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PRESENT:

MARTIN R. CASTRO, Chairman
PATRICIA TIMMONS-GOODSON, Vice Chair
ROBERTA ACHTENBERG, Commissioner*
GAIL HERIOT, Commissioner
PETER N. KIRSANOW, Commissioner
DAVID Kladney, Commissioner*
KAREN NARASAKI, Commissioner
MICHAEL YAKI, Commissioner*

* Present via telephone
STAFF PRESENT:

PAMELA DUNSTON, Chief, ASCD
DARREN FERNANDEZ
ANGELA FRENCH-BELL, Assistant Staff Director for Civil Rights, OCRE
DORIS GILLIAM
ALFREDA GREENE
JENNIFER HELPER, Parliamentarian
ROGER LOCKLEAR, OGC Intern
DAVID MUSSATT, Chief, RPCU
LENORE OSTROWSKY, Chief, PAU
ROREY SMITH, General Counsel
MICHELE YORKMAN, Director, IT

COMMISSIONER ASSISTANTS PRESENT:

SHERYL COZART
ALEC DEULL
JASON LAGRIA
CLARISSA MULDER
AMY ROYCE
JUANA SILVERIO
ALISON SOMIN
KIMBERLY TOLHURST
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CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay, we're calling the meeting to order. This is Chairman Marty Castro. It is 9:31. We are here at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in our headquarters at 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue NW in Washington, D.C. Today is February 20th, and this is our normal monthly business meeting.

The Commissioners who are present with me at the meeting are of course myself, Commissioner -- I should say Vice-Chair Timmons-Goodson, Commissioner Kirsanow, Commissioner Heriot, and Commissioner Narasaki. Participating by phone are Commissioners Achtenberg, Kladney, and Yaki.

A quorum of the Commissioners is present. Is the court reporter present?

THE COURT REPORTER: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. The meeting shall come to order.

The first item is the approval of the Agenda. I move that we approve the Agenda. Is there a second?

VICE-CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Second.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. I do have some
amendments. I don't know if others have, but let me do
a little bit of an omnibus here to clean up the Agenda
and add something that was not on there.

I want to amend the Agenda to remove the
SAC, Ohio SAC, consideration. Some of us want to take
a little closer look at that and haven't had the
opportunity.

I would also like to add -- or I should say
remove from the Agenda the Elimination of Racial
Discrimination Statement that was up as one of the
Statements to look at.

And then I'd like to add a discussion and
a vote on the extension of SAC terms, SAC membership
terms.

Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: I second.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: You added --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: The SAC terms, yes.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Okay. Where did
you add it?

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: We'll add it under
Program, under Management and Operations.

So I have a second. Any discussion?

(No audible response.)
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: All in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Any other amendments? I should say, any abstentions or any votes against?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: No? Then it's unanimous.

Any other amendments?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay, hearing none, then we'll proceed.

The first item, then, on the Agenda is a discussion and vote on the Statement, which hopefully you all had a chance to look at. I apologize for getting these Statements out to you late. The staff got them to me, I just didn't get a chance to review them until late last night, given some of the scheduling we had over the last couple of days, so -- but the first item is the review of a Statement commemorating President Kennedy's Executive Order 10925 on its 55th Anniversary. Have folks had a chance to look at that?

Yes, Commissioner Heriot?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes, I've looked at it, but you know, I think there are problems here.
One, you've got a typo. It wasn't 1951, obviously, it was 1961.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Second, it's not the 55th Anniversary, it's the 54th, which is kind of odd to be commemorating.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: And third, it actually is the 75th Anniversary of the Ramspeck Act, which is what -- which is much, you know, more traditional to celebrate, it's something like that.

