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BEFORE THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

* * *

In the Matter of the
Application of Claim No. 18-1579-EL-BGN
Angelina Solar, I, LLC
for a Certificate of
Environmental Compatibility
and Public Need.

* * *

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

* * *

DATE OF HEARING: Tuesday, April 30, 2019
6:00 p.m.
PLACE OF HEARING: Eaton Fire Division Station 2
391 West Lexington Road
Eaton, Ohio 45320
ADMINISTRATIVE
LAW JUDGE: Patricia A. Schabo

* * *

1 MS. SCHABO: Good evening. The Ohio
2 Power Siting Board has assigned for public hearing
3 at this time and place Case Number 18-1579-EL-BGN,
4 which is captioned in the matter of the
5 application of the Angelina Solar I, LLC for a
6 certificate of environmental capability and public
7 need.

8 My name is Patricia Schabo, and I'm
9 the administrative law judge with the Board's
10 legal department who has been assigned to conduct
11 this hearing. Sam Randazzo, the chairman of the
12 Ohio Power Siting Board, is with us tonight.
13 Chairman, would you like to make a comment?

14 MS. RANDAZZO: Well, thanks everybody
15 for coming out. My name is Sam Randazzo. I was
16 appointed by Governor Mike DeWine to be the
17 chairman of the Public Utilities Commission of
18 Ohio, and as a result of that, I'm also chairman
19 of the Ohio Power Siting Board, which is the
20 agency that's conducting this hearing this
21 evening.

22 So from public hearings like this, we
23 gather information about projects. It helps the
24 Board make a decision based upon the statutory
25 criteria that are in front of us, and we -- in

1 Ohio, the regulation of land use related to
2 generation projects -- electric generation
3 projects of fifty megawatts or above, and this
4 project is about eighty megawatts I believe.

5 MS. SCHABO: Yes, sir.

6 MR. RANDAZZO: So that is regulated
7 by the State instead of being regulated locally,
8 like zoning is done at the local level. So we
9 have a statewide system in Ohio for land use
10 regulation related to what we call major utility
11 facilities. And, again, an electric generating
12 station or an electric generation policy in excess
13 of fifty megawatts qualifies for that category.
14 So thanks for coming. We look forward to getting
15 your comments. We know this is important to you
16 so it's important to us as well. Thanks very
17 much.

18 MS. SCHABO: Thank you, Chairman.

19 Also with us tonight, still in the
20 room, is Matt Butler from Power Siting Board
21 staff. Outside the building, due to our surprised
22 capacity, is Scott Elisar, who is our legislative
23 and policy director, and two other staff members
24 Andrew Conway and Jill Kohker. Mr. Butler,
25 Mr. Conway, and Ms. Kohker may be able to help

1 with any general questions you have about the
2 Board's process.

3 Also here tonight are representatives
4 of Angelina Solar, and they may have the ability
5 to -- sir?

6 MR. HERLING: Sorry. Herling.

7 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Mr. Herling.

8 Also there are another couple
9 outside. They may be able to answer any questions
10 you have generally about the project under
11 consideration.

12 At this time I'd like to take
13 appearances on behalf of the parties.

14 MR. SETTINERI: Thank you, your
15 Honor. On behalf of Angelina Solar I, LLC, Mike
16 Settineri with the law firm of Vorys, Sater,
17 Seymour and Pease, 52 East Gay Street, Columbus,
18 Ohio 43215.

19 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. There's a
20 representative of the Ohio Farm Bureau here this
21 evening.

22 MR. ARNOLD: Thank you, your Honor.
23 Mr. Chairman, your Honor, my name is Dale Arnold
24 I'm the Director of Energy, Utility and Local
25 Government Policy for the Ohio Farm Bureau, 280

1 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio.

2 MS. SCHABO: Thank you, Mr. Arnold.
3 Are there any other representatives of parties
4 that have intervened in this matter here this
5 evening?

6 MS. WEST: Kathryn West, I'm with the
7 Preble County prosecutor's office. I represent
8 the Preble County commissioners, the Preble County
9 Soil and Water District, the planning commission,
10 Israel Township, Dixon Township, and the County
11 engineer.

12 MS. SCHABO: Thank you so much,
13 Ms. West.

14 The subject of this evening's public
15 hearing -- I'm sorry.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The concerned
17 citizens of Preble County, LLC are here also, and
18 we have filed a motion to intervene.

19 MS. SCHABO: Which was granted. Is
20 your attorney here?

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He is not
22 here.

23 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Could I ask how
24 many of the people in this group in front of me
25 are part of your group.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So only
2 twenty-four of the group were listed inside the
3 motion to intervene.

4 MS. SCHABO: Okay.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And they were
6 direct impact neighbors to it.

7 MS. SCHABO: Okay. I will say that
8 this local public hearing, the intent of it is to
9 take testimony from citizens who have not
10 intervened in the action. Given that there are so
11 many people waiting to come in, if your group
12 could split up. I can't police which ones of you
13 are part of the group that has intervened, but the
14 group that has intervened will have the
15 opportunity to present evidence and cross-examine
16 witness at the actual judicatory hearing.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

18 MS. SCHABO: You're welcome. Anybody
19 else?

20 The subject of tonight's public
21 hearing is the application filed with the Board on
22 December 3rd, 2018 by Angelina Solar I, LLC, which
23 you will also hear me refer to as Angelina or the
24 applicant.

25 With its application, Angelina seeks

1 the Board's approval of its plan to construct,
2 maintain, and operate an eighty megawatt solar
3 electric generating facility in Israel and Dixon
4 Townships, Preble County, Ohio.

5 The Angelina project we are seeking
6 comment on this evening should not be confused
7 with the 49.9 megawatt Alamo solar project in
8 Gasper and Washington Townships, Preble County,
9 Ohio. That is under consideration in Case Number
10 18-1578-EL-BGN. These projects are separate, and
11 each case will be decided based on the evidence
12 presented in the respective proceedings.

13 If you are interested, currently the
14 local public hearing for the Alamo project is
15 scheduled to be held here on June the 12th. Given
16 our capacity problem, although that has already
17 been published in the paper, I will be talking to
18 the administrative law judge in charge of that
19 case and suggesting to her that maybe a larger
20 venue is found. Again, please restrict any
21 comments this evening to the Angelina project.

22 Tonight's local public hearing is one
23 aspect of the process in this case. An
24 evidentiary hearing is also scheduled to commence
25 on May 14th at the Board offices in Columbus.

1 As an aside to both of those
2 comments, you can keep up to date on the docket in
3 either one of these cases by going to the Ohio
4 Power Siting Board website and looking on the
5 docketing and just in the search box in the upper
6 right-hand corner enter the respective case
7 number, and if this -- if the public hearing and
8 the other project is moved, you'll see that a new
9 location is given there. If any hearing dates are
10 changed, you'll also see notice there.

11 The purpose of this evening's public
12 hearing is to receive comments from those people
13 who have not intervened as parties in the case
14 regarding Angelina's application. It is not a
15 question and answer session. Instead, it is your
16 opportunity to let the Board know what you think
17 about the proposed solar facility.

18 I would note that the Board staff
19 report of investigation was filed on April 15th.
20 Again, that is available on the docket if you have
21 not yet seen that and wish to.

22 The recommendation of Board staff
23 does not necessarily reflect what the Board's
24 final determination will be. It is just one piece
25 of the puzzle that will be reviewed and from which

1 a determination will be made.

2 Speaking of which, tonight's hearing
3 is being transcribed by a court reporter. Any
4 testimony given this evening will be incorporated
5 into the official record of the case, and it will
6 be viewed and considered by the Board in making a
7 final determination.

8 If you do plan to testify, I'll ask
9 that you speak clearly so that the court reporter
10 can accurately reflect your comments for the
11 record. Also, if you have a prepared written
12 statement, if you could give her a copy, it will
13 help just maintain accuracy in the transcript.

14 When you arrived, you were given the
15 opportunity to sign up to testify. I have twenty
16 names in front of me. I know we're on a third
17 sheet. After I finish with my introduction I'll
18 begin calling witnesses forward in the order they
19 appear, and I'll ask you to come up to the table
20 and face the court reporter. I will swear you in.
21 I will ask that you state your name and your
22 address for the record.

23 Should you decide that you do not
24 want to testify when I call your name, you can
25 merely pass to the next witness. That's not a

1 problem. At the end of the list I will revisit
2 any names that have passed and present an
3 opportunity for anyone that has not signed up to
4 testify.

5 Once you are finished testifying, if
6 we could cycle in and out of the room, I'd just
7 really appreciate it. Everything that is going to
8 be said tonight will be on the transcript.
9 Apparently, we're also being live streamed. There
10 is a way for you to see it without being in the
11 room. Just please be cognisant of that and let
12 people that are outside waiting to make a
13 statement come in.

14 The Board really appreciates your
15 participation, and at this time let's begin
16 calling witnesses. First name I have is Jeff
17 Dare. Mr. Dare, come on up. If you would raise
18 your right hand for me.

19 JEFF DARE
20 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
21 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
22 certified, said as follows:

23 MS. SCHABO: If you'd just state your
24 name and then begin.

25 MR. DARE: My name is Jeff Dare. I

1 reside at 88374 Mile State Line Road, Eaton, Ohio.

2 MS. SCHABO: Go ahead.

3 MR. DARE: Thank you, your Honor.

4 Site Board members, friends, neighbors, and
5 guests, my name is Jeff Dare. I'm a lifelong
6 resident of Dixon Township. My family started
7 farming here in the '50s. Five generations have
8 lived around here by now, worked the land, and
9 this land is our livelihood and important to us.

10 Open Road has decided it would be a
11 good idea to build solar fields where we now grow
12 beans, corn, and cattle. I, along with many of my
13 neighbors and members of this coalition, strongly
14 disagree with this. We fail to see the need for
15 constructing a solar panel field or fields in this
16 area. The reasons are plentiful. There are many
17 more reasons not to build here than there are good
18 reasons to build here.

19 We as a nation are increasing in
20 population, and we no doubt need more energy to
21 accommodate a growing population and industry.
22 However, solar panels in Ohio is not the right
23 answer for more energy. As I understand it, solar
24 panels rely on sunlight to make energy. Do you
25 realize how many gloomy days we experience here in

1 the state of Ohio? Many, many, many days of no
2 sun, or partial sun at best. Our question to Open
3 Road is if you want to build solar fields, why not
4 construct them in Arizona or New Mexico where the
5 sun shines practically every day and many more
6 hours of sunlight each and every day. It is not
7 as if we here in Dixon, Israel, and Gasper
8 Townships will use or even have a chance to use
9 the energy proposed by the fields. It is known
10 that the energy produced here will travel into the
11 grid and used who knows where, but probably not
12 here. We do know that.

13 Furthermore, with construction of
14 these fields, there is the problem of how to store
15 and transport the energy produced. This means
16 more invasion of farm ground to build substations,
17 battery bank terminals, electric towers, and power
18 lines. Many lines will run underground, which
19 brings up another whole topic. Who is going to be
20 responsible for making certain that the
21 underground ditch lines and drainage lines are
22 preserved and not destroyed? There are miles and
23 miles of drainage tile in these proposed areas and
24 once solar fields are constructed, how will we as
25 farmers maintain the tile lines and outlets? I am

1 sure that Open Road would frown on farmers
2 entering a newly constructed solar field with
3 backhoes, shovels, and spades. In other states,
4 more desert-type areas, drainage tile would not be
5 an issue. So we ask why here? We, as taxpayers
6 in this county, are asking why our commissioners
7 are not vehemently opposing this whole idea.
8 These townships are regarded as agricultural
9 acres. We are not in the solar panel industry.
10 It seems to many of us here tonight that there are
11 better alternatives than to try and harvest the
12 sun's energy here. Do it somewhere else where
13 there is more sunlight available. Solar panels
14 are not all that efficient compared to natural gas
15 or coal.

16 We here tonight feel that the
17 government's subsidies awarded to the proponents
18 and contractors that are pushing for this might
19 very well have something to do with their plan to
20 move forward here in Preble County. There may be
21 a need for solar fields but, we feel not here.

22 Another concern for many of us here
23 tonight, what are the long-term effects of
24 deteriorating solar panels, hazardous materials
25 used in them, underground leakage of electricity

1 produced, and the changes in the ecosystem around
2 these proposed fields? We know that there are
3 potential problems and are very -- they are very
4 real, especially to those who live in close
5 proximity to the panels. Answers to these
6 questions seem to be in short supply, or there's
7 just not enough data from existing areas to give a
8 fair assessment. Are these proposed fields going
9 to interfere with or interrupt cell phone signals,
10 GPS readings, and satellite signals? We need to
11 know these questions -- we need to know answers to
12 these questions. Some of us feel that if these
13 fields are built, the answer man will disappear
14 right along with the construction crew.

15 I can tell you all here tonight from
16 personal experience that recently when on the road
17 that I live on fiber-optic lines were being
18 installed underground, that the workmen were doing
19 an unsatisfactory job. When I confronted them
20 about the damage they were causing, they handed me
21 a business card with a phone number and said if we
22 had any complaints, to call this number, and they
23 kept right on plowing in the cable lines and
24 breaking tiles as they went. We are afraid this
25 same type of irresponsible workmanship might be

1 common with the construction of the solar fields.
2 Sometimes anymore, sad as it seems, some people
3 just don't give a damn, right or wrong.
4 Of great concern to some of the
5 residents in and around Fairhaven, in Israel
6 Township, is the potential crime element. Sadly,
7 the small village of Fairhaven is rampant with
8 crime. Drugs and the need for revenue to buy
9 drugs is increasing at an alarming rate. Bringing
10 in expensive solar panels, reels of wire, copper,
11 or otherwise, along with steel and aluminum for
12 construction of these proposed fields would be
13 baiting the crime element in and around Fairhaven.
14 Some of the proposed fields are just a short
15 distance from this small burg. Theft for drug
16 money is out of control right now in this area so
17 we feel that trying to build solar fields would
18 only add to the crime and vandalism in the area.
19 We all know what copper and aluminum can be sold
20 for at recycling establishments. Granted, that is
21 only a what-if scenario but -- okay. Yeah. So we
22 feel that trying to build solar fields would only
23 add to the crime and vandalism in the area. We
24 all know what copper and aluminum can be sold for
25 at recycling establishments. The sad part is,

1 that if this were to happen and these fields are
2 subsidized by government funding, the criminals
3 would be in fact stealing from us as taxpayers.
4 This is not acceptable to our community. Granted,
5 this is only a what-if scenario, but it is still a
6 real possibility. We would like to know from Open
7 Road to what extent does crime, vandalism, and
8 theft occur during construction of these solar
9 fields in other locations?

10 A few area landowners will profit
11 greatly from this project. We know that. It is a
12 fact. That being said, any landowner has the
13 right to do with his land as he sees fit, as long
14 as it is within the boundaries of the law.

15 We here tonight do not feel that it
16 is a fair tradeoff. Putting our land, health, and
17 well-being in the balance for unneeded energy from
18 solar panels in Preble County is and should be out
19 of the question. As the lifespan of the project
20 goes forth, it is proven by our County officials
21 that our property taxes will increase. To what
22 extent, we do not know yet. Also, what will these
23 panels do to property values near them? Township
24 residents are concerned that their farms or
25 properties will decrease in value, possibly by

1 huge numbers. Open Road should address this issue
2 and be forthcoming with information as to what has
3 transpired in other locations.

4 There are many unanswered questions,
5 and this is too big a project to simply let it
6 commence and then learn of the mistakes and
7 misfortunes the hard way, or worse, after it's too
8 late.

9 Thank you for your attention and the
10 opportunity to address this group. Please take
11 into consideration our ideas and concerns. Thank
12 you.

13 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. My next
14 witness is Isabelle Heggs.

15 ISABELLE HEGGS
16 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
17 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
18 certified, said as follows:

19 MS. SCHABO: If you could state your
20 name and address for the record before you begin.

21 MS. HEGGS: Isabelle Heggs, 2042
22 Gasper Road, Eaton, Ohio.

23 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Go ahead.

24 MS. HEGGS: Okay. We all know why we
25 are here tonight, but equally important is knowing

1 who is here. Everyone has the First Amendment
2 right to express an opinion. However, the weight
3 that should be given to certain opinions should
4 depend on the motivation of each speaker. Is a
5 speaker a landowner receiving a large sum of
6 money for turning productive farmland into a solar
7 facility, is it a paid propagandist of Open Road
8 Renewables, is it a union worker from an
9 out-of-county company hoping to receive the
10 construction contract for the solar facility, or
11 is it a Preble County landowner whose major source
12 of income will be diminished by contaminated soil
13 and water? Is each person motivated by financial
14 gain or because they are concerned about the
15 land's viability?

16 As we cherish our right to speak and
17 be heard, we the residents and landowners of
18 Preble County respectfully request that our County
19 commissioners refrain from pressuring our County
20 auditor from publicizing the unpleasant truth that
21 if the solar facilities are built, our property
22 taxes will decrease and our real estate taxes will
23 increase. Well, not everyone will have to pay
24 more in real estate taxes. According to a
25 Register-Herald article dated March 2nd, this

1 year, the landowners who are leasing their land to
2 Open Road will be exempted from paying real estate
3 or public utility taxes.

4 Finally, Open Road Renewables has
5 requested a protection order to keep the public
6 from learning the contents of the contracts they
7 have secretly negotiated. In the spirit of
8 transparency, the company should be compelled to
9 disclose such information. A handful of
10 landowners and our elected County commissioners
11 kept these negotiations a secret for nearly three
12 years. Why? What are they hiding? More
13 importantly, did their failure to disclose these
14 closed-door negotiations constitute a breach of
15 public trust? What are they gaining at our
16 expense? Thank you.

17 MS. SCHABO: Jimmy Kimball. Is there
18 a Jimmy Kimball in the room?

19 JIMMY KIMBALL
20 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
21 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
22 certified, said as follows:

23 MS. SCHABO: Please state your name
24 and address for the record.

25 MR. JIMMY KIMBALL: Jimmy Kimball,

1 3239 Jordan Road, West Alexandria, Ohio.

2 My name is Jimmy Kimball. My family
3 and I are farmers in the Gasper and Israel
4 Townships area. The property is a half mile away
5 from one of the proposed solar projects. We have
6 several concerns.

7 The first concern is drainage issues.
8 Pushing these pipes into the ground, drilling
9 holes, burying these poles is going to damage
10 tile. We have enough problems as it is with water
11 runoff as it is now today. With all these excess
12 rains that we've been having, we have a lot of
13 drainage problems.

14 And what's it going to do to our
15 aquifers? The water runs downhill. Camden
16 already has enough problems with the water as it
17 is. The water runs south.

18 Secondly is I raise livestock,
19 therefore, I'm concerned about the toxic materials
20 leaching into the water fields in the ground and
21 the soil around made with these panels of God
22 knows where they're made from. How is Open Road
23 going to compensate me for livestock that is lost
24 of these toxins put in the ground.

25 And the PILT program I feel is a

1 scam. Doug Herring of Open Road said to have --
2 dictated land use management policies to our
3 County commissioners. Why were these out-of-state
4 salesmen allowed to hook a few of these gullable
5 fools with dollar signs in their eyes? What about
6 those of us who were excluded from these back
7 door -- these back room deals?

8 Open Road Renewables, like most solar
9 panel companies, are going bankrupt right now.
10 It's interesting knowing one thing, our tax
11 dollars that fund these federal subsidies, they
12 will receive our property values to go down and
13 our taxes to go up. Thanks.

14 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Paul
15 Kimball.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can we unplug
17 that pop machine back there so the rest of us can
18 hear?

19 MS. SCHABO: Sir, I'm not going to
20 disturb the fire station's property.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can't hear
22 back here.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Unplug it.

24 MS. SCHABO: Let's go off the record
25 for just a minute.

1 (Thereupon, an off-the-record
2 discussion was had.)

3 PAUL KIMBALL

4 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
5 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
6 certified, said as follows:

7 MS. SCHABO: If you could state your
8 name and your address for the record before you
9 give your testimony.

10 MR. PAUL KIMBALL: My name is Paul
11 Kimball. 199 Antioch Road, Eaton, Ohio.

12 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

13 MR. PAUL KIMBALL: Okay. Everybody
14 knows my name now. And I've got a red shirt on.
15 Sorry if you guys wanted green but red means stop.
16 We don't need this crap.

17 Okay. As a farmer in Preble County,
18 I never thought that I was doing anything that
19 would harm my neighbors. We are all farmers. We
20 share the same goals we all had to plant and
21 harvest when the weather would cooperate. I am
22 very disappointed that some farmers have betrayed
23 us either out of greed or stupidity.

24 Solar panels in Ohio? Really? Ohio
25 ranks next to last for economic viability of solar

1 panels, but these smooth-talking city slickers
2 from Austin who call their scam, which by the way,
3 there's plenty of scams going on, we don't need
4 this one, a solar farm because in their words they
5 are harvesting the sun's energy represents not
6 only an insult to our intelligence but an offense
7 to my Christian faith. How can you harvest
8 something that you didn't plant? God put the sun
9 in the sky for the health and benefit of all his
10 people.

11 These money grubbing scoundrels want
12 us to be brainwashed into thinking that what they
13 want to do will be good for the environment; that
14 what they really want is your tax dollars in the
15 form of federal subsidies they will collect by
16 calling themselves green energy. They are
17 offensive, outrageous, and insulting. They will
18 do permanent harm to our farm ground and should be
19 stopped.

20 There's a creek that runs through my
21 place and it runs within fifty foot of my well.
22 The water comes off of one of these farms less
23 than a mile away, so that don't get it with me.
24 And what's this creek carrying down through there
25 from these solar farms? What if a tornado comes

1 through and rips these panels out of the ground
2 and puts a toxic waste into this creek? It's just
3 going to be permanent, all kinds.

4 Thank you very much.

5 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Chelsea
6 Sorrell.

7 CHELSEA SORRELL

8 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
9 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
10 certified, said as follows:

11 MS. SCHABO: If you could give your
12 name and your address for the record.

13 MS. SORRELL: Chelsea Sorrell, 352
14 Longman Road, Eaton, Ohio.

15 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Go ahead.

16 MS. SORRELL: Good evening. My name
17 is Chelsea Sorrell, and I live in Gasper Township.
18 My husband Jacob Sorrell is a hardworking farmer.
19 Our family farm of fifty-two years was purchased
20 by Jacob's great-grandparents Roy and Anna Sorrell
21 on Paint Creek Road in Gasper Township.

22 We oppose the development of the
23 proposed Angelina Solar facility near Eaton and
24 Preble County. The proposed project would
25 seriously aberrate from the common practice of

1 agricultural production in our area. The
2 projected solar panel facility will be located on
3 eight hundred acres, more or less, of high
4 percentage tillable productive land. We agree
5 with many other people in this area that solar
6 panels are not a wise use to this farmland.
7 Nonproductive land should be considered for solar
8 panel facilities.

9 The following information comes from
10 the Preble County Comprehensive Economic
11 Development Strategy and Land Use Plan which was
12 revised and adopted by your three current
13 commissioners on February 1st, 2017. The County
14 will discourage any development which conflicts
15 with agricultural productivity. And in the
16 agricultural land use, these twelve bullet points
17 are stated. That it preserves a way of life in
18 its unique cherished values. It provides fresh,
19 high quality food at a reasonable cost close to
20 the consumer. It contributes to a stable economy
21 by providing job opportunities, income, and a
22 market for the resources of production. It
23 contributes to the nation's balance of payments by
24 providing food for export. It provides reserved
25 food production capacity to meet the future needs

1 of the world. It provides wood products from the
2 woodlands. It maintains the quality and beauty of
3 the environment through the cleansing effect of
4 the supply of oxygen by growing plants and the
5 filtering effects of plants and soil on the water
6 supply. It maintains farm-associated wildlife
7 habitats and provides for private outdoor
8 recreational areas of camping, fishing, and
9 hunting. It provides areas for recycling of solid
10 and liquid agricultural wastes. It protects
11 mineral resources from being preempted. It
12 provides productive, privately-maintained
13 agricultural open space with all its accompanying
14 environmental benefits, including rural aesthetics
15 and enhanced air and water quality. And it
16 protects the hydrological integrity of watersheds
17 through the control of storm water runoffs and
18 sediment drainage, protects aquifer recharge
19 areas, and provides buffers for water supply and
20 other natural areas.

21 Our community wrote the plan to
22 protect farmland in the agricultural way of life.
23 We made it a priority to these solar projects --
24 we made it a priority, and these solar projects
25 take away from your rights as a community and the

1 lifestyle we have prioritized.

2 Why are we taking good topsoil and
3 putting an energy plant in its place? Technology
4 can handle our energy needs, but technology will
5 not replace topsoil and feed the world now or in
6 the future. What we need is good farming land and
7 that to continue to feed the world.

8 If solar panel efficiency is only
9 twenty-three to twenty-five percent effective, why
10 are we using up productive land for such a low
11 percentage of effectiveness? Why are we not
12 putting these solar panels on top of buildings or
13 on nonproductive land. The efficiency would
14 become even less after taking into consideration
15 the weather. We all know Ohio weather is
16 completely unpredictable. What about the
17 efficiency when we have overcast days like today?
18 If we are lucky enough to have a bright sunny day,
19 there are only so many hours of daylight each day.
20 Solar panels aren't as effective during the night.

21 In 2008 our county experienced
22 hurricane-like winds leaving trees and debris
23 scattered all over the roads and fields. If this
24 were to happen again, who is left to clean up this
25 mess of the broken solar panels? Who is

1 responsible for paying for the replacements?

2 Same thing could happen if we
3 experience another catastrophic tornado like in
4 1975. Are the solar panels recycled here in the
5 United States or are they truly shipped back off
6 to China to be discarded?

7 What about flooding? This year the
8 amount of rain in our county has -- this year the
9 amount of rain our county has experienced has been
10 devastating leaving homes and fields flooded. The
11 field tiles cannot even keep up with the amount of
12 rainfall we have gotten over the last few months.
13 What would happen if the solar farms flooded? Is
14 anyone else concerned with the possibility of
15 existing field tiles being damaged and how that
16 will affect the flood of water on properties in
17 the Angelina protect? Will hazardous materials
18 from the solar panels be cross-contaminated into
19 the joining farm tiles and harm any vegetation
20 surrounding the project? Will our water wells be
21 affected? Will our drinking water be affected?
22 What about our livestock? Will they be exposed to
23 the possibility of contaminated water?

24 Does anyone care about surrounding
25 property values? Research states that our

1 property value will decrease. Any land signed up
2 for this project will eventually become tax exempt
3 leaving the rest of the community to pick up the
4 loss. How is that fair? What about the local
5 school districts? If all of our land becomes tax
6 exempt, how will that affect our schools and what
7 about our students? Who will make up the loss of
8 the money due to tax exempt land?

9 And what about the security and
10 safety of our solar panels? Who do we call to
11 report suspicious activity? Do we call our
12 understaffed local sheriff's office, or do we rely
13 on the man two states over to watch security
14 cameras and make a report?

15 Are there bright security lights
16 surrounding the area at night, and if so, how will
17 this disturb our neighbors and wildlife?

18 What happens when harvest season
19 begins and farmers in the field are harvesting
20 their crops and all the dust and debris cover the
21 solar panels? Would the efficiency of the solar
22 panels decrease? Who will maintain the panels?
23 Who's paying for that service? Who will keep the
24 solar panels clean? How often do these solar
25 panels need cleaned from everyday debris and bird

1 droppings? Are special chemicals needed? If so,
2 is that any good for our land?

3 Is Open Road Renewables interested in
4 the thirty percent tax credit that will expire on
5 December 31, 2019? Will they sell this project
6 before it even gets started? Who will the new
7 developer and builder be?

