 A But I think we don't have any other projects
4 in the county actively going right now because -- the
5 one thing I'm curious about, I've heard and I thought
6 I read it somewhere, additional maybe four projects in
7 the thought process or design of other companies for
8 the county. That's why I thought that we currently
9 don't have any of the county, so --

10 Q Now that the -- you said that a resolution
11 was passed by the city. Is that Resolution --

12 A Yes.

13 Q -- that's 31?

14 A It is Resolution 2024-31, yes, sir.

15 Q Passed March 11, 2024, right?

16 A Yes, I think so.

17 Q Okay. Now this was before the staff report
18 issued in this case, right?

19 A The staff report? Which one?

20 Q Staff report recommendation.

21 A I -- what I read -- I haven't read anything
22 before, before this is what I read online on the Power
23 Siting Board -- Siting Board, sorry. I haven't read
24 anything since then, online. So as far as the date of
25 what they have recommended, I have not read that.

1 Q Okay. And you're aware that the OPSB staff
2 issues a report and recommendation?

3 A Yes, they make recommendations.

4 Q Okay. Have you read that report and
5 recommendation for this project?

6 A It came out after we passed the resolution,
7 no, I have not yet.

8 Q Okay, all right. And the resolution was
9 passed on an emergency basis, right?

10 A Yes. In Mount Vernon, we generally pass
11 everything on an emergency basis.

12 Q Now, but there was a vote no on the
13 resolution by Mr. Ruckman, right?

14 A For the initial yes, but at the end, when we
15 actually passed the resolution, it was a unanimous
16 resolution.

17 Q Okay. But he also explained, it's a hearing
18 resolution, actually in the second page, that he
19 thought more discussion on the legislation was needed
20 and criticized the tone of the public's debate on the
21 issue. Did you see that?

22 A Yeah, I was there. I remember him voting no
23 when we were discussing whether to do the resolution.
24 And then we went through that, he did vote no, but
25 then after that he voted yes in this final resolution.

1 Q May I see the resolution?

2 A Yeah. I would like to hope that you have
3 the same one I have. That looks a little different
4 maybe it's because of the print, how you printed it
5 off.

6 Q That's the final resolution?

7 A Yeah, this is what I got off from Todd, our
8 clerk. Matt Starr signed it. Yeah.

9 Q This is at the front page said 2024-31, mine
10 also says 2024-31.

11 A Yep. This was taken from directly that
12 night, when we signed it. Yours looks slightly
13 different. I don't know where you printed that off
14 at, maybe.

15 Q I can represent it was off the city's
16 website.

17 A Okay.

18 Q All right. Well, let me ask this. Did you
19 have any meetings with a Frasier Solar representative
20 prior to the vote on the resolution yourself?

21 A The night of, someone came, was it you that
22 came, I think? That night talked, that night. Before
23 that, we had no conversation on behalf of the city
24 council. No one came to spoke to council about the
25 project that I'm aware of. It actually made many city

1 council members upset, that no one bothered to talk to
2 city council, which are the elected representatives of
3 each ward in the city.

4 Q Now, you were at the planning and zoning
5 commission meeting when a draft resolution --

6 A No. I was not at that hearing.

7 Q All right.

8 A Mike Hillier was there. I think he spoke
9 the last time. I replaced him on city council.

10 Q Okay. And you're aware that -- when did you
11 become aware of the project yourself?

12 A Actually, I found out about it when a couple
13 other city council people told me about it. I mean, I
14 knew it was in the city then. I knew of the entire
15 project, and I looked at it, and I read it. I read
16 about the project. I collected information from
17 Frasier. I read what I could read online. I read
18 what I read in Mount Vernon News.

19 Q But when did that happen? When did you find
20 out about the project?

21 A I don't know, eight months, nine months, a
22 year ago? I mean, I wasn't on council then. I was a
23 community member.

24 Q Okay. When did you get elected to council?

25 A I just started this year, on January 1.

1 Q Okay. Congratulations.

2 A Thank you.

3 Q And then you said -- you also mentioned you
4 collected information from Frasier Solar. So that was
5 prior to you joining city council?

6 A Yeah, prior to council. I read all their
7 information that they had put out from their office,
8 and I even picked it up, I think, on the first Friday,
9 or one of the displays they had here locally in town.
10 And then I read what they had online. But I can say
11 this, I'm not against solar as long as it's on a
12 rooftop in a parking lot in a brownfield. That's what
13 -- I think agricultural land should be taken as a last
14 best use.

15 I think that personally, and as city council
16 voted, that solar development projects such as this
17 are not the last best use. And I also feel that they
18 should go through zoning. And I believe there's also
19 stormwater issues. I talked to our city engineering
20 office and their engineers, and that was before this
21 vote even, and they advised me that there's all kinds
22 of red flags with zoning issue -- with not zoning, but
23 with stormwater runoff.

24 And from what I read the other day Mr.
25 Clendening had the same issue. Sorry, I know we're

1 talking. Sorry.

2 Q Yep --

3 A I can talk forever.

4 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.
5 Thank you. Congratulations again.

6 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you. Next is Derek
7 Posey.

8 Hearing none, Jill Haupt [ph]. Oh,
9 never mind, sorry, my apologies.

10 MR. POSEY: No problem.

11 JUDGE ASTA: Please raise your right
12 hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony
13 you're about to provide is the truth?

14 MR. POSEY: I do.

15 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
16 your name for the record.

17 THE WITNESS: Derek Posey, D-E-R-E-K
18 P-O-S-E-Y.

19 JUDGE ASTA: And your address,
20 including township, please?

21 THE WITNESS: 3475 Rangeline Road in
22 Mount Vernon, Ohio. That's Miller Township.

23 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
24 the project area?

25 THE WITNESS: I do, about a mile away.

1 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of an
2 intervening party?

3 THE WITNESS: I'm not.

4 JUDGE ASTA: Please proceed.

5 DIRECT STATEMENT

6 THE WITNESS: Thank you. First of all,
7 thank you for your time. It's been a long, what,
8 three nights now, and we appreciate the extension the
9 board's given us in providing everybody the
10 opportunity to speak. It's been a long few weeks, and
11 really just appreciate your time in being able to
12 express our opinion and actually taking the time to
13 hear from the community that lives within the project
14 areas.

15 Before we get started, just wanted to
16 talk about a few things in terms of the connotation
17 and just the entire process of this is a bunch of
18 unknowns, okay? It's assumptions. It's we don't
19 know. We think. We're not really sure how this might
20 work out, you know, just the connotation of in the
21 talking about after the project.

22 If we're going to remove the project,
23 if we're going to restore the ground, why are we doing
24 it in the first place? Doesn't really make any sense.
25 So if we're already making plans to remove the project

1 and restore the property after the fact, it's probably
2 a red flag that this is not a good idea and not a
3 sustainable project.

4 So around that connotation, let's talk
5 about some facts, no opinions. So let's talk about
6 sunlight in Ohio. Just some basic research. You can
7 go online and you're going to see a lot of common
8 facts when you look up Ohio and sunlight. Ohio
9 typically ranks on average 38 out of the 50 states and
10 could rank as low as 44 out of 50 in a year. Probably
11 not good for a solar project.

12 Average annual sunlight hours, 2,100
13 hours, clear days, on average there's 72 clear days in
14 Ohio. That's around 19.7 percent of the year. Summer
15 peaks sun hours, 5.26 hours per day. In winter, peak
16 sun hours, 2.66 hours per day. Clearly, Ohio is not a
17 sunshine state. It really doesn't make sense when you
18 start to break down the data, and you look at the
19 power source, and you look at just the facts, what are
20 we doing?

21 Some other concerns that we have. The
22 unknown impact on the health of our children,
23 neighbors, and surrounding environments. If you all
24 had the option, you're sitting on the stage today, and
25 gentlemen down here, if you had the option to have

1 your home beside a solar project or a power plant,
2 would you do it? Probably not.

3 Do you want your children running
4 around a solar project that's a mile away, ten feet
5 away? It doesn't matter. There's a lot of neighbors
6 here that are really close, closer than I am. I've
7 got a concern. I couldn't imagine being -- having
8 that in my backyard.

9 So, health concerns, the displacement
10 of agriculture, I think that's been hit pretty hard
11 here today. And also just limited data on putting
12 that agricultural land back in place, but I honestly
13 just can't wrap my head around. And you've matched
14 the numbers up, and you talk about reverting it back
15 to farm ground later. What are we even going down
16 this avenue for?

17 And then just another piece of this,
18 when we talk about property rights, all for property
19 rights. I think it makes total sense, right? I have
20 property rights. This could potentially drive my
21 property right -- my property value down, and that's
22 not good for me. I understand that there's
23 opportunities for these other landowners, but at the
24 same time, we've talked about zoning.

25 I can't just build a barn on my

1 property with three apartments in the top of it and
2 have people living in it and making money. I can't
3 produce income for myself. But down the road, it's
4 okay to do this on this scale and affect every single
5 person in our community just so one person can make
6 money. How's that equal opportunity? It makes no
7 sense.

8 We actually have someone within our
9 township that know of this, he built a nice garage
10 with his own money, bought his own property. It's his
11 property, right? He put a garage in. He's got an
12 apartment up top for him to potentially just stay in
13 on the weekends. He's not even renting it out.
14 Because of zoning laws, he's not really supposed to be
15 living in that dwelling. But it's okay for someone
16 else to put all of this in and affect an entire
17 township, an entire county, and drive everyone else's
18 property values down, and there's already zoning laws
19 in place so that doesn't happen.

20 So we're kind of making an exception
21 for this project, and I don't think that makes any
22 sense. And in terms of just wrapping this up, I hope
23 that you all just take the opinions of the people that
24 live within the project area. It's pretty clear that
25 if you guys fail here today, that the Kenyon area --

1 it's -- they're all for it. So if you guys want to
2 cancel this and move it up that way, that's fine.

3 I understand that's far away from New
4 Albany, but you guys can do it up there in the Kenyon
5 area if you really want to. And I'm not trying to try
6 to be smart about it, I'm just telling you, like, when
7 you guys take into the account the opinions of the
8 people, the only ones that matter are the ones that
9 are going to have to deal with this for the next 30
10 years and have to deal with all the repercussions of
11 these decisions that you all make.

12 So I just hope that you take the
13 opinion of the people that live in these communities.
14 That's really all that matters at the end of the day.
15 Not people living in Columbus, not the people from
16 Kenyon. So thank you for your time.

17 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

18 Any questions for this witness?

19 MR. SETTINERI: No questions.

20 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

21 Next is Jill Haupt [ph]. Hearing none,
22 John Rosseau [ph]. Hearing none, Cody Beacom [ph].
23 Hearing none, John W. Johnson. Hearing none, Sarah
24 Laughlin [ph]. Hearing none, Greg Culbertson
25 contacted OPSB and informed us that he is not

1 testifying tonight. Craig S. Colopy.

2 Please raise your right hand. Do you
3 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to
4 provide is the truth?

5 MR. COLOPY: I do.

6 JUDGE ASTA: Please state and spell
7 your name for the record.

8 THE WITNESS: My name is Craig S.
9 Colopy. I live at 300 Kimberly Drive in Fourth Ward,
10 City of Mount Vernon.

11 JUDGE ASTA: And do you live or work in
12 the project area?

13 THE WITNESS: No, I do not.

14 JUDGE ASTA: And are you a member of
15 any intervening party?

16 THE WITNESS: No, I am not.

17 JUDGE ASTA: Please continue.

18 DIRECT STATEMENT

19 THE WITNESS: First, thank you for
20 taking the opportunity to allow me to speak tonight.

21 To tell you a little bit about myself,
22 I'm a former and retired Knox County Health Inspector,
23 i.e. sanitarium, from 1986 to 1991. Then I furthered
24 my career with the City of Columbus Department of
25 Health from 1991 to 2001. And then switched over to

1 the City of Columbus Department of Public Safety
2 license section, in which I regulated 32 different
3 licenses for the City of Columbus, including the Chief
4 Enforcement Officer for the Board of Charitable
5 Solicitations.

6 I'm here tonight to oppose the Frasier
7 Solar Project that will be in Clinton and Miller
8 Township. It's interesting when you look at the
9 United States Department of Energy, they have some
10 interesting facts about sunlight and also about how it
11 reflects with the solar panels. It states that light
12 either gets reflected or turned into heat, instead of
13 getting the electric efficiency.

14 We always talk about Europe and the
15 things that go on in Europe. Half of the countries in
16 Europe use solar power -- use nuclear power. 13 out
17 of 27 countries with France, Germany, Spain, Sweden,
18 and Belgium leading the way with nuclear power.
19 Nuclear power is more efficient than solar.

20 Why are we taking highly productive
21 farm fields and turning them into solar fields, when
22 we have just let in the United States ten million
23 people and counting? These people will need to be
24 "fed." There is a bigger situation going on than
25 just with solar.

1 This is solar, but it's taking farmland
2 from the likes of, like, Bill Gates, Warren Buffet,
3 and China. If you lack -- if you look at what
4 happened in Madison County, Ohio, where there were
5 6,000 acres of very productive farmland, which was
6 approved by this board. My opinion, the reason that
7 that was approved by this board was because this had
8 involvement with Bill Gates.

9 These solar fields should be placed in
10 old landfills, not on rich farmland to use to be
11 fed -- help us feed our people. Productive farmland
12 in the Midwest, which is being destroyed by wealthy
13 people acquiring this farmland to change with
14 different foods, with the federal government and state
15 government incentives, and by some of our local
16 officials who have failed to do largely what the
17 people of this county want.

18 To our county officials, this issue
19 should have never gotten this far. This issue should
20 have been brought to a ballot issue where all of Knox
21 County could either vote for or against the use of
22 solar. Do we really think that communities like New
23 Albany, Dublin, Hilliard, Upper Arlington, Grandview
24 Heights, Mason, Kings Mills, Lakewood, and the suburb
25 of Cleveland, Strongsville, Huber Heights, Wayne,

1 Centerville would allow something like this to be put
2 in their communities? Hell no.

3 If this is going to be approved by the
4 body, by you folks, I would urge that the concerned
5 citizens ask that they go further by either local
6 means or by the Ohio Supreme Court. Thank you.

7 JUDGE ASTA: Thank you.

8 Any questions for this witness?

9 Thank you for your testimony.

10 Next witness is Amber Keener [ph].

11 Hearing none, Sarah Wallace [ph]. Hearing none, I
12 will hand it over to ALJ David Hicks.

13 JUDGE HICKS: We've been going now for
14 about two hours solid, so we are going to take a break
15 right now.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER 3: There's sheets
17 out here.

18 JUDGE HICKS: Sure. There's sheets out
19 there, anyone who has to go talk to our staff out
20 there to sign, and they can they can help you with
21 that. But we are going to take a ten-minute break.
22 It's 6:50 right now. We will look to come back on at
23 about seven o'clock. With that, we are off the
24 record.

25 THE REPORTER: We are off the record at

1 6:51 p.m.

2 (Off the record.)

3 JUDGE HICKS: We are going to go ahead
4 and go back on the record, folks, can go ahead and
5 file in. I'm going to turn it over to my colleague,
6 Judge Sandor, here, and we are going to keep calling
7 the witnesses in order.

8 JUDGE SANDORS: All right, the last
9 one --

10 THE OFFICER: Sorry, I turned it on.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. The last
12 remaining group of witnesses are, I believe,
13 intervenors. And we'll clarify that with them when
14 they come up here to testify.

15 The first up is Beth Bartley.

16 MS. BARTLEY: Hi, Jason [ph].

17 JUDGE SANDOR: Before we get started, I
18 want to clarify your counsel, is it Mr. Van Kley?

19 MS. BARTLEY: Yes.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. You are aware
21 that he is not present tonight?

22 MS. BARTLEY: No, I didn't know that,
23 but I don't know that it matters.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. So he's not
25 present, and if you're choosing to testify, you

1 acknowledge that you're choosing to testify tonight
2 without your counsel present.

3 MS. BARTLEY: Okay.

4 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor --

5 MS. BARTLEY: I've been here three
6 times, so --

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, one moment.

8 MR. SETTINERI: Let's go off the
9 record. Can I have a discussion with the bench?

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Let's go off the record.

11 THE REPORTER: All right. We're going
12 to go off the record at 7:06 p.m.

13 (Off the record.)

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, let's resume.

15 Ms. Bartley, would you please come back
16 up? I'll give you a few statements -- before you
17 start answering, I'll give you a few statements, and
18 you can say whether you agree or not before we proceed
19 with your testimony.

20 MS. BARTLEY: Okay.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: So, first, you are aware
22 that you're represented by counsel in this case, and
23 he's not present tonight?

24 MS. BARTLEY: Yes.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Do you

1 acknowledge that you're choosing to testify tonight
2 without your counsel present, meaning you are subject
3 to cross-examination --

4 MS. BARTLEY: Yes.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: -- by opposing counsel
6 without your attorney present?

7 MS. BARTLEY: Yes.

8 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And then, two, in
9 the alternative, you may choose to come to the
10 evidentiary hearing that begins on August 19, 2022,
11 where your counsel will be present, in lieu of giving
12 testimony tonight.

13 MS. BARTLEY: No, thank you.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Please raise your
15 right hand. Do you swear to tell the whole truth?

16 MS. BARTLEY: Yep.

17 JUDGE SANDOR: And can you please state
18 your name for the record.

19 THE WITNESS: Beth Bartley, B-E-T-H
20 B-A-R-T-L-E-Y. 19026 Arrington Road, Utica, Morgan
21 Township.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Do you work
23 or reside within the project area?

24 THE WITNESS: Yes.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Which one?

1 THE WITNESS: I own ground that's right
2 beside it.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. And you are
4 an interviewer, correct?

5 THE WITNESS: Yes.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please
7 proceed.

8 DIRECT STATEMENT

9 THE WITNESS: I oppose the Solar
10 Frasier Project or the Frasier Solar Project. I did
11 take this oath seriously, and I hope that Frasier
12 Solar does too with their honesty to each and every
13 individual the project affects.

14 I have heard people that have testified
15 that they have put solar on their homes, their
16 electric bills dropped. Yay. Good for them. I've
17 also heard one lady tonight that said she did and did
18 not have those same results.

19 When I am farming my ground, I will be
20 right beside the project. I will be picking up the
21 rocks in my field. I will be helping plant it. I
22 will be running the combine when I harvest it, and I
23 will be helping make any repairs to equipment that
24 breaks down in my field.

25 I have a pacemaker. And maybe you can

1 answer this, nobody seems to be able to tell me with
2 1,000 percent guarantee that me being in my field,
3 farming my field to make my living will not be
4 affected by the solar panels and the solar farm that
5 is going to be 50 foot away from me. I can't even be
6 10 foot within a welder. I want to guarantee that if
7 this project runs forward it is not going to affect my
8 health and my life.

9 I have crops or covered crops that are
10 flown on by airplane in accordance to the Natural
11 Resources Conservation Service guidelines. I believe
12 the sun reflecting off of those solar panels could
13 possibly affect Brian's [ph] ability to accurately fly
14 on my covered crop, especially within the boundaries
15 of my property lines.

16 Like Mary Bebout said or somebody said
17 about the hail, we had a hailstorm just Friday or
18 whenever it was, and it shredded some of the leaves on
19 my corn. What will that hail do to the solar panels?

20 When Frasier does remove the topsoil to
21 build the product -- their project, it can create
22 uncontrolled runoff of rainwater onto my field,
23 affecting my ability to grow a good, healthy crop by
24 eroding my nutrient rich soil that I have worked very
25 hard over the years to build and sustain. And while

1 the leased landowner is making a great amount of money
2 leasing his land, I potentially could be stuck
3 repairing that erosion and rebuilding the health of my
4 soil.

5 The project field has a stream. If
6 there's ever any chemical runoff from the aging panels
7 over the years, it would or could affect the stream,
8 could affect my soil and the stream in my field that
9 runs into the Sycamore Creek. Both of those little
10 streams run into the Sycamore Creek.

11 I believe that technology is constantly
12 state -- changing. I believe solar technology is in
13 its infancy and will be outdated within a few years.
14 I believe whatever is put in now will be outdated
15 within years. Then what happens?

16 I agree with Mary Bebout. Anything
17 that you have relates to farming: Clothes, food,
18 drink, without it you'd be hungry, naked, and sober.
19 That's how I feel. Thank you.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

21 Questions from counsel?

22 MR. SETTINERI: Just a few.

23 CROSS-EXAMINATION

24 BY MR. SETTINERI:

25 Q Good evening, Ms. Bartley.

1 A Hello.

2 Q Mike Settineri, on behalf of Frader Solar.
3 You're a member of Preserve Knox County. Is that
4 right?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Okay. When did you join that organization?
7 Do you recall?

8 A A few months ago. Last year.

9 Q All right. Last year?

10 A Whenever it was brought up to me.

11 Q Okay. You reside in Utica, right? Correct?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Okay. But you do own ground in the project
14 area?

15 A Yes.

16 Q And how much acreage do you own in the
17 project area?

18 A 35.183.

19 Q Okay. You also mentioned that you -- I
20 think you said you have covered crops flown by
21 airplane?

22 A Yes.

23 Q What is that?

24 A Well, the mix that I like is barley, crimson
25 clover, and radishes.

1 Q Okay. When you said "flown by airplane,"
2 what do you mean by that?

3 A An airplane flies and opens it and it
4 spreads it.

5 Q Seed. So you're spreading the seed versus
6 pesticide or herbicides?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Okay. Have you read the staff report and
9 recommendation that was issued in this proceeding by
10 the Power Siting Board staff?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay. Have you read any of the conditions
13 related to the report?

14 A Nope.

15 Q All right. Would you like to receive a copy
16 of that?

17 A Yeah, you can give me one.

18 Q I'll send one to Mr. Van Kley for you.

19 A Okay.

20 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you, Ms. Bartley.
21 No further questions.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Any other
23 questions?

24 Thank you for your testimony.

25 Our next witness is Kari Thomas.

1 All right. Let me start off with some
2 questions here, some statements. Are you aware
3 counsel is not present tonight?

4 MS. THOMAS: Yes, I am.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Do you
6 acknowledge that if you do testify tonight that you
7 are subject to cross-examination of that counsel?

8 MS. THOMAS: Yes.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: And then in the
10 alternative, you may choose to come for the
11 evidentiary hearing beginning August 19, 2024, where
12 your counsel will be present. Do you choose to
13 testify tonight or --

14 MS. THOMAS: I do.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Thank you.
16 Please raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell
17 the truth?

18 MS. THOMAS: I do.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
20 your name for the record.

21 THE WITNESS: Kari Thomas, K-A-R-I
22 T-H-O-M-A-S, 4379 Possum Street, Mount Vernon. We
23 live directly across the road from the project, and
24 I'm an intervenor.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And which

1 township is that?

2 THE WITNESS: Miller.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: Miller Township. Okay.
4 All right. Please proceed.

5 DIRECT STATEMENT

6 THE WITNESS: I oppose the proposed
7 Frasier's Industrial Solar Project for Knox County.
8 And I thank you for the opportunity tonight to be
9 heard. My hope tonight is that you not only hear us
10 but that you will listen to us and what we are saying.
11 Most of what I wanted to say has been repeated many
12 times by others who oppose this project.

13 At the previous two hearings, we the
14 people who opposed the project were referred to as
15 uninformed, misinformed, ignorant of facts and even
16 once Marxist. That is an ad hominem, which means --
17 which is a logical fallacy that is aimed to harm a
18 person's character, rather than the position they are
19 maintaining.

20 We the people who oppose are small
21 business owners, preachers, teachers, authors, and
22 students. We are artisans, retirees, farmers. None
23 of us are Marxist. We the people who oppose are God-
24 fearing, America-loving, tax-paying, law-abiding
25 citizens. We are people who would be directly and

1 negatively affected by this project. We are good
2 neighbors without contracts, without -- I'm sorry --
3 without agreements or payments. We are informed
4 citizens that realize our rights are being
5 jeopardized.

6 There are townships all over this
7 county with zoning regulations put in place
8 specifically to protect the value of property. Not
9 all of us who oppose our eloquent speakers, but it is
10 the passion we feel about this issue that has forced
11 us to get up here and conquer our fears. Please
12 listen to how this project could negatively impact our
13 community.

14 No matter how many taxpayer-funded
15 handouts this company is promising, the overall effect
16 within the life of these solar panels will certainly
17 be negative. None of us wants our rights taken away,
18 and no one wants a neighbor that has to pay you not to
19 complain about them, or one who lowers your property
20 value, or one who puts your health and the health of
21 your family at risk.

22 When we bought our seven-acre mini-farm
23 27 years ago, we expected our -- more homes or hog
24 barns to eventually go up around us in the future, but
25 never did we imagine an industry clear-out on Possum

1 Street. There are lawyers who keep busy defending
2 people just like us who oppose industrial solar
3 projects. So this opposition that is here tonight and
4 the previous two hearings is part of a larger and
5 growing group that sees behind the smoke and mirrors
6 and false scientific claims of recycling panels and
7 industrial solar energy production being clean and
8 reliable.

9 The government's Inflation Reduction
10 Act, which really is a green energy bill, funds these
11 projects which in turn pays Chinese firms to mine and
12 extract rare Earth minerals all over the world. How
13 is this green or clean? The overall effect will be
14 that millions of acres of prime farmland all across
15 America will be rendered useless. No matter how many
16 false promises are being made, America will eventually
17 not be the bread basket of the world and we will have
18 food insecurities in a nation that was built on
19 agriculture.

20 We oppose industrial solar. We oppose
21 industrial solar, not solar in general. If someone's
22 faith and hope to save the world that was never
23 created to last forever is in solar by then all means
24 let them put solar panels on their homes and
25 businesses, but don't make everyone else hold to that

1 same fate.

2 I have looked at the staff report, and
3 I have some pages -- portions of it to read. Page 34,
4 last paragraph, "38 panels will be located in a
5 floodplain." Page 31, bottom paragraph, "The habitat
6 of four endangered species of bats could be impacted
7 by the project as they anticipate clearing ten acres
8 of trees for construction."

9 Page 49, fourth paragraph, "If all the
10 panels in the project need cleaning, it would require
11 1.3 million gallons of water." Again, is this green?

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, Ms. Thomas, that's
13 five minutes.

14 MS. THOMAS: Thank you.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Questions from counsel?

16 CROSS-EXAMINATION

17 BY MR. SETTINERI:

18 Q Good evening, Ms. Thomas, Mike Settineri, on
19 behalf of Frasier Solar.

20 What was that last page number of the staff
21 report you just referenced?

22 A The last one?

23 Q Yeah.

24 A Forty-nine.

25 Q Page 49 of the staff report?

1 A Yep.

2 Q And what was that sentence you were reading?

3 A If all the panels in the project need
4 cleaning, it would require 1.3 gallons of water.

5 Q Okay. And that full sentence reads, "In the
6 relatively rare instance in which cleaning of the
7 entire project would be performed, the applicant
8 estimates a maximum of five gallons of water per
9 megawatt hour or 1.3 million gallons total would be
10 used." That's the full sentence, right?

11 A Probably. The whole -- the whole thing is
12 very open. Every time you read something, it's very
13 open.

14 Q Did you review the conditions that staff
15 recommended for the project?

16 A I didn't read the whole thing.

17 Q Okay. Would you be willing to read, at a
18 later time, pages 50, going forward, which lists the
19 general conditions for the project?

20 A I think I have went over that, the
21 conditions.

22 Q And you understand that the board approves
23 the project and adopts staff's recommended conditions,
24 the project would be obligated to follow those
25 recommended conditions, right?

1 A I know they want them to.

2 Q Okay. All right. Now, you're a member of
3 Preserve Knox County?

4 A I am.

5 Q And you're an intervenor in the case?

6 A I am.

7 Q When did you join Preserve Knox County?

8 A In the beginning.

9 Q When was the beginning?

10 A Two years ago? Last year.

11 Q What time approximately last year, would you
12 say? Last spring?

13 A Yeah. I guess it was the spring.

14 Q Okay. And how did you join?

15 A Piece of paper.

16 Q Okay. And let me ask this. I'm going to
17 show you a map here, if I may. I'll represent this --
18 both of the red arrows, that's the page, the
19 navigation -- the natural navigation. Can you
20 identify -- and why don't we go ahead and put the
21 judges as well -- which is marked for this hearing,
22 Frasier Public Hearing, or Frasier PH1.

23 (Frasier Exhibit PH1 was marked for
24 identification.)

25 There we go. The three --

1 JUDGE SANDOR: Excuse me. That's
2 Frasier PH1?

3 MR. SETTINERI: Yeah, I thought that
4 was the best.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. So marked.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. And we can
7 provide copies to the other members here. It's up to
8 Your Honors if you would like copies or not.

9 JUDGE HICKS: I think we're good.

10 MR. SETTINERI: Would you like copies?

11 JUDGE HICKS: No, no.

12 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. All right.

13 BY MR. SETTINERI:

14 Q Ms. Thomas, is that red arrow at the lower
15 left side on both drawings, is that near your
16 property? Is that your property there?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Okay. And are you aware that between June
19 and August of 2023, that panels were -- originally,
20 panels were proposed to be, I believe, right across
21 the road, generally from your property, and that in
22 August, the Frasier Solar moved panels further away
23 from your house. Do you see that?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay. And did you have an opportunity to

1 meet with any Frasier Solar representatives back in
2 June of 2023?

3 A They were at all of our township meetings.

4 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. All right. All
5 right. No further questions. Thank you. Your Honor,
6 I'd like to put that in the record for this hearing.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. Any
8 objections? Okay, Frasier PH1 is admitted to this
9 hearing.

10 (Frasier Exhibit PH1 was received into
11 evidence)

12 The next witness is Rhonda Noble. You
13 are an intervenor in this case, correct?

14 MS. NOBLE: Yes, I am.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. You're aware that
16 counsel is not present tonight?

17 MS. NOBLE: Yes.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Do you
19 acknowledge that if you testify tonight, that you'll
20 be subject to cross-examination without your counsel
21 present?

22 MS. NOBLE: Yep.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. And in the
24 alternative, you may present your testimony at the
25 August 19, 2024 hearing with your counsel present, if

1 you so choose.

2 MS. NOBLE: Correct.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. But you choose to
4 testify tonight?

5 MS. NOBLE: Yep.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please raise
7 your hand. Do you swear to tell the whole truth?

8 MS. NOBLE: I do.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please state
10 your name for the record.

11 THE WITNESS: Rhonda Noble, R-H-O-N-D-
12 A, N-O-B-L-E.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
14 address, including the township.

15 THE WITNESS: 4465 Possum Street, Mount
16 Vernon, Ohio, and that's Miller Township.

17 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
18 reside within the project area?

19 THE WITNESS: I work from home, yes.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And, again,
21 you're an intervenor, correct?

22 THE WITNESS: That is correct.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Please proceed.

24 DIRECT STATEMENT

25 THE WITNESS: On March 27, 2023, I

1 received my first letter from Open Roads Renewables
2 saying that there was a solar project coming into
3 Miller Township. This occurred after Open Roads
4 Renewable secretly got a non-disclosure agreement
5 signed from neighbors, so they could lease enough
6 acreage to move the project forward without the
7 community knowledge. They had been in the area for
8 years, even during the COVID lockdown. As far as I'm
9 concerned, that was unethical and deceptive.

10 With this project being across the road
11 from my home, it's made a very, very long year. The
12 mental anguish of the constant worry and the lack of
13 sleep is almost unbearable. Those of you who do not
14 oppose the project couldn't possibly understand the
15 shock and the strain that I and others have endured.
16 Taxes from the thin film solar panels, page six of the
17 staff report, the water runoffs and wildlife impacts
18 are a huge likelihood.

19 Unlike what the staff report says, page
20 31, the endangered northern harriers are in the
21 project area. They nest and roost across from my home
22 and hunt my land. We also have short-eared owls and
23 most recently a sandhill crane which has visited my
24 pond as witnessed by my neighbors and myself. These
25 creatures, like others, such as the bald eagle, found

1 in my vicinity, will greatly be affected before,
2 during and after construction.

3 And, yes, lake effect is a real thing.
4 Page 31 of the staff report says the project is within
5 range of the federally stated -- state endangered
6 northern long-eared bat, the state endangered little
7 brown bat, and the tri-colored bat. And, yet, Open
8 Roads Renewables anticipates approximately ten acres
9 of trees for clearing. Page 33 of the staff report,
10 "With this project, hundreds of acres will be fenced,"
11 which is also -- will affect the ecosystem and other
12 wildlife, such as the deer, foxes, and coyotes.

13 The future taxes on our children and
14 grandchildren will be at a record-breaking high. New
15 Treasury Department estimates shows the ten-year cost
16 of eternity -- alternative energy tax credit has gone
17 up 21 fold since 2015 -- since 2015. Increased
18 farmlands are being leased and bought for solar
19 utilities, with Madison County a 6,000-acre solar
20 project, being the latest example here in Ohio.

21 For those who do not understand the
22 impact of solar project, rural America is set to
23 transform by a 55-million-acre federal solar plan and
24 ten million acres of solar collectors. And these
25 were -- the collectors will be needed to help meet the

1 US clean energy goals by 2050 and costing taxpayers
2 over 425 billion between now and 2033.

3 A disturbing article from Australia in
4 an Insurance News article says farmers are claiming
5 that they will be uninsurable being close to these
6 projects. How soon will that come to the United
7 States? The possibility of waking up to the
8 unofficial project in our neighborhood without
9 considering our voices or the value of our lives is
10 unacceptable.

11 A 2022 study by Mary McClinton Clay
12 shows that solar projects decrease property values up
13 to 30 percent, and I have that here. While our
14 government has funded, supported and given more rights
15 and resources to the developers, rather than
16 protecting those who work and pay the taxes to have
17 the right to their American dream. The majority of
18 those leasing out their farms don't even live in our
19 township.

20 Our rights are being denied and our
21 rural life and homes destroyed. Those who live in the
22 project area also have property rights and will be
23 detrimentally affected by the project. Page 23 of the
24 staff report says over 2,000 large vehicles will be
25 traveling on our country roads. These vehicles will

1 be affecting our livelihood, our rights and
2 obstructing the farmer's rights during planting and
3 harvest seasons.

4 Noise pollution, loss of property
5 values, damaged roads, toxins, wildlife impact,
6 runoffs, flooding, loss of farmland, are real. This
7 is my home, my heritage, my community, and I'm going
8 to protect it against the irrational process
9 instituted by the government. I should not have to
10 worry about a power plant being constructed across the
11 road and the impairment that comes with it.

12 I will protect my property against --
13 from any assault from Frasier Solar, from the Frasier
14 Solar Project, and the degradation it would have on my
15 rural community and my wildlife. My neighbors, my
16 rural community, and I will fight to preserve safe
17 homes, a secure environment, and community in which we
18 live and to protect our heritage.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: That is five minutes.

20 MS. NOBLE: Thank you.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

22 Any questions, Counsel?

23 CROSS-EXAMINATION

24 BY MR. SETTINERI:

25 Q Good evening, Ms. Noble.

1 A Good evening.

2 Q It's nice to meet you.

3 A Very nice to meet you.

4 Q Now, you're a member of Preserve Know
5 County.

6 A Yes, sir, I am.

7 Q When did you join?

8 A Last year.

9 Q Last year? I know in March 27, 2023, you
10 said you got your first letter about the project.

11 A That would be correct.

12 Q Were you involved in the formation of
13 Preserve Knox County?

14 A Not at that point in time, no.

15 Q Okay. Do you know who formed Preserve Knox
16 County?

17 A I believe Gary Koester did, but I did not
18 know him at the time.

19 Q Okay. Are you involved in the organization
20 now?

21 A Yes, I am.

22 Q Do you consider yourselves having a
23 leadership role?

24 A Yes, I am.

25 Q Are you responsible for website content?

1 A No, I am not.

2 Q Oh, who's responsible for website content?

3 A Exactly what do you mean website? Like,
4 Preserve Knox County website or Facebook or what are
5 you talking?

6 Q Thank you. I'll back up. Preserve Knox
7 County has a website?

8 A Yes, they do. And, no, I'm not responsible
9 for that.

10 Q Do you know who is responsible?

11 A No, I do not.

12 Q Okay. And have you provided any information
13 to be placed on that website?

14 A No, I have not.

15 Q Now, as an intervenor in this case, your
16 counsel can cross -- articles as a evidentiary,
17 correct?

18 A I don't know. I've never been through
19 something like this.

20 Q Okay, fine. Now, you've read the -- you've
21 obviously read the staff report. Thank you.

22 A Three times, but I still can't remember
23 everything.

24 Q There's a condition -- you're aware there's
25 a condition about sandhill cranes in the staff report?

1 A I've read over it, but I'm drawing a blank.

2 Q Condition 52, "Construction in sandhill
3 crane preferred nesting habitat type shall be avoided
4 during the species nesting period, April 1st through
5 August 31." There's additional language there. Does
6 that refresh your recollection about that?

7 A Yes, it does.

8 Q Okay. Does that address your concern about
9 sandhill cranes?

10 A No, it doesn't. I think that what some of
11 that says in there are just words. I have to agree
12 with a gentleman earlier who felt that what people do
13 at their home and what people are going to do at this
14 project are two different things.

15 Q I'm going to do the same thing, I'm going to
16 give you a map as well. We'll mark it as Frasier PH2.

17 (Frasier Exhibit PH2 was marked for
18 identification.)

19 JUDGE SANDOR: So marked.

20 BY MR. SETTINERI:

21 Q And I'll give that to you -- the red arrow
22 is not the application, but is that red arrow pointing
23 at your residence?

24 A Yes, it is.

25 Q And you were aware that in June of 2023,

1 panels were proposed to be placed pretty much close to
2 across the road from your property?

3 A That's correct.

4 Q And then in August of 2023, the company,
5 based on input, moved panels further away from your
6 property.

7 A We demanded them to be put back, and they're
8 still too close.

9 Q Okay. So you demanded that the panels be
10 removed, and they were moved, but you'd like them
11 further away?

12 A I don't want them at all.

13 Q You don't want them in Miller Township?

14 A I do not.

15 Q Okay. So you don't want any solar in Miller
16 Township?

17 A I do not.

18 Q Okay.

19 A I'm not opposed to solar on rooftops or, you
20 know, the smaller ones that people have in their
21 yards, but now this is prime farmland, it does not
22 belong there.

23 Q Now, how big is your parcel approximately?

24 A Well, we own 170 acres.

25 Q Is that contiguous to your house?

1 A Yes, it is.

2 Q Okay. And do you have screening behind your
3 house on two sides?

4 A Yes, I do.

5 Q You have screening between you and Mrs.
6 Thomas' property. Is that right?

7 A Those were always there.

8 Q I'm sorry?

9 A They were always there. We just put our
10 driveway next to it.

11 Q Now, Ms. Noble, does Preserve Knox County
12 disseminate any forms that people could fill out to
13 submit to the Power Siting Board to oppose the
14 project?

