

UNEDITED

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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BUSINESS MEETING

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FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 2025

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The Commission convened via Video
Teleconference at 10:00 a.m. EDT, Rochelle Garza, Chair,
presiding.
PRESENT:

ROCHELLE GARZA, Chair
VICTORIA FRANCES NOURSE, Vice Chair
GLENN MAGPANTAY Commissioner
STEPHEN GILCHRIST, Commissioner
J. CHRISTIAN ADAMS, Commissioner
GAIL HERIOT, Commissioner
PETER N. KIRSANOW, Commissioner
MONDAIRE JONES, Commissioner

MARIK XAVIER-BRIER, Acting Deputy Staff Director
SHERYL COZART, General Counsel & Parliamentarian

STAFF PRESENT:

ROBERT AMARTEY

TINALOUISE MARTIN

JULIAN NELSON

PAMELA DUNSTON, Chief, ACSD

DAVID MUSSATT

DONALD BATES

MICHELLE YORKMAN-RAMSEY

ANTONIO FAUNTEROY

PIOTR CZAPLICKI

ANTONIO FAUNTEROY

ROBERT STEINBUCH

COMMISSIONER ASSISTANTS PRESENT:

JOHN K. MASHBURN

CARISSA MULDER

THOMAS SIMUEL

IRENA VIDUOLOVIC

ALEXIS FRAGOSA

NATHALIE DEMIRDJAIN-RIVEST

YVESNER ZAMAR

STEPHANIE WONG

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3

A G E N D A

I. Approval of Agenda	5
II. Business Meeting	7
A. A Presentation by the Chair of the Arkansas State Advisory Committee on Their Report Entitled, the Right to Counsel in Arkansas	7
B. Discussion and Vote on the Commission's 2026 Business Meeting Calendar	19
C. Discussion and Vote on State Advisory Committee Appointments	21
D. Staff Director's Report	25
III. Adjourn Meeting	27

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10:07 a.m.

CHAIR GARZA: Good morning everyone, we're going to go ahead and get started. This business meeting of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights comes to order at 10:07 a.m. Eastern Time on Friday, June the 20th of 2025. This meeting is taking place via telephone conference. I'm the chair of the Commission, Rochelle Garza. Since we are all attending by phone, I'd like to start with a roll call.

So, please confirm your presence when I say your name. Vice Chair Nourse?

VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Present.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Adams?

COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Here.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Gilchrist?

COMMISSIONER GILCHRIST: Present.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Heriot?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I'm here.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Jones?

COMMISSIONER JONES: Present.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Kirsanow?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Here.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Magpantay?

COMMISSIONER MAGPANTAY: I'm here.

CHAIR GARZA: Great, thank you. Based on that roll call, we have a quorum of commissioners

present. Is the Court Reporter present?

COURT REPORTER: Present.

CHAIR GARZA: Thank you. Is the acting deputy staff director present?

MR. XAVIER-BRIER: Present.

CHAIR GARZA: Is the parliamentarian present?

MS. COZART: Present.

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR GARZA: Great, thank you so much. Now we're going to proceed with today's agenda as posted on the Federal Register. Today we're going to consider the following items. First, a discussion and vote on state advisory committee appointments and the staff director's report next. But before we get into today's agenda, I would like to offer a motion to amend the agenda to add two items to the top of our agenda.

First, a presentation by the chair of the Arkansas State Advisory Committee on the report entitled the Right to Counsel in Arkansas. And second, a discussion and vote on the Commission's 2026 calendar.

Do I have a second?

VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Yes, second from Vice Chair Nourse.

CHAIR GARZA: Great. A motion has been made and properly seconded. Is there any discussion on this motion?

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COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Adams.

CHAIR GARZA: Yes, Commissioner Adams?

COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Point of parliamentary inquiry, I couldn't hear, maybe because it was the phone, the second item. It sounded like something about -- I couldn't hear what the second item was about. Could someone explain that to me?

CHAIR GARZA: Yes. A discussion and vote on the Commission's 2026 calendar, the dates that we have chosen for our meetings.

COMMISSIONER ADAMS: All right, thank you.

CHAIR GARZA: You're welcome. Is there any further discussion on those items? Hearing none, we can go ahead and proceed to a roll call vote. So, please respond with yes if you are in favor, no if you're opposed, or indicate if you're abstaining. So, we're going to start with Vice Chair Nourse.

VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Aye.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Adams?

COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Gilchrist?

COMMISSIONER GILCHRIST: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Heriot?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Jones?

COMMISSIONER JONES: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Kirsanow?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Magpantay?

COMMISSIONER MAGPANTAY: Aye.

CHAIR GARZA: And I vote yes. So, thank you very much, the motion passes with eight votes in favor, no opposed, and no abstentions.

II. BUSINESS MEETING

A. A PRESENTATION BY THE CHAIR OF THE ARKANSAS STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THEIR REPORT ENTITLED, THE RIGHT TO COUNSEL IN ARKANSAS.

CHAIR GARZA: So, with that we're going to go ahead and begin with the presentation by our past chair of the Arkansas Advisory Committee, Robert Steinbuch, on the Committee's report, the Right to Counsel in Arkansas. Thank you so much for joining us, Chair Steinbuch, the floor is yours.

MR. STEINBUCH: Thank you so very much. As at least some of you may know, I'm the Arkansas Bar Foundation professor at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock Bowen School of law, and I was the chair of the Committee, and my term has now ended. I greatly enjoyed it, and I greatly enjoy that the term has now ended as well.

So, I look forward to giving you my report, and I will indeed not only try, but I will keep it brief.

So, our study was on the right to counsel in terms of public defense in Arkansas. And of course this is a

1 problem across the country, access to effective public
2 defenders for those who can't otherwise afford defense
3 attorneys is always a challenge.

4 It results in overworked and underpaid public
5 defenders, and the issue there of course is the case
6 loads that they have to endure, and the resulting effect
7 on the clients. So, this is not a question of whether
8 we're sufficiently funding people for the purposes of
9 their lifestyles, I'm talking about the attorneys of
10 course, it's a question as to whether or not we are
11 providing adequate defense to those who can't afford
12 private counsel.

13 Of course, excessive case loads for public
14 defenders can often result in defendants facing long
15 periods of incarceration without representation prior
16 to trial. And that was, and remains a particular
17 concern of the Committee. The excessive case loads,
18 coupled with the relatively low pay has also resulted
19 in high turnover in public defenders.