8 Once this project gets started and
9 all the construction begins, how will this leave
10 our roads? How will this affect the local
11 traffic? Will our roads be replaced within a
12 timely manner? Will they be replaced in the
13 condition like they were before they started or
14 will we get an upgrade of heated pavers on our
15 roads?

16 What about our wildlife? How will
17 these solar panels affect our wildlife in the
18 county? What about our birds? Will the birds
19 think the reflection of the solar panels are a
20 body of water and dive into the panel leaving them
21 extremely injured or even dead? What if that
22 happened to a beautiful endangered bald eagle that
23 has been spotted locally within our community?

24 What about our hunters in the
25 community? Will the solar panels affect -- will

1 the solar panel farm affect them? The State
2 collects a substantial amount of money for hunting
3 licenses resulting in revenue for the State, but
4 with solar panels surrounding our woodlands, who
5 will have any success hunting? Who will want to
6 even hunt our area not just for deer but new
7 census too, such as coyote?

8 Has Open Road Renewables contacted
9 our local state park Hueston Woods? Do you really
10 think people are going to enjoy looking at solar
11 panels as they drive their family to the state
12 park for the weekend to enjoy family camping.

13 We agree with the neighbors that our
14 farmers, landowners, and rural residents who
15 oppose the projected Angelina Solar project. This
16 beautiful productive farmland and rural area is
17 unlike -- is unique in its kind, abundance of
18 wildlife habitat, clean water systems, and has
19 Hueston Woods State Park to the south. This
20 Angelina Solar panel projected project will have a
21 strong negative impact on a multitude of people,
22 wildlife, and water systems.

23 We urge you to look at the impact
24 Open Road Renewables will have on Preble County.
25 As a member of the community, we are asking the

1 Ohio Power Siting Board to deny the decision of
2 the Angelina Solar project. Thank you.

3 MS. SCHABO: Kathryn Clippinger.

4 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, if I may.

5 MS. SCHABO: Yes.

6 MR. SETTINERI: I think I heard in
7 the record -- could you read the townships that
8 that witness was from, please. I think if the
9 court reporter could tell me --

10 MS. SCHABO: Gasper.

11 MR. SETTINERI: Gasper. Thank you.

12 Here's a copy with my name and address on it.

13 KATHRYN CLIPPINGER

14 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
15 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
16 certified, said as follows:

17 MS. CLIPPINGER: My name is Kathryn
18 Clippinger. I live at 1050 Mann Road, Eaton,
19 Ohio.

20 Four months ago I learned that Open
21 Road Renewables has proposed to build solar
22 facilities in Preble County. Based on what the
23 media and green energy supporters have told the
24 public, solar is the cleanest renewable energy
25 source available to us, I wanted to support solar

1 in Preble County, but I felt I should exercise due
2 diligence and research more thoroughly the
3 industry that was going to take over so many acres
4 of our farmland. Unfortunately, most journalists
5 do not report any negative information about
6 renewal energies. I had to rely on the
7 information made available by environmental
8 scientists to provide the particulars on solar
9 energy. My research has led me to realize that
10 solar panels are not clean and not green.

11 In a May 2018 Forbes magazine
12 article, research scientists with the German
13 Stuttgart Institute for Photovoltaic are quoted as
14 saying, contrary to previous assumptions,
15 pollutants such as lead or carcinogenic cadmium
16 can be almost completely washed out of the
17 fragments of solar modules over a period of
18 several months by rainwater. Those washed-out
19 toxins from damaged solar panels will be absorbed
20 by the soil and groundwater of Preble County.
21 Perhaps because of this threat of toxicity, Open
22 Road had to identify in their Ohio Power Siting
23 Board application the location of each residential
24 well within and adjacent to the Angelina facility.
25 This fact should alarm the residents of Israel and

1 Dixon Townships who rely on these wells for their
2 drinking water.

3 Another expert, a senior Chinese
4 solar official, states that the problem of solar
5 panel disposal will rapidly increase in two to
6 three decades and damage the environment because
7 the panels produce a huge amount of waste that is
8 not easy to recycle. To be specific, the
9 International Renewable Energy Agency estimates
10 there will be seventy-eight million metric tons of
11 solar panel waste by 2050. And even though ninety
12 percent of solar panels are made up of glass, they
13 cannot be recycled because the glass contains
14 lead, cadmium telluride, antimony, copper, indium
15 and gallium, all of which are toxic to humans and
16 livestock.

17 At a public meeting in February,
18 representatives from Ohio Road -- from Open Road
19 told those in attendance the company would
20 potentially dispose of Angelina's worn out panels
21 in the Preble County Landfill. However, according
22 to the researchers from Electric Power Research
23 Institute, solar panels cannot be disposed of in
24 regular landfills because they are considered
25 hazardous waste and the toxins can leach into

1 soil. Is Open Road ignorant to this information
2 or were their representatives arrogantly testing
3 the intelligence of Preble County's residents?

4 To review, old solar panels cannot be
5 put in landfills and it's hard to recycle them so
6 what are companies doing with these solar panel
7 waste? Currently companies are paying third-world
8 countries to take America's decommissioned
9 equipment. These companies are taking advantage
10 of poorer countries by offering a short-term
11 monetary gain with a long-term hazardous problem.
12 Not only is this practice not green but in my
13 opinion is sinful.

14 Lastly, I want to leave you with
15 another detail I have learned. The solar industry
16 is not a self-sustaining industry. According to
17 the North Carolina State University professor
18 Herbert Ecklin, a former power company official,
19 solar is a government-created industry and it is
20 supported by the backs of the taxpayer. Because
21 of government subsidies very little cash is needed
22 for companies to get rich. Our state and federal
23 tax money is being used to make solar investors
24 millions because of the huge tax breaks that comes
25 from the solar energy.

1 Even though solar is a
2 government-supported industry, solar companies
3 struggle to remain solvent. Within the last three
4 years the solar companies Sungevity, Beamreach,
5 Verengo Solar, SunEdison, Yingli Green Energy,
6 Solar World, and Suniva have gone bankrupt. Will
7 Open Road Renewables, a three-year old company,
8 follow suit? If so, who will pay for the
9 decommissioning of the solar facilities they
10 created? Will it be left to the taxpayers of
11 Preble County to deal with the cleaning up of
12 eighteen hundred acres of solar panels? Our
13 County commissioners can't afford to put more than
14 two sheriffs -- two sheriff deputies on patrol at
15 a time. How will they find moneys to clean up a
16 solar -- a toxic solar field? By raising our
17 taxes, that's how.

18 After my research I concluded that
19 proponents of solar energy fall into two
20 categories. They are green as in uneducated on
21 the negative effects of solar, or they are not
22 clean. They know the negative effects but don't
23 care because they are so driven to make money off
24 this dirty industry. Proponents' ignorance and/or
25 greed will desecrate our valuable land. I don't

1 want to pay to clean up their mess.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. SCHABO: I understand that there
4 are lots of people here today that share the views
5 that have been stated by those giving testimony
6 thus far. The night will go much faster if we
7 don't give each speaker a standing ovation,
8 please.

9 MR. SETTINERI: Your Honor, if I may.
10 The clapping kind of prevents me, but I may have
11 some questions for witnesses, particularly what
12 township they live in --

13 MS. SCHABO: Okay.

14 MR. SETTINERI: -- so just keep that
15 in mind.

16 MS. SCHABO: I'll try to remember to
17 look over to you.

18 MR. SETTINERI: No problem. I'll
19 give you a nod.

20 MR. RANDAZZO: So if you anticipate a
21 question and if you just say what township you're
22 from, that will save -- we can short-circuit the
23 need for questions.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can't hear
25 you.

1 MS. SCHABO: If you can identify the
2 township in which you live as you are giving your
3 address for the record, we'd appreciate it.

4 MR. RANDAZZO: Thank you.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: People have
6 come here to share their opinions and you're now
7 saying they can't share their opinions? I don't
8 understand.

9 MS. SCHABO: No. I'm just saying we
10 will go much faster if we don't give each person
11 your appreciation. We're on our seventh -- my
12 point being, we're on our seventh speaker. It's
13 quarter to 7:00 now. I don't know how many more
14 sheets I have. I want everybody here tonight that
15 wishes to give their opinion the opportunity to
16 give their opinion. Now I will stop wasting your
17 time. I believe it's Lee Broermann.

18 Mr. Broermann.

19 MR. BROERMANN: It's Lou.

20 MS. SCHABO: Lou. Sorry. I always
21 miss a couple.

22 MR. BROERMANN: Thank you for the
23 opportunity to talk tonight.

24 LOU BROERMANN

25 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first

1 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
2 certified, said as follows,

3 MR. BROERMANN: My name is Lou
4 Broermann. I live at 8709 State Route 725 West,
5 Israel Township.

6 My name is Lou Broermann. I'm
7 speaking on behalf of my wife Judy and myself. We
8 are in favor of the Angelina Solar I facility. We
9 think it could be a good thing when you consider
10 the benefit to the community. It's good for the
11 environment; no erosion of the soil, no runoff,
12 all grasses and trees around the panels. It will
13 be mowed and taken care of and always look good.
14 Plus a pretty healthy tax payment to the County.

15 While we have no involvement in this
16 plan, some family members do, I think it's a good
17 deal for them and also good for the area.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. SCHABO: Thank you,
20 Mr. Broermann. Jane Marshall.

21 JANE MARSHALL

22 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
23 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
24 certified, said as follows:

25 MS. MARSHALL: My name is Jane

1 Marshall. I live at 4655 Ketterman Road, which is
2 in Lanier Township for anybody that's interested.
3 I'm a resident of Preble County.

4 I am opposed to this Angelina project
5 for a variety of reasons. Just so you know a
6 little bit about me, I have served on the planning
7 commission. I'm a former County commissioner. We
8 pay -- while we don't live in the area, we pay --
9 we have a farm that is in the school district that
10 is in the area so we pay taxes in the school
11 district. We also pay taxes in the various county
12 taxes that are imposed as well, property taxes.

13 As you may or may not know, we are a
14 small rural county. We have forty-two thousand
15 people. We have a lot of agriculture in the
16 county. Preble County sits between the Indiana
17 line to the west and Montgomery County, a very
18 metropolitan county, to the east.

19 From everything I have read, projects
20 like this want to be an energy project because
21 they are getting energy from the sun. Because
22 they are over fifty megawatts, they go before the
23 Ohio Power Siting Board. That puts all the
24 decisions about this in Columbus, far away from
25 local government. Now I want you to think about

1 utilities at a local level. So they want to be a
2 utility and that's where they go is the Power
3 Siting Board. Go to the Preble County Auditor's
4 website, type in Dayton Power & Light, that's a
5 utility here locally, in the search bar. There
6 are fifty entries. They pay a lot of property
7 tax. They are a utility.

8 Now, think about why Angelina wants
9 to be a utility energy project on the State level
10 but at the local level they want to be part of a
11 PILT, payment in lieu of taxes, instead of paying
12 traditional property tax. They are very willing
13 to hand over seven hundred and twenty thousand
14 dollars a year for this project instead of paying
15 property taxes. Oh, wait, they do want to be a
16 utility locally when it comes to zoning because
17 utilities are exempt from local zoning. I think
18 it's called having your cake and eating it too.

19 Let's talk about taxes. Taxes on a
20 good day are very confusing. This is far from a
21 good day and they are far from -- and they are
22 beyond confusing. Let's examine a public records
23 request from the County auditor, I've learned some
24 thing -- or after examining I've learned some
25 things. According to Rick Hoffman, the auditor's

1 tax counsel, in an e-mail from mid February this
2 year, there are three things that could happen.
3 The commissioners could approve the PILT
4 exemption, the commissioners -- the commissioners
5 could deny the PILT exemption and the project
6 dies, which really intrigued me, and finally the
7 commissioners deny the exemption and they still
8 build the project.

9 The middle scenario made me scratch
10 my head. Open Road wants to do the project so why
11 would they let something like not being in a PILT
12 stop them? That made me think about why Open Road
13 is so quick to want to throw seven hundred and
14 twenty thousand dollars at the County.

15 The other thing that I found is that
16 the law changed and while in the past seven
17 thousand dollars per megawatt was the mandatory
18 payment for a PILT, that would go where the
19 property taxes on the exempted property went
20 before it was exempted, that does not exist for
21 solar projects put in place after 12/31/16.

22 There's another two thousand dollars
23 discretionary money that the commissioners can
24 also receive. In the past this two thousand
25 dollars would go directly into the County general

1 fund. Because this law has not been renewed,
2 there is no requirement or allowance for the
3 mandatory payment. The commissioners could or
4 have to ask for up to nine hundred -- nine
5 thousand dollars per megawatt and put it all in
6 the general fund. So I'm not sure that the people
7 would get the taxes.

8 I don't understand why these are
9 just -- why these -- I don't understand why these
10 are just treated as a utility -- why they aren't
11 just treated as a utility instead of doing a PILT.
12 Doing a PILT slams the door on re-evaluation of
13 these properties. If they are taxed as a utility,
14 then we are sure that all the entities that
15 receive tax dollars will get the money they are
16 owed. It is my understanding that nowhere in Ohio
17 have we had an energy project like this one that
18 has gone the traditional taxing -- utility taxing
19 way.

20 I don't understand why our
21 commissioners are so excited about giving this
22 gigantic tax break to people who just arrived in
23 the county. Do we give this kind of break for
24 people who have businesses in the county, who
25 employ county people, who provide services to the

1 county? If commissioners are listening, and I
2 know there's one in the room, I urge you to say no
3 to the PILT.

4 The other part of taxes that is as
5 clear as mud as to if the County does the PILT
6 project, if any of the money will go to the
7 entities that would normally get -- get the tax
8 money. If it does, it will be getting those -- if
9 it does, it will make those getting inside milage
10 and fixed rate whole. If it doesn't, these groups
11 will lose money.

12 I don't believe that the fixed sum
13 bonds like which schools have can get any of the
14 PILT money; but since they have to come up with a
15 certain sum of money, it will cost the other
16 taxpayers in whatever district we are talking
17 about. That's why I'll pay more as an Eaton city
18 school taxpayer if this goes through with a PILT.

19 The other questionable thing about
20 this is that it is possible that landowners do not
21 have to pay CAUV recoupment if the whole parcel is
22 not taken out of production. That is according to
23 the Ohio Department of Taxation.

24 Now let's talk about terminology.
25 The sole -- the term solar farm is ridiculous.

1 This is not a farm. It is a utility. We have
2 already had that discussion. So to call it a farm
3 is disingenuous. Farms plant seeds and grow
4 things. This is not planting or growing. I am
5 part of a farming family who makes our living from
6 farming. It's an insult.

7 Preble County has worked hard to not
8 look like Montgomery County or Warren County or
9 Butler County. We have County zoning. We have
10 had that for twenty years, more than. We have a
11 comprehensive land use plan that was quoted
12 earlier that this project flies in the face of.
13 Our plan calls to keep farmland in production.
14 It's says development -- basically development
15 should occur around existing development where
16 services can be provided.

17 This project is a long way from
18 emergency services, which is a big issue. On
19 February 19th, here is a transcript, we talked --
20 there was a public meeting, and I have the -- I
21 wanted to know what it would take to break one of
22 these things. Everybody that works for Open Road
23 Renewables ought to know golf ball size, baseball
24 size, what size hail would it take. Here's how it
25 went. What does it take to break one of these?

1 David -- that's me. David Savage says, I don't
2 know precisely, but it would be a really bad
3 hailstorm. If it did break, what would happen?
4 There would be nothing that could happen except
5 that an operator in a control room with a bunch of
6 computer panels would see that a particular panel
7 or string of panels wasn't producing electricity
8 and then the workers would, among their other work
9 jobs, would go to the site to fix and replace the
10 panels. I said that person, is there a person at
11 the site in a little control room there at the
12 site? They would probably be in a remote
13 control -- or remote control room, but the workers
14 that would be dispatched would be nearby. How far
15 away? How far away would the control room be?
16 Again, he didn't know. These are simple
17 questions. They should know how far away these
18 things -- these people are.

19 We've heard -- well, I've heard this
20 is supposed to be a transparent process. I
21 appreciate the time to be able to talk. That's
22 transparency. But my question is, why didn't Open
23 Road have meetings with township trustees, with
24 fire, with EMS, with the public, with the
25 neighbors, and they didn't do that? The trustees

1 had to be told by a lot of the people in this
2 room. That's not fair. That's not transparent.

3 They were talking about solar
4 projects at the 2017 at the planning -- in 2017 in
5 the planning commission meeting. The
6 commissioners knew about it, yet there was no
7 public meeting. This is not transparent. This is
8 opaque, like a brick wall. If Angelina people
9 were transparent, they would have had people -- I
10 said that.

11 Again I ask you to deny the Angelina
12 Solar project. Thank you for your time.

13 MS. SCHABO: Barry Jerdon.

14 BARRY JERDON

15 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
16 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
17 certified, said as follows:

18 MS. SCHABO: If you would state your
19 name and address before you give your statement,
20 please.

21 MR. JERDON: Barry Jerdon, 7683 State
22 Route 177, Fairhaven, Ohio.

23 MS. SCHABO: And your township, sir?

24 MR. JERDON: Israel Township. I'm
25 sorry.

1 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Go ahead.

2 MR. JERDON: Okay. Barry Jerdon. I
3 live in Fairhaven. I'm a co-leader of Israel
4 Township Neighborhood Watch Team. We've been
5 active for the past seven years because of our
6 high crime rate in that area.

7 During that period we've had a number
8 of violent incidents in the township; murder, two
9 houses burnt down, grand thefts, petty thefts,
10 property damage, fights, frequent gunfire, car
11 chopping, houses have been stripped of copper
12 wiring and copper plumbing, windows broken, doors
13 knocked in, air-conditioning and generators
14 stolen, fuel stolen, cars, boats, travel trailers,
15 mowers, utility trailers and four wheelers have
16 been stolen and/or recovered in our village. We
17 have found security fences, locks, security
18 lighting, security cameras to be insufficient.
19 Security locks cut, security fence stolen, and
20 some of our security lighting have even been shot
21 out or destroyed.

22 With the murder of a village resident
23 and the advice of our county sheriff we formed a
24 neighborhood watch effort to monitor each other's
25 property. We suspect we're only one of the few

1 farm townships in the state with an active
2 neighborhood watch effort. We're not certain.
3 Given our situation, we have no choice but to
4 start it.

5 We are of certain, even with all
6 these provisions we generally have a grand theft,
7 petty theft, property damage, or numerous
8 suspicious events reported to the sheriff's office
9 once a month. The sheriff's department has been
10 very cooperative, but they're understaffed with
11 only two deputies on at a time to cover the entire
12 county. The township residents simply were
13 overwhelmed by the lawlessness and violence of the
14 individuals involved.

15 We are consequently very concerned
16 with the increased safety and security issues a
17 solar facility presents in our township. Will
18 safety and security provisions plan be sufficient
19 given our environment? How much potential
20 recyclable materials is contained on the site?
21 Some of the equipment may contain exotic
22 materials. What if some use a torch to cut the
23 panels into sections so they can be hidden in a
24 recycle load going to the recycle center? What
25 are the environment issues with melting the

1 various components of the system with torches?
2 What if the materials enter the nearby recycling
3 centers? Are there any electrical risks if
4 individuals are on that property?

5 Our team, we've been trying to site
6 clear some of the properties in our village.
7 Roughly we have twenty-five percent of the homes
8 in the village of Fairhaven that are abandoned and
9 beyond repair. Even with the State funds that
10 were available, we have to -- have trouble
11 clearing the properties for free. The property
12 owners could not be found or not -- would not sign
13 the site clearance. The buildings, some vacant
14 for forty, fifty years, still stand today creating
15 safety and health issues. Children at times play
16 in the houses with the roofs missing, the porch
17 buckling, windows broken, doors ajar due to
18 vandalism, and the taxes ain't been paid up to ten
19 years on some of these properties.

20 My questions regarding the solar
21 project site clearance are based on the recent
22 experiences. Who is responsible to remove all
23 equipment, materials, chemical, buildings, and any
24 other items at the end of their useful life? What
25 are the hazardous chemicals, materials that will

1 need to comply with Federal site clearance
2 guidelines? Where will the site clearance items
3 need to be disposed of? How will site clearance
4 funds be secured to cover all the site clearance
5 costs as mandated by Federal regulations for all
6 items? How will the secure amount be indexed for
7 inflation? Who will have access to those funds?
8 If the property title owner does not sign the site
9 clearance permits, will anyone have the authority
10 to legally authorize site clearance, and who would
11 that be? If sufficient site clearance funds are
12 not available at the end of the project, who pays
13 the difference; will it be the State, County,
14 Township, or the property owners? If sufficient
15 funds are not available for site clearance, will
16 the system remain in place, thus keeping the
17 farmland out of production? How would an
18 abandoned site be secured and who pays? What are
19 the environmental concerns with the abandoned
20 site?

21 Thank you very much.

22 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Carol
23 Benton, Burton. I'm sorry. Was it Burton or
24 Benton?

25 MS. BENTON: Benton, B E N T O N.

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CAROL BENTON

of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
certified, said as follows:

MS. SCHABO: Go ahead and proceed.

MS. BENTON: Okay. My name is Carol
Benton. I am a co-owner and --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can't hear.

MS. BENTON: I'm sorry.

MS. SCHABO: If you could just speak
up to the best of your ability.

MS. BENTON: I'm sorry.

MR. RANDAZZO: Do the best you can.
Don't worry about it.

MS. BENTON: My name is Carol Benton.
I'm a co-leader of Israel Township Neighborhood
Watch Team. I have lived in Fairhaven, Israel
Township all of my life, seventy-five years.

Fairhaven is a small, mostly poor
residential area. My property is located between
State Route 177 and Four Mile Creek with the
highway to the east and creek to the west. The
creek runs mostly between Bobby Black's farm and
my property from the north end of Fairhaven to the
south. The creek, a source of water for Fairhaven

1 and the homes along the creek, drains into Acton
2 Lake at Hueston Woods State Park a few miles away.
3 Our water source in Fairhaven is well
4 water, but some residents must haul water in on a
5 regular basis due to unlimited water supply.
6 Water supply is particularly a problem in the
7 summer. We have floods, droughts, high winds,
8 tornados, and we had Hurricane Ike 2008 which left
9 us without power for nearly nine to eleven days.
10 During the Hurricane Ike power outage the Hays
11 family, who are local farmers, had to haul in one
12 thousand gallons of water each day for their
13 cattle. During this period everyone had to find
14 their own water supply. Stores were closed as
15 well as gas stations in nearby towns. People
16 could not get bottled water to drink or well water
17 to bathe in. Some say they tried to get water at
18 Hueston Woods State Park and were turned down
19 because Hueston Woods said they needed their
20 limited water supply for tourists.

21 In Fairhaven some of us have spent
22 money and our time working to clean up Four Mile
23 Creek just so it will be safe and clear of
24 dangerous objects and toxic chemicals. Floods and
25 high winds cause Four Mile Creek to wash the

1 debris down to Hueston Woods State Park where
2 people swim, fish, hike, boat, bike. And of
3 course, animals and water creatures of all sorts
4 from Fairhaven to the lake all depend on the creek
5 water.

6 The Hueston Woods State Park,
7 including the lodge, has piped in safe water from
8 the Southwest Ohio Water Company during the past
9 two years or so, but the lake and the sections of
10 Four Mile Creek downstream from Fairhaven receive
11 Fairhaven's water and debris. Any contaminants in
12 the creek water will collect in the lake and creek
13 beds. What might start as a small risk can become
14 a serious problem over time as concentrations
15 increase in the creek bed, the lake bed, and the
16 lake water. Given enough time, the health and
17 safety of people, animals, and water creatures may
18 be impacted.

19 I'm against the solar system until
20 they can prove and guarantee the following. The
21 solar project, can they have their own source of
22 water and not reduce our already limited water
23 supply? Can they properly and safely take care of
24 wastewater and any toxic waste at their expense on
25 their property? Can they quickly take care of any

1 damages from their facility to any of us and our
2 properties, mainly health of people, animals,
3 water, and land? Can they guarantee whoever owns
4 the property and contents will completely and
5 safely rid the property of any eyesore buildings,
6 equipment, and waste, and restore the land to its
7 natural use? Can they guarantee our water supply
8 will not be contaminated by any hazardous
9 materials located on the site? What are the
10 chemicals located on the site and what risk do
11 they present? Can they guarantee the entire site
12 will be restored to productive farmland after use?
13 What chemicals might contaminate the land and
14 enter our streams during rainstorms.

15 Remember, our farmers plow and raise
16 animals. Our low income people do not have money
17 to fix someone else's mistakes. Water and land
18 are valuable.

19 Fairhaven is located along the east
20 bank of the Four Mile Creek and is a one hundred
21 year plain -- floodplain. Fairhaven and the
22 low-lying farmland along the creek flood every
23 year, often more than once. Sometimes the rains
24 come as a deluge and results in rapid flooding
25 condition. Other times the rain comes as a steady

1 rain spread over three to seven days resulting in
2 gradual increase in flooding conditions.

3 Flooding causes erosion of the
4 adjacent farmlands with debris being spread
5 throughout the flooded areas. I have observed
6 flood waters up to the white church and across the
7 state highway at the south end of town.

8 Why is prime farmland being taken out
9 of production? This is very fertile soil. How
10 will the erosion of farmland and the deposit of
11 debris be prevented from increasing above current
12 levels? This project will undoubtedly increase
13 the potential for flooding during at least some
14 rainstorms. How will this project ensure the
15 flooding of Fairhaven and the low-lying farmlands
16 located along the Four Mile Creek will not
17 increase during all rainstorm conditions?

18 Thank you. Arica Hamilton.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She's not here
20 right now.

21 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Thank you.
22 Curtis Notestine.

23 CURTIS NOTESTINE

24 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
25 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter

1 certified, said as follows:

2 MR. NOTESTINE: My name is Curtis
3 Notestine. I live at 1852 Deerbrook Trail in
4 Beavercreek, Ohio. I am a senior engineering
5 consultant with a master's degree in computer
6 engineering. I specialize in computer
7 microelectronics, architecture, including silicon
8 systems and circuit design. And for the record,
9 I'm not being paid for this testimony.

10 Part of the Fourth Amendment to the
11 U.S. Constitution infers a right to be secure in
12 one's person and one's property. It is my opinion
13 that the construction and installation of solar
14 panels on prime agricultural farmlands violates
15 the Fourth Amendment rights of adjacent
16 landowners. How can one be secure in his or her
17 own property if others willfully disrupt the
18 tranquility of the rural environment, potentially
19 contaminate the water and the soil, and create an
20 environment conducive to criminal activities such
21 as vandalism and theft?

22 Moreover, there will be inverters and
23 substations throughout the project, all of which
24 create an additional risk of fire. The College
25 Corner Fire Department responds to fires in Dixon

1 and Israel Township and may not be equipped to
2 handle hazardous material that such a situation
3 would produce. These hazardous materials include
4 antimony, cadmium telluride, copper, gallium, and
5 selenium. In addition, chemicals such as
6 phosphorous, arsenic, and boron are used in
7 silicon substrates. Again, how can landowners who
8 live in close proximity to this project protect
9 themselves.

10 While supporters of this project like
11 to assert their landowner's rights, they must
12 realize that with all rights come a commensurate
13 duty. No right is absolute or unfettered. Stated
14 another way, your right to behave irresponsibly on
15 your land ends when the results of your actions
16 have damaged adjacent properties.