15 A Yeah, we sent quite a few, actually. I did.

16 Q And how did you send those?

17 A I scanned them and emailed those.

18 Q So let's go ahead and let me show you an
19 example.

20 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, we'll mark
21 Frasier PH3. It is a public comment, actually by Mrs.
22 Bartley, Beth Bartley, dated March 5th, 2020.

23 (Frasier Exhibit PH3 was marked for
24 identification.)

25 JUDGE SANDOR: So marked.

1 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you, Your Honor.

2 BY MR. SETTINERI:

3 Q Do you recognize that form?

4 A I guess I do, but I don't know if this is
5 the one that I sent in, and maybe I did. I've seen an
6 awful lot of paper these days.

7 Q Is this a form from Preserve Knox County
8 that was disseminated to people?

9 A I think this is just a generic form that we
10 pulled off, so yes. Is there a problem with the form?

11 Q Let me ask: Where did you pull that form
12 off?

13 A That I don't remember.

14 Q Okay. When you say "we," who's the we?

15 A "We" as in Preserve Knox County, Ohio.

16 Q And would this have been a form that members
17 of Preserve Knox County would hand out to people to
18 fill out?

19 A Absolutely. Why wouldn't we?

20 Q And you have other forms as well?

21 A Possibly. I see an awful lot. They were
22 seeing an awful lot from you.

23 Q Now, have you been on the Preserve Knox
24 County website?

25 A Not lately.

1 Q When was the last time you think you were on
2 it?

3 A Months ago. Maybe even longer.

4 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, mark
5 Frasier PH4.

6 (Frasier Exhibit PH4 was marked for
7 identification.)

8 And I'll represent it's a printout from
9 the Preserve Knox County website.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: So marked.

11 BY MR. SETTINERI:

12 Q Ms. Noble, do you recognize this page being
13 from the home page of the Preserve Knox County
14 website?

15 A Yes, sir. I do.

16 Q Okay. And do you see there -- this will be
17 the home page, the website.

18 A I think, yep.

19 Q And you see the -- I can barely read it, but
20 there's a word, but there's a skull and crossbones
21 that says "toxicity."

22 A Correct.

23 Q And it says, "Solar panels contain a
24 substantial amount of toxic chemicals. Fragile. They
25 become damaged and leach into the soil, risking our

1 health and the health of our local wildlife." Do you
2 see that?

3 A Yes, I do.

4 Q All right. And there's a symbol for a fire
5 risk, property damages, and a cash grab on there,
6 right?

7 A Yes.

8 Q All right. And you believe that solar
9 panels are toxic?

10 A I do. As you do too, when you talked about
11 thin film panels in your staff report.

12 Q How do you address the fact that people have
13 solar panels on their houses, where their children
14 live, schools have panels? How do you reconcile that?

15 A Well, the Centerburg School did catch fire
16 because of solar panels, and that just happened last
17 year so --

18 Q And that was on the roof, correct?

19 A That was on the roof, yes.

20 Q And they kept the solar panels in the field?

21 A They want them off, and they want those to
22 go. And the ones in the fields, I don't think work.

23 Q Okay. But they're still there?

24 A Yeah.

25 Q Okay. Again, how do you reconcile -- if

1 solar panels are toxic, how do you reconcile that
2 someone would put them on their house and potentially
3 have children in the house, children playing in the
4 yard? How do you reconcile that --

5 A Well, that's their home, and they're not
6 affecting agriculture. That's on their home, that's
7 not taking up, you know, 1,000 acres of prime
8 farmland. I think that that's pretty common sense
9 right there.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: So as a reminder, let's
11 try not to talk about each other. It'll make it
12 easier for the court reporter to get us all down.

13 MR. SETTINERI: I'm guilty on that one.

14 BY MR. SETTINERI:

15 Q So in that instance of a panel being on a
16 roof, you don't view that as being a situation that
17 would lead to a risk of toxicity for residents?

18 A I do think it's a risk.

19 Q Okay. So you believe that solar panels
20 should not be on rooftops?

21 A I don't like them at all, but if somebody
22 wants to put them on their home, that is their home.
23 That is a huge difference in between a home catching
24 fire and 1,000 acres catching fire.

25 Q Now, you've attended Miller Township Trustee

1 meetings as part of your opposition to the project,
2 right?

3 A Yes, I have.

4 Q And you've attended Clinton Township Trustee
5 meetings as part of your opposition?

6 A Yes, I have.

7 Q Okay. And you're aware that Miller Township
8 residents are now attending the Clinton Township
9 Trustee meetings, correct?

10 A Yep.

11 Q Okay. Is that something you helped
12 organize?

13 A That is something that we asked the group to
14 go and sit and help other Clinton residents.

15 Q Now, I'm looking -- you submitted a
16 couple -- I know you submitted a public comment on the
17 docket, March 2nd, it looks like. But let me ask you
18 this question: Do you believe -- you believe that
19 residents living near a high voltage line in Miller
20 and Clinton Townships have experienced a high rate of
21 serious health issues, most probably caused by the
22 EMFs radiating from the lines and substations. Is
23 that correct?

24 A Is that what I wrote?

25 Q I'd be glad to show it.

1 A Could you please?

2 Q Yep, absolutely. More than glad to.

3 A Thank you, sir. Okay, thank you. Yep.

4 Q So what I read -- what I said was correct?

5 A That is correct.

6 Q Now, was the intent of the Preserve Knox
7 County website -- let me ask this another way. Do you
8 believe that the intent of the Preserve Knox County
9 website is to educate the public?

10 A I can't answer that because I wasn't the one
11 that set it up.

12 Q Do you view it as a tool to educate?

13 A I think it is a tool to educate.

14 Q And the home page is where people would land
15 when they came to that website?

16 A I think it's for anybody to go to that
17 website, no different than Frasier Solar's website.

18 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.
19 Thank you very much.

20 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you for your
22 testimony. Actually, Ms. Noble, if you don't mind
23 coming back up. We have a few more questions for you.

24 THE REPORTER: Mr. Tavenor, could you
25 let him move away from the mic and then move up to it?

1 MR. TAVENOR: Yep.

2 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

3 MR. TAVENOR: Thank you. Sorry.

4 CROSS-EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. TAVENOR:

6 Q Hi. Just a few questions.

7 A Sure.

8 Q So you already established you're involved
9 with Preserve Knox County, correct?

10 A Yes.

11 Q What is your role with Preserve Knox County?

12 A I am the treasurer.

13 Q You're the treasurer, okay. So do you have
14 knowledge of the contributions that are coming into
15 Preserve Knox County?

16 A I do.

17 Q Great. So has this group received
18 contributions to support its work?

19 A We get donations.

20 Q Okay. So you receive donations. Do you
21 know, generally, the source of these donations? Do
22 you know them? Are some of them anonymous?

23 A If you would like, I can pull up the
24 receipts of the money I have spent.

25 Q You've spent money?

1 A Sure.

2 Q But you've received money as well?

3 A But we have received money when we've gone
4 to do, like, first Fridays. We take donations that
5 way.

6 Q Okay. Have you -- has Knox County received
7 any money from individuals or companies associated
8 with the oil and gas --

9 A Absolutely not.

10 Q Are you familiar with the organization, the
11 Empowerment Alliance?

12 A I've been hearing a little bit about them,
13 yes.

14 Q Okay. In Knox County, when you're
15 developing your educational materials for the
16 community, where do you get that information?

17 A When we go to pass out the materials to the
18 public? Is that what you're talking about?

19 Q Yeah --

20 A We do extensive research --

21 Q And do you rely on --

22 A And we have engineers in our group.

23 Q Great. So you rely on experts or other
24 individuals?

25 A Well, yeah. I guess some of those experts

1 are on the internet, yeah.

2 Q Do you have the names of any of those
3 people?

4 A You can look right in my box, or right in
5 the box.

6 Q So it's in the testimony --

7 A Yeah, there's some information in there.

8 MR. TAVENOR: All right. All right.
9 Thank you.

10 MS. NOBLE: You're welcome. Thank you.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Any other questions?

12 No?

13 Thank you.

14 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Mr. Settineri, your
16 exhibits?

17 MR. SETTINERI: Yes. Exhibits we'd
18 like to put into the hearing record, Exhibits Frasier
19 PH2, Frasier PH3, Frasier PH4.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Any objections?
21 Hearing none, all three exhibits are admitted to the
22 record.

23 (Frasier Exhibits PH2, PH3, and PH4
24 were received into evidence.)

25 Our next witness is Karen Schmitt.

1 Good evening. I think it's evening.

2 MS. SCHMITT: Good evening.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: You are an intervenor in
4 this case, correct?

5 MS. SCHMITT: I am.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: And you're aware your
7 counsel is not present tonight?

8 MS. SCHMITT: I am.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: You acknowledge that if
10 you testify tonight, that you're subject to
11 cross-examination with --

12 MS. SCHMITT: I do.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: Perfect. And then in
14 the alternative, you may choose to come testify at the
15 evidentiary hearing that begins on August 19, 2024, in
16 lieu of testifying tonight.

17 MS. SCHMITT: Okay. My husband is
18 testifying at that hearing, so I'll testify tonight.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: You want to testify
20 tonight? Okay.

21 MS. SCHMITT: Thank you.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: Please raise your right
23 hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

24 MS. SCHMITT: Yes.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please state

1 your name for the record.

2 THE WITNESS: Karen, K-A-R-E-N,
3 Schmitt, S-C-H-M-I-T-T.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
5 address, including your township.

6 THE WITNESS: 5952 Rangeline Road,
7 Mount Vernon, Township Morgan.

8 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you reside or
9 work within the project area?

10 THE WITNESS: Both.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, please proceed.

12 DIRECT STATEMENT

13 THE WITNESS: My name is Karen Schmitt.
14 I reside at 5952 Rangeline Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio.
15 I am an intervenor in the Knox County Frasier Solar
16 Project, 23-0796-EL-BGN. I am opposed to this
17 project. Thank you for taking the time tonight to
18 listen to the people who live here and who will be
19 adversely affected by this project.

20 We've already heard many people talk
21 about how this project will destroy beautiful rolling
22 hills, miles of crops, and grassy fields, which
23 provide home for various species of wildlife,
24 including birds, sandhill cranes, deer, foxes,
25 rabbits, and others. Also, how using prime farmland

1 will affect the agricultural use of the land.
2 Diminishing food supply, breaking tiles, causing
3 flooding, and potentially toxic chemicals leaching
4 from the cracked panels and leaky batteries.

5 Our property is situated directly
6 across from part of this project that is in Miller
7 Township. Instead of the open field which currently
8 produces corn, soybeans, alfalfa, and hay, the arrays
9 of solar panels planned for these fields would
10 directly affect our property, which sits lower in
11 elevation. Our property would be directly impacted by
12 excess water from runoff, causing possible flooding
13 and a breach in the safety of our well.

14 The underground water on our land
15 culminates into a five-acre wetland, which is home to
16 a variety of plants and animals. The impact and
17 disruption of these ecosystems would send a ripple
18 effect to many species of wildlife that use the fields
19 for habitation, nesting, and flight.

20 Our livelihood would also be impacted
21 as we are feature hosts to guests who rent our cabins
22 to relax in a natural setting while enjoying the
23 wildlife and tranquility of our land. Our guests want
24 to listen to the beautiful sounds of nature, not noisy
25 inverters from an industrial solar --

1 JUDGE SANDOR: Ms. Schmitt, can you
2 slow down just a tad? I know you're under time
3 pressure too, but if you could help us, help the court
4 reporter. We're transcribing.

5 THE WITNESS: Do I need to repeat
6 anything?

7 THE REPORTER: No, thank you.

8 THE WITNESS: Okay, is it okay to
9 begin?

10 THE REPORTER: Yes.

11 THE WITNESS: Okay, thank you.

12 We can learn from other states, like,
13 Michigan, where Jim Sheridan [ph] shares from personal
14 experience about the flooding, noise, decrease in food
15 production, and chaos, the Ranger Power Project in
16 Shiawassee County, Michigan has caused.

17 What about the four-day fire that
18 burned in Chaumont, New York? The battery storage
19 caught fire, releasing potentially toxic fumes into
20 the air. Residents were contained in their homes.

21 We can look at Europe, where the Green
22 Deal passed in 2020, experienced two years later, the
23 reopening of dozens of coal plants and 25 natural gas
24 import terminals for drilling and gas production,
25 Gorham 2023. Why? Because solar power isn't

1 reliable. We have never had to be concerned if our
2 hospitals, offices, or homes would go without power
3 because the grid didn't have enough power to
4 facilitate energy. But now, this is a real question
5 we must ask ourselves.

6 Can Ohio foresee the expensive, coming
7 renewable energy failure and protectively --
8 proactively protect its citizens from blackouts? The
9 data from the April 4th public hearing shows nearly 70
10 percent, 234 of the people attended are opposed to
11 this project, while 31 percent, 104 people support it.
12 38 percent of the 104 have Mount Vernon addresses.
13 The rest live elsewhere.

14 I ask on behalf of the property owners
15 who do not want this project in our backyards to
16 please consider our property rights, to continue to
17 live in the tranquil, rural areas that we've chosen.
18 I ask you to protect Ohio's grid and to continue to
19 provide reliable electricity to power it. And on
20 behalf of the many species of wildlife who would be
21 adversely affected as some of your title state, please
22 conserve and protect our environment by denying this
23 project. Thank you very much for your time.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

25 And any questions from counsel?

CROSS-EXAMINATION

1
2 BY MR. SETTINERI:

3 Q Good evening, Ms. Schmitt.

4 A Good evening.

5 Q You submitted some public comments in this
6 case, right?

7 A Yes.

8 Q All right.

9 A And I have them right here.

10 Q Do you have both of them?

11 A I do.

12 Q Do you have the ones dated March 5th, 2024?

13 A I do not.

14 Q You don't? Okay. Do you have one that's
15 dated -- well -- February 15th?

16 A I do not. As stated in my testimony, I have
17 them from April 4th.

18 Q Let's go ahead and mark a couple exhibits
19 here. Frasier PH5. It's a public comment from Karen
20 Schmitt, dated -- docketed February 15, 2024. And
21 then Frasier PH6 would be a public comment, docketed
22 March 5th by 2024 by Karen Schmitt at 5952 Ridgeline
23 Road. And that's your address, right?

24 A Correct.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: So marked for Frasier

1 PH5 and PH6.

2 (Frasier Exhibit PH5 and Exhibit PH6
3 were marked for identification.)

4 BY MR. SETTINERI:

5 Q Do you have Fraiser PH5 and PH6?

6 A I do.

7 Q Are those your public comments? At least
8 some of your public comments?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Okay. So both of those comments are from
11 forms that were given to you, correct?

12 A Everything that I wrote today was from me.

13 Q In your statement?

14 A Yes.

15 Q The forms I gave you, Frasier PH5 and
16 Frasier PH6, those are forms that people could fill
17 out and send in to the Power Siting Board, right?

18 A That's correct.

19 Q Okay. And you did that on this too --

20 A I did.

21 Q And who gave -- where did you get those
22 forms?

23 A A neighbor.

24 Q And what neighbor?

25 A I don't remember his name.

1 Q Okay.

2 A He lives further down the road from us.

3 Q All right. And you see on the one, Frasier
4 -- he one that's dated February 15, 2024 -- let me
5 make sure I don't get -- Frasier PH5. Do you see that
6 statement that, first bullet point, "There is a major
7 high voltage line running north, south, through Miller
8 and Clinton Townships. In one current AB substation
9 on Sharp Road, residents living near these areas have
10 experienced a high rate of serious health issues, most
11 probably caused by the MS radiating from the lines and
12 substation." Do you see that?

13 A I do.

14 Q -- the whole bullet point. Okay. Now,
15 these forms, both forms, Frasier PH6 and Frasier PH5,
16 they came from Preserve Knox County, right?

17 A Possibly.

18 Q Okay. And do you agree with that first
19 bullet point statement, yourself?

20 A I do.

21 MR. SETTINERI: All right. No further
22 questions. Thank you, Ms. Schmitt.

23 THE WITNESS: Thank you. Do you want
24 these back?

25 MR. SETTINERI: You can leave those.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: Any other -- okay. We
2 have some more questions for you, Ms. Schmitt.

3 CROSS-EXAMINATION

4 BY MR. TAVENOR:

5 Q Good evening.

6 A Good evening.

7 Q Good evening. Oop. There we go. Good
8 evening.

9 A Good evening.

10 Q Just a few questions for you. In your
11 testimony, you mentioned the idea of blackouts and
12 solar, it relating to blackouts, correct?

13 A If our grade cannot support the lack of
14 electricity that solar panels produce in Ohio.

15 Q Are you familiar with the concept of peak
16 demand?

17 A Where the energy stored throughout the seven
18 hours of sunlight during the day is supposedly put
19 into batteries and then used at a later time?

20 Q No. So when, during the day, would you say
21 we're using the most electricity?

22 A Probably 5, 6 p.m., when people are home.

23 Q How much power do you think AC uses, air
24 conditioning?

25 A I'm not an electric expert. I don't know.

1 Q Do you think it uses a lot of electricity?

2 A Possibly.

3 Q Do you think when people are at work
4 throughout the day that their businesses are using a
5 lot of electricity?

6 A Possibly.

7 Q So during the day, you know, from the hours
8 of, say, 10 to 6 p.m. for a lot of the year, that's
9 when the sun is out?

10 A Correct.

11 Q So if solar panels are operating during the
12 time when the sun is out the most and when a lot of
13 electricity is being used, it's probably a benefit to
14 the grid then?

15 A Maybe, maybe not.

16 MR. TAVENOR: No further questions.
17 Thank you.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Thank you for
19 your testimony.

20 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

21 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, we'd like
22 to admit Frasier PH5 and PH6 into the hearing record,
23 please.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: Any objections?

25 MR. HOLTHUS: No, I would like copies

1 though, Mike.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. No objections.

3 Frasier PH5 and PH6 are admitted.

4 (Frasier Exhibit PH5 and Exhibit PH6
5 were received into evidence.)

6 Our next registered witness is Brenda
7 McCament.

8 Good evening. I'd like to just
9 clarify, you are an intervenor, correct?

10 MS. MCCAMENT: Yes. Yes, I am.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And you're aware
12 that your counsel is not present tonight?

13 MS. MCCAMENT: Yes, I am.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: And you acknowledge that
15 if you testify tonight, that you're subject to
16 cross-examination without counsel?

17 MS. MCCAMENT: Yes, I'm aware.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. And in the
19 alternative, you may present your testimony at the
20 August 24th evidentiary hearing, but you move to
21 testify tonight?

22 MS. MCCAMENT: Correct, but I don't
23 want to.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. You want to
25 testify tonight?

1 MS. MCCAMENT: Yes, tonight.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. Please raise
3 your right hand.

4 MS. MCCAMENT: My name is Brenda
5 McCament. Oh, sorry.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: I'll swear you in first.

7 MS. MCCAMENT: Yes.

8 JUDGE SANDOR: Do you swear to tell the
9 truth?

10 MS. MCCAMENT: Yes.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please state
12 and spell your name for the record.

13 THE WITNESS: My name is Brenda
14 McCament, B-R-E-N-D-A, McCament M-C-C-A-M-E-N-T.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
16 address, including your township.

17 THE WITNESS: I live at 7942 Granville
18 Road, Mount Vernon in Clinton Township.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
20 reside within the project area?

21 THE WITNESS: I live and work in the
22 project area. It's south of me.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, thank you. Please
24 proceed.

25 //

DIRECT STATEMENT

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

I am opposed to the Frasier Solar Project. This project was hidden well enough that there are citizens to this day that don't know this is a proposed project in our community. We received the Good Neighbor Agreement. After reading it, I was not happy and did not want any part of the hush money. We ended up receiving two more unsolicited agreements in the mail. They were left unsigned.

I did my due diligence when I heard that Open Roads met with a farmer's group a couple of years ago or so, and I contacted one of my Clinton Township trustees. Later, after a face-to-face conversation about solar, I gave the trustee a copy of the Good Neighbor Agreement because he said he had not seen one.

Later, in the summer of 2023, after finding two men looking for survey markers and digging up my yard, is when I found out more when they unfolded a map showing me the project area closest to me. I contacted my trustee again. After all of that contact with him over a span of time, I never once was told that Open Roads, from out of state, was sitting at all of the Clinton Township meetings.

1 The Township never sent out any
2 communication about this proposed project. I am not
3 on Facebook or any other social media site. We were
4 blindsided by Open Roads and our trustees. We would
5 have attended the meetings if we would have known
6 about the project.

7 Agrivoltaics is a term, in my opinion,
8 that appears to make the ruination of farmland more
9 palatable. I don't find a permanent sheep grazing
10 plan. Dropping lambs out in the field without
11 supervision doesn't seem like a plan to me. The care
12 and shelter for them is not defined either.

13 Page 12 of the application states,
14 "After an initial transition period, supplemented by
15 mechanical cutting or as long as local sheep grazers
16 are available and interested in providing such
17 services and as long as such services are cost
18 effective." On page 54, of the staff report, line
19 item 21 states, "At least 30 days prior to the
20 pre-construction conference, the applicant shall file
21 a copy of the agrivoltaics plan," et cetera. It's too
22 long. That's after the hearings. It makes it sound
23 like it's an option and not a solid plan.

24 A long-lasting impact of 26 miles of
25 conduit or communication cable or whatever it's called

1 that is going to be left in the ground after the
2 project is decommissioned. How is that good? There
3 are no construction drawings, just maps with a concept
4 drawing feel.

5 What about compliance during
6 construction and production after? There are a lot of
7 rules and regulations to follow. Is there a fine or
8 some sort of consequence if the regulations weren't
9 followed?

10 What about the impact being surrounded
11 on four sides by inverters and panels at John and
12 Norma Parker's property? How about the other families
13 surrounded on three sides? Even two sides is too
14 many. Setbacks don't erase the impact of an unnatural
15 landscape. The behemoth project is so spread out, it
16 looks like an unorganized plague is going to be
17 released upon our prime farmland.

18 Governments don't like urban sprawl.
19 This kind of sprawl is better. How much more prime
20 farmland are they going to grab for solar? What about
21 the high cost of this kind of energy? Solar companies
22 are adding a burden to our already fragile grid.

23 Renewables don't produce all the time like all the
24 other power plants. They need a lot of backup.

25 We need more natural gas and nuclear

1 plants that are always on, always working. Let's stop
2 the closure of any more power plants. Let's secure
3 our existing grid. Remember Texas? The government is
4 using our tax money for renewables instead of reducing
5 our deficit. The government is busy mandating
6 electric for everyone, without the infrastructure to
7 supply that power. They know this. What is their
8 plan?

9 And thank you for letting me speak
10 today. And I wanted to let you know that the
11 articles, and I have many more at home but I just
12 couldn't bring them all, are kind of what helped me
13 form my opinion in my research. Thank you.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

15 Any questions from counsel?

16 CROSS-EXAMINATION

17 BY MR. SETTINERI:

18 Q Good evening, Ms. McCament.

19 A Mr. Settineri.

20 Q You're a member of Preserve Knox County?

21 A Yes.

22 Q And you're an intervenor in the case?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And when did you join Preserve Knox County?

25 A I went to my first meeting at the public

1 library, around August, I believe.

2 Q Of 2023?

3 A Yeah, of 2023, and we did not join
4 immediately.

5 Q And how did you join?

6 A At the library with a piece of paper. There
7 was a membership form, yeah.

8 Q And is it fair to say the distance from your
9 residence to the project is about 0.3 miles, 1700 feet
10 or so. Does that sound about right?

11 A Yeah.

12 MR. SETTINERI: And no further
13 questions for me. Thank you.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Any other
15 questions?

16 Okay, thank you for your testimony.

17 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Our next witness is Rick
19 McCament.

20 Good evening. Just to make sure, you
21 are an intervenor, correct?

22 MR. MCCAMENT: That is correct.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. And you're
24 aware that your counsel is not present tonight?

25 MR. MCCAMENT: Understood.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. And you
2 acknowledge that if you testify tonight, that you'll
3 be subject to cross-examination without your counsel?

4 MR. MCCAMENT: Correct.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: And that, in the
6 alternative, you can provide testimony at the
7 evidentiary hearing in this proceeding with your
8 counsel present?

9 MR. MCCAMENT: Agreed.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And you choose to
11 testify tonight?

12 MR. MCCAMENT: Yes, sir.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Please raise your
14 right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

15 MR. MCCAMENT: I do.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please state
17 and spell your name for the record.

18 THE WITNESS: Rick, R-I-C-K M-
19 C-C-A-M-E-N-T.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
21 address, including the township.

22 THE WITNESS: 7942 Granville Road,
23 Mount Vernon, Ohio, Clinton Township.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
25 reside within the project area?

1 THE WITNESS: I reside in the project
2 area.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please
4 proceed.

5 DIRECT STATEMENT

6 THE WITNESS: I cannot, for the life of
7 me, figure out why I'm here. Let alone why I'm
8 standing at this podium speaking. I also cannot
9 figure out why my friends and my neighbors are also
10 here doing the same thing. We get paid to do other
11 things. We live in a representative republic. No
12 matter what you hear or what you have been told, to
13 date, we are a representative republic. We are by no
14 means a democracy.

15 I attended a Clinton Township Trustee
16 meeting sometime in October of 2023. The meeting was
17 concerning the Frasier Solar Project in Clinton and
18 Miller Townships. I was surprised at what I heard and
19 the reactions of the three trustees from Clinton
20 Township. Their response to any question or comments
21 from the citizens were they were neutral. I have
22 attended the Clinton Township meetings consistently
23 since, and the trustees still maintain that they are
24 neutral to this very day.

25 Our county commissioners, Thom Collier,

1 Chuck Purcell [ph], Theresa Bemiller, were also
2 responding that they were also neutral on the Frasier
3 Solar Project. I was told at the Clinton Township
4 meeting several times by Donna Hochstetler that she
5 felt there were as many citizens for this project, if
6 not more, against it.

7 Sometime before the primary election of
8 2024, a letter of intent was released from our three
9 county commissioners stating they were unanimously in
10 support of the Frasier Solar Project. That doesn't
11 seem neutral to me.

12 I participated in a signature drive
13 petitioning the Clinton Township Trustees to sign a
14 resolution against specifically the Frasier Solar
15 Project in Clinton Township. There were over 350
16 signatures collected from Clinton Township citizens.
17 When presented to the trustees, they responded they
18 would not sign a resolution and they were, once again,
19 neutral.

20 The board has received countless
21 letters, testimonies, petitions from residents of Knox
22 County in opposition of this solar project. The Knox
23 County Commissioners and Clinton Township Trustees
24 have silenced our voices. They have violated our
25 civil rights, the Ohio Revised Code Section B504, and

1 the Constitution's Bill of Rights, Amendment 1.

2 We expect the board to reject the
3 Frasier Solar Project based on we the people of Knox
4 County have not been represented in this case as
5 should have been in a representative republic. As for
6 the politicians who have violated our rights, we the
7 people will deal with that matter at the voting
8 booths. That's all.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

10 Questions from counsel?

11 CROSS-EXAMINATION

12 BY MR. SETTINERI:

13 Q Good evening, Mr. McCament.

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q Thank you for coming tonight.

16 A You bet.

17 Q Real quick. You agree, the Ohio Power
18 Siding Board will decide whether this project gets a
19 certificate, correct?

20 A That's the way I understand it.

21 Q And so, the Miller Township Trustees will
22 not decide whether this project goes forward.

23 A I understand that too.

24 Q And the Clinton Township Trustees --

25 A I understand that completely.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. And we have
2 to be careful we don't talk over each other for the
3 court reporter to get the question.

4 THE WITNESS: I'm sorry.

5 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Let's let him finish the
7 questions real quick before we respond, if you don't
8 mind.

9 THE WITNESS: Could you repeat that?

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Please let him finish
11 his questions before we respond.

12 THE WITNESS: I got you. Sorry.

13 BY MR. SETTINERI:

14 Q You mentioned a letter of intent, I think,
15 by the county commissioners.

16 A Sure.

17 Q Did you have a copy of that in the other --

18 A I have a copy of it at my desk. I don't
19 have it with me.

20 Q And will you describe that letter again for
21 me, please.

22 A It was a letter from all three of the county
23 commissioners showing their support for the Frasier
24 Solar Project, and it was stated at the bottom of that
25 letter that it was unanimous.

1 Q And would that be available on the county
2 website?

3 A Not sure.

4 Q Where did you get the letter?

5 A I really can't tell you sir.

6 Q Okay. Now, one thing, as an intervenor you
7 get to participate in this case, right?

8 A I'm right here right now.

9 Q And you can even -- your lawyer can cross-
10 examine our witnesses at the evidentiary hearing. Is
11 that your understanding?

12 A Say that again.

13 Q As an intervenor in the case, you have
14 rights, and one of those rights is the ability to have
15 your counsel cross-examine our witnesses at the
16 evidentiary hearing, which is August 19th? Just like
17 tonight I'm here asking you questions.

18 A Got it.

19 Q All right. So is it fair to say that your
20 voice has not been silenced in this case, correct?

21 A By my local politicians, it has been
22 because, I feel, that this board would certainly base
23 their opinion or their decision based on our local
24 politicians because we have elected them to represent
25 us. Not the other way around. So as far as I

1 understand the United States of America and our
2 system, that our representatives, we've elected them
3 to represent us in cases like this to the board.

4 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. No further
5 questions.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Any other
7 questions from counsel?

8 Okay. Thank you for your testimony.
9 The next registered witness is Susan
10 Moore.

11 You're an intervenor. Is that correct?

12 MS. MOORE: Yes, I am.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: And you're aware that
14 your counsel is not present tonight?

15 MS. MOORE: Yes, I am.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And if you do
17 testify tonight, you acknowledge that you're subject
18 to cross-examination without your counsel?

19 MS. MOORE: That's correct.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: And that, in the
21 alternative, you can present your testimony at the
22 evidentiary hearing in this proceeding with your
23 counsel present?

24 MS. MOORE: Yes, I am.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And you choose to

1 testify tonight?

2 MS. MOORE: That's correct.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. Please raise
4 your hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

5 MS. MOORE: I do.

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
7 your name for the record.

8 THE WITNESS: My name is Susan Moore,
9 S-U-S-A-N Moore, M-O-O-R-E. My address is 12681
10 Butcher Road, Mount Vernon, and I'm in Miller
11 Township.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work reside
13 in the project area?

14 THE WITNESS: Yeah, my farm is right --
15 butts right up to it.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Please proceed.

17 DIRECT STATEMENT

18 THE WITNESS: Absolutely. Thank you,
19 first of all, for hearing us all out. Appreciate it.

20 Again, my name is Susan Moore. My
21 husband and I live in Miller Township on Butcher Road.
22 Our farm borders the proposed Frasier Solar Project.

23 What is Knox County? Knox County is
24 known for being the heart of Ohio, a beautiful, highly
25 productive agricultural county in the state of Ohio.

1 Whether you travel on Route 661 from Mount Vernon to
2 Granville or Route 13 to Mansfield or Newark or Route
3 3 from Columbus, you will see acres upon acres of
4 planted fields of grain and hay. Though beautiful,
5 charts do show us that our state is in the lower third
6 of sunny states.

7 Solar. I don't know. Our farm
8 originated 46 years ago as a small farm out in the
9 country, about an hour from the big city, which is
10 Columbus. Our son is in our family farm partnership
11 with us, and our grandson hopes to join in the future.
12 We've taken time and money to build a lasting legacy.
13 It's our life, as many others have done.

14 We've worked and used progressive
15 farming practices and methods. With the help of our
16 local soil and water district, we've installed
17 drainage tile and waterways to deal with excess water
18 and run of storm runoff. The proposed site is of
19 higher elevation and will most definitely cause
20 extreme storm water runoff downstream, maxing out our
21 installed waterways and drainage tile system, if the
22 existing tile and drainage system on the proposed site
23 are not intact due to the damage that will occur when
24 the posts for the panels are installed.

25 Thousands of these posts will be

1 punched or drilled down through the tile, possibly
2 making it inoperable. This is where the surface water
3 runoff problems will occur, damaging our waterways and
4 require extra work of repair and seeding on our land.

5 We have met with Open Roads Renewable
6 manager Craig Adair, his engineer, and a drainage
7 consultant at our farm border of the proposed site.
8 Our township trustees were also in attendance, as they
9 are concerned about the impact of the storm water
10 issues downstream on our township road culverts. We
11 are strongly convinced after our meeting and messages
12 from Craig Adair that many of these problems are not
13 even understood, which we feel comes from the reality
14 that he lives in Austin, Texas, where it is mostly
15 sunny, dry, and excess water runoff has most likely
16 not been dealt with us a whole lot.

17 And on another note, I am not prone to
18 bashing people or companies, but we have never dealt
19 with or would we deal with a company that offers
20 thousands of dollars to people to keep quiet and/or
21 speak positively about their agenda. This company
22 appears ruthless with one agenda. It does not appear
23 to be having the good neighbor aspect or be an
24 ethically good business. We have been in business and
25 never have dealt like this.

1 My trust of them and their word is not
2 good. I wish I felt differently, but I see only
3 questionable red flags as time goes on.

4 In conclusion, we are strongly opposed
5 to this Frasier Solar Project and any others in our
6 state that take prime farmland out of production. I
7 believe this is a subtle undermining of our area and
8 states, that, if not stopped will eventually take the
9 food availability out of our country. I hope that you
10 will consider my thoughts and dig deeper into the
11 negative reality of this project and ones like it and
12 put a stop to our prime farmland being used like this.
13 Thank you for listening.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Questions for counsel?

15 MR. SETTINERI: A few questions.

16 CROSS-EXAMINATION

17 BY MR. SETTINERI:

18 Q Good evening, Ms. Moore.

19 A Good evening.

20 Q My name is Mike Settineri, on behalf of
21 Frasier Solar. Now, you're an intervenor in the case?

22 A Yes, I am.

23 Q And you are a member of Preserve Knox
24 County?

25 A Yes, I am.

1 Q And when did you join your organization?

2 A I really couldn't tell you that. It's been
3 a while, probably last year. I don't know.

4 Q Now, you mentioned that the project, at
5 least near your properties, that property is a higher
6 elevation?

7 A Yes, it is. Most definitely.

8 Q Is there runoff from that area today?

9 A Yes, there is.

10 Q Okay. How do you know --

11 A Forty-some years of farming and we know the
12 -- what it does to with the waterways that we have
13 installed. It's at max.

14 Q Okay. So there's runoff from the
15 neighboring properties onto your property?

16 A From the site, the proposed site, yes.
17 There's always been -- there's always a lot of
18 stormwater runoff.

19 Q And you manage that how, specifically?

20 A With waterways. We have -- we -- we have to
21 build new ones. We have to seed and keep them up and
22 keep them repaired.

23 Q Okay. And if the drain tile is not
24 maintained after the project is built, if the drain
25 tile is damaged and not maintained, you're concerned

1 there could be --

2 A There definitely will be.

3 Q -- storm runoff?

4 A Yes, absolutely.

5 Q That could then exceed what you've done on
6 your property?

7 A Exactly.

8 Q Now, have you looked at the staff report
9 that was issued for this case?

10 A I briefly have seen a few -- I'm sorry.
11 Are you talking about the sheet that'll be on there?

12 Q No, there's a -- the Power Siding Board
13 issued a staff report recommendation for the project.

14 A And who checks that out? That's what I, you
15 know, once this is installed, I guess, yes, I
16 understand that.

17 Q And do you know there are at least two
18 conditions, at least, on addressing drainage in the
19 project site?

20 A Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

21 Q And have you reviewed those at all?

22 A Yes, I've seen where there is.

23 Q And that doesn't address those conditions,
24 don't address your concerns?

25 A No.

1 Q Now, if the drain tile is maintained on the
2 project site, as you would like it to be, then you
3 should be okay on your storm and your runoff in your
4 area, correct, with what you designed?

5 A If the drain tile is maintained. I want to
6 know who would be monitoring that. And there would
7 have to be more people than what we've had come to our
8 place because it hasn't succeeded.

9 Q And are you aware that the Power Siding
10 Board has a compliance team that monitors the
11 structure?

12 A Oh, yes, I'm very aware.

13 Q Good. Now, you mentioned about the
14 agreements that you found that bothered you. I know
15 they've been called different things, hush money,
16 things of that nature, right?

17 A Mm-hmm.

18 Q Now, are you aware that good neighbor
19 agreements are very common in the power industry for
20 power plants, gas-fired power plants, coal plants --
21 plants, wind firearms, and utility-scale solar?

22 A No.

23 Q And whether someone likes to sign a good
24 neighbor agreement is up to them, correct?

25 A That's right, definitely.

1 Q And you made that decision?

2 A That's right.

3 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. All right. No
4 further questions. Thank you.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: Any other questions,
6 counsel? All right. No. Thank you for your
7 testimony.

8 Our next witness is Patti Dice.

9 So let me clarify, you are an
10 intervenor in this proceeding?

11 MS. DICE: Yes, sir.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. You're aware
13 that your counsel is not present tonight?

14 MS. DICE: Yes.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: And you acknowledge that
16 if you testify this evening that you're subject to
17 cross-examination without any counsel present?

18 MS. DICE: Yes, sir.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: And that, in the
20 alternative, you could testify at the evidentiary
21 hearing in this proceeding with your counsel present?

22 MS. DICE: Correct, yes.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And you're
24 choosing to testify tonight?

25 MS. DICE: Yes, sir.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please raise
2 your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

3 MS. DICE: Yes.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
5 your name for the record.

6 THE WITNESS: My name is Patti Dice,
7 P-A-T-T-I D-I-C-E. My address is 13558 Miller Road,
8 Mount Vernon. And I live in Miller Township.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: And you work or reside
10 in the project area?

11 THE WITNESS: I live there.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. Please
13 proceed.

14 DIRECT STATEMENT

15 THE WITNESS: I am not being paid for
16 my testimony, nor will I financially benefit from it.
17 I am vehemently opposed to industrial solar in Knox
18 County for several reasons that have already been
19 stated by previous speakers that oppose industrial
20 solar.

21 The projected solar fields by Frasier
22 Solar will be visible from where I live. This will be
23 a disgrace to beautiful Knox County, specifically
24 Miller Township. I love living out in the country and
25 seeing all of the beauty that surrounds me on a daily

1 basis. I love my view. For those that say I should
2 have bought the land if I love my view so much, your
3 land was not for sale, nor is it now --

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Sir, please.

5 THE WITNESS: However, you are willing
6 to lease it for the right price. Industrial solar
7 would destroy the beauty that surrounds me.