The Ramspeck Act was kind of a mixed bag, but one of the things that it had in it that was very important is that it did outlaw race discrimination in federal hiring, and so it just seems very odd to be celebrating the 54th Anniversary of an Executive Order that was not as momentous in that respect. It just seems kind of awkward to me.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes. Do you know what the date of the Ramspeck --

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: It's 1940, but I don't know the actual date.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. Well what we'll do is we'll -- if folks are amenable, we'll put this off
until we take a little more close look at the Ramspeck --?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Sorry.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: You know, as I said, the Ramspeck, that was kind of a mixed bag, and one of the things it did was protect jobs for congressional employees, which later, I believe, got repealed --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: -- but --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Well, I think you've indicated you all are congressional appointees, right? or employees.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: No, congressional employees.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Employees, okay, employees. So yes, we'll take a closer look at that. If everyone is okay, we will just put that on hold for now.

The next one is the 55th, I hope -- I am sorry, the 50th Anniversary of Selma. I think we got that right.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: It's three paragraphs,
so hopefully if you didn't have a chance to look at it before now, you can take a few minutes now and take a look at it.

Anybody have any questions or a motion?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I think you need a motion in order to start discussing.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: So --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: So do we have a motion on this?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: I guess I will wait until folks read it.

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: I will move the question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Thank you. Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Second.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. We have a motion and a second. When folks are ready to discuss, just let me know.

Commissioner Heriot, is that a hand?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I am happy to talk about it.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes, go ahead.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I am concerned with the last paragraph --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: All right, my quote?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: -- saying that the right to vote continues to be threatened in parts of our nation. That is a very aggressive statement, and it has no -- there is no explanation here of what is meant, and I fear there's a lot of talk about this problem, and different people may read this differently, but the way it is, I feel like I can't vote for it. I would like to delete that reference to "continues to be threatened."

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Are there other comments or thoughts from Commissioners on that, or on anything else? Commissioner Kirsanow, you have to turn your mic on.

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: I concur with what Commissioner Heriot said. I can fully support this if we delete that clause that we must acknowledge that the right to vote continues to be threatened in parts of our nation. We could get a unanimous vote on this.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Any other comments?

VICE-CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Is there any
way that we might be able to massage that portion in a
way that will permit Commissioner Kirsanow and
Commissioner Heriot to go along with it? I'd like to
have us invest some time in massaging that to see whether
we can get some agreement.

It -- perhaps the word "threatened" is a bit
too strong, but is there a word that we might be able
to come up with that would -- ?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: I can't think of
one on the fly, other than, you know, something to the
effect that we urge that we always remain vigilant to
protect the franchise, the right to vote. Something of
that nature is acceptable to me.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: How are other folks'
thoughts on that?

Okay. Commissioner Narasaki?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Well, we saw this
past election several cases actually making it up to the
Supreme Court on this issue of voting rights, and the
National Commission on Voting Rights project that was
run by the Lawyers' Committee just published a very
extensive report based on hearings in 25 states about
the challenges that people are finding in trying to
exercise their right to vote, so I would like to see a
Statement about the fact that there are indications of problems, although I do agree with the Vice-Chair that it would be very helpful to have a unanimous Statement.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO:  Yes.  Any other comments before we figure out how we can best massage this?

COMMISSIONER KLANDNEY:  Why don't we just say it's --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO:  Could you repeat that, Commissioner Kladney?  You were breaking up.

COMMISSIONER KLANDNEY:  I know.  The mic system is terrible up here.

Wait a second.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO:  Yes.

COMMISSIONER YAKI:  What if we were to say --

--

CHAIRMAN CASTRO:  Yes, Commissioner Yaki.

COMMISSIONER YAKI:  -- in effect that we commend -- we commend those individuals and organizations who, in the spirit of Selma, continue to defend and protect voting rights today.

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW:  Works for me.  You?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT:  I mean, that's a
little better.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: So we commend those who, in the spirit of Selma, continue to defend --

COMMISSIONER YAKI: Protect and defend --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Protect and defend.

COMMISSIONER YAKI: -- voting rights today.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Voting rights today.

Okay.

And so that would replace the second part of the first sentence, and then --

VICE-CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: I can go with that.