17 In summary, I oppose the installation
18 of solar panels on agricultural land in any county
19 of Ohio. Thank you.

20 MS. SCHABO: Andrew Brooks.

21 ANDREW BROOKS

22 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
23 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
24 certified, said as follows:

25 MR. BROOKS: My name is Andrew

1 Brooks. I live at 7380 Creek Road, Camden, Ohio.
2 That's in Israel Township.

3 I've come today to talk a little bit
4 about the unhidden -- or I should say hidden
5 truths about solar panels in particular. I've
6 done some research. My FFA chapter in Eaton High
7 School actually just participated in a state
8 contest this past Saturday where we discussed the
9 pros and cons of the solar panel facilities as a
10 whole, and so I'm here today to address some
11 concerns I have with solar panel production in
12 particular.

13 For one, I want to talk about
14 production waste. According to
15 environmentalprogress.org solar panels create
16 three hundred times more toxic waste per unit than
17 nuclear energy. Given the nasty stuff that
18 nuclear energy can produce, that is something that
19 scares me as a citizen of this county.

20 Also I want to point out that silicon
21 tetrachloride is used in the production of solar
22 panels. Silicon tetrachloride is a pretty nasty
23 chemical. It can leave burns on your skin;
24 pollutants in the air, which can cause lung
25 disease and cancer; and if exposed to water

1 creates hydrochloric acid, which is harmful to
2 both human and animal health. Unfortunately, the
3 disposal of silicon tetrachloride and similar
4 chemicals is very difficult. You can't just put
5 it in a landfill because it leaches into good
6 soil. You can't put it in the water because it
7 destroys the water, and putting waste in water is
8 bad to begin with.

9 And, you know, when I hear that solar
10 panels create three hundred times more toxic waste
11 per unit than nuclear energy, that's three hundred
12 times more places that we have to find somewhere
13 to put this stuff. And as somebody who is
14 concerned for the future of both the earth and
15 agriculture, I don't -- I am not okay with just
16 taking silicon tetrachloride and similar harmful
17 chemicals and throwing them every which way we
18 can.

19 Secondly, I want to talk about the
20 population. According to the United Nations
21 Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the
22 world population is projected to reach nine point
23 eight billion by 2050 and eleven point two billion
24 by 2100. Both of those dates theoretically could
25 be within my lifetime, although I severely doubt

1 I'll live to 2100. My kids will live to 2100 and
2 so I have to think about them as well. Even
3 though I don't have kids yet, you know, that's
4 something that I have to consider. The fact of
5 the matter is, we are projected to have to feed a
6 lot of people within the next one hundred years.
7 And, in fact, today I know that according to
8 foodaidfoundation.org seven hundred and
9 ninety-five million people in the world don't have
10 food -- enough food to lead a healthy, active
11 life. That's about one in nine people in a rural
12 population. That is a humongous number.

13 And to me personally, people ask me,
14 well, what about -- you know, what if we run out
15 of energy. I would much rather live without
16 energy than live without food because I need food
17 to live and I don't need energy to live. I know
18 for a fact because out where I live, when the
19 power goes out, it's out for fourteen days, and
20 I've made it this far so I think I'm going to keep
21 going.

22 But anyway -- and so when I hear
23 those numbers, I think it's a little unfair to be
24 even considering taking production ag use land and
25 using it for something else. And even if it

1 doesn't, you know, poison the soil, even if we are
2 able to farm that, you know, these leases are for
3 long periods of time, and I don't know the exact
4 number of years but I know it's a lot, and those
5 are good years of farming that are lost possibly
6 forever.

7 And when I hear that we have to feed
8 nine point eight billion people within the next
9 couple of decades, that's something that I really
10 want to focus on is the hunger aspect and not
11 necessarily worry about energy right now. Don't
12 get me wrong, I think solar energy has great
13 potential to solve, you know, many of the world's
14 climate change issues. However, I think it's a
15 little too early in this technology's life-span to
16 be putting them out on production ag use land.

17 I have always suggested finding
18 nonproductive land to put solar panels on. Places
19 like in the Appalachian part of Ohio, that land is
20 unusable due to things such as fracking and strip
21 mining but you can then use that land to produce
22 energy that already can't be farmed.

23 Lastly I want to talk about property
24 values. A study by the University of Texas, which
25 was conducted in May of 2018, shows that the

1 installment of solar panels is statistically
2 significant enough to prove that they lower
3 property values. When you want to determine
4 whether something is -- whether a variable has
5 bearing on a change and another variable, you do
6 in statistics what's called a statistical test or
7 a statistical analysis. When something is
8 statistically significant, that means that at the
9 level you're testing for, it is -- it is proven to
10 have the effect of the change on the other
11 variable.

12 In this instance at the one percent
13 level it was shown that installment of solar
14 panels did decrease the property values of
15 properties within three miles of the solar
16 facility. The degree of decrease varied based on
17 distance, but it was significant at the one
18 percent level and in statistics that shows that it
19 is strongly proven, the evidence is highly
20 correlating with the fact that that is the cause
21 of those properties -- those property value
22 declines.

23 So in conclusion, I guess, I just --
24 I don't think it is fair to be putting solar
25 panels for say twenty-five or thirty years or

1 however long it might be on production land when
2 we have to be more worried about feeding people as
3 opposed to making sure we can power our iPhones
4 and watch TV.

5 I also think that it's unfair to
6 people who have to live next to them, that even
7 though they don't agree, you know, some people do
8 not agree with this installment but yet they have
9 to watch their property values go down, which also
10 traps citizens if they want to move. It's very
11 hard to sell a house when your property value is
12 down.

13 I know my family in particular, we
14 are looking at moving into a new home within
15 Preble County; but if these solar panels go in,
16 which like I said, I live in Israel Township, if
17 these solar panels go in, then it's going to be
18 very hard to sell my home. I live on five acres
19 of land. It's great land but it's going to be
20 very hard to sell the home in which case I'm not
21 going to be able to afford to buy a new home. So
22 it's going to stick me where I'm at locationwise
23 in Preble County. I love Preble County. It's a
24 beautiful county, but where I'm at within Preble
25 County, which is near Fairhaven, we've heard all

1 the things about the crime near Fairhaven today,
2 so I think you guys get the gist of why I want to
3 scoot on out of there, it's going to leave me in a
4 position where I'm stuck in a potentially
5 dangerous situation, and that's not something that
6 I'm looking to support.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Dorothy
9 Clippinger.

10 DOROTHY CLIPPINGER

11 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
12 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
13 certified, said as follows:

14 MS. CLIPPINGER: I am a resident of
15 Preble County and am a concerned citizen about
16 higher taxes. My aunt lives in Israel Township
17 and will be effected by Angelina.

18 MS. SCHABO: And if I could just stop
19 you for a minute. If you could state where your
20 address is, please.

21 MS. CLIPPINGER: Oh, it's 1050 Mann
22 Road, Eaton, Ohio, and that's Gasper Township.

23 I am a farm girl. My family both on
24 my father's side as well as my mother's side has
25 farmed in Preble County for over a hundred years.

1 For generations, we have faced drought, disease,
2 weak markets, and many other factors that have
3 threatened our livelihood. My family has always
4 been able to survive those uncontrollable
5 adversities and we continue to have a successful
6 farming operation that can be passed to the next
7 generation. Now my family's historic century farm
8 is facing a new threat as Open Road Renewables
9 proposes to build large-scale solar facilities on
10 top of our county's most productive farmland.

11 As farmers who are concerned about
12 the future of our land, many of us in the
13 community have attended countless meetings to
14 learn about solar energy. We have learned more
15 than we ever wanted to know, and it's time for the
16 rest of the our county to know the dirty details
17 of this so-called clean energy. I'd like to share
18 just a few.

19 By turning agricultural land into a
20 solar facility, we will lose valuable, very
21 limited, fertile, tillable acreage of farmland. I
22 do not need to remind you that farmland is a
23 nonrenewable resource. Solar companies will tell
24 you the land can go back to agricultural, but even
25 Open Road Renewables admitted in a public meeting

1 at the courthouse on February 19th that they've
2 never experienced a solar facility returning to
3 farmland.

4 Even though these farms with solar
5 panels will probably never return to feeding the
6 world's population, the solar companies still
7 consider the land agricultural use because they
8 are, quote, unquote, harvesting the sun. They use
9 the term, agriculture so zoning codes will not
10 change. They are completely bypassing the local
11 Zoning Board's authority. You or I can't add a
12 porch or a garage on our land without approval
13 from the Zoning Board but fifteen hundred acres of
14 land put into industrial use seems fine.

15 Speaking of land, the property values
16 of homes and land that would neighbor solar
17 facilities will decrease in market value from
18 thirty-eight to sixty-five percent. The solar
19 panels are visually unappealing, but the
20 protective nine foot chain-link fence with barbed
21 wire surrounding the facility will be even less
22 appealing. Very few people would buy a home next
23 to a solar farm unless the property was really
24 cheap.

25 One may be willing to tolerate a

1 reduction of property value if solar energy would
2 provide him or her with a reduced electric bill.
3 However, the electric that will be generated with
4 this facility will not stay in our community. It
5 will be sent through electric lines to Chicago and
6 other out-of-state communities. So we won't see
7 lower electric bills but surely our county will
8 get a substantial tax benefit, right?

9 Open Road Renewables will tell you
10 our county will receive a large amount of money
11 from these solar facilities, however, the amount
12 they say our county will get changes as much as
13 Ohio weather. And just like Ohio weather, it's
14 not all that sunny. During the meeting at the
15 courthouse in February, Open Road said the payment
16 would be one point seven million dollars each year
17 in lieu of taxes. Their application to the Ohio
18 Power Siting Board states it would give the County
19 approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand
20 dollars. But the latest OPSB summary report
21 states the payment will be five hundred thousand
22 dollars. No matter which of those three payments
23 is accurate, the payment is stagnant for the next
24 thirty to forty years. It will not increase with
25 the cost of living or reflect changes in

1 inflation. Half a million dollars sounds good now
2 but what will that be worth in forty years? I
3 encourage you to speak to our County auditor to
4 see how this lack of financial growth will affect
5 the taxes for our townships and schools. Here's a
6 hint, we'll be paying more.

7 Maybe we can pay more if the facility
8 will provide local jobs. Unfortunately, the
9 majority of those jobs are temporary. The farms
10 going out of production provide as many permanent
11 jobs as the facility would. And there is no
12 guarantee the solar company will hire locally.
13 They are more likely to bring in their own
14 out-of-state crew.

15 Also, please consider that Open Road
16 Renewables is only an installer of this solar
17 grid. They will not be running, operating, or
18 even owning this complex. It will be sold to
19 another person, group, or organization. Wouldn't
20 it be nice to know who is in our neighborhood?
21 Open Road will not tell us; but if their practices
22 in Brown County are any indication, they will sell
23 the power facility to foreign investors.

24 Lastly, I want to mention how the
25 facility will affect farming. Farmers in Preble

1 County rely heavily on field tile to control the
2 runoff of the land. The solar company plans to
3 set the legs of each solar panel ten feet deep
4 into the ground, breaking drainage tiles. This
5 could make adjacent land waterlogged or perhaps
6 eroded. Either way, the land would not be
7 farmable. This disruption could cause flooding to
8 creeks, ditches, yards, and basements as well.
9 Because Open Road is based in Texas, they may not
10 be informed of how important field tile is to
11 Ohio's farmers.

12 Also, according to a biologist at
13 ODNR, fencing off nearly one thousand acres of
14 farmland will change the movement and feeding
15 habits of the local wildlife. Not only will they
16 feed off available fields, hurting crop yields,
17 but deer, coyotes, turkeys, raccoons, mice, rats,
18 snakes, and other vermin will move onto nearby
19 residential properties as well.

20 Before I conclude, it must be noted
21 that Open Road's application requests permission
22 to fracture ground when building the solar
23 facility. Please take some time and investigate
24 what fracking does to our environment. Is this
25 something we want done to our local land?

1 The proposed solar facility will cost
2 this community natural resources, property values,
3 more taxes, jobs, and farm productivity. Our
4 grandparents did not often have control of the
5 factors against them. We have an opportunity to
6 protect the land that has given so much to
7 generations of our family. Is all of this worth
8 the debt future generations will pay due to our
9 negligence? It is not. We can't afford the
10 price. Preble County farmland is our richest
11 asset. Please make sure it stays just that, an
12 agricultural resource.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. SCHABO: Richard Giffen.

15 RICHARD GIFFEN

16 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
17 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
18 certified, said as follows:

19 MS. SCHABO: Start with your name and
20 your address for the record, please.

21 MR. GIFFEN: My name is Richard
22 Giffen. My address is 5651 Trenton Road in
23 Trenton. I own a farm that is considered to be
24 part of the project.

25 When we looked at this project, we

1 didn't do -- my wife and I didn't decide this on
2 our own. We went to the whole family. As old as
3 we are, our kids and grandkids will be more
4 affected by this than we will so we -- we spent a
5 lot of time, an inordinate amount of time talking
6 to them and discussing the pros and cons of
7 whether we should do it or not. And as the
8 younger generation, they're more accepting of the
9 new technology than we are, and most of them were
10 very in favor of it. So they convinced us that it
11 was a good thing to do and mainly because of the
12 new technology.

13 Some of the things we felt as an
14 advantage, it did provide a consistent income,
15 which in farming there seems to be inconsistencies
16 in income, and we felt like that was an
17 opportunity to have consistent source of income.

18 We feel like solar panel -- the means
19 of converting sun to energy is not a whole lot
20 different than it is raising corn or ethanol.
21 They're very, very similar. So we felt like that
22 getting into the solar business could be just as
23 effective as raising corn and so --

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
25 (Unintelligible.)

1 MS. SCHABO: Sir, please refrain from
2 making comments.

3 MR. GIFFEN: Some side notes that we
4 thought were important. The increased tax dollars
5 for school and local government we think is a
6 great benefit, especially when you look at the
7 fact that Preble County is an agricultural county.
8 It has a difficult time sometimes generating tax
9 dollars because it's not commercial. So the
10 landowners, they shoulder the total responsibility
11 for taxes. So we thought that that could help in
12 our local area, our school district, which because
13 of the way the funding is for schools, they're
14 always coming back and wanting a tax increase.

15 We think it will provide -- be a
16 short-term business because in time, at the end of
17 the project, it can be revitalized as agricultural
18 land. We've been ensured of that. And we think
19 that it's better than looking at some type of
20 permanent development that would be long-term
21 where that would or could not be returned to
22 agricultural use, whether it be -- I can't imagine
23 a factory but something that would be permanent
24 that would not be allowed to be back in a cropping
25 system.

1 So some of those reasons are why we
2 think it's a positive thing to go on with this
3 project.

4 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Mike
5 Broermann.

6 MIKE BROERMANN
7 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
8 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
9 certified, said as follows:

10 MR. BROERMANN: My name is Mike
11 Broermann. I live at 5569 State Route 725 West,
12 Camden, Ohio, Israel Township.

13 My name is Mike Broermann and I'm
14 here on behalf of the Broermann Family, LLC in
15 support of the Angelina Solar project. Change is
16 the only constant in life is a quote from Greek
17 philosopher Heraclitus. Change is a difficult
18 concept for many people to deal with in life.
19 People deal with change in many different ways.
20 Some sit tight and do nothing, which it does not
21 seem to be the case here. Some people put their
22 heads down, ignore the change, and just keep
23 plugging away day-to-day. Some people panic and
24 let their emotions override their normal logic.
25 Some people acknowledge the change, face it head

1 on with positivity and due diligence for better
2 outcomes in the end.

3 As I look around the room, there are
4 not many of you that have sat around and done
5 nothing or ignored the situation or the
6 opportunity at hand. What I see around the room
7 are numerous successful businessmen and women that
8 did not get to that point by not changing their
9 business in some way or another over the lifetime
10 to make it more profitable or successful. You
11 faced the change head on. I'm sure it was a
12 difficult decision to make, a change to your
13 business or operation, and it was probably not
14 done overnight, as was the case with our decision
15 to sign a contract with Angelina Solar project.
16 Broermann Family, LLC spent many hours discussing
17 this issue among family members, as well as
18 numerous meetings with attorneys and farming
19 organizations as well as with Open Road
20 Renewables. We spent months in discussion and
21 doing research before anything was ever signed.

22 Broermann Family LLC also met with an
23 adjoining neighbor and agreed to move the proposed
24 boundary line of the solar panels to accommodate
25 the neighbor.

1 I know that tile, water runoff, and
2 erosion are major concerns of ours as well as the
3 neighbor's. However, after all the hours of
4 meeting with the attorneys and members of the
5 Angelina Solar project Open Road Renewables, we
6 feel we have done our due diligence to address
7 these concerns in this matter.

8 As I stated before, I'm in favor of
9 the Angelina Solar project because of the
10 benefits, jobs, and tax dollars it will generate
11 for Preble County, Israel Township, the schools,
12 the roads, and the community.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. David
15 Giffen.

16 DAVID GIFFEN
17 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
18 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
19 certified, said as follows:

20 MS. SCHABO: Go ahead and proceed.

21 MR. GIFFEN: I'm David Giffen. 7352
22 State Line Road, Camden, Ohio, Israel Township.

23 Hello. I'm David Giffen. I am a
24 landowner in the Angelina solar project. My
25 family and I feel that this solar project is a

1 great idea. It is a clean renewable source of
2 energy. This is something our kids and our
3 grandkids will need. This will definitely help to
4 eliminate the carbon footprint. This is our
5 future, our retirement, and our decision.

6 Not only is it a clean renewable
7 energy, it also secures our financial future.
8 Taxes projected to be paid by the solar farm
9 operation will be multiples above the agricultural
10 use taxes on the land. This will be a great asset
11 to the local schools, townships, County, and
12 State.

13 During all of our homework,
14 contacting lawyers and making sure our ground was
15 protected, we had to take into consideration that
16 we would live right in the hub of construction and
17 operation. We came to a realization that you get
18 used to your surroundings.

19 My father said make the ground pay
20 for itself. The solar project is a stable income
21 to ensure the ground does just that. To
22 reiterate, the Giffen family is in favor of solar.
23 Thank you.

24 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Donna
25 Ridder.

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DONNA RIDDER

of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
certified, said as follows:

MS. RITTER: Donna Ridder, 5515
Taylor Blair Road, London, Ohio, that's in Madison
County, and I'm speaking on behalf of Broermann
Family, LLC in Israel Township.

I support the Angelina Solar project
in Preble County. Solar is a clean, safe
renewable energy that will only benefit everyone
involved. Many hours of research, meetings, and
family involvement went into our decision to
participate in this project. We feel it is a good
business decision. Farming is a business, plain
and simple. Solar is a good business decision.
Business decisions are not always easy. The
difficult ones never are. But after evaluating
all the benefits and considering the
disadvantages, the benefits far outweigh the
disadvantages.

Solar isn't dependent on market
fluctuations. There are few operating costs and
minimal labor. Open Road will pay for the
construction, maintenance, and decommissioning of

1 the project. Again, those commitments are a part
2 of good business decisions.

3 Solar will provide a stable,
4 long-term source of income and it will also
5 preserve our land for potential future farming.
6 Preble County can't ignore the enormous tax
7 benefits solar projects will bring to the
8 community. And for these reasons I support solar
9 in Preble County.

10 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Fred Ridder.

11 FRED RIDDER

12 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
13 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
14 certified, said as follows:

15 MR. RIDDER: Good evening. My name
16 is Fred Ritter. My address is 5515 Taylor Blair
17 Road, London, Ohio, Monroe Township. I'm here
18 tonight to speak in support of the Broermann
19 Family, LLC in Israel Township and here to support
20 the Angelina Solar project in Preble County.

21 Solar is a clean renewable energy
22 that is easy on the land. Once it is installed
23 there is very little maintenance that is required.
24 This project will bring many tax dollars into the
25 community and is a win/win for both Preble County

1 and the farmers that have decided to move forward
2 with this project. Solar is a good decision for
3 Preble County and I support it. I appreciate your
4 time and attention.

5 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

6 MR. RIDDER: Have a great evening.

7 MS. SCHABO: Tom McDonough.

8 TOM McDONOUGH

9 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
10 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
11 certified, said as follows:

12 MR. McDONOUGH: Hello, my name is Tom
13 McDonough, and I represent Old Sod. We own
14 Talawanda Springs Waterworks in Israel Township.

15 When I read the proposal, I
16 discovered a lot of gray areas I'd like to
17 address, that being that this new project is built
18 on the Great Miami Aquifer on the proposed site.
19 This aquifer supplies water not only to the
20 springs but all local wells, Southwestern Water,
21 MillerCoors Brewery, which is near to my heart,
22 seven adjoining counties.

23 Any so-called clean energy product
24 has the potential to contaminant millions of
25 gallons of incredibly valuable water. Isn't it

1 true that millions of gallons of water will be
2 used at the proposed site to operate and clean the
3 solar panels to keep them operating efficiently as
4 dust needs to be removed? Isn't it true that
5 solar farms are at best twenty-three percent
6 efficient in converting solar to electricity?
7 Isn't it true that the millions of gallons of
8 water that will be used, and more importantly
9 displaced, will end up on neighboring properties
10 and farms?

11 For example, if ten thousand gallons
12 are required per acre times the nine hundred acres
13 of panels to be cleaned, that's ten thousand times
14 nine -- that's ten thousand times nine hundred
15 acres or nine million gallons once a month if they
16 clean it once a month, or a hundred and eight
17 million gallons a year. That's a lot of
18 consumption problem and a lot of runoff problem.
19 That's an extra hundred million gallons of water
20 flowing into little Four Mile Creek.

21 And as a personal side bar I've got a
22 hundred and thirty acre farm about two and a half
23 miles down that creek which if these attorneys
24 want to go look, it's flooded right now. More
25 water is only going to be a detriment.

1 Also Talawanda Springs floods about
2 once every ten years instead of once every three
3 years. The home farm is on Junction Road in
4 Israel Township. Big Four Mile Creek runs through
5 that. All this water has to go to those two
6 creeks which eventually leads into Hueston Woods
7 Acton Lake where I worked when I was in school
8 here. And they have to dredge that every year
9 because of all the topsoil from my fields and my
10 neighbor's fields that as it floods every year
11 pick up all the soil and take it to Acton Lake.

12 And as I said, this water has to go
13 someplace. I mean, what effectively you're doing
14 here is letting these people build a nine hundred
15 acre parking lot. I'm fairly certain that solar
16 panels do not absorb water. However, I know
17 cornfields do.

18 I would have assumed that the
19 Department of Natural Resources, Army Corps of
20 Engineers, and the EPA would have researched these
21 concerns. Acton Lake probably was not contacted.
22 I have no idea, but I'm sure they'd be interested
23 in how much more water and topsoil they'll be
24 receiving due to the runoff from this nine hundred
25 acre parking lot.

1 And it's already been cited several
2 times about the toxic contamination. If it gets
3 into this Great Miami Aquifer, it's going to
4 contaminate thousands -- hundreds of thousands of
5 jobs and people.

6 I'm scratching my head about all the
7 nonspecific statements made by the proposal. I've
8 been in business for a long time and I've never
9 heard so many proposals -- or maybes or probably
10 or to be determined later. I'm not in a habit of
11 signing blank checks. I hope you folks are not
12 also. All these things should be brought out to
13 open air before anything is signed.

14 The bottom line is we are a farming
15 community, and for the most part, we were kept in
16 the dark about this proposal. I didn't know about
17 it until my brother called.

18 There is no way without the
19 government subsidies and tax credit that the
20 project survives. We all know it, these guys are
21 in it for the tax dollars, that's their only
22 motivation. I know a few people who will benefit
23 financially in a tremendous way, as with the power
24 companies.

25 But to sum it up, I think in order to

1 make -- we're going green to make Uncle Sam go in
2 the red. That's all I have.

3 MS. SCHABO: We currently have about
4 eight people who have signed up, nine, so I don't
5 forget Ms. Hamilton, and we've got about
6 forty-five minutes before the fine folks at the
7 fire department have a shift change and things
8 could get a little hectic. I'm hoping that
9 everyone will have an opportunity to say what they
10 would like the Power Siting Board to hear so I'll
11 just ask that everyone be cognizant of the time.

12 Yes, sir. Go ahead and stand up so I
13 can see, maybe I'll hear you a little bit better.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: People came to
15 share their opinions and concerns and comments.
16 Everybody here are presenters on both sides and
17 all of the people have been respectful and people
18 would like to share their opinions.

19 MS. SCHABO: Absolutely, and I would
20 like for everyone to have that opportunity. I
21 am --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Everyone is
23 being honest and this is frankly relevant.

24 MS. SCHABO: I agree. Gary
25 Stahlheber.

1 MR. STAHLHEBER: That's me.

2 MS. SCHABO: Was I close?

3 MR. STAHLHEBER: Close.

4 GARY STAHLHEBER

5 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
6 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
7 certified, said as follows:

8 MR. STAHLHEBER: Gary Stahlheber,
9 landowner involved in the project, Israel
10 Township, and it's 7208 Eaton-Oxford Road.

11 When I received the first letter from
12 Open Road twenty-eight months ago, I gave it about
13 a one percent chance of happening. My next
14 thought was it would be too good to be true for me
15 and for the County. You know what they say, if it
16 looks too good -- if it looks too good to be true,
17 it's probably not true.

18 So for twenty-eight months I have
19 tried to find the bad side of this. I can't find
20 it. I've talked to people who have had solar for
21 six to eight years and everything is good and they
22 would like to have more.

23 Solar is big in China and Japan and
24 Germany, also the states of California, North
25 Carolina, and Arizona. I will never forget my dad

1 telling me when a new thing comes along, you never
2 want to be first, but you don't want to be last.
3 We sure aren't the first. If there was something
4 bad about this, wouldn't we know it by now?

5 Supposedly reliable sources say fifty
6 percent of electric could come from wind and solar
7 by the year 2050. Let's take the solar before the
8 ugly windmill people show up. And that's supposed
9 to be ugly windmills, not ugly people.

10 MR. RANDAZZO: Either one.

11 MR. STAHLHEBER: The land -- we all
12 care about the land. We're not selling the land,
13 and I would never be doing this if I did not think
14 it would be farmed again.

15 I hope for good soil conditions when
16 it's installed and again when it's cleaned up, but
17 even if it is wet, will it be much different than
18 our last harvest?

19 I have always been intrigued by our
20 neighbors. So many families from counties to the
21 south of us, they all sold family farms to
22 developers to plaster houses all over them.
23 Farmland gone forever, but I've never heard a bad
24 word about them doing that. Why is this so
25 different? Their land gone forever. This land, I

1 think, will be farmed again.

2 There is, in my opinion, so much
3 misinformation here. I have been told solar
4 panels are hazardous, and we heard that tonight,
5 have to be shipped to third world countries to get
6 rid of. I called our landfill. They told me that
7 they get shipped to Indianapolis, they get
8 recycled, and they're eighty to ninety percent
9 reused.

10 I was told by one person the land
11 would be worthless and not grow anything after the
12 solar people were done. I don't believe that. I
13 was told solar people would pour chemicals on the
14 land. I don't believe that.

15 I'm going to stick my neck out a
16 little bit here, but in my opinion, there will be
17 less chemicals, less erosion, and even less runoff
18 than any other ag land in the county. I even
19 think neighboring farms will have less runoff with
20 panels and grass than they have now.

21 There is talk about the neighboring
22 properties losing value. I can tell you if I was
23 looking for land in the neighborhood, it would
24 make -- it would make no difference if it was next
25 to a solar panel farm. I can even think of a few

1 advantages.

2 From what I see and read, I like
3 solar. In closing, I truly believe this land will
4 be farmed again. It is not gone forever as many
5 have suggested.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Shara
8 Ridenour. Mr. Conway is checking outside. No?
9 Okay. I'll call the name again.

10 Rob Cross.

11 ROB CROSS

12 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
13 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
14 certified, said as follows:

15 MR. CROSS: I've heard a lot of
16 compelling arguments on both sides, both inside
17 and -- inside here and then obviously outside. So
18 one note I think before I get started with my
19 point is the State and the County can or should
20 have done a better job at getting the facts and
21 mitigation plans for like environmental concerns
22 and things like that that have come up from these
23 solar panels and obviously a much better form of
24 communication for that.

