

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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TELEPHONIC BUSINESS MEETING

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2019

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The Commission convened via
teleconference at 10:00 a.m., Catherine Lhamon,
Chair, presiding.

PRESENT:

CATHERINE E. LHAMON, Chair

PATRICIA TIMMONS-GOODSON, Vice Chair

DEBO P. ADEGBILE, Commissioner

GAIL HERIOT, Commissioner

DAVID KLADNEY, Commissioner

PETER KIRSANOW, Commissioner

KAREN K. NARASAKI, Commissioner

MICHAEL YAKI, Commissioner

MAURO MORALES, Staff Director

MAUREEN RUDOLPH, General Counsel

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STAFF PRESENT:

LASHONDA BRENSON

KATHERINE CULLITON-GONZALEZ

PAMELA DUNSTON, Chief ASCD

LATRICE FOSHEE

ALFREDA GREENE

JUANDA SMITH

PILAR VELASQUEZ MCLAUGHLIN

BRIAN WALCH

COMMISSIONER ASSISTANTS PRESENT:

ALEC DUELL

CARISSA MULDER

AMY ROYCE

RUKKU SINGLA

PEACH SOLTIS

ALISON SOMIN

IRENA VIDULOVIC

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(10:00 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. This meeting of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights comes to order at 10:00 a.m. Eastern time on November 8th, 2019. The meeting takes place over the phone.

I'm Chair Catherine Lhamon. I'd like to confirm each of the Commissioners is on the line. So I'll take a roll call here at the outset. Please say present when I say your name. Vice Chair Timmons-Goodson?

VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Adegbile?

COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Present.

CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Heriot?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I'm here.

CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Kirsanow?

Commissioner Kladney?

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Here.

CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Narasaki?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Present.

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1 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Yaki?

2 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Present.

3 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Based on
4 that, a quorum of the Commissioners is present. Is
5 the Court Reporter present?

6 COURT REPORTER: Yes, ma'am, I am
7 present.

8 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Okay, thank you. Is
9 the staff director present?

10 STAFF DIRECTOR MORALES: I am present.

11 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. The
12 meeting will now come to order. Is there a motion
13 to approve to the agenda for the business meeting?

14 **I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

15 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: So moved.
16 This is Vice Chair Timmons-Goodson.

17 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Commissioner
18 Adegbile seconds.

19 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Are there
20 any amendments?

21 Hearing none, let's go to approve the
22 agenda as amended. All those in favor, say aye.

23 (Chorus of aye.)

24 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Any opposed? Any
25 abstentions?

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1 The motion passes unanimously.

2 The first item on our agenda is an item that
3 we tabled from our last business meeting which is a
4 discussion and vote on appointments to the
5 Commission to Maryland Advisory Committee.

6 **II. Business Meeting**

7 **A. Discussion and Vote on Commission Advisory**

8 **Committee Appointments, Maryland**

9 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Before we begin
10 discussions, I remind my fellow Commissioners that
11 objections to these nominations have already been
12 shared with all the Commissioners.

13 To the extent we would like to discuss
14 continuing objections, I remind my fellow
15 Commissioners that the Commission has a policy to
16 not defame, degrade, or incriminate any person.
17 Each of these individuals has agreed to volunteer
18 time and energy in the pursuit of the protection of
19 civil rights.

20 With that said, I move that the
21 Commission appoint the following individuals to the
22 Maryland Advisory Committee based on the
23 recommendation of the staff director. Kendra
24 Brown, Teresa Chaurand, Tamara Chrisler, Sheryl
25 Cozart, Candace Dodson-Reed, David Kim, Sara Love,

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1 Melinda Maddox, Marie Meszaros, Jennifer Mathis,
2 Michelle Minton, Walter Olson, Joseline
3 Pena-Melnyk, Genevieve Segura, and Elizabeth
4 Slattery.

5 With this motion, the Commission will
6 also appoint Kendra Brown as the Chair of the
7 Maryland Advisory Committee. All of these members
8 will serve as uncompensated government employees.
9 If the motion passes, the Commission will authorize
10 the Staff Director to execute the appropriate
11 paperwork for the appointments which will begin on
12 November 17, 2019, after the current committee
13 expires.