8 Aside from me, industrial solar would
9 displace the wildlife habitat we have in the area.
10 The fences would severely limit their habitat. I get
11 to see and enjoy deer, pheasants, wild turkey, various
12 birds, woodpeckers, owls, and an occasional fox. I
13 also get to see raccoons, skunks, vultures, and
14 possums that may not be so enjoyable, but are a very
15 important part of the local animal life cycle.

16 The industrial solar farms may add
17 sheep to the area, but the areas where the solar farms
18 have been proposed currently farm wheat, corn, and
19 soybeans, thus taking a food source away from other
20 farm animals, thus taking away my food source. I love
21 going to Lanning's to get the meat that has been
22 locally sourced. What will happen to this?

23 Why are businesses not offering up
24 their rooftops? Why are parking garages not offering
25 up their rooftops? Intel and Amazon's rooftop would

1 be a great space for industrial solar. Could they
2 also use parking lots and provide shelter for their
3 employees' vehicles? I haven't done the research on
4 this, but it is a thought.

5 Other thoughts to ponder: How many of
6 us will still own our land in 40 years? I hope to,
7 but there are no guarantees. Can the land be sold,
8 and if so, who is going to buy it?

9 Number two: Does Ohio have enough
10 sunlight to produce the energy that is promised?
11 "Sunlight may be unlimited, but the materials required
12 to manufacture solar technology are not. The
13 availability of the raw materials required to produce
14 solar products may not be sufficient to meet future
15 demand. And the options for mining these materials
16 can have a significant environmental impact." My
17 source is cited.

18 Number three: Solar energy cannot be
19 collected at night. "Not even big systems, like a
20 12-kilowatt solar system can collect solar energy at
21 night." My source is cited.

22 Number four: "High winds often whip
23 around these structures, making them howl like
24 banshees." My source is cited. Who wants this,
25 whether it is during the day or night?

1 How expensive is it to store solar
2 energy? "A single lead acid battery can cost between
3 \$200 and \$800 while a residential lithium-ion solar
4 system can cost \$7,000 to \$14,000." My source is
5 cited.

6 Solar panels are touted to last 25 to
7 30 years, yet the contracts are for 40 years. Hmm,
8 there's some math that does not add up there.

9 Number seven: Disposal and recycling
10 options are limited. What areas are being littered by
11 broken or non-functional panels?

12 Number eight: The mining of materials
13 and manufacturing of solar panels creates a
14 considerable amount of greenhouse gas.
15 "Transportation and installation of solar systems have
16 been associated with the emission of greenhouse
17 gases." My source is cited.

18 Number nine: With all the solar farms
19 going up in the nation, where will people eventually
20 live? Over the weekend, on Sunday, I did travel to
21 Southern Ohio, very sad.

22 Number ten: Why is someone from Texas
23 coming to Ohio to build a solar field?

24 Number 11: How many of the pro-solar
25 people that have spoken before me would buy property

1 right next to an industrial solar field? I have heard
2 one so far, and he spoke last Thursday. As a local
3 middle school teacher, I see how kids are affected
4 every day by the various mental health factors that
5 they face. I cannot imagine the effects, the health
6 effects, construction, noise, obstruction, et cetera,
7 industrial solar would have on the mental health of my
8 neighbors.

9 Yes, the local school district to which
10 I work does stand to benefit greatly from this.
11 However, no amount of money is worth jeopardizing the
12 livelihood, wellbeing and mental health of my
13 neighbors and my community. Not to mention the
14 potential for hazardous materials to leach into the
15 groundwater, threatening residents, livestock and
16 wildlife.

17 My personal dream of owning a house in
18 beautiful Miller Township in Knox County will be
19 crushed if industrial solar is permitted. Please,
20 please, do not allow industrial solar. Thank you for
21 this opportunity to address you.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
23 counsel?

24 //

25 //

1 CROSS-EXAMINATION

2 BY MR. SETTINERI:

3 Q You're a member of Preserve Knox County,
4 correct?

5 A Yes, sir.

6 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you very much,
7 that's it.

8 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Thank you. Any
9 other questions?

10 Okay. Thank you for your testimony.

11 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. The next
13 registered witness is Don Moore. Okay. Is there
14 another Don Moore? Okay. Thank you.

15 The next is Sarah Ann Dean.

16 You're an intervenor in this
17 proceeding?

18 MS. DEAN: Yes.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. You're aware
20 your counsel's not present this evening?

21 MS. DEAN: Yes.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you acknowledge
23 that if you testify this evening, that you'll be
24 subject to cross-examination without your counsel
25 present?

1 MS. DEAN: Yes.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: And that, in the
3 alternative, you may provide testimony at the
4 evidentiary hearing in this proceeding in lieu of
5 tonight?

6 MS. DEAN: I understand.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. And you're
8 choosing to testify tonight?

9 MS. DEAN: Yes.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please raise
11 your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

12 MS. DEAN: Yes.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
14 your name for the record.

15 THE WITNESS: My name is Sarah Ann
16 Dean, S-A-R-A-H A-N-N D-E-A-N.

17 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
18 address, including the township.

19 THE WITNESS: 6041 Sharp Road, Mount
20 Vernon, Ohio, Miller Township.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
22 reside within the project area?

23 THE WITNESS: I both live and
24 homeschool in the project area.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Please proceed.

DIRECT STATEMENT

1
2 THE WITNESS: I am strongly opposed to
3 the Frasier Solar Project. I have several reasons.
4 One, my family's home would be surrounded within about
5 half a mile on all sides. We would have no way to get
6 to Mount Vernon without passing solar fields and
7 crossing underground transmission lines.

8 Two, our property abuts a large
9 upstream field in the project. We are concerned about
10 construction runoff due to the land degrading and
11 miles of trenching. A large influx of mud would
12 decimate the ecosystem of our creek, Delano Run, and
13 imperil the pristine waters of Kokosing, a state
14 scenic river about two miles away, which is used for
15 outdoor tourism with the Kokosing Gap Trail
16 overlooking the river for miles after our creek meets
17 it. This outdoor tourism is an important drawing
18 point for the city of Mount Vernon.

19 Three, based on the Berkeley study on
20 solar neighbors' property value loss, which caps out
21 at 12-acre plots and other studies, we expect a
22 significant loss somewhere between 10 and 30 percent.
23 This study showcases the reason why zoning laws are
24 important to balance the rights of various property
25 owners. America is not a nation of land-bearing

1 dictators.

2 Four, we intentionally bought a smaller
3 house so that we could afford land, a little over 20
4 acres. But we would have not bought our house had we
5 known that during the height of COVID, Open Road
6 Renewables began quietly signing leases for the
7 project a full five months before we bought. The
8 housing market is now vastly different than it was in
9 early 2020. There are higher prices in general and
10 higher mortgage rates. My family faces a significant
11 financial disadvantage to find a similar location due
12 to their covert business practices.

13 Five, electrical fires are an
14 increasingly common problem on solar installations and
15 are notoriously difficult to put out safely. And if
16 it does catch fire, burning heavy metals like the
17 cadmium telluride Craig Adair suggested might be used
18 at a Miller Township meeting becomes seriously toxic
19 as fumes.

20 Six, our winters freeze, which is a
21 danger to the solar tracking equipment needed to
22 follow the sun and maintain a safe panel angle during
23 high wind situations. Without the correct angle, the
24 panel arrays can gallop with winds at just 36 miles
25 per hour. Our small slice of Knox County has

1 experienced high wind events at least a couple of
2 times each year since we moved in, barely missing a
3 tornado by about four miles.

4 Seven, the technology is not very
5 efficient in Ohio's cloudy climate. Cloud cover
6 reduces the already dilute power output by roughly 70
7 to 90 percent. With more than half of our days
8 moderately to severely cloudy, this is a poor option
9 when we could explore alternatives like geothermal.

10 Eight, I don't believe in the integrity
11 of this development company. I think that they are
12 just here for the government subsidies and are merely
13 a glove corporation for the Eolian Investing Group
14 that manages a \$100 billion in assets, shuffling shell
15 companies around in order to hide from being held
16 responsible from their promises.

17 And like the Blossom Project, Open Road
18 Renewables will likely sell and run as soon as the
19 project is approved, leaving the neighbors little
20 recourse if their promises prove hollow, as they did
21 in their Hillcrest Project, where investigators
22 discovered workers falsified state IDs that
23 temporarily lost them their pilot program approval.

24 Nine, Felicia Fields, who testified
25 here the first night, is a recruiter and on-site

1 coordinator for 360 Industrial Services, who advises
2 workers on Facebook from as far away as Texas to just
3 "Get an Ohio ID." Is that a local worker? There are
4 many outside voices like hers trying to get their
5 share. Some have obvious aspirations, while others
6 have clearly been hired. They'll tell you that there
7 is overwhelming support for the project, but most of
8 that comes from far outside the county.

9 Let the first night's local sign-in
10 numbers be your guide, with roughly 26.3 percent
11 pro-solar and 73.6 opposed. This climate hysteria
12 driven government funded out of state colonial
13 "plantationism" has no place in Knox County. Please
14 deny this project. Thank you.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
16 counsel?

17 CROSS-EXAMINATION

18 BY MR. SETTINERI:

19 Q Good evening, Mrs. Dean.

20 A Hello.

21 Q Mike Settineri. Just some questions for
22 you. You're a member of Preserve Knox County,
23 correct?

24 A Yes, sir.

25 Q And when did you become a member?

1 A Near the beginning.

2 Q When did they begin?

3 A I'm afraid I don't know that
4 chronologically.

5 Q Spring of 2023 perhaps?

6 A Whenever the time is that they first sent
7 around the pages.

8 Q Sent around the what?

9 A The pages, the sign-up pages.

10 Q Now, you mentioned the Hillcrest Project in
11 your statement.

12 A I did.

13 Q Are you aware that another company built and
14 constructed that project, not Open Road?

15 A I am. Open Road sold it to them though.

16 Q Now your property, where you live today, is
17 surrounded by pretty good, dense woods, would you say?

18 A We are some of the few acres of woods.
19 There's some on Mr. Bob's property, but that's
20 considerably behind ours. We have some woods, but
21 most of it's behind us.

22 Q Okay. Let's make sure I have the right
23 drawing here.

24 MR. SETTINERI: Let's go ahead and mark
25 an exhibit, Frasier PH7, please.

1 (Frasier Exhibit PH7 was marked for
2 identification.)

3 JUDGE SANDOR: And what's the exhibit
4 of?

5 MR. SETTINERI: I'm sorry?

6 JUDGE SANDOR: Could you describe the
7 exhibit?

8 MR. SETTINERI: Oh, yeah, I will. It
9 is a -- again, it's two maps of the project
10 application with red arrows that are not in the
11 project.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: So marked.

13 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you, Your Honor.

14 BY MR. SETTINERI:

15 Q I'm going to hand you a picture of PH7. Is
16 that an arrow pointing toward your residence?

17 A No, sir.

18 Q That's not your residence?

19 A It's pointing directly on top of it.

20 Q I'm sorry?

21 A It's pointing to the road in front of it.

22 Q Well, is your house -- let's be a little
23 more exact. The arrow is right on top of your house,
24 correct?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Okay. All right. And your house has woods
2 around the house, right?

3 A We have some trees. I would not call it
4 woods though. The woods are further back.

5 Q You reside at 6041 Sharp Road, is that
6 correct?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 MR. SETTINERI: Let's mark Frasier PH8,
9 Your Honor, which is just an exhibit for now.

10 (Frasier Exhibit PH8 was marked for
11 identification.)

12 JUDGE SANDOR: So marked.

13 Can you describe that again, actually?

14 MR. SETTINERI: Yeah, that's a Google
15 Map printout of 6041 Sharp Road.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

17 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

18 BY MR. SETTINERI:

19 Q Now, that -- is that where your house is?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Okay. And it looks like there are trees in
22 that area. It's a significant number of trees. Is
23 that fair to say?

24 A I would say about a dozen.

25 Q Okay. This picture is representative of the

1 woods and the trees around your house?

2 A Unfortunately, the shadows make it seem like
3 there's quite a bit more foliage.

4 Q Okay. Fair enough. Now, going back to what
5 I marked as Frasier PH7, with the arrow that's right
6 on top of your house, are you aware that initially, as
7 of June 2023, panels were proposed? You see right
8 where your house is on that top map with the arrow?
9 And you see the panels in the middle, I guess it would
10 be southeast and southwest of your house. Do you see
11 that?

12 A Yes, I do.

13 Q Did you have an opportunity to provide any
14 input to Frasier Solar between June and August of
15 2023?

16 A Are you referring to the meetings that were
17 at Panera?

18 Q Just in general, did you have an opportunity
19 to give any feedback to Frasier Solar about the panels
20 that were initially proposed in June of 2023 to be
21 near your house?

22 A I was provided the ability to give feedback,
23 yes, but I'm not sure when that was. I imagine it was
24 when you're saying it.

25 Q Okay. In the bottom one, August 2023, would

1 show the current proposed project and those panels
2 were removed, correct?

3 A I see that. I also see that a work landing
4 spot is also removed.

5 Q Okay. Great, thank you. And with that
6 removal, would you say the project would be
7 approximately -- the nearest project would be to your
8 house would be about a half mile or so?

9 A To my house?

10 Q Mm-hmm.

11 A No. No, my property only goes back a third
12 of a mile, and so even if it's just the property at
13 the very far back of my property, that's still less
14 than a third of a mile from my house.

15 Q Okay. So you're saying from your house to
16 the nearest project location on the road map, you
17 believe is over -- is about a third of a mile?

18 A It's closer than half a mile, it's about a
19 third of a mile.

20 Q All right. Now when you moved into Miller
21 Township, you accepted that living where you live
22 would include the sounds and smells of farming,
23 correct?

24 A Of course, those are intermittent.

25 Q And you also accepted that farming can

1 create dust, correct?

2 A Of course, that also is intermittent.

3 Q And you would like to have farming preserved
4 on the land where the project is proposed, correct?

5 A Yes, I would.

6 Q Okay.

7 A It's a farming neighborhood.

8 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.
9 Thank you.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Questions from anyone
11 else?

12 Thank you for your testimony.

13 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

14 MR. SETTINERI: And, Your Honor, we'd
15 like to put Frasier PH7 and PH8 into the record.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: Any objections? Hearing
17 none, Frasier PH7 and PH8 are admitted.

18 (Frasier Exhibit PH7 and Exhibit PH8
19 were received into evidence.)

20 All right. Our next registered witness
21 is Holly Hocott [sic].

22 MS. P. HOCOTT: It's actually Polly
23 Hocott.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: Polly, we apologize.
25 Are you an intervenor in this case?

1 MS. P. HOCOTT: No, I'm not.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: You're not? Okay, we
3 deeply apologize for mixing that up, and we appreciate
4 you waiting until near the end of all these hearings
5 to give your testimony this evening.

6 MS. P. HOCOTT: All right.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, please raise your
8 right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

9 MS. P. HOCOTT: I do.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: All right, please state
11 and spell your name for the record.

12 THE WITNESS: All right. Polly,
13 P-O-L-L-Y, Hocott, H-O-C-O-T-T. 722 East High Street,
14 Mount Vernon, Ohio, Clinton Township.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
16 reside within the project area?

17 THE WITNESS: No.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, thank you. Please
19 proceed.

20 DIRECT STATEMENT

21 THE WITNESS: I am opposed to the
22 Frasier Project. I'm concerned that they are not
23 listening to the people that live in Knox County. The
24 majority, 69 percent, are in opposition, and the
25 supporters, 31 percent, are mostly out of the project

1 area. People that don't live in Knox County should
2 have no voice in this decision.

3 My daughter and son, their children and
4 grandchildren live in the immediate area of this
5 project, and I'm concerned for their safety. This is
6 not in the best interest of the public, nor the safety
7 of their citizens. It would be a terrible mistake to
8 have the farmland and the beautiful fields turned into
9 solar panels that ruin the possibility of ever having
10 our food supply restored by removing topsoil that
11 never recovers in my lifetime.

12 We have "no solar" signs in our yards
13 from the very beginning and, yet, we have had students
14 knocking on our door multiple times trying to convince
15 us that what we have heard about solar is
16 misinformation. These students obviously are
17 benefiting from canvassing the neighborhoods and do
18 not live here. They attend college in the area and
19 all have the same addresses. They put their "yes
20 solar" signs in neighbor's yards, right beside the
21 candidate signs that are against solar, several times
22 without permission.

23 It is obviously apparent that Frasier
24 Solar is not concerned or listening to the people that
25 live here and those that it affects. We, the people

1 of Knox County, have stated our opposition. The
2 majority should move and that should be the end of
3 this travesty.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
5 counsel?

6 Can I just clarify real quick? Do you
7 have family members who are intervenors in this
8 proceeding?

9 THE WITNESS: Yes.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: But you're not, correct?

11 THE WITNESS: I'm not.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, thank you.

13 All right, our next witness is Hannah
14 Gleespen.

15 Good evening. You are an intervenor in
16 this proceeding?

17 MS. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. And you're aware
19 your counsel is not present tonight?

20 MS. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: And you acknowledge that
22 if you testify this evening, you'll be subject to
23 cross-examination without your counsel.

24 MS. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: And in the alternative,

1 you could provide testimony at the August 2024 hearing
2 with counsel present?

3 MS. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Do you choose to
5 testify tonight?

6 MS. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please raise
8 your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

9 MS. GLEESPEN: Yes, I do.

10 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state your name
11 and spell your name for the record.

12 THE WITNESS: Hannah Gleespen, H-A-N-N-
13 A-H G-L-E-E-S-P-E-N.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
15 address, including the township.

16 THE WITNESS: 5881 Sharp Road, Mount
17 Vernon, Ohio, Miller Township.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
19 reside within the project area?

20 THE WITNESS: I reside in it. I also
21 home school, but I work outside of the community.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Thank you.
23 Please proceed.

24 DIRECT STATEMENT

25 THE WITNESS: I oppose the Frasier

1 Solar Project. Citizens of Knox County do not want
2 this. We are a community of family and farmland. Our
3 roads are not prepared for it, not to mention that
4 dirt is a hindrance for solar panels and Ohio weather
5 is not reliable. We live close to two airports in
6 Knox County, where an obvious issue with glare from
7 solar fields is a cause for concern, as well as a
8 nuisance for neighbors.

9 Our community and some officials were
10 not informed and notified about this project in
11 accordance with timely requirements. The project was
12 hidden for most of us while those that did know
13 secretly signed contracts for money and to be quiet
14 and hide from us. We were devastated when we were
15 told about it. It was already a done deal by our
16 commissioner and that there was no one -- nothing we
17 could do about it, which was deceptive and dishonest.

18 We have worked countless hours to have
19 the house and property we have now, buying fixer-
20 uppers, rehabbing houses as we live in them and
21 reselling them to buy something nicer. We just
22 purchased our home in August and we have worked our
23 tails off to have the house that we have for the past
24 ten years. To raise our family close to family and in
25 the country, not in the middle of solar fields that

1 are going to affect our house value that we have
2 worked hard to build in our scenery and wildlife that
3 we get to see every single day.

4 The proposed contract will allow
5 cutting down ten acres of trees, which will affect
6 this wildlife per page 33 of the staff report. And
7 not only that, but will destroy farmland for locally
8 produced food and drain toxic waste into our fields,
9 which is very concerning for runoff going into the
10 ground while most of the surrounding areas have well
11 water.

12 We, as a community, don't want solar
13 fields and we don't see it as a good fit for our
14 community. I oppose the Frasier Solar Project.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
16 counsel?

17 CROSS-EXAMINATION

18 BY MR. SETTINERI:

19 Q Good evening, Ms. Gleespen. Nice to meet
20 you. How long have you owned your house?

21 A Since August.

22 Q Of which year?

23 A 2023.

24 Q And you moved from where?

25 A Airport Road, Knox County.

1 Q Knox County, okay. And were you aware of
2 the project when you purchased your house?

3 A I was.

4 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. Your Honor, at
5 this time, I'd like to mark -- I think we're at
6 Frasier PH9.

7 (Frasier Exhibit PH9 was marked for
8 identification.)

9 JUDGE SANDOR: Thanks.

10 MR. SETTINERI: This is another set of
11 maps, an application with red arrows.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Frasier PH9 is so
13 marked.

14 BY MR. SETTINERI:

15 Q Mrs. Gleespen, am I saying that right?

16 A Gleespen.

17 Q I want to give you a document marked Frasier
18 PH9 -- red arrow are not. Am I right that that red
19 arrow is either on or pointing to your property
20 directly?

21 THE REPORTER: Excuse me, sir, could
22 you please remove the paper from -- I'm so sorry.

23 MR. SETTINERI: All right. All right.

24 BY MR. SETTINERI:

25 Q And so now you bought your house in August

1 of 2023?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q Now, you were aware of the project prior to
4 that?

5 A Mm-hmm.

6 Q What was your awareness of the project prior
7 to buying your house?

8 A We were aware that we had been, even at our
9 previous address, we had been fighting it, and we had
10 had "no solar" signs, and all of that kind of stuff as
11 well.

12 Q Okay. So when you bought the house in
13 August -- let me get back up. In June, were you aware
14 that panels were proposed on either side, where that
15 red arrow is in the top map?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Okay. And then in August, obviously, those
18 panels -- you see the panels were removed, and it says
19 at the top of the map after community input. Do you
20 see that?

21 A Yes, I do.

22 Q All right. And in terms of buying that
23 property, with those panels being removed, did that
24 influence your purchase of the property?

25 A It did not. We have family in the

1 surrounding area, and we want to raise our family
2 close to family with the support of being a village.

3 Q And you're a member of Preserve Knox County,
4 correct?

5 A Yes, I am.

6 MR. SETTINERI: All right. I have no
7 further questions. Thank you.

8 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: Any other questions?
10 All right. Thank you for your
11 testimony.

12 MR. SETTINERI: And, Your Honor, if I
13 could move for the admission for this hearing record
14 for Frasier PH9, please?

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Any objections? Hearing
16 none, Frasier PH9 is admitted.

17 (Frasier Exhibit PH9 was received into
18 evidence.)

19 Our next -- and as a heads up, there's
20 four more registered witnesses. Next is Candy Hocott.

21 MS. C. HOCOTT: Hi.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: Hello. You are an
23 intervenor in this case?

24 MS. C. HOCOTT: Yes, I am.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: You're aware your

1 counsel is not present this evening?

2 MS. C. HOCOTT: Yes.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: You acknowledge that if
4 you provide testimony this evening, you'll be subject
5 to cross-examination without your counsel present?

6 MS. C. HOCOTT: Yes.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: In the alternative, you
8 can provide testimony at the evidentiary hearing in
9 this proceeding with counsel.

10 MS. C. HOCOTT: I choose to speak here.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: And you choose to speak
12 here? Okay. Thank you. Please raise your right
13 hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

14 MS. C. HOCOTT: Yes, I do.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
16 your name for the record.

17 THE WITNESS: Candace Hocott, C-
18 A-N-D-I-C-E H-O-C-O-T-T.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
20 address, including the township.

21 THE WITNESS: 5840 Sharp Road, Mount
22 Vernon, Ohio, in Miller Township.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Do you work or reside
24 within the project area?

25 THE WITNESS: I reside in the project

1 area.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Please
3 proceed.

4 DIRECT STATEMENT

5 THE WITNESS: I just want to thank you
6 guys for taking the time to listen to all of us and
7 our concerns about the Frasier Solar Project and why I
8 strongly am opposed against it. First off, I just
9 want to let you guys know, I moved from Georgia. We
10 came -- we have family that live here and visited over
11 the years and loved the farmland here and fell in love
12 with Sharp Road and all the beautiful land out there.

13 We've now lived here for almost 18
14 years. Have a family of five and we have five
15 children, now have three grandchildren. So just love
16 being able to raise our kids on the farmland and not
17 be concerned about any city aspects.

18 We just found out, you know, we found
19 out about that Sharp Road was kind of in the ground
20 zero of all the solar projects. We were very, you
21 know, upset to hear about that because we, you know,
22 like I said, looking out at the beautiful cornfields,
23 watching the soybeans grow and the corn, and our kids
24 would go out and we'd measure their height up against
25 the corn stalks and all that. You know, we didn't

1 have that in Georgia.

2 And we've hosted many parties of people
3 that have come out from Columbus and other surrounding
4 cities that just fell in love with our area, and they
5 don't get an opportunity to see that, you know, in
6 that area. But we were, like I said, devastated to
7 find out the project was going to come there and a
8 negative impact it would be for us, for the community.

9 The proposed project will ruin many of
10 the things that make our area special and the
11 potential to cause major harm to the land as well as
12 the people living here. As a mother and a
13 grandmother, I am extremely concerned about the
14 potential dangers that the solar panels can and have
15 caused in other areas, which may -- which many others
16 have gone on into already. I want my grandchildren to
17 be able to grow up in a peaceful, rural setting and
18 not surrounded by industrial solar fields.

19 I also believe that taking prime
20 farmland and turning it into industrial solar fields
21 is a horrible idea. They aren't making any more
22 farmlands so protecting our own farmlands is very
23 important. The negative impact on our property values
24 is also very troubling to me.

25 The bottom line is that the vast

1 majority of the people in this community do not want
2 this project to happen. And as in recent election
3 results in Township anti-solar resolutions have
4 proven. This is what should matter, not the opinions
5 of the outsiders from Columbus or any other areas,
6 states, or wherever they're outside of our community.

7 I respectfully and passionately ask
8 that the board deny this project and let us all get
9 back to our peaceful lives in the community that we
10 all love. Thank you.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Any questions from
12 counsel?

13 CROSS-EXAMINATION

14 BY MR. SETTINERI:

15 Q Good evening.

16 A Hi.

17 Q You're a member of Preserve Knox County?

18 A Yes.

19 Q And you're an intervenor.

20 A Yep.

21 Q Now, you live just southeast of Ms.
22 Gleespen, right?

23 A Yeah.

24 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. Your Honor, I'll
25 just mark as Frasier PH10, another series of maps

1 before and after community input.

2 (Frasier Exhibit PH10 was marked for
3 identification.)

4 JUDGE SANDOR: So marked.

5 BY MR. SETTINERI:

6 Q I'm going to give you a map, as a
7 representative of the project application, the top one
8 before and after community input, the bottom and after
9 community input, the red arrows are not in the
10 application. But am I correct that generally that red
11 arrow on both maps is pointing towards your residents?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Okay. And were you aware that in June there
14 were panels located to the east and west -- proposed
15 to be installed to the east and west of your home?

16 A Yes.

17 Q And then were you able to give input to
18 Frasier Solar about those panels specifically?

19 A Not personally to that. Well, I mean, we've
20 been to some of the township trustee meetings and have
21 spoke our opinions there.

22 Q Okay.

23 A I have also emailed our, you know,
24 counsel -- commissioners and things like that for it
25 too, that we oppose it.

1 Q Okay. And so you know, as of August when
2 the application was filed, those panels were removed
3 to the east and west of your house?

4 A That's what they say.

5 MR. SETTINERI: No further questions.
6 Thank you.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Any other questions?
8 Nope.

9 Thank you for your testimony.

10 MR. SETTINERI: If we can move for the
11 admission of Frasier PH10, into the hearing record,
12 please.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: Any objections? Hearing
14 none, Frasier PH10 is admitted.

15 (Frasier Exhibit PH10 was received into
16 evidence.)

17 Our next witness is Emily Rowley.

18 Good evening. You're an intervenor in
19 this proceeding?

20 MS. ROWLEY: Yes, I am.

21 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. You're aware
22 your counsel is not present this evening?

23 MS. ROWLEY: Yes, I am.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: And you acknowledge that
25 if you provide testimony this evening that you'll be

1 subject to cross-examination without your counsel
2 present?

3 MS. ROWLEY: I am aware.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: And in the alternative,
5 you can provide testimony at the evidentiary hearing
6 in this proceeding with counsel present?

7 MS. ROWLEY: I understand that.

8 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. And you
9 choose to testify?

10 MS. ROWLEY: I choose to testify.

11 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, please raise your
12 right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth?

13 MS. ROWLEY: I do.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
15 your name to the record.

16 THE WITNESS: My name is Emily Rowley,
17 E-M-I-L-Y R-O-W-L-E-Y.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
19 address, including the township.

20 THE WITNESS: My address is 5224
21 Lafayette Road, Mount Vernon. The township is Miller.

22 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
23 reside in the project area?

24 THE WITNESS: I do both.

25 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. Please

1 proceed.

2 DIRECT STATEMENT

3 THE WITNESS: Thank you for giving us
4 the opportunity to voice our concerns. I am opposed
5 to the Frasier Solar Project. Unlike the landowners
6 who leased their land for the projects, I live in the
7 project area with my husband and three small children.

8 In fact, if this project is approved,
9 there will be no place that we can stand on our
10 property and not see solar panels. We will be
11 surrounded. Our home sits atop a hill overlooking the
12 proposed project. No amount of screening and
13 landscaping will be a benefit because of how our home
14 is placed.

15 You see, we are in such an impossible
16 situation that Frasier Solar verbally said they would
17 offer us a purchase option agreement. That agreement
18 came with a caveat. We could no longer speak out in
19 opposition. Wouldn't a good neighbor allow someone to
20 express their deep concerns about the future for their
21 family and community without trying to silence them,
22 remove them from the home they intend to raise their
23 children in? Our story and our voice must be
24 powerful.

25 We moved into our home in November of

1 2020. We can see my in-laws' farm from our home, as
2 well as my husband's uncle's farm that used to be his
3 grandparents. Selling our old home and buying this
4 home helped put us in a financial situation that
5 allows me to stay home with our children. It's
6 everything my husband and myself has ever dreamed of
7 for ourselves and our children until now.

8 The current landowner who's leasing the
9 land to Frasier Solar did not own the land when we
10 purchased our home. When we found out that the
11 current landowner had purchased the land, we reached
12 out in hopes to buy some of the land from him. He
13 said he had no desire to sell the land. Little did we
14 know, he would soon sell out to Frasier Solar.

15 When I asked Matt Butler last week if
16 the OPSB staff comes to all of the sites of the
17 proposed project, I was surprised to learn his answer.
18 Yes, they do.

19 On page nine of the staff report, it
20 states, "Staff recommends that aesthetic impact
21 mitigation include native vegetation planning,
22 alternative fencing, good neighbor agreements, or
23 other methods in consultation with effective
24 landowners and subject to staff review. With
25 implementation of the staff's condition, the overall

1 expected aesthetic impact would be minimal." I'm not
2 sure the OPSB staff would find the expected aesthetic
3 impact to be minimal in the case of my family.

4 On page 53, condition ten, the staff
5 report states, "Prior to commencement of construction,
6 the applicant shall file a landscape and lighting plan
7 in consultation with a landscape architect that
8 addresses the aesthetic and lighting impacts of the
9 facility. That plan shall include any adjacent non-
10 participating parcel containing a resident, residents
11 with a direct line of sight to the fence of the
12 facility. The plan shall provide for the planting of
13 vegetative screening designed by the landscape
14 architect to enhance the view from the residence,
15 unless alternative mitigation measures are agreed to
16 with the property owner."

17 Again, there's nothing that can be done
18 to enhance the view from our residence. This
19 condition will not be able to be met by Frasier Solar.

20 Our current Knox County Commissioner
21 signed a resolution on August 11th of 2022 stating
22 they would look at industrial solar projects in a
23 case-by-case basis. One of the criteria to
24 considering large-scale facilities is the ability to
25 provide buffers between the facility and adjacent

1 landowners. You must understand our frustration.

2 Time and time again we're reading and
3 hearing about the importance of buffers, screening,
4 landscaping and knowing that in our situation it does
5 not matter. There's nothing they can do.

6 We hear the argument that we shouldn't
7 be able to tell someone what they can or cannot do
8 with their land. That's rich considering only one of
9 the landowners who have leased their land actually
10 lives in the project area. Also this is not really a
11 matter of telling someone what they can or cannot do
12 with their land. This is a matter of local residents
13 voicing their concerns for what the future of their
14 community looks like in the realms of zoning.

15 On page eight, paragraph five of the
16 staff report, it is acknowledged that Frasier Solar is
17 developing a commercial operation. This is not an
18 agricultural operation. If an Amazon warehouse put
19 some sheep in front of their building, would it
20 suddenly become agricultural?

21 I have so many concerns we would be
22 here all night if I started sharing them. Thankfully
23 my friends, my family, my neighbors have brought a
24 majority of those concerns to you. I hear the
25 pro-industrial solar sites say that this proposed

1 project only impacts a small percentage of farmlands
2 in Knox County. Well, the majority of that farmland
3 surrounds my entire world.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: Take a moment, if you
5 need. It's okay.

6 THE WITNESS: I rest in the comfort of
7 Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you,
8 says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for
9 despair, to give you a future and a hope."

10 I ask you to please deny approval of
11 the Frasier Solar project on behalf of my family, my
12 friends, and my neighbors who are most impacted by the
13 project.

14 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you.

15 Any questions from counsel?

16 MR. SETTINERI: No questions, thank
17 you.

18 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay. Any other
19 questions?

20 All right. Thank you for your
21 testimony.

22 Our next registered witness is Johnny
23 Hocott. All right, hearing -- oh, there he is.

24 You are an intervenor?

25 MR. HOCOTT: Yes.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: Correct? Okay. And
2 you're aware of counsel's not present this evening?

3 MR. HOCOTT: Yes.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: And you acknowledge that
5 if you testify tonight, you'll be subject to
6 cross-examination without your counsel present?

7 MR. HOCOTT: Yes.

8 JUDGE SANDOR: And in the alternative,
9 you provide testimony at the evidentiary hearing with
10 your counsel present?

11 MR. HOCOTT: Yes.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: And you choose to
13 testify tonight?

14 MR. HOCOTT: I do.

15 JUDGE SANDOR: All right, thank you.
16 Please raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell
17 the truth?

18 MR. HOCOTT: I do.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
20 your name for the record.

21 THE WITNESS: Johnny Hocott, J-O-H-N-N-
22 Y H-O-C-O-T-T.

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
24 address, including the township.

25 THE WITNESS: 5840 Sharp Road, in

1 Miller.

2 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
3 reside in the project area?

4 THE WITNESS: I do.

5 JUDGE SANDOR: I'm sorry?

6 THE WITNESS: I do. Actually both.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Both, okay. Please
8 proceed.

9 DIRECT STATEMENT

10 THE WITNESS: Okay. I want to start by
11 thanking the board for the opportunity to express my
12 opposition to the Frasier Solar Project. My wife and
13 I are from Georgia. We lived there for the first 36
14 years of our lives. Never thought we'd live anywhere
15 else.

16 In 2006, we came to housesit for my
17 sister and brother-in-law who lived on Sharp Road.
18 While we were here, we fell in love with Mount Vernon
19 and especially Sharp Road area due to the gorgeous
20 views of the farmland as well as the laid-back
21 lifestyle. We went back to Georgia and immediately
22 put our home up for sale and moved to Mount Vernon.
23 We could have moved anywhere we wanted to, but we
24 chose Mount Vernon and more precisely Sharp Road.

25 My daughter and son-in-law also chose

1 to buy a house on Sharp Road to raise their three
2 girls. Those girls deserve to grow up in a community
3 that we all fell in love with and not be surrounded by
4 industrial solar. I think it'd be an utter travesty
5 to allow the raping of our beautiful farm community so
6 that the electricity produced from it could be shipped
7 off to Licking County. I would not be for it, even if
8 the electricity was staying in Knox County.

9 Using prime farmland for these
10 so-called farmland -- solar farms is a horrible idea.
11 In my opinion, this project is fueled by greed and the
12 vast majority of the people that have spoken in favor
13 of it at these meetings either do not live in the
14 affected area or are profiting from it by leasing
15 their land to Frasier or getting the hush money that
16 Frasier likes to call the "good neighbor program."

17 I would also like to call attention to
18 the disgusting ads that Frasier has put out about this
19 so-called dark money that is supposedly the driving
20 force behind the opposition to their project. Dark
21 money, I guess they mean money from hard-working
22 people like myself and my wife, as well as countless
23 others in this room that have had to contribute their
24 own hard-earned money that they could use for about a
25 thousand other things to fight this invasion of our

1 community. We've all had to put our lives on hold to
2 fight this, which has cost us both time and money.

3 Lastly, I want to urge the board to
4 look at the turnout that's happened in the last three
5 meetings about this project. Frasier would love for
6 you to believe that the community's evenly split, but
7 that's a joke. The vast majority of those in favor of
8 this project that have spoken at these meetings don't
9 live in Knox County. Why should people from Columbus
10 and other parts of the state have the say so and what
11 happens in our community?

12 As others have stated, the recent
13 county commissioners races in Knox County were both
14 overwhelmingly won by candidates that were an adamant
15 opposition to solar and ran primarily on the solar
16 issue.

17 In closing, I ask that the board take
18 all this into account, deny this project, and help us
19 keep our amazing farm community intact.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Questions?

21 CROSS-EXAMINATION

22 BY MR. SETTINERI:

23 Q Good evening, Mr. Hocott. A couple quick
24 questions. What's your address currently?

25 A 5840 Sharp Road.

1 Q All right. Do you rent there?

2 A Yes, we do.

3 Q Okay. Who do you rent from?

4 A My sister and brother-in-law.

5 Q Who are they?

6 A Gary and --

7 Q Okay. And you're a member of Preserve Knox
8 County?

9 A I am.

10 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. No further
11 questions. Thank you.

12 JUDGE SANDOR: Any other questions?
13 All right. Thank you for your
14 testimony.

15 And last but not least, Samuel
16 Gleespen.

17 MR. GLEESPEN: She forgot to put hers
18 in the box.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: That's fine. You can
20 bring it up to the box. That's okay. Thank you.

21 MR. GLEESPEN: Is it all right if I put
22 these in the box?

23 JUDGE SANDOR: Yes. Yes. And you are
24 an intervenor?

25 MR. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

1 JUDGE SANDOR: All right. You're aware
2 your counsel is not present this evening?

3 MR. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

4 JUDGE SANDOR: And you acknowledge that
5 if you provide testimony this evening that you're
6 subject to cross-examination without your counsel
7 present?

8 MR. GLEESPEN: Yes, sir.

9 JUDGE SANDOR: And you have the
10 alternative to provide testimony at the evidentiary
11 hearing with counsel present.

12 MR. GLEESPEN: Mm-hmm.

13 JUDGE SANDOR: And you choose to
14 testify tonight?

15 MR. GLEESPEN: Absolutely.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: All right, thank you.
17 Please raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell
18 the truth?

19 MR. GLEESPEN: Yes.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: Please state and spell
21 your name for the record.