25 The reason I wanted to get up and

1 speak was my dealings with power and utility
2 companies at my job. I am -- we had load shedding
3 abilities where the grid would become overloaded
4 all the time. Everybody thinks there's batteries
5 and things like that. Well, there's power
6 generation facilities trying to keep up with the
7 demand, and that's, you know -- so every day you
8 have coal-fired plants ramped up and down, nuclear
9 facilities, you have that happening.

10 Well, another thing they have is
11 being able to take large energy consumers off the
12 grid to keep those brownouts and blackouts from
13 happening. And my point is with this, solar is a
14 perfect solution for this. Its peak demand is
15 during the day when your peak usage is. The
16 highest it produces is during the peak part of the
17 day when those power outages and brownouts happen.

18 For the farmers, you hear -- you
19 know, this opens them up for another, I guess,
20 commodity for production, you know, for produce
21 that, you know, now they plant the seed and hope
22 for good weather, you know, and they have
23 fertilizer, diesel fuels, all these inputs and
24 still have to depend on Mother Nature. This is a
25 truly stable form of energy production, and it

1 opens them up for another commodity that they can
2 participate in.

3 That's all.

4 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where's he
6 from?

7 MR. CROSS: Where am I from? Somers
8 Township.

9 MS. SCHABO: Jason Baker.

10 JASON BAKER

11 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
12 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
13 certified, said as follows:

14 MR. BAKER: My name is Jason Baker.
15 I'm with the International Union of Operating
16 Engineers, Local 18. I'm a business
17 representative. Address is 3860 Towne Boulevard,
18 Franklin, Ohio.

19 Good evening. My name is Jason
20 Baker, and I'm a business representative with the
21 Operating Engineers, Local 19. I'm here today to
22 testify in support of the proposed Angelina solar
23 farm project.

24 Prior to becoming a business
25 representative with Local 18 I worked on a

1 numerous -- number of energy projects. The
2 Angelina solar farm will put Local 18 Operating
3 Engineers to work, and we are looking forward to
4 working with Open Road Renewables on this project.
5 I urge the Board to join me in supporting the
6 Angelina solar farm and approve this project.
7 Thank you.

8 MS. SCHABO: Paige Gabbard.

9 PAIGE GABBARD

10 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
11 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
12 certified, said as follows:

13 MS. SCHABO: If you could start with
14 your name and your address.

15 MS. GABBARD: Paige Gabbard, 4565
16 Northern Road, Somerville, Ohio, and I am in
17 Gratis Township.

18 MS. SCHABO: I'm sorry which?

19 MS. GABBARD: Gratis Township. I
20 would like to say, first of all, that I have
21 extreme confidence in the individual property
22 owners involved in the solar farming option. I
23 have known several of them for over thirty-five
24 years; but outside of that, the reason I trust
25 their judgment is because they're going to

1 continue to live, eat, work, play, and pray on the
2 same land in the same neighborhood as they always
3 have. People will not defecate in their own
4 habitat. If they thought that any of this was
5 detrimental to themselves or the community, they
6 would not be doing it.

7 They not only see it as a good option
8 for themselves but a way to enhance the community
9 also; unlike when property is sold, rezoned, and
10 developed and the sellers move away and leave the
11 fallout to their neighbors.

12 But the most concerning part of this
13 for me is that when a property owner that is not
14 doing anything illegal or immoral with that
15 property to make an income for their families is
16 confronted with angry mob mentality of rule. We
17 all lose. This is not an HOA that you can deny a
18 purple house when the rest are all beige. When we
19 start to deny property owners of their right to
20 use their property within legal limits, we all
21 lose that right. You could be next.

22 For instance, mob mentality could
23 argue that sunflower crops attract large amounts
24 of birds and rodents that will overpopulate the
25 area and bring disease to surrounding people and

1 animals. They will also destroy berries, gardens,
2 and fruit trees in the surrounding properties.

3 Another example would be your
4 neighbor wants to start an organic farm on some of
5 their land, but regulations say that chemicals
6 cannot be applied within five to ten acres of the
7 crop so they request a variance that you will not
8 be able to apply chemicals to your crop within
9 five to ten acres of the bordering property.

10 Remember, if we set the precedent for
11 angry mob legalism instead of laws, it can and
12 will be used against you in the future. If you
13 don't like or agree with the laws, put your
14 efforts into working to change them. Do not use
15 mob bullying, legal twisting, and social media
16 manipulations to get your way. We will no longer
17 live in a democracy and enjoy the freedoms that
18 built this country.

19 MS. SCHABO: Thank you, Ms. Gabbard.
20 Mark Partin.

21 MARK PARTIN
22 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
23 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
24 certified, said as follows:

25 MR. PARTIN: My name is Mark Partin.

1 My address is 1515 Hess road, Sardinia, Ohio,
2 southern Highland County.

3 I'm here for three reasons this
4 evening. One, I've been asked by a friend, newly
5 friend here, to speak as well as kind of back her
6 community and put in a last word for mine. My
7 community is involved in a thirty-four hundred
8 acre project, and I sit at the northern peak. I
9 can see about fifty to sixty percent if this goes
10 through.

11 Yeah, my life -- my life investment
12 currently is there for my kids, my grandkids, and
13 as a gentleman spoke earlier that knows his stuff,
14 we all know where the value of these adjacent
15 properties are going.

16 I've been asked to speak, but
17 listening to this group behind me I don't know
18 what I can add. They've done their homework.
19 They're continuing to do their homework. They're
20 spot on. So, in essence, I'm going to give you a
21 little, hopefully, information on what I've been
22 through, what my community has been through.

23 Ladies and gentlemen I was asked by a
24 friend to speak tonight due to that I have been
25 through and still going through what this

1 community is going through at this very moment.
2 I'm going to highlight my experiences for you
3 throughout a solar project and let you make your
4 own judgment. However, I caution you to listen
5 very carefully as I feel a major problem we face
6 in this country is that the public has lost their
7 voice, their ability to influence or change
8 anything. We are being led by big money and
9 people in high positions under what's right --
10 under what's not right or wrong but by what's
11 legal. We have Washington, D.C. in our back door.

12 I cannot physically cover all the
13 material as time will not allow. However,
14 remember these few words or phrases, drain swamp,
15 collusion, and fake news.

16 September 17th, 2018 was the first
17 public announcement in Highland County. After the
18 announcement the public began educating
19 themselves. We learned landowners knew about the
20 project since 2015. Landowners bought up other
21 properties knowing they will flip it for
22 substantial profit following approval of the
23 project. Landowners went around offering six
24 thousand knowing they will flip it for eleven
25 thousand or twelve thousand upon approval of the

1 project; not offering to tell the public or
2 landowner they are about to be taken.

3 Landowners of Randolph property after
4 three visits of harassing the public to sell their
5 land to them on numerous occasions, landowners
6 telling the public that their land won't be worth
7 anything if they don't sell to the solar project.

8 Reading of the paperwork filed by the
9 solar company providing statistics on the PUCO
10 website was a lot of work. It was misleading,
11 inaccurate, incomplete, and false. We'd like to
12 know who's following up with these reports.
13 Nobody is yet to answer.

14 I filed to be able to sit in on a
15 judiciary hearing in Columbus but was ruled
16 against because I was late and didn't have good
17 enough reasoning, and the solar company was the
18 only ones that contested my presence and it was
19 honored.

20 I will read my explanation. I
21 realize this filing is late and/or past the
22 required admission date; however, coming from a
23 farming community, as residents, we were ambushed
24 by certified mail, people and/or companies from
25 states away we knew nothing about, therefore, it

1 took time, understanding, education, community
2 involvement to grasp what was going on and the
3 possibility of our environment changing
4 dramatically. Keep in mind we have our daily
5 lives that include jobs, children, and family, and
6 finding time outside of our normal lives to
7 investigate, educate, understand, and feel
8 confident enough to talk in a manner that's
9 accepted about the project or issue we've been
10 dealt was a challenge. We don't have the time
11 those folks who are devoted or employed with the
12 project, or as I understand, are in our community
13 daily. I'd ask that you consider my petition in
14 good faith and looking forward to a positive
15 response. Apparently that was not a good enough
16 response.

17 Upon receiving my denial to appear in
18 Columbus, I received my notice from the solar
19 company ten days prior to receiving it from PUCO.
20 Who's running the show here? My denial letter
21 from the solar company was accompanied by all the
22 newspaper articles they filed for proof of public
23 notice. How many of you wake up every morning and
24 read the paper looking for a solar panel project
25 being built or go to the library or how about all

1 those that are not familiar with the Internet, nor
2 knows how to use it. If this is so great, then
3 why not send notifications like Walmart, Lowe's,
4 Kohl's.

5 The solar company wants to meet with
6 me and make me feel good and go over issues that I
7 might have. The vice president of project
8 development of this solar company and her
9 development associate met with me, and here's what
10 came out of it.

11 They told me they didn't buy houses.
12 They buy land. They paid one landowner an extra
13 thousand dollars per acre to cover the cost of two
14 houses. I was also told by the development
15 associate that there's not a pile of money or
16 government money supporting this project. The
17 absolute best that still today I can't figure out
18 how it's legal, the very people that were sent to
19 talk to me about my concerns left my office that
20 evening to visit with the landowners and told them
21 everything about our conversation. How do I know?
22 It comes out in the testimony given at the local
23 hearing. Collusion.

24 Upon arrival -- March 19th, 2019,
25 local hearing. Upon arrival, no one to check in

1 those who wanted to speak. When announcement was
2 made to sign in to speak, it was like a herd of
3 cattle racing to the trough. Not that I
4 understood why at the moment but later figured out
5 in the upcoming speakers. Those who were for the
6 project and had an obvious monetary value in the
7 approval of the project were lining up so that
8 they could use all the time allotted for the
9 meeting, pushing those who were against hoping
10 they wouldn't get to speak. The second and third
11 speakers, one of the major landowners, took up
12 approximately forty minutes talking about nothing
13 but the history of their ground dating back to the
14 1800s. No mention of the solar panel project
15 until the last twenty seconds of how good it would
16 be in the area.

17 As far as the evening goes for the
18 almost first hour and a half of the hearing, it
19 was primarily relatives of primary landowners and
20 those who are working for the primary landowners.
21 I spoke up at the end of the third speaker,
22 respecting their time rather than to be rude and
23 interrupt in the middle, to express the rules and
24 the guidelines that was passed out to those who
25 were speaking and that was, if you wish to make a

1 statement, please focus on your testimony on the
2 issues in the case, not forty minutes of family
3 history.

4 As the evening went on, no one was
5 asked to shorten their time or even bothered by
6 how much time they were taking other than myself;
7 even though I asked in the beginning of my speech
8 to understand I was speaking for two hundred and
9 seventy-five people that had signed a petition. I
10 took twenty-four minutes for two hundred and
11 seventy-five people, not forty minutes for two. I
12 just figured this was payback for mentioning the
13 rules.

14 To sum up, the local hearing numbers,
15 the only ones who spoke in favor of the project
16 were primarily those who had a financial gain of
17 some sort in this project. However, those
18 primarily speaking against it are those who are
19 exposed to a financial loss, who have invested in
20 their properties and homes for the future of their
21 kids and grandkids that will now be devalued.
22 I've heard a lot of people saying that will not
23 happen. Well, tell me how many people are looking
24 for a home near a solar panel project. Apparently
25 not within three miles.

1 The following day a local citizen of
2 the area, retired professional wrote into PUCO and
3 explained the very unprofessional way in which
4 this meeting was conducted with so-called
5 professionals, and the response given in just a
6 few short sentences was sorry you had a bad
7 experience.

8 The local paper announces that there
9 was thirty people who spoke. Twenty-two was for,
10 while eight was against. If you do the math,
11 calculate the family members and the employees and
12 the landowners, the local paper largely
13 misrepresented the obvious results of the evening,
14 not to mention I represented two hundred and
15 seventy-five people who was against the project.

16 The local paper didn't print the same
17 thing that was on the Internet either. No mention
18 of two hundred and seventy-five people that were
19 against in the physical write-up. They mentioned
20 that I said there was improprieties in our
21 petition. The definition of improprieties is
22 failure to observe standards or show due honesty.
23 That was wrong. We mentioned that there was
24 duplicate signatures and wanted anyone who was
25 listening to understand we were aware and did not

1 count them in the overall count so no one could
2 accuse us of misleading any information, unlike
3 the local paper has. As I've mentioned, fake
4 news.

5 Currently I want to share a brief
6 financial conversation with you before I conclude.
7 This project I've been speaking about is supposed
8 to bring so much money to the community. If
9 approved, the property taxes stop, no money
10 changes hands until the project is built and
11 running, which could be two to three years.

12 Currently all the money supposedly
13 going to the schools, well, that will cause the
14 State to hold back their existing funds once they
15 start getting funds from the solar project. So
16 there's no gains here.

17 In conclusion, we are waiting on a
18 decision but still today there has been no public
19 official or representative of any kind that has
20 spoke or reached out to your community to even
21 discuss the matter. We have tried contacting the
22 governor; still waiting a response. We have asked
23 for the County commissioners to reach out, along
24 with local township trustees, our County auditor,
25 some cases some folks have stopped communicating

1 with us, ignoring e-mails and messages. I suppose
2 you only hear from these folks when election time
3 comes around.

4 As citizens who apparently don't have
5 a voice, we ask that anyone listening to at least
6 hear this. We understand that the world is
7 changing. We are not necessarily against the
8 solar projects. We are primarily against the way
9 they are being conducted, secretly, privately,
10 financially, and without involvement of the
11 public. We ask that you just slow down, look at
12 this from a reasonable perspective, and look at
13 the land across the state or this country and make
14 a strategic decision based on people of this
15 country and a state that ranks somewhere between
16 thirty-three and forty-eight in the most sunlight.

17 Haven't we learned from the failed
18 gas line projects or failed ethanol plants, all of
19 which are government funded like these solar
20 projects. You can't tell me there isn't a better
21 position across this land for these projects that
22 don't affect people in a financial manner. They
23 are and are destroying families and relationships
24 all over money.

25 Right now it's just a financial race

1 to get our taxpayer dollars by the year 2020. So
2 it's like a bull in a China shop. What it doesn't
3 break gets dumped on. And yes, I'm against the
4 project, and it's time to drain the swamp.

5 MS. SCHABO: Jim Broermann. Don
6 Jackson.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can't hear
8 back here.

9 MS. SCHABO: The first name I said
10 was Jim Broermann. Okay. Sorry.

11 JIM BROERMANN

12 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
13 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
14 certified, said as follows:

15 MR. BROERMANN: My name is Jim
16 Broermann, address is 10300 Riverwalk Lane,
17 Loveland, Ohio. I'm here in support of the
18 Angelina farm and the Broermann, LLC located in
19 Israel Township.

20 I want to share my thoughts on why I
21 believe the Angelina Solar project is right to do.
22 Temperatures in the U.S. and the world are rising.
23 Average winter temperatures in America have
24 increased one degree since 1970. Northern states,
25 Alaska, Minnesota, Vermont, and Wisconsin have

1 increased five degrees. The snow pack in the
2 Rocky Mountains has reduced thirty percent in the
3 last century. Globally only eight of the
4 twenty-one winter Olympic host sites would be cold
5 enough to host another winter Olympics by 2100.
6 That's eighty years from now.

7 Don't believe those numbers? Turn on
8 the news. There's regular reports about
9 devastation and lives lost to torrential rains,
10 floods, tornados, arctic blasts, and fires fueled
11 by droughts.

12 My family and I lived in Iowa for
13 five and a half years. I've driven across Iowa on
14 vacation and kids' sporting events. I've driven
15 back home to Ohio, across Illinois and Indiana to
16 visit family and friend. During that time I
17 witnessed construction of the wind farms in all
18 those states. That got me thinking that wind and
19 solar power are things that will enable us to
20 start reversing this global warming trend, reduce
21 our reliability on fossil fuels, and do so with no
22 pollution.

23 The solar projects in Preble County
24 and the wind farms I've seen won't solve the
25 problem by themselves, but they're certainly a

1 step in the right direction and something we can
2 do to start making a difference.

3 Additional tax revenue for the county
4 further supports my position because all residents
5 will benefit from the dollars to put toward
6 schools, roads, and other county programs for
7 those in need. These projects will allow Preble
8 County to declare not only are we feeding America,
9 but we're powering America with renewable
10 environmentally friendly energy.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Don Jackson.

13 DON JACKSON

14 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
15 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
16 certified, said as follows:

17 MS. SCHABO: If you could start with
18 your name and your address, please.

19 MR. JACKSON: My name is Don Jackson,
20 8584 State Route 725 West, Camden, Ohio. I'm one
21 of the landowners in this project.

22 When they first come to us -- when we
23 first got the letter and they come to us and
24 talked about this project, like some other things,
25 you know, we were kind of skeptical about it.

1 Yeah, they threw big money at you, but that wasn't
2 what we were looking at. We were very skeptical
3 of it. As a matter of fact, they were kind of
4 shocked that we wouldn't sign on the dotted line
5 right away. But we did have -- we kind of got
6 together as a group. We thought a better group --
7 you know, you get more people thinking about it,
8 we could come up with more questions and walk
9 through the process. We had several meetings over
10 several months. We brought speakers in. We
11 actually brought the Farm Bureau in and got their
12 side. We asked them questions, and we even asked
13 them if they thought this was a viable project for
14 the farm ground to be going into, and they said
15 yes, it was.

16 It was brought up about erosion and
17 chemicals. My feeling is when you put the solar
18 panels in, it will be grass underneath them.
19 Actually, it's going to be less erosion. It's
20 going to be less chemicals put on the ground.
21 You're going to have less chemicals in soils going
22 into streams and the water in the lake at Hueston
23 Woods.

24 I know we are a rural county -- rural
25 community, that farmland -- farm economy isn't

1 always going to be enough to support it. This is
2 another industry coming in to help support the
3 county as far as tax base.

4 I just -- I think this is a viable
5 project. I know I've heard a lot of people say,
6 well, you know, we believe you should be able to
7 do whatever you want with your ground but just not
8 this project so -- we've heard that several times.
9 So I just want to let you know I'm in favor of the
10 project.

11 Thanks.

12 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. Arica
13 Hamilton.

14 ARICA HAMILTON

15 of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
16 duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
17 certified, said as follows:

18 MS. SCHABO: If you'll start with
19 your name and address, please.

20 THE HAMILTON: My name is Arica
21 Hamilton. My address is 1731 West Consolidated
22 Road, Eaton, Ohio, and I'm from Washington
23 Township.

24 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

25 MS. HAMILTON: One of my favorite

1 things to do in the summer is to take a drive down
2 a country road, windows down, sunshine in my face,
3 wind in my hair and enjoying the scenery. Seeing
4 the perfectly aligned rows of tall, green stalks
5 of corn are one of my favorite sights. I have
6 fond memories of riding in the combine with my
7 grandpa, running through rows and rows of corn
8 with my cousins, and eventually learning more
9 about agriculture in my ag class. However, corn
10 and other crops could soon be traded for solar
11 power plants.

12 So why solar energy? Well, solar
13 energy is energy from the sun that is converted
14 into thermal or electrical energy. Solar energy
15 has grown in popularity due to its potential
16 impact on the reduction of greenhouse gases.

17 As we know, greenhouse gas emissions
18 comes from burning fossil fuels. We burn fossil
19 fuels when we operate vehicles, heat our homes,
20 and use electricity. Solar energy helps combat
21 climate change because it creates clean and
22 renewable power.

23 Through my research I have found that
24 in general, solar energy is a great thing.
25 However, putting solar power plants on

1 agricultural land is not. We must halt the
2 installment of solar power plants in rural
3 communities like Preble County due to their
4 effects on the environment, the value of our
5 agricultural land, and their effect on property
6 values.

7 To begin, solar farms do, in fact,
8 harm our environment. One aspect of their
9 environmental impact is their use of toxic
10 chemicals during production. A solar panel is
11 made up of multiple photovoltaic cells.
12 Manufacturing these cells uses toxic chemicals
13 such as hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, nitric
14 acid, trichloroethane.

15 There's also the possibility for
16 environmental contamination if any equipment were
17 improperly disposed of upon decommissioning or if
18 damaged while in service on the farmland. This
19 contamination could affect surface and groundwater
20 in the surrounding area.

21 This brings up another point of how
22 solar power plants are not good for the
23 environment. The manufacturers of these solar
24 panels are responsible for their disposal once
25 they're to be decommissioned. As of now, many

1 solar panels end up in landfills at the end of
2 their lifecycle. The researchers with the
3 Electric Power Research Institute did a study on
4 solar panels and concluded that the disposal in
5 regular landfills is not recommended in case
6 panels break and cause toxic materials to leak
7 into the soil. Disposal is a major issue.

8 A final aspect of their impact
9 environmentally is that solar farms can pose an
10 extreme cost for some wildlife. The seven foot
11 tall fences to be placed around the solar farms
12 coming into my own community would take away the
13 habitat of local animals. Deer, coyote, fox, and
14 a number of other animals will lose area for
15 grazing and finding food.

16 Not only do these facilities take
17 away habitats, but they can also affect a bird's
18 migration. Many birds migrate to survive, and
19 like all electrical generating facilities, solar
20 power plants produce a magnetic field. These
21 magnetic fields can interfere with a bird's
22 ability to see the earth's magnetic field which
23 gives them a sense of direction when migrating.
24 This is particularly concerning to many members of
25 my community due to the many birds that migrate to

1 Hueston Woods, a state park in my area.

2 So are the environmental risks worth
3 the hassle? Do the environmental pros outweigh
4 the cons? The answer is no. We mustn't allow
5 solar power facilities to be put on agricultural
6 land and in my community simply because it's not
7 worth the risk.

8 Others disagree and say that farmland
9 is the best place for solar power plants because
10 the land is already flat and cleared. However,
11 the construction of solar facilities on any area
12 of land requires clearing and grading which
13 results in soil compaction, potential changes of
14 drainage channels, and increased runoff and
15 erosion.

16 Energy -- our farmland is far too
17 important for our future to allow it to become a
18 solar farm. Experts say that by 2050 we'll have
19 to feed two billion more people, an estimated nine
20 billion people total. A recent study found that
21 crop yields, which are agricultural outputs,
22 haven't been rising at a sufficient pace to meet
23 this projected demand of nine billion people by
24 2050. There will be a large demand for food with
25 little supply. Taking up farmland for solar power

1 will only progress this problem. Our farmland
2 needs to be valued and put to better use than for
3 solar farms.

4 Recently the Oregon Land Conservation
5 and Development Commission voted to put a
6 statewide rule to no longer allow the construction
7 of solar power plants on soils that are determined
8 as Class 1, Class 2, prime, or unique soils unless
9 a solar developer can determine a dual use, such
10 as bee keeping. They put a value on their
11 farmland and so should we. We need to follow in
12 their footsteps and regulate the construction of
13 solar farms in rural communities. We must learn
14 to value our agricultural land.

15 Let's stop and think. Would you buy
16 the home or the property surrounded by seven foot
17 tall fencing and is enclosed by a solar farm?
18 This is a problem that a particular family in my
19 community is facing. They built a house five
20 years ago on seventeen acres of land they
21 purchased. Recently their neighbor who owns the
22 adjoining land has leased his farmland to the
23 private company developing these solar farms. I'm
24 sure it's safe to say that no one wants to live or
25 even buy a house surrounded by these solar panels.

1 To conclude, we must stop solar farms
2 from being put on agricultural land. They
3 negatively affect our environment through their
4 use of toxic chemicals in production and the event
5 of decommissioning and the disruption of local
6 wildlife. Our farmland is far too valuable to be
7 wasting it on solar farms. Too many families can
8 suffer the financial loss caused by the location
9 of these solar facilities. I know I would much
10 rather see rows and rows of corn rather than rows
11 and rows of solar panels. How about you?

12 MS. SCHABO: Shara Ridenour. Those
13 are all the names that I have of folks that have
14 signed up and, with the exception of Ms. Ridenour,
15 have testified.

16 Is there anyone here that did not
17 sign up to testify but would like to give their
18 statement to the Board?

19 MR. WYATT: Yeah, I would.

20 MS. SCHABO: Come on up, sir.

21 Slightly different instructions since
22 we don't have your name on paper. When I ask you
23 to introduce yourself, if you would actually spell
24 it out for me as well.

25 MR. WYATT: Okay.

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STEPHEN WYATT

of lawful age, Witness herein, having been first
duly cautioned and sworn, as hereinafter
certified, said as follows:

MS. SCHABO: Go ahead and start.

MR. WYATT: My name is Stephen Wyatt,
S T E P H E N, W Y A T T.

MS. SCHABO: And your address, sir?

MR. WYATT: 6625 South Snowden Road,
Liberty, Indiana.

MS. SCHABO: Okay. Go ahead and
proceed.

MR. WYATT: My county is adjacent to
this one, and from what I'm seeing is the
undermining and the corruption.

My son just bought a property here in
Preble County. The County knew that this was
going on. They did not tell him, nor did they
tell the loan people or him and the adjacent
neighbors. Then he had problems with one of the
neighbors that leased part of the land and wanted
to lease more of it or whatever the situation was
until he found out that it was going to be
surrounded by solar panels.

It's his first purchased home, and to

1 sit there and do somebody like that on their first
2 home just disgusts me. I've owned several
3 properties several states away. I've never in my
4 life ever been treated like that.

5 I'm also a truck driver. I haul a
6 lot of this so-called renewable energy. All the
7 windmill farms here north and south, I've hauled
8 the materials to them. It was my job. I was told
9 the same thing, that those properties would stay
10 in farmland if ever it failed, and that they would
11 create jobs and taxes and all the craziness that
12 comes along with it. It did not. I know these
13 people, and to sit here and tell people that this
14 land will be done with taxes going to schools and
15 everything else is a crop of crap.

16 Ohio just passed a twenty-six --
17 twenty cent tax increase on fuel. I buy a lot of
18 my fuel in Ohio. I know for a fact that twenty
19 years ago they done the same thing and said that
20 it would fix the roads. The infrastructure of
21 Ohio, Indiana, Michigan sucks. None of the taxes
22 are done to it. I spend big money in taxes
23 trucking across this country, and to sit here and
24 say that, you know, everybody is going to benefit
25 from them is a crock.

1 So that being said, my son, who is
2 here today, got shafted because the County
3 officials didn't bleed out the information that
4 they should have. And I hope the rest of you that
5 vote know how to get rid of that problem. Get rid
6 of the trash.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Drain the
8 swamp.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Drain the
10 swamp.

11 MS. SCHABO: Are there any other
12 citizens who would like to testify? One more call
13 for Ms. Ridenour.

14 Seeing no one, I would like to thank
15 everyone for coming here this evening. This will
16 conclude tonight's public hearing. It will be
17 submitted to the -- on the record for the Board's
18 consideration.

19 Again, there is an adjudicatory
20 hearing scheduled in Columbus on May 14th
21 currently.

22 The staff and I will be here for a
23 little bit to be able to answer any questions you
24 might have about the process, but for now -- oh,
25 if you did not have the opportunity to or you

1 chose not to testify this evening, you can file a
2 public comment to the docket, again, just going up
3 to that search bar on the docking page.

4 Thank you very much. Have a good
5 evening. We're adjourned.

6 (Thereupon, the meeting was concluded
7 at 8:25 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF OHIO)

2 COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY) SS: CERTIFICATE

3 I, Kathy S. Wysong, a Notary Public within
4 and for the State of Ohio, duly commissioned and
5 qualified,

6 DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above-named
7 proceeding was reduced to writing by me
8 stenographically in the presence of the parties
9 and thereafter reduced to typewriting.