14 Do I have a second to this motion?

15 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: I second,
16 Kladney.

17 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Any
18 discussion on the slate?

19 Hearing none, I'll call the question
20 and take a roll call vote. Commissioner Adegbile,
21 how do you vote?

22 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Aye.

23 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Heriot?

24 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I don't see any
25 point in going into an executive session to discuss

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1 this, but I vote an emphatic no.

2 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner

3 Kirsanow?

4 Commissioner Kladney?

5 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner

7 Narasaki?

8 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Yaki?

10 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

11 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Vice Chair

12 Timmons-Goodson?

13 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: I vote yes. The

15 motion passes. One Commissioner opposed, no

16 Commissioner abstained, all others were in favor.

17 We'll now move to the West Virginia

18 Advisory Committee.

19 **B. Discussion and Vote on Commission Advisory**

20 **Committee Appointments, West Virginia**

21 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: I move that the

22 Commission appoint the following individuals to the

23 West Virginia Advisory Committee based on the

24 recommendation of the staff director. Lisa Younis,

25 Katherine Dooley, Frank Hartman, Jeri Kirby, Anne

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1 Marie Lofaso, Tara Martinez, Lydia Milnes, Fanica
2 Payne, William Rhee, Isabel Simon, Merideth Smith,
3 Sean Thomas, Stephanie Thornton, Jeremiah
4 Underhill, Ronald Neal Walters, and Joshua
5 Weishart.

6 With this motion, the Commission will
7 also appoint Lisa Younis as the Chair of the West
8 Virginia Advisory Committee. All of these members
9 will serve as uncompensated government employees.
10 If the motion passes, the Commission will authorize
11 the staff director to execute the appropriate
12 paperwork for the appointments which will begin on
13 November 17, 2019, after the current committee
14 expires. Do I have a second to this motion?

15 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Kladney, I
16 second.

17 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Any
18 discussion on the slate?

19 Hearing none, I'll call the question
20 and take a roll call vote. Commissioner Adegbile,
21 how do you vote?

22 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Aye.

23 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Heriot?

24 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I vote no,
25 failure of balance.

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1 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
2 Kirsanow?

3 Commissioner Kladney?

4 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
6 Narasaki?

7 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Yaki?

9 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

10 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Vice Chair
11 Timmons-Goodson?

12 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: And I vote yes. The
14 motion passes, one Commissioner opposed, no
15 Commissioner abstains, all others were in favor.

16 The next item on our agenda is a
17 discussion and vote on the Commission's report
18 titled Women in Prison: Seeking Justice Behind
19 Bars.

20 **C. Discussion and Vote on the Commission's**
21 **report, Women in Prison: Seeking Justice Behind**
22 **Bars**

23 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: First we will
24 consider the report, and then we will consider the
25 findings and recommendations. To open the floor

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1 for discussion, is there a motion?

2 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes, Madam
3 Chair, Dave Kladney here. I move the Women in
4 Prison report text, as circulated by my special
5 assistant on Thursday, November 7th, be adopted by
6 the Commission.

7 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Is there
8 a second?

9 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Vice-Chair
10 Timmons-Goodson, I second.

11 (Simultaneous speaking.)

12 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Commissioner
13 Narasaki seconds.

14 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Enthusiastic second,
15 thank you both.

16 I'll offer two points to begin our
17 discussion. First, I thank Commissioner Kladney
18 for his leadership with this project. And I thank
19 our staff, particularly Katherine Culliton-Gonzalez
20 and LaShonda Brenson, as well as other members of
21 our staff who pitched in during the research and
22 development of this project.

23 Thanks to all of their efforts, we
24 today consider a report that looks at a range of
25 civil rights issues that impact women in prison

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1 from the adequacy of legal protections and federal
2 actions against unconstitutional and illegal
3 treatment of women in prison, to the appropriate
4 security classification and placement of women,
5 including transgender women, the impacts of family
6 disruption, access to healthcare, heightened risk
7 of sexual abuse and sexual assault, discipline
8 policies, the use of solitary confinement, to
9 educational and programming opportunities to
10 prepare women for re-entering society following
11 incarceration.