COMMISSIONER YAKI: I would change directions on that -- I am just spitballing here.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I can live with that.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Gail and -- Commissioners Heriot and Kirsanow?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I can live with that.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Works for me.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. Great. With
that amendment, then, any additional discussion?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: If not, I will call the question for a vote.

Commissioner Kirsanow, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Heriot, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Narasaki, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Kladney, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Achtenberg, how do you vote? Is that a yes?

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. Commissioner Yaki, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER YAKI: I am thinking now that Peter has agreed that --

(Laughter.)

COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

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CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. And Madam Vice-Chair, how do you vote?

VICE-CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: And I vote yes, so it's unanimous. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Commissioner Yaki, you should know that Commissioner Narasaki informed us that she thinks you and I are actually the same person because we've never been seen in the same room together, and least she hasn't seen us together. (Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: That's --

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: And that would mean one of us today would have to be a ventriloquist.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Well, you know, anything is possible.

The last Statement we have is a Statement on the commemoration of Cesar Chavez Day. Do we have a motion on that for discussion purposes?

VICE-CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: So moved.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Second.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. And just to let my conservative colleagues know, I know last year you...
all had a concern with the request for a national holiday, so I didn't add that this year, although obviously, the letter from last year is still on the record, so this is one that just talks about the commemoration of the day rather than requesting any additional action.

And folks can let me know once they've had a chance to look at it if they have any comments.

(Pause.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay, any comments, agreements, wordsmithing?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Hearing none. Okay, well then what I'd like to do is if there are no comments, I'd like to call the question for a vote.

So if -- let me get my -- Commissioner Kirsanow, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Heriot, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Narasaki, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Kladney, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Achtenberg, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Yaki, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Madam Vice-Chair, how do you vote?

VICE-CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: And I vote yes, so it's unanimous. Thank you.

We now move on to our Management and Operations Report. Of course, we are in between Staff Directors right now, so we have a little bit of an abbreviated report here, but what I'd like to do is ask our Assistant Staff Director, the head of our Office of Civil Rights Evaluation, Angela French-Bell, to give us a brief update on the upcoming March Examining Workplace Discrimination Against LGBT Community briefing.

She comes to the mic now.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Good morning.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Good morning.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Good morning, Chairman Castro, Madam Vice-Chair Timmons-Goodson, Commissioners, and the USCCR staff.

On March 16, 2015, the Commission will be holding a briefing entitled Examining Workplace Discrimination Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Americans. It will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the Washington, D.C. headquarters office.

It will cover the scope of federal protections against LGBT workplace discrimination, and specifically, we'll be covering the federal government's implementation of federal protections regarding workplace discrimination against LGBT employees as well as Title VII workplace protections for all LGBT Americans.

There will be five panels: Federal Government Officials, General Issues, Economic Issues, Transgender Issues, and Religious Exemption Issues.

We have 13 confirmed panelists, and we have had suggestions from various Commissioners which we have reached out to them, and we are still waiting to hear back from some panelists.

It has been a pleasure working with
Commissioner Achtenberg and Alec Duell to make this briefing a success, and we also are working diligently to make sure it's a balanced panel.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. Any questions on that topic?

COMMISSIONER YAKI: Commissioner Yaki.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes, go ahead, Commissioner Yaki.

COMMISSIONER YAKI: Just for logistics purposes, for those on the West Coast, how long is the briefing supposed to last?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: It is supposed to last from 9 o'clock to 5 o'clock.

COMMISSIONER YAKI: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: And what's the -- our goal for the number of panelists, ideally?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: No more than 15 is what we're hoping.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. So basically, three per panel, roughly? Okay.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Right.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. Any other questions? Commissioner Heriot.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Now you have the
list of witnesses with you right now?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: I do not, but I can get that to you.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Could you like at least tell me what you've got so far?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: We can. I would be more than happy to discuss that with you following this briefing, and I really appreciate your indulgence.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: And you said we're going to have 15? How many have already said yes?