10 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative
11 or Attorney of either party nor in any manner
12 interested in the event of this action.

13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
14 hand and seal of office at Dayton, Ohio, on this
15 8th day of May, 2019.



16
17 *Kathy S. Wysong*
18 KATHY S. WYSONG, RPR
19 NOTARY PUBLIC, STATE OF OHIO
20 My commission expires 12-25-2023
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1	3860 90:17 3rd 6:22	accommodate 11:21 75:24 accompanied 97:21 accompanying 26:13 accuracy 9:13 accurate 68:23 accurately 9:10 accuse 102:2 acid 60:1 110:13,14 acknowledge 74:25 acre 81:12,22 82:15,25 94:8 98:13 acreage 66:21 acres 13:9 25:3 33:3 36:12 64:18 67:13 70:13 81:12, 15 93:6,9 113:20 action 6:10 actions 58:15 active 48:5 49:1 61:10 activities 57:20 activity 29:11 Acton 53:1 82:7,11,21 actual 6:16 add 15:18,23 67:11 94:18 addition 58:5 additional 57:24 106:3 address 9:22 17:1,10,20 19:24 22:8 24:12 32:12 38:3 47:19 59:10 65:20 71:20,22 76:6 79:16 80:17 90:17 91:14 94:1 104:16 106:18 108:19,21 adjacent 33:24 56:4 57:15 58:16 70:5 94:14 adjoining 75:23 80:22 113:22 administrative 2:9 7:18 admission 96:22 admitted 66:25 adopted 25:12 advantage 35:9 72:14 advantages 88:1 adversities 66:5 advice 48:23 aesthetics 26:14 Affairs 60:21 affect 28:16 29:6 30:10, 17,25 31:1 69:4,25 103:22 110:19 111:17 114:3	affected 28:21 72:4 afford 36:13 64:21 71:9 afraid 14:24 ag 61:24 62:16 87:18 109:9 age 10:20 17:16 19:20 22:4 24:8 32:14 38:25 39:22 47:15 52:2 56:24 58:22 65:11 71:16 74:7 76:17 78:2 79:12 80:9 85:5 88:12 90:11 91:10 93:22 104:12 106:14 108:15 agency 2:20 34:9 agree 25:4 31:13 64:7,8 84:24 93:13 agreed 75:23 agricultural 13:8 25:1,15, 16 26:10,13,22 57:14 58:18 66:19,24 67:7 71:12 73:7,17,22 77:9 110:1,5 112:5,21 113:14 114:2 agriculture 40:15 60:15 67:9 109:9 ahead 11:2 17:23 24:15 48:1 52:5 76:20 84:12 air 26:15 59:24 83:13 air-conditioning 48:13 ajar 50:17 Alamo 7:7,14 alarm 33:25 alarming 15:9 Alaska 104:25 Alexandria 20:1 aligned 109:4 allotted 99:8 allowance 43:2 allowed 21:4 73:24 alternatives 13:11 aluminum 15:11,19,24 ambushed 96:23 Amendment 18:1 57:10, 15 America 104:23 106:8,9 America's 35:8 amount 28:8,9,11 31:2 34:7 51:6 68:10,11 72:5 amounts 92:23 analysis 63:7 and/or 36:24 48:16 96:21, 24 Andrew 3:24 58:20,21,25
2	4		
1 113:8 10300 104:16 1050 32:18 65:21 12/31/16 42:21 12th 7:15 14th 7:25 1515 94:1 15th 8:19 1731 108:21 177 47:22 52:21 17th 95:16 18 90:16,25 91:2 18-1578-EL-BGN 7:10 18-1579-EL-BGN 2:3 1800s 99:14 1852 57:3 19 90:21 1970 104:24 1975 28:4 199 22:11 19th 45:19 67:1 98:24 1st 25:13	43215 4:18 4565 91:15 4655 40:1 49.9 7:7		
3	5		
2 113:8 2008 27:21 53:8 2015 95:20 2017 25:13 47:4 2018 6:22 33:11 62:25 95:16 2019 30:5 98:24 2020 104:1 2042 17:21 2050 34:11 60:23 86:7 112:18,24 2100 60:24 61:1 105:5 280 4:25 2nd 18:25	50s 11:7 52 4:17 5515 78:5 79:16 5569 74:11 5651 71:22		
3	7		
31 30:5 3239 20:1 352 24:13	7208 85:10 725 39:4 74:11 106:20 7352 76:21 7380 59:1 7683 47:21 7:00 38:13		
	8		
	8584 106:20 8709 39:4 88374 11:1		
	A		
	abandoned 50:8 51:18,19 aberrate 24:25 abilities 89:3 ability 4:4 52:11 95:7 111:22 absolute 58:13 98:17 Absolutely 84:19 absorb 82:16 absorbed 33:19 abundance 31:17 acceptable 16:4 accepted 97:9 accepting 72:8 access 51:7		

<p>Angelina 2:5 4:4,15 6:22, 23,25 7:5,21 24:23 28:17 31:15,20 32:2 33:24 39:8 40:4 41:8 47:8,11 65:17 74:15 75:15 76:5,9,24 78:9 79:20 90:22 91:2,6 104:18, 21</p> <p>Angelina's 8:14 34:20</p> <p>angry 92:16 93:11</p> <p>animal 60:2</p> <p>animals 54:3,17 55:2,16 93:1 111:13,14</p> <p>Anna 24:20</p> <p>announcement 95:17,18 99:1</p> <p>announces 101:8</p> <p>answers 14:5,11</p> <p>anticipate 37:20</p> <p>antimony 34:14 58:4</p> <p>Antioch 22:11</p> <p>anymore 15:2</p> <p>Appalachian 62:19</p> <p>apparently 10:9 97:15 100:24 103:4</p> <p>appealing 67:22</p> <p>appearances 4:13</p> <p>applicant 6:24</p> <p>application 2:5 6:21,25 8:14 33:23 68:17 70:21</p> <p>applied 93:6</p> <p>apply 93:8</p> <p>appointed 2:16</p> <p>appreciates 10:14</p> <p>appreciation 38:11</p> <p>approval 7:1 67:12 95:22, 25 99:7</p> <p>approve 42:3 91:6</p> <p>approved 102:9</p> <p>approximately 68:19 99:12</p> <p>April 8:19</p> <p>aquifer 26:18 80:18,19 83:3</p> <p>aquifers 20:15</p> <p>architecture 57:7</p> <p>arctic 105:10</p> <p>area 11:16 15:16,18,23 16:10 20:4 25:1,5 29:16 31:6,16 39:17 40:8,10 48:6 52:20 73:12 92:25 99:16 101:2 110:20 111:14 112:1,11</p>	<p>areas 12:23 13:4 14:7 26:8,9,19,20 56:5 80:16</p> <p>argue 92:23</p> <p>arguments 88:16</p> <p>Arica 56:18 108:12,14,20</p> <p>Arizona 12:4 85:25</p> <p>Army 82:19</p> <p>Arnold 4:22,23 5:2</p> <p>arrival 98:24,25</p> <p>arrived 9:14 43:22</p> <p>arrogantly 35:2</p> <p>arsenic 58:6</p> <p>article 18:25 33:12</p> <p>articles 97:22</p> <p>aspect 7:23 62:10 110:8 111:8</p> <p>assert 58:11</p> <p>assessment 14:8</p> <p>asset 71:11 77:10</p> <p>assigned 2:2,10</p> <p>associate 98:9,15</p> <p>assumed 82:18</p> <p>assumptions 33:14</p> <p>attendance 34:19</p> <p>attended 66:13</p> <p>attention 17:9 80:4</p> <p>attorney 5:20</p> <p>attorneys 75:18 76:4 81:23</p> <p>attract 92:23</p> <p>auditor 18:20 41:23 69:3 102:24</p> <p>auditor's 41:3,25</p> <p>aunt 65:16</p> <p>Austin 23:2</p> <p>authority 51:9 67:11</p> <p>authorize 51:10</p> <p>Average 104:23</p> <p>awarded 13:17</p> <p>aware 101:25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">B</p> <hr/> <p>back 21:6,7,17,22 28:5 66:24 73:14,24 94:5 95:11 99:13 102:14 104:8 105:15</p> <p>backhoes 13:3</p> <p>backs 35:20</p>	<p>bad 46:2 60:8 85:19 86:4, 23 101:6</p> <p>baiting 15:13</p> <p>Baker 90:9,10,14,20</p> <p>balance 16:17 25:23</p> <p>bald 30:22</p> <p>ball 45:23</p> <p>bank 12:17 55:20</p> <p>bankrupt 21:9 36:6</p> <p>bar 41:5 81:21</p> <p>barbed 67:20</p> <p>Barry 47:13,14,21 48:2</p> <p>base 108:3</p> <p>baseball 45:23</p> <p>based 2:24 7:11 32:22 50:21 63:16 70:9 103:14</p> <p>basements 70:8</p> <p>basically 45:14</p> <p>basis 53:5</p> <p>bathe 53:17</p> <p>batteries 89:4</p> <p>battery 12:17</p> <p>Beamreach 36:4</p> <p>beans 11:12</p> <p>bearing 63:5</p> <p>beautiful 30:22 31:16 64:24</p> <p>beauty 26:2</p> <p>Beavercreek 57:4</p> <p>bed 54:15</p> <p>beds 54:13</p> <p>bee 113:10</p> <p>began 95:18</p> <p>begin 9:18 10:15,24 17:20 60:8 110:7</p> <p>beginning 100:7</p> <p>begins 29:19 30:9</p> <p>behalf 4:13,15 39:7 74:14 78:7</p> <p>behave 58:14</p> <p>beige 92:18</p> <p>benefit 23:9 39:10 68:8 73:6 78:11 83:22 106:5</p> <p>benefits 26:14 76:10 78:19,20 79:7</p> <p>Benton 51:23,24,25 52:1, 6,7,9,12,15</p> <p>berries 93:1</p>	<p>betrayed 22:22</p> <p>big 17:5 45:18 82:4 85:23 95:8 107:1</p> <p>bike 54:2</p> <p>bill 68:2</p> <p>billion 60:23 62:8 112:19, 20,23</p> <p>bills 68:7</p> <p>biologist 70:12</p> <p>bird 29:25</p> <p>bird's 111:17,21</p> <p>birds 30:18 92:24 111:18, 25</p> <p>bit 40:6 59:3 84:13 87:16</p> <p>Black's 52:23</p> <p>blackouts 89:12</p> <p>Blair 78:6 79:16</p> <p>blank 83:11</p> <p>blasts 105:10</p> <p>Board 2:2,12,19,24 3:20 6:21 7:25 8:4,16,18,22 9:6 10:14 11:4 32:1 33:23 40:23 41:3 67:13 68:18 84:10 91:5 114:18</p> <p>Board's 2:9 4:2 7:1 8:23 67:11</p> <p>boat 54:2</p> <p>boats 48:14</p> <p>Bobby 52:23</p> <p>body 30:20</p> <p>bonds 44:13</p> <p>bordering 93:9</p> <p>boron 58:6</p> <p>bothered 100:5</p> <p>bottled 53:16</p> <p>bottom 83:14</p> <p>bought 95:20</p> <p>Boulevard 90:17</p> <p>boundaries 16:14</p> <p>boundary 75:24</p> <p>box 8:5</p> <p>brainwashed 23:12</p> <p>breach 19:14</p> <p>break 43:22,23 45:21,25 46:3 104:3 111:6</p> <p>breaking 14:24 70:4</p> <p>breaks 35:24</p> <p>Brewery 80:21</p>
---	--	--	---

<p>brick 47:8</p> <p>bright 27:18 29:15</p> <p>bring 69:13 79:7,24 92:25 102:8</p> <p>Bringing 15:9</p> <p>brings 12:19 110:21</p> <p>Broermann 38:17,18,19, 22,24 39:3,4,6,20 74:5,6, 10,11,13,14 75:16,22 78:7 79:18 104:5,10,11,15,16, 18</p> <p>broken 27:25 48:12 50:17</p> <p>Brooks 58:20,21,25 59:1</p> <p>brother 83:17</p> <p>brought 83:12 107:10,11, 16</p> <p>Brown 69:22</p> <p>brownouts 89:12,17</p> <p>buckling 50:17</p> <p>buffers 26:19</p> <p>build 11:11,17,18 12:3,16 15:17,22 32:21 42:8 66:9 82:14</p> <p>builder 30:7</p> <p>building 3:21 70:22</p> <p>buildings 27:12 50:13,23 55:5</p> <p>built 14:13 18:21 80:17 93:18 97:25 102:10 113:19</p> <p>bull 104:2</p> <p>bullet 25:16</p> <p>bullying 93:15</p> <p>bunch 46:5</p> <p>Bureau 4:20,25 107:11</p> <p>burg 15:15</p> <p>burn 109:18</p> <p>burning 109:18</p> <p>burns 59:23</p> <p>burnt 48:9</p> <p>Burton 51:23</p> <p>burying 20:9</p> <p>business 14:21 72:22 73:16 75:9,13 78:15,16,17 79:2 83:8 90:16,20,24</p> <p>businesses 43:24</p> <p>businessmen 75:7</p> <p>Butler 3:20,24 45:9</p> <p>buy 15:8 64:21 67:22 98:11,12 113:15,25</p>	<p>bypassing 67:10</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <hr/> <p>cable 14:23</p> <p>cadmium 33:15 34:14 58:4</p> <p>cake 41:18</p> <p>calculate 101:11</p> <p>California 85:24</p> <p>call 3:10 9:24 14:22 23:2 29:10,11 45:2 88:9</p> <p>called 41:18 63:6 83:17 87:6</p> <p>calling 9:18 10:16 23:16</p> <p>calls 45:13</p> <p>Camden 20:15 59:1 74:12 76:22 106:20</p> <p>cameras 29:14 48:18</p> <p>camping 26:8 31:12</p> <p>cancer 59:25</p> <p>capability 2:6</p> <p>capacity 3:22 7:16 25:25</p> <p>captioned 2:4</p> <p>car 48:10</p> <p>carbon 77:4</p> <p>carcinogenic 33:15</p> <p>card 14:21</p> <p>care 28:24 36:23 39:13 54:23,25 86:12</p> <p>carefully 95:5</p> <p>Carol 51:22 52:1,6,15</p> <p>Carolina 35:17 85:25</p> <p>carrying 23:24</p> <p>cars 48:14</p> <p>case 2:3 7:9,11,19,23 8:6, 13 9:5 64:20 74:21 75:14 100:2 111:5</p> <p>cases 8:3 102:25</p> <p>cash 35:21</p> <p>catastrophic 28:3</p> <p>categories 36:20</p> <p>category 3:13</p> <p>cattle 11:12 53:13 99:3</p> <p>caused 114:8</p> <p>causing 14:20</p> <p>caution 95:4</p> <p>cautioned 10:21 17:17 19:21 22:5 24:9 32:15</p>	<p>39:1,23 47:16 52:3 56:25 58:23 65:12 71:17 74:8 76:18 78:3 79:13 80:10 85:6 88:13 90:12 91:11 93:23 104:13 106:15 108:16</p> <p>CAUV 44:21</p> <p>cell 14:9</p> <p>cells 110:11,12</p> <p>census 31:7</p> <p>center 49:24</p> <p>centers 50:3</p> <p>century 66:7 105:3</p> <p>certificate 2:6</p> <p>certified 10:22 17:18 19:22 22:6 24:10 32:16 39:2,24 47:17 52:4 57:1 58:24 65:13 71:18 74:9 76:19 78:4 79:14 80:11 85:7 88:14 90:13 91:12 93:24 96:24 104:14 106:16 108:17</p> <p>chain-link 67:20</p> <p>chairman 2:11,13,17,18 3:18 4:23</p> <p>challenge 97:10</p> <p>chance 12:8 85:13</p> <p>change 62:14 63:5,10 67:10 70:14 74:15,17,19, 22,25 75:11,12 84:7 93:14 95:7 109:21</p> <p>changed 8:10 42:16</p> <p>changing 75:8 97:3 103:7</p> <p>channels 112:14</p> <p>chapter 59:6</p> <p>charge 7:18</p> <p>cheap 67:24</p> <p>check 98:25</p> <p>checking 88:8</p> <p>checks 83:11</p> <p>Chelsea 24:5,7,13,17</p> <p>chemical 50:23 59:23</p> <p>chemicals 30:1 50:25 53:24 55:10,13 58:5 60:4, 17 87:13,17 93:5,8 107:17, 20,21 110:10,12 114:4</p> <p>cherish 18:16</p> <p>cherished 25:18</p> <p>Chicago 68:5</p> <p>children 50:15 97:5</p> <p>China 28:6 85:23 104:2</p> <p>Chinese 34:3</p>	<p>choice 49:3</p> <p>chopping 48:11</p> <p>Christian 23:7</p> <p>church 56:6</p> <p>circuit 57:8</p> <p>cited 83:1</p> <p>citizen 59:19 65:15 101:1</p> <p>citizens 5:17 6:9 64:10 103:4</p> <p>city 23:1 44:17</p> <p>clapping 37:10</p> <p>class 109:9 113:8</p> <p>clean 27:24 29:24 31:18 33:10 36:15,22 37:1 53:22 66:17 77:1,6 78:10 79:21 80:23 81:2,16 109:21</p> <p>cleaned 29:25 81:13 86:16</p> <p>cleanest 32:24</p> <p>cleaning 36:11</p> <p>cleansing 26:3</p> <p>clear 44:5 50:6 53:23</p> <p>clearance 50:13,21 51:1, 2,3,4,9,10,11,15</p> <p>cleared 112:10</p> <p>clearing 50:11 112:12</p> <p>climate 62:14 109:21</p> <p>Clippinger 32:3,13,17,18 65:9,10,14,21</p> <p>close 14:4 25:19 58:8 85:2,3</p> <p>closed 53:14</p> <p>closed-door 19:14</p> <p>closing 88:3</p> <p>co-leader 48:3 52:16</p> <p>co-owner 52:7</p> <p>coal 13:15</p> <p>coal-fired 89:8</p> <p>coalition 11:13</p> <p>codes 67:9</p> <p>cognisant 10:11</p> <p>cognizant 84:11</p> <p>cold 105:4</p> <p>collect 23:15 54:12</p> <p>collects 31:2</p> <p>College 57:24</p> <p>collusion 95:15 98:23</p> <p>Columbus 4:17 5:1 7:25</p>
---	--	---	--

<p>40:24 96:15 97:18</p> <p>combat 109:20</p> <p>combine 109:6</p> <p>commence 7:24 17:6</p> <p>commensurate 58:12</p> <p>comment 2:13 7:6</p> <p>comments 3:15 7:21 8:2, 12 9:10 73:2 84:15</p> <p>commercial 73:9</p> <p>commission 2:17 5:9 40:7 47:5 113:5</p> <p>commissioner 40:7</p> <p>commissioners 5:8 13:6 18:19 19:10 21:3 25:13 36:13 42:3,4,7,23 43:3,21 44:1 47:6 102:23</p> <p>commitments 79:1</p> <p>commodity 89:20 90:1</p> <p>common 15:1 24:25</p> <p>communicating 102:25</p> <p>communication 88:24</p> <p>communities 68:6 110:3 113:13</p> <p>community 16:4 26:21,25 29:3 30:23,25 31:25 39:10 66:13 68:4 71:2 76:12 79:8,25 83:15 92:5,8 94:6, 7,22 95:1 96:23 97:1,12 102:8,20 107:25 111:12,25 112:6 113:19</p> <p>compaction 112:13</p> <p>companies 21:9 35:6,7,9, 22 36:2,4 66:23 67:6 83:24 89:2 96:24</p> <p>company 18:9 19:8 34:19 35:18 36:7 54:8 69:12 70:2 96:9,17 97:19,21 98:5,8 113:23</p> <p>compared 13:14</p> <p>compelled 19:8</p> <p>compelling 88:16</p> <p>compensate 20:23</p> <p>complaints 14:22</p> <p>completely 27:16 33:16 55:4 67:10</p> <p>complex 69:18</p> <p>comply 51:1</p> <p>components 50:1</p> <p>comprehensive 25:10 45:11</p> <p>computer 46:6 57:5,6</p> <p>concentrations 54:14</p>	<p>concept 74:18</p> <p>concern 13:22 15:4 20:7</p> <p>concerned 5:16 16:24 18:14 20:19 28:14 49:15 60:14 65:15 66:11</p> <p>concerns 17:11 20:6 51:19 59:11 76:2,7 82:21 84:15 88:21 98:19</p> <p>conclude 70:20 102:6 114:1</p> <p>concluded 36:18 111:4</p> <p>conclusion 63:23 102:17</p> <p>condition 30:13 55:25</p> <p>conditions 56:2,17 86:15</p> <p>conducive 57:20</p> <p>conduct 2:10</p> <p>conducted 62:25 101:4 103:9</p> <p>conducting 2:20</p> <p>confidence 91:21</p> <p>confident 97:8</p> <p>conflicts 25:14</p> <p>confronted 14:19 92:16</p> <p>confused 7:6</p> <p>confusing 41:20,22</p> <p>cons 59:9 72:6 112:4</p> <p>Conservation 113:4</p> <p>consideration 4:11 7:9 17:11 27:14 77:15</p> <p>considered 9:6 25:7 34:24 71:23</p> <p>consistent 72:14,17</p> <p>Consolidated 108:21</p> <p>constant 74:16</p> <p>constitute 19:14</p> <p>Constitution 57:11</p> <p>construct 7:1 12:4</p> <p>constructed 12:24 13:2</p> <p>constructing 11:15</p> <p>construction 12:13 14:14 15:1,12 16:8 18:10 30:9 57:13 77:16 78:25 105:17 112:11 113:6,12</p> <p>consultant 57:5</p> <p>consumer 25:20</p> <p>consumers 89:11</p> <p>consumption 81:18</p> <p>contacted 31:8 82:21</p> <p>contacting 77:14 102:21</p>	<p>contained 49:20</p> <p>contaminant 80:24</p> <p>contaminants 54:11</p> <p>contaminate 55:13 57:19 83:4</p> <p>contaminated 18:12 28:23 55:8</p> <p>contamination 83:2 110:16,19</p> <p>contents 19:6 55:4</p> <p>contest 59:8</p> <p>contested 96:18</p> <p>continue 27:7 66:5 92:1</p> <p>continuing 94:19</p> <p>contract 18:10 75:15</p> <p>contractors 13:18</p> <p>contracts 19:6</p> <p>contrary 33:14</p> <p>contributes 25:20,23</p> <p>control 15:16 26:17 46:5, 11,13,15 70:1 71:4</p> <p>conversation 98:21 102:6</p> <p>converted 109:13</p> <p>converting 72:19 81:6</p> <p>convinced 72:10</p> <p>Conway 3:24,25 88:8</p> <p>cooperate 22:21</p> <p>cooperative 49:10</p> <p>copper 15:10,19,24 34:14 48:11,12 58:4</p> <p>copy 9:12 32:12</p> <p>corn 11:12 72:20,23 109:5,7,9 114:10</p> <p>corner 8:6 57:25</p> <p>cornfields 82:17</p> <p>Corps 82:19</p> <p>correlating 63:20</p> <p>cost 25:19 44:15 68:25 71:1 98:13 111:10</p> <p>costs 51:5 78:23</p> <p>counsel 42:1</p> <p>count 102:1</p> <p>counties 80:22 86:20</p> <p>countless 66:13</p> <p>countries 35:8,10 87:5</p> <p>country 93:18 95:6 103:13,15 109:2</p>	<p>county 5:7,8,10,17 7:4,8 13:6,20 16:18,20 18:11,18, 19 19:10 21:3 22:17 24:24 25:10,13 27:21 28:8,9 30:18 31:24 32:22 33:1,20 34:21 36:11,13 39:14 40:3, 7,11,14,16,17,18 41:3,23 42:14,25 43:23,24,25 44:1, 5 45:7,8,9 48:23 49:12 51:13 58:18 59:19 64:15, 23,24,25 65:15,25 66:16 68:7,10,12,18 69:3,22 70:1 71:10 73:7 76:11 77:11 78:7,10 79:6,9,20,25 80:3 85:15 87:18 88:19 94:2 95:17 102:23,24 105:23 106:3,6,8 107:24 108:3 110:3</p> <p>county's 35:3 66:10</p> <p>couple 4:8 38:21 62:9</p> <p>court 9:3,9,20 32:9</p> <p>courthouse 67:1 68:15</p> <p>cousins 109:8</p> <p>cover 29:20 49:11 51:4 95:12 98:13</p> <p>coyote 31:7 111:13</p> <p>coyotes 70:17</p> <p>crap 22:16</p> <p>create 57:19,24 59:15 60:10</p> <p>created 36:10</p> <p>creates 60:1 109:21</p> <p>creating 50:14</p> <p>creatures 54:3,17</p> <p>credit 30:4 83:19</p> <p>creek 23:20,24 24:2,21 52:21,22,23,25 53:1,23,25 54:4,10,12,15 55:20,22 56:16 59:1 81:20,23 82:4</p> <p>creeks 70:8 82:6</p> <p>crew 14:14 69:14</p> <p>crime 15:6,8,13,18,23 16:7 48:6 65:1</p> <p>criminal 57:20</p> <p>criminals 16:2</p> <p>criteria 2:25</p> <p>crop 70:16 93:7,8 112:21</p> <p>cropping 73:24</p> <p>crops 29:20 92:23 109:10</p> <p>Cross 88:10,11,15 90:7</p> <p>cross-contaminated 28:18</p> <p>cross-examine 6:15</p>
--	--	--	---