12 At our briefing, we heard compelling
13 testimony from legal and academic experts, as well
14 as some women who had themselves experienced
15 incarceration, in the particular harm that women
16 face in prison.

17 I believe this report does justice to
18 that testimony, I look forward to seeing the change
19 that this text can drive. I'll now open the floor
20 for discussion beginning with Commissioner Kladney
21 as the lead sponsor of this project.

22 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Thank you, Madam
23 Chair.

24 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Madam Chair,
25 Commissioner Kladney, at an appropriate time, I'd

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1 like to move a friendly amendment, but happy to
2 take your comments first.

3 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Thank you,
4 Commissioner Adegbile. Why don't we take the
5 friendly amendment first, how's that? We're
6 already there, let's move.

7 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Okay, thank
8 you. I would like to make a friendly amendment to
9 strike a sentence located on Page 186 of the report
10 in the section entitled overview of DOJ litigation
11 activities.

12 The sentence that I propose to strike
13 reads as follows. "Our analysis indicates that
14 while CRIPA provides a broad statutory mandate for
15 DOJ to enforce a variety of civil rights, DOJ's
16 enforcement activity has focused largely on sexual
17 abuse, sometimes adding other types of claims, but
18 not on bringing actions that are focused on issues
19 such as inadequate medical care, unequal
20 facilities, or systematic inattention to disability
21 needs."

22 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: I will accept
23 that as a friendly amendment.

24 May I proceed, Madam Chair?

25 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Sure, go ahead,

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1 Commissioner Kladney.

2 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Okay. I would
3 just like to echo your remarks and thank our staff,
4 who worked so diligently to research and draft this
5 report. I thank my fellow Commissioners for their
6 support in this project and all their input.

7 I'm proud the Commission will be a
8 voice raising the serious issues that incarcerated
9 women face, particularly because their civil rights
10 concerns are not often recognized or acknowledged
11 by the broader community.

12 As the Chair laid out, our report
13 covers a broad range of topics which affect
14 incarcerated women every day. Incarcerated people
15 do not forfeit their civil rights and those in
16 positions of power must act to ensure that these
17 rights are protected.

18 As a population, incarcerated women
19 have often been an afterthought and are therefore
20 at risk of harm when policies do not consider their
21 circumstances. We have laid out in detail the
22 research that exists in how prisons can uphold the
23 rights of women in their care.

24 As a country we should not assume what
25 happens in prisons doesn't matter or doesn't affect

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1 us but instead should listen to what happens behind
2 the prison walls and work to prevent abuses.

3 I look forward to our vote today and to
4 the issuance of this report. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you,
6 Commissioner Kladney. Is there any further
7 discussion?

8 Hearing none, I'll call the question,
9 and we can take a roll call vote on the report,
10 including with the friendly amendment that Mr.
11 Kladney has accepted.

12 Commissioner Adegbile, how do you vote?

13 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Aye.

14 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Heriot?

15 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I'm going to have
16 to abstain on this one.

17 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
18 Kirsanow?

19 Commissioner Kladney?

20 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
22 Narasaki?

23 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Yaki?

25 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

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1 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Vice Chair
2 Timmons-Goodson?

3 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: And I vote yes. The
5 motion passes, no Commissioners oppose, one
6 Commissioner abstained, all others were in favor.

7 Next, we will consider the findings and
8 recommendations for the report. To open the floor
9 for discussion, is there a motion?

10 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes, Madam
11 Chair. Commissioner Kladney here. I'll make two
12 separate motions on the findings and
13 recommendations. First, I move the findings and
14 recommendations, as circulated by my special
15 assistant on Tuesday, November 5th, be adopted with
16 the exception of Recommendation Number 25 which I
17 will move separately. In this motion, I move to
18 adopt all findings and recommendations except
19 Recommendation Number 25.

20 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Is there
21 a second?

22 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Madam Chair, I
23 have a friendly amendment to the motion to adopt
24 the findings and recommendations.

25 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Go ahead,

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1 Commissioner Adegbile?

2 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: I would move to
3 strike Finding 16, which is the finding that
4 corresponds to the text that we struck a moment
5 ago.