22 THE WITNESS: Samuel S-A-M-U-E-L
23 Gleespen, G-L-E-E-S-P-E-N.

24 JUDGE SANDOR: Please provide your
25 address, including the township.

1 THE WITNESS: 5881 Sharp Road. That's
2 Miller.

3 JUDGE SANDOR: And do you work or
4 reside within the project area?

5 THE WITNESS: I reside. I work
6 outside.

7 JUDGE SANDOR: Okay, thank you.

8 DIRECT STATEMENT

9 THE WITNESS: All right. Solar comes
10 with too many unknowns and the facts that are out
11 there are from the same companies selling you the
12 product. They would never say anything too bad about
13 it because your "yes" lines their pockets. There are
14 too many unknowns and downsides to comprehend. And
15 four years is a long time to test that theory out.

16 I refuse to stand idly by and watch the
17 town I'm currently raising my three kids in get bought
18 out by greedy corporations like Frasier Solar just
19 because they thought we were an easy target. The
20 truth of the matter is the majority of Knox County --
21 the majority of Knox community and the people in this
22 project affects, they don't want solar panels, and the
23 whole reason the county voted the way they did for the
24 commissioners was on the solar issue.

25 If we want to look to the future of a

1 community we need to focus on families and small
2 businesses, not big corporations moving in and buying
3 their way into our lands with their good neighbor
4 acts. The amount of good neighboring that I've seen
5 in just these meetings alone is staggering from people
6 outside the county who shouldn't have an opinion on
7 who deserves or needs solar in Knox County.

8 As I've stated I will not lie down on
9 this issue just because it's convenient to do so.
10 I've had to put my life on hold, and I will continue
11 to do that until Frasier is gone. Solar is an
12 inefficient, expensive energy source that's more
13 trouble than it's worth, especially in 40 years.
14 Frasier Solar is a disease and their practices are a
15 disease to the community, and I will fight to the
16 bitter end to see them out.

17 I will raise my family in a solar free
18 environment. I oppose the Frasier Solar project.

19 JUDGE SANDOR: Questions from counsel?

20 CROSS-EXAMINATION

21 BY MR. SETTINERI:

22 Q Good evening, Mr. Gleespen.

23 A Good evening.

24 Q You're an intervenor in the case?

25 A Yes, sir.

1 Q A member of Preserve Knox County?

2 A Absolutely.

3 Q Have you had an opportunity to review the
4 staff report and the staff's recommended conditions?

5 A I have but, from memory -- I mean, you
6 have it right there, so I can --

7 Q It's fine, just want to make sure you read
8 it. And then also, you live at 5881 Sharp Road,
9 right?

10 A Yes, sir.

11 Q And is Mrs. Hannah Gleespen, that's your
12 wife?

13 A Yes.

14 MR. SETTINERI: Okay. Good enough. No
15 further questions. Thank you.

16 JUDGE SANDOR: Thank you. Any other
17 questions? Hearing none, thank you very much for your
18 testimony.

19 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

20 JUDGE SANDOR: All right, we've reached
21 the end of the list of registered witnesses for the
22 local public hearing in this case. The board
23 appreciates your participation in embarking on this
24 three-hearing journey with us. Just as a reminder,
25 everyone -- or just as a reminder, the evidentiary

1 hearing begins August 19, 2024, at the -- offices in
2 Columbus.

3 And with that, we are adjourned. Thank
4 you very much.

5 THE REPORTER: We're going to go off
6 the record at 9:34 p.m.

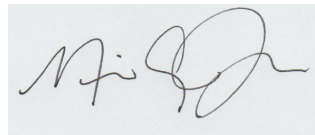
7 (Whereupon, at 9:34 p.m., the
8 proceeding was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, NIC JOSEPH, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby certify that any witness(es) in the foregoing proceedings, prior to testifying, were duly sworn; that the proceedings were recorded by me and thereafter reduced to typewriting by a qualified transcriptionist; that said digital audio recording of said proceedings are a true and accurate record to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.



NIC JOSEPH
Notary Public in and for the
State of Ohio

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, ALEXIS GALLO, do hereby certify that this transcript was prepared from the digital audio recording of the foregoing proceeding, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.



ALEXIS GALLO

&	130 437:19	20 444:23	2033 539:2
& 423:5 424:5 431:19,24	13558 587:7	479:24 480:12	2050 539:1
0	13825 451:24	485:10 595:3	21 538:17
0.3 571:9	14,000 590:4	200 590:3	568:19
1	15 560:20	2000 435:10	22 501:11
1 481:4 483:19	562:4	478:3	23 539:23
507:25 575:1	15893 487:11	2001 515:25	23-0796 451:10
1,000 523:2	15th 560:15	2006 626:16	556:16
549:7,24	16 468:15	2015 538:17,17	23-796 422:5
1.3 531:11	170 544:24	2020 545:22	430:5
532:4,9	1700 571:9	558:22 595:9	234 559:10
1.5 446:13	18 501:12	621:1	24th 565:20
1.8 446:8	503:17,21	2021 457:25	25 558:23
10 498:2 523:6	614:13	2022 521:10	590:6
564:8 594:22	183 439:2	539:11 622:21	250 434:21
100 468:21	19 521:10	2023 446:5	2550 424:6
596:14	527:11 535:25	534:19 535:2	25587 635:17
1008 423:7	555:15 634:1	536:25 541:9	26 568:24
104 559:11,12	19.7 511:14	543:25 544:4	26.3 597:10
107 437:3	19026 521:20	558:25 567:18	26289 636:14
11 504:15	1924 478:1	571:2,3 573:16	27 516:17
590:24	1983 494:7	598:5 601:7,15	529:23 536:25
112 422:18	1985 478:3	601:20,25	541:9
1145 423:16	1986 515:23	609:23 611:1	2821 456:5
11th 622:21	1991 515:23,25	2024 422:12	29 422:12
12 568:13	1994 500:25	479:14 495:17	29,000 447:1
589:20 594:21	19th 479:14	504:15 527:11	29:11 624:7
12681 579:9	577:16	535:25 555:15	2nd 550:17
12863 462:11	1st 543:4	560:12,20,22	3
13 438:21	2	562:4 574:8	3 422:11
498:2 516:16	2 483:21	607:1 634:1	518:16 580:3
580:2	2,000 539:24	2024-04-01	30 430:22,22
	2,100 511:12	452:14	455:6 514:9
	2.66 511:16	2024-31 504:14	539:13 568:19
		506:9,10	590:7 594:22

<p>300 515:9 300,000 481:6 304 500:9 31 504:13 531:5 537:20 538:4 543:5 559:11 604:25 32 516:2 3288 477:12 33 538:9 609:6 34 531:3 34,000 438:17 3475 509:21 35 500:23 35.183. 525:18 350 574:15 36 595:24 626:13 360 597:1 38 511:9 531:4 559:12 3879 491:18</p>	<p>43212 423:17 43215 423:8 424:7 433 425:3 437 425:5 4379 527:22 44 511:10 440 425:6 444 425:8 4465 536:15 449 425:10 452 425:12 456 425:14 46 580:8 461 425:15 462 425:17 464-5462 423:11 466 425:18 4709 443:18 477 425:20 481 425:21 487 425:23 487-7506 423:19 49 531:9,25 492 425:25 497 426:3 4th 559:9 560:17</p>	<p>5,600 435:11 5.26 511:15 5.8 446:24 50 511:9,10 523:5 532:18 50,000 464:1 500 426:5 500,000 446:14 447:1,3 502 426:6 510 426:8 515 426:10 52 423:6 458:1 478:13 495:19 495:22 543:2 522 426:12 5224 619:20 524 426:13 528 426:15 53 622:4 531 426:16 533/535 429:5 536 426:18 54 568:18 540 426:19 543/554 429:7 545/554 429:9 547/554 429:11 55 538:23 552 426:20 556 426:22 560 426:23 561/565 429:13 429:15</p>	<p>563 426:24 567 427:3 570 427:4 573 427:6 575 427:7 579 427:9 582 427:10 5840 613:21 625:25 628:25 587 427:12 5881 607:16 631:1 633:8 592 427:13 594 427:15 5952 556:6,14 560:22 597 427:16 599/603 429:17 5:00 422:13 5th 545:22 560:12,22</p>
4	5	6	
<p>4 500:21 4/1/2024 454:15 4/7/22 501:19 40 449:25 465:23 473:21 476:11 589:6 590:7 632:13 40,000 447:3 425 539:2 43050 422:19</p>	<p>5 479:23,23,23 563:22 5,000 438:20</p>	<p>6 563:22 564:8 6,000 517:5 538:19 60 476:11 60,000 464:3 600/603 429:19 604 427:18 6041 429:18 593:19 600:5 600:15 607 427:20 609 427:21</p>	

<p>610/612 429:21 614 423:11,19 424:9 427:23 616 427:24 617/618 429:23 620 428:3 626 428:5 628 428:6 631 428:8 632 428:9 65 424:6 661 492:15 493:2 580:1 6665493 422:21 683-8411 424:9 69 604:24 6:50 518:22 6:51 519:1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p>8.75 447:3 800 590:3 85 465:19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <p>90 465:19 596:7 9:34 634:6,7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a</p> <p>ab 562:8 abd 485:15 abide 469:16 470:11 abiding 528:24 ability 523:13 523:23 577:14 601:22 622:24 635:10 636:7 able 437:21 494:15 510:11 523:1 614:16 615:17 617:17 622:19 623:7 above 453:6 495:12 absolutely 433:24 485:25 546:19 551:2 553:9 579:18 584:4 630:15 633:2 abuse 493:24 abuts 594:8</p>	<p>ac 563:23 acceptable 457:21 accepted 602:21,25 accepting 456:23 access 493:12 accordance 494:11 523:10 608:11 account 514:7 628:18 accountable 497:22 accurate 431:11 635:9 636:5 accurately 523:13 achieve 434:15 achieved 493:9 acid 590:2 acknowledge 520:1 521:1 527:6 535:19 555:9 565:14 572:2 578:17 586:15 592:22 606:21 613:3 618:24 625:4 630:4 acknowledged 623:16</p>	<p>acquiring 517:13 acre 468:7 529:22 538:19 538:23 557:15 594:21 acreage 465:19 525:16 537:6 acres 435:11 459:8,8 464:2 464:3 465:17 468:20 488:17 495:7 517:5 530:14 531:7 538:8,10,24 544:24 549:7 549:24 580:3,3 595:4 598:18 609:5 act 530:10 action 635:12 635:16 636:8 636:12 actively 504:4 activities 484:19 activity 468:11 acts 632:4 actual 460:14 actually 470:22 481:21 496:15 505:15,18 506:25 507:12 510:12 513:8 545:15,21</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">7</p>			
<p>7,000 590:4 7,500 446:14 70 559:9 596:6 7127 496:21 713 495:2 7193 432:17 72 511:13 722 604:13 73.6 597:11 75/25 463:17 783 448:12 7942 566:17 572:22 7:06 520:12</p>			

<p>551:22 600:13 603:22 623:9 626:6 ad 528:16 adair 581:6,12 595:17 adamant 628:14 add 588:16 590:8 added 465:25 adding 569:22 addition 447:8 454:22 additional 435:8 480:5,7 480:8 504:6 543:5 additive 501:24 address 429:5,7 429:17,21,23 432:15 437:1 443:16 448:10 451:23 456:3 462:9 470:14 471:16 472:17 477:10 487:9 491:16 496:19 500:7 509:19 536:14 543:8 548:12 556:5 560:23 566:16 572:21 579:9 584:23,24 587:7 591:21</p>	<p>593:18 607:15 611:9 613:20 619:19,20 625:24 628:24 630:25 addressed 472:19 473:2 addresses 559:12 605:19 622:8 addressing 584:18 adjacent 434:23 445:7 501:22 622:9 622:25 adjoining 434:14 adjourned 634:3 administrative 430:11 admission 612:13 618:11 admit 564:22 admitted 535:8 554:21 565:3 603:17 612:16 618:14 adoption 454:12 adopts 469:12 532:23 ads 627:18</p>	<p>adverse 434:13 adversely 556:19 559:21 advised 508:21 advises 597:1 advocate 445:1 aesthetic 621:20 622:1,2 622:8 affect 433:11 513:4,16 523:7 523:13 524:7,8 538:11 557:1 557:10 609:1,5 affected 478:25 479:12 523:4 529:1 538:1 539:23 556:19 559:21 591:3 627:14 affecting 523:23 540:1 549:6 affects 493:18 522:13 605:25 631:22 affirm 448:4 451:18 462:2 477:3 487:2 491:6 496:10 499:25 509:12 515:3 affirms 495:2 afford 595:3</p>	<p>afraid 598:3 agencies 503:3 agenda 581:21 581:22 agendas 457:19 aging 459:23 524:6 ago 459:10 478:9 486:19 507:22 525:8 529:23 533:10 547:3 567:13 580:8 agree 445:19 520:18 524:16 543:11 562:18 575:17 agreed 572:9 622:15 agreement 467:8 537:4 567:7,16 585:24 620:17 620:17 agreements 470:17,19,24 529:3 567:9 585:14,19 621:22 agrees 495:19 agricultural 435:23,25 449:4,6,24 451:8 457:24 460:13 468:11</p>
---	---	---	---

474:4,6,7,10 482:24 483:9 483:15 484:18 487:24 508:13 512:12 557:1 579:25 623:18 623:20 agriculture 435:21 449:7 452:25 472:23 474:12 483:13 483:14 512:10 530:19 549:6 agrivoltaics 568:7,21 agronomy 474:10 ahead 430:2 431:12 519:3,4 533:20 545:18 560:18 598:24 aid 453:13 aimed 528:17 air 449:16 558:20 563:23 airplane 523:10 525:21 526:1,3 airplanes 433:11 airport 433:12 454:17,19,21 455:6 609:25 airports 608:5	albany 514:4 517:23 alexis 636:2,15 alfalfa 557:8 alj 518:12 alliance 553:11 allow 437:15 439:5 515:20 518:1 591:20 609:4 620:19 627:5 allowed 435:22 445:17 498:11 allowing 459:3 460:16 allows 439:3 621:5 alongside 478:2 alternative 521:9 527:10 535:24 538:16 555:14 565:19 572:6 578:21 586:20 593:3 606:25 613:7 619:4 621:22 622:15 625:8 630:10 alternatives 438:9 596:9 altogether 468:21 amazing 628:19	amazon 489:4 623:18 amazon's 588:25 amber 518:10 amenable 457:14 amendment 575:1 america 528:24 530:15,16 538:22 578:1 594:25 american 493:9 539:17 amount 472:5 485:11 524:1 547:24 590:14 591:11 620:12 632:4 ample 495:20 analysis 447:2 analyzed 446:7 andrea 425:3 432:7,13 433:2 andrew 461:24 angle 595:22 595:23 anguish 537:12 animal 480:17 588:15 animals 557:16 588:20 ann 427:15 592:15 593:15	annual 511:12 anonymous 552:22 answer 431:3 442:22 475:11 523:1 551:10 621:17 answering 520:17 anti 616:3 anticipate 480:24 481:1 531:7 anticipates 538:8 anticipating 480:21 antonio 425:5 436:16,24 anybody 476:22 551:16 anymore 471:20 apartment 513:12 apartments 513:1 apologies 491:13 496:17 509:9 apologize 603:24 604:3 apparent 605:23
---	--	---	--

<p>appear 581:22</p> <p>appearances 430:18 431:13 431:15 457:10</p> <p>appeared 457:6</p> <p>appearing 456:19</p> <p>appears 451:7 458:15 568:8 581:22</p> <p>applause 496:5</p> <p>applicant 423:2 532:7 568:20 622:6</p> <p>application 422:3 430:6 503:2,4 543:22 568:13 599:10 610:11 617:7 617:10 618:2</p> <p>applied 439:6</p> <p>applies 430:20</p> <p>applying 442:1</p> <p>appreciate 467:5,18 510:8 510:11 579:19 604:3</p> <p>appreciates 633:23</p> <p>apprenticeship 439:4,7</p> <p>appropriate 494:10</p> <p>approval 596:23 624:10</p>	<p>approve 447:16 453:24 495:22</p> <p>approved 447:13 486:13 486:16 503:11 517:6,7 518:3 596:19 620:8</p> <p>approves 469:10 532:22</p> <p>approximately 433:4 533:11 538:8 544:23 602:7</p> <p>april 543:4 559:9 560:17</p> <p>architect 434:5 622:7,14</p> <p>area 432:20 435:11,15 436:3 437:6 441:6,8,18,22 443:22 444:18 445:8 446:24 448:15 451:10 452:1,5 456:8 462:14 464:12 477:15 480:17 480:19 487:14 491:22 496:24 498:11 500:12 501:23 509:24 513:24,25 514:5 515:12 521:23 525:14 525:17 536:18</p>	<p>537:7,21 539:22 556:9 566:20,22 567:21 572:25 573:2 579:13 582:7 583:8 585:4 587:10 588:9,17 593:22,24 600:22 604:16 605:1,4,18 607:19 612:1 613:24 614:1 615:4,6,10 619:23 620:7 623:10 626:3 626:19 627:14 631:4</p> <p>areas 437:21 458:5 465:15 503:22 510:14 559:17 562:9 588:17 590:10 609:10 615:15 616:5</p> <p>argue 445:16 446:21</p> <p>arguing 445:17</p> <p>argument 445:19,20 460:11 623:6</p> <p>arlington 517:23</p> <p>arrays 557:8 595:24</p>	<p>arrington 521:20</p> <p>arrow 534:14 543:21,22 599:16,23 601:5,8 610:18 610:19 611:15 617:11</p> <p>arrows 533:18 599:10 610:11 617:9</p> <p>article 539:3,4</p> <p>articles 542:16 570:11</p> <p>artisans 528:22</p> <p>aside 588:8</p> <p>asked 457:17 465:3 467:8 475:16 480:4,4 481:2 550:13 621:15</p> <p>asking 439:22 440:21,21 577:17</p> <p>aspect 581:23</p> <p>aspects 614:17</p> <p>asphalt 460:5</p> <p>aspirations 597:5</p> <p>assault 540:13</p> <p>assets 596:14</p> <p>assigned 430:11</p> <p>associate's 439:6</p>
--	---	--	---

associated 553:7 590:16 assume 482:17 assumptions 510:18 assurances 456:20 458:16 459:7,22 assuring 456:22 asta 422:16 430:10 432:7 432:11,15,19 432:22,25 436:5,9,12,18 436:22 437:1,5 437:8,11 440:4 443:4,7,12,16 443:21,24 444:2 447:18 447:22,25 448:3,7,11,14 448:18,20,23 449:1 451:12 451:17,21,25 452:4,7,10 455:14,17,24 456:3,7,10,13 460:21,23 461:22 462:5,9 462:13,17,20 466:6 476:21 476:23 477:2,6 477:10,14,18 477:21 481:9	481:11 486:23 487:5,9,13,16 487:19 490:24 491:3,9,13,16 491:21,25 492:3 496:4,8 496:13,17,19 496:23 497:1,4 499:18,20 500:3,7,11,14 500:17 502:12 509:6,11,15,19 509:23 510:1,4 514:17,20 515:6,11,14,17 518:7 atop 620:11 attached 432:4 attachments 502:6 attend 437:21 605:18 attendance 581:8 attended 549:25 550:4 559:10 568:5 573:15,22 attending 550:8 attention 627:17 attested 454:13 attorney 422:14,15,16	455:10 521:6 635:14 636:10 attraction 483:11 audio 635:8 636:3 auditorium 495:25 august 521:10 527:11 534:19 534:22 535:25 543:5 544:4 555:15 565:20 571:1 577:16 601:14,25 607:1 608:22 609:21 610:25 611:13,17 618:1 622:21 634:1 austin 581:14 australia 539:3 authority 453:15 454:17 494:20 authorized 454:8 494:13 authors 528:21 availability 582:9 589:13 available 439:19 453:5 486:12,15 568:16 577:1	avenue 423:16 437:3 512:16 average 446:11 446:24 511:9 511:12,13 avoided 543:3 aware 455:1 461:10 474:14 502:22 503:1 505:1 506:25 507:10,11 519:20 520:21 527:2 534:18 535:15 542:24 543:25 550:7 555:6 565:11 565:17 571:24 578:13 585:9 585:12,18 586:12 592:19 598:13 601:6 606:18 610:1 611:3,8,13 612:25 617:13 618:21 619:3 625:2 630:1 awareness 611:6 awe 493:3 awful 459:16 546:6,21,22 b b 429:1 443:14 443:15 456:2 487:8,8 521:19
--	---	---	---

521:20 536:12 566:14 b504 574:25 back 436:6 438:11 450:1,3 467:19 470:13 471:5 472:9,12 476:4,7,10,12 483:4 484:24 493:2 512:12 512:14 518:22 519:4 520:15 535:1 542:6 544:7 551:23 562:24 600:4 601:4 602:11 602:13 611:13 616:9 626:20 626:21 backing 499:16 backup 569:24 backyard 436:4 512:8 backyards 438:5 559:15 bacon 489:24 490:6 bad 446:15 450:18 631:12 balance 449:14 493:18 594:24 bald 480:18 537:25 baldrige 461:23	ballot 495:11 498:10 517:20 banburys 474:20 banshees 589:24 barely 547:19 596:2 barley 525:24 barn 512:25 barns 529:24 barons 495:13 bartley 426:12 429:9 519:15 519:16,19,22 520:3,5,15,20 520:24 521:4,7 521:13,16,19 524:25 526:20 545:22,22 base 577:22 based 544:5 575:3 577:23 594:19 bashing 581:18 basic 511:6 basis 442:20 460:7 505:9,11 588:1 622:23 basket 530:17 basketball 484:12 bat 538:6,7,7 bats 531:6	batteries 557:4 563:19 battery 558:18 590:2 beacom 514:22 beans 465:20 468:13 474:13 484:20 bearing 594:25 beautiful 458:17 556:21 557:24 579:24 580:4 587:23 591:18 605:8 614:12,22 627:5 beauty 435:18 587:25 588:7 bebout 425:23 486:25 487:4,7 487:8 523:16 524:16 began 458:8 595:6 beginning 456:16,18 527:11 533:8,9 598:1 605:13 begins 521:10 555:15 634:1 behalf 423:2,13 424:2 431:17 431:21,24 437:23 440:17 461:5 466:3,16	502:21 506:23 525:2 531:19 559:14,20 582:20 624:11 behemoth 569:15 beings 493:20 belatedly 457:25 belgium 516:18 believe 470:14 472:5 484:25 489:9,15,19 508:18 519:12 523:11 524:11 524:12,14 534:20 541:17 548:8 549:19 550:18,18 551:8 571:1 582:7 596:10 602:17 615:19 628:6 belong 544:22 belt 464:21 bemiller 574:1 bench 520:9 benefit 564:13 587:16 591:10 620:13 benefiting 605:17 benefits 440:2 449:12 458:11 493:22
---	---	---	---

berger 456:5 berkeley 446:6 594:19 best 453:8 454:3 463:25 483:2 502:4 508:14,17 534:4 605:6 635:9 636:6 bet 467:12 575:16 beth 426:12 429:9 519:15 521:19 545:22 better 443:1 465:15 468:6,6 489:16,20 498:14,14 569:19 beyond 447:5 bgn 422:5 430:5 451:10 556:16 biden 488:13 big 438:12 489:3 495:15 497:7 544:23 580:9 589:19 632:2 bigger 516:24 bill 425:8 443:7 443:14 444:4 458:1 478:13 495:19,22 517:2,8 530:10	575:1 billion 539:2 596:14 bills 522:16 binder 466:10 birds 501:24 556:24 588:12 bit 475:17 498:1 515:21 553:12 601:3 bitter 632:16 blackouts 559:8 563:11 563:12 blank 543:1 blinding 459:25 blindsided 568:4 blood 488:3 blossom 596:17 blue 480:17 board 422:1 424:13 430:13 431:7 433:12 437:15 439:25 447:16 452:15 452:18,21 453:2,6,12,14 453:18,20,22 453:23 454:1,4 454:10,21 461:10 462:24 469:10,11 479:10 486:6	502:19,24 504:23,23 516:4 517:6,7 526:10 532:22 545:13 561:17 574:20 575:2 575:18 577:22 578:3 584:12 585:10 616:8 626:11 628:3 628:17 633:22 board's 510:9 bob's 598:19 body 518:4 bogantz 425:8 443:7,11,14 444:4 booming 437:25 booths 575:8 border 581:7 borders 579:22 boss 441:24 bothered 507:1 585:14 bottom 531:5 576:24 601:25 615:25 617:8 bought 513:10 529:22 538:18 588:2 595:2,4 595:7 610:25 611:12 631:17 boundaries 452:20 453:1	523:14 bowen 425:14 455:19,23 456:1 461:4 box 423:7 455:12 466:21 554:4,5 629:18 629:20,22 boxes 494:18 breach 557:13 bread 490:11 530:17 break 511:18 518:14,21 breakfast 489:23 breaking 538:14 557:2 breaks 522:24 breathe 449:17 breathing 493:19 brenda 427:3 565:6 566:4,13 brian's 523:13 bribe 457:18 brief 431:13,15 briefly 584:10 bring 570:12 629:20 bringing 498:23 brings 489:18 brochure 458:18
--	---	---	--

broke 470:21 broken 590:11 broker 447:9 brother 626:17 629:4 brotherhood 439:12 brothers 437:20 440:19 brought 465:1 480:1 517:20 525:10 623:23 brown 480:2 481:20,21 482:3 538:7 brownfield 508:12 buffers 622:25 623:3 buffet 517:2 build 476:10 498:19,20 512:25 523:21 523:25 580:12 583:21 590:23 609:2 building 449:18 623:19 built 482:8,9 513:9 530:18 583:24 598:13 bullet 562:6,14 562:19 bunch 490:15 510:17	burden 569:22 burned 558:18 burning 465:4 595:16 business 433:15,20,21 434:24 438:13 457:21 464:4,5 468:16 528:21 581:24,24 595:12 businesses 530:25 564:4 588:23 632:2 busy 530:1 570:5 butcher 579:10 579:21 butler 621:15 butter 490:11 butts 579:15 buy 488:10 489:2 589:8 590:25 608:21 621:12 627:1 buying 450:14 465:7 608:19 611:7,22 621:3 632:2	587:7 604:13 612:21,24 613:2,6,10,14 613:17,18,18 625:22 cabins 557:21 cable 568:25 cadmium 595:17 california 446:19,22 call 476:13 481:22 492:10 600:3 627:16 627:17 called 439:1 444:24 568:25 585:15 627:10 627:19 calling 519:6 cancel 514:2 candace 427:23 613:17 candidate 605:21 candidates 628:14 candy 612:20 canvassing 605:17 capital 436:25 477:9 caps 594:20 car 450:14	carbon 449:14 care 450:6 469:8,8,20,24 470:2 473:15 483:22 488:2 490:7,22 498:25 499:4,5 568:11 career 439:1,9 439:11 515:24 careful 479:18 576:2 caretaker 478:4 caring 478:24 carolina 446:20 446:22,23 carpenter 444:22 carpenters 437:19 438:17 438:17 439:11 439:12 442:6 444:22 case 422:4 430:5,11 472:25 484:2 504:18 520:22 533:5 535:13 542:15 555:4 560:6 570:22 575:4 577:7,13 577:20 582:21 584:9 603:25 612:23 622:3
	c		
	c 423:1 424:1 430:1 477:9,9 500:6 556:3 566:14,14 572:18,19,19		

<p>622:23,23 632:24 633:22 cases 578:3 cash 548:5 catch 493:2 548:15 595:16 catching 549:23,24 cattle 474:13 484:20 caught 486:5 492:16 558:19 cause 459:24 471:13 478:16 501:23 580:19 608:7 615:11 caused 550:21 558:16 562:11 615:15 causing 450:4 557:2,12 caution 455:2 caveat 620:18 cell 451:4 center 439:9 456:19 482:12 centerburg 496:22 548:15 centers 438:22 centerville 518:1 central 437:18 438:16 494:1 certainly 529:16 577:22</p>	<p>certificate 422:5 469:11 575:19 635:1 636:1 certification 430:7 certify 635:3 636:2 cetera 568:21 591:6 chains 469:21 chair 424:12 430:12 chance 466:19 486:3 change 438:11 438:13,14 517:13 changing 524:12 chaos 558:15 character 435:15,20 482:24 483:10 528:18 charitable 516:4 charlie 467:6 charts 580:5 chase 435:9,24 chaumont 558:18 check 495:6 checks 584:14</p>	<p>cheering 431:8 chemical 464:6 524:6 chemicals 433:9 458:24 547:24 557:3 chesapeake 423:16 chicken 490:5 chickens 474:13 490:4 chief 501:1 516:3 chiefs 475:10 children 439:18 511:22 512:3 538:13 548:13 549:3,3 605:3 614:15 620:7,23 621:5 621:7 china 449:18 488:9 517:3 chinese 530:11 chip 455:9 choose 521:9 527:10,12 536:1,3 555:14 572:10 578:25 607:4 613:10 613:11 619:9 619:10 625:12 630:13 choosing 519:25 520:1</p>	<p>521:1 586:24 593:8 chose 626:24 626:25 chosen 559:17 chris 423:14 431:21 chronologica... 598:4 chuck 574:1 circadian 494:1 cited 446:5 589:17,21,24 590:5,17 cities 615:4 citing 452:18 453:12,18 citizens 453:9 518:5 528:25 529:4 559:8 567:5 573:21 574:5,16 605:7 608:1 city 434:6 500:21 501:7 501:13 502:3,7 504:11 506:23 506:25 507:2,3 507:9,13,14 508:5,15,19 515:10,24 516:1,3 580:9 594:18 614:17 city's 506:15</p>
--	--	---	--

civil 574:25 claiming 539:4 claims 530:6 clapping 431:8 clarify 433:24 503:17 519:13 519:18 565:9 586:9 606:6 class 495:13 clay 471:11 539:11 clean 458:9 489:19 530:7 530:13 539:1 cleaning 449:16 531:10 532:4,6 cleanup 459:14 clear 450:16 471:5 492:25 511:13,13 513:24 529:25 clearcutting 450:3 465:8,9 clearing 531:7 538:9 clearly 511:16 597:6 clendening 508:25 clerk 506:8 cleveland 517:25 climate 446:5 450:4 596:5	597:11 clinton 487:23 516:7 550:4,8 550:14,20 562:8 566:18 567:13,25 572:23 573:15 573:17,19,22 574:3,13,15,16 574:23 575:24 604:14 close 444:18 448:16 465:8 512:6 539:5 544:1,8 608:5 608:24 612:2 closely 446:16 closer 489:18 512:6 602:18 closest 463:2 567:21 closing 451:7 466:3 490:20 628:17 closure 570:2 clothes 524:17 cloud 596:5 cloudy 450:18 596:5,8 clover 525:25 club 443:18 coal 449:19 465:4 478:1 558:23 585:20	coalition 444:25 code 494:13 495:2 574:25 cody 514:22 colleague 519:5 colleagues 455:3 collect 589:20 collected 507:16 508:4 574:16 589:19 collective 502:3 collectors 538:24,25 college 435:13 435:16,16,19 605:18 collier 573:25 colonial 597:12 colopy 426:10 515:1,5,9 colored 538:7 columbus 423:8,17 424:7 444:25 496:21 501:6 503:15 514:15 515:24 516:1,3 580:3 580:10 615:3 616:5 628:9 634:2 combine 522:22	come 436:6 464:10 478:15 483:1 484:24 486:19 488:1 489:15,17,20 499:2,10 518:22 519:14 520:15 521:9 527:10 539:6 555:14 585:7 615:3,7 comes 450:17 450:18,21 465:24 473:21 476:10 481:6 490:6,16 540:11 581:13 597:8 621:16 631:9 comfort 494:8 624:6 coming 440:16 463:9 478:23 489:4 498:12 537:2 551:23 552:14 559:6 575:15 590:23 command 469:22 commencem... 622:5 comment 484:1 484:5 545:21 550:16 560:19 560:21
---	--	--	--

comments 430:17 459:20 560:5 561:7,8 561:10 573:20	440:1 445:24 452:25 453:9 457:13 458:7 478:11,17	472:7 482:4 529:15 544:4 581:19,21 596:11 598:13	concern 473:1 512:7 543:8 608:7
commercial 457:24 623:17	479:20 483:3 485:6 492:21	compatibility 422:6 430:7	concerned 433:8 449:14 472:18 485:23
commission 507:5	493:14 495:16 495:18 502:5	compensation 481:8	518:4 537:9 559:1 581:9
commissioner 479:13 608:16 622:20	507:23 510:13 513:5 529:13 537:7 540:7,15	complain 529:19	583:25 594:9 604:22 605:5 605:24 614:17 615:13
commissioners 447:12 453:14 454:5,10 478:11 573:25 574:9,23 576:15,23 617:24 628:13 631:24	540:16,17 553:16 567:6 591:13 607:21 608:2,9 609:12 609:14 611:19 615:8 616:1,6 616:9 617:1,8 617:9 620:21 623:14 627:2,5 628:1,11,19 631:21 632:1 632:15	complete 450:13	concerning 573:17 609:9
commit 439:22 441:1 499:10		completed 481:7	concerns 433:5 453:6 470:15 475:6,20,24 478:17 479:16 484:25 485:2,3 485:13 511:21 512:9 584:24 614:7 620:4,20 623:13,21,24
committed 440:15 479:16		completely 466:1 575:25	
common 449:4 450:8 482:22 511:7 549:8 585:19 595:14	community's 628:6	completing 501:1	
communication 568:2,25	companies 433:16 444:12 457:18,20 489:3 504:7 553:7 569:21 581:18 596:15 631:11	complex 482:21	concluded 634:8
communities 458:18 495:2 514:13 517:22 518:2	company 431:5 433:19,21 456:21 464:5	compliance 485:23 486:7 501:16,19 569:5 585:10	conclusion 478:15 483:2 582:4
community 439:24,25		components 459:2	condition 473:22,23 476:14 542:24 542:25 543:2 621:25 622:4 622:19
		comprehend 631:14	
		comprehensive 494:11	
		concept 563:15 569:3	
		conception 497:14	

conditioning 563:24	conservation 523:11	constructed 457:23 540:10	content 541:25 542:2
conditions 450:18 461:16 469:3,12,13,16 470:13,14,16 485:24 488:24 526:12 532:14 532:19,21,23 532:25 584:18 584:23 633:4	conservative 444:24	598:14	contiguous 544:25
conducted 446:6	conserve 434:14 435:12 494:9 559:22	construction 450:12 460:3,4 460:6 476:15 482:5 486:8 501:20 531:8 538:2 543:2 568:20 569:3,6 591:6 594:10 622:5	continually 488:18
conduit 568:25	consider 447:4 450:11 472:21 541:22 559:16 582:10	consultant 581:7	continue 437:11 444:2 472:13 477:21 478:3 497:4 500:17 515:17 559:16,18 632:10
conference 568:20	considerable 590:14	consultation 621:23 622:7	contract 609:4
congratulate 434:9	considerably 598:20	consumer 488:25	contracted 445:10
congratulations 508:1 509:5	consideration 454:10 455:5 479:18 499:12	consumption 450:17	contractors 478:23
connections 439:1	considered 453:2	cont'd 424:1 426:1 427:1 428:1	contracts 445:7 458:11 529:2 590:7 608:13
connotation 510:16,20 511:4	considering 447:1 539:9 622:24 623:8	contact 567:23	contradict 495:22
conquer 529:11	consistent 430:25	contacted 514:25 567:13 567:22	contrary 488:6
cons 497:11 499:15	consistently 573:22	contain 547:23	contribute 627:23
consciousness 457:10	constant 460:6 537:12	contained 558:20	contributions 552:14,18
consequence 569:8	constantly 524:11	containing 622:10	control 488:10
conservancy 435:9,24	constitution's 575:1	contaminated 433:8	convenient 632:9
	construct 422:7		conversation 506:23 567:15
			convert 465:5

convince 605:14	544:3 547:22 548:18 550:9	councilman 500:21	counting 516:23
convinced 581:11	550:23 551:4,5 552:9 555:4	counsel 430:18 432:2 436:14	countless 574:20 608:18 627:22
cooling 449:15	560:24 561:11	467:15 519:18	countries 488:9
coordinator 597:1	561:18 563:12 564:10 565:9	520:2,22 521:2 521:5,11	516:15,17
copies 534:7,8 534:10 564:25	565:22 571:21 571:22 572:4	524:21 527:3,7 527:12 531:15	country 435:17 492:24 493:24 539:25 580:9 582:9 587:24 608:25
copy 454:9 461:18 466:18 466:21 526:15 567:15 568:21 576:17,18	575:19 577:20 578:11,19 579:2 585:4,24 586:22 592:4 595:23 597:23 599:24 600:6 602:2,23 603:1 603:4 606:10 612:4 617:10 625:1	535:16,20,25 540:22 542:16 555:7 559:25 565:12,16 570:15 571:24 572:3,8 575:10 577:15 578:7 578:14,18,23 582:14 586:6 586:13,17,21 591:23 592:24 597:16 606:5 606:19,23 607:2 609:16 613:1,5,9 616:12 617:24 618:22 619:1,6 624:15 625:6 625:10 630:2,6 630:11 632:19 635:10,13 636:7,10	county 429:10 433:12 437:20 439:9 441:9,17 441:20,22,23 442:2 443:20 444:6,6,8,17 445:1,8,12 446:1 447:12 447:12 452:20 452:22 453:14 453:15,21,25 454:2,4,9,17,19 455:6,10 458:3 458:11,20 464:2,3,9 470:7,10 474:9 474:18,19 477:25 478:11 479:14 480:2 481:21,21 482:3 483:12 495:20 498:10 498:12 500:24
core 436:15	correcting 458:19	counsel's 592:20 625:2	
corn 464:21 465:19,20 468:13 474:13 484:20 523:19 557:8 588:18 614:23,25	cost 475:14 481:4 538:15 568:17 569:21 590:2,4 628:2	counter 460:11	
cornfields 614:22	costing 539:1		
corporation 596:13	cotton 490:17 490:18		
corporations 495:14 497:20 631:18 632:2	council 423:13 423:15 431:22 437:19 500:21 501:7 506:24 506:24 507:1,2 507:9,13,22,24 508:5,6,15		
correct 442:18 479:5 482:11 484:17 502:24 503:11 522:4 525:11 535:13 536:2,21,22 541:11 542:17			