current 25:12 56:11	decisions 40:24 78:17 79:2	devastation 105:9	disrupt 57:17
Curtis 56:22,23 57:2	declare 106:8	developed 92:10	disruption 70:7 114:5
cut 48:19 49:22	declines 63:22	developer 30:7 113:9	distance 15:15 63:17
cycle 10:6	decommissioned 35:8 110:25	developers 86:22	district 5:9 40:9,11 44:16 73:12
<hr/> D <hr/>	decommissioning 36:9 78:25 110:17 114:5	developing 113:23	districts 29:5
D.C. 95:11	decrease 16:25 18:22 29:1,22 63:14,16 67:17	development 24:22 25:11,14 45:14,15 73:20 98:8,9,14 113:5	disturb 21:20 29:17
dad 85:25	deep 70:3	devoted 97:11	ditch 12:21
daily 97:4,13	deer 31:6 70:17 111:13	Dewine 2:16	ditches 70:8
Dale 4:23	Deerbrook 57:3	dictated 21:2	dive 30:20
damage 14:20 20:9 34:6 48:10 49:7	defecate 92:3	dies 42:6	Dixon 5:10 7:3 11:6 12:7 34:1 57:25
damaged 28:15 33:19 58:16 110:18	definition 101:21	diesel 89:23	docket 8:2,20
damages 55:1	degree 57:5 63:16 104:24	difference 51:13 87:24 106:2	docketing 8:5
damn 15:3	degrees 105:1	difficult 60:4 73:8 74:17 75:12 78:18	dollar 21:5
dangerous 53:24 65:5	deluge 55:24	diligence 33:2 75:1 76:6	dollars 21:11 23:14 41:14 42:14,17,22,25 43:5,15 68:16,20,22 69:1 73:4,9 76:10 79:24 83:21 98:13 104:1 106:5
Dare 10:17,19,25 11:3,5	demand 89:7,14 112:23, 24	diminished 18:12	Don 104:5 106:12,13,19
dark 83:16	democracy 93:17	direct 6:6	Donna 77:24 78:1,5
data 14:7	denial 97:17,20	direction 106:1 111:23	door 21:7 43:12 95:11
date 8:2 96:22	deny 32:1 42:5,7 47:11 92:17,19	directly 42:25	doors 48:12 50:17
dated 18:25	department 2:10 44:23 49:9 57:25 60:21 82:19 84:7	director 3:23 4:24	doors 48:12 50:17
dates 8:9 60:24	depend 18:4 54:4 89:24	dirty 36:24 66:16	Dorothy 65:8,10
dating 99:13	dependent 78:22	disadvantages 78:20,21	dotted 107:4
David 46:1 76:14,16,21,23	deposit 56:10	disagree 11:14 112:8	doubt 11:20 60:25
day 12:5,6 27:18,19 41:20, 21 53:12 89:7,15,17 101:1	deputies 36:14 49:11	disappear 14:13	Doug 21:1
day-to-day 74:23	desecrate 36:25	disappointed 22:22	downhill 20:15
daylight 27:19	desert-type 13:4	discarded 28:6	downstream 54:10
days 11:25 12:1 27:17 53:9 56:1 61:19 97:19	design 57:8	disclose 19:9,13	drain 95:14 104:4
Dayton 41:4	design 57:8	discourage 25:14	drainage 12:21,23 13:4 20:7,13 26:18 70:4 112:14
dead 30:21	destroy 93:1	discovered 80:16	drains 53:1
deal 36:11 39:17 74:18,19	destroyed 12:22 48:21	discretionary 42:23	dramatically 97:4
dealings 89:1	destroying 103:23	discuss 102:21	dredge 82:8
deals 21:7	destroys 60:7	discussed 59:8	drilling 20:8
dealt 97:10	detail 35:15	discussing 72:6 75:16	drink 53:16
debris 27:22 29:20,25 54:1,11 56:4,11	details 66:16	discussion 22:2 45:2 75:20	drinking 28:21 34:2
debt 71:8	deteriorating 13:24	disease 59:25 66:1 92:25	drive 31:11 109:1
decades 34:6 62:9	determination 8:24 9:1,7	disingenuous 45:3	driven 36:23 105:13,14
December 6:22 30:5	determine 63:3 113:9	dispatched 46:14	droppings 30:1
decide 9:23 72:1	determined 83:10 113:7	displaced 81:9	drought 66:1
decided 7:11 11:10 80:1	detriment 81:25	disposal 34:5 60:3 110:24 111:4,7	droughts 53:7 105:11
decision 2:24 32:1 75:12, 14 77:5 78:13,15,16 80:2 102:18 103:14	detrimental 92:5	dispose 34:20	drug 15:15
	devalued 100:21	disposed 34:23 51:3 110:17	drugs 15:8,9
	devastating 28:10		dual 113:9

due 3:21 29:8 33:1 50:17
53:5 62:20 71:8 75:1 76:6
82:24 94:24 101:22 109:15
110:3 111:25

duly 10:21 17:17 19:21
22:5 24:9 32:15 39:1,23
47:16 52:3 56:25 58:23
65:12 71:17 74:8 76:18
78:3 79:13 80:10 85:6
88:13 90:12 91:11 93:23
104:13 106:15 108:16

dumped 104:3

duplicate 101:24

dust 29:20 81:4

duty 58:13

E

e-mail 42:1

e-mails 103:1

eagle 30:22

earlier 45:12 94:13

early 62:15

earth 60:14

earth's 111:22

east 4:17 40:18 52:22
55:19

easy 34:8 78:17 79:22

eat 92:1

eating 41:18

Eaton 11:1 17:22 22:11
24:14,23 32:18 44:17 59:6
65:22 108:22

Eaton-oxford 85:10

Ecklin 35:18

economic 22:25 25:10
60:21

economy 25:20 107:25

ecosystem 14:1

educate 97:7

educating 95:18

education 97:1

effect 26:3 63:10 110:5

effected 65:17

effective 27:9,20 72:23

effectively 82:13

effectiveness 27:11

effects 13:23 26:5 36:21,
22 110:4

efficiency 27:8,13,17
29:21

efficient 13:14 81:6

efficiently 81:3

effort 48:24 49:2

efforts 93:14

eighteen 36:12

eighty 3:4 7:2 87:8 105:6

elected 19:10

election 103:2

electric 3:2,11,12 7:3
12:17 34:22 68:2,3,5,7
86:6 111:3

electrical 50:3 109:14
111:19

electricity 13:25 46:7
81:6 109:20

element 15:6,13

eleven 53:9 60:23 95:24

eliminate 77:4

Elisar 3:22

else's 55:17

emergency 45:18

emissions 109:17

emotions 74:24

employ 43:25

employed 97:11

employees 101:11

EMS 46:24

enable 105:19

enclosed 113:17

encourage 69:3

end 10:1 50:24 51:12
52:24 56:7 73:16 75:2 81:9
99:21 111:1

endangered 30:22

ends 58:15

energies 33:6

energy 4:24 11:20,23,24
12:9,10,15 13:12 16:17
23:5,16 27:3,4 32:23,24
33:9 34:9 35:25 36:5,19
40:20,21 41:9 43:17 59:17,
18 60:11 61:15,16,17
62:11,12,22 66:14,17 68:1
72:19 77:2,7 78:11 79:21
80:23 89:11,25 91:1
106:10 109:12,13,14,20,24
112:16

engineer 5:11

engineering 57:4,6

Engineers 82:20 90:16,21
91:3

enhance 92:8

enhanced 26:15

enjoy 31:10,12 93:17

enjoying 109:3

enormous 79:6

ensure 56:14 77:21

ensured 73:18

enter 8:6 50:2 55:14

entering 13:2

entire 49:11 55:11

entities 43:14 44:7

entries 41:6

environment 23:13 26:3
34:6 39:11 49:19,25 57:18,
20 70:24 97:3 110:4,8,23
114:3

environmental 2:6 26:14
33:7 51:19 88:21 110:9,16
112:2,3

environmentally 106:10
111:9

environmentalprogress
.org 59:15

EPA 82:20

equally 17:25

equipment 35:9 49:21
50:23 55:6 110:16

equipped 58:1

eroded 70:6

erosion 39:11 56:3,10
76:2 87:17 107:16,19
112:15

essence 94:20

establishments 15:20,25

estate 18:22,24 19:2

estimated 112:19

estimates 34:9

ethanol 72:20 103:18

evaluating 78:18

evening 2:1,21 4:21 5:5
7:6,21 9:4 24:16 79:15
80:6 90:19 94:4 98:20
99:17 100:4 101:13

evening's 5:14 8:11

event 114:4

events 49:8 105:14

eventually 29:2 82:6
109:8

everyday 29:25

evidence 6:15 7:11 63:19

evidentiary 7:24

exact 62:3

examine 41:22

examining 41:24

exception 114:14

excess 3:12 20:11

excited 43:21

excluded 21:6

exempt 29:2,6,8 41:17

exempted 19:2 42:19,20

exemption 42:4,5,7

exercise 33:1

exist 42:20

existing 14:7 28:15 45:15
102:14

exotic 49:21

expense 19:16 54:24

expensive 15:10

experience 11:25 14:16
28:3 101:7

experienced 27:21 28:9
67:2

experiences 50:22 95:2

expert 34:3

Experts 112:18

expire 30:4

explained 101:3

explanation 96:20

export 25:24

exposed 28:22 59:25
100:19

express 18:2 99:23

extent 16:7,22

extra 81:19 98:12

extreme 91:21 111:10

extremely 30:21

eyes 21:5

eyesore 55:5

F

face 9:20 45:12 74:25 95:5
109:2

faced 66:1 75:11

facilities 3:11 18:21 25:8
32:22 36:9 59:9 66:9 68:11
89:6,9 111:16,19 112:5,11
114:9

facility 7:3 8:17 18:7,10 24:23 25:2 33:24 39:8 49:17 55:1 63:16 66:20 67:2,21 68:4 69:7,11,23,25 70:23 71:1	53:11 55:15 66:11 69:25 70:11 80:1 89:18	fifty 3:3,13 23:21 40:22 41:6 50:14 68:19 86:5 94:9	fond 109:6
facing 66:8 113:19	farming 11:7 27:6 45:5,6 62:5 66:6 69:25 72:15 75:18 78:15 79:5 83:14 91:22 96:23	fifty-two 24:19	food 25:19,24,25 61:10,16 111:15 112:24
fact 16:3,12 33:25 61:4,7, 18 63:20 73:7 107:3 110:7	farmland 18:6 25:6 26:22 31:16 33:4 45:13 51:17 55:12,22 56:8,10 66:10,21, 22 67:3 70:14 71:10 86:23 107:25 110:18 112:8,16,25 113:1,11,22 114:6	fighths 48:10	foodaidfoundation.org 61:8
factors 66:2 71:5	farmlands 56:4,15 57:14	figure 98:17	fools 21:5
factory 73:23	farms 16:24 23:22,25 28:13 45:3 67:4 69:9 81:5, 10 86:21 87:19 105:17,24 110:7 111:9,11 113:3,13, 23 114:1,7	figured 99:4 100:12	foot 23:21 67:20 111:10 113:16
facts 88:20	father 77:19	filed 5:18 6:21 8:19 96:8, 14 97:22	footprint 77:4
faculties 67:17	father's 65:24	filing 96:21	footsteps 113:12
fail 11:14	favor 39:8 72:10 76:8 77:22 100:15 108:9	filtering 26:5	Forbes 33:11
failed 103:17,18	favorite 108:25 109:5	final 8:24 9:7 111:8	foreign 69:23
failure 19:13 101:22	February 25:13 34:17 42:1 45:19 67:1 68:15	finally 19:4 42:6	forever 62:6 86:23,25 88:4
fair 14:8 16:16 29:4 47:2 63:24	federal 21:11 23:15 35:22 51:1,5	financial 18:13 69:4 77:7 100:16,19 102:6 103:22,25 114:8	forget 84:5 85:25
Fairhaven 15:5,7,13 47:22 48:3 50:8 52:17,19, 24,25 53:3,21 54:4,10 55:19,21 56:15 64:25 65:1	feed 27:5,7 61:5 62:7 70:16 112:19	financially 83:23 103:10	form 23:15 88:23 89:25
Fairhaven's 54:11	feeding 64:2 67:5 70:14 106:8	find 36:15 53:13 60:12 85:19	formed 48:23
fairly 82:15	feel 13:16,21 14:12 15:17, 22 16:15 20:25 72:18 76:6, 25 78:14 95:5 97:7 98:6	finding 62:17 97:6 111:15	forthcoming 17:2
faith 23:7 97:14	feeling 107:17	fine 67:14 84:6	forty 50:14 68:24 69:2 99:12 100:2,11
fake 95:15 102:3	feet 70:3	finish 9:17	forty-eight 103:16
fall 36:19	fence 48:19 67:20	finished 10:5	forty-five 84:6
fallout 92:11	fences 48:17 111:11	fire 21:20 46:24 57:24,25 84:7	forty-two 40:14
false 96:11	fencing 70:13 113:17	fires 57:25 105:10	forward 3:14 9:18 13:20 80:1 91:3 97:14
familiar 98:1	fertile 56:9 66:21	firm 4:16	fossil 105:21 109:18
families 86:20 92:15 103:23 114:7	fertilizer 89:23	fish 54:2	found 7:20 42:15 48:17 50:12 109:23 112:20
family 11:6 20:2 24:19 31:11,12 39:16 45:5 53:11 64:13 65:23 66:3 71:7 72:2 74:14 75:16,17,22 76:25 77:22 78:8,13 79:19 86:21 97:5 100:2 101:11 105:12, 16 113:18	FFA 59:6	fish 54:2	fourteen 61:19
family's 66:7	fiber-optic 14:17	fishing 26:8	Fourth 57:10,15
farm 4:20,25 12:16 23:4, 18 24:19 28:19 31:1 40:9 44:25 45:1,2 49:1 52:23 62:2 65:23 66:7 67:23 71:3,23 77:8 81:22 82:3 87:25 90:23 91:2,6 93:4 104:18 107:11,14,25 112:18 113:17	field 11:15 13:2 28:11,15 29:19 36:16 70:1,10 111:20,22	fit 16:13	fox 111:13
farm-associated 26:6	fields 11:11,15 12:3,9,14, 24 13:21 14:2,8,13 15:1, 12,14,17,22 16:1,9 20:20 27:23 28:10 70:16 82:9,10 111:21	fix 46:9 55:17	fracking 62:20 70:24
farmable 70:7	fifteen 67:13	fixed 44:10,12	fracture 70:22
farmed 62:22 65:25 86:14 87:1 88:4		flat 112:10	fragments 33:17
farmer 22:17 24:18		flies 45:12	Franklin 90:18
farmers 12:25 13:1 20:3 22:19,22 29:19 31:14		flip 95:21,24	frankly 84:23
		flood 28:16 55:22 56:6	Fred 79:10,11,16
		flooded 28:10,13 56:5 81:24	free 50:11
		flooding 28:7 55:24 56:2, 3,13,15 70:7	freedoms 93:17
		floodplain 55:21	frequent 48:10
		floods 53:7,24 82:1,10 105:10	fresh 25:18
		flowing 81:20	friend 94:4,5,24 105:16
		fluctuations 78:23	friendly 106:10
		focus 62:10 100:1	friends 11:4
		folks 83:11 84:6 97:11 102:25 103:2 114:13	front 2:25 5:24 9:16
		follow 36:8 113:11	frown 13:1
			fruit 93:2

<p>held 7:15</p> <p>helps 2:23 109:20</p> <p>Heraclitus 74:17</p> <p>Herbert 35:18</p> <p>herd 99:2</p> <p>hereinafter 10:21 17:17 19:21 22:5 24:9 32:15 39:1,23 47:16 52:3 56:25 58:23 65:12 71:17 74:8 76:18 78:3 79:13 80:10 85:6 88:13 90:12 91:11 93:23 104:13 106:15 108:16</p> <p>Herling 4:6,7</p> <p>Herring 21:1</p> <p>Hess 94:1</p> <p>hidden 49:23 59:4</p> <p>hiding 19:12</p> <p>high 5:1 25:3,19 48:6 53:7, 25 59:6 95:9</p> <p>higher 65:16</p> <p>highest 89:16</p> <p>Highland 94:2 95:17</p> <p>highlight 95:2</p> <p>highly 63:19</p> <p>highway 52:22 56:7</p> <p>hike 54:2</p> <p>hint 69:6</p> <p>hire 69:12</p> <p>historic 66:7</p> <p>history 99:13 100:3</p> <p>HOA 92:17</p> <p>Hoffman 41:25</p> <p>hold 102:14</p> <p>holes 20:9</p> <p>home 64:14,18,20,21 67:22 82:3 100:24 105:15 113:16</p> <p>homes 28:10 50:7 53:1 67:16 100:20 109:19</p> <p>homework 77:13 94:18, 19</p> <p>honest 84:23</p> <p>honesty 101:22</p> <p>Honor 4:15,22,23 11:3 32:4 37:9</p> <p>honored 96:19</p> <p>hook 21:4</p> <p>hope 83:11 86:15 89:21</p>	<p>hoping 18:9 84:8 99:9</p> <p>host 105:4,5</p> <p>hour 99:18</p> <p>hours 12:6 27:19 75:16 76:3 78:12</p> <p>house 64:11 92:18 113:19,25</p> <p>houses 48:9,11 50:16 86:22 98:11,14</p> <p>hub 77:16</p> <p>Hueston 31:9,19 53:2,18, 19 54:1,6 82:6 107:22 112:1</p> <p>huge 17:1 34:7 35:24</p> <p>human 60:2</p> <p>humans 34:15</p> <p>humongous 61:12</p> <p>hundred 25:3 36:12 41:13 42:13 43:4 55:20 59:16 60:10,11 61:6,8 65:25 67:13 68:19,21 81:12,14, 16,19,22 82:14,24 94:7 100:8,10 101:14,18</p> <p>hundreds 83:4</p> <p>hunger 62:10</p> <p>hunt 31:6</p> <p>hunters 30:24</p> <p>hunting 26:9 31:2,5</p> <p>Hurricane 53:8,10</p> <p>hurricane-like 27:22</p> <p>hurting 70:16</p> <p>husband 24:18</p> <p>hydrochloric 60:1 110:13</p> <p>hydrological 26:16</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <hr/> <p>idea 11:11 13:7 77:1 82:22</p> <p>ideas 17:11</p> <p>identify 33:22 38:1</p> <p>ignorance 36:24</p> <p>ignorant 35:1</p> <p>ignore 74:22 79:6</p> <p>ignoring 103:1</p> <p>Ike 53:8,10</p> <p>illegal 92:14</p> <p>Illinois 105:15</p> <p>imagine 73:22</p> <p>immoral 92:14</p>	<p>impact 6:6 31:21,23 109:16 110:9 111:8</p> <p>impacted 54:18</p> <p>important 3:15,16 11:9 17:25 70:10 73:4 112:17</p> <p>importantly 19:13 81:8</p> <p>imposed 40:12</p> <p>improperly 110:17</p> <p>improprieties 101:20,21</p> <p>inaccurate 96:11</p> <p>incidents 48:8</p> <p>include 58:3 97:5</p> <p>including 26:14 54:7 57:7</p> <p>income 18:12 25:21 55:16 72:14,16,17 77:20 79:4 92:15</p> <p>incomplete 96:11</p> <p>inconsistencies 72:15</p> <p>incorporated 9:4</p> <p>increase 16:21 18:23 34:5 54:15 56:2,12,17 68:24 73:14</p> <p>increased 49:16 73:4 104:24 105:1 112:14</p> <p>increasing 11:19 15:9 56:11</p> <p>incredibly 80:25</p> <p>indexed 51:6</p> <p>Indiana 40:16 105:15</p> <p>Indianapolis 87:7</p> <p>indication 69:22</p> <p>indium 34:14</p> <p>individual 91:21</p> <p>individuals 49:14 50:4</p> <p>industrial 67:14</p> <p>industry 11:21 13:9 33:3 35:15,16,19 36:2,24 108:2</p> <p>infers 57:11</p> <p>inflation 51:7 69:1</p> <p>influence 95:7</p> <p>information 2:23 17:2 19:9 25:9 33:5,7 35:1 94:21 102:2</p> <p>informed 70:10</p> <p>injured 30:21</p> <p>inordinate 72:5</p> <p>inputs 89:23</p> <p>inside 6:2 44:9 88:16,17</p> <p>installation 57:13 58:17</p>	<p>installed 14:18 79:22 86:16</p> <p>installer 69:16</p> <p>installment 63:1,13 64:8 110:2</p> <p>instance 63:12 92:22</p> <p>Institute 33:13 34:23 111:3</p> <p>instructions 114:21</p> <p>insufficient 48:18</p> <p>insult 23:6 45:6</p> <p>insulting 23:17</p> <p>integrity 26:16</p> <p>intelligence 23:6 35:3</p> <p>intent 6:8</p> <p>interested 7:13 30:3 40:2 82:22</p> <p>interesting 21:10</p> <p>interfere 14:9 111:21</p> <p>International 34:9 90:15</p> <p>Internet 98:1 101:17</p> <p>interrupt 14:9 99:23</p> <p>intervene 5:18 6:3</p> <p>intervened 5:4 6:10,13,14 8:13</p> <p>intrigued 42:6 86:19</p> <p>introduce 114:23</p> <p>introduction 9:17</p> <p>invasion 12:16</p> <p>inverters 57:22</p> <p>invested 100:19</p> <p>investigate 70:23 97:7</p> <p>investigation 8:19</p> <p>investment 94:11</p> <p>investors 35:23 69:23</p> <p>involved 49:14 78:12 85:9 91:22 94:7</p> <p>involvement 39:15 78:13 97:2 103:10</p> <p>Iowa 105:12,13</p> <p>iphones 64:3</p> <p>irresponsible 14:25</p> <p>irresponsibly 58:14</p> <p>Isabelle 17:14,15,21</p> <p>Israel 5:10 7:3 12:7 15:5 20:3 33:25 39:5 47:24 48:3 52:16,17 58:1 59:2 64:16 65:16 74:12 76:11,22 78:8 79:19 80:14 82:4 85:9</p>
--	--	--	--

<p>104:19</p> <p>issue 13:5 17:1 45:18 75:17 97:9 111:7</p> <p>issues 20:7 49:16,25 50:15 62:14 98:6 100:2</p> <p>items 50:24 51:2,6</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">J</p> <hr/> <p>Jackson 104:6 106:12,13, 19</p> <p>Jacob 24:18</p> <p>Jacob's 24:20</p> <p>Jane 39:20,21,25</p> <p>Japan 85:23</p> <p>Jason 90:9,10,14,19</p> <p>Jeff 10:16,19,25 11:5</p> <p>Jerdon 47:13,14,21,24 48:2</p> <p>Jill 3:24</p> <p>Jim 104:5,10,11,15</p> <p>Jimmy 19:17,18,19,25 20:2</p> <p>job 14:19 25:21 88:20 89:2</p> <p>jobs 46:9 69:8,9,11 71:3 76:10 83:5 97:5</p> <p>join 91:5</p> <p>joining 28:19</p> <p>Jordan 20:1</p> <p>journalists 33:4</p> <p>judge 2:9 7:18</p> <p>judgment 91:25 95:4</p> <p>judicatory 6:16</p> <p>judiciary 96:15</p> <p>Judy 39:7</p> <p>Junction 82:3</p> <p>June 7:15</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">K</p> <hr/> <p>Kathryn 5:6 32:3,13,17</p> <p>keeping 51:16 113:10</p> <p>Ketterman 40:1</p> <p>kids 61:1,3 72:3 77:2 94:12 100:21</p> <p>kids' 105:14</p> <p>Kimball 19:17,18,19,25 20:2 21:15 22:3,10,11,13</p> <p>kind 31:17 37:10 43:23 94:5 102:19 106:25 107:3,</p>	<p>5</p> <p>kinds 24:3</p> <p>knew 47:6 95:19 96:25</p> <p>knocked 48:13</p> <p>knowing 17:25 21:10 95:21,24</p> <p>Kohker 3:24,25</p> <p>Kohl's 98:4</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">L</p> <hr/> <p>labor 78:24</p> <p>lack 69:4</p> <p>Ladies 94:23</p> <p>lake 53:2 54:4,9,12,15,16 82:7,11,21 107:22</p> <p>land 3:1,9 11:8,9 16:13,16 19:1 21:2 25:4,7,11,16 27:6,10,13 29:1,5,8 30:2 36:25 45:11 55:3,6,13,17 58:15,18 61:24 62:16,18, 19,21 64:1,19 66:12,19,24 67:7,12,14,15,16 70:2,5,6, 25 71:6 73:18 77:10 79:5, 22 86:11,12,25 87:10,14, 18,23 88:3 92:2 93:5 96:5, 6 98:12 103:13,21 110:1,5 112:6,10,12 113:4,14,20, 22 114:2</p> <p>land's 18:15</p> <p>landfill 34:21 60:5 87:6</p> <p>landfills 34:24 35:5 111:1, 5</p> <p>landowner 16:12 18:5,11 76:24 85:9 96:2 98:12</p> <p>landowner's 58:11</p> <p>landowners 16:10 18:17 19:1,10 31:14 44:20 57:16 58:7 73:10 95:19,20,23 96:3,5 98:20 99:11,19,20 101:12 106:21</p> <p>Lane 104:16</p> <p>Lanier 40:2</p> <p>large 18:5 68:10 89:11 92:23 112:24</p> <p>large-scale 66:9</p> <p>largely 101:12</p> <p>larger 7:19</p> <p>Lastly 35:14 62:23 69:24</p> <p>late 17:8 96:16,21</p> <p>latest 68:20</p> <p>law 2:9 4:16 7:18 16:14 42:16 43:1</p>	<p>lawful 10:20 17:16 19:20 22:4 24:8 32:14 38:25 39:22 47:15 52:2 56:24 58:22 65:11 71:16 74:7 76:17 78:2 79:12 80:9 85:5 88:12 90:11 91:10 93:22 104:12 106:14 108:15</p> <p>lawlessness 49:13</p> <p>laws 93:11,13</p> <p>lawyers 77:14</p> <p>leach 34:25</p> <p>leaches 60:5</p> <p>leaching 20:20</p> <p>lead 33:15 34:14 61:10</p> <p>leads 82:6</p> <p>leak 111:6</p> <p>leakage 13:25</p> <p>learn 17:6 66:14 113:13</p> <p>learned 32:20 35:15 41:23,24 66:14 95:19 103:17</p> <p>learning 19:6 109:8</p> <p>leased 113:22</p> <p>leases 62:2</p> <p>leasing 19:1</p> <p>leave 30:9 35:14 59:23 65:3 92:10</p> <p>leaving 27:22 28:10 29:3 30:20</p> <p>led 33:9 95:8</p> <p>Lee 38:17</p> <p>left 27:24 36:10 53:8 98:19</p> <p>legal 2:10 92:20 93:15 95:11 98:18</p> <p>legalism 93:11</p> <p>legally 51:10</p> <p>legislative 3:22</p> <p>legs 70:3</p> <p>letter 85:11 97:20 106:23</p> <p>letting 82:14</p> <p>level 3:8 41:1,9,10 63:9, 13,18</p> <p>levels 56:12</p> <p>library 97:25</p> <p>licenses 31:3</p> <p>lieu 41:11 68:17</p> <p>life 25:17 26:22 50:24 52:18 61:11 74:16,18 94:11</p> <p>life-span 62:15</p>	<p>lifecycle 111:2</p> <p>lifelong 11:5</p> <p>lifespan 16:19</p> <p>lifestyle 27:1</p> <p>lifetime 60:25 75:9</p> <p>Light 41:4</p> <p>lighting 48:18,20</p> <p>lights 29:15</p> <p>limited 53:20 54:22 66:21</p> <p>limits 92:20</p> <p>lines 12:18,21,25 14:17,23 68:5</p> <p>lining 99:7</p> <p>liquid 26:10</p> <p>list 10:1</p> <p>listed 6:2</p> <p>listen 95:4</p> <p>listening 44:1 94:17 101:25 103:5</p> <p>live 10:9 14:4,17 24:17 32:18 37:12 38:2 39:4 40:1,8 48:3 57:3 58:8 59:1 61:1,15,16,17,18 64:6,16, 18 74:11 77:16 92:1 93:17 113:24</p> <p>lived 11:8 52:17 105:12</p> <p>livelihood 11:9 66:3</p> <p>lives 65:16 97:5,6 105:9</p> <p>livestock 20:18,23 28:22 34:16</p> <p>living 45:5 68:25</p> <p>LLC 2:5 4:15 5:17 6:22 74:14 75:16,22 78:8 79:19 104:18</p> <p>load 49:24 89:2</p> <p>local 3:8 4:24 6:8 7:14,22 29:4,12 30:10 31:9 40:25 41:1,10,17 53:11 67:10 69:8 70:15,25 73:5,12 77:11 80:20 90:16,21,25 91:2 98:22,25 100:14 101:1,8,12,16 102:3,24 111:13 114:5</p> <p>locally 3:7 30:23 41:5,16 69:12</p> <p>located 25:2 52:20 55:9, 10,19 56:16 104:18</p> <p>location 8:9 33:23 114:8</p> <p>locations 16:9 17:3</p> <p>locationwise 64:22</p> <p>locks 48:17,19</p> <p>lodge 54:7</p>
--	---	--	---