6 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Kladney,
7 do you agree with that?

8 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes, I do, Madam
9 Chair.

10 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Okay. So now we're
11 looking for a second to Commissioner Kladney's
12 motion as adopting the friendly amendment as well.

13 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Commissioner
14 Adegbile ---

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Commissioner?

17 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: I hear either second
18 from multiple Commissioners. We'll start with
19 Commission Adegbile's second. Any discussion about
20 other amendments?

21 Hearing none, I'll call the question
22 and take a roll call vote. Commissioner Adegbile,
23 how do you vote?

24 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Aye.

25 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Heriot?

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1 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I'm going to have
2 to abstain.

3 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
4 Kirsanow?
5 Commissioner Kladney?

6 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
8 Narasaki?

9 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Yaki?

11 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

12 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Vice Chair
13 Timmons-Goodson?

14 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

15 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: And I vote yes. The
16 motion passes. No Commissioner opposed, one
17 Commissioner abstained, all others were in favor.

18 Commissioner Kladney, you may now
19 proceed with your second motion.

20 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Thank you, Madam
21 Chair. Second, I move Recommendation 25, as
22 circulated by my special assistant on Tuesday,
23 November 5, be adopted.

24 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Is there
25 a second?

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1 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Commissioner
2 Narasaki, second.

3 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Unless
4 there's further discussion, or is there any
5 discussion of this motion?

6 Hearing none, I'll call the question
7 and take a roll call vote. Commissioner Adegbile,
8 how do you vote?

9 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Aye.

10 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Heriot?

11 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Abstain.

12 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
13 Kirsanow?
14 Commissioner Kladney?

15 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes.

16 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
17 Narasaki?

18 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes. And I
19 want to thank Commissioner Kladney and his special
20 assistant, Amy, for their incredible work on this
21 report. I'm very proud of it.

22 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Yaki?

23 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Thank you,
24 Commissioner.

25 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

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1 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Vice Chair
2 Timmons-Goodson?

3 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: And I vote no. The
5 motion passes. One Commissioner opposed, one
6 Commissioner abstained, all others were in favor.

7 Thank you all. I'll note that, with
8 the adoption of this report and the findings and
9 recommendations, the clock begins ticking with
10 respect to the deadline for statements and
11 rebuttals.

12 Statements will be due on Monday,
13 December 9, with rebuttals due on Thursday, January
14 9. Commissioners must file notice of their
15 intention to file a surrebuttal by Thursday January
16 16 and then must file the text of their surrebutal,
17 if any, on Thursday, January 23.

18 Next, we'll hear from staff director,
19 Mauro Morales for the monthly staff director's
20 report.

21 **D. Management and Operations**

22 **Staff Director's Report**

23 STAFF DIRECTOR MORALES: Madam Chair
24 and Commissioner, I apologize that I was unable to
25 circulate the report in time for this meeting. I

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1 will be sending the report to all of you, all the
2 Commissioners, in another week or so. So thank you
3 for your opportunity here.

4 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you, Mr. Staff
5 Director. That concludes the business on the
6 agenda for today's business meeting. But before we
7 adjourn, I want to take a moment just to recognize
8 Commissioner Karen Narasaki, for whom this will be
9 the last non-briefing business meeting before her
10 term expires at that end of November, about which I
11 am devastated.

12 **RECOGNITION OF COMMISSIONER KAREN NARASAKI**

13 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner Narasaki
14 joined the Commission with a long history of civil
15 rights advocacy. As her official bio notes, she
16 previously served as president and executive
17 director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice,
18 AAJC, one of the nation's premier civil rights
19 organizations.

20 Prior to that, she was the Washington
21 Representative for the Japanese American Citizens
22 League. She has served on many boards and
23 commissions throughout her career, including as
24 Vice Chair of the Leadership Conference on Civil
25 and Human Rights, Chair of the Rights Working

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1 Group, and Chair of the Asian American Diversity
2 Advisory Council for Comcast/NBCU.

3 She was a board member for Common
4 Cause, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights
5 Under Law, Independent Sector, The National Adult
6 Literacy Commission, National Immigration Law
7 Center, and the National Asian Pacific American Bar
8 Association.