20 And to be clear, we expect a fair level of
21 turnover in public defender positions, as well as in
22 prosecutor positions, it just tends to be a role that
23 attorneys often take on early in their careers, and there
24 is a significant, but not complete attrition of those
25 attorneys. But if they are funded properly, and the
case load is sufficient, we think the system can, and
indeed has operated well.

1 Since the inception of the Arkansas Public
2 Defender Commission, the Arkansas legislature has
3 indeed attempted on various occasions to address the
4 shortage of public defenders, but it has only done so
5 in fits and starts, and often in temporary measures.
6 So, in the study we examined the adequacy of the public
7 defender system in Arkansas, the impact of lagging
8 public defense adequacy on other outcomes such as, as
9 I just mentioned, pre-trial incarceration.

10 The disparate impact of lagging public
11 defense resources on protected classes, because of
12 course there is a correlation between protected classes
13 and economics, and that's why you wind up with a
14 disparate impact. Guidelines and standards for case
15 loads for public defenders, and best practices and
16 recommendations to remediate the concerns that I have
17 just mentioned.

18 As we get started, or as we proceed I should
19 say, it's critical to recognize that one of the issues
20 involved is not only the individual treatment of
21 defendants in any given case, but the impact on our
22 criminal justice system, including the perception of
23 legitimacy, the apt perception of legitimacy if
24 defendants don't have adequate public defense.

25 We did find that, perhaps unsurprisingly,
that public defenders have very large case loads,
disproportionate with the case loads of the prosecutors

1 in fact, and it resulted in public defenders having a
2 significant back log in their cases. As I mentioned,
3 the Arkansas legislature has struggled to address this,
4 and has done so in fits and starts.

5 And so, we came up with the following
6 recommendations. We made recommendations to four
7 entities, the Commission itself of course, the governor
8 here in Arkansas, the Arkansas Supreme Court, which
9 regulates attorneys of course, and the Arkansas Public
10 Defender Commission. To this Commission, we
11 recommended a national study of access to public defense
12 and impact on civil rights, and a public statement
13 regarding the value of properly funding public defenders
14 as a constitutional obligation.

15 To the Arkansas governor and we recommended
16 prioritizing -- excuse me, to the governor and the
17 legislature we recommended prioritizing additional and
18 critically, continuous funding for public defender
19 positions, as well as support staff, investigators, and
20 language interpreters.

21 We recommended incentivizing training for
22 lawyers to handle complex criminal defense cases,
23 including death penalty certification, the evaluation
24 of additional investment opportunities in evidence
25 based substance abuse treatment, quality mental
healthcare, workforce training, diversion programs, and
other social programs that may reduce crime.

1 And finally, requiring complete data
2 collection and reporting of attorney case loads and
3 staffing within the Arkansas Public Defender Commission
4 to better evaluate the disparity in work between public
5 defenders and prosecutors. To the Arkansas Supreme
6 Court we recommended issuing ethical guidance for
7 attorneys regarding their duty to manage or refuse cases
8 if their case load presents an inability to properly
9 address their clients.

10 Also to direct the continuing legal education
11 board in the Office of Professional Responsibility to
12 offer continuous legal education credits for attorneys
13 willing to take on pro-bono defense to assist the Public
14 Defenders Commission. And finally to that Public
15 Defenders Commission, we recommended a study to
16 determine resources necessary to fully support the
17 Commission and its ability to provide timely and
18 effective counsel to indigent defendants.

19 And conduct complete data collection as I
20 mentioned a moment ago, and reporting of attorney case
21 loads to evaluate and compare relative to prosecutors.

22 And so, with that, I end the presentation portion of
23 my discussion, and of course I am available to answer
24 any questions, or at least try to answer any questions
25 that you might have.

 CHAIR GARZA: Well, thank you so much, Chair
 Steinbuch, for that presentation. Right now we're

1 going to go ahead and open up for questions. But I did
2 want to take a point of privilege because the criminal
3 legal system is something that interests me very much,
4 it's something that I've interacted with as a lawyer
5 myself, representing indigent clients.

6 So, I just wanted to ask you if you could tease
7 out a few more details about what the State Advisory
8 Committee found in terms of the kind of case load that
9 we're talking about for public defenders. So, if you
10 could give us a little bit more details like how many
11 cases are we talking about here?

12 MR. STEINBUCH: Yeah, we're talking about
13 often public defenders will have a case load of hundreds
14 of cases. Now, it's a little bit deceptive in the sense
15 of not every case is active at every moment, right?

16 But that notwithstanding, it was in multiple of the cases
17 typically that prosecutors have. And one of the things
18 I think we did very well on our committee, is by design,
19 as you well know, we are a committee of Republicans and
20 Democrats, including independents as well.

21 But left and right, and we're very open about
22 our discussion of politics in our meetings. And it is
23 easier for legislatures and governors in general, and
24 indeed it is the case in Arkansas as well, to provide
25 funding for prosecutors. You can be tough on crime,
and hey, I am a Republican, perhaps I was tied, or the
most conservative on the Committee.

1 So, I certainly subscribe to the notion of
2 tough on crime. But in doing so I also subscribe to
3 the notion of providing an adequate defense, because
4 even one wrongfully convicted defendant is a travesty.
5 And it was very easy, it has remained very easy in
6 Arkansas and elsewhere to fund prosecutor positions long
7 term.

8 Yet we saw that the funding of the public
9 defender positions was done much more sporadically, and
10 we had significant funding for example during and post
11 COVID to deal with backlog, but that funding went away,
12 it was designed to be temporary. And so, one of the
13 goals that we had with the Committee was to encourage
14 sort of ongoing funding for both positions, public
15 defenders, and prosecutors, with a level of parity
16 between those positions.

17 CHAIR GARZA: Well, thank you for that
18 response, it just sounds like there was a deep imbalance
19 in how you're funding essentially both of these arms
20 of the legal criminal system, right? They both have
21 to be very well funded. I'll stop asking questions and
22 let others jump in. I see that Vice Chair Nurse has
23 her hand up, so please go ahead and ask your question.

24 VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Hi, Professor Steinbuch,
25 it's nice to see a fellow professor here. We've got
26 another one on this Commission, so we're happy to see
27 you. Wonderfully designed, I love the report, I love

the summary of it, you did a great job.

MR. STEINBUCH: Thank you so much.

VICE CHAIR NOURSE: So, having worked on criminal justice issues for 30 years, I will tell you that we tried to get federal funding for defenders many, many years ago. And the basic pitch here often fails because people worry that average people don't have lawyers. Georgetown has created a low-bono program for middle class people who are not subject to public defenders because they can't get lawyers.