501:12,14,25 502:2,2 503:22 504:4,8,9 513:17 515:22 517:4,17,18,21 525:3 528:7 529:7 533:3,7 538:19 541:5 541:13,16 542:4,7 545:11 546:7,15,17,24 547:9,13 551:7 551:8 552:9,11 552:15 553:6 553:14 556:15 558:16 562:16 570:20,24 573:25 574:9 574:22,23 575:4 576:15 576:22 577:1 579:23,23,25 582:24 587:18 587:23 591:18 592:3 595:25 597:8,13,22 604:23 605:1 606:1 608:1,6 609:25 610:1 612:3 616:17 622:20 624:2 627:7,8 628:9 628:13,13 629:8 631:20 631:23 632:6,7	633:1 couple 430:16 475:9,10 479:21 507:12 550:16 560:18 567:12 596:1 628:23 course 458:1 602:24 603:2 court 431:10 518:6 549:12 558:3 576:3 cover 596:5 covered 523:9 523:14 525:20 covert 595:12 covid 456:16 458:2 537:8 595:5 coyotes 538:12 cracked 557:4 craig 426:10 469:6 471:3 479:22 515:1,8 581:6,12 595:17 crane 480:17 537:23 543:3 cranes 542:25 543:9 556:24 create 439:6 440:23 449:20 523:21 603:1 created 494:6 530:23	creates 590:13 creating 450:9 470:22 478:18 creatures 537:25 credit 538:16 credits 439:4 creek 524:9,10 594:12,16 crews 459:14 crime 499:9 crimes 499:11 crimson 525:24 crisis 456:18 493:23 criteria 622:23 criticized 505:20 crop 523:14,23 cropped 467:2 crops 464:10 464:11 466:24 468:3,5 484:18 523:9,9 525:20 556:22 cross 440:7 461:2 466:14 481:13 502:14 521:3 524:23 527:7 531:16 535:20 540:23 542:16 552:4 555:11 560:1 563:3 565:16 570:16 572:3	575:11 577:9 577:15 578:18 582:16 586:17 592:1,24 597:17 606:23 609:17 613:5 616:13 619:1 625:6 628:21 630:6 632:20 crossbones 547:20 crossing 594:7 crushed 591:19 ctavenor 423:18 culbertson 514:24 culminates 557:15 culverts 581:10 curious 504:5 current 562:8 602:1 621:8,11 622:20 currently 441:11,17,19 442:1 449:5,18 457:5 484:15 500:20 504:8 557:7 588:18 628:24 631:17 curriculum 438:25 439:14 curtain 471:4
---	--	---	--

<p>cut 430:24 cutting 568:15 609:5 cx 425:2 426:2 427:2 428:2 cycle 588:15</p>	<p>date 422:12 504:24 573:13 dated 454:14 545:22 560:12 560:15,20 562:4 daughter 498:2 605:3 626:25 david 422:14 430:9 518:12 day 422:11 484:11 488:12 508:24 511:15 511:16 514:14 558:17 563:18 563:20 564:4,7 567:5 573:24 589:25 591:4 609:3 days 459:25 475:10 486:11 511:13,13 546:6 568:19 596:7 deal 469:5,19 469:22 471:2 484:10 514:9 514:10 558:22 575:7 580:17 581:19 608:15 dealers 464:6,6 dealing 478:7 485:19 dealt 484:11 485:15 581:16</p>	<p>581:18,25 dean 427:15 592:15,18,21 593:1,6,9,12,16 597:19 deans 429:16 debate 442:25 505:20 debilitating 492:23 deceptive 537:9 608:17 decide 458:4 495:1 498:6 575:18,22 decides 445:21 decimate 594:12 decision 493:18 577:23 586:1 605:2 decisions 453:15 467:22 514:11 decline 460:20 decommissio... 569:2 decrease 433:6 539:12 558:14 decreasing 463:13 485:1 485:13 deep 620:20 deeper 582:10</p>	<p>deeply 604:3 deer 433:6,7 538:12 556:24 588:11 defending 530:1 defense 475:19 deficit 570:5 defined 568:12 definitely 483:13 580:19 583:7 584:2 585:25 degradation 540:14 degrade 459:2 degrading 594:10 degree 439:6 457:4 delano 594:12 demand 450:20 563:16 589:15 demanded 544:7,9 democracy 573:14 denied 454:1 539:20 dense 598:17 deny 597:14 616:8 624:10 628:18 denying 559:22</p>
d			
<p>d 425:1 426:1 427:1 428:1 430:1 432:14 436:25 496:16 509:17 536:11 566:14 587:7 593:16 613:18 daily 587:25 dairy 490:12 damage 459:7 478:21 580:23 damaged 459:3 540:5 547:25 583:25 damages 548:5 damaging 456:25 581:3 danger 595:21 dangers 615:14 daniel 426:3 496:15 danville 474:20 dark 627:19,20 darn 474:21 data 488:2 511:18 512:11 559:9</p>			

department 424:14 430:14 458:22 481:3,6 500:23 501:17 502:23 515:24 516:1,9 538:15 departments 458:13 depression 492:24 derek 426:8 509:6,17 describe 576:20 599:6 600:13 description 429:2 deserve 627:2 deserves 632:7 design 471:15 471:16 482:4,4 482:6 504:7 designate 447:13 designed 494:3 585:4 622:13 designee 424:14 430:14 454:8 desirable 494:12 desire 621:13 desk 576:18 despair 624:9	despite 493:9 destabilization 450:5 destiny 495:12 destroy 556:21 588:7 609:7 destroyed 517:12 539:21 destructive 456:25 determined 453:7 detrimentally 539:23 devalue 485:8 devastated 608:14 615:6 develop 450:18 developer 493:12 developers 539:15 developing 553:15 623:17 development 424:2 435:23 452:19 453:5,7 453:24,25 454:5 465:17 482:9 494:12 501:9 508:16 596:11 developments 434:14,24 454:1 502:1	dice 427:12 586:8,11,14,18 586:22,25 587:3,6 dictators 595:1 difference 471:8,12 549:23 different 460:17 471:16 471:25 499:2 506:3,13 516:2 517:14 543:14 551:17 585:15 595:8 differently 582:2 difficult 431:9 488:12 492:22 595:15 dig 582:10 digging 567:19 digital 635:8 636:3 diligence 437:15 567:11 dilt 467:21 468:1 dilute 596:6 diminishing 557:2 dipping 489:7 direct 433:1 437:12 444:3 449:2 452:11	456:14 462:21 477:22 487:20 492:4 497:5 500:18 510:5 515:18 522:8 528:5 536:24 556:12 567:1 573:5 579:17 587:14 594:1 604:20 607:24 614:4 620:2 622:11 626:9 631:8 directed 434:20 454:8 directly 503:24 506:11 527:23 528:25 557:5 557:10,11 599:19 610:20 director 502:22 502:23 directors 433:13 dirt 476:5 608:4 disadvantage 595:11 disagree 445:20 disarms 494:2 disclosure 537:4 discovered 596:22
---	--	---	---

<p>discuss 460:2</p> <p>discussed 475:8</p> <p>discussing 505:23</p> <p>discussion 478:15 505:19 520:9</p> <p>discussions 472:14</p> <p>disease 632:14 632:15</p> <p>disgrace 587:23</p> <p>disgusting 627:18</p> <p>dishonest 608:17</p> <p>displace 501:22 588:9</p> <p>displacement 512:9</p> <p>displays 508:9</p> <p>disposal 590:9</p> <p>disrupted 480:11,13</p> <p>disruption 434:16 478:17 557:17</p> <p>disseminate 545:12</p> <p>disseminated 546:8</p> <p>distance 492:11 571:8</p>	<p>district 434:22 475:13 580:16 591:9</p> <p>disturb 480:11</p> <p>disturbed 479:22</p> <p>disturbing 539:3</p> <p>ditommaso 425:5 436:16 436:17,21,24 440:9</p> <p>divided 474:23 474:24</p> <p>division 501:2</p> <p>dj 496:9</p> <p>docket 484:1 550:17</p> <p>docketed 560:20,21</p> <p>document 434:12 453:11 453:13 460:14 610:17</p> <p>doing 439:16 441:12 460:15 465:10 510:23 511:20 573:10</p> <p>dollars 581:20</p> <p>don 592:13,14</p> <p>donations 552:19,20,21 553:4</p> <p>donna 574:4</p>	<p>door 495:16 605:14</p> <p>doors 438:23</p> <p>double 489:7</p> <p>doug 431:23 440:9</p> <p>doug.holthus 424:8</p> <p>douglas 424:4</p> <p>downs 493:10</p> <p>downsides 631:14</p> <p>downstream 580:20 581:10</p> <p>dozen 600:24</p> <p>dozens 558:23</p> <p>draft 507:5</p> <p>drain 471:4 583:23,24 585:1,5 609:8</p> <p>drainage 580:17,21,22 581:6 584:18</p> <p>drawing 543:1 569:4 594:17 598:23</p> <p>drawings 534:15 569:3</p> <p>drawn 458:12</p> <p>dream 489:18 493:9 539:17 591:17</p> <p>dreamed 621:6</p> <p>dressed 459:15</p>	<p>drilled 581:1</p> <p>drilling 558:24</p> <p>drink 524:18</p> <p>drinking 433:7</p> <p>drive 448:13 512:20 513:17 515:9 574:12</p> <p>driven 597:12</p> <p>drives 492:25 493:5</p> <p>driveway 545:10</p> <p>driving 627:19</p> <p>drop 485:4</p> <p>dropped 522:16</p> <p>dropping 497:15 568:10</p> <p>drove 492:15</p> <p>drummond 437:3</p> <p>dry 581:15</p> <p>dublin 517:23</p> <p>due 437:21,23 567:11 580:23 594:10 595:11 626:19</p> <p>duly 635:5</p> <p>dust 459:19 460:2,2 603:1</p> <p>dwelling 513:15</p> <p>dx 425:2 426:2 427:2 428:2</p>
---	--	---	---

e	earth 449:15 492:11 530:12 easement 435:21 easier 549:12 east 422:18 423:6 424:6 474:19 604:13 617:14,15 618:3 easy 444:20 445:4 631:19 eat 465:16 eckert 423:4 431:18 economic 495:7 ecosystem 538:11 594:12 ecosystems 557:17 educate 551:9 551:12,13 educational 553:15 effect 449:15 449:16 529:15 530:13 538:3 557:18 effective 454:11 456:21 456:24 568:18 621:23 effects 591:5,6 efficiency 449:21 516:13	efficient 434:15 449:11 516:19 596:5 eggs 489:24 490:3 eight 445:9 471:21 476:8 507:21 590:12 596:10 623:15 either 438:6 482:7 485:18 516:12 517:21 518:5 568:12 610:19 611:14 627:13 el 422:5 430:5 451:10 556:16 elected 454:18 455:3 502:4 507:2,24 577:24 578:2 election 479:13 574:7 616:2 electric 422:8 450:24 516:13 522:16 563:25 570:6 electrical 595:13 electricity 449:21 451:1 489:16 559:19 563:14,21 564:1,5,13 627:6,8	elevating 495:11 elevation 557:11 580:19 583:6 eliminated 478:12 eloquent 529:9 else's 513:17 email 454:16 emailed 545:17 617:23 embarking 633:23 emergency 505:9,11 emfs 550:22 emily 428:3 618:17 619:16 emission 590:16 emotional 467:22 493:1 employed 635:11,14 636:8,11 employee 497:17,22 635:13 636:10 employees 589:3 empowerment 553:11 enabled 458:3
----------	--	--	--

<p>enacted 494:7</p> <p>encapsulate 458:24</p> <p>endangered 480:16 531:6 537:20 538:5,6</p> <p>ended 567:9</p> <p>endured 537:15</p> <p>energy 450:17 452:19 453:3,8 453:25 458:9 458:20 501:3 501:18 516:9 530:7,10 538:16 539:1 559:4,7 563:17 569:21 589:10 589:18,20 590:2 632:12</p> <p>enforcement 516:4</p> <p>engage 484:19</p> <p>engaged 468:12</p> <p>engineer 465:1 470:7,10 581:6</p> <p>engineered 471:15</p> <p>engineering 508:19</p> <p>engineers 472:7 508:20 553:22</p> <p>enhance 622:14 622:18</p>	<p>enjoy 588:11</p> <p>enjoyable 588:14</p> <p>enjoyed 435:7</p> <p>enjoying 557:22</p> <p>ensure 435:14</p> <p>entire 441:21 485:11 492:20 507:14 510:17 513:16,17 532:7 624:3</p> <p>entitled 458:19</p> <p>entrance 431:7</p> <p>entry 432:4</p> <p>environment 434:15,16 435:6 450:9 540:17 559:22 632:18</p> <p>environmental 422:5 423:13 423:15 430:7 431:22 435:14 458:21 589:16</p> <p>environments 511:23</p> <p>eolian 596:13</p> <p>epa 486:17 501:20 502:8 502:23</p> <p>epidemic 493:24</p> <p>equal 495:18 513:6</p>	<p>equipment 433:17 522:23 595:21</p> <p>erase 569:14</p> <p>erode 475:24</p> <p>eroding 523:24</p> <p>erosion 463:12 472:20 484:25 485:12 524:3</p> <p>error 447:2</p> <p>es 635:4</p> <p>especially 523:14 626:19 632:13</p> <p>esquire 423:3,4 423:14 424:4</p> <p>establish 435:17</p> <p>established 552:8</p> <p>estate 447:9</p> <p>estimates 532:8 538:15</p> <p>et 568:21 591:6</p> <p>eternity 538:16</p> <p>ethically 581:24</p> <p>europe 489:17 516:14,15,16 558:21</p> <p>evd 429:2</p> <p>evening 431:16 431:20 436:17 451:16 461:4 502:16 524:25</p>	<p>531:18 540:25 541:1 555:1,1 555:2 560:3,4 563:5,6,7,8,9 565:8 570:18 571:20 575:13 582:18,19 586:16 592:20 592:23 597:19 604:5 606:15 606:22 609:19 613:1,4 616:15 618:18,22,25 625:2 628:23 630:2,5 632:22 632:23</p> <p>evenly 628:6</p> <p>events 457:9 596:1</p> <p>eventually 529:24 530:16 582:8 590:19</p> <p>everybody 463:19 479:23 498:7 510:9</p> <p>everyone's 495:3</p> <p>everything's 467:3</p> <p>evidence 495:20 535:11 554:24 565:5 603:19 612:18 618:16</p>
--	---	---	--

evidentiary 521:10 527:11 542:16 555:15 565:20 572:7 577:10,16 578:22 586:20 593:4 613:8 619:5 625:9 630:10 633:25 evidently 480:22 exact 459:21 599:23 exactly 486:9 542:3 584:7 examination 440:7 461:2 466:14 481:13 502:14 521:3 524:23 527:7 531:16 535:20 540:23 552:4 555:11 560:1 563:3 565:16 570:16 572:3 575:11 578:18 582:16 586:17 592:1,24 597:17 606:23 609:17 613:5 616:13 619:1 625:6 628:21 630:6 632:20 examine 577:10,15	examiner 422:14,15,16 example 439:15 450:2 538:20 545:19 exceed 434:20 584:5 excellent 464:11 exception 513:20 excerpts 434:12 excess 557:12 580:17 581:15 exclude 458:4 exclusion 503:22 exclusionary 447:14 excuse 534:1 610:21 exhibit 429:4,6 429:8,10,12,14 429:16,18,20 429:22 533:23 535:10 543:17 545:23 547:6 561:2,2 565:4 565:4 598:25 599:1,3,7 600:9,10 603:18,18 610:7 612:17 617:2 618:15	exhibits 554:16 554:17,18,21 554:23 560:18 existing 501:22 570:3 580:22 expansive 492:16 expect 470:9 482:19 492:25 497:17 575:2 594:21 expected 529:23 622:1,2 expensive 451:6 559:6 590:1 632:12 experience 485:18 492:19 493:6 558:14 experienced 486:2 492:23 550:20 558:22 562:10 596:1 expert 456:19 563:25 experts 496:1 553:23,25 explain 467:1 explained 467:1 505:17 explore 596:9 express 510:12 620:20 626:11 expresses 453:22	extension 510:8 extensive 553:20 extinguish 433:10 extra 460:2 478:18,22 481:2 485:4 581:4 extract 530:12 extreme 580:20 extremely 615:13 eyesight 448:19 f faa 454:23 face 469:19,19 469:20,20 567:14,14 591:5 facebook 542:4 568:3 597:2 faced 475:18 488:19 faces 595:10 facilitate 559:4 facilities 446:3 447:10 465:8 501:18 622:24 facility 422:8 452:16 465:11 622:9,12,25 facing 493:23 fact 433:19 511:1 548:12
--	--	---	---

620:8 factors 591:4 facts 442:20,25 511:5,8,19 516:10 528:15 631:10 factual 458:16 fail 438:10,14 513:25 failed 517:16 failure 559:7 fair 468:8 571:8 577:19 600:23 601:4 faith 530:22 fall 446:4 fallacy 528:17 false 530:6,16 falsified 596:22 familiar 553:10 563:15 families 474:25 475:2 495:10 569:12 632:1 family 478:4 482:9,21 492:10,20 529:21 580:10 595:10 606:7 608:2,24,24 611:25 612:1,2 614:10,14 620:21 622:3 623:23 624:11 632:17	family's 594:4 fancy 495:15 far 449:12 504:24 514:3 517:19 537:8 577:25 591:2 597:2,8 602:13 farm 457:15,23 458:8 462:25 465:16,18 467:12 478:4 479:2 482:20 488:17 489:5,8 489:21 490:5 512:15 516:21 523:4 529:22 579:14,22 580:7,8,10 581:7 588:18 588:20 621:1,2 627:5 628:19 farmed 468:16 468:23,24 478:2 farmer 467:20 468:9 481:22 484:15 489:24 489:24 490:4,7 490:9,11,12,16 490:18 farmer's 540:2 567:12 farmers 433:25 434:1 435:13 435:22 458:12	463:25 464:8 464:14 467:3,4 469:19 488:1 488:19 490:16 490:18 496:1 528:22 539:4 farmhouse 493:7 farming 434:1 488:7 522:19 523:3 524:17 580:15 583:11 602:22,25 603:3,7 farmland 433:25 434:11 435:10 459:4 517:1,5,10,11 517:13 530:14 540:6 544:21 549:8 556:25 568:8 569:17 569:20 582:6 582:12 605:8 608:2 609:7 614:11,16 615:20 624:2 626:20 627:9 627:10 farmlands 538:18 615:22 615:22 624:1 farms 435:19 444:9 457:23 458:17,21	459:19 463:11 466:1 539:18 588:16,17 590:18 627:10 farther 437:22 438:1 fast 455:12 497:17 fate 531:1 father 444:22 478:2 favor 436:3 501:8,11 627:12 628:7 fearful 456:17 fearing 528:24 fears 456:20 529:11 feature 557:21 february 560:15,20 562:4 fed 517:11 federal 464:17 517:14 538:23 federally 538:5 feed 488:18 490:4 517:11 feedback 601:19,22 fedded 516:24 feel 431:4 455:2 473:15 479:19 490:22 498:9 502:1 508:17
--	---	--	---

<p>524:19 529:10 569:4 577:22 581:13 feeling 493:3 feet 434:21 512:4 571:9 felicia 596:24 fell 614:11 615:4 626:18 627:3 fellow 457:18 felt 543:12 574:5 582:2 fence 622:11 fenced 538:10 fences 588:10 fencing 621:22 fertilizer 464:6 feudal 495:15 fgmlaw.com 424:8 field 442:24 450:25 500:25 522:21,24 523:2,3,22 524:5,8 548:20 557:7 568:10 590:23 591:1 594:9 fields 434:1 454:22 488:10 489:12 501:21 516:21,21 517:9 548:22 556:22 557:9</p>	<p>557:18 580:4 587:21 594:6 596:24 605:8 608:7,25 609:8 609:13 615:18 615:20 fight 475:11,13 494:2 540:16 627:25 628:2 632:15 fighting 611:9 figure 573:7,9 file 519:5 568:20 622:6 filed 503:2 618:2 fill 545:12 546:18 561:16 film 537:16 548:11 final 505:25 506:6 finally 480:6 493:9 495:24 finances 493:19 financial 458:10 595:11 621:4 financially 587:16 635:15 636:11 financing 457:8 find 454:3 464:23 465:15 507:19 568:9</p>	<p>595:11 615:7 622:2 finding 567:19 findings 455:1 fine 460:14 467:16 481:10 514:2 542:20 569:7 629:19 633:7 fined 486:5 finish 478:22 576:6,10 fire 433:9,10 458:13 475:9 475:12 481:3,5 548:4,15 549:24,24 558:17,19 595:16 firearms 585:21 fired 449:19 585:20 fires 595:13 firm 431:18 455:1 firms 530:11 first 437:14 439:15 446:10 460:9 463:7 466:22 467:6 486:20 508:8 510:6,24 515:19 519:15 520:21 537:1</p>	<p>541:10 553:4 562:6,18 566:6 570:25 579:19 596:25 597:9 598:6 614:8 626:13 firsthand 447:10 fit 464:16,24 609:13 five 430:21,25 435:12 460:21 462:24 468:8 471:22 476:7 485:9 486:19 492:6 531:13 532:8 540:19 557:15 595:7 595:13 614:14 614:14 623:15 fix 466:2 478:22 fixer 608:19 flag 511:2 flags 508:22 582:3 flash 430:21 flaw 478:12 479:7 flies 526:3 flight 494:2 557:19 flooding 480:5 480:8 540:6 557:3,12</p>
---	--	---	--

558:14 floodplain 531:5 floor 438:18 florida 464:21 flown 523:10 525:20 526:1 fly 523:13 flying 433:11 498:21 focus 632:1 focused 458:2 fold 538:17 foliage 601:3 folks 432:5 436:3 457:6 475:6 518:4 519:4 follow 532:24 569:7 595:22 followed 456:20 469:7 502:3 569:9 food 433:7 449:23 488:23 489:1 497:17 524:17 530:18 557:2 558:14 582:9 588:19 588:20 605:10 609:8 foods 517:14 foot 523:5,6 forages 468:14	force 454:11 627:20 forced 529:10 foregoing 635:3,4 636:4 foresee 559:6 foresight 434:10 forest 449:13 forestation 449:8 forests 449:15 450:3 forever 459:14 469:23 470:2 509:3 530:23 forget 437:14 476:5 forgot 629:17 form 546:3,7,9 546:10,11,16 570:13 571:7 formation 541:12 formed 435:10 541:15 former 515:22 forms 545:12 546:20 561:11 561:15,16,22 562:15,15 forty 458:11 531:24 583:11 forward 463:17 466:13 523:7	532:18 537:6 575:22 fossil 449:22 fought 469:22 found 478:9 507:12 537:25 567:20 585:14 614:18,18 621:10 foundation 466:24 482:18 four 445:11 471:22 472:3 476:7 480:3,6 504:6 531:6 558:17 569:11 589:22 595:2 596:3 612:20 631:15 fourth 515:9 531:9 fox 588:12 foxes 538:12 556:24 frader 525:2 fragile 547:24 569:22 frasier 561:5 france 516:17 frasier 422:4 423:2 429:3,4 429:6,9,13,15 429:16,20,22 430:6 431:17 433:3,15	439:20,22 440:2,14,18,25 441:3 444:10 445:1,11 446:4 447:16 452:17 453:3,7,24 454:5 457:5 461:5 466:4,17 487:22 492:8 494:4,19 501:9 501:16 502:21 503:16 506:19 507:17 508:4 516:6 522:10 522:10,11 523:20 531:19 533:22,22,23 534:2,22 535:1 535:8,10 540:13,13 543:16,17 545:21,23 547:5,6 551:17 554:18,19,19 554:23 556:15 560:19,21,25 561:2,15,16 562:3,5,15,15 564:22 565:3,4 567:3 573:17 574:2,10,14 575:3 576:23 579:22 582:5 582:21 587:21 594:3 598:25
---	--	--	---

599:1 600:8,10 601:5,14,19 603:15,17,18 604:22 605:23 607:25 609:14 610:6,7,12,17 612:14,16,17 614:7 616:25 617:2,18 618:11,14,15 620:5,16 621:9 621:14 622:19 623:16 624:11 626:12 627:15 627:16,18 628:5 631:18 632:11,14,18 frasier's 439:8 528:7 free 431:4 455:2 632:17 freedom 433:20 freeman 424:5 431:24 freeze 595:20 freezer 490:14 french 424:12 430:13 friday 508:8 523:17 fridays 553:4 friends 573:9 623:23 624:12 friendships 474:24	front 431:5 481:6 482:1 506:9 599:21 623:19 frustration 623:1 fuel 449:22 fueled 627:11 fuels 479:3 fulfill 439:7 full 447:9 454:11 459:15 532:5,10 595:7 fully 458:24 fumes 558:19 595:19 functional 590:11 funded 529:14 539:14 597:12 funding 458:12 funds 530:10 further 433:21 476:17 484:21 486:21 509:4 518:5 526:21 534:22 535:5 544:5,11 551:18 562:2 562:21 564:16 571:12 578:4 586:4 600:4 603:8 612:7 618:5 629:10 633:15 635:12	636:9 furthered 515:23 fusion 489:17 future 435:23 438:9 440:24 450:9,10 488:7 489:17 492:20 494:12 495:1 498:15 529:24 538:13 580:11 589:14 620:20 623:13 624:9 631:25	629:6 gas 553:8 558:23,24 569:25 585:20 590:14 gases 590:17 gaslighting 457:3 gates 517:2,8 gathering 478:8 gay 423:6 gender 495:7 gene 424:14 430:15 general 434:25 435:4 442:25 452:24 473:9 494:9 501:4 530:21 532:19 595:9 601:18 generally 505:10 534:21 552:21 617:10 generate 458:9 generation 422:8 450:10 462:25 468:9 generational 496:1 generations 496:2 generic 546:9 gentleman 459:10 470:20
		g	
		g 430:1 443:15 451:23 477:8 607:13 630:23 gallo 636:2,15 gallons 531:11 532:4,8,9 gallop 595:24 gambier 434:10 435:7,9 436:2 gambier's 434:17 gap 594:15 garage 513:9 513:11 garages 588:24 garden 464:9 gary 424:5 431:24 454:7 454:14 541:17	

543:12 gentlemen 511:25 georgia 614:9 615:1 626:13 626:21 geothermal 596:9 germany 516:17 getting 458:2 471:22 482:2 498:21 516:13 627:15 gigawatts 438:20 girls 627:2,2 give 468:4 475:10,14,17 481:5 495:18 520:16,17 526:17 543:16 543:21 601:19 601:22 604:5 610:17 617:6 617:17 624:9 given 439:14 457:13 459:21 460:10 493:12 510:9 539:14 561:11 giving 521:11 620:3 glad 461:20 550:25 551:2	glance 446:10 glare 433:10 434:19 435:1 459:25 608:6 glass 458:24 459:3,8 glespen 427:20 428:8 606:14,17,20 606:24 607:3,6 607:9,12 609:19 610:15 610:16 616:22 629:16,17,21 629:25 630:3,8 630:12,15,19 630:23 632:22 633:11 glespens 429:20 globally 449:23 glove 596:13 go 430:2,2 431:12 432:3 433:15 441:21 441:22,23,23 441:25 463:17 469:21 473:4 498:18,20 501:5 508:18 511:7 516:15 518:5,19 519:3 519:4,4 520:8 520:10,12 529:24 533:20	533:25 545:18 548:22 550:14 551:16 553:17 559:2 560:18 563:7 598:24 614:24 634:5 goal 482:23,25 486:1 goals 539:1 gobbling 489:20 god 528:23 goes 434:18 469:5 470:23 471:4 476:4 575:22 582:3 602:11 going 430:24 431:9 432:2,3 437:24,25 464:19,19,20 466:1,2 467:1 467:19 468:4,5 470:13 471:1 471:12 472:11 472:12,24 473:1,18,20 476:9 480:12 481:4 483:4 485:8,8 490:8 490:14,15 492:5 497:22 497:25 498:12 498:23 499:10 499:11 504:4	510:22,23 511:7 512:15 514:9 516:24 518:3,13,14,21 519:3,5,6 520:11 523:5,7 532:18 533:16 540:7 543:13 543:15,15 569:1,16,20 588:21 589:8 590:19 599:15 601:4 609:1,9 615:7 617:6 634:5 good 431:16,20 435:2 436:17 439:15 448:3 449:4,5,24 451:5,16 457:11 459:1 461:4 464:13 467:4 476:12 479:19 490:22 502:16 511:2 511:11 512:22 522:16 523:23 524:25 529:1 531:18 534:9 540:25 541:1 555:1,2 560:3 560:4 563:5,6 563:7,7,9 565:8 567:7,16 569:2 570:18
---	---	--	--

571:20 575:13 581:23,24 582:2,18,19 585:13,18,23 597:19 598:17 606:15 609:13 609:19 616:15 618:18 620:19 621:22 624:8 627:16 628:23 632:3,4,22,23 633:14 google 429:18 459:20 600:14 gorgeous 626:19 gorham 558:25 gotten 517:19 governed 445:25 government 464:18,18 488:20 495:4 517:14,15 539:14 540:9 570:3,5 596:12 597:12 government's 530:9 governments 569:18 grab 548:5 569:20 grade 563:13	grain 490:5,8 580:4 grandchildren 538:14 605:4 614:15 615:16 grandfather 477:25 478:2 grandfathered 478:10 grandmother 615:13 grandparents 621:3 grandson 580:11 grandview 517:23 granted 449:10 453:16 granville 477:12 566:17 572:22 580:2 grassy 556:22 gravel 460:5 471:10 graze 460:11 grazers 568:15 grazing 460:16 474:15 568:9 great 495:8 524:1 552:17 553:23 589:1 602:5 greater 447:6 449:12 472:11	greatly 538:1 591:10 greed 627:11 greedy 631:18 green 530:10 530:13 531:11 558:21 greenhouse 590:14,16 greg 514:24 grid 465:14 559:3,18 564:14 569:22 570:3 grind 489:25 ground 449:6 465:8,9,16,19 465:24 470:17 471:9 473:15 473:19 476:3 476:12 479:2 482:20 487:24 488:6,17 489:5 489:8,21 510:23 512:15 522:1,19 525:13 569:1 609:10 614:19 grounds 457:23 groundwater 459:5,16 475:21 591:15 group 432:23 437:9 440:10 448:24 477:19	498:6 519:12 530:5 550:13 552:17 553:22 567:12 596:13 groups 435:14 444:24 grow 464:19,19 464:20 489:25 490:5,9 523:23 614:23 615:17 627:2 growers 488:19 growing 490:14 530:5 growth 437:24 guarantee 440:18 467:11 523:2,6 guarantees 589:7 guess 465:22 466:25 473:14 480:18 533:13 546:4 553:25 584:15 601:9 627:21 guessing 470:20 guests 557:21 557:23 guidance 453:14 501:17 501:20 502:8 guide 597:10
---	---	--	--

guidelines 485:16 502:8 523:11 guilty 549:13 gun 442:5 guys 464:7 465:22 497:24 498:8,12 499:4 499:10 513:25 514:1,4,7 614:6,9	451:18 455:20 462:1 477:3 487:1 491:5 499:24 509:12 515:2 518:12 521:15 527:16 536:7 546:17 555:23 566:3 572:14 579:4 587:2 593:11 599:15 604:8 607:8 613:13 619:12 625:16 630:17 handful 444:10 handing 495:12 handouts 529:15 hannah 427:20 606:13 607:12 633:11 happen 473:20 486:1 488:9 507:19 513:19 588:22 616:2 happened 450:2 475:1,2 478:19,25 517:4 548:16 628:4 happens 450:12 451:3 501:6 503:15 524:15 628:11	happy 431:6 447:11 460:4 567:8 hard 431:10 449:25 459:15 459:22 470:21 495:5 512:10 523:25 609:2 627:21,24 harm 458:17 528:17 615:11 harmony 494:3 harriers 537:20 harvest 522:22 540:3 haupt 509:8 514:21 hay 468:13,15 468:18,20 484:20 557:8 580:4 hazardous 435:1 458:24 591:14 hazmat 459:15 head 512:13 heads 612:19 health 424:15 430:15 433:6 452:24 458:22 473:9 493:22 493:23 494:5,8 511:22 512:9 515:22,25 523:8 524:3	529:20,20 548:1,1 550:21 562:10 591:4,5 591:7,12 healthy 523:23 hear 430:11 483:5 502:18 510:13 528:9 573:12 614:21 623:6,24 heard 438:2 463:14 475:20 475:22 499:8 504:5 522:14 522:17 528:9 556:20 567:11 573:18 591:1 605:15 hearing 422:10 430:5 436:16 461:24,25 505:17 507:6 509:8 514:21 514:22,23,23 514:24 518:11 518:11 521:10 527:11 533:21 533:22 535:6,9 535:25 553:12 554:18,21 555:15,18 559:9 564:22 565:20 572:7 577:10,16 578:22 579:19
h			
h 429:1 500:6 521:19 527:22 536:11 556:3 593:16 604:13 607:12,13 613:18 625:21 625:22 habitat 531:5 543:3 588:9,10 habitation 557:19 hac 537:7 hail 523:17,19 hailstorm 450:25 523:17 half 446:12,23 447:5,5 463:3 499:11 516:15 594:5 596:7 602:8,18 hand 432:8 436:19 443:8 447:23 448:1			

586:21 593:4 603:16 607:1 612:13,15 613:8 618:11 618:13 619:5 623:3 624:23 625:9 630:11 633:17,22,24 634:1 hearings 453:17 460:10 479:8 528:13 530:4 568:22 604:4 heart 493:8 579:24 heartbreak 493:5 heat 516:12 heaven 492:11 heavy 471:11 595:16 height 595:5 614:24 heights 517:24 517:25 held 494:20 596:15 hell 518:2 hello 500:19 502:17 525:1 597:20 612:22 help 517:11 518:20 538:25 550:14 558:3,3	580:15 628:18 helped 493:5 550:11 570:12 621:4 helping 522:21 522:23 herbicides 526:6 hereto 635:14 636:11 heritage 540:7 540:18 heron 480:17 hi 519:16 552:6 612:21 616:16 hicks 422:14 430:2,9 432:1 442:10 455:7 518:12,13,18 519:3 534:9,11 hidden 567:4 608:12 hide 466:12 596:15 608:14 hideous 459:25 high 422:18 438:23 439:3 447:2 449:22 538:14 550:19 550:20 562:7 562:10 569:21 589:22 595:23 596:1 604:13 higher 580:19 583:5 595:9,10	highly 516:20 579:24 hill 492:15 620:11 hillcrest 596:21 598:10 hilliard 517:23 hillier 507:8 hills 556:22 hindrance 608:4 hire 440:19 497:16 hired 434:8 597:6 history 485:21 hit 512:10 hmm 584:20,20 585:17 590:7 602:10 611:5 630:12 hochstetler 574:4 hocott 427:18 427:23 428:5 603:21,22,23 604:1,6,9,13 612:20,21,24 613:2,6,10,14 613:17 624:23 624:25 625:3,7 625:11,14,18 625:21 628:23 hog 490:7,7 529:23	hogs 474:13 holcotts 429:22 hold 497:22 530:25 628:1 632:10 holder 470:9 holds 469:16 hollow 596:20 holly 603:21 holthus 424:4 425:6 431:23 431:23 440:6,8 440:9 442:14 442:16 443:2 564:25 home 446:12 446:14 447:1,3 461:14 491:24 492:18 493:20 494:14 499:5,6 512:1 536:19 537:11,21 540:7 543:13 547:13,17 549:5,6,22,22 549:23 551:14 556:23 557:15 563:22 570:11 594:4 607:21 608:22 617:15 620:11,13,22 620:25 621:1,3 621:4,5,10 626:22
--	--	--	--

<p>homer 475:12 homes 445:15 446:8,23 447:4 498:25 522:15 529:23 530:24 539:21 540:17 558:20 559:2 homeschool 593:24 hominem 528:16 honest 463:6 463:16 honestly 473:19 512:12 honesty 457:20 522:12 honor 442:10 520:4 535:5 545:20 546:1 547:4 564:21 599:13 600:9 603:14 610:4 612:12 616:24 honors 431:17 431:21 534:8 hope 479:9 506:2 513:22 514:12 522:11 528:9 530:22 582:9 589:6 624:9 hopes 580:11 621:12</p>	<p>hoping 439:19 horrible 615:21 627:10 hospital 482:12 hospitals 559:2 host 457:8 hosted 615:2 hosts 557:21 hour 532:9 580:9 595:25 hours 437:22 438:1,24 511:12,13,15 511:15,16,16 518:14 563:18 564:7 608:18 house 465:2 472:9 534:23 544:25 545:3 549:2,3 591:17 595:3,4 599:22 599:23 600:1,2 600:19 601:1,6 601:8,10,21 602:8,9,14,15 608:19,23 609:1,20 610:2 610:25 611:7 611:12 618:3 627:1 houses 463:1 465:17 548:13 608:20 housesit 626:16</p>	<p>housing 595:8 how's 513:6 howl 589:23 hubbard 437:4 huber 517:25 huge 537:18 549:23 human 493:6 493:20 humans 494:3 humble 493:9 hundreds 459:12 488:16 488:16 538:10 hungry 524:18 hunt 537:22 husband 492:13 555:17 579:21 620:7 621:6 husband's 621:2 hush 457:12 567:8 585:15 627:15 hysteria 597:11</p>	<p>545:24 547:7 561:3 599:2 600:11 610:8 617:3 identify 533:20 idly 631:16 ids 596:22 ignorant 528:15 illinois 464:22 images 459:9 imagine 460:6 493:11 512:7 529:25 591:5 601:23 immediate 605:4 immediately 454:12 571:4 626:21 impact 445:5 446:18,21 447:2,6,10 511:22 529:12 538:22 540:5 557:16 568:24 569:10,14 581:9 589:16 615:8,23 621:20 622:1,3 impacted 446:13 531:6 557:11,20 624:12</p>
		<p>i</p>	
		<p>i.e. 515:23 icebreaker 501:4 503:8 idea 451:8 511:2 563:11 615:21 627:10 identification 533:24 543:18</p>	

impacts 434:13 435:5 445:22 453:3 458:21 537:17 622:8 624:1 impairment 540:11 imperil 594:13 implementati... 621:25 import 558:24 importance 623:3 important 449:9 483:10 588:15 594:17 594:24 615:23 imported 488:23 impossible 620:15 improve 488:22 incentives 517:15 inch 471:23,23 472:3,4 476:6 inches 476:8 include 602:22 621:21 622:9 included 454:24 490:16 including 432:16 437:2 438:3,12	443:17 448:11 456:4 462:10 477:11 496:20 501:13 502:7 503:3 509:20 516:3 536:14 556:5,24 566:16 572:21 593:18 607:15 613:20 619:19 625:24 630:25 income 467:23 495:10 513:3 increased 538:17 increasingly 595:14 indiana 438:19 441:16 464:22 individual 522:13 individuals 553:7,24 industrial 434:1 436:3 439:6 454:21 458:4 528:7 530:2,7,20,21 557:25 587:17 587:19 588:6,8 588:16 589:1 591:1,7,19,20 597:1 615:18 615:20 622:22 623:25 627:4	industrializat... 494:17 industry 449:12 529:25 585:19 inefficient 632:12 infancy 524:13 inflation 530:9 influence 493:25 611:24 influences 435:2 influx 594:11 information 478:8,14 507:16 508:4,7 542:12 553:16 554:7 informed 514:25 529:3 608:10 informing 494:18 infrastructure 570:6 initial 505:14 568:14 initially 601:6 601:20 initiated 478:20 479:1 481:17,24,25 innards 459:3	inoperable 581:2 input 453:1 478:10 503:4 544:5 601:14 611:19 617:1,8 617:9,17 insecurities 530:18 inside 446:5 inspector 470:5 515:22 install 489:6 installation 439:13,17 590:15 installations 595:14 installed 438:19 580:16 580:21,24 583:13 584:15 617:15 instance 475:7 532:6 549:15 instinctual 492:18 instituted 540:9 institutional 434:24 insurance 539:4 intact 580:23 628:19
---	---	--	---