COMMISSIONER HERIOT: 13.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Narasaki, you had a question?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: I was just wondering whether a public notice had gone out yet.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: I don't know. Has the notice gone out? Probably not yet.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Not yet.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: But it will go out soon.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: And that's a good question.
COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: There is interest in the civil rights community, and I think some people are interested, if they're not asked to testify, to submit written testimony, so if we could get formal notice out that we could share with people so everybody is on an even playing field in terms of knowing about the hearing, that would be great.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Will do. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Any other questions on this?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: While we have you, I understand also, you know, you've been working closely, or your office has been working closely with Commissioner Kladney on getting ready for the April briefing.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Is there anything you can update us on that?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: It's going well. We're beginning the process of reaching out to various panelists, and we're also working to work on our briefing book, so we're researching and reaching out to panelists.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.
MS. FRENCH-BELL: And it's going well.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Any questions?
COMMISSIONER YAKI: I have a question on that.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Yaki?
COMMISSIONER YAKI: Yes. Again, for planning purposes, are we now solidified on the location being in New York?
MS. FRENCH-BELL: We're -- we've sent an individual out from our staff who is looking into that location. They will be there next week before we make a final decision, but it is determined that that is the location that we're looking at.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: So we're -- yes on New York, we're just not sure where in New York?
MS. FRENCH-BELL: Right.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.
COMMISSIONER YAKI: Okay, thank you.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: You're welcome.
And depending, I guess, on where in New York, will we be able to stream that, or are our capabilities -- will that be -- it will depend on the location, right?
MS. FRENCH-BELL: It will depend on the location.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: It's most likely going to be at John Jay University.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. And do we know, do they have streaming capabilities there?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: We're looking into that --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: -- and we will have an answer for you --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Got it.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: -- by next week.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay, thanks. Any --

Commissioner Narasaki?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes, I just have a question on what the status of process is for completing the report on the National Voter Registration Act briefing?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: It's currently with the editor.

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: So since I'm new, I haven't been a report through the -- what's the next
step?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Legal sufficiency, and then it will go out to the Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: And then if the Commissioners approve, then we do Statements?

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Well, you would do Statements regardless, and you may have corrections or additional information that you would like for us to submit.

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes. I am just trying to figure out what the likely timing is of actually getting the report out.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: It's about two weeks with the editor. Legal sufficiency, I would have to defer to OGC.

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Thank you.

MS. FRENCH-BELL: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Any other questions?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: If not, thank you, appreciate it.

Next, we have a report from David Mussatt, our Chief of Regional Programs Unit. I have asked him to give us an oral update on the status of different SAC
projects around the country.

I know we do get written updates every month, but I think it's important for us to hear from the head of the regional programs as to what's going on and things of a timely nature, so Mr. Mussatt, you're on the phone?

MR. MUSSATT: Yes, I am. Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Good morning.

MR. MUSSATT: Good morning, Commissioners. It's a pleasure to talk to you again.

I -- as the Chairman said, I submitted the monthly report for your review, but I did want to add or highlight three items in particular.

First, I just wanted to let you know that the regional units have begun regional web meetings with our new ReadyTalk technology to start creating unified and efficient internal procedures for providing the advice to the Commission, so those meetings have begun, and we hope -- we think it's going to foster more efficient communication with you in the future.

The second thing is the New York Advisory Committee recently released a report on solitary confinement of youth. We invited the chair to talk to
you today as the chairs of the Illinois and Georgia Committees talked to you in December, I believe, to give you the updates, the findings and recommendations from that report.

Unfortunately, she did want to be a part of this, but she was unable to do it today, so hopefully in the future she'll be able to be a part of one of these meetings and give you the full story on that report.

The final thing I wanted to highlight was on this coming Monday, the Missouri Advisory Committee will be meeting in St. Louis at the University of Missouri-St. Louis to have a full day of testimony on police/community relations in Missouri.

Obviously, this arose, this project arose out of the events in Ferguson. The Committee is not focused specifically on Ferguson, but the larger topic in general, and throughout the state of Missouri.