But the one thing that does seem to affect people as you recognize, you can be tough on crime, and still not want to put innocent people in jail. And it was the innocents piece of this that seemed to have the most effect, so I would like you to comment on that.

And second, I may have missed this in the report, do you have comparative figures between Arkansas and other states? Because this is a chronic problem across the United States.

MR. STEINBUCH: Yeah, we did not -- I'll take it in reverse order. We did not do any systematic evaluation comparing Arkansas to other states. Some of the testimony did touch on that, and Arkansas is worse than some, and better than others, perhaps unsurprisingly. But as you say, it is a problem ongoing across the United States, in part due to the political problem that you recognized, and I raised, and that's

a real challenge.

And now, you'll need to remind me, I apologize, Vice Chair, what was the first part of that question?

VICE CHAIR NOURSE: The first part of the question was about basically the kinds of arguments you make to try to get this funding. I mean, I hear you when there's disparate funding between prosecutors and public defenders. My experience in the past is, and I think liberals and conservatives have been both a problem in this, is that the real issue is about innocence.

We now have all these innocence projects, and that's because we're getting lawyers who fall asleep, Steve Bright and others have written about this for years. These lawyers are completely incompetent, they're on drugs, fall asleep, they don't file motions. And so, I just thought as you move forward, I know that you've probably had a difficult time on the Commission.

It is something that I think that people need to be reminded of, that if we don't have these defenders, then we're going to put innocent people in jail. And I --

(Simultaneous speaking.)

MR. STEINBUCH: I think -- I'm sorry, I didn't mean to step on you. You're precisely right, and of course this is an old notion, right? The old notion,

1 for those of us that went to law school back in the day,
2 was we always learned this doctrine, and it wasn't left
3 or right, that ten guilty people should go free to ensure
4 that one innocent person isn't convicted.

5 And it's somewhat an artificial claim, but
6 the notion of course is entirely true. There's much
7 more damage to society, and of course to that individual
8 by convicting an innocent person. And we have convicted
9 innocent people, we know this, irrespective of funding
10 of public defenders, because with such a large criminal
11 justice system, it's inevitable, that doesn't mean it's
12 acceptable, those are two different notions.

13 And when I speak with legislators, and I often
14 do here in Arkansas, we have a very accessible
15 legislature, I tell them -- and we're overwhelmingly
16 Republican in Arkansas, 85 percent of the legislature,
17 and every what we call constitutional office, meaning
18 governor, lieutenant governor, AG, that kind of thing,
19 land commissioner, I'm not sure that particularly
20 applies, but you take my meaning, are all Republican.

21 And I'm a Republican, and I speak to them,
22 and I say listen, I get it that funding prosecutors is
23 popular, and a good thing, and I agree with both of those
24 notions. And as you reflected a moment ago, but I also
25 believe that you can't have a one sided system. We look
at of course all dictatorships, and you see a one sided
system.

1 And if we are pulling people into our criminal
2 justice system and they can't afford an attorney, we
3 need to provide them with adequate representation. And
4 let me add that your point about that sort of middle
5 bracket is a remaining problem. We didn't address it
6 in our report, but the problem that you highlighted is
7 of course folks who are well off can essentially afford
8 defense.

9 Albeit, mind you, people go bankrupt, and none
10 the less win cases, but go bankrupt defending themselves
11 in our criminal justice system. A judge once told me
12 if you get your shirt caught in the criminal justice
13 system, you're going to lose that shirt. And that
14 metaphor applies of course to the financial impact even
15 if you win that case.

16 And we have the public defender system for
17 the indigent. But that middle class category is really
18 a difficult category, and something that needs to be
19 addressed, I think, in the future.

20 VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Thank you.

21 CHAIR GARZA: Well, thank you for that
22 question, and the conversation it elicited. Are there
23 other questions from other commissioners? If not, I
24 have one last question. I did see some indications
25 regarding juveniles in your report. This Commission
is looking into juvenile mental health, and the impact
on incarceration.

1 So, that's a separation, we've heard from
2 other advisory committees on this particular issues as
3 well, and I'm just curious if you could tease out any
4 of the information that you've learned about the right
5 to counsel as it relates to juveniles in this report.

6 MR. STEINBUCH: What I can say, what I
7 remember, indeed starkly from some of the testimony that
8 we took that touched on the issue of juveniles, is the
9 real challenge there, as we discussed and I mentioned
10 in my initial presentation, one of the problems with
11 having adequate public defense is you have people
12 predetermination of guilt incarcerated.

13 The impact on juveniles is magnified, the
14 negative impact, obviously a negative impact. And so,
15 I think that's something to really be concerned about.
16 When we take juveniles and we arrest them for serious
17 crimes, and without counsel there is essentially let's
18 say an insignificant, I was going to say no, but at least
19 an insignificant ability to be released.

20 And maybe with counsel the person wouldn't
21 be released, but at least that issue needs to be raised
22 adequately in defense of the juvenile in particular
23 because of the negative impact of being put into the
24 criminal justice system prior to potential conviction,
25 or of course innocence.

26 CHAIR GARZA: Yeah, and that could impact
27 their ability to continue going to school, and be able

1 to -- I mean if we're talking about a student who is
2 close to graduating, it could impact their ability to
3 graduate from high school. Thank you so much for
4 covering that, and raising that particular issue. It's
5 a particular concern of mine, how we treat children in
6 this country, and making sure that we respect their civil
7 rights, and set them up for success long term.

8 Well, thank you so much, Chair Steinbuch, for
9 being here today, and for presenting this. If there
10 are no further questions, we're going to go ahead and
11 move on to the rest of our agenda. But again, thank
12 you for your service on the state advisory committee,
13 and for your commitment to civil rights.

14 The Commission is going to be working towards
15 filling the state advisory committee again, so hopefully
16 this won't be the last we see of you.

17 MR. STEINBUCH: Thank you so very much for
18 all of your time, thank you.

19 CHAIR GARZA: Great, wonderful. Okay, so
20 we're going to go ahead and move on to the next agenda
21 item that we have, which is a vote on the Commission's
22 2026 business meeting calendar.

23 B. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON THE COMMISSION'S

24 2026 BUSINESS MEETING CALENDAR.

25 CHAIR GARZA: The meeting calendar dates for
2026 were circulated to commissioners, special
assistants, and staff, and the proposed dates for our

1 meetings are as follows. On the following Fridays of
2 2026, January 16th, February 20th, March 20th, April
3 24th, May 15th, June 12th, July 17th, August 21st,
4 September 18th, October 16th, November 20th, and
5 December 11th.