<p>integrity 452:24 473:6 473:10,13,14 480:10,12 596:10 intel 489:4,4 588:25 intend 620:22 intended 452:19 intent 495:22 551:6,8 574:8 576:14 intentionally 595:2 interest 439:24 445:13,14 453:4,8,16 454:3 605:6 interested 568:16 635:15 636:12 interesting 450:19 516:8 516:10 intermittent 602:24 603:2 internet 554:1 intervening 432:23 437:9 440:10 443:25 448:21,24 452:8 456:11 462:18 477:19 487:17 492:1</p>	<p>500:15 510:2 515:15 intervenor 423:13 527:24 533:5 535:13 536:21 542:15 555:3 556:15 565:9 570:22 571:21 577:6 577:13 578:11 582:21 586:10 592:16 603:25 606:15 612:23 616:19 618:18 624:24 629:24 632:24 intervenors 424:2 519:13 606:7 interviewer 522:4 introduce 430:12 introductory 430:16 invasion 627:25 inverters 459:24 557:25 569:11 invested 439:23 investigators 596:21 investing 596:13</p>	<p>investment 433:22 440:1 490:23 involved 482:4 541:12,19 552:8 involvement 517:8 ion 590:3 iowa 464:22 irrational 540:8 issue 470:3 471:1 497:15 505:21 508:22 508:25 517:18 517:19,20 529:10 608:6 628:16 631:24 632:9 issued 461:11 469:1 504:18 526:9 584:9,13 issues 463:11 469:10 470:5,7 470:10 472:10 505:2 508:19 550:21 562:10 581:10 it'd 627:4 it'll 455:12 473:21 485:25 549:11 item 568:19</p>	<p>j j 462:8 491:15 498:21 625:21 jam 490:12,14 janet 436:15 january 507:25 jared 424:3 431:24 jason 425:17 453:20 454:12 461:25 462:7 462:22 481:3 485:15 519:16 jeanine 461:23 jennifer 424:12 430:13 jeopardized 529:5 jeopardizing 591:11 jeremiah 624:7 jersey 446:20 jill 509:8 514:21 jim 558:13 job 422:21 441:21 484:11 486:2,2 492:14 497:18 jobs 440:23 450:12 482:15 joe 454:16 455:5 john 514:22,23 569:11</p>
--	---	---	--

johnny 428:5 624:22 625:21	460:21,23 461:22 462:5,9	535:7,15,18,23 536:3,6,9,13,17	599:12 600:12 600:16 603:10
johnson 514:23	462:13,17,20	536:20,23	603:16,24
johnstown 443:19	466:6 467:14 476:21,23	540:19,21 543:19 545:25	604:2,7,10,15 604:18 606:4
join 525:6 533:7,14 541:7 570:24 571:3,5 580:11 583:1	477:2,6,10,14 477:18,21 481:9,11 483:17 486:23	547:10 549:10 551:21 554:11 554:15,20 555:3,6,9,13,19	606:10,12,18 606:21,25 607:4,7,10,14 607:18,22
joining 508:5	487:5,9,13,16	555:22,25	609:15 610:9
joke 628:7	487:19 490:24	556:4,8,11	610:12 612:9
joseph 422:20 635:2,18	491:3,9,13,16 491:21,25	558:1 559:24 560:25 563:1	612:15,22,25 613:3,7,11,15
josh 431:18	492:3 496:4,8	564:18,24	613:19,23
joshua 423:4	496:13,17,19	565:2,11,14,18	614:2 616:11
journey 633:24	496:23 497:1,4	565:24 566:2,6	617:4 618:7,13
jr 436:24	499:18,20	566:8,11,15,19	618:21,24
jreckert 423:10	500:3,7,11,14	566:23 570:14	619:4,8,11,14
judge 430:2 432:1,7,11,15 432:19,22,25 436:5,9,12,18 436:22 437:1,5 437:8,11 440:4 442:10 443:4,7 443:12,16,21 443:24 444:2 447:18,22,25 448:3,7,11,14 448:18,20,23 449:1 451:12 451:17,21,25 452:4,7,10 455:7,14,17,24 456:3,7,10,13	500:17 502:12 509:6,11,15,19 509:23 510:1,4 514:17,20 515:6,11,14,17 518:7,13,18 519:3,6,8,11,17 519:20,24 520:7,10,14,21 520:25 521:5,8 521:14,17,22 521:25 522:3,6 524:20 526:22 527:5,9,15,19 527:25 528:3 531:12,15 534:1,5,6,9,11	571:14,18,23 572:1,5,10,13 572:16,20,24 573:3 575:9 576:1,6,10 578:6,13,16,20 578:25 579:3,6 579:12,16 582:14 586:5 586:12,15,19 586:23 587:1,4 587:9,12 588:4 591:22 592:8 592:12,19,22 593:2,7,10,13 593:17,21,25 597:15 599:3,6	619:18,22,25 624:4,14,18 625:1,4,8,12,15 625:19,23 626:2,5,7 628:20 629:12 629:19,23 630:1,4,9,13,16 630:20,24 631:3,7 632:19 633:16,20
			judges 430:11 533:21
			juliet 425:25 491:3,11
			june 534:18 535:2 543:25

601:7,14,20 611:13 617:13 juniors 439:3	kilowatt 589:20 kimberly 515:9 kind 456:17 468:11 469:20 472:1 473:20 475:16 482:15 485:14 497:16 513:20 569:19 569:21 570:12 611:10 614:19 kinds 498:24 499:2 508:21 kings 517:24 kley 519:18 526:18 knew 475:16 507:14,14 knocked 465:20 knocking 605:14 know 430:23 434:7 438:7 441:5 442:22 442:23 443:1 447:10 461:9 463:18 464:1 465:12,23 468:1,21 472:12 473:16 476:2,4,25 480:25 481:4 481:18 484:12 485:4,8 486:6 486:12 488:25	489:9 490:6 492:6 494:23 497:14 498:8 498:14,23 499:7,8,11,15 506:13 507:21 508:25 510:19 510:20 513:9 519:22,23 533:1 541:4,9 541:15,18 542:10,18 544:20 546:4 549:7 550:16 552:21,22 558:2 563:25 564:7 567:5 570:7,10 580:7 583:3,10,11 584:15,17 585:6,14 598:3 608:12 614:9 614:18,21,21 614:25 615:5 617:23 618:1 621:14 624:7 knowing 623:4 knowledge 440:16 496:2 537:7 552:14 635:9 636:6 known 452:16 458:25 479:18 568:5 579:24 595:5	knows 488:24 knox 422:17 424:2 429:10 433:11 437:20 439:9 441:9,17 441:20,22,23 442:2 444:8,16 445:1 452:20 452:22 453:15 453:21,25 454:2,4,9,17,19 455:5,10 458:20 462:23 464:2,8 474:9 474:18 477:24 478:10 479:14 483:12 500:24 501:25 515:22 517:20 525:3 528:7 533:3,7 541:13,15 542:4,6 545:11 546:7,15,17,23 547:9,13 551:6 551:8 552:9,11 552:15 553:6 553:14 556:15 562:16 570:20 570:24 574:21 574:22 575:3 579:23,23 582:23 587:17 587:23 591:18 592:3 595:25 597:13,22
k			
k 491:15 509:17 527:21 556:2 572:18 karen 426:22 429:13,15 554:25 556:2 556:13 560:19 560:22 kari 426:15 526:25 527:21 kcraa 455:5 keener 518:10 keep 431:9 435:24 502:10 519:6 530:1 581:20 583:21 583:22 628:19 keeping 495:6 kentucky 438:19 441:16 kenyon 435:13 435:16,19 513:25 514:4 514:16 kept 548:20 kid 484:13 493:1 kids 591:3 614:16,23 631:17			

604:23 605:1 606:1 608:1,6 609:25 610:1 612:3 616:17 622:20 624:2 627:8 628:9,13 629:7 631:20 631:21 632:7 633:1 koester 541:17 kokosing 594:13,15 ksd 431:24	lake 538:3 lakewood 517:24 lambs 568:10 land 434:2,15 435:17,24 444:11,24 445:13,18 449:4,24 453:5 459:16 460:12 467:2 468:3 494:10,25 495:13 496:3 508:13 512:12 524:2 537:22 551:14 557:1 557:14,23 581:4 588:2,3 589:6,7 594:10 594:25 595:3 603:4 614:12 615:11 620:6 621:9,9,11,12 621:13 623:8,9 623:12 627:15 landfills 517:10 landing 602:3 landowner 433:16 434:3 440:10 445:17 466:23 467:19 495:15 524:1 621:8,11 landowners 434:13 435:5	435:14 440:12 445:6,9 463:19 463:21 512:23 620:5 621:24 623:1,9 lands 501:23 632:3 landscape 434:5 569:15 622:6,7,13 landscaping 620:13 623:4 language 460:15 543:5 lanning's 588:21 large 435:21 447:14 452:16 453:9 457:15 502:1 539:24 594:8,11 622:24 largely 445:19 517:16 larger 530:4 largest 474:18 lasting 568:24 580:12 lastly 434:9 628:3 lately 546:25 latest 538:20 laughlin 514:24 law 430:11 431:18 453:16	528:24 626:17 626:25 629:4 lawrence 446:6 laws 485:12 494:20 513:14 513:18 594:23 621:1 lawyer 577:9 lawyers 530:1 layers 438:18 leach 459:4 547:25 591:14 leaching 475:21 557:3 lead 549:17 590:2 leadership 541:23 leading 516:18 leads 489:11 leaky 557:4 lean 466:13 learn 558:12 621:17 learned 457:25 459:22 460:20 lease 465:9 537:5 588:6 leased 524:1 538:18 620:6 623:9 leases 595:6 leasing 444:11 524:2 539:18 621:8 627:14
I			
I 435:22 443:14 443:14 456:1,1 477:9,9 491:15 496:16 500:6,6 500:6 521:20 536:12 604:13 604:13 607:13 619:17,17 630:22,23 labor 440:15 440:19 laboratory 446:7 lack 517:3 537:12 563:13 lady 439:16 490:12 522:17 lafayette 619:21 laid 626:20			

<p>leave 499:7 562:25</p> <p>leaves 523:18</p> <p>leaving 596:19</p> <p>left 430:14 498:1 534:15 567:10 569:1</p> <p>legacy 580:12</p> <p>legislation 505:19</p> <p>lengthy 460:3 497:7</p> <p>letter 429:8,12 429:14 454:23 537:1 541:10 574:8 576:14 576:20,22,25 577:4</p> <p>letters 453:17 463:14 574:21</p> <p>letting 570:9</p> <p>level 488:22</p> <p>liable 433:17</p> <p>liberty 432:18 443:19 444:5 444:25 447:13 496:22</p> <p>library 571:1,6</p> <p>license 516:2</p> <p>licenses 516:3</p> <p>licking 443:19 444:5,6 464:3 464:9 627:7</p> <p>lie 459:13 632:8</p>	<p>liens 433:18</p> <p>lieu 521:11 555:16 593:4</p> <p>life 473:24 488:3 494:16 494:21 523:8 529:16 539:21 573:6 580:13 588:15 632:10</p> <p>lifelong 477:24</p> <p>lifestyle 626:21</p> <p>lifetime 480:13 480:14 605:11</p> <p>light 459:18 493:25 516:11</p> <p>lighting 622:6 622:8</p> <p>lights 450:21</p> <p>likelihood 537:18</p> <p>likely 581:15 596:18</p> <p>likes 517:2 585:23 627:16</p> <p>limit 430:20 485:17 588:10</p> <p>limited 512:11 590:10</p> <p>limitless 489:19</p> <p>lincoln 447:12 498:12</p> <p>line 488:1 550:19 562:7 568:18 615:25 622:11</p>	<p>lines 469:23 523:15 550:22 562:11 594:7 631:13</p> <p>list 493:21 633:21</p> <p>listen 479:8 528:10 529:12 556:18 557:24 614:6</p> <p>listening 452:25 582:13 604:23 605:24</p> <p>listing 458:10</p> <p>lists 532:18</p> <p>lithium 590:3</p> <p>littered 590:10</p> <p>littering 485:17</p> <p>little 450:16 452:3 468:15 468:18 475:16 506:3 515:21 524:9 538:6 553:12 595:3 596:19 599:22 621:13</p> <p>live 432:19 433:3 437:5,20 438:4 441:6,8 441:9 444:6,16 444:18 445:2,7 445:8,11,12 448:14,16 451:1,25 452:4 456:7 462:13</p> <p>462:15 463:21 477:14 487:13 491:21,23 494:16,25 496:23 500:11 509:23 513:24 514:13 515:9 515:11 527:23 539:18,21 540:18 548:14 556:18 559:13 559:17 566:17 566:21 573:11 579:21 587:8 587:11,22 590:20 593:23 598:16 602:21 604:23 605:1,4 605:18,25 608:5,20 614:10 616:21 620:6 626:14 627:13 628:9 633:8</p> <p>lived 614:13 626:13,17</p> <p>livelihood 540:1 557:20 591:12</p> <p>lives 493:18 510:13 539:9 562:2 581:14 616:9 623:10 626:14 628:1</p>
---	---	--

<p>livestock 591:15 living 438:18 439:14 459:21 462:25 493:19 493:24 496:2 513:2,15 514:15 523:3 550:19 562:9 587:24 602:21 615:12 llc 422:4 423:2 430:6 431:17 452:17 454:6 llp 423:5 local 430:4 435:21 439:23 441:2,3 454:18 458:13 479:11 494:20 495:12 495:17 517:15 518:5 548:1 568:15 577:21 577:23 580:16 588:15 591:2,9 597:3,9 623:12 633:22 locally 489:2 508:9 588:22 609:7 locals 434:7 located 452:19 531:4 617:14 location 422:17 492:10 595:11</p>	<p>602:16 lockdown 537:8 logical 528:17 long 476:6 488:1 492:24 508:11 510:7 510:10 537:11 538:6 568:15 568:17,22,24 609:20 631:15 longer 437:22 438:1 460:12 547:3 620:18 look 446:11 450:2 464:22 470:25 473:4 485:16 497:13 511:8,18,19 516:8 517:3 518:22 554:4 558:21 622:22 628:4 631:25 looked 465:7 494:14 507:15 531:2 584:8 looking 430:24 498:3 550:15 567:19 614:22 looks 450:11 506:3,12 550:17 569:16 600:21 623:14 looping 493:2</p>	<p>lord 624:8 lose 465:16 losing 479:2 485:10 loss 446:14,15 446:25 447:3 463:12 472:20 475:25 485:7 492:23 540:4,6 594:20,22 lost 438:10 488:16 596:23 lot 437:24,25 449:6 450:4 457:10 463:5 463:10,14 464:1,5,15 468:23 470:2 470:22 471:8 471:19 474:19 474:24 475:5 475:22 490:1 491:15 497:9 497:10,10 498:15 499:9 508:12 511:7 512:5 546:6,21 546:22 564:1,5 564:8,12 569:6 569:24 581:16 583:17 lots 456:17 489:7 589:2 love 587:24 588:1,2,20</p>	<p>614:11,15 615:4 616:10 626:18 627:3 628:5 loved 614:11 loving 528:24 low 449:21 511:10 lower 495:10 534:14 557:10 580:5 lowers 529:19 lynn 425:12 451:15,23 453:19 454:13</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">m</p> <hr/> <p>m 436:25,25 477:9 487:8 500:6,6 527:22 556:3 566:14 566:14 572:18 572:19 579:9 619:17 630:22 ma'am 452:3 462:19 491:1 made 439:19 440:1 442:12 456:17,21 458:13 459:17 506:25 530:16 537:11 586:1 madison 517:4 538:19 mail 567:10</p>
---	--	---	---

mailed 461:14 mailer 494:18 main 457:7 468:15 470:25 471:5 maintain 470:25 482:24 488:21 573:23 595:22 maintained 435:15 583:24 583:25 585:1,5 maintaining 450:4 528:19 major 434:16 562:6 615:11 majority 457:2 463:22 471:10 539:17 604:24 606:2 616:1 623:24 624:2 627:12 628:7 631:20,21 make 440:23 449:4,20 459:23 464:13 464:16 466:23 467:23 468:3,6 473:15 485:7 490:4 499:17 505:3 510:24 511:17 513:5 514:11 522:23 523:3 530:25 549:11 562:5	568:8 571:20 598:22 601:2 615:10 633:7 makers 489:13 makes 431:9 512:19 513:6 513:21 568:22 making 453:4 453:15 468:15 510:25 513:2 513:20 524:1 581:2 589:23 615:21 man 456:18 manage 583:19 management 501:21 manager 581:6 manages 596:14 managing 476:14 mandated 489:6 mandating 570:5 manette 422:16 430:10 manpower 479:4 mansfield 444:23 580:2 manufacture 449:22 589:12	manufacturing 590:13 map 429:4,6,16 429:18,20,22 533:17 543:16 567:21 600:15 601:8 602:16 611:15,19 617:6 maps 569:3 599:9 610:11 616:25 617:11 march 446:5 479:14 504:15 536:25 541:9 545:22 550:17 560:12,22 margin 447:1 marion 498:13 mark 543:16 545:20 547:4 560:18 598:24 600:8 610:5 616:25 marked 429:5 429:7,17,21,23 533:21,23 534:5 543:17 543:19 545:23 545:25 547:6 547:10 560:25 561:3 599:1,12 600:10,12 601:5 610:7,13 610:17 617:2,4	markers 567:19 market 595:8 married 492:13 marxist 528:16 528:23 mary 425:23 486:25 487:7,7 523:16 524:16 539:11 mason 517:24 match 489:19 matched 512:13 material 454:23 materials 475:21 553:15 553:17 589:11 589:13,15 590:12 591:14 math 590:8 mathis 424:5 431:24 matt 430:10 506:8 621:15 matter 422:3 430:6 455:2 465:25 498:5 512:5 514:8 529:14 530:15 573:12 575:7 616:4 623:5,11 623:12 631:20
---	---	--	--

matters 514:14 519:23 matthew 422:15 max 583:13 maximum 532:8 maxing 580:20 mccament 427:3,6 565:7 565:10,13,17 565:22 566:1,4 566:5,7,10,14 566:14 570:18 571:19,22,25 572:4,9,12,15 575:13 mcclinton 539:11 mcconnell 425:20 454:13 476:23,24 477:5,8,24 481:15 483:24 mcconnell's 476:24 mconville 455:9 mean 441:14 469:18 471:7 473:13 474:6 476:3,5 481:25 485:4 494:24 507:13,22 526:2 542:3	617:19 627:21 633:5 meaning 521:2 means 488:14 494:24 518:6 528:16 530:23 573:14 measure 614:24 measures 622:15 meat 588:21 mechanical 568:15 media 568:3 medical 456:23 meet 472:7 535:1 538:25 541:2,3 589:14 609:19 meeting 434:5 439:15 467:7 471:3 507:5 570:25 573:16 573:16 574:4 581:11 595:18 meetings 463:5 475:8 478:14 506:19 535:3 550:1,5,9 567:25 568:5 573:22 601:16 617:20 627:13 628:5,8 632:5	meets 594:16 megawatt 532:9 melts 450:23 member 432:22 437:8 443:24 448:20,23 452:7 456:10 462:17 477:19 487:16 492:1 497:1 500:14 503:2 507:23 510:1 515:14 525:3 533:2 541:4 570:20 582:23 592:3 597:22,25 612:3 616:17 629:7 633:1 members 437:25 438:4 438:19,21 440:17 442:4 479:8,10 502:24 507:1 534:7 546:16 606:7 membership 571:7 memorial 422:17 memory 633:5 men 499:3 567:19	mental 493:22 493:23 494:4 537:12 591:4,7 591:12 mention 460:10 591:13 608:3 mentioned 442:17,19 459:10 472:19 481:17 483:24 503:17 508:3 525:19 563:11 576:14 583:4 585:13 598:10 merely 596:12 messages 581:11 messed 498:18 met 472:9 567:12 581:5 622:19 metals 595:16 methods 580:15 621:23 mic 551:25 michael 423:3 426:5 431:17 500:5 michigan 558:13,16 microphone 466:10 middle 591:3 601:9 608:25
--	--	---	--

midwest 437:19 438:16 517:12 migratory 501:24 mike 461:4 466:16 499:23 500:20 502:21 507:8 525:2 531:18 565:1 582:20 597:21 mile 433:4 435:12 446:12 446:24 447:5,5 509:25 512:4 594:5 602:8,12 602:14,17,18 602:19 miles 556:22 568:24 571:9 594:11,14,16 595:24 596:3 miller 426:5 452:13,15,20 452:22 453:21 454:2,3 456:6 462:12,23,25 463:4,19,25 466:4,18 471:10 472:6 472:14,16,18 472:20 473:2 474:9 477:17 477:25 479:19 482:24 483:8	483:10,12 487:23 491:19 494:6,12 499:23 500:2,5 500:20 502:16 509:22 516:7 528:2,3 536:16 537:3 544:13 544:15 549:25 550:7,19 557:6 562:7 573:18 575:21 579:10 579:21 587:7,8 587:24 591:18 593:20 595:18 602:20 607:17 613:22 619:21 626:1 631:2 million 446:8 465:19 481:4 516:22 531:11 532:9 538:23 538:24 millions 530:14 mills 517:24 millwrights 438:18 mind 463:18 492:25 509:9 551:22 576:8 mine 478:1 506:9 530:11 minerals 530:12	mini 529:22 minimal 622:1 622:3 minimized 458:21 mining 589:15 590:12 minnesota 446:19 minute 518:21 minutes 430:21 430:25 460:21 480:4,6 492:7 531:13 540:19 mirrors 530:5 misinformation 442:23 458:19 605:16 misinformed 528:15 missing 596:2 mission 435:18 mississippi 474:19 mistake 605:7 mistakes 479:5 misunderstand 442:7 misunderstan... 442:9 mitigation 621:21 622:15 mix 525:24 mixed 434:22	mixing 604:3 mjsettineri 423:9 mm 584:20,20 585:17 602:10 611:5 630:12 moderately 596:8 mom 484:13 moment 459:10 460:24 520:7 624:4 money 440:23 440:23 457:12 457:13 467:3 468:7 481:2 485:5,10 489:13 497:24 497:25 513:2,6 513:10 524:1 552:24,25 553:2,3,7 567:8 570:4 580:12 585:15 591:11 608:13 627:15,19,21 627:21,24 628:2 monitoring 585:6 monitors 486:7 585:10 months 507:21 507:21 525:8 547:3 595:7
--	--	---	---

<p>moore 427:9 578:10,12,15 578:19,24 579:2,5,8,9,20 582:18 592:13 592:14 morals 494:8 morgan 521:20 556:7 morning 489:22 mortality 480:20,21 501:24 mortgage 595:10 mother 495:16 615:12 motion 453:19 mount 422:19 432:17 448:13 451:24 456:6 462:11 477:13 482:10,13 487:11 491:19 492:14,17 500:9,20 501:7 501:14 502:7 505:10 507:18 509:22 515:10 527:22 536:15 556:7,14 559:12 566:18 572:23 579:10 580:1 587:8</p>	<p>593:19 594:6 594:18 604:14 607:16 613:21 619:21 626:18 626:22,24 move 442:15 457:19 480:11 514:2 537:6 551:25,25 565:20 606:2 612:13 618:10 moved 477:25 534:22 544:5 544:10 596:2 602:20 609:24 614:9 620:25 626:22,23 moving 436:15 494:17 632:2 mud 594:11 multi 482:9,21 multiple 449:18 489:13 497:14 605:14 murray 461:24 myriad 458:10 myths 438:2 442:17,21,24</p>	<p>462:8 477:9,9 491:15 496:16 536:11,12 556:2 566:14 566:14 572:19 579:9 593:16 593:16,16 607:12,12,13 613:18 625:21 625:21 630:23 nail 442:5 naked 524:18 name 430:9 432:12,13 433:2 436:23 437:17 440:9 443:12 448:8,9 451:22 455:25 458:14 462:6 462:22 477:7 477:23 487:6 491:10 496:14 500:4,20 509:16 515:7,8 521:18 527:20 536:10 556:1 556:13 561:25 566:4,12,13 572:17 579:7,8 579:20 582:20 587:5,6 593:14 593:15 604:11 607:10,11 613:16 619:15 619:16 625:20</p>	<p>630:21 names 432:4 481:18 554:2 nation 493:22 495:8 530:18 590:19 594:25 national 446:6 native 621:21 natural 434:14 434:16 435:18 449:9,15 500:23,24 501:17 502:24 523:10 533:19 557:22 558:23 569:25 nature 471:18 493:22 494:3 557:24 585:16 navigation 533:19,19 naz 434:5 napve 494:19 near 445:2,2,11 446:3,8 457:16 457:24 459:21 496:25 534:15 550:19 562:9 583:5 598:1 601:21 604:4 nearby 434:20 454:22 492:14 nearest 602:7 602:16</p>
	<p>n</p>		
	<p>n 423:1 424:1 425:1 426:1 427:1 428:1 430:1 432:14 436:25,25 443:15 456:2</p>		

<p>nearly 559:9</p> <p>necessary 441:24</p> <p>need 422:6 430:8 449:23 450:8 457:18 459:9 464:23 465:12,13 475:15 490:21 495:25 516:23 531:10 532:3 558:5 569:24 569:25 624:5 632:1</p> <p>needed 463:23 479:24 505:19 538:25 595:21</p> <p>needs 470:22 632:7</p> <p>negative 435:5 529:17 582:11 615:8,23</p> <p>negatively 445:4,22 446:13 529:1 529:12</p> <p>negligible 446:18</p> <p>neighbor 435:3 495:6 529:18 561:23,24 567:7,16 581:23 585:18 585:24 620:19 621:22 627:16</p>	<p>632:3</p> <p>neighbor's 605:20</p> <p>neighborhood 539:8 603:7</p> <p>neighborhoods 495:13 605:17</p> <p>neighboring 435:4 445:15 478:18,24 479:17 583:15 632:4</p> <p>neighbors 444:7 445:22 457:12,14,18 471:6 478:16 511:23 512:5 529:2 537:5,24 540:15 573:9 591:8,13 594:20 596:19 608:8 623:23 624:12</p> <p>neither 457:21 635:10 636:7</p> <p>nervous 494:1</p> <p>nest 537:21</p> <p>nesting 543:3,4 557:19</p> <p>neutral 463:8 573:21,24 574:2,11,19</p> <p>never 472:11 492:14 509:9 517:19 529:25</p>	<p>530:22 542:18 559:1 567:23 568:1 581:18 581:25 605:11 626:14 631:12</p> <p>new 434:6 446:20 450:14 469:23 514:3 517:22 538:14 558:18 583:21</p> <p>newark 580:2</p> <p>newly 492:13</p> <p>news 446:5 457:22 488:12 507:18 539:4</p> <p>nic 422:20 635:2,18</p> <p>nice 466:17 481:15 502:18 513:9 541:2,3 609:19</p> <p>nicer 608:21</p> <p>nick 478:5</p> <p>night 450:17 506:12,21,22 506:22 589:19 589:21,25 596:25 623:22</p> <p>night's 597:9</p> <p>nights 444:15 510:8</p> <p>nine 445:9 507:21 531:24 590:18 596:24 621:19</p>	<p>noble 426:18 535:12,14,17 535:22 536:2,5 536:8,11 540:20,25 545:11 547:12 551:22 554:10</p> <p>nobles 429:6</p> <p>noise 459:18,23 540:4 558:14 591:6</p> <p>noisy 435:1 557:24</p> <p>non 435:23 458:23,23 537:4 590:11 622:9</p> <p>nope 526:14 618:8</p> <p>norma 569:12</p> <p>north 444:8 446:20,22,23 562:7</p> <p>northeast 482:12</p> <p>northern 537:20 538:6</p> <p>notary 635:19</p> <p>note 447:4 479:6 581:17</p> <p>notes 480:10</p> <p>notified 608:10</p> <p>notify 480:15</p> <p>notifying 480:18</p>
--	--	--	---

<p>notoriously 595:15</p> <p>november 620:25</p> <p>nuclear 489:17 516:16,18,19 569:25</p> <p>nuisance 608:8</p> <p>number 430:5 451:10 452:13 475:16,17 486:1 503:20 531:20 589:9 589:18,22 590:9,12,18,22 590:24 600:22</p> <p>numbers 512:14 597:10</p> <p>nurture 490:8</p> <p>nutrient 523:24</p>	<p>oak 500:9</p> <p>oath 522:11</p> <p>obey 485:18,19</p> <p>objectionable 435:2</p> <p>objections 535:8 554:20 564:24 565:2 603:16 612:15 618:13</p> <p>obligated 532:24</p> <p>obliterating 459:12</p> <p>obstructing 540:2</p> <p>obstruction 591:6</p> <p>obvious 597:5 608:6</p>	<p>offer 449:12,15 449:16 620:17</p> <p>offered 458:16</p> <p>offering 588:23 588:24</p> <p>offers 581:19</p> <p>office 508:7,20</p> <p>officer 454:7,14 500:25 516:4 519:10 635:2</p> <p>offices 559:2 634:1</p> <p>official 454:18</p> <p>officials 455:4 458:3 502:4 517:16,18 608:9</p> <p>oh 422:19 423:8,17 424:7 436:9 447:25 448:2 477:2 484:6,21 509:8 542:2 566:5 585:12 599:8 624:23</p> <p>ohio 422:1 423:13,15 424:12,14 430:13,14 431:21 432:18 437:4,14,24 438:5,18 439:2 441:16,20 442:2 443:19 444:6,23,24</p>	<p>447:15 448:13 451:24 452:17 452:22 453:11 453:18,21,23 454:2 455:6 458:22 459:6 461:8,10 462:12 463:11 463:25 464:20 464:23 477:13 479:10 487:12 489:5 494:13 494:20 495:2 495:19 496:22 500:10,23 501:2,17,18,20 502:8,23,23 509:22 511:6,8 511:8,14,16 517:4 518:6 536:16 538:20 546:15 556:14 559:6 563:14 572:23 574:25 575:17 579:24 579:25 589:9 590:21,23 593:20 597:3 604:14 607:17 608:4 613:22 635:20</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">o</p>			
<p>o 430:1 436:25 436:25,25,25 443:15 456:2 462:8,8 477:8 477:9 487:8 509:18 527:22 536:11,12 579:9,9 604:13 604:13,13 613:18,18 619:17 625:21 625:22,22</p> <p>o'clock 518:23</p>	<p>obviously 542:21 605:16 605:23 611:17</p> <p>occasional 588:12</p> <p>occur 580:23 581:3</p> <p>occurred 537:3</p> <p>occurrences 459:6</p> <p>october 573:16</p> <p>odnr 502:7 503:3</p> <p>odor 435:1 459:19</p>	<p>ohio 422:1 423:13,15 424:12,14 430:13,14 431:21 432:18 437:4,14,24 438:5,18 439:2 441:16,20 442:2 443:19 444:6,23,24</p>	<p>509:22 511:6,8 511:8,14,16 517:4 518:6 536:16 538:20 546:15 556:14 559:6 563:14 572:23 574:25 575:17 579:24 579:25 589:9 590:21,23 593:20 597:3 604:14 607:17 608:4 613:22 635:20</p> <p>ohio's 559:18 596:5</p> <p>oil 553:8</p>

okay 432:1,3 433:2 440:13 441:6 443:2 444:4 448:12 449:3 455:8 456:15 460:22 462:22 464:16 465:14 467:13 468:8,17,22 469:15 470:7 471:23 474:3 474:17 475:5 475:20 477:18 481:10 484:7 484:15 487:21 491:11,14,25 492:5 496:8,18 500:19 503:1 503:10,13 504:2,17 505:1 505:4,8,17 506:17 507:10 507:24 508:1 510:18 513:4 513:15 519:11 519:20,24 520:3,7,14,20 520:25 521:8 521:14 525:6 525:11,13,19 526:1,8,12,19 526:22 527:15 527:25 528:3 531:12 532:5 532:17 533:2	533:14,16 534:5,12,18,25 535:4,8,15,18 536:3,20,23 541:15,19 542:12,20 543:8 544:9,15 544:18 545:2 546:14 547:16 548:23,25 549:19 550:7 550:11 551:3 552:13,20 553:6,14 554:20 555:17 555:20 556:11 558:8,8,11 560:14 561:10 561:19 562:1 562:14,18 563:1 564:18 565:2,11,24 566:23 571:14 571:16 572:10 572:13 577:6 578:4,6,8,16,25 579:16 583:10 583:14,23 585:3 586:3,23 592:8,10,13,14 593:25 598:22 600:1,21,25 601:4,25 602:5 602:15 603:6 604:2,7,18	606:12,18 607:4,22 610:1 610:4 611:12 611:17 613:12 616:24 617:13 617:22 618:1 619:11 624:5 624:18 625:1 626:7,10 629:3 629:7,10,20 631:7 633:14 old 460:5 465:8 465:11 471:9 498:2,2 517:10 621:3 once 430:9,24 431:2 449:24 450:14 477:23 478:6 480:11 482:20 528:16 567:23 574:18 584:15 ones 463:20 471:21 514:8,8 544:20 548:22 560:12 582:11 583:21 online 502:10 504:22,24 507:17 508:10 511:7 oop 563:7 opa 503:3 open 433:15 435:12 444:12	445:10 452:15 454:6 457:5 458:6,18 459:18 460:15 467:7 478:20 479:1 481:18 485:5 532:12 532:13 537:1,3 538:7 557:7 567:12,24 568:4 581:5 595:5 596:17 598:14,15 opened 438:23 opens 526:3 operating 564:11 operation 453:24 486:8 623:17,18 opinion 479:7 483:9,13,15 497:8 510:12 514:13 517:6 568:7 570:13 577:23 627:11 632:6 opinions 479:11 511:5 513:23 514:7 616:4 617:21 opportunities 439:19 440:24 441:13 512:23
--	--	--	--

<p>opportunity 436:14 437:16 438:14,15 439:5,9,20 440:2 468:2,4 510:10 513:6 515:20 528:8 534:25 591:21 601:13,18 615:5 620:4 626:11 633:3</p> <p>oppose 433:3 451:9 454:5 492:8 516:6 522:9 528:6,12 528:20,23 529:9 530:2,20 530:20 537:14 545:13 587:19 607:25 609:14 617:25 632:18</p> <p>opposed 487:22 528:14 544:19 556:16 559:10 567:3 582:4 587:17 594:2 597:11 604:21 614:8 620:4</p> <p>opposing 466:4 521:5</p> <p>opposition 429:8,12,14 452:14 453:22 530:3 550:1,5 574:22 604:24</p>	<p>606:1 620:19 626:12 627:20 628:15</p> <p>opsb 501:3 503:2 505:1 514:25 621:16 622:2</p> <p>option 460:17 511:24,25 568:23 596:8 620:17</p> <p>options 589:15 590:10</p> <p>oranges 464:19 464:20</p> <p>order 432:4 435:24 497:19 519:7 596:15</p> <p>ordinance 434:12</p> <p>organic 465:25</p> <p>organization 525:6 541:19 553:10 583:1</p> <p>organize 550:12</p> <p>originally 534:19</p> <p>originated 580:8</p> <p>outcome 635:15 636:12</p> <p>outdated 524:13,14</p>	<p>outdoor 594:15 594:17</p> <p>output 596:6</p> <p>outside 493:25 597:4,8 607:21 616:6 631:6 632:6</p> <p>outsiders 616:5</p> <p>overall 504:1 529:15 530:13 621:25</p> <p>overlooking 594:16 620:11</p> <p>overnight 449:13 488:4</p> <p>overreach 495:4</p> <p>overwhelming 597:7</p> <p>overwhelmin... 628:14</p> <p>owls 537:22 588:12</p> <p>own 435:17 440:17 446:3 458:22 463:13 465:14,20 493:10 513:10 513:10 522:1 525:13,16 544:24 589:6 615:22 621:9 627:24</p> <p>owned 495:7 609:20</p>	<p>owner 445:21 622:16</p> <p>owners 445:16 445:24,25 446:2 453:4 479:15 528:21 559:14 594:25</p> <p>owning 591:17</p> <p>owns 467:19,20</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">p</p> <hr/> <p>p 423:1,1 424:1 424:1 430:1 435:22,22 496:16 509:18 587:7 603:22 604:1,6,9,13 607:13 630:23</p> <p>p.m. 422:13 519:1 520:12 563:22 564:8 634:6,7</p> <p>p.o. 423:7</p> <p>pacemaker 522:25</p> <p>package 490:1</p> <p>page 455:10 505:18 506:9 531:3,5,9,20,25 533:18 537:16 537:19 538:4,9 539:23 547:12 547:13,17 551:14 568:13 568:18 609:6 621:19 622:4</p>
--	---	---	--

<p>623:15 pages 531:3 532:18 598:7,9 598:9 paid 467:8 573:10 587:15 palatable 568:9 pan 470:21 panel 449:23 475:7 549:15 595:22,24 panels 433:19 433:23 438:8 449:7,19 451:6 458:25 459:2,8 459:13,23 460:11 465:10 489:6 516:11 523:4,12,19 524:6 529:16 530:6,24 531:4 531:10 532:3 534:19,20,22 537:16 544:1,5 544:9 547:23 548:9,11,13,14 548:16,20 549:1,19 557:4 557:9 563:14 564:11 569:11 580:24 590:6 590:11,13 601:7,9,19 602:1 605:9 608:4 611:14</p>	<p>611:18,18,23 615:14 617:14 617:18 618:2 620:10 631:22 panera 601:17 paper 533:15 546:6 571:6 610:22 paragraph 473:7 531:4,5 531:9 623:15 paraphrasing 468:17 parcel 544:23 622:10 pardon 440:11 441:7 448:22 484:3 486:14 parents 484:12 parker's 569:12 parking 489:7 508:12 588:24 589:2 part 437:23 459:6 483:11 490:21 530:4 550:1,5 557:6 567:8 588:15 participate 577:7 participated 574:12 participating 622:10</p>	<p>participation 633:23 particularly 492:22 501:4 parties 431:15 615:2 635:11 635:14 636:8 636:11 partnering 439:11 partnership 580:10 parts 628:10 party 443:25 448:21 452:8 456:11 462:18 487:17 492:1 497:2 500:15 510:2 515:15 pass 505:10 553:17 passed 454:20 457:25 463:22 478:3 501:8,10 501:12 503:18 503:21 504:11 504:15 505:6,9 505:15 558:22 passing 478:12 594:6 passion 529:10 passionately 616:7 past 439:17 465:1 480:13</p>	<p>480:13 502:19 608:23 patti 427:12 586:8 587:6 pay 529:18 539:16 paying 528:24 payments 457:12 529:3 pays 435:25 530:11 peace 493:3 peaceful 615:17 616:9 peak 511:15 563:15 peaks 511:15 pease 423:5 431:19 penalized 486:5 pending 452:17 453:23 pennsylvania 478:1 people 430:23 438:12 444:11 451:1 457:2 463:14,15 464:7,15 467:4 469:18,19 475:3,3,4 479:11 481:20 481:21 482:25 488:8,19</p>
--	--	--	---