Of special note is that these -- this meeting will be streamed live. Currently, we have the link to the stream on the Commission website, and we are directing traffic to the Commission website to view it for those who can't attend in person.

And, you know, it's a full agenda. The agenda is available as well. It's made up of an
academic panel, two community panels, a panel of law
enforcement -- basically chiefs of police departments
throughout the state of Missouri, and then government
panels made up of different representatives from
government entities on the state and federal levels.

And then we also have two public forums.
Since this is such a, you know, intense issue that's
being -- that has been going on for some time now, we
wanted to give the public more than ample opportunities
to be involved, so instead of the usual one open forum,
we provided two, and are trying to get people to come
and testify at those -- during those sessions as well.

I would be happy to take any questions.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Are there any questions
for Mr. Mussatt?

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes, is that
Commissioner Achtenberg?

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: I am wondering
what kind of support we offer to our SAC in the situation
that Missouri finds itself in. How do we staff them to
make sure that they have everything they need to conduct
-- I mean, this looks like to be quite an extensive hearing and set of briefings. I am wondering -- I am just curious, how do we support them?

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Well, I will let Mr. Mussatt answer that, but you know, they are certainly being supported by our regional staff there in the Midwest. But David, do you have a more specific answer for Commissioner Achtenberg?

MR. MUSSATT: Well this has been -- we actually have quite a bit of regional staff working on this compared to our normal events where it's usually one person and an administrative assistant. In this case, we've had our new analyst, Melissa Wojnaroski, who has done a fabulous job of putting the panels together and doing, you know, most of the legwork on getting the thing done singlehandedly.

But we also have Carolyn Allen and Corrine Sanders, who are two administrative assistant people who have been helping put it together, as well as, Melissa, I know, has been talking a lot with Sean in headquarters on trying to, you know, figure out how to put this together, so it's been a very good team effort, and, you know, I can't say it has, you know, been well -- you know, overly-staffed, but it's been for --
Chairman Castro: And also, Mr. Mussatt and Juana and I have been in contact regarding trying to provide support in terms of getting the Police Chief of Ferguson to appear and testify. However, unfortunately, he has -- correct me if I'm wrong, David, informed us last week that he has an urgent matter next week that is going to keep him from the briefing, and I tried to set up a phone call with him to encourage him to attend, but on advice of counsel, he said -- we were told he would not speak with us.

Is that right, David?

Mr. Mussatt: That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castro: So that is disappointing. So we have tried to help in that regard as well.

Commissioner Achtenberg: Thank you --

Chairman Castro: Yes, go ahead? Was that --

Commissioner Achtenberg: No, no, thank you.

Chairman Castro: Okay.

Commissioner Kladney: I have a question.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Kladney?

Go ahead.

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Mr. Mussatt, is there some way that we can call in and listen to the SAC meetings around the country?

MR. MUSSATT: Absolutely. So this meeting obviously is streamed live, and so you can hear it and see it.

The -- most of the Advisory Committee meetings now are done via conference call, and the -- they are published in the Federal Register Notice, obviously, with the number that the public can call in to listen to the meetings, and of course, you know, anyone is welcome to listen in to those meetings.

When we -- when we do meetings in person where we hear testimony that aren't -- because very rarely, this is the first time, I think, that we've had an Advisory Committee meeting streamed live. When we have those meetings, we don't normally set up a conference call number for people to listen in to, just because usually technology is limited, but those are open meetings, so there's no requirement also to have those be a conference call.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Maybe we should explore
it in the future in those settings where it is possible to have at least phone capabilities at the SAC briefings.

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Shouldn't you be able to list those phone numbers not just on the Federal Register but on the website, and I mean, the dates of the meetings, et cetera, et cetera?

MR. MUSSATT: Yes.

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: So that --

MR. MUSSATT: We can do that.

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes, and I think they sometimes are, right? If we put out a release, don't we have that on our website?

MR. MUSSATT: Yes, if we do --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: But maybe we should make it more prominent, if possible.