6 And I move to adopt the Commission's 2026
7 business meeting calendar, and accept those dates. Do
8 we have a second?

9 VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Second.
10 CHAIR GARZA: Seconded by Vice Chair Nourse.
11 So, we have a motion that's been made and properly
12 seconded. Is there any discussion on these dates?

13 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: No, just I'm happy that
14 we now have December 11th instead of December 12th, a
15 Saturday, which was --

16 CHAIR GARZA: Yes, thank you for catching
17 that, because I sure agree. But okay, so if there is
18 no other issues with those dates, and I know we've all
19 had an opportunity to review them, we can go ahead and
20 proceed to a roll call vote. Okay, so please say yes
21 if you are in favor, no if you're opposed, and indicate
22 if you're abstaining by saying I abstain. Vice Chair
23 Nourse?

24 VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Yes.

25 CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Adams?

COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Gilchrist?

COMMISSIONER GILCHRIST: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Heriot?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Jones?

COMMISSIONER JONES: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Kirsanow?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Yes.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Magpantay?

COMMISSIONER MAGPANTAY: Aye.

CHAIR GARZA: And I vote yes, so the motion passes with eight votes in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. Our next agenda item is a discussion and vote on members of the Commission's state advisory committees.

C. DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON STATE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

CHAIR GARZA: To begin this discussion I'm going to go ahead and move to appoint the following people to serve as members for the following advisory committees. For Tennessee we have Brandon Smith as chair, along with appointees Nicholas Berry, Gale Jones, Carson --

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Madam Chair, we didn't get all these names until basically 15 minutes ago. These flunk the 48 hour rule. I think we're going to need to do this as a notational vote, and I'm sure we can get that done very quickly at the beginning of the

1 week, but we did not get all the names until basically
2 minutes before the meeting.

3 So now -- why don't we just put it off until
4 then? I think it's going to be fine, but we need to
5 get all the names before just minutes before the meeting.

6 CHAIR GARZA: Okay, Commissioner Heriot --

7 COMMISSIONER JONES: Madam Chair, may I?

8 CHAIR GARZA: Yes, Commissioner Jones.

9 COMMISSIONER JONES: Just a caveat that it
10 would probably have to take place at the next meeting
11 if that is the route that people decide to go, because
12 I wouldn't consent to a notational vote on these.

13 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Why?

14 CHAIR GARZA: Before we get into any
15 discussion, a motion hasn't been fully made quite yet.
16 So, I was in the middle of making my motion. How about
17 this, I'm going to go ahead and finish making my motion,
18 and we can follow the procedure to table it if that's
19 what commissioners would like to do during the
20 discussion, so that I can finish putting this on the
21 record.

22 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: This is like --

23 CHAIR GARZA: No, I hear you, I hear you, and
24 I know that our special assistants were talking about
25 this, but I just want to finish the motion, and we can
go ahead and table it if that ends up being what we do.
Or somebody can make a motion to table it.

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COMMISSIONER HERIOT: It's just so useless.

CHAIR GARZA: I would welcome a motion for somebody to table this until the next business meeting.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I move to table.

CHAIR GARZA: Okay, is there a second?

COMMISSIONER JONES: This is Mr. Jones, seconded.

CHAIR GARZA: Great, so motioned by Commissioner Heriot to table, seconded by Commissioner Jones, so a motion has been properly made and seconded.

Is there any discussion on that?

COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Adams, discussion.

CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Adams?

COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Does anybody know how this happened so we can avoid it next time? This is all very new within the last 39 minutes to me. Why did this happen, and what can we do to avoid it again?

CHAIR GARZA: That's a fair question, Commissioner Adams. There has been, I think that this Commission has been very clear that we want to move things forward, and we want to do so very quickly. I know that the special assistants are working very, very hard to recruit and fill these positions. So, it may have been that we had a few folks come in at the last minute.

But the vast majority of the folks that were ready to move forward on these state advisory committees

1 were already identified. So, I'm fine with us going
2 ahead and tabling this, and then working that out on
3 the back end so that we don't have this happen again.
4 Is there any other discussion? If not, we can call
5 the question.

6 CHAIR GARZA: All right, so we're going to
7 go ahead and do a roll call vote on a motion to table,
8 and we're going to start with Vice Chair Nourse.

9 VICE CHAIR NOURSE: Aye.

10 CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Adams?

11 COMMISSIONER ADAMS: Yes.

12 CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Gilchrist?

13 COMMISSIONER GILCHRIST: Yes.

14 CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Heriot?

15 COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes.

16 CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Jones?

17 COMMISSIONER JONES: Yes.

18 CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Kirsanow?

19 COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Yes.

20 CHAIR GARZA: Commissioner Magpantay?

21 COMMISSIONER MAGPANTAY: Yes.

22 CHAIR GARZA: And I vote yes, so the motion
23 to table this item passes with eight votes in favor,
24 and none opposed, and no abstentions. And then we are
25 at our next item, and it's Acting Deputy Staff Director
Marik Xavier-Brier, we're going to go ahead and turn
to you for the monthly staff director's report. So,

1 the floor is yours.

2 D. STAFF DIRECTOR'S REPORT

3 MR. XAVIER-BRIER: Good morning
4 commissioners. In the interest of time, I have nothing
5 further to add than what is already contained in the
6 staff director's report. But as always, if the
7 commissioners have any questions about any of the
8 information, please let me know. Thank you.

9 CHAIR GARZA: All right, well thank you,
10 acting staff director. Before we adjourn, I would like
11 to take a moment to recognize the passing of a
12 distinguished former member of this Commission, Mr.
13 Arlan D. Melendez. Commissioner Melendez was appointed
14 to the Commission in 2005 by Senate Minority Leader Harry
15 Reid and served with honor and distinction.

16 He was the second Native American to serve
17 on this body, and brought with him a lifetime of advocacy
18 on behalf of Native communities and under served
19 populations. As chairman and chief executive of the
20 Reno Sparks Indian Colony for over three decades, he
21 demonstrated what unwavering leadership and public
22 service look like in practice.

23 A Vietnam era Marine Corps veteran, Mr.
24 Melendez committed his life to justice, self
25 determination, and tribal sovereignty. He was deeply
respected by colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and
it is only fitting that we pause to remember his many

1 contributions to the work of this Commission, and to
2 civil rights in America, especially to Native
3 communities.

4 So, at this time I would like to invite
5 Commissioner Kirsanow, who served alongside
6 Commissioner Melendez, to share a few words.

7 COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Yeah, just very
8 briefly. I served with Arlan from about 2005 through
9 2011, and you will never find a finer gentleman at any
10 commission, at any agency, at any department. He was
11 a true gentleman, he was a marine, but acted more like
12 a shaman. He was really a thoughtful and collegial
13 individual.