logic 74:24	99:25 103:13	mentality 92:16,22	mitigation 88:21
London 78:6 79:17	makes 45:5	mention 69:24 99:14 101:14,17	mob 92:16,22 93:11,15
long 16:13 45:17 62:3 64:1 83:8	making 9:6 12:20 64:3 73:2 77:14 106:2	mentioned 101:19,23 102:3	modules 33:17
long-term 13:23 35:11 73:20 79:4	man 14:13 29:13	mentioning 100:12	moment 95:1 99:4
longer 93:16 113:6	management 21:2	mess 27:25 37:1	monetary 35:11 99:6
Longman 24:14	mandated 51:5	messages 103:1	money 15:16 18:6 23:11 29:8 31:2 35:23 36:23 42:23 43:15 44:6,8,11,14, 15 53:22 55:16 68:10 95:8 98:15,16 102:8,9,12 103:24 107:1
looked 71:25	mandatory 42:17 43:3	met 75:22 98:9	moneys 36:15
lose 44:11 66:20 92:17,21 111:14	manipulations 93:16	metric 34:10	monitor 48:24
losing 87:22	Mann 32:18 65:21	metropolitan 40:18	Monroe 79:17
loss 29:4,7 100:19 114:8	manner 30:12 97:8 103:22	Mexico 12:4	Montgomery 40:17 45:8
lost 20:23 62:5 95:6 105:9	manufacturers 110:23	Miami 80:18 83:3	month 49:9 81:15,16
lot 20:12 40:15 41:6 47:1 61:6 62:4 72:5,19 80:16 81:17,18 82:15,25 88:15 96:10 100:22 108:5	Manufacturing 110:12	mice 70:17	months 28:12 32:20 33:18 75:20 85:12,18 107:10
lots 37:4	March 18:25 98:24	microelectronics 57:7	morning 97:23
Lou 38:19,20,24 39:3,6	Mark 93:20,21,25	mid 42:1	Mother 89:24
love 64:23	market 25:22 67:17 78:22	middle 42:9 99:23	mother's 65:24
Loveland 104:17	markets 66:2	migrate 111:18,25	motion 5:18 6:3
low 27:10 55:16	Marshall 39:20,21,25 40:1	migrating 111:23	motivated 18:13
low-lying 55:22 56:15	master's 57:5	migration 111:18	motivation 18:4 83:22
Lowe's 98:3	material 58:2 95:13	Mike 2:16 4:15 74:4,6,10, 13	Mountains 105:2
lower 63:2 68:7	materials 13:24 20:19 28:17 49:20,22 50:2,23,25 55:9 58:3 111:6	milage 44:9	move 13:20 64:10 70:18 75:23 80:1 92:10
lucky 27:18	math 101:10	mile 11:1 20:4 23:23 52:21 53:22,25 54:10 55:20 56:16 81:20 82:4	moved 8:8
lung 59:24	Matt 3:20	miles 12:22,23 53:2 63:15 81:23 100:25	movement 70:14
	matter 2:4 5:4 61:5 68:22 76:7 102:21 107:3	Millercoors 80:21	moving 64:14
	maybes 83:9	million 34:10 61:9 68:16 69:1 81:15,17,19	mowed 39:13
M	Mcdonough 80:7,8,12,13	millions 35:24 80:24 81:1, 7	mowers 48:15
machine 21:17	means 12:15 22:15 63:8 72:18	mind 37:15 97:4	mud 44:5
made 9:1 20:21,22 26:23, 24 33:7 34:12 42:9,12 61:20 83:7 99:2 110:11	media 32:23 93:15	mine 94:6	multiple 110:11
Madison 78:6	meet 25:25 98:5 112:22	mineral 26:11	multiples 77:9
magazine 33:11	meeting 34:17 45:20 47:5, 7 66:25 68:14 76:4 99:9 101:4	minimal 78:24	multitude 31:21
magnetic 111:20,21,22	meetings 46:23 66:13 75:18 78:12 107:9	mining 62:21	murder 48:8,22
mail 96:24	megawatt 7:2,7 42:17 43:5	Minnesota 104:25	mustn't 112:4
maintain 7:2 9:13 12:25 29:22	megawatts 3:3,4,13 40:22	minute 21:25 65:19	
maintains 26:2,6	melting 49:25	minutes 84:6 99:12 100:2, 10,11	N
maintenance 78:25 79:23	member 31:25	misfortunes 17:7	names 9:16 10:2 114:13
major 3:10 18:11 76:2 95:5 99:11 111:7	members 3:23 11:4,13 39:16 75:17 76:4 101:11 111:24	misinformation 87:3	nasty 59:17,22
majority 69:9	memories 109:6	misleading 96:10 102:2	nation 11:19
make 2:13,24 10:12 11:24 29:7,14 35:23 36:23 44:9 70:5 71:11 75:10,12 77:19 84:1 87:24 92:15 95:3 98:6		misrepresented 101:13	nation's 25:23
		missing 50:16	Nations 60:20
		mistakes 17:6 55:17	natural 13:14 26:20 55:7 71:2 82:19

<p>Nature 89:24</p> <p>nearby 46:14 50:2 53:15 70:18</p> <p>necessarily 8:23 62:11 103:7</p> <p>neck 87:15</p> <p>needed 30:1 35:21 53:19</p> <p>negative 31:21 33:5 36:21,22</p> <p>negatively 114:3</p> <p>negligence 71:9</p> <p>negotiated 19:7</p> <p>negotiations 19:11,14</p> <p>neighbor 67:16 75:23,25 93:4 113:21</p> <p>neighbor's 76:3 82:10</p> <p>neighborhood 48:4,24 49:2 52:16 69:20 87:23 92:2</p> <p>neighboring 81:9 87:19, 21</p> <p>neighbors 6:6 11:4,13 22:19 29:17 31:13 46:25 86:20 92:11</p> <p>newly 13:2 94:4</p> <p>news 95:15 102:4 105:8</p> <p>newspaper 97:22</p> <p>nice 69:20</p> <p>night 27:20 29:16 37:6</p> <p>ninety 34:11 87:8</p> <p>ninety-five 61:9</p> <p>nitric 110:13</p> <p>nod 37:19</p> <p>nonproductive 25:7 27:13 62:18</p> <p>nonrenewable 66:23</p> <p>nonspecific 83:7</p> <p>normal 74:24 97:6</p> <p>north 5:1 35:17 52:24 85:24</p> <p>northern 91:16 94:8 104:24</p> <p>note 8:18 88:18</p> <p>noted 70:20</p> <p>notes 73:3</p> <p>Notestine 56:22,23 57:2,3</p> <p>notice 8:10 97:18,23</p> <p>notifications 98:3</p> <p>nuclear 59:17,18 60:11 89:8</p>	<p>number 2:3 7:9 8:7 14:21, 22 48:7 61:12 62:4 91:1 111:14</p> <p>numbers 17:1 61:23 100:14 105:7</p> <p>numerous 49:7 75:7,18 91:1 96:5</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">O</p> <hr/> <p>objects 53:24</p> <p>observe 101:22</p> <p>observed 56:5</p> <p>obvious 99:6 101:13</p> <p>occasions 96:5</p> <p>occur 16:8 45:15</p> <p>ODNR 70:13</p> <p>off-the-record 22:1</p> <p>offense 23:6</p> <p>offensive 23:17</p> <p>offering 35:10 95:23 96:1</p> <p>office 5:7 29:12 49:8 98:19</p> <p>offices 7:25</p> <p>official 9:5 34:4 35:18 102:19</p> <p>officials 16:20</p> <p>Ohio 2:1,12,18,19 3:1,9 4:18,20,25 5:1 7:4,9 8:3 11:1,22 12:1 17:22 20:1 22:11,24 24:14 27:15 32:1, 19 33:22 34:18 40:23 43:16 44:23 47:22 54:8 57:4 58:19 59:1 62:19 65:22 68:13,17 74:12 76:22 78:6 79:17 90:18 91:16 94:1 104:17 105:15 106:20 108:22</p> <p>Ohio's 70:11</p> <p>Olympic 105:4</p> <p>Olympics 105:5</p> <p>one's 57:12</p> <p>opaque 47:8</p> <p>open 11:10 12:2 13:1 16:6 17:1 18:7 19:2,4 20:22 21:1,8 26:13 30:3 31:8,24 32:20 33:21 34:18 35:1 36:7 42:10,12 45:22 46:22 66:8,25 68:9,15 69:15,21 70:9,21 75:19 76:5 78:24 83:13 85:12 91:4</p> <p>opens 89:19 90:1</p> <p>operate 7:2 81:2 109:19</p> <p>operating 69:17 78:23</p>	<p>81:3 90:15,21 91:2</p> <p>operation 66:6 75:13 77:9,17</p> <p>operator 46:5</p> <p>opinion 18:2 35:13 38:15, 16 57:12 87:2,16</p> <p>opinions 18:3 38:6,7 84:15,18</p> <p>opportunities 25:21</p> <p>opportunity 6:15 8:16 9:15 10:3 17:10 38:15,23 71:5 72:17 75:6 84:9,20</p> <p>oppose 24:22 31:15 58:17</p> <p>opposed 40:4 64:3</p> <p>opposing 13:7</p> <p>OPSB 68:20</p> <p>option 91:22 92:7</p> <p>order 9:18 19:5 83:25</p> <p>Oregon 113:4</p> <p>organic 93:4</p> <p>organization 69:19</p> <p>organizations 75:19</p> <p>other's 48:24</p> <p>out-of-county 18:9</p> <p>out-of-state 21:3 68:6 69:14</p> <p>outage 53:10</p> <p>outages 89:17</p> <p>outcomes 75:2</p> <p>outdoor 26:7</p> <p>outlets 12:25</p> <p>outputs 112:21</p> <p>outrageous 23:17</p> <p>outweigh 78:20 112:3</p> <p>ovation 37:7</p> <p>overcast 27:17</p> <p>overloaded 89:3</p> <p>overnight 75:14</p> <p>overpopulate 92:24</p> <p>override 74:24</p> <p>overwhelmed 49:13</p> <p>owed 43:16</p> <p>owner 51:8 92:13</p> <p>owners 50:12 51:14 91:22 92:19</p> <p>owning 69:18</p> <p>owns 55:3 113:21</p>	<p>oxygen 26:4</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <hr/> <p>pace 112:22</p> <p>pack 105:1</p> <p>paid 18:7 50:18 57:9 77:8 98:12</p> <p>Paige 91:8,9,15</p> <p>Paint 24:21</p> <p>panel 11:15 13:9 21:9 25:2,8 27:8 30:20 31:1,20 34:5,11 35:6 46:6 59:9,11 70:3 72:18 87:25 97:24 99:14 100:24 110:10</p> <p>panels 11:22,24 13:13,24 14:5 15:10 16:18,23 20:21 22:24 23:1 24:1 25:6 27:12,20,25 28:4,18 29:10, 21,22,24,25 30:17,19,25 31:4,11 33:10,19 34:7,12, 20,23 35:4 36:12 39:12 46:6,7,10 49:23 57:14 58:18 59:5,15,22 60:10 62:18 63:1,14,25 64:15,17 67:5,19 75:24 81:3,13 82:16 87:4,20 88:23 107:18 110:24 111:1,4,6 113:25 114:11</p> <p>panic 74:23</p> <p>paper 7:17 97:24 101:8, 12,16 102:3 114:22</p> <p>paperwork 96:8</p> <p>parcel 44:21</p> <p>park 31:9,12,19 53:2,18 54:1,6 112:1</p> <p>parking 82:15,25</p> <p>part 5:25 6:13 15:25 41:10 44:4 45:5 57:10 62:19 71:24 79:1 83:15 89:16 92:12</p> <p>partial 12:2</p> <p>participate 78:14 90:2</p> <p>participated 59:7</p> <p>participation 10:15</p> <p>particulars 33:8</p> <p>parties 4:13 5:3 8:13</p> <p>Partin 93:20,21,25</p> <p>pass 9:25</p> <p>passed 10:2 66:6 99:24</p> <p>past 42:16,24 48:5 54:8 59:8 96:21</p> <p>Patricia 2:8</p> <p>patrol 36:14</p>
---	--	---	---

Paul 21:14 22:3,10,13	physical 101:19	population 11:20,21 60:20,22 61:12 67:6	president 98:7
pavers 30:14	physically 95:12	porch 50:16 67:12	pressuring 18:19
pay 18:23 36:8 37:1 40:8, 10,11 41:6 44:17,21 69:7 71:8 77:19 78:24	pick 29:3 82:11	pose 111:9	pretty 39:14 59:22
payback 100:12	piece 8:24	position 65:4 103:21 106:4	prevented 56:11
paying 19:2 28:1 29:23 35:7 41:11,14 69:6	pile 98:15	positions 95:9	prevents 37:10
payment 39:14 41:11 42:18 43:3 68:15,21,23	PILT 20:25 41:11 42:3,5, 11,18 43:11,12 44:3,5,14, 18	positive 74:2 97:14	previous 33:14
payments 25:23 68:22	piped 54:7	positivity 75:1	price 71:10
pays 51:12,18	pipes 20:8	possibility 16:6 28:14,23 97:3 110:15	primarily 99:19 100:16,18 103:8
peak 89:14,15,16 94:8	place 2:3 23:21 27:3 42:21 51:16 112:9	possibly 16:25 62:5	primary 99:19,20
Pease 4:17	places 60:12 62:18	potential 14:3 15:6 49:19 56:13 62:13 79:5 80:24 109:15 112:13	prime 56:8 57:14 113:8
people 5:24 6:11 8:12 10:12 15:2 23:10 25:5 31:10,21 37:4 38:5 40:15 43:6,22,24,25 46:18 47:1, 8,9 53:15 54:2,17 55:2,16 61:6,9,11,13 62:8 64:2,6,7 67:22 74:18,19,21,23,25 82:14 83:5,22 84:4,14,17 85:20 86:8,9 87:12,13 92:3,25 95:9 96:24 98:18 100:9,11,22,23 101:9,15, 18 103:14,22 107:7 108:5 112:19,20,23	plain 55:21 78:15	potentially 34:20 57:18 65:4	print 101:16
percent 27:9 30:4 34:12 50:7 63:12,18 67:18 81:5 85:13 86:6 87:8 94:9 105:2	plan 7:1 9:8 13:19 25:11 26:21 39:16 45:11,13 49:18	pour 87:13	prior 90:24 97:19
percentage 25:4 27:11	planning 5:9 40:6 47:4,5	power 2:2,12,19 3:20 8:4 12:17 32:1 33:22 34:22 35:18 40:23 41:2,4 53:9,10 61:19 64:3 68:18 69:23 83:23 84:10 89:1,5,17 105:19 109:11,22,25 110:2,22 111:3,20 112:5,9, 25 113:7	prioritized 27:1
perfect 89:14	plans 70:2 88:21	powering 106:9	priority 26:23,24
perfectly 109:4	plant 22:20 23:8 27:3 45:3 89:21	practically 12:5	private 26:7 113:23
period 33:17 48:7 53:13	planting 45:4	practice 24:25 35:12	privately 103:9
periods 62:3	plants 26:4,5 89:8 103:18 109:11,25 110:2,22 111:20 112:9 113:7	practices 69:21	privately-maintained 26:12
permanent 23:18 24:3 69:10 73:20,23	plaster 86:22	pray 92:1	problem 7:16 10:1 12:14 34:4 35:11 37:18 53:6 54:14 81:18 95:5 105:25 113:1,18
permission 70:21	play 50:15 92:1	Preble 5:7,8,17 7:4,8 13:20 16:18 18:11,18 22:17 24:24 25:10 31:24 32:22 33:1,20 34:21 35:3 36:11 40:3,16 41:3 45:7 64:15,23,24 65:15,25 69:25 71:10 73:7 76:11 78:10 79:6,9,20,25 80:3 105:23 106:7 110:3	problems 14:3 20:10,13, 16
permits 51:9	plentiful 11:16	precedent 93:10	proceed 52:5 76:20
person 18:13 38:10 46:10 57:12 69:19 87:10	plenty 23:3	precisely 46:2	proceedings 7:12
personal 14:16 81:21	plow 55:15	preempted 26:11	process 4:2 7:23 46:20 107:9
personally 61:13	plowing 14:23	prepared 9:11	produce 34:7 58:3 59:18 62:21 89:20 111:20
perspective 103:12	plugging 74:23	presence 96:18	produced 12:10,15 14:1
petition 97:13 100:9 101:21	plumbing 48:12	present 6:15 10:2 55:11	produces 89:16
petty 48:9 49:7	point 38:12 59:20 60:22, 23 62:8 68:16 75:8 88:19 89:13 110:21	presented 7:12	producing 46:7
philosopher 74:17	points 25:16	presenters 84:16	product 80:23
phone 14:9,21	poison 62:1	presents 49:17	production 25:1,22,25 44:22 45:13 51:17 56:9 59:11,14,21 61:24 62:16 64:1 69:10 89:20,25 110:10 114:4
phosphorous 58:6	poles 20:9	preserve 79:5	productive 18:6 25:4 26:12 27:10 31:16 55:12 66:10
photovoltaic 33:13 110:11	police 6:12	preserved 12:22	productivity 25:15 71:3
phrases 95:14	policies 21:2	preserves 25:17	products 26:1
	policy 3:12,23 4:25		professional 101:2
	pollutants 33:15 59:24		professionals 101:5
	pollution 105:22		professor 35:17
	poor 52:19		profit 16:10 95:22
	poorer 35:10		profitable 75:10
	pop 21:17		
	popularity 109:15		

<p>program 20:25</p> <p>programs 106:6</p> <p>progress 113:1</p> <p>project 3:4 4:10 7:5,7,14, 21 8:8 16:11,19 17:5 24:24 28:20 29:2 30:5,8 31:15,20 32:2 40:4,20 41:9,14 42:5, 8,10 43:17 44:6 45:12,17 47:12 50:21 51:12 54:21 56:12,14 57:23 58:8,10 71:24,25 73:17 74:3,15 75:15 76:5,9,24,25 77:20 78:9,14 79:1,20,24 80:2,17 83:20 85:9 90:23 91:4,6 94:8 95:3,20,23 96:1,7 97:9,12,24 98:7,16 99:6,7, 14 100:15,17,24 101:15 102:7,10,15 104:4,21 106:21,24 107:13 108:5,8, 10</p> <p>projected 25:2 31:15,20 60:22 61:5 77:8 112:23</p> <p>projects 2:23 3:2,3 7:10 20:5 26:23,24 40:19 42:21 47:4 79:7 91:1 103:8,18, 20,21 105:23 106:7</p> <p>proof 97:22</p> <p>propagandist 18:7</p> <p>properly 54:23</p> <p>properties 16:25 28:16 43:13 50:6,11,19 55:2 58:16 63:15,21 70:19 81:9 87:22 93:2 94:15 95:21 100:20</p> <p>property 16:21,23 18:21 20:4 21:12,20 28:25 29:1 40:12 41:6,12,15 42:19 48:10,25 49:7 50:4,11 51:8,14 52:20,24 54:25 55:4,5 57:12,17 62:23 63:3,14,21 64:9,11 67:15, 23 68:1 71:2 91:21 92:9, 13,15,19,20 93:9 96:3 102:9 110:5 113:16</p> <p>proponents 13:17 36:19</p> <p>Proponents' 36:24</p> <p>proposal 80:15 83:7,16</p> <p>proposals 83:9</p> <p>proposed 8:17 12:9,23 14:2,8 15:12,14 20:5 24:23,24 32:21 71:1 75:23 80:18 81:2 90:22</p> <p>proposes 66:9</p> <p>pros 59:9 72:6 112:3</p> <p>prosecutor's 5:7</p> <p>protect 26:22 28:17 58:8 71:6</p> <p>protected 77:15</p>	<p>protection 19:5</p> <p>protective 67:20</p> <p>protects 26:10,16,18</p> <p>prove 54:20 63:2</p> <p>proven 16:20 63:9,19</p> <p>provide 33:8 43:25 68:2 69:8,10 72:14 73:15 79:3</p> <p>provided 45:16</p> <p>providing 25:21,24 96:9</p> <p>provisions 49:6,18</p> <p>proximity 14:5 58:8</p> <p>public 2:2,6,17,22 5:14 6:8,20 7:14,22 8:7,11 19:3, 5,15 32:24 34:17 41:22 45:20 46:24 47:7 66:25 95:6,17,18 96:1,4,6 97:22 102:18 103:11</p> <p>publicizing 18:20</p> <p>published 7:17</p> <p>PUCO 96:9 97:19 101:2</p> <p>purchased 24:19 113:21</p> <p>purple 92:18</p> <p>purpose 8:11</p> <p>pushing 13:18 20:8 99:9</p> <p>put 20:24 23:8 35:5 36:13 42:21 43:5 60:4,6,13 62:18 67:14 74:21 91:2 93:13 94:6 106:5 107:17,20 112:5 113:2,5,10 114:2</p> <p>puts 24:2 40:23</p> <p>putting 16:16 27:3,12 60:7 62:16 63:24 109:25</p> <p>puzzle 8:25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> <hr/> <p>qualifies 3:13</p> <p>quality 25:19 26:2,15</p> <p>quarter 38:13</p> <p>question 8:15 12:2 16:19 37:21 46:22</p> <p>questionable 44:19</p> <p>questions 4:1,9 14:6,11, 12 17:4 37:11,23 46:17 50:20 107:8,12</p> <p>quick 42:13</p> <p>quickly 54:25</p> <p>quote 67:8 74:16</p> <p>quoted 33:13 45:11</p>	<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">R</p> <hr/> <p>raccoons 70:17</p> <p>race 103:25</p> <p>racing 99:3</p> <p>rain 28:8,9 55:25 56:1</p> <p>rainfall 28:12</p> <p>rains 20:12 55:23 105:9</p> <p>rainstorm 56:17</p> <p>rainstorms 55:14 56:14</p> <p>rainwater 33:18</p> <p>raise 10:17 20:18 55:15</p> <p>raising 36:16 72:20,23</p> <p>rampant 15:7</p> <p>ramped 89:8</p> <p>Randazzo 2:11,14,15 3:6 37:20 38:4 52:13 86:10</p> <p>Randolph 96:3</p> <p>ranks 22:25 103:15</p> <p>rapid 55:24</p> <p>rapidly 34:5</p> <p>rate 15:9 44:10 48:6</p> <p>rats 70:17</p> <p>re-evaluation 43:12</p> <p>reach 60:22 102:23</p> <p>reached 102:20</p> <p>read 32:7 40:19 80:15 88:2 96:20 97:24</p> <p>Reading 96:8</p> <p>readings 14:10</p> <p>real 14:4 16:6 18:22,24 19:2</p> <p>realization 77:17</p> <p>realize 11:25 33:9 58:12 96:21</p> <p>reason 88:25 91:24</p> <p>reasonable 25:19 103:12</p> <p>reasoning 96:17</p> <p>reasons 11:16,17,18 40:5 74:1 79:8 94:3</p> <p>receive 8:12 18:9 21:12 42:24 43:15 54:10 68:10</p> <p>received 85:11 97:18</p> <p>receiving 18:5 82:24 97:17,19</p> <p>recent 50:21 112:20</p> <p>recently 14:16 113:4,21</p>	<p>recharge 26:18</p> <p>recommendation 8:22</p> <p>recommended 111:5</p> <p>record 9:5,11,22 17:20 19:24 21:24 22:8 24:12 32:7 38:3 57:8 71:20</p> <p>records 41:22</p> <p>recoupment 44:21</p> <p>recovered 48:16</p> <p>recreational 26:8</p> <p>recyclable 49:20</p> <p>recycle 34:8 35:5 49:24</p> <p>recycled 28:4 34:13 87:8</p> <p>recycling 15:20,25 26:9 50:2</p> <p>red 22:14,15 84:2</p> <p>reduce 54:22 105:20</p> <p>reduced 68:2 105:2</p> <p>reduction 68:1 109:16</p> <p>reels 15:10</p> <p>refer 6:23</p> <p>reflect 8:23 9:10 68:25</p> <p>reflection 30:19</p> <p>refrain 18:19 73:1</p> <p>regarded 13:8</p> <p>Register-herald 18:25</p> <p>regular 34:24 53:5 105:8 111:5</p> <p>regulate 113:12</p> <p>regulated 3:6,7</p> <p>regulation 3:1,10</p> <p>regulations 51:5 93:5</p> <p>reiterate 77:22</p> <p>related 3:1,10</p> <p>relationships 103:23</p> <p>relatives 99:19</p> <p>relevant 84:23</p> <p>reliability 105:21</p> <p>reliable 86:5</p> <p>rely 11:24 29:12 33:6 34:1 70:1</p> <p>remain 36:3 51:16</p> <p>remember 37:16 55:15 93:10 95:14</p> <p>remind 66:22</p> <p>remote 46:12,13</p> <p>remove 50:22</p>
---	--	---	---

removed 81:4	respectful 84:17	rising 104:22 112:22	Sadly 15:6
renewable 32:24 34:9 77:1,6 78:11 79:21 106:9 109:22	respectfully 18:18	risk 54:13 55:10 57:24 112:7	safe 53:23 54:7 78:10 113:24
Renewables 18:8 19:4 21:8 30:3 31:8,24 32:21 36:7 45:23 66:8,25 68:9 69:16 75:20 76:5 91:4	respecting 99:22	risks 50:3 112:2	safely 54:23 55:5
renewal 33:6	respective 7:12 8:6	Ritter 78:5 79:16	safety 29:10 49:16,18 50:15 54:17
renewed 43:1	responds 57:25	Riverwalk 104:16	salesmen 21:4
repair 50:9	response 97:15,16 101:5 102:22	road 11:1,10 12:3 13:1 14:16 16:7 17:1,22 18:7 19:2,4 20:1,22 21:1,8 22:11 24:14,21 30:3 31:8, 24 32:18,21 33:22 34:18 35:1 36:7 40:1 42:10,12 45:22 46:23 59:1 65:22 66:8,25 68:9,15 69:15,21 70:9 71:22 75:19 76:5,22 78:6,24 79:17 82:3 85:10, 12 91:4,16 94:1 108:22 109:2	Sam 2:11,15 84:1
replace 27:5 46:9	responsibility 73:10	Road's 70:21	Sardinia 94:1
replaced 30:11,12	responsible 12:20 28:1 50:22 110:24	roads 27:23 30:10,11,15 76:12 106:6	sat 75:4
replacements 28:1	rest 21:17 29:3 66:16 92:18	Rob 88:10,11	satellite 14:10
report 8:19 29:11,14 33:5 68:20	restore 55:6	Rocky 105:2	Sater 4:16
reported 49:8	restored 55:12	rodents 92:24	Saturday 59:8
reporter 9:3,9,20 32:9	restrict 7:20	roofs 50:16	Savage 46:1
reports 96:12 105:8	result 2:18	room 3:20 10:6,11 19:18 21:7 44:2 46:5,11,13,15 47:2 75:3,6	save 37:22
represent 5:7 80:13	resulting 31:3 56:1	Roughly 50:7	scam 21:1 23:2
representative 4:20 90:17,20,25 102:19	results 55:24 58:15 101:13 112:13	Route 39:4 47:22 52:21 74:11 106:20	scams 23:3
representatives 4:3 5:3 34:18 35:2	retired 101:2	rows 109:4,7 114:10,11	scares 59:19
represented 101:14	retirement 77:5	Roy 24:20	scattered 27:23
represents 23:5	return 67:5	rude 99:22	scenario 15:21 16:5 42:9
request 18:18 41:23 93:7	returned 73:21	rule 92:16 113:6	scenery 109:3
requested 19:5	returning 67:2	ruled 96:15	Schabo 2:1,8 3:5,18 4:7, 19 5:2,12,19,23 6:4,7,18 10:23 11:2 17:13,19,23 19:17,23 21:14,19,24 22:7, 12 24:5,11,15 32:3,5,10 37:3,13,16 38:1,9,20 39:19 47:13,18,23 48:1 51:22 52:5,10 56:21 58:20 65:8, 18 71:14,19 73:1 74:4 76:14,20 77:24 79:10 80:5, 7 84:3,19,24 85:2 88:7 90:4,9 91:8,13,18 93:19 104:5,9 106:12,17 108:12, 18,24 114:12,20
requests 70:21	revenue 15:8 31:3 106:3	rules 99:23 100:13	scheduled 7:15,24
required 79:23 81:12 96:22	reversing 105:20	run 12:18 61:14	school 29:5 40:9,10 44:18 59:7 73:5,12 82:7
requirement 43:2	review 35:4	running 69:17 97:20 102:11 109:7	schools 29:6 44:13 69:5 73:13 76:11 77:11 102:13 106:6
requires 112:12	reviewed 8:25	runoff 20:11 39:11 70:2 76:1 81:18 82:24 87:17,19 112:14	scientists 33:8,12
research 28:25 33:2,9,12 34:22 36:18 59:6 75:21 78:12 109:23 111:3	revised 25:12	runoffs 26:17	scoot 65:3
researched 82:20	revisit 10:1	runs 20:15,17 23:20,21 52:23 82:4	Scott 3:22
researchers 34:22 111:2	revitalized 73:17	rural 26:14 31:14,16 40:14 57:18 61:11 107:24 110:2 113:13	scoundrels 23:11
reserved 25:24	rezoned 92:9		scratch 42:9
reside 11:1	rich 35:22	S	scratching 83:6
resident 11:6 40:3 48:22 65:14	Richard 71:14,15,21	sad 15:2,25	search 8:5 41:5
residential 33:23 52:20 70:19	richest 71:10		season 29:18
residents 15:5 16:24 18:17 31:14 33:25 35:3 49:12 53:4 96:23 106:4	Rick 41:25		seconds 99:15
resource 66:23 71:12	rid 55:5 87:6		secret 19:11
resources 25:22 26:11 71:2 82:19	Ridder 77:25 78:1,5 79:10,11,15 80:6		
	Ridenour 88:8 114:12,14		
	ridiculous 44:25		
	riding 109:6		
	right-hand 8:6		
	rights 26:25 57:15 58:11, 12		
	rips 24:1		