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: I am just thinking not just on the release, Mr. Chairman --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Oh, yes.

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: I am talking like if there's a page or a place on the front page especially --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.
COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: -- of the website with a link where to go to another page to get all of the meetings that are going to occur and the contact information for people who want to listen.

So in other words, we could have a page with all of the SACs and the meeting dates and the contact information, and have the link to that on the front page of our website.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes. I think we have a SAC sub-page, don't we, David?

MR. MUSSATT: Yes. Actually, this is a great recommendation, Commissioner Kladney.

We are working on changing some of the information on the SAC page right now, and so we will definitely take that recommendation and try to implement it.

You know, I am not -- Michelle in headquarters is obviously leading the effort to work with the website, and I have to talk to her to make sure this is all possible, but I think that's a good suggestion.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Great, thank you.

COMMISSIONER KLADNEY: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Any other questions for
Mr. Mussatt? Commissioner Narasaki?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Not a question, but a suggestion that perhaps at our next business meeting, we could put on the agenda the discussion about website and the efforts that I know staff are undertaking to update our ability to use social media more effectively to make sure more people in the country who are interested in these issues --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: -- have easier access.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: I will make sure we put that on the agenda for the next business meeting.

Okay. Anything else for Mr. Mussatt?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay, don't go too far away, David, because we are going to ask you to do something in a second.

So we'll move on to the next topic, which we added at the beginning of this meeting, and that is to discuss and vote upon an extension of SAC terms prospectively going from two years to four years. It has been something that some of us have been informally bouncing around for a while, and what I would like to
do is entertain a motion to extend the terms of our SAC
members from two-year terms to four-year terms, and to
direct Mr. Mussatt to amend the charter of our SACs
accordingly.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: So moved.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay, is there a second?
COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Second.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Any discussion?
COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Just a -- .
COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Mr. Chairman?
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Kirsanow,
then Commissioner Achtenberg.

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: By extending the
terms, is this something that's done prospectively? Is
it something that affects currently sitting SAC
members? How are we going to implement it?

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes, I mentioned in my
proposal to have a motion that it be prospective, and
so that's how the motion was made.

Commissioner Achtenberg, then
Commissioner Heriot.

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Commissioner
Kirsanow asked my question, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. Commissioner
Heriot?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I just want to say that this is something that we've been kicking around for a while, as the Chairman just said.

When Commissioner Achtenberg and I were on the SAC Committee back a few years ago, we very much wanted to do this. I think it will cut down on the amount of time that the regional staff spends putting SACs together, and that will mercifully allow for a lot more time for having SACs actually meet and issue reports, so I think this is definitely a very, very, very big step in the right direction.

My only disappointment is that we didn't do it back in I guess it was 2012 when we were kicking the idea around in the first place, but somehow, this got lost in the shuffle, and I am glad that it's -- that we're moving forward with it now.

I think that we also should be looking for other methods of cutting down on the amount of work that the regional staff has to spend on putting together SACs, and I hope that we will look into things like cutting down on the minimum number of SAC members so that if we have some attrition from a SAC, the SAC doesn't go into hiatus because there aren't enough members, and
I think, again, this will cut down on the amount of work they spend a lot, and will also mean the SAC members have more experience and I think will be able to do a better job.

But there are a few more things we need to be doing as well if we want to maximize the amount of real, productive work that the SACs can do.

Anyway, I support the motion. After all, I guess I made it.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Thank you. Any other comments, questions, discussion on this?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Hearing none, I will call a vote on this.

Commissioner Kirsanow, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER KIRSANOW: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Heriot, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Narasaki, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER NARASAKI: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Kladney, how do you vote?
COMMISSIONER KLDNEY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Achtenberg, how do --

COMMISSIONER KLDNEY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes, got it.

Commissioner Achtenberg, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Commissioner Yaki, how do you vote?

COMMISSIONER YAKI: Aye.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Madam Vice-Chair, how do you vote?