14 If the country had more Arlan Melendezes, a
15 bunch of the division we currently experience would
16 dissipate. What an amazing and extraordinary
17 individual. I wish I had prepared remarks, but I think
18 you get the gist. I have had the pleasure and privilege
19 of serving with dozens of commissioners, and Arlan
20 Melendez is in a class by himself.

21 CHAIR GARZA: Well, thank you for that,
22 Commissioner Kirsanow, and I'm sorry for your loss as
23 well, and for the loss to the broader civil rights
24 community. What a beautiful legacy to leave behind
25 though. If there are any other comments on this, and
if I hear none, I'm going to go ahead and move on. Okay,
hearing none.

1 Again, thank you all so much, that concludes
2 the business on the agenda for today's business meeting.

3 III. ADJOURN MEETING

4 CHAIR GARZA: So, I'm going to go ahead and
5 adjourn us at 10:42 a.m. Eastern Time. Thank you all
6 so much, and have a wonderful weekend.

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
8 off the record at 10:42 a.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript was
duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my
direction; further, that said transcript is a true and
accurate record of the proceedings; and that I am neither
counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the
parties to this action in which this matter was taken;
and further that I am not a relative nor an employee
of any of the parties nor counsel employed by the
parties, and I am not financially or otherwise
interested in the outcome of the action.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dalton Scott", is written over a horizontal line.

Court Reporter

<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <hr/>	<p>addressed 17:17</p>	<p>amend 5:14</p>
<p>10:07 4:5</p>	<p>85 16:14</p>	<p>adequacy 9:5,7</p>	<p>America 26:1</p>
<p>10:42 27:4,7</p>	<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <hr/>	<p>adequate 8:10 9:22 13:2 17:2 18:10</p>	<p>American 25:14</p>
<p>11th 20:4,12</p>	<p>a.m. 4:1,5 27:4,7</p>	<p>adequately 18:20</p>	<p>apologize 15:2</p>
<p>12th 20:2,12</p>	<p>ability 11:15 18:17,24 19:1</p>	<p>adjourn 25:9 27:2,4</p>	<p>applies 16:18 17:12</p>
<p>15 21:22</p>	<p>above-entitled 27:6</p>	<p>adopt 20:5</p>	<p>appoint 21:16</p>
<p>15th 20:2</p>	<p>abstain 20:20</p>	<p>advisory 5:12,17 7:8,12 12:6 18:1 19:11,13 21:12,14, 17 23:24</p>	<p>appointed 25:12</p>
<p>16th 20:1,3</p>	<p>abstaining 6:14 20:20</p>	<p>advocacy 25:15</p>	<p>appointees 21:19</p>
<p>17th 20:2</p>	<p>abstentions 7:5 21:11 24:22</p>	<p>affect 14:10</p>	<p>appointments 5:12 21:14</p>
<p>18th 20:3</p>	<p>abuse 10:23</p>	<p>afford 8:1,10 17:1,6</p>	<p>APPROVAL 5:8</p>
<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <hr/>	<p>accept 20:6</p>	<p>AG 16:16</p>	<p>April 20:1</p>
<p>2005 25:12 26:7</p>	<p>acceptable 16:11</p>	<p>agency 26:9</p>	<p>apt 9:21</p>
<p>2025 4:6</p>	<p>access 10:10</p>	<p>agenda 5:8,10,14,15 19:10,18 21:11 27:1</p>	<p>arguments 15:5</p>
<p>2026 5:19 6:8 19:22,24 20:5</p>	<p>accessible 16:12</p>	<p>agree 16:21 20:15</p>	<p>Arkansas 5:17,18 7:7,9,12,13,16, 17,24 9:1,6 10:2,7,8,13 11:2,4 12:22 13:5 14:15,20,21 16:12,14</p>
<p>20th 20:1,3</p>	<p>acted 26:10</p>	<p>ahead 4:3 6:12 7:11 13:21 19:9,18 20:17 21:16 22:15,24 24:1,6,24 26:24 27:3</p>	<p>Arlan 25:12 26:7,12,17</p>
<p>21st 20:2</p>	<p>acting 5:2 24:23 25:9</p>	<p>aisle 25:24</p>	<p>arms 13:17</p>
<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <hr/>	<p>active 12:13</p>	<p>Albeit 17:8</p>	<p>arrest 18:14</p>
<p>30 14:3</p>	<p>Adams 4:12,13 6:1,2,10,17,18 20:23,24 23:11,12,17 24:9,10</p>	<p>alongside 26:4</p>	<p>artificial 16:4</p>
<p>39 23:14</p>	<p>add 5:15 17:3 25:4</p>	<p>amazing 26:14</p>	<p>asleep 15:12,15</p>
<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <hr/>	<p>additional 10:15,22</p>	<p>address 9:2 10:2 11:8 17:4</p>	<p>assist 11:12</p>
<p>48 21:23</p>			<p>assistants 19:24 22:22 23:20</p>