secretly 19:7 103:9	sheriff's 29:12 49:8,9	sits 40:16	22,23 111:1,4,9,11,19 112:5,9,11,18,25 113:3,7, 9,13,17,23,25 114:1,7,9,11
sections 49:23 54:9	sheriffs 36:14	situation 49:3 58:2 65:5 75:5	sold 15:19,24 69:18 86:21 92:9
secure 51:6 57:11,16	shift 84:7	sixty 94:9	sole 44:25
secured 51:4,18	shines 12:5	sixty-five 67:18	solid 26:9
secures 77:7	shipped 28:5 87:5,7	size 45:23,24	solution 89:14
security 29:9,13,15 48:17, 18,19,20 49:16,18	shirt 22:14	skeptical 106:25 107:2	solve 62:13 105:24
sediment 26:18	shocked 107:4	skin 59:23	solvent 36:3
seed 89:21	shop 104:2	sky 23:9	someplace 82:13
seeds 45:3	short 14:6 15:14 101:6	slams 43:12	Somers 90:7
seeking 7:5	short-circuit 37:22	slickers 23:1	Somerville 91:16
seeks 6:25	short-term 35:10 73:16	Slightly 114:21	Sorrell 24:6,7,13,16,17, 18,20
sees 16:13	shorten 100:5	slow 103:11	sort 100:17
selenium 58:5	shot 48:20	small 15:7,15 40:14 52:19 54:13	sorts 54:3
self-sustaining 35:16	shoulder 73:10	smooth-talking 23:1	sounds 69:1
sell 30:5 64:11,18,20 69:22 96:4,7	show 86:8 97:20 101:22	snakes 70:18	source 18:11 32:25 52:25 53:3 54:21 72:17 77:1 79:4
sellers 92:10	shown 63:13	snow 105:1	sources 86:5
selling 86:12	shows 62:25 63:18	so-called 66:17 80:23 101:4	south 20:17 31:19 52:25 56:7 86:21
send 98:3	side 65:24 73:3 81:21 85:19 107:12	social 60:21 93:15	southern 94:2
senior 34:3 57:4	sides 84:16 88:16	Sod 80:13	Southwest 54:8
sense 111:23	sights 109:5	soil 5:9 18:12 20:21 26:5 33:20 35:1 39:11 56:9 57:19 60:6 62:1 82:11 86:15 111:7 112:13	Southwestern 80:20
sentences 101:6	sign 9:15 50:12 51:8 75:15 99:2 107:4 114:17	soils 107:21 113:7,8	space 26:13
separate 7:10	signals 14:9,10	solar 2:5 4:4,15 6:22 7:2,7 8:17 11:11,15,22,23 12:3, 24 13:2,9,13,21,24 15:1, 10,17,22 16:8,18 18:6,10, 21 20:5 21:8 22:24,25 23:4,25 24:23 25:2,5,7 26:23,24 27:8,12,20,25 28:4,13,18 29:10,21,24 30:17,19,25 31:1,4,10,15, 20 32:2,21,24,25 33:8,10, 17,19 34:4,11,12,23 35:4, 6,15,19,23,25 36:1,2,4,5,6, 9,12,16,19,21 39:8 42:21 44:25 47:3,12 49:17 50:20 54:19,21 57:13 58:18 59:5, 9,11,15,21 60:9 62:12,18 63:1,13,15,24 64:15,17 66:9,14,20,23 67:2,4,6,16, 18,23 68:1,11 69:12,16 70:2,3,22 71:1 72:18,22 74:15 75:15,24 76:5,9,24, 25 77:8,20,22 78:9,10,16, 22 79:3,7,8,20,21 80:2 81:3,5,6 82:15 85:20,23 86:6,7 87:3,12,13,25 88:3, 23 89:13 90:22 91:2,6,22 95:3 96:7,9,17 97:18,21,24 98:5,8 99:14 100:24 102:15 103:8,19 104:21 105:19,23 107:17 109:10, 12,14,20,24,25 110:2,7,10,	spades 13:3
September 95:16	signatures 101:24		speak 9:9 18:16 52:10 69:3 79:18 89:1 94:5,16,24 99:1,2,10
served 40:6	signed 10:3 29:1 75:21 83:13 84:4 100:9 114:14		speaker 5:16,21 6:1,5,17 18:4,5 21:16,21,23 37:7,24 38:5,12 52:8 56:19 72:24 84:14,22 90:5 99:21 104:7
service 29:23 110:18	significant 63:2,8,17		speakers 99:5,11 107:10
services 43:25 45:16,18	signing 83:11		speaking 9:2 39:7 67:15 78:7 99:25 100:8,18 102:7
session 8:15	signs 21:5		special 30:1
set 70:3 93:10	silicon 57:7 58:7 59:20,22 60:3,16		specialize 57:6
Settineri 4:14,16 32:4,6, 11 37:9,14,18	similar 60:3,16 72:21		specific 34:8
seventeen 113:20	simple 46:16 78:16		speech 100:7
seventh 38:11,12	simply 17:5 49:12 112:6		spell 114:23
seventy-eight 34:10	sinful 35:13		spent 53:21 72:4 75:16,20
seventy-five 52:18 100:9, 11 101:15,18	sir 3:5 4:5 21:19 47:23 73:1 84:12 114:20		spirit 19:7
severely 60:25	sit 74:20 94:8 96:14		split 6:12
Seymour 4:17	site 11:4 46:9,11,12 49:20 50:5,13,21 51:1,2,3,4,8,10, 11,15,18,20 55:9,10,11 80:18 81:2		spoke 94:13 99:21 100:15 101:9 102:20
Shara 88:7 114:12	sites 105:4		sporting 105:14
share 22:20 37:4 38:6,7 66:17 84:15,18 102:5 104:20	Siting 2:2,12,19 3:20 8:4 32:1 33:22 40:23 41:3 68:18 84:10		
shedding 89:2			
sheet 9:17			
sheets 38:14			
sheriff 36:14 48:23			

<p>spot 94:20</p> <p>spotted 30:23</p> <p>spread 56:1,4</p> <p>springs 80:14,20 82:1</p> <p>stable 25:20 77:20 79:3 89:25</p> <p>staff 3:21,23 8:18,22</p> <p>stagnant 68:23</p> <p>Stahlheber 84:25 85:1,3, 4,8 86:11</p> <p>stalks 109:4</p> <p>stand 50:14 84:12</p> <p>standards 101:22</p> <p>standing 37:7</p> <p>start 49:4 54:13 71:19 91:13 92:19 93:4 102:15 105:20 106:2,17 108:18</p> <p>started 11:6 30:6,8,13 88:18</p> <p>state 3:7 9:21 10:23 11:1 12:1 17:19 19:23 22:7 31:1,3,9,11,19 35:17,22 39:4 41:9 47:18,21 49:1 50:9 51:13 52:21 53:2,18 54:1,6 56:7 59:7 65:19 74:11 76:22 77:12 88:19 102:14 103:13,15 106:20 112:1</p> <p>stated 25:17 37:5 58:13 76:8</p> <p>statement 9:12 10:13 47:19 100:1 114:18</p> <p>statements 83:7</p> <p>states 13:3 28:5,25 29:13 34:4 68:18,21 85:24 96:25 104:24 105:18</p> <p>statewide 3:9 113:6</p> <p>station 3:12</p> <p>station's 21:20</p> <p>stations 53:15</p> <p>statistical 63:6,7</p> <p>statistically 63:1,8</p> <p>statistics 63:6,18 96:9</p> <p>statutory 2:24</p> <p>stay 68:4</p> <p>stays 71:11</p> <p>steady 55:25</p> <p>stealing 16:3</p> <p>steel 15:11</p> <p>step 106:1</p> <p>stick 64:22 87:15</p>	<p>stolen 48:14,16,19</p> <p>stop 22:15 38:16 42:12 65:18 102:9 113:15 114:1</p> <p>stopped 23:19 102:25</p> <p>store 12:14</p> <p>Stores 53:14</p> <p>storm 26:17</p> <p>strategic 103:14</p> <p>Strategy 25:11</p> <p>streamed 10:9</p> <p>streams 55:14 107:22</p> <p>Street 4:17 5:1</p> <p>string 46:7</p> <p>strip 62:20</p> <p>stripped 48:11</p> <p>strong 31:21</p> <p>strongly 11:13 63:19</p> <p>struggle 36:3</p> <p>stuck 65:4</p> <p>students 29:7</p> <p>study 62:24 111:3 112:20</p> <p>stuff 59:17 60:13 94:13</p> <p>stupidity 22:23</p> <p>Stuttgart 33:13</p> <p>subject 5:14 6:20</p> <p>subsidies 13:17 21:11 23:15 35:21 83:19</p> <p>subsidized 16:2</p> <p>substantial 31:2 68:8 95:22</p> <p>substations 12:16 57:23</p> <p>substrates 58:7</p> <p>success 31:5</p> <p>successful 66:5 75:7,10</p> <p>suffer 114:8</p> <p>sufficient 49:18 51:11,14 112:22</p> <p>suggested 62:17 88:5</p> <p>suggesting 7:19</p> <p>suit 36:8</p> <p>sulfuric 110:13</p> <p>sum 44:12,15 83:25 100:14</p> <p>summary 58:17 68:20</p> <p>summer 53:7 109:1</p> <p>sun 12:2,5 23:8 40:21 67:8 72:19 109:13</p>	<p>sun's 13:12 23:5</p> <p>Sunedison 36:5</p> <p>sunflower 92:23</p> <p>Sungevity 36:4</p> <p>Suniva 36:6</p> <p>sunlight 11:24 12:6 13:13 103:16</p> <p>sunny 27:18 68:14</p> <p>sunshine 109:2</p> <p>supplies 80:19</p> <p>supply 14:6 26:4,6,19 53:5,6,14,20 54:23 55:7 112:25</p> <p>support 32:25 65:6 74:15 78:9 79:8,18,19 80:3 90:22 104:17 108:1,2</p> <p>supported 35:20</p> <p>supporters 32:23 58:10</p> <p>supporting 91:5 98:16</p> <p>supports 106:4</p> <p>suppose 103:1</p> <p>supposed 46:20 86:8 102:7</p> <p>supposedly 86:5 102:12</p> <p>surely 68:7</p> <p>surface 110:19</p> <p>surprised 3:21</p> <p>surrounded 113:16,25</p> <p>surrounding 28:20,24 29:16 31:4 67:21 92:25 93:2 110:20</p> <p>surroundings 77:18</p> <p>survive 66:4 111:18</p> <p>survives 83:20</p> <p>suspect 48:25</p> <p>suspicious 29:11 49:8</p> <p>swamp 95:14 104:4</p> <p>swear 9:20</p> <p>swim 54:2</p> <p>sworn 10:21 17:17 19:21 22:5 24:9 32:15 39:1,23 47:16 52:3 56:25 58:23 65:12 71:17 74:8 76:18 78:3 79:13 80:10 85:6 88:13 90:12 91:11 93:23 104:13 106:15 108:16</p> <p>system 3:9 50:1 51:16 54:19 73:25</p> <p>systems 31:18,22 57:8</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <hr/> <p>table 9:19</p> <p>taking 27:2,14 35:9 60:16 61:24 100:6 112:25</p> <p>Talawanda 80:14 82:1</p> <p>talk 38:23 41:19 44:24 46:21 59:3,13 60:19 62:23 87:21 97:8 98:19</p> <p>talked 45:19 85:20 106:24</p> <p>talking 7:17 44:16 47:3 72:5 99:12</p> <p>tall 109:4 111:11 113:17</p> <p>tax 21:10 23:14 29:2,5,8 30:4 35:23,24 39:14 41:7, 12 42:1 43:15,22 44:7 68:8 73:4,8,14 76:10 79:6,24 83:19,21 106:3 108:3</p> <p>Taxation 44:23</p> <p>taxed 43:13</p> <p>taxes 16:21 18:22,24 19:3 21:13 36:17 40:10,11,12 41:11,15,19 42:19 43:7 44:4 50:18 65:16 68:17 69:5 71:3 73:11 77:8,10 102:9</p> <p>taxing 43:18</p> <p>taxpayer 35:20 44:18 104:1</p> <p>taxpayers 13:5 16:3 36:10 44:16</p> <p>Taylor 78:6 79:16</p> <p>team 48:4 50:5 52:17</p> <p>technology 27:3,4 72:9, 12</p> <p>technology's 62:15</p> <p>telling 86:1 96:6</p> <p>telluride 34:14 58:4</p> <p>temperatures 104:22,23</p> <p>temporary 69:9</p> <p>ten 50:18 70:3 81:11,13,14 82:2 93:6,9 97:19</p> <p>term 44:25 67:9</p> <p>terminals 12:17</p> <p>terminology 44:24</p> <p>test 63:6</p> <p>testified 114:15</p> <p>testify 9:8,15,24 10:4 90:22 114:17</p> <p>testifying 10:5</p> <p>testimony 6:9 9:4 22:9 37:5 57:9 98:22 100:1</p>
---	--	---	---

<p>testing 35:2 63:9</p> <p>tetrachloride 59:21,22 60:3,16</p> <p>Texas 62:24 70:9</p> <p>theft 15:15 16:8 49:6,7 57:21</p> <p>thefts 48:9</p> <p>themselves 105:25</p> <p>theoretically 60:24</p> <p>thermal 109:14</p> <p>thing 21:10 28:2 39:9 41:24 42:15 44:19 72:11 74:2 86:1 89:10 101:17 109:24</p> <p>things 41:25 42:2 45:4,22 46:18 62:20 65:1 72:13 83:12 84:7 88:22 89:5 105:19 106:24 109:1</p> <p>thinking 23:12 105:18 107:7</p> <p>thinks 89:4</p> <p>third-world 35:7</p> <p>thirty 30:4 63:25 68:24 81:22 101:9 105:2</p> <p>thirty-eight 67:18</p> <p>thirty-five 91:23</p> <p>thirty-four 94:7</p> <p>thirty-three 103:16</p> <p>thought 22:18 73:4,11 85:14 92:4 107:6,13</p> <p>thoughts 104:20</p> <p>thousand 40:14 41:13 42:14,17,22,24 43:5 53:12 68:19,21 70:13 81:11,13,14 95:24,25 98:13</p> <p>thousands 83:4</p> <p>threat 33:21 66:8</p> <p>threatened 66:3</p> <p>three-year 36:7</p> <p>threw 107:1</p> <p>throw 42:13</p> <p>throwing 60:17</p> <p>tight 74:20</p> <p>tile 12:23,25 13:4 20:10 70:1,10 76:1</p> <p>tiles 14:24 28:11,15,19 70:4</p> <p>tillable 25:4 66:21</p> <p>time 2:3 4:12 10:15 36:15 38:17 46:21 47:12 49:11 53:22 54:14,16 62:3 66:15 70:23 72:5 73:8,16 80:4</p>	<p>83:8 84:11 89:4 95:13 97:1,6,10 99:8,22 100:5,6 103:2 104:4 105:16</p> <p>timely 30:12</p> <p>times 50:15 55:25 59:16 60:10,12 81:12,13,14 83:2 108:8</p> <p>title 51:8</p> <p>today 20:11 27:17 37:4 50:14 59:3,10 61:7 65:1 90:21 98:17 102:18</p> <p>told 32:23 34:19 47:1 87:3,6,10,13 98:11,14,20</p> <p>tolerate 67:25</p> <p>Tom 80:7,8,12</p> <p>tonight 2:12 3:19 4:3 10:8 13:10,16,23 14:15 16:15 17:25 38:14,23 79:18 87:4 94:24</p> <p>tonight's 6:20 7:22 9:2</p> <p>tons 34:10</p> <p>top 27:12 66:10</p> <p>topic 12:19</p> <p>topsoil 27:2,5 82:9,23</p> <p>torch 49:22</p> <p>torches 50:1</p> <p>tornado 23:25 28:3</p> <p>tornados 53:8 105:10</p> <p>torrential 105:9</p> <p>total 73:10 112:20</p> <p>tourists 53:20</p> <p>towers 12:17</p> <p>town 56:7</p> <p>Towne 90:17</p> <p>towns 53:15</p> <p>township 5:10 11:6 15:6 16:23 24:17,21 37:12,21 38:2 39:5 40:2 46:23 47:23,24 48:4,8 49:12,17 51:14 52:16,18 58:1 59:2 64:16 65:16,22 74:12 76:11,22 78:8 79:17,19 80:14 82:4 85:10 90:8 91:17,19 102:24 104:19 108:23</p> <p>townships 7:4,8 12:8 13:8 20:4 32:7 34:1 49:1 69:5 77:11</p> <p>toxic 20:19 24:2 34:15 36:16 53:24 54:24 59:16 60:10 83:2 110:9,12 111:6 114:4</p> <p>toxicity 33:21</p>	<p>toxins 20:24 33:19 34:25</p> <p>traded 109:10</p> <p>tradeoff 16:16</p> <p>traditional 41:12 43:18</p> <p>traffic 30:11</p> <p>Trail 57:3</p> <p>trailers 48:14,15</p> <p>tranquility 57:18</p> <p>transcribed 9:3</p> <p>transcript 9:13 10:8 45:19</p> <p>transparency 19:8 46:22</p> <p>transparent 46:20 47:2,7,9</p> <p>transpired 17:3</p> <p>transport 12:15</p> <p>traps 64:10</p> <p>travel 12:10 48:14</p> <p>treated 43:10,11</p> <p>trees 27:22 39:12 93:2</p> <p>tremendous 83:23</p> <p>trend 105:20</p> <p>Trenton 71:22,23</p> <p>trichloroethane 110:14</p> <p>trouble 50:10</p> <p>trough 99:3</p> <p>true 81:1,4,7 85:14,16,17</p> <p>trust 19:15 91:24</p> <p>trustees 46:23,25 102:24</p> <p>truth 18:20</p> <p>truths 59:5</p> <p>turkeys 70:17</p> <p>Turn 105:7</p> <p>turned 53:18</p> <p>turning 18:6 66:19</p> <p>TV 64:4</p> <p>twelve 25:16 95:25</p> <p>twenty 9:15 41:13 42:14 45:10 99:15</p> <p>twenty-eight 85:12,18</p> <p>twenty-five 27:9 50:7 63:25</p> <p>twenty-four 6:2 100:10</p> <p>twenty-one 105:4</p> <p>twenty-three 27:9 81:5</p> <p>Twenty-two 101:9</p>	<p>twisting 93:15</p> <p>type 14:25 41:4 73:19</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">U</p> <hr/> <p>U.S. 57:11 104:22</p> <p>ugly 86:8,9</p> <p>unanswered 17:4</p> <p>unappealing 67:19</p> <p>Uncle 84:1</p> <p>uncontrollable 66:4</p> <p>underground 12:18,21 13:25 14:18</p> <p>underneath 107:18</p> <p>understaffed 29:12 49:10</p> <p>understand 11:23 37:3 38:8 43:8,9,20 97:7,12 100:8 101:25 103:6</p> <p>understanding 43:16 97:1</p> <p>understood 99:4</p> <p>undoubtedly 56:12</p> <p>uneducated 36:20</p> <p>unfair 61:23 64:5</p> <p>unfettered 58:13</p> <p>unhidden 59:4</p> <p>UNIDENTIFIED 5:16,21 6:1,5,17 21:16,21,23 37:24 38:5 52:8 56:19 72:24 84:14,22 90:5 104:7</p> <p>Unintelligible 72:25</p> <p>union 18:8 90:15</p> <p>unique 25:18 31:17 113:8</p> <p>unit 59:16 60:11</p> <p>United 28:5 60:20</p> <p>University 35:17 62:24</p> <p>unlike 31:17 92:9 102:2</p> <p>unlimited 53:5</p> <p>unnneeded 16:17</p> <p>unpleasant 18:20</p> <p>unplug 21:16,23</p> <p>unpredictable 27:16</p> <p>unprofessional 101:3</p> <p>unquote 67:8</p> <p>unsatisfactory 14:19</p> <p>unusable 62:20</p> <p>upcoming 99:5</p> <p>upgrade 30:14</p>
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<p>upper 8:5</p> <p>urge 31:23 44:2 91:5</p> <p>usage 89:15</p> <p>utilities 2:17 41:1,17</p> <p>utility 3:10 4:24 19:3 41:2, 5,7,9,16 43:10,11,13,18 45:1 48:15 89:1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <hr/> <p>vacant 50:13</p> <p>vacation 105:14</p> <p>valuable 36:25 55:18 66:20 80:25 114:6</p> <p>valued 113:2</p> <p>values 16:23 21:12 25:18 28:25 62:24 63:3,14 64:9 67:15 71:2 110:6</p> <p>vandalism 15:18,23 16:7 50:18 57:21</p> <p>variable 63:4,5,11</p> <p>variance 93:7</p> <p>varied 63:16</p> <p>variety 40:5</p> <p>vegetation 28:19</p> <p>vehemently 13:7</p> <p>vehicles 109:19</p> <p>venue 7:20</p> <p>Verengo 36:5</p> <p>vermin 70:18</p> <p>Vermont 104:25</p> <p>viability 18:15 22:25</p> <p>viable 107:13 108:4</p> <p>vice 98:7</p> <p>viewed 9:6</p> <p>views 37:4</p> <p>village 15:7 48:16,22 50:6, 8</p> <p>violates 57:14</p> <p>violence 49:13</p> <p>violent 48:8</p> <p>visit 98:20 105:16</p> <p>visits 96:4</p> <p>visually 67:19</p> <p>voice 95:7 103:5</p> <p>Vorys 4:16</p> <p>voted 113:5</p>	<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">W</p> <hr/> <p>wait 41:15</p> <p>waiting 6:11 10:12 102:17,22</p> <p>wake 97:23</p> <p>walk 107:8</p> <p>wall 47:8</p> <p>Walmart 98:3</p> <p>wanted 22:15 32:25 45:21 66:15 88:25 99:1 101:24</p> <p>wanting 73:14</p> <p>warming 105:20</p> <p>Warren 45:8</p> <p>wash 53:25</p> <p>washed 33:16</p> <p>washed-out 33:18</p> <p>Washington 7:8 95:11 108:22</p> <p>waste 24:2 34:7,11,25 35:7 54:24 55:6 59:14,16 60:7,10</p> <p>wastes 26:10</p> <p>wastewater 54:24</p> <p>wasting 38:16 114:7</p> <p>watch 29:13 48:4,24 49:2 52:17 64:4,9</p> <p>water 5:9 18:13 20:10,15, 16,17,20 23:22 26:5,15,17, 19 28:16,20,21,23 30:20 31:18,22 34:2 52:25 53:3, 4,5,6,12,14,16,17,20 54:3, 5,7,8,11,12,16,17,22 55:3, 7,17 57:19 59:25 60:6,7 76:1 80:19,20,25 81:1,8, 19,25 82:5,12,16,23 107:22</p> <p>waterlogged 70:5</p> <p>waters 56:6</p> <p>watersheds 26:16</p> <p>Waterworks 80:14</p> <p>ways 74:19</p> <p>weak 66:2</p> <p>weather 22:21 27:15 68:13 89:22</p> <p>website 8:4 41:4 96:10</p> <p>weekend 31:12</p> <p>weight 18:2</p> <p>well-being 16:17</p> <p>wells 28:20 34:1 80:20</p>	<p>west 5:6,13 20:1 39:4 40:17 52:22 74:11 106:20 108:21</p> <p>wet 86:17</p> <p>what-if 15:21 16:5</p> <p>wheelers 48:15</p> <p>white 56:6</p> <p>wife 39:7 72:1</p> <p>wildlife 26:6 29:17 30:16, 17 31:18,22 70:15 111:10 114:6</p> <p>willfully 57:17</p> <p>win/win 79:25</p> <p>wind 86:6 105:17,18,24 109:3</p> <p>windmill 86:8</p> <p>windmills 86:9</p> <p>windows 48:12 50:17 109:2</p> <p>winds 27:22 53:7,25</p> <p>winter 104:23 105:4,5</p> <p>wire 15:10 67:21</p> <p>wiring 48:12</p> <p>Wisconsin 104:25</p> <p>wise 25:6</p> <p>wishes 38:15</p> <p>witnessed 105:17</p> <p>witnesses 9:18 10:16 37:11</p> <p>women 75:7</p> <p>wood 26:1</p> <p>woodlands 26:2 31:4</p> <p>Woods 31:9,19 53:2,18,19 54:1,6 82:6 107:23 112:1</p> <p>word 86:24 94:6</p> <p>words 23:4 95:14</p> <p>work 46:8 91:3 92:1 96:10</p> <p>worked 11:8 45:7 82:7 90:25</p> <p>worker 18:8</p> <p>workers 46:8,13</p> <p>working 53:22 91:4 93:14 99:20</p> <p>workmanship 14:25</p> <p>workmen 14:18</p> <p>works 45:22</p> <p>world 26:1 27:5,7 36:6 60:22 61:9 87:5 103:6 104:22</p>	<p>world's 62:13 67:6</p> <p>worn 34:20</p> <p>worried 64:2</p> <p>worry 52:14 62:11</p> <p>worse 17:7</p> <p>worth 69:2 71:7 96:6 112:2,7</p> <p>worthless 87:11</p> <p>write-up 101:19</p> <p>written 9:11</p> <p>wrong 15:3 62:12 95:10 101:23</p> <p>wrote 26:21 101:2</p> <p>WYATT 114:19,25</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Y</p> <hr/> <p>yards 70:8</p> <p>year 19:1 28:7,8 41:14 42:2 55:21,23 68:16 81:17 82:8,10 86:7 104:1</p> <p>years 19:12 24:19 36:4 45:10 48:5 50:14,19 52:18 54:9 61:6 62:4,5 63:25 65:25 68:24 69:2 82:2,3 85:21 91:24 102:11 105:6, 13 113:20</p> <p>yields 70:16 112:21</p> <p>Yingli 36:5</p> <p>younger 72:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Z</p> <hr/> <p>zoning 3:8 41:16,17 45:9 67:9,11,13</p>
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Summary: Transcript electronically filed by Ms. Courtney L Elliott on behalf of Mike Mobley Reporting