VICE-CHAIR TIMMONS-GOODSON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: And I vote yes. It passes unanimously.

So Mr. Mussatt, if you would please amend the universal charter for these SACs accordingly, prospectively, we would appreciate that.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Could I make another motion here?

I move that we ask our -- I forget David's title here --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Chief of Regional Programs --
COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Our Chief of Regional Programs to also look into how we would go about making other changes, like changes to the minimum number, and -- so that we can think about other methods that we can use in the future as well.

MR. MUSSATT: Yes. Mr. Chair, can I add --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: David, go ahead, and I think Ms. Hepler wanted to say something. Go ahead, David -- I mean Mr. Mussatt, sorry.

MR. MUSSATT: Jennifer might be saying the same thing, but Commissioner Heriot, to your point, the minimum number is in the CFR, so that would require a CFR change.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Yes, that's what I thought, so what I'd like is, you know, a short memo telling us how we'd go about doing that and what the kind of timeline would be if we chose to do it.

MR. MUSSATT: I can work with OGC on that, that's fine.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: I don't know that we need a motion to ask him to do that, so --.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Fine, as long as, you know.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes.
COMMISSIONER HERIOT: That's fine.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Sure.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.

Okay. That concludes the items on our Agenda, so with that, I am hereby calling the meeting adjourned. Thank you. It is now 10:04 Eastern Time. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the meeting went off the record at 10:03 a.m. and resumed at 10:04 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: I forgot to add something, so I am calling the meeting back in order.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Are you sure you don't have to vote us back --

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: We do actually have a discussion on the -- no, I don't think we have to vote it back, do we? On the actual Agenda, we also had a -- what -- we had a brief report on the discussion on the status of our proposed trips to the immigration detention centers.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: Oh, yes.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: And as we had initially indicated at the last briefing, we as Commissioners had a desire to attend, or visit, I should say, some
immigration detention centers, and we asked the DHS and ICE representatives on the record to help facilitate that.

In the interim, we have looked at and talked to staff about resources to do that, so I propose to our budget staff, if we were to conduct two site visits with all Commissioners who are interested in attending, with a special assistant from each caucus so as to keep the cost down, representation from OCRE and the Office of the General Counsel, would we have money in the budget to do this?

And I was -- we were informed that they would find money in the budget for us to conduct two such visits, so what we need to do is determine which of those family detention centers we want to go to and amongst ourselves, we can figure out what the timing would be.

Obviously, we want to do this as expeditiously as possible in order to allow our staff to incorporate any findings that we have, any observations that we make, into the report so that it is timely submitted to Congress.

So with that, I am happy to open it up for some discussion.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I am for it.
CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Good. You know, I know that some folks are interested in going to specific locations. I don't know if all Commissioners have a preference on that, you know, or you could empower the Chair -- go ahead.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: I would point out that we have an awful lot of West Coast Commissioners, and there may be a California or even Arizona that would be pretty efficient for West Coast Commissioners to get to.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Yes, that's a good point.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: So for these purposes, I am an East Coast Commissioner until the first of May.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay.

COMMISSIONER HERIOT: After the first of May, I am a West Coast Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. So if maybe I can suggest a way to proceed, if Commissioners are comfortable with my staff and I continuing to identify the locations and interface along with OCRE as the point to interface with DHS and ICE, we'll come back and report to you all as to where -- what direction we're going,
obviously, any specific input as to locations, and I'd like to get your availability. We can do all that logistic work between now and the next meeting.

Does that work for Commissioners?

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: Well why don't we -- yes, I think that's a great idea, Mr. Chairman, and please do take our calendars into consideration in advance.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Absolutely.

COMMISSIONER ACHTENBERG: If that's possible.

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: So I would ask Commissioners to provide to Juana your availability over the next, what, 60 days, for availability to travel.

Any other questions or comments?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CASTRO: Okay. If not, now, we are really adjourned, and it is now 10:08. Thank you, everybody.

(Whereupon, the meeting went off the record at 10:08 a.m.)