attempted 9:2	21:19	catching 20:14	clear 8:18 23:18
attending 4:8	bit 12:9,12	category 17:15,16	clients 8:6 11:8 12:4
attorney 11:1,18 17:1	board 11:10	caught 17:11	close 19:1
attorneys 8:2,8,21,23 10:8 11:6, 11	body 25:15	caveat 22:8	colleagues 25:24
attrition 8:22	Bowen 7:18	certification 10:21	collection 11:1,17
August 20:2	bracket 17:4	chair 4:2,7,11,12,14,16,18, 20,22,24 5:2,5,9,16,21, 22,23 6:1,7,11,15,16, 17,19,21,23,24 7:1,3,7, 10,12,14,18 11:24 13:15,20,22 14:2 15:2,4 17:18,19 18:24 19:7,17, 23 20:8,9,14,20,22,23, 24 21:1,3,5,7,9,15,19, 21 22:5,6,7,12,21 23:1, 4,7,12,16 24:5,7,8,9,11, 12,14,16,18,20 25:8 26:19 27:3	collegial 26:11
average 14:6	Brandon 21:18	chairman 25:17	Colony 25:18
avoid 23:13,15	briefly 26:7	challenge 8:2 18:8	comment 14:13
aye 6:16 7:2 21:8 24:8	Bright 15:13	chief 25:17	comments 26:23
<hr/> B <hr/>	brought 25:15	children 19:4	commission 4:4,7 9:1 10:6,9 11:2, 12,13,15 13:24 15:17 17:23 19:12 23:18 25:11,12 26:9
back 10:1 24:2	bunch 26:13	chosen 6:9	Commission's 5:19 6:8 19:19,21 20:5 21:12
backlog 13:10	business 4:3 7:6 19:20,22 20:6 23:2 27:1	chronic 14:16	commissioner 4:12,13,14,15,16,17,18, 19,20,21,22,23 6:1,2, 10,17,18,19,20,21,22, 23,24 7:1,2 16:17 20:12,23,24 21:1,2,3,4, 5,6,7,8,21 22:5,6,7,8, 12,20 23:3,5,8,11,12,17 24:9,10,11,12,13,14,15, 16,17,18,19 25:12 26:4, 5,6,20
bankrupt 17:8,9	<hr/> C <hr/>		commissioners 4:24 17:21 19:24 22:17 25:3,6 26:17
Bar 7:16	calendar 5:19 6:8 19:20,22,23 20:6	circulated 19:24	commitment 19:12
based 4:24 10:23	call 4:9,24 6:12 16:15 20:18 24:3,6	civil 4:4 10:11 19:5,12 26:1, 21	committed 25:22
basic 14:5	careers 8:21	claim 16:4	committee 5:12,17 7:8,12,19 8:15 12:7,16,17,24 13:12 19:11,13 21:14
basically 15:5 21:22	Carson 21:20	class 14:8 17:15 26:18	
beautiful 26:22	case 8:4,12,15,24 9:12,19,24 11:1,7,18 12:7,12,13,22 17:13	classes 9:10,11	
begin 7:11 21:15	cases 10:1,20 11:6 12:10,12, 14 17:9		
beginning 21:24			
behalf 25:16			
Berry			

Committee's 7:12	continuing 11:9	critically 10:16	17:7 18:10,20
committees 18:1 21:12,18 23:24	continuous 10:16 11:11	curious 18:2	Democrats 12:18
communities 25:16 26:2	conversation 17:20		demonstrated 25:19
community 26:22	convicted 13:3 16:3,7	D	department 26:9
comparative 14:15	convicting 16:7	damage 16:6	deputy 5:3 24:23
compare 11:19	conviction 18:22	data 11:17	design 12:16
comparing 14:20	Corps 25:21	dates 6:8 19:23,24 20:6,11,16	designed 13:11,24
complete 8:22 11:17	correlation 9:11	deal 13:10	details 12:6,9
completely 15:14	counsel 5:18 7:9,13,24 8:11 11:16 18:4,15,18	death 10:21	determination 25:23
complex 10:20	country 19:5 26:12	decades 25:18	determine 11:14
concern 8:15 19:4	coupled 8:16	December 20:4,12	dictatorships 16:24
concerned 18:13	Court 5:1 10:7 11:5	deceptive 12:12	difficult 15:17 17:16
concerns 9:14	covering 19:3	decide 22:10	direct 11:9
conduct 11:17	COVID 13:10	deep 13:16	director 5:3 24:23 25:9
conference 4:7	COZART 5:7	deeply 25:23	director's 5:13 24:24 25:1,5
confirm 4:10	created 14:7	defendant 13:3	discussed 18:8
consent 22:11	credits 11:11	defendants 8:12 9:19,22 11:16	discussion 5:12,19,24 6:7,12 11:21 12:20 19:21 20:11 21:11,13,15 22:13,18 23:10,11 24:3
conservative 12:24	crime 10:24 12:23 13:1 14:11	defender 8:19 9:1,6 10:9,16 11:2 13:8 17:14	disparate 9:9,12 15:7
conservatives 15:9	crimes 18:15	defenders 8:1,4,12,17 9:3,13,24 10:12 11:4,12,13 12:8, 12 13:13 14:4,9 15:8,19 16:9	disparity 11:3
constitutional 10:12 16:15	criminal 9:20 10:20 12:1 13:18 14:3 16:9 17:10,11 18:22	defending 17:9	disproportionate 9:24
contained 25:4	critical 9:17	defense 7:24 8:1,10 9:7,10,22 10:10,20 11:12 13:2	dissipate 26:14

distinction 25:13	ends 22:24		7:14
distinguished 25:11	endure 8:5	F	flunk 21:23
diversion 10:24	enjoy 7:20	facing 8:12	folks 17:6 23:22,24
division 26:13	enjoyed 7:20	fails 14:5	follow 22:16
doctrine 16:1	ensure 16:2	fair 8:18 23:16	forward 7:22 15:16 23:19,24
dozens 26:17	entities 10:6	fall 15:12,15	found 12:7
drugs 15:15	entitled 5:17 7:8	favor 6:13 7:4 20:19 21:10 24:21	Foundation 7:17
due 14:24	era 25:21	February 20:1	free 16:2
duty 11:6	essentially 13:17 17:6 18:15	federal 5:11 14:4	Friday 4:5
	ethical 11:5	fellow 13:23	fully 11:14 22:13
E	evaluate 11:3,19	figures 14:15	fund 13:5
early 8:21	evaluation 10:21 14:20	file 15:15	funded 8:23 13:19
easier 12:21	evidence 10:22	fill 23:21	funding 8:7 10:12,16 12:23 13:7,9,10,12,17 14:4 15:6,7 16:8,20
Eastern 4:5 27:4	examined 9:5	filling 19:13	future 17:17
easy 13:4	excessive 8:12,15	finally 11:12	
economics 9:12	excuse 10:14	financial 17:12	G
education 11:9,11	executive 25:17	find 9:23 26:8	Gale 21:19
effect 8:5 14:13	expect 8:18	fine 22:3	Garza 4:2,8,12,14,16,18,20, 22,24 5:2,5,9,23 6:1,7, 11,17,19,21,23,24 7:1, 3,10 11:24 13:15 17:19 18:24 19:17,23 20:9,14, 23,24 21:1,3,5,7,9,15 22:5,7,12,21 23:1,4,7, 12,16 24:5,9,11,12,14, 16,18,20 25:8 26:19 27:3
effective 11:16	experience 15:8 26:13	finer 26:8	
elicited 17:20	explain 6:6	finish 22:15,18,23	general 12:21
encourage 13:12	extraordinary 26:14	fits 9:4 10:3	
end 11:20 24:2		fitting 25:24	
ended 7:19,21		floor	