9 What her official bio does not capture
10 is the fierce spirit of justice and equality that
11 animates her work here at the Commission and has
12 animated that work throughout her career.

13 I will say that, when I joined the
14 Commission, Commissioner Narasaki's reputation
15 well-preceded her. And I was delighted to learn,
16 in our work together, that that reputation is well-
17 deserved. She is and has been both a leader and a
18 colleague, willing to roll up her sleeves and to
19 put in the spadework to ensure that we, together,
20 do the work that we love and that the work is as
21 strong as it can be.

22 It has been just a deep pleasure to be
23 able to benefit from that expertise, that
24 leadership, and that good collegueship. It's been
25 clear to me throughout my time with Commissioner

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1 Narasaki on this Commission that the time, work,
2 and effort she puts into the projects, not just the
3 ones that she leads as lead Commissioner but on all
4 the work of the Commission, is extraordinarily
5 benefitted from her excellence.

6 She's been a consistent advocate for
7 the Commission, as well as for our staff, we're
8 grateful for her vigilance on civil rights issues
9 that the Commission needs to speak out on and her
10 thoughtful consideration of each of the issues that
11 come before the Commission.

12 Commissioner Narasaki, thank you for
13 your service to the Commission and to the country.
14 And I will miss you.

15 If there's nothing further, I hereby
16 adjourn ---

17 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Oh, Madam Chair?

18 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: -- this meeting.
19 Yes?

20 COMMISSIONER YAKI: Madam Chair?

21 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Yes, Commissioner
22 Yaki?

23 COMMISSIONER YAKI: I just wanted to
24 associate myself with your remarks on Commissioner
25 Narasaki. The Commission was invigorated by her

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1 joining and has been invigorated by her presence.
2 I count her as a friend and not just a colleague.

3 And I know that she will continue doing
4 what she has been doing here for six years and has
5 continued to do outside of the Commission work
6 which is be a passionate advocate for justice, for
7 human rights, for civil rights, for the dignity and
8 worth of every individual in this country. It has
9 been a privilege and pleasure to serve with her.
10 And I am going to miss her.

11 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Madam
12 Chair, Vice Chair Timmons-Goodson. Would you
13 permit me to say just a couple of words?

14 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Please go ahead,
15 Madam Vice Chair?

16 VICE CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Thank you
17 so much. I was sworn in on the same day with
18 Commissioner Narasaki. Prior to that time, the
19 only thing that I knew about her was what I had
20 heard at an American Bar Association meeting where
21 she had received the Spirit of Excellence Award.

22 I, in working with her, have come to
23 admire her tremendous work ethic, at her ability to
24 get things done. I've learned a great deal from
25 her. It has indeed been a joy to work with her and

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1 thank you, Karen, for being the great Commissioner
2 that you are and for being my friend. All the best
3 to you.

4 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Thank you,
5 Madam Vice Chair.

6 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Madam Chair?

7 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Madam Chair?

8 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Commissioner
9 Adegbile? Commissioner Adegbile and then after
10 Commissioner Adegbile, Commissioner Heriot.

11 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: I yield to
12 Commissioner Heriot.

13 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I just want to
14 thank --

15 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Okay, go ahead.

16 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: -- Commissioner
17 Narasaki for all her work on the Commission. And I
18 especially want to thank her for her efforts to
19 reach across the aisle. I appreciate it.

20 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you. Go ahead,
21 Commissioner Adegbile.

22 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: I yield to the
23 senior Commissioner from the great state of Nevada.

24 (Laughter.)

25 COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Thank you,

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1 Commissioner Adegbile. And I guess I am the senior
2 on the Commission. Commissioner Narasaki, I can't
3 believe six years has gone by so fast. I've
4 learned reams of knowledge from you and have
5 admired your leadership during this time.

6 You came to the Commission at a time
7 when we needed you desperately. And I thank you
8 for your leadership, your inspiration, I thank you
9 for being a fighter for civil rights, and I thank
10 you for continuing the struggle. Thank you very
11 much. I will miss you terribly.

12 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: And Commission
13 Adegbile?