489:25 490:1,2 493:4,17 494:23 495:1 497:9 498:6,10 498:13,24 507:13 513:2 513:23 514:8 514:13,15,15 516:23,23 517:11,13,17 522:14 528:14 528:20,23,25 530:2 543:12 543:13 544:20 545:12 546:8 546:17 548:12 551:14 554:3 556:18,20 559:10,11 561:16 563:22 564:3 575:3,7 581:18,20 585:7 590:19 590:25 604:23 605:1,24,25 615:2,12 616:1 627:12,22 628:9 631:21 632:5 percent 446:13 446:25 447:3 479:23,23,24 479:24 480:12 511:14 523:2 539:13 559:10	559:11,12 594:22 596:7 597:10 604:24 604:25 percentage 624:1 perfect 482:18 555:13 perform 440:20 440:22 performed 532:7 period 543:4 568:14 periodical 461:13 permanent 469:13 568:9 permission 605:22 permit 469:16 470:9,10,11 permits 470:3,6 470:7 permitted 498:21 591:19 perpetuity 435:25 person 451:4 462:25 470:1,1 479:9 482:2 495:8 513:5,5 person's 528:18	personal 493:16 558:13 591:17 personally 457:3 508:15 617:19 pesticide 526:6 peters 426:3 496:9,12,16 499:19 petition 434:2 petitioning 574:13 petitions 574:21 petroleum 488:14 ph 436:15 454:17 455:5 467:6,21 468:1 471:9 475:13 485:15 509:8 514:21,22,22 514:24 518:10 518:11 519:16 523:13 558:13 574:1 ph1 429:4 533:22,23 534:2 535:8,10 ph10 429:22 616:25 617:2 618:11,14,15 ph2 429:6 543:16,17	554:19,23 ph3 429:8 545:21,23 554:19,23 ph4 429:10 547:5,6 554:19 554:23 ph5 429:12 560:19 561:1,2 561:5,15 562:5 562:15 564:22 565:3,4 ph6 429:14 560:21 561:1,2 561:5,16 562:15 564:22 565:3,4 ph7 429:16 598:25 599:1 599:15 601:5 603:15,17,18 ph8 429:18 600:8,10 603:15,17,18 ph9 429:20 610:6,7,12,18 612:14,16,17 phase 460:4 pheasants 588:11 philander 435:9,24 philips 424:14 phillips 430:15
---	--	--	---

<p>philosophy 445:21</p> <p>phone 451:4 481:5</p> <p>phrase 473:5 473:10 474:5 494:22</p> <p>physical 435:6 454:7,14 494:4</p> <p>picked 499:13 508:8</p> <p>picking 522:20</p> <p>picture 599:15 600:25</p> <p>piece 512:17 533:15 571:6</p> <p>piledrivers 438:18</p> <p>pilot 596:23</p> <p>pit 471:10</p> <p>place 438:11 465:13 492:9 492:10,19 493:8,11 510:24 512:12 513:19 529:7 585:8 597:13 620:9</p> <p>placed 434:19 517:9 542:13 544:1 620:14</p> <p>places 449:6 492:12 498:25 499:3,5</p>	<p>plague 569:16</p> <p>plan 494:11 538:23 568:10 568:11,21,23 570:8 622:6,9 622:12</p> <p>planned 501:10 557:9</p> <p>planning 507:4 621:21</p> <p>plans 510:25 624:7,8</p> <p>plant 480:17 488:4 493:13 512:1 522:21 540:10</p> <p>plantationism 597:13</p> <p>planted 580:4</p> <p>planting 434:6 468:5 540:2 622:12</p> <p>plants 446:8 449:19 465:4,6 557:16 558:23 569:24 570:1,2 585:20,20,20 585:21</p> <p>play 484:13</p> <p>playing 549:3</p> <p>please 431:4,8 432:7,11 436:13,18,22 437:11 443:8 443:12 444:2</p>	<p>445:18 447:23 447:25 448:7 451:17,21 452:10 455:20 455:24 462:1,5 466:10 477:2,6 477:21 483:17 483:18 487:1,5 487:19 491:5,9 492:3 496:4,13 496:19 497:4 499:24 500:3 500:17 509:11 509:15,20 510:4 515:2,6 515:17 520:15 521:14,17 522:6 527:16 527:19 528:4 529:11 536:6,9 536:13,23 551:1 555:22 555:25 556:4 556:11 559:16 559:21 564:23 566:2,11,15,23 572:13,16,20 573:3 576:10 576:21 579:3,6 579:16 587:1,4 587:12 588:4 591:19,20 593:10,13,17 593:25 597:13 598:25 604:7</p>	<p>604:10,18 607:7,10,14,23 610:22 612:14 613:12,15,19 614:2 618:12 619:11,14,18 619:25 624:10 625:16,19,23 626:7 630:17 630:20,24</p> <p>plots 594:21</p> <p>pockets 631:13</p> <p>podium 573:8</p> <p>point 431:14 442:13 502:11 541:14 562:6 562:14,19 594:18</p> <p>pointing 543:22 599:16 599:19,21 610:19 617:11</p> <p>politicians 575:6 577:21 577:24</p> <p>polluting 438:5 449:22</p> <p>pollution 493:25 540:4</p> <p>polly 427:18 603:22,24 604:12</p> <p>pond 537:24</p> <p>ponder 589:5</p>
--	--	---	--

<p>ponds 471:17</p> <p>poor 596:8</p> <p>population 433:6</p> <p>populations 495:10</p> <p>porous 458:23</p> <p>portion 436:1</p> <p>portions 531:3</p> <p>portsmouth 439:16</p> <p>posey 426:8 509:7,10,14,17</p> <p>position 442:11 453:11,13 472:21 474:25 500:22 502:1 528:18</p> <p>positively 581:21</p> <p>possibility 539:7 605:9</p> <p>possible 557:12</p> <p>possibly 478:23 523:13 537:14 546:21 562:17 564:2,6 581:1</p> <p>possum 432:17 527:22 529:25 536:15</p> <p>possums 588:14</p> <p>post 501:20</p> <p>postpartum 492:24</p>	<p>posts 580:24,25</p> <p>potential 435:5 453:3 457:11 458:10,20 591:14 615:11 615:14</p> <p>potentially 459:4 512:20 513:12 524:2 549:2 557:3 558:19</p> <p>poultry 490:3</p> <p>power 422:1 424:12 430:13 437:14 438:9 442:17 447:16 449:12,19 450:15,19 452:18 453:11 453:18,23 461:10 465:13 469:23 479:10 486:6 488:10 489:19 493:13 493:14 502:19 504:22 511:19 512:1 516:16 516:16,18,19 526:10 540:10 545:13 558:15 558:25 559:2,3 559:19 561:17 563:23 569:24 570:2,7 575:17 584:12 585:9</p>	<p>585:19,20,20 596:6</p> <p>power's 471:9</p> <p>powered 422:7</p> <p>powerful 620:24</p> <p>practices 580:15 595:12 632:14</p> <p>pre 568:20</p> <p>preachers 528:21</p> <p>precisely 626:24</p> <p>preferred 543:3</p> <p>pregnancy 492:23</p> <p>prepared 437:16 608:3 636:3</p> <p>present 424:11 458:7,25 519:21,25 520:2,23 521:2 521:6,11 527:3 527:12 535:16 535:21,24,25 555:7 565:12 565:19 571:24 572:8 578:14 578:21,23 586:13,17,21 592:20,25 606:19 607:2</p>	<p>613:1,5 618:22 619:2,6 625:2 625:6,10 630:2 630:7,11</p> <p>presented 574:17</p> <p>preservation 452:23 473:9</p> <p>preserve 429:10 435:20 483:14 525:3 533:3,7 540:16 541:4,13,15 542:4,6 545:11 546:7,15,17,23 547:9,13 551:6 551:8 552:9,11 552:15 562:16 570:20,24 582:23 592:3 597:22 612:3 616:17 629:7 633:1</p> <p>preserved 603:3</p> <p>preserving 445:13 483:9</p> <p>president 444:22 454:18 488:13</p> <p>pressure 558:3</p> <p>pretty 467:22 474:21 512:10 513:24 544:1 549:8 598:17</p>
---	---	---	--

<p>previous 444:15 528:13 530:4 587:19 611:9</p> <p>previously 430:19</p> <p>price 588:6</p> <p>prices 446:7 595:9</p> <p>primarily 628:15</p> <p>primary 485:1 574:7</p> <p>prime 530:14 544:21 549:7 556:25 569:17 569:19 582:6 582:12 615:19 627:9</p> <p>print 506:4</p> <p>printed 506:4 506:13</p> <p>printout 429:11,18 547:8 600:15</p> <p>prior 467:18 500:22 506:20 508:5,6 568:19 611:3,6 622:5 635:5</p> <p>priorities 452:25 474:4,6 474:7</p> <p>pristine 594:13</p>	<p>pro 590:24 597:11 623:25</p> <p>proactively 559:8</p> <p>probably 463:16 464:1 468:21 473:6 480:3,13 486:18 511:1 511:10 512:2 532:11 550:21 562:11 563:22 564:13 583:3</p> <p>problem 458:15 469:4 471:8 474:24 486:10,11,18 509:10 546:10 595:14</p> <p>problems 481:23 581:3 581:12</p> <p>proceed 432:25 449:1 452:10 456:13 462:20 487:19 492:3 510:4 520:18 522:7 528:4 536:23 556:11 566:24 573:4 579:16 587:13 593:25 604:19 607:23 614:3 620:1 626:8</p>	<p>proceeding 432:23 437:9 526:9 572:7 578:22 586:10 586:21 592:17 593:4 606:8,16 613:9 618:19 619:6 634:8 636:4</p> <p>proceedings 635:3,4,6,8 636:6</p> <p>process 478:12 479:7 504:7 510:17 540:8</p> <p>produce 449:19 450:19 460:1 488:20 489:16 513:3 563:14 569:23 589:10 589:13</p> <p>produced 460:2 489:2 609:8 627:6</p> <p>produces 479:3 557:8</p> <p>producing 449:5 451:8 474:18</p> <p>product 449:20 488:21 523:21 631:12</p> <p>production 473:21 474:10 474:11 476:4</p>	<p>488:22 490:6 530:7 558:15 558:24 569:6 582:6</p> <p>productive 465:24 476:12 489:8 516:20 517:5,11 579:25</p> <p>products 456:22,23,24 457:1 468:14 489:2 589:14</p> <p>profit 444:13 444:21</p> <p>profitable 489:10,12</p> <p>profiting 445:6 627:14</p> <p>profits 445:18</p> <p>program 435:22 439:5,7 596:23 627:16</p> <p>progressive 580:14</p> <p>project 432:20 433:3,13 437:6 439:21,24 440:3,15,20,22 443:22 444:10 444:18 445:1,3 445:8,11,11 446:5,12,24 447:17 448:15 451:9,10 452:1</p>
---	--	--	--

452:5,16,19	513:24 515:12	587:10 593:22	476:1 478:19
453:3,8,25	516:7 521:23	593:24 594:3,9	479:1 481:17
454:6 456:8	522:10,10,13	595:7 596:17	481:19 482:3
458:8 461:6,12	522:20 523:7	596:19,21	485:21 486:7
461:16 462:14	523:21 524:5	597:7,14	495:11 501:5
463:2,6,9,20,21	525:13,17	598:10,14	504:3,6 508:16
466:5 468:2	527:23 528:7	599:9,11 602:1	530:3,11 539:6
469:6,10,15	528:12,14	602:6,7,16	539:12 614:20
470:15 471:5	529:1,12 531:7	603:4 604:16	620:6 622:22
472:22 473:2	531:10 532:3,7	604:22,25	promised
474:14 475:7	532:15,19,23	605:5 607:19	433:22 589:10
477:15 478:7,8	532:24 536:18	608:1,10,11	promises
478:16,18,22	537:2,6,10,14	609:14 610:2	456:22 458:12
479:12,16,19	537:21 538:4	611:3,6 613:24	459:17 530:16
480:2,6,9,17,19	538:10,20,22	613:25 614:7	596:16,20
480:21,22	539:8,22,23	615:7,9 616:2	promising
481:7,23 482:1	540:14 541:10	616:8 617:7	529:15
482:2,7 484:9	543:14 545:14	619:23 620:5,7	promote 458:8
485:11 487:14	550:1 556:9,16	620:8,12	prone 581:17
487:22,25	556:17,19,21	621:17 623:10	proof 458:17
489:10 491:22	557:6 558:15	624:1,11,13	propensity
492:8 493:4	559:11,15,23	626:3,12	433:9
494:4,19	566:20,22	627:11,20	properties
495:23 496:24	567:4,4,6,21	628:5,8,18	434:20 445:15
500:12 501:10	568:2,6 569:2	631:4,22	478:19,24
501:11,13,15	569:15 571:9	632:18	583:5,15
501:19,21,23	572:25 573:1	project's	property 433:5
503:8,10,16,18	573:17 574:3,5	473:24 486:13	433:18 445:14
503:24 505:5	574:10,15,22	486:16	445:16,21
506:25 507:11	575:3,18,22	projected	446:2,3,4,25
507:15,16,20	576:24 579:13	587:21	447:11 453:4
509:24 510:13	579:22 582:5	projects 439:8	463:12 467:20
510:21,22,25	582:11 583:4	441:22 444:13	467:20 472:20
511:3,11 512:1	583:24 584:13	450:13 457:15	479:17 485:1,4
512:4 513:21	584:19 585:2	458:5 459:21	485:7,12 494:9

494:10,22,24 495:3,5 498:17 498:19 499:8 511:1 512:18 512:18,20,21 512:21 513:1 513:10,11,18 523:15 529:8 529:19 534:16 534:16,21 539:12,22 540:4,12 544:2 544:6 545:6 548:5 557:5,10 557:11 559:14 559:16 569:12 583:5,15 584:6 590:25 594:8 594:20,24 598:16,19 602:11,12,13 608:19 610:19 611:23,24 615:23 620:10 622:16 proposal 460:10 proposals 472:4 propose 457:15 460:19 proposed 433:4 444:9 454:21 457:4 458:8 463:2 478:8	501:18 528:6 534:20 544:1 567:6 568:2 579:22 580:18 580:22 581:7 583:16 588:18 601:7,20 602:1 603:4 609:4 611:14 615:9 617:14 620:12 621:17 623:25 pros 497:12 499:16 prosecuting 455:10 protect 434:10 434:13,23 435:4,10,18 445:24,24 459:15 493:14 493:20 494:9 529:8 540:8,12 540:18 559:8 559:18,22 protected 480:16 protecting 445:14 450:9 481:7 539:16 615:22 protections 435:8 protectively 559:7	protects 435:11 495:3,5 prove 596:20 proven 438:7,8 616:4 proves 493:21 provide 432:9 436:20 439:9 439:18 440:3 443:9 448:5 450:16 451:19 453:14 455:21 462:3 477:4 487:3 491:7 496:11 499:25 503:4 509:13 515:4 534:7 536:13 556:4 556:23 559:19 566:15 572:6 572:20 589:2 593:3,17 601:13 607:1 607:14 613:4,8 613:19 618:25 619:5,18 622:12,25 625:9,23 630:5 630:10,24 provided 542:12 601:22 provides 438:14 449:13 providing 458:16 510:9	568:16 proximity 454:19 public 422:6 430:4,8 434:25 453:17 457:11 460:9 483:25 484:1,5 494:8 501:1 516:1 533:22 545:21 550:16 551:9 553:18 559:9 560:5,19,21 561:7,8 570:25 605:6 633:22 635:19 public's 505:20 pull 464:11 546:11 552:23 pulled 546:10 punched 581:1 purcell 574:1 purchase 435:21 611:24 620:17 purchased 494:14 608:22 610:2 621:10 621:11 purpose 434:13 435:3,11 452:18 494:8 purposes 460:13
---	--	---	--

<p>put 437:13 449:6 465:13 466:10,20 469:23 470:19 471:4 473:17 482:21 484:1 488:11 490:2 490:11,12,14 498:10 508:7 513:11,16 518:1 522:15 524:14 529:7 530:24 533:20 535:6 544:7 545:9 549:2,22 554:18 563:18 582:12 595:15 603:15 605:19 621:4 623:18 626:22 627:18 628:1 629:17 629:21 632:10</p> <p>puts 529:20</p> <p>putting 450:3 457:7 465:10 485:5 512:11</p>	<p>559:4 573:20 576:3</p> <p>questionable 582:3</p> <p>questioned 467:6</p> <p>questions 431:4 436:8,10,11,14 440:5 447:19 451:13 455:15 455:16 466:7 467:15 473:25 481:12 484:21 486:21 490:25 491:1 496:6,7 499:20 502:13 509:4 514:18 514:19 518:8 524:21 526:21 526:23 527:2 531:15 535:5 540:22 551:18 551:23 552:6 554:11 559:25 562:22 563:2 563:10 564:16 570:15 571:13 571:15 575:10 576:7,11 577:17 578:5,7 582:14,15 586:4,5 591:22 592:9 597:15 597:21 603:8 603:10 606:4</p>	<p>609:15 612:7,9 616:11 618:5,7 624:15,16,19 628:20,24 629:11,12 632:19 633:15 633:17</p> <p>quick 430:16 461:1 575:17 576:7 606:6 628:23</p> <p>quicker 486:4</p> <p>quiet 456:20 458:9 581:20 608:13</p> <p>quietly 595:6</p> <p>quite 474:2 478:9 545:15 601:3</p> <p>quote 458:22</p> <p>quoted 447:6</p>	<p>raccoons 588:13</p> <p>race 495:7</p> <p>races 628:13</p> <p>radiating 550:22 562:11</p> <p>radishes 525:25</p> <p>radius 435:12</p> <p>rain 471:22</p> <p>rainfall 472:5</p> <p>rainfalls 471:20</p> <p>rains 471:23 472:3,4</p> <p>rainwater 523:22</p> <p>raise 432:8 436:18 443:8 447:23,25 451:17 455:20 462:1 477:2 487:1 490:4,7 491:5 499:24 509:11 515:2 521:14 527:16 536:6 555:22 566:2 572:13 579:3 587:1 593:10 604:7 607:7 608:24 612:1 613:12 614:16 619:11 620:22 625:16 627:1 630:17</p>
q		r	
<p>qualified 635:7</p> <p>quality 435:7</p> <p>question 431:3 434:4 442:9 461:1 466:22 467:18,19 484:7,22 499:15 550:18</p>		<p>r 423:1,4 424:1 430:1 432:14 432:14 462:8 477:8,8 487:8 491:12,15 496:16 500:6 509:17 521:20 527:21 536:11 556:2 566:14 572:18 579:9 593:16 619:17</p> <p>rabbits 556:25</p>	

<p>632:17 raised 468:18 475:6 488:25 489:1 raising 474:12 631:17 ran 628:15 range 538:5 rangeline 493:1 509:21 556:6 556:14 ranger 558:15 rank 511:10 ranks 511:9 raping 627:5 rare 530:12 532:6 rate 499:9 550:20 562:10 rates 497:14 595:10 rather 528:18 539:15 raw 589:13 rcx 425:2 426:2 427:2 428:2 rdx 425:2 426:2 427:2 428:2 reached 621:11 633:20 react 493:12 reactions 573:19</p>	<p>read 455:11,12 461:13 468:25 469:3 473:22 480:23 483:25 484:4 495:24 497:10 504:6 504:21,21,22 504:23,25 505:4 507:15 507:15,17,17 507:17,18 508:6,10,24 526:8,12 531:3 532:12,16,17 542:20,21 543:1 547:19 551:4 633:7 reading 446:16 532:2 567:7 623:2 reads 494:7 532:5 real 447:9,11 538:3 540:6 559:4 575:17 576:7 606:6 reality 581:13 582:11 realize 476:13 529:4 really 467:5 472:11 475:18 476:12 498:9 499:17 510:11 510:19,24</p>	<p>511:17 512:6 513:14 514:5 514:14 517:22 530:10 577:5 583:2 623:10 realms 623:14 reason 517:6 594:23 631:23 reasons 587:18 594:3 reassured 494:15 rebuild 476:7 488:4 rebuilding 524:3 rebuttal 468:7 recall 456:15 525:7 receipts 552:24 receive 439:12 440:1 461:18 526:15 552:20 received 438:21 494:18 535:10 537:1 552:17 553:2,3 553:6 554:24 565:5 567:6 574:20 603:19 612:17 618:15 receiving 567:9 recent 454:20 616:2 628:12</p>	<p>recently 450:24 537:23 recharged 451:4 recognize 546:3 547:12 recollection 543:6 recommendat... 461:11 469:1 504:20 505:2,5 526:9 584:13 recommendat... 505:3 recommended 461:16 469:12 473:23 504:25 532:15,23,25 633:4 recommends 621:20 reconcile 548:14,25 549:1,4 reconditioning 473:23 reconvening 430:4 record 430:3 432:12 436:23 443:13 448:8 451:22 455:25 462:6 477:7 487:6 491:10 496:14 503:17</p>
---	--	--	--

509:16 515:7 518:24,25 519:2,4 520:9 520:10,12,13 521:18 527:20 535:6 536:10 538:14 554:18 554:22 556:1 564:22 566:12 572:17 579:7 587:5 593:14 603:15 604:11 607:11 612:13 613:16 618:11 619:15 625:20 630:21 634:6 635:9 636:5 recorded 635:6 recording 635:8 636:4 records 500:4 recourse 596:20 recovers 605:11 recruit 453:6 recruiter 596:25 recycle 451:6 recycling 530:6 590:9 red 508:22 511:2 533:18 534:14 543:21 543:22 582:3	599:10 610:11 610:18,18 611:15 617:9 617:10 reduced 635:6 reduces 596:6 reducing 570:4 reduction 446:25 530:9 reference 454:23 referenced 531:21 referred 528:14 referring 601:16 reflected 516:12 reflecting 523:12 reflects 516:11 refrain 431:8 483:17 496:4 refresh 543:6 refuse 631:16 regard 503:7 regarding 454:21 472:17 476:14 regardless 473:1 495:6 regards 483:8 484:9 503:16 region 435:20 459:11	regional 437:19 registered 565:6 578:9 592:13 603:20 612:20 624:22 633:21 regular 460:7 471:20 472:1,2 regulated 516:2 regulations 446:1 495:17 529:7 569:7,8 rehabbing 608:20 reiterate 430:19 reject 575:2 related 526:13 635:11 636:7 relates 524:17 relating 563:12 relative 635:13 636:10 relatively 532:6 relax 557:22 released 569:17 574:8 releasing 558:19 reliable 433:17 530:8 559:1,19 608:5 rely 553:21,23	remain 436:13 remaining 433:17 436:12 519:12 remember 459:14 464:2 464:25 465:6 493:17 505:22 542:22 546:13 561:25 570:3 reminder 467:14 549:10 633:24,25 reminds 457:4 removal 484:25 602:6 remove 510:22 510:25 523:20 610:22 620:22 removed 479:25 544:10 602:2,4 611:18 611:23 618:2 removing 605:10 rendered 530:15 renewable 457:5 458:6 479:3 537:4 559:7 581:5 renewables 444:12 445:10 452:16 454:6 458:18 479:1
---	---	--	---

<p>537:1 538:8 569:23 570:4 595:6 596:18 rent 465:9 557:21 629:1,3 renting 513:13 reopening 558:23 repair 581:4 repaired 583:22 repairing 524:3 repairs 522:23 repeat 558:5 576:9 repeated 528:11 repercussions 514:10 replace 449:13 451:2 488:3 replaced 507:9 replenishing 488:13 report 446:10 446:11 447:7 447:11 461:6,7 461:11 468:25 476:15 479:22 480:10,15,20 480:25 485:14 485:16 495:24 503:4 504:17 504:19,20 505:2,4 526:8</p>	<p>526:13 531:2 531:21,25 537:17,19 538:4,9 539:24 542:21,25 548:11 568:18 584:8,13 609:6 621:19 622:5 623:16 633:4 reported 422:20 reporter 431:10 466:9 466:11 483:5 518:25 520:11 549:12 551:24 552:2 558:4,7 558:10 576:3 610:21 634:5 reports 457:12 represent 438:17 440:10 440:17 463:18 482:25 483:1 500:20 506:15 533:17 547:8 577:24 578:3 representative 437:18 464:25 475:12 480:1 506:19 573:11 573:13 575:5 600:25 617:7 representatives 431:5 444:16</p>	<p>458:7 507:2 535:1 578:2 represented 444:14 520:22 575:4 representing 441:13 442:3 453:16 502:4 reps 464:6,10 republic 495:1 573:11,13 575:5 request 447:13 453:23,25 454:4 requesting 503:21 require 531:10 532:4 581:4 required 434:3 589:11,13 requirements 608:11 research 463:10,13 511:6 553:20 570:13 589:3 reselling 608:21 reserve 488:13 resets 494:1 reside 521:23 525:11 536:18 556:8,14 566:20 572:25</p>	<p>573:1 579:12 587:9 593:22 600:5 604:16 607:19,20 613:23,25 619:23 626:3 631:4,5 residence 543:23 571:9 599:16,18 622:14,18 resident 477:24 622:10 residential 434:23 482:8 482:20 590:3 residents 479:11,15 549:17 550:8 550:14,19 558:20 562:9 574:21 591:15 617:11 622:10 623:12 resistance 463:6 resolution 452:12,13,14 453:11,13 454:9,11,20,22 455:9,11 463:23 466:18 473:4,5 474:5 494:7 501:8,13 502:7 504:10</p>
--	---	--	--

504:11,14 505:6,8,13,15 505:16,18,23 505:25 506:1,6 506:20 507:5 574:14,18 622:21 resolutions 501:10,12 503:18,21 616:3 resolved 453:20 resource 486:12,15 resources 449:9 450:5 479:4 500:23 500:24 501:17 501:22 502:24 523:11 539:15 respectfully 616:7 respond 576:7 576:11 responded 574:17 responding 574:2 response 465:6 494:2 573:20 responsibility 452:23 473:8 responsible 541:25 542:2,8	542:10 596:16 rest 439:13 498:6 559:13 624:6 restaurant 497:17 restore 510:23 511:1 restored 605:10 restricting 434:25 restrictions 488:20 resulting 493:23 results 479:13 522:18 616:3 resume 520:14 retention 471:17 retile 466:1 retired 500:22 501:1 515:22 retirees 528:22 return 433:22 449:21 482:19 revealed 456:25 reveals 446:17 reversing 472:21 reverting 512:14	review 503:3 532:14 621:24 633:3 reviewed 461:5 461:15 584:21 revised 494:13 495:2 574:25 reward 486:4 rezoned 434:2 rhonda 426:18 535:12 536:11 rhythms 494:2 rich 517:10 523:24 623:8 rick 427:6 571:18 572:18 ridge 448:12 ridgeline 560:22 right 432:8 436:18 441:11 442:14 443:8 447:23 448:1 451:17 455:7 455:20 461:15 462:1 464:3 465:3 466:21 469:13,17 470:11,12,18 472:24 477:3 480:18 481:8 482:10,16,21 483:22 484:2 484:16,18 486:16 487:1	491:5 493:8,11 494:21 496:1 497:19 498:3,4 498:20 503:5 503:20,22,23 503:25 504:4 504:15,18 505:8,9,13 506:18 507:7 509:11 512:19 512:21 513:11 515:2 518:15 518:22 519:8 520:11 521:15 522:1,20 525:4 525:9,11 526:15 527:1 527:16 528:4 532:10,25 533:2 534:12 534:20 535:4,5 535:7 539:17 545:6 548:4,6 548:8 549:9 550:2 554:4,4 554:8,8 555:22 560:6,8,9,23 561:17 562:3 562:16,21 566:2,3 571:10 571:23 572:1 572:14 576:1 577:7,8,8,19 579:3,14,15 585:16,25
---	---	--	---

586:2,3,6 587:2,12 588:6 591:1 592:12 592:19 593:7 593:11 598:22 599:23 600:1,2 601:5,7 602:20 603:20 604:6,8 604:10,12 605:20 606:13 607:8 610:15 610:18,23,23 611:22 612:6 612:10 613:12 616:22 618:21 619:12,25 624:20,23 625:15,16 629:1,13,21 630:1,16,17 631:9 633:6,9 633:20 rights 433:25 435:23 445:16 445:24,25 446:2 479:15 479:17 494:22 494:24 495:9 498:17,19 512:18,19,20 529:4,17 539:14,20,22 540:1,2 559:16 574:25 575:1,6 577:14,14	594:24 ripped 459:11 ripple 557:17 risk 486:3 529:21 548:5 549:17,18 risking 547:25 river 465:5 594:14,16 road 429:19 443:19 445:10 451:24 452:15 454:6 456:5 457:5 458:6,18 459:18 460:15 462:11 467:7 473:18 477:12 481:18 487:11 487:15 488:15 491:19,24 493:2,2 496:21 509:21 513:3 521:20 527:23 534:21 537:10 540:11 544:2 556:6,14 560:23 562:2,9 566:18 572:22 579:10,21 581:10 587:7 593:19 595:5 596:17 598:14 598:15 599:21 600:5,15 602:16 607:16	609:25 613:21 614:12,19 619:21 625:25 626:17,19,24 627:1 628:25 631:1 633:8 roads 433:15 444:12 460:5,7 478:20,21 479:1,4 485:5 485:14 537:1,3 538:8 539:25 540:5 567:12 567:24 568:4 581:5 608:3 robert 476:23 476:25 rocks 522:21 roger 425:20 454:13 470:1 476:24 477:8 477:24 role 541:23 552:11 rolling 556:21 ron 471:9 roof 548:18,19 549:16 roofs 489:7 rooftop 508:12 588:25 rooftops 544:19 549:20 588:24,25	room 464:8,15 627:23 roost 537:21 rooted 492:20 rosseau 514:22 rossford 441:25 roughly 596:6 597:10 round 430:4 route 493:1 580:1,2,2 row 425:17 453:20 454:12 461:25 462:4,7 462:23 466:8 466:16 476:18 484:7,24 rowe 425:12 451:15,16,20 451:23 453:19 454:13 455:14 rowley 428:3 618:17,20,23 619:3,7,10,13 619:16 rows 459:12 ruckman 505:13 ruin 605:9 615:9 ruination 568:8 ruined 488:7 rules 483:19,20 569:7
---	---	--	---

run 464:4 471:25 472:8 524:10 580:18 594:12 596:18	491:15 496:16 509:18 515:1,8 527:22 556:3 579:9,9 593:16	524:20 526:22 527:5,9,15,19 527:25 528:3 531:12,15	591:22 592:8 592:12,19,22 593:2,7,10,13 593:17,21,25
running 512:3 522:22 562:7	607:13 630:22 630:23	534:1,5,6 535:7,15,18,23 536:3,6,9,13,17	597:15 599:3,6 599:12 600:12 600:16 603:10
runoff 433:9 470:23,24 471:6,12,24 478:18 480:5,7 497:15 502:9 508:23 523:22 524:6 557:12 580:18,20 581:3,15 583:8 583:14,18 584:3 585:3 594:10 609:9	sad 590:21 safe 438:8,8 456:21,24 489:10 540:16 595:22	540:19,21 543:19 545:25 547:10 549:10 551:21 554:11 554:15,20 555:3,6,9,13,19 555:22,25 556:4,8,11 558:1 559:24 560:25 563:1 564:18,24	603:16,24 604:2,7,10,15 604:18 606:4 606:10,12,18 606:21,25 607:4,7,10,14 607:18,22 609:15 610:9 610:12 612:9 612:15,22,25 613:3,7,11,15 613:19,23
runoffs 438:3 537:17 540:6	sally 425:14 455:19 456:1	565:2,11,14,18 565:24 566:2,6 566:8,11,15,19 566:23 570:14 571:14,18,23 572:1,5,10,13 572:16,20,24 573:3 575:9 576:1,6,10 578:6,13,16,20 578:25 579:3,6 579:12,16 582:14 586:5 586:12,15,19 586:23 587:1,4 587:9,12 588:4	614:2 616:11 617:4 618:7,13 618:21,24 619:4,8,11,14 619:18,22,25 624:4,14,18 625:1,4,8,12,15 625:19,23 626:2,5,7 628:20 629:12 629:19,23 630:1,4,9,13,16 630:20,24 631:3,7 632:19 633:16,20
runs 523:7 524:9	samuel 428:8 629:15 630:22		
rural 435:15,20 452:24 458:5 473:5,10,13,14 538:22 539:21 540:15,16 559:17 615:17	sandhill 537:23 542:25 543:2,9 556:24		
rusting 459:23	sandor 422:15 430:10 442:12 467:14 483:17 519:6,11,17,20 519:24 520:7 520:10,14,21 520:25 521:5,8 521:14,17,22 521:25 522:3,6		
ruthless 581:22			
s			
s 423:1 424:1 429:1 430:1 432:14 436:25 456:1 462:8			

<p>sandors 519:8 sanitarium 515:23 sarah 427:15 514:23 518:11 592:15 593:15 sat 465:2 sater 423:5 431:18 save 473:25 530:22 saying 442:20 464:23 528:10 537:2 601:24 602:15 610:15 says 434:18 473:7 479:23 479:23 480:15 480:20 506:10 537:19 538:4 539:4,24 543:11 547:21 547:23 611:18 624:8 scale 446:8 513:4 585:21 622:24 scanned 545:17 scenery 609:2 scenes 501:6 scenic 493:5 594:14 scheduled 432:5</p>	<p>schmitt 426:22 429:13,15 554:25 555:2,5 555:8,12,17,21 555:24 556:3 556:13 558:1 560:3,20,22 562:22 563:2 school 438:24 439:4 548:15 591:3,9 607:21 schools 439:2 441:23 458:13 548:14 science 439:7 scientific 530:6 scientists 439:10 scott 425:10 447:22,24 448:9 scrape 476:8 scraped 476:2 screening 545:2,5 620:12 622:13 623:3 search 459:20 season 492:22 seasons 540:3 second 430:22 453:20 473:6 505:18 seconds 430:22 455:6</p>	<p>secretly 537:4 608:13 section 495:2 516:2 574:25 secure 494:10 540:17 570:2 see 430:23 438:10,14 457:2 459:20 466:17 471:7 473:10 474:8 481:15 486:11 497:9 499:16 505:21 506:1 511:7 534:23 546:21 547:16 547:19 548:2 562:3,5,12 580:3 582:2 588:11,13 591:3 601:7,9 601:10 602:3,3 609:3,13 611:18,20 615:5 620:10 620:15 621:1 632:16 seed 464:4,5,6 468:6,13,17 526:5,5 583:21 seeding 581:4 seeing 546:22 587:25 seem 489:12 568:11 574:11</p>	<p>601:2 seems 492:11 523:1 seen 433:23 451:3 463:11 497:10 546:5 567:17 584:10 584:22 632:4 sees 530:5 selected 498:8 sell 435:22 468:5,13 482:2 490:1 596:18 621:13,14 selling 444:11 468:17 478:1 621:3 631:11 senate 478:13 495:19,22 send 444:25 461:20 526:18 545:16 557:17 561:17 seniors 439:3 sense 449:4,20 450:8 464:13 482:22 492:18 510:24 511:17 512:19 513:7 513:22 549:8 sent 545:15 546:5 568:1 598:6,8 sentence 532:2 532:5,10</p>
--	---	---	--

<p>series 616:25</p> <p>serious 471:24 476:9 550:21 562:10</p> <p>seriously 522:11 595:18</p> <p>service 501:1 523:11</p> <p>services 568:17 568:17 597:1</p> <p>session 431:3</p> <p>sessions 430:20</p> <p>set 485:10 492:5 493:13 538:22 551:11 610:10</p> <p>setbacks 569:14</p> <p>settineri 423:3 425:15,18,21 426:6,13,16,19 426:23 427:4,7 427:10,13,16 427:21,24 428:6,9 431:16 431:18 436:7 455:16 461:1,3 461:4 466:8,9 466:12,15,16 467:16,17 476:17,20 481:14 483:7 483:23 486:21 496:7 502:15 502:21 509:4</p>	<p>514:19 520:4,8 524:22,24 525:2 526:20 531:17,18 534:3,10,12,13 535:4 540:24 543:20 545:20 546:1,2 547:4 547:11 549:13 549:14 551:18 554:15,17 560:2 561:4 562:21,25 564:21 570:17 570:19 571:12 575:12 576:5 576:13 578:4 582:15,17,20 586:3 592:2,6 597:18,21 598:24 599:5,8 599:13,14 600:8,14,18 603:8,14 609:18 610:4 610:10,14,23 610:24 612:6 612:12 616:14 616:24 617:5 618:5,10 624:16 628:22 629:10 632:21 633:14</p> <p>setting 557:22 615:17</p>	<p>seven 467:9 518:23 529:22 563:17 590:9 596:4</p> <p>several 478:14 481:21 574:4 587:18 594:3 605:21</p> <p>severely 588:10 596:8</p> <p>seymour 423:5 431:19</p> <p>shadows 601:2</p> <p>shaped 492:19</p> <p>share 454:19 455:3 493:16 597:5</p> <p>shares 558:13</p> <p>sharing 497:9 623:22</p> <p>sharp 429:19 562:9 593:19 600:5,15 607:16 613:21 614:12,19 625:25 626:17 626:19,24 627:1 628:25 631:1 633:8</p> <p>sheep 460:11 474:12,12,13 474:15,18 568:9,15 588:17 623:19</p>	<p>sheet 584:11</p> <p>sheets 518:16 518:18</p> <p>shell 596:14</p> <p>shelter 568:12 589:2</p> <p>sheridan 558:13</p> <p>shiawasse 558:16</p> <p>shipped 627:6</p> <p>shock 537:15</p> <p>shooters 457:11</p> <p>short 451:9 502:10 537:22</p> <p>shortages 449:23</p> <p>shortly 456:18</p> <p>show 486:20 533:17 545:18 550:25 580:5 602:1</p> <p>showcases 594:23</p> <p>shower 450:21</p> <p>showing 497:9 567:21 576:23</p> <p>shows 538:15 539:12 559:9</p> <p>shredded 523:18</p> <p>shuffling 596:14</p>
--	---	---	--