gentleman 26:8,10	10:20	9:6,9,12,19 10:11 17:12,24 18:12,21,24 19:1	interests 12:2
Georgetown 14:7	happen 23:15 24:2		interpreters 10:18
get all 21:22 22:4	happened 23:13	inability 11:7	investigators 10:17
Gilchrist 4:14,15 6:19,20 20:24 24:11,12	happy 13:24 20:12	incarcerated 18:11	investment 10:22
gist 26:16	hard 23:21	incarceration 8:13 9:8 17:24	invite 26:3
give 12:9	Harry 25:12	incentivizing 10:19	involved 9:18
giving 7:22	health 17:24	including 9:20 10:21 12:18	irrespective 16:8
goals 13:12	healthcare 10:24	incompetent 15:14	issue 8:4 15:10 18:7,19 19:3
good 4:2 16:21 25:2	hear 6:3,5 15:6 22:21 26:24	independents 12:18	issues 9:17 14:3 18:1 20:16
governor 10:6,13,14 16:16	hearing 6:12 26:24	Indian 25:18	issuing 11:5
governors 12:21	Heriot 4:16,17 6:21,22 20:12 21:1,2,21 22:5,12,20 23:3,8 24:12,13	indications 17:22	item 6:4,5 19:19 21:11 24:21,23
graduate 19:2	hey 12:24	individual 9:18 16:6 26:12,15	items 5:12,15 6:12
graduating 19:1	high 8:17 19:2	inevitable 16:10	<hr/> J <hr/>
Great 4:24 5:9,23 19:17 23:7	highlighted 17:5	information 18:3 25:7	jail 14:12 15:20
greatly 7:19,20	honor 25:13	initial 18:9	January 20:1
guidance 11:5	hour 21:23	innocence 15:11,12 18:23	joining 7:13
Guidelines 9:12	hundreds 12:12	innocent 14:12 15:20 16:3,7,8	Jones 4:18,19 6:23,24 21:3,4, 19 22:6,7,8 23:5,9 24:14,15
guilt 18:11	<hr/> I <hr/>	innocents 14:12	judge 17:10
guilty 16:2	II 7:6	inquiry 6:3	July 20:2
<hr/> H <hr/>	III 27:2	insignificant 18:16,17	jump 13:20
hand 13:21	imbalance 13:16	interacted 12:3	June 4:5 20:2
handle	impact	interest 25:3	

justice

9:20 14:3 16:10 17:1,
10,11 18:22 25:22

juvenile

17:24 18:20

juveniles

17:23 18:4,7,12,14

K

kind

12:7 16:16

kinds

15:5

Kirsanow

4:20,21 6:24 21:5,6
24:16,17 26:4,6,20

L

lagging

9:6,9

land

16:17

language

10:18

large

9:24 16:9

law

7:18

lawyer

12:3

lawyers

10:20 14:7,9 15:12,14

Leader

25:12

leadership

25:19

learned

16:1 18:3

leave

26:22

left

12:19 16:1

legacy

26:22

legal

11:9,11 12:2 13:18

legislators

16:12

legislature

9:1 10:2,15 16:13,14

legislatures

12:21

legitimacy

9:21

level

8:18 13:13

liberals

15:9

lieutenant

16:16

life

25:22

lifestyles

8:8

lifetime

25:15

listen

16:20

load

8:24 11:7 12:7,12

loads

8:5,12,15 9:13,24 11:1,
19

log

10:1

long

8:12 13:5 19:6

lose

17:12

loss

26:20,21

love

13:24

low

8:16

low-bono

14:7

M

Madam

21:21 22:6

made

5:23 10:5 20:10 22:13
23:9

magnified

18:12

Magpantay

4:22,23 7:1,2 21:7,8
24:18,19

majority

23:24

make

15:6 22:24

making

19:5 22:14,15

manage

11:6

March

20:1

Marik

24:24

marine

25:21 26:10

matter

27:6

meaning

16:15,18

measures

9:4

meeting

4:4,6 7:6 19:20,22,23
20:6 22:1,4,9 23:2 27:1,
2

meetings

6:9 12:20

Melendez

25:12,22 26:5,18

Melendezes

26:12

member

25:11

members

21:12,17

mental

10:23 17:24

mentioned

9:8,15 10:1 11:18 18:8

metaphor

17:12

middle

14:8 17:3,15 22:14

mind

17:8

mine

19:4

Minority

25:12

minute

23:23

minutes

21:22 22:1,4 23:14

missed

14:14

moment

11:18 12:13 16:22
25:10

monthly

24:24

morning

4:2 25:2

motion

5:14,23,24 7:4 20:10
21:9 22:13,14,15,23,24
23:1,9 24:6,20

motioned

23:7

motions

15:15

move

15:16 19:10,18 20:5
21:16 23:3,18,24 26:24

multiple

12:14

N

names

21:22 22:4	8:24	perception 9:20,21	predetermination 18:11
national 10:10	opportunities 10:22	periods 8:13	prepared 26:15
Native 25:14,16 26:1	opportunity 20:17	person 16:3,7 18:18	presence 4:10
negative 18:12,21	opposed 6:14 7:5 20:19 21:10 24:22	phone 4:8 6:3	present 4:12,15,19 5:1,3,4,6,7
nice 13:23	order 4:5 14:19	piece 14:12	presentation 5:16 7:7,11 11:20,24 18:9
Nicholas 21:19	outcomes 9:7	pitch 14:5	presenting 19:8
notational 21:24 22:11	overwhelmingly 16:13	place 4:6 22:9	presents 11:7
notion 13:2 15:24 16:5	overworked 8:3	pleasure 26:16	prior 8:13 18:22
notions 16:11,22		point 6:2 12:1 17:3	prioritizing 10:14,15
notwithstanding 12:14	P	political 14:24	private 8:11
Nourse 4:11,12 5:21,22 6:15,16 13:22 14:2 15:4 17:18 20:8,9,21,22 24:7,8	parity 13:13	politics 12:20	privilege 12:1 26:16
November 20:3	parliamentarian 5:5	popular 16:21	pro-bono 11:12
Nurse 13:20	parliamentary 6:2	populations 25:17	problem 14:16,23,24 15:10 17:4, 5
	part 14:24 15:2,4	portion 11:20	problems 18:9
	passes 7:4 21:10 24:21	positions 8:19,20 10:17 13:5,8, 12,14 23:21	procedure 22:16
O	passing 25:10	post 13:9	proceed 5:10 6:12 9:16 20:18
obligation 10:12	past 7:11 15:8	posted 5:10	Professional 11:10
occasions 9:2	pause 25:24	potential 18:22	professor 7:17 13:22,23
October 20:3	pay 8:16	practice 25:20	program 14:7
offer 5:14 11:11	penalty 10:21	practices 9:13	programs 10:24
office 11:10 16:15	people 8:7 14:6,8,11,12 15:18, 20 16:2,8 17:8 18:10 21:17 22:10	pre-trial 9:8	projects 15:12
ongoing 13:12 14:23	percent 16:14	precisely 15:24	
open 12:19			
operated			