14 COMMISSIONER ADEGBILE: Thank you,
15 Madam Chair. I would just like to join in all of
16 the appropriate words of tribute that have been
17 shared for Commissioner Narasaki and just add
18 briefly that when I think of Karen's contributions,
19 not only on this Commission but as a civil rights
20 leader, I think of her as a person of tremendous
21 courage, of an unwavering commitment to equal
22 justice and the equality of all persons in our
23 country.

24 And I am moved by the motivation that
25 brings her to her work in civil rights which, as

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1 all of us know, and as she has carefully explained
2 to us at appropriate times throughout our work over
3 many years, is connected to some of the most
4 harrowing and darkest moments of the country in
5 connection with civil rights and human dignity.

6 And so I thank Commissioner Narasaki
7 for her leadership, for her example, for the way in
8 which she reminds us of our history and how it
9 informs the continuing work of the Commission.

10 And I too count Commissioner Narasaki
11 as a friend. And I know that stepping away from
12 this Commission will not dim, in the least bit, her
13 efforts to fight for the equality of all Americans.
14 Thank you, Commissioner Narasaki.

15 STAFF DIRECTOR MORALES: Madam Chair?

16 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Madam Chair?

17 (Simultaneous speaking.)

18 STAFF DIRECTOR MORALES: On behalf of
19 the staff ---

20 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Go ahead, Mr. Staff
21 Director.

22 STAFF DIRECTOR MORALES: Thank you,
23 Madam Chair. Commissioner Narasaki, I can't thank
24 you enough for the leadership you've shown, the
25 advice and counsel you've given to me as a

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1 Commissioner on the Commission.

2 And on behalf of the staff, I know all
3 of them will miss you, they're all grateful for the
4 many kindnesses you've given to them, and your hard
5 work to the Commission. They appreciate the work
6 that's been done and how your leadership has helped
7 move the Commission forward.

8 So on behalf on the staff and myself,
9 we thank you for your service to the country and to
10 the Commission.

11 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Well, thank you
12 all. I feel like I've died, but I'm still around.

13 (Laughter.)

14 COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: I will still be
15 haunting all of you appropriately. I do want to
16 acknowledge, I do have one more hearing, so I will
17 be around to bug you for a couple more weeks. But
18 I very much appreciate Madam Chair's words, since I
19 won't have an opportunity to speak at the hearing.

20 I want to particularly recognize Mauro
21 Morales as the Staff Director and all of the staff,
22 General Counsel, OCRE, operations, the State
23 Advisory Committee staff. I'm very, very proud of
24 the work that all of you have done and the
25 sacrifices that all of you make to help make sure

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1 that the most vulnerable voices are heard and that
2 our country continues to move to, live up to its
3 ideals.

4 And I want to really thank the Staff
5 Director in particular, because when he came
6 onboard, we were a bit in chaos. And he has
7 managed very difficult decisions, dealt with a very
8 limited budget, and really helped to restore the
9 foundation of the Commission.

10 I want to also acknowledge the
11 leadership of the chair and my fellow Commissioners
12 with whom I sparred and enjoyed sparring. Because
13 I know that it's because we all passionately
14 believe in what America can be and should be.

15 And I also want to thank all of the
16 special assistants with whom I've worked. I admire
17 you greatly and look forward to seeing your future
18 careers as you all move on as well. And to Jason
19 Lagria, my former special assistant, and Peach
20 Soltis, she has come on in the heat of fire to help
21 to take me to the finish line.

22 And particular comments to the Vice
23 Chair, because as you know, we started together as
24 newbies and have a special bond. And I admire her
25 greatly. And I won't be around to be able to give

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1 my remarks when she leaves in a few weeks. So
2 thank you all. It meant a lot to me, your very
3 kind and generous words.

4 CHAIRMAN LHAMON: Thank you,
5 Commissioner Narasaki. And I look forward to one
6 last complete briefing with you before we actually
7 have to say an actual goodbye.

8 If there is nothing further, I hereby
9 adjourn this meeting at 10:28 a.m. Eastern time.
10 Thank you all.

11 (Whereupon, the above-entitled
12 matter went off the record at 10:28 a.m.)
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