<p>sic 603:21</p> <p>side 455:2 465:3 482:13 534:15 611:14</p> <p>sides 442:23 545:3 569:11 569:13,13 594:5</p> <p>siding 575:18 584:12 585:9</p> <p>sight 622:11</p> <p>sign 430:22 485:17,17 518:20 574:13 574:18 585:23 597:9 598:9</p> <p>signature 574:12 635:17 636:14</p> <p>signatures 574:16</p> <p>signed 439:2 455:9 476:25 480:2 506:8,12 537:5 608:13 622:21</p> <p>significant 446:21 589:16 594:22 595:10 600:22</p> <p>signing 595:6</p> <p>signs 605:12,20 605:21 611:10</p> <p>silence 457:14 457:19 620:21</p>	<p>silenced 574:24 577:20</p> <p>similar 595:11</p> <p>simple 459:20 489:23 490:10 495:16</p> <p>single 498:1 513:4 590:2 609:3</p> <p>singular 492:19</p> <p>sir 441:5,21 442:22 467:10 469:5 472:15 483:21 504:14 541:6 547:15 551:3,20 572:12 575:14 577:5 586:11 586:18,25 588:4 592:5 597:24 599:17 600:7 606:17 606:20,24 607:3,6 610:21 611:2 629:25 630:3,8 632:25 633:10</p> <p>sister 626:17 629:4</p> <p>sisters 437:20 440:20</p> <p>sit 497:13 550:14</p> <p>site 433:4 568:3 580:18,22</p>	<p>581:7 583:16 583:16 584:19 585:2 596:25</p> <p>sites 621:16 623:25</p> <p>siting 422:1 424:12 430:13 437:15 447:16 453:23 461:10 479:10 486:6 502:19 504:23 504:23 526:10 545:13 561:17</p> <p>sits 557:10 620:11</p> <p>sitting 464:8,15 465:2 511:24 567:24</p> <p>situated 557:5</p> <p>situation 488:12 516:24 549:16 620:16 621:4 623:4</p> <p>situations 595:23</p> <p>six 446:9 467:8 537:16 595:20</p> <p>sized 458:4</p> <p>skilled 439:23 440:22 441:2,3</p> <p>skills 635:10 636:6</p> <p>skull 547:20</p> <p>skunks 588:13</p>	<p>slated 487:23</p> <p>sleep 537:13</p> <p>slice 595:25</p> <p>slightly 506:12</p> <p>slow 558:2</p> <p>slowly 457:9</p> <p>small 454:8,14 457:7,9 490:21 493:7 497:20 528:20 580:8 595:25 620:7 624:1 632:1</p> <p>smaller 544:20 595:2</p> <p>smart 424:2 451:8 514:6</p> <p>smells 602:22</p> <p>smith 425:10 447:22,24,24 448:2,6,9</p> <p>smoke 530:5</p> <p>snow 450:23</p> <p>snowstorm 450:22</p> <p>sober 524:18</p> <p>social 568:3</p> <p>society 450:10</p> <p>soil 462:24 473:23 475:21 476:14 523:24 524:4,8 547:25 580:16</p> <p>solar 422:4,7 423:2 429:4,6 429:9,13,15,16</p>
--	--	--	--

429:20,22	503:16 504:1	589:1,12,14,18	somebody
430:6 431:17	506:19 508:4	589:20,20	480:9 482:7
433:3,16,18,20	508:11,16	590:1,3,6,13,15	497:16 523:16
433:23 434:1	511:11 512:1,4	590:18,23,24	549:21
434:18,18,19	516:7,11,16,19	591:1,7,19,20	someone's
436:3 438:7,8	516:21,25	594:3,6,20	530:21
438:20,25	517:1,9,22	595:14,21	son 468:14
439:8,13,16,22	522:9,10,12,15	597:11 601:14	478:4 498:2
440:2 441:13	523:4,4,12,19	601:19 605:9	580:10 605:3
442:17 444:9	524:12 525:2	605:12,15,20	626:25
445:1,2 446:4	528:7 529:16	605:21,24	son's 480:14
446:8 447:14	530:2,7,20,21	608:1,4,7,25	soon 493:7
447:16 449:3,7	530:21,23,24	609:12,14	539:6 596:18
449:19 450:15	531:19 534:22	611:10 614:7	621:14
450:25 451:5,7	535:1 537:2,16	614:20 615:14	sorry 438:10
451:9 452:16	538:18,19,22	615:18,20	448:2 466:11
452:17,18	538:23,24	616:3 617:18	483:5 492:25
453:3,7,24	539:12 540:13	620:5,10,16	504:23 508:25
454:5,21 457:5	540:14 544:15	621:9,14	509:1,9 519:10
457:15,22	544:19 547:23	622:19,22	529:2 545:8
458:5,8,20,21	548:8,13,16,20	623:16,25	552:3 566:5
458:25 459:8	549:1,19	624:11 626:12	576:4,12
459:13,21	556:15 557:9	627:4,10	584:10 599:5
461:5 463:2	557:25 558:25	628:15,15	599:20 610:22
464:16,25	563:12,14	631:9,18,22,24	626:5
465:6,16 466:5	564:11 567:3	632:7,11,14,17	sort 430:17
466:17,23	567:15 569:20	632:18	569:8
473:16,17	569:21 573:17	solar's 551:17	sound 446:15
475:7 478:19	574:3,10,14,22	sold 469:6,15	493:25 568:22
480:22 483:14	575:3 576:24	489:12,14	571:10
487:22 488:10	579:22 580:7	589:7 598:15	sounds 460:14
489:6,11 492:8	582:5,21	solicitations	557:24 602:22
494:19 501:9	585:21 587:17	516:5	source 433:7
501:16,18,21	587:20,21,22	solid 518:14	511:19 552:21
502:1,8,22	588:6,8,16,17	568:23	588:19,20

<p>589:17,21,24 590:4,17 632:12 sourced 588:22 south 448:12 562:7 566:22 southeast 601:10 616:21 southern 590:21 southwest 601:10 soybeans 557:8 588:19 614:23 space 435:12 589:1 spaces 435:19 spain 516:17 span 567:23 spans 497:20 speak 431:6 437:16,23 444:7 452:2 475:3 510:10 515:20 570:9 581:21 613:10 613:11 620:18 speaker 483:19 483:21 518:16 speakers 529:9 587:19 speaking 573:8 speaks 479:14 special 492:9 615:10</p>	<p>species 480:16 531:6 543:4 556:23 557:18 559:20 specifically 529:8 574:14 583:19 587:23 617:18 speech 497:7 speed 485:17 spell 432:11 436:22 448:7 451:21 455:24 462:5 477:7 487:5 491:9 496:13 500:3 509:15 515:6 527:19 566:12 572:17 579:6 587:4 593:13 604:11 607:11 613:15 619:14 625:19 630:20 spend 440:23 spent 552:24 552:25 split 628:6 spoke 434:4 480:3 481:20 506:24 507:8 591:2 617:21 spoken 444:15 590:25 627:12 628:8</p>	<p>sportsman's 443:18 spot 602:4 spots 464:9 sprawl 569:18 569:19 spread 569:15 spreading 526:5 spreads 526:4 spring 471:20 472:1 533:12 533:13 598:5 staff 431:7 461:5,7,11 468:25 473:22 476:15 479:21 495:24 503:4 504:17,19,20 505:1 518:19 526:8,10 531:2 531:20,25 532:14 537:17 537:19 538:4,9 539:24 542:21 542:25 548:11 568:18 584:8 584:13 609:6 621:16,19,20 621:24 622:2,4 623:16 633:4 staff's 469:12 532:23 621:25 633:4</p>	<p>stage 456:19 511:24 staggering 632:5 stalks 614:25 stance 455:1 stand 436:13 591:10 620:9 631:16 standards 435:3 standing 573:8 starr 506:8 start 439:10 459:2 511:18 520:17 527:1 626:10 started 463:7 468:14 482:2 492:20 507:25 510:15 519:17 623:22 state 424:6 432:11 435:25 436:22 443:12 445:25 448:7 451:21 455:24 457:15,25,25 462:5 463:25 464:7,9,12,18 464:20 477:6 487:5,22 491:9 494:20 495:4,8 495:14,18 496:13,19</p>
---	---	---	---

<p>500:3 509:15 511:17 515:6 517:14 521:17 524:12 527:19 536:9 538:5,6 555:25 559:21 566:11 567:24 572:16 579:6 579:25 580:5 582:6 587:4 593:13 594:13 596:22 597:12 604:10 607:10 613:15 619:14 625:19 628:10 630:20 635:20</p> <p>stated 538:5 560:16 576:24 587:19 606:1 628:12 632:8</p> <p>statement 433:1 437:12 444:3 449:2 452:11 456:14 462:21 477:22 484:4 487:20 492:4 497:5,7 500:18 510:5 515:18 522:8 528:5 536:24 556:12 561:13 562:6,19 567:1 573:5 579:17 587:14 594:1 598:11 604:20</p>	<p>607:24 614:4 620:2 626:9 631:8</p> <p>statements 520:16,17 527:2</p> <p>states 446:9,17 446:18,19 465:18 488:11 489:15 511:9 516:9,11,22 539:7 558:12 568:13,19 578:1 580:6 582:8 616:6 621:20 622:5</p> <p>stating 452:14 458:9,23 574:9 622:21</p> <p>status 495:7</p> <p>stay 430:25 513:12 621:5</p> <p>staying 627:8</p> <p>step 489:18</p> <p>stewards 449:24</p> <p>stewart 425:3 432:7,10,14 433:3 436:5,5 436:11</p> <p>stood 474:25</p> <p>stop 450:20 489:7 570:1 582:12</p>	<p>stopped 582:8</p> <p>storage 558:18</p> <p>store 590:1</p> <p>stored 563:17</p> <p>storefronts 457:7</p> <p>storm 580:18 580:20 581:9 584:3 585:3</p> <p>storms 459:11</p> <p>stormwater 501:20 502:9 508:19,23 583:18</p> <p>story 493:16 620:23</p> <p>straight 457:11 475:11,17</p> <p>strain 537:15</p> <p>strawberries 490:13</p> <p>stream 460:6 524:5,7,8</p> <p>streams 524:10</p> <p>street 422:18 423:6 424:6 432:17 456:9 500:9 527:22 530:1 536:15 604:13</p> <p>streets 457:8</p> <p>stress 484:11</p> <p>stressful 463:4 474:22,23 484:8,10,14</p>	<p>stretches 492:17</p> <p>strinka 425:25 491:4,8,12</p> <p>stripped 482:15</p> <p>strongly 581:11 582:4 594:2 614:8</p> <p>strongsville 517:25</p> <p>structure 585:11</p> <p>structures 589:23</p> <p>struggled 439:18</p> <p>stuck 498:1 524:2</p> <p>students 438:24 439:10 528:22 605:13 605:16</p> <p>studies 493:21 495:25 594:21</p> <p>study 446:6,7 446:16,17 460:14 539:11 594:19,23</p> <p>stuff 438:4 465:24 475:2 497:16,21 498:9,13,15 499:4,9,13 611:10</p>
---	---	---	--

subdivision 482:8,20 subject 521:2 527:7 535:20 555:10 565:15 572:3 578:17 586:16 592:24 606:22 613:4 619:1 621:24 625:5 630:6 submit 545:13 submitted 502:9 550:15 550:16 560:5 subsequent 433:20 subsidies 596:12 substance 493:24 substances 458:23 substantial 485:6 547:24 substation 562:8,12 substations 550:22 subtle 582:7 suburb 517:24 succeeded 585:8 suddenly 457:8 623:20	sufficient 589:14 sugar 490:15 suggested 471:3 595:17 suggests 446:11 suit 465:15 suite 423:16 424:6 suits 459:15 475:15 summary 454:23 summer 511:14 567:18 sun 450:21 459:24 511:15 511:16 523:12 564:9,12 595:22 sunday 590:20 sunlight 511:6 511:8,12 516:10 563:18 589:10,11 sunny 450:16 459:25 580:6 581:15 sunshine 511:17 supervision 568:11 supplement 450:15	supplemented 568:14 supply 488:11 488:14 557:2 570:7 605:10 support 433:24 439:25 444:7 444:20 445:4 479:15 485:22 552:18 559:11 563:13 574:10 576:23 597:7 612:2 supported 539:14 supporters 604:25 supporting 452:23 473:8 supposed 485:20 513:14 supposedly 485:5 563:18 627:19 supreme 518:6 sure 431:6 438:2 440:18 460:25 465:23 473:15 475:5 484:23 491:18 510:19 518:18 552:7 553:1 562:5 571:20 576:16 577:3 598:22 601:23	622:2 633:7 surface 446:14 470:23 471:1,2 471:14,17 581:2 surfaced 457:13 surprised 573:18 621:17 surrounded 569:10,13 594:4 598:17 615:18 620:11 627:3 surrounding 435:13,15,19 498:11 511:23 609:10 612:1 615:3 surrounds 587:25 588:7 624:3 survey 567:19 survive 493:5 susan 427:9 578:9 579:8,20 suspect 444:17 444:18 445:3 sustain 523:25 sustainable 511:3 swear 432:8 436:19 443:9 448:4 451:18 455:21 462:2
---	--	---	--

<p>477:3 487:2 491:6 496:10 499:24 509:12 515:3 521:15 527:16 536:7 555:23 566:6,8 572:14 579:4 587:2 593:11 604:8 607:8 613:13 619:12 625:16 630:17 sweden 516:17 sweet 502:10 switched 515:25 sworn 635:5 sycamore 451:24 493:2 524:9,10 symbol 548:4 system 451:8 494:1 495:15 578:2 580:21 580:22 589:20 590:4 systems 589:19 590:15</p>	<p>566:14 572:19 587:7,7 604:13 604:13 613:18 613:18 625:22 625:22 tad 558:2 tails 608:23 take 430:18 431:13 449:25 450:21 465:4 469:20 476:5,9 476:11 482:14 486:3 489:23 490:3,21 492:24 513:23 514:7,12 518:14,21 522:11 553:4 582:6,8 624:4 628:17 taken 449:10 450:6 469:8,8 469:24 473:15 473:18 487:24 498:4,19 499:11 506:11 508:13 529:17 580:12 635:3 635:12 636:9 takes 459:19 476:5,6 488:4 talk 431:4 434:18,22 438:16 470:1 470:20 472:8</p>	<p>475:3 507:1 509:3 510:16 511:4,5 512:14 512:18 516:14 518:19 549:11 556:20 576:2 talked 464:5 475:9 481:20 506:22 508:19 512:24 548:10 talking 465:22 469:18 473:16 476:9 484:13 490:13 509:1 510:21 542:5 553:18 584:11 talks 473:7 target 631:19 tavenor 423:14 426:20,24 431:20,21 551:24 552:1,3 552:5 554:8 563:4 564:16 tax 485:6 528:24 538:16 570:4 taxes 537:16 538:13 539:16 taxpayer 529:14 taxpayers 539:1 teacher 591:3</p>	<p>teachers 528:21 team 444:25 482:9 486:7 585:10 teams 484:12 tear 499:8 technicality 495:23 technologies 449:11 technology 524:11,12 589:12 596:4 tell 463:24 464:8 472:24 473:19 475:14 481:22 515:21 521:15 523:1 527:16 536:7 555:23 566:8 572:14 577:5 579:4 583:2 587:2 593:11 597:6 604:8 607:8 613:13 619:12 623:7 625:16 630:17 telling 463:22 514:6 623:11 tells 441:24 telluride 595:17 temporarily 596:23</p>
t			
<p>t 429:1 432:14 432:14 436:25 436:25 443:15 487:8 491:15 491:15 496:16 521:19,20 527:22 556:3,3</p>			

temporary 450:13,15	619:9,10 625:5 625:13 630:14	630:10 633:18	536:9 540:20
ten 471:21 476:8 512:4 516:22 518:21 531:7 538:8,15 538:24 590:22 608:24 609:5 622:4	testifying 515:1 555:16,18 635:5	texas 450:25 451:1 459:11 570:3 581:14 590:22 597:2	540:21 542:6 542:21 546:1 551:3,3,19,20 551:21 552:2,3 554:9,10,13,14 555:21,25 556:17 558:7 558:11 559:23 559:24 562:22 562:23 564:17 564:18 565:18 566:11,23 567:2 570:9,13 570:14 571:13 571:16,17 572:16 573:3 575:9,15 576:5 578:8 579:18 582:13 586:4,6 586:12 587:1 591:20 592:6,8 592:10,11,14 593:10 597:14 599:13 600:16 600:17 602:5 603:9,12,13 604:18 606:12 607:7,22 612:7 612:8,10 613:12 614:2,5 616:10 618:6,9 619:8 620:3 624:14,16,20 625:15 629:11
tension 478:16	testimonies 574:21	thank 432:1 437:14 440:4 442:14 443:2,4 443:6 447:17 447:18,20,21 451:10,12,14 455:4,13,14,17 460:22,23 461:20,22 466:5,6 476:18 476:19,20,21 481:11,16 484:21 486:22 486:23,24 490:23,24 491:1,2 496:3 496:8 497:6 499:18,19,22 502:12 508:2 509:5,6 510:6 510:7 514:16 514:17,20 515:19 518:6,7 518:9 521:13 521:22 522:3,6 524:19,20 526:20,24 527:5,15 528:8 531:14 534:6 535:5,23 536:6	
tenths 471:22	testimony 430:21 432:9 436:19 440:3,6 443:5,9 447:20 448:4 451:14 451:18 455:18 455:21 462:2 467:21,22 477:3 479:9 486:24 487:2 491:6 496:11 499:22,25 509:12 515:3 518:9 520:19 521:12 526:24 535:24 551:22 554:6 560:16 563:11 564:19 565:19 571:16 572:6 578:8,21 586:7 587:16 592:10 593:3 603:12 604:5 607:1 612:11 613:4,8 618:9 618:25 619:5 624:21 625:9 629:14 630:5		
term 451:9 568:7			
terminals 558:24			
terms 510:16 513:22 611:22			
terrible 446:11 475:4 605:7			
test 631:15			
testified 522:14 596:24			
testify 432:6 519:14,25 520:1 521:1 527:6,13 535:19 536:4 555:10,14,18 555:19 565:15 565:21,25 572:2,11 578:17 579:1 586:16,20,24 592:23 593:8 606:22 607:5			

629:13,20 630:16 631:7 633:15,16,17 633:19 634:3 thankfully 623:22 thanking 626:11 thanks 474:20 500:19 610:9 theater 422:17 theoec.org 423:18 theory 489:11 631:15 theresa 574:1 thin 492:10,18 493:8,10 537:16 548:11 thing 439:1 450:19 451:5 490:10 504:5 532:11,16 538:3 543:15 573:10 577:6 things 431:9 438:25 456:16 460:18 469:20 471:17 479:21 481:1 497:10 497:10,14 498:17 510:16 516:15 543:14 573:11 585:15 585:16 615:10	617:24 627:25 think 431:13 442:8,12 450:24 459:9 464:2,14,15 465:15 467:10 467:20 470:16 471:11,25 472:19 474:9 475:4 476:7 483:11,12,25 484:24 485:25 494:19,23 503:17 504:3 504:16 506:22 507:8 508:8,13 508:15 510:19 512:10,19 513:21 517:22 525:20 532:20 534:9 543:10 546:9 547:1,18 548:22 549:8 549:18 551:13 551:16 555:1 563:23 564:1,3 576:14 596:11 610:5 627:4 thinking 489:23 thinner 492:11 third 473:6 580:5 602:11 602:14,17,19	thom 573:25 thomas 426:15 429:4 526:25 527:4,8,14,18 527:21 531:12 531:14,18 534:14 545:6 thought 488:8 504:5,7,8 505:19 534:3 589:4 626:14 631:19 thoughts 582:10 589:5 thousand 627:25 thousands 465:17 580:25 581:20 threatening 591:15 threatens 494:4 three 430:4 438:20 439:17 446:17,19 460:9 463:1,7 469:21 471:22 472:3 480:3,6 486:10 510:8 513:1 520:5 533:25 542:22 554:21 569:13 573:19 574:8 576:22 589:18 594:19 614:15	620:7 627:1 628:4 631:17 633:24 thrive 494:3 thrown 494:23 thunderstorms 459:5 thursday 591:2 tile 466:2 470:17,18,19 470:22,24 580:17,21,22 581:1 583:23 583:25 585:1,5 tiles 470:25 557:2 tillable 464:2,3 time 422:13 447:9 455:4,11 455:13 458:1 459:2 463:4 469:6,9 476:10 478:9 481:9 483:17 501:3 507:9 510:7,11 510:12 512:24 514:16 532:12 532:18 533:11 541:14,18 547:1 556:17 558:2 559:23 563:19 564:12 567:23 569:23 580:12 582:3 598:6 610:5
---	---	---	--

614:6 623:2,2 628:2 631:15 timely 608:11 timer 492:6 times 467:9 480:25 489:13 497:18 520:6 528:12 542:22 574:4 596:2 605:14,21 title 559:21 toast 489:24 490:10 today 441:24 450:5,11 486:10 511:24 512:11 513:25 561:12 570:10 583:8 598:16 todd 506:7 told 437:17 439:17 460:1 479:22 507:13 567:24 573:12 574:3 608:15 tomorrow 450:12 tone 505:20 tonight 432:6 438:16 444:7 444:14 447:15 448:24 452:8 456:11 462:18 466:17 470:21 483:25 484:4	489:23 490:13 515:1,20 516:6 519:21 520:1 520:23 521:1 521:12 522:17 527:3,6,13 528:8,9 530:3 535:16,19 536:4 555:7,10 555:16,18,20 556:17 565:12 565:15,21,25 566:1 571:24 572:2,11 575:15 577:17 578:14,17 579:1 586:13 586:24 593:5,8 606:19 607:5 625:5,13 630:14 tons 463:14 tony 441:24 took 450:25 456:19 470:2,2 489:24,25 490:1,3,4,7,11 492:14 tool 551:12,13 top 466:10 513:1,12 599:19,23 601:6,8 611:15 611:19 617:7	topsoil 463:12 472:20 475:24 476:3,6,14,14 479:22 480:11 482:15 484:25 485:12 488:3 497:15 523:20 605:10 tornado 596:3 tornadoes 459:5 total 512:19 532:9 totally 460:17 487:23 tourism 594:15 594:17 touted 590:6 toward 599:16 towards 439:4 617:11 town 457:9 508:9 631:17 towns 457:7 township 432:16,18 437:2 443:17 443:19 444:5,5 445:23 446:1 447:8,14 448:11 452:13 452:15,21,22 453:1,10,12,17 453:21 454:2,4 454:7,14,25	455:4 456:4,6 462:10,12,23 463:1,4,5,15,16 463:19,25 465:2 466:4,18 470:3,4,10 471:11 472:6 472:14,16,18 472:21 473:2 474:10 477:11 477:17,25 479:3,19 482:23,24 483:1,2,4,8,10 483:12 484:8 485:2 486:16 486:18 487:10 487:23 491:17 491:20 494:6 494:12 496:20 496:22 500:8 509:20,22 513:9,17 516:8 521:21 528:1,3 535:3 536:14 536:16 537:3 539:19 544:13 544:16 549:25 550:4,7,8 556:5,7 557:7 566:16,18 567:14,25 568:1 572:21 572:23 573:15 573:20,22
--	---	---	--

574:3,13,15,16 574:23 575:21 575:24 579:11 579:21 581:8 581:10 587:8 587:24 591:18 593:18,20 595:18 602:21 604:14 607:15 607:17 613:20 613:22 616:3 617:20 619:19 619:21 625:24 630:25	trade 442:2 traffic 478:22 trail 594:15 trained 438:20 training 438:21 438:22,24 439:13 tranquil 559:17 tranquility 557:23 transcriber 636:1 transcribing 558:4 transcript 431:11 636:3,5 transcriptionist 635:7 transform 538:23 transition 568:14 transmission 594:7 transmit 454:9 transparency 457:20 transportation 590:15 trash 499:7 travel 580:1 590:20 traveling 437:22 438:1 539:25	travesty 606:3 627:4 treasurer 552:12,13 treasury 538:15 trees 531:8 538:9 600:3,21 600:22 601:1 609:5 trenching 594:11 tri 538:7 tried 463:8 486:17 trouble 488:15 632:13 troubling 615:24 truck 481:5 true 460:12 635:9 636:5 trust 435:18 582:1 trustee 444:5 447:9 452:13 462:23 463:5 470:3 472:6,14 472:18 477:16 478:6 481:22 482:23,25 483:4 549:25 550:4,9 567:15 567:22 573:15 617:20	trustees 452:15 452:21,22 453:21 454:1,2 463:7,22 472:16 474:22 478:7,11 484:9 485:2 567:14 568:4 573:19 573:23 574:13 574:17,23 575:21,24 581:8 truth 432:9 436:20 443:10 448:5 451:19 455:22 457:3 462:3 477:4 487:3 491:7 496:11 500:1 509:13 515:4 521:15 527:17 536:7 555:23 566:9 572:14 579:4 587:2 593:11 604:8 607:8 613:13 619:12 625:17 630:18 631:20 try 430:21 468:5 483:1 514:5 549:11 trying 431:10 459:15 466:12 488:21 493:20 498:14 514:5
---	---	--	---

597:4 605:14 620:21 turkey 588:11 turn 431:3 450:21 519:5 530:11 turned 516:12 519:10 605:8 turning 516:21 615:20 turnout 628:4 tv 459:13 two 430:20 444:15 455:10 456:21 457:20 460:17 469:21 471:23 472:3 518:14 521:8 528:13 530:4 533:10 543:14 545:3 558:22 567:9,19 569:13 584:17 589:9 594:8,14 599:9 608:5 type 543:3 types 434:25 typewriting 635:7 typically 511:9	unacceptable 539:10 unanimous 501:8 505:15 576:25 unanimously 454:20 574:9 unbearable 537:13 uncle's 621:2 uncomfortable 438:12 uncommon 459:6 uncontrolled 523:22 under 453:15 488:25 558:2 underground 557:14 594:7 undermining 495:9 582:7 understand 433:12 436:2 440:14 445:19 463:8 465:14 469:11 471:12 497:11 498:13 499:14 503:14 512:22 514:3 532:22 537:14 538:21 575:20 575:23,25 578:1 584:16 593:6 619:7	623:1 understanding 433:14 445:9 501:5 577:11 understood 571:25 581:13 underwear 490:17 undisturbed 494:16 unethical 495:21 537:9 unfettered 493:12 unfolded 567:21 unfortunately 601:2 unidentified 483:19,21 518:16 uninformed 528:15 uninsurable 539:5 union 440:15 440:19,21 444:16,23 unions 444:14 444:21 unique 501:25 united 439:11 465:18 488:11 489:15 516:9 516:22 539:6	578:1 university 435:17 unknown 456:16 511:22 unknowns 456:17 465:21 510:18 631:10 631:14 unlimited 589:11 unnatural 569:14 unofficial 539:8 unorganized 569:16 unpacked 494:17 unsigned 567:10 unsolicited 567:9 untried 456:23 updated 501:18 upper 517:23 uppers 608:20 ups 493:10 upset 507:1 614:21 upstream 594:9 urban 569:18 urbanization 494:16
u			
u 487:8 491:15 579:9 630:22 ultimately 503:10			

<p>urge 518:4 628:3</p> <p>usa 449:20 450:7</p> <p>use 433:6 434:15,22 435:25 450:8 450:24 488:20 490:15,19 494:10 508:14 508:17 516:16 516:16 517:10 517:21 557:1 557:18 589:2 627:24</p> <p>used 433:10,19 449:7 450:14 460:12 474:5 532:10 563:19 564:13 580:14 582:12 594:14 595:17 621:2</p> <p>useless 530:15</p> <p>uses 434:25 435:6 563:23 564:1</p> <p>using 439:23 441:2 442:5 449:3,22 465:11 471:17 556:25 563:21 564:4 570:4 627:9</p> <p>usually 471:23</p>	<p>utica 521:20 525:11</p> <p>utilities 538:19</p> <p>utility 446:8 458:20 585:21</p> <p>utter 627:4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">v</p> <p>valley 492:16</p> <p>valuable 450:6 479:2</p> <p>value 479:10 485:1 495:6 512:21 529:8 529:20 539:9 594:20 609:1</p> <p>values 433:5 445:14 446:4 446:12,25 447:11 463:12 472:20 485:4,7 485:13 494:10 513:18 539:12 540:5 615:23</p> <p>van 519:18 526:18</p> <p>vance 487:11</p> <p>variety 557:16</p> <p>various 556:23 588:11 591:4 594:24</p> <p>vast 615:25 627:12 628:7</p> <p>vastly 595:8</p> <p>vegetation 434:7 621:21</p>	<p>vegetative 622:13</p> <p>vehemently 587:17</p> <p>vehicles 460:3 460:7 539:24 539:25 589:3</p> <p>verbally 620:16</p> <p>vernon 422:19 432:18 448:13 451:24 456:6 462:12 477:13 482:10,13 487:12 491:19 492:14,17 500:10,21 501:7,14 502:7 505:10 507:18 509:22 515:10 527:22 536:16 556:7,14 559:12 566:18 572:23 579:10 580:1 587:8 593:20 594:6 594:18 604:14 607:17 613:22 619:21 626:18 626:22,24</p> <p>versus 526:5</p> <p>vessels 496:2</p> <p>vested 445:13 445:14</p> <p>vibrant 492:21</p>	<p>vicinity 538:1</p> <p>videoconfere... 423:14</p> <p>view 492:16,19 549:16 551:12 588:1,2 622:14 622:18</p> <p>views 488:2 626:20</p> <p>viewshed 493:19</p> <p>village 434:10 434:17 435:4,8 612:2</p> <p>violated 574:24 575:6</p> <p>virtually 459:18</p> <p>visible 587:22</p> <p>visited 537:23 614:10</p> <p>voice 577:20 605:2 620:4,23</p> <p>voices 539:9 574:24 597:4</p> <p>voicing 623:13</p> <p>voltage 550:19 562:7</p> <p>volume 479:14</p> <p>von 467:6</p> <p>vorys 423:5 431:18</p> <p>vorys.com 423:9,10</p>
--	--	---	---

<p>vote 495:8 498:4 505:12 505:24 506:20 508:21 517:21 voted 505:25 508:16 631:23 voting 454:12 454:13 479:8,9 495:9 498:5 505:22 575:7 vulnerable 495:9 vultures 588:13</p>	<p>495:21 497:25 498:19 499:1 512:3 514:1,5 517:17 519:18 523:6 533:1 544:12,13,15 548:21,21 555:19 557:23 559:15 562:23 565:23,24 567:8 585:5 608:1 609:12 610:17 612:1 614:5,9 615:16 616:1 626:10 628:3 631:22 631:25 633:7 wanted 440:19 440:25 444:7 444:10 454:19 458:4 467:8 510:15 528:11 570:10 626:23 wanting 488:25 wants 484:13 529:17,18 549:22 589:24 ward 500:21 507:3 515:9 warehouse 623:18 warren 517:2 wash 485:9,9 waste 609:8</p>	<p>watch 631:16 watched 459:13 watching 614:23 water 433:7 462:24 470:24 471:1,2,14,17 478:18 531:11 532:4,8 537:17 557:12,14 580:16,17,20 581:2,9,15 609:11 watercraft 501:2 waters 438:3 594:13 waterways 580:17,21 581:3 583:12 583:20 watson 462:11 way 457:9 459:22 467:5 471:16 472:17 480:13,23 489:16,22 494:21 498:25 499:1 514:2 516:18 551:7 553:5 575:20 577:25 594:5 631:23 632:3</p>	<p>wayne 517:25 ways 498:16 we've 431:1 438:2,23 460:20 463:5 463:11 512:24 518:13 553:3 556:20 559:17 578:2 580:12 580:14,16 585:7 614:13 615:2 617:19 628:1 633:20 wealthy 495:13 517:12 wearing 490:17 weather 450:16 450:18 608:4 weaver 491:18 website 429:10 506:16 541:25 542:2,3,4,7,13 546:24 547:9 547:14,17 551:7,9,15,17 551:17 577:2 wednesday 422:12 week 430:17 467:21 621:15 weekend 590:20 weekends 513:13</p>
w			
<p>w 432:14 456:2 462:8 514:23 619:17 wage 439:14 441:14,19 442:2 wait 450:20,23 waiting 604:4 waking 539:7 wallace 518:11 want 430:3,12 430:18 431:12 434:23 436:4 438:4,6,13 442:11 448:10 450:20,23 451:1,5 463:20 464:11 469:21 469:25 475:6 481:5 489:10 493:17 494:25</p>			

weeks 510:10	609:2,6	462:22 466:7	579:18 586:8
weighing	willing 472:7	476:19,22	587:6,11,15
497:12	472:13 532:17	477:8,12,16,20	588:5 592:11
welcome 430:3	588:5	477:23 481:10	592:13 593:15
461:21 554:10	wind 458:5	481:12 486:25	593:19,23
564:20	501:3 585:21	487:7,11,15,18	594:2 600:17
welder 523:6	595:23 596:1	487:21 491:2,3	603:13,20
welfare 452:24	winds 589:22	491:11,14,18	604:12,17,21
473:9 494:9	595:24	491:23 492:2,5	606:9,11,13
wellbeing	winter 465:2	496:9,15,18,21	607:12,16,20
591:12	511:15	496:25 497:3,6	607:25 612:8
wendy's 497:18	winters 595:20	499:21 500:5,9	613:17,21,25
went 433:20,21	wisdom 496:2	500:13,16,19	614:5 618:17
480:6 497:18	wisely 490:22	509:17,21,25	619:16,20,24
505:24 532:20	wish 582:2	510:3,6 514:18	620:3 624:6,22
570:25 626:21	wishes 453:10	515:8,13,16,19	625:21,25
west 617:14,15	453:12 502:2,4	518:8,10	626:4,6,10
618:3	withstand	521:19,24	630:22 631:1,5
wetland 557:15	488:18	522:1,5,9	631:9 633:19
wheat 468:13	witness 432:13	526:25 527:21	635:4
484:20 489:24	432:17,21,24	528:2,6 535:12	witnessed
489:25 490:11	433:2 436:24	536:11,15,19	537:24
588:18	437:3,7,10,13	536:22,25	witnesses 425:2
whip 589:22	440:5 443:6,14	551:20 554:14	426:2 427:2
wife 466:4	443:18,23	554:25 556:2,6	428:2 436:13
626:12 627:22	444:1,4 447:19	556:10,13	519:7,12
633:12	447:21 448:9	558:5,8,11	577:10,15
wild 588:11	448:12,16,19	562:23 564:20	612:20 633:21
wildlife 500:25	448:22,25	565:6 566:13	women 495:10
501:2,22	449:3 451:23	566:17,21	won 495:5
537:17 538:12	452:2,6,9,12	567:2 571:17	628:14
540:5,15 548:1	455:8,15 456:1	571:18 572:18	wonder 488:8
556:23 557:18	456:5,9,12,15	572:22 573:1,6	woodpeckers
557:23 559:20	460:22,25	576:4,9,12	588:12
588:9 591:16	462:7,11,15,19	578:9 579:8,14	

<p>woods 598:17 598:18,20 600:1,4,4 601:1 word 480:24 482:14 547:20 582:1 words 543:11 work 432:19 437:5,7,25 439:20 440:20 440:22 441:9 441:16 443:21 448:14 451:25 452:4 456:7 462:13,15 465:10 472:4 477:14 478:3 479:4 487:13 490:2 491:21 491:24 496:23 500:11 502:18 509:23 510:20 515:11 521:22 536:17,19 539:16 548:22 552:18 556:9 564:3 566:19 566:21 572:24 579:12 581:4 587:9 591:10 593:21 602:3 604:15 607:18 607:21 613:23 619:22 626:2</p>	<p>631:3,5 worked 499:2 500:24 501:3 523:24 580:14 608:18,22 609:2 worker 597:3 workers 439:23 440:22 441:2,3 444:16 596:22 597:2 working 437:22 438:1 441:10,14,15 441:17,19 442:1,5 457:9 495:13 499:3 570:1 627:21 works 435:13 world 450:5 489:18 490:21 530:12,17,22 624:3 worried 469:7 470:18 471:7 worry 537:12 540:10 worse 460:8 499:16 worth 486:3 591:11 632:13 worthwhile 499:17 wrap 512:13</p>	<p>wrapping 513:22 wrote 467:9 550:24 561:12</p> <hr/> <p>x</p> <hr/> <p>x 425:1 426:1 427:1 428:1 429:1</p> <hr/> <p>y</p> <hr/> <p>y 487:8 509:18 521:20 604:13 619:17,17 625:22 yard 549:4 567:20 yards 544:21 605:12,20 yay 522:16 yeah 442:19 466:8 467:24 468:25 469:18 470:8 474:8,16 474:23 475:9 483:12 497:21 503:19 505:22 506:2,7,8 508:6 526:17 531:23 533:13 534:3 545:15 548:24 553:19 553:25 554:1,7 571:3,7,11 579:14 599:8 600:14 616:23</p>	<p>year 434:6 435:10 458:11 458:19 459:12 462:24 463:3 465:17,21 468:9,15 472:1 474:21 484:8 485:9,10 488:17,18,18 488:23 498:2,2 507:22,25 511:10,14 525:8,9 533:10 533:11 537:11 538:15 541:8,9 548:17 564:8 583:3 596:2 609:22 years 439:17 444:23 449:25 465:23 471:21 473:21 474:19 476:8,11,11 486:19 488:4,4 499:3 500:23 514:10 523:25 524:7,13,15 529:23 533:10 537:8 558:22 567:13 580:8 583:11 589:6 590:7,7 608:24 614:11,14 626:14 631:15 632:13</p>
--	---	--	---

<p>yep 468:10,19 469:14 470:5 473:12,25 475:23 476:16 506:11 509:2 521:16 532:1 535:22 536:5 547:18 550:10 551:2,3 552:1 616:20</p> <p>yield 468:6</p> <p>york 434:6 558:18</p> <p>yost 424:3 431:25</p> <p>young 439:16</p>	
<p>z</p>	
<p>z 443:15</p> <p>zell 467:6</p> <p>zero 614:20</p> <p>zimmerman 454:16 455:5</p> <p>zone 447:14</p> <p>zoned 460:13</p> <p>zones 503:22</p> <p>zoning 434:11 434:12,17 445:23,23 446:1 470:5 494:6 495:3,5 495:12,17 498:18 507:4 508:18,22,22 512:24 513:14 513:18 529:7</p>	