properly 5:24 8:23 10:12 11:7 20:10 23:9	14:24 18:19	26:15	resulting 8:5
proposed 19:24	raising 19:3	remediate 9:14	results 8:3
prosecutor 8:20 13:5	ready 23:24	remember 18:6 25:24	reverse 14:19
prosecutors 9:24 11:4,19 12:15,23 13:13 15:7 16:20	real 15:10 18:8	remind 15:1	review 20:17
protected 9:10,11	recognize 9:17 14:11 25:10	reminded 15:19	rights 4:4 10:11 19:6,12 26:1, 21
provide 11:15 12:22 17:2	recognized 14:24	Reno 25:18	Robert 7:12
providing 8:10 13:2	recommendations 9:14 10:5	report 5:13,17 7:8,12,22 13:24 14:14 17:5,23 18:4 24:24 25:1,5	Rochelle 4:8
public 7:24 8:3,12,17,19 9:3,5, 7,9,13,22,24 10:8,10, 11,12,16 11:2,3,12 12:8,12 13:7,12 14:8 15:8 16:9 17:14 18:10 25:19	recommended 10:10,13,15,19 11:5,13	REPORTER 5:1	Rock 7:18
purposes 8:7	record 22:19 27:7	reporting 11:1,18	role 8:20
put 14:12 15:20 18:21 22:2	recruit 23:21	representation 8:13 17:2	roll 4:9,24 6:12 20:18 24:6
putting 22:18	reduce 10:24	representing 12:4	route 22:10
<hr/> Q <hr/>	reflected 16:22	Republican 12:24 16:14,18,19	rule 21:23
quality 10:23	refuse 11:6	Republicans 12:17	<hr/> S <hr/>
question 8:6,9 13:21 15:3,5 17:20,22 23:16 24:4	Register 5:11	resources 9:10 11:14	Saturday 20:13
questions 11:22 13:19 17:21 19:9 25:6	regulates 10:8	respect 19:5	school 7:18 18:24 19:2
quickly 21:24 23:19	Reid 25:13	respected 25:24	seconded 5:24 20:9,11 23:6,8,9
quorum 4:24	relates 18:4	respond 6:13	Senate 25:12
<hr/> R <hr/>	relative 11:19	response 13:16	sense 12:12
raised	released 18:17,19	Responsibility 11:10	September 20:3
	remained 13:4	rest 19:10	serve 21:17 25:14
	remaining 17:4	result 8:12	served 25:13,16 26:4,7
	remains 8:14	resulted 8:16	service
	remarks		

19:11 25:20	13:8	sufficient 8:24	thought 15:16
serving 26:17	staff 5:3,12 10:17 19:24 24:23,24 25:1,5,9	sufficiently 8:7	thoughtful 26:11
set 19:6	staffing 11:2	support 10:17 11:14	tied 12:24
shaman 26:11	standards 9:12	Supreme 10:7 11:4	time 4:5 15:17 19:16 23:13 25:3 26:3 27:4
share 26:5	starkly 18:6	system 8:24 9:6,20 12:2 13:18 16:10,23,24 17:1,10,12, 14 18:22	timely 11:15
shirt 17:11,12	start 4:9 6:15 24:7	systematic 14:19	today 5:11 19:8
shortage 9:3	started 4:3 9:16		today's 5:10,13 27:1
sided 16:23,24	starts 9:4 10:3	<hr/> T <hr/>	told 17:10
sides 25:24	state 5:12,17 7:8 12:6 19:11, 13 21:12,13 23:24	table 22:16,24 23:2,3,8 24:6, 21	top 5:15
significant 8:22 10:1 13:9	statement 10:11	tabling 24:1	touch 14:21
simultaneous 15:22	states 14:16,17,20,24	taking 4:6	touched 18:7
Smith 21:18	Steinbuch 7:12,14,15 11:24 12:11 13:22 14:1,18 15:23 18:5 19:7,15	talking 8:8 12:8,10,11 22:22	tough 12:23 13:1 14:11
social 10:24	step 15:24	tease 12:5 18:2	training 10:19,24
society 16:6	Steve 15:13	telephone 4:7	travesty 13:3
sort 13:12 17:3	stop 13:19	temporary 9:4 13:11	treat 19:4
sounded 6:4	struggled 10:2	ten 16:2	treatment 9:18 10:23
sounds 13:16	study 7:24 9:5 10:10 11:13	Tennessee 21:18	trial 8:14
sovereignty 25:23	subject 14:8	term 7:19,20 13:6 19:6	tribal 25:23
Sparks 25:18	subscribe 13:1	terms 7:24 12:7	true 16:5 26:10
speak 16:12,19	substance 10:23	testimony 14:21 18:6	turn 24:24
speaking 15:22	success 19:6	thing 14:10 16:16,21	turnover 8:17,19
special 19:24 22:22 23:20		things 12:15 23:19	typically 12:15
sporadically			

<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">U</p> <hr/>	<p>19:17 27:5</p>	
<p>U.S. 4:4</p>	<p>Wonderfully 13:24</p>	
<p>underpaid 8:3</p>	<p>words 26:5</p>	
<p>United 14:17,24</p>	<p>work 11:3</p>	
<p>University 7:17</p>	<p>worked 14:2</p>	
<p>unsurprisingly 9:23 14:23</p>	<p>workforce 10:24</p>	
<p>unwavering 25:19</p>	<p>working 19:12 23:20 24:1</p>	
<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <hr/>	<p>worry 14:6</p>	
<p>vast 23:24</p>	<p>worse 14:21</p>	
<p>veteran 25:21</p>	<p>written 15:13</p>	
<p>Vice 4:11,12 5:21 6:15,16 13:20,22 14:2 15:2,4 17:18 20:8,9,20,22 24:7,8</p>	<p>wrongfully 13:3</p>	
<p>Vietnam 25:21</p>	<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <hr/>	
<p>vote 5:12,19 6:7,12 7:3 19:19,21 20:18 21:9,12, 13,24 22:11 24:6,20</p>	<p>Xavier-brier 5:4 24:24 25:2</p>	
<p>votes 7:4 21:10 24:21</p>	<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Y</p> <hr/>	
<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">W</p> <hr/>	<p>years 14:3,5 15:14</p>	
<p>wanted 12:5</p>		
<p>weekend 27:5</p>		
<p>win 17:9,13</p>		
<p>wind 9:12</p>		
<p>wonderful</p>		