

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
FULL LEGISLATURE MEETING

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RICHARD NICOLELLO, PRESIDING OFFICER

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**County Executive and Legislative Building**  
**1550 Franklin Avenue**  
**Mineola, New York**

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Monday, December 18, 2023

2:15 p.m.

TAKEN BY: KAREN LORENZO, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

LEGISLATOR RICHARD J. NICOLELLO

Presiding Officer

9TH Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL

Deputy Presiding Officer

7th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD

Alternate Presiding Officer

4th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR KEVAN ABRAHAMS

Minority Leader

1st Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE

2nd Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES

3rd Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE

5th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR C. WILLIAM GAYLOR, III

6th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR JOHN J. GIUFFRE

8th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR MAZI MELESA PILIP

10th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON

11th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY

12th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT (recused 33)

13th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR LAURA SCHAEFER

14th Legislative District

LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI, JR.

15th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR ARNOLD W. DRUCKER

16th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR ROSE MARIE WALKER

17th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR JOSHUA LAFAZAN

18th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR MICHAEL GIANGREGORIO

19th Legislative District

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MICHAEL PULITZER

Clerk of the Legislature

**ALSO APPEARED:**

Andy Persich, OMB

Chris Liemone, Administration

Mary Harkins, Consumer Affairs

Commissioner Capece, Consumer Affairs

ADA McDermott, District Attorney's Office

**Public comment:**

Maria Conzatti, NCCC

Jerry Kornbluth, NCCC

Maria Jordan-Awalom

Nancy Youngfert

Dan Oppenheimer

Chris Jacobs

Meta J. Mereday

Pearl Jacobs

Lynn Krug

Monica Kiely

Mariano Ugalde

Susan Kaye

Gary Levine

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: I'm going to call this meeting to order, and I'm going to ask Minority Leader Kevan Abrahams to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance is said by all.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Mike, please call the roll.

CLERK PULITZER: Thank you, Presiding Officer.

Roll call. Deputy Presiding Officer Howard Kopel?

LEGISLATOR KOPEL: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Deputy Presiding Officer Denise Ford?

LEGISLATOR FORD: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Siela Bynoe?

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Carrie A. Solages?

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Debra

1  
2 Mule?

3 LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.

4 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator C.  
5 William Gaylor, III?

6 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Here.

7 CLERK PULITZER: Thank you.  
8 Legislator John Giuffre?

9 LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Here.

10 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Mazi  
11 Pilip?

12 LEGISLATOR PILIP: Here.

13 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Delia  
14 DeRiggi-Whitton?

15 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Here.

16 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator James  
17 Kennedy?

18 LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.

19 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Laura  
20 Schaefer?

21 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Here.

22 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator John  
23 Ferretti?

24 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Here.

25 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Arnold

Drucker?

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Rose  
Marie Walker?

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Joshua  
Lafazan.

LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Michael  
Giangregorio?

LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Minority Leader  
Kevan Abrahams?

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Presiding Officer  
Richard Nicoletello?

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: We have a quorum,  
sir.

(Whereupon, Legislator  
McKevitt was left out of the  
roll call but is indeed in  
attendance.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Okay.



1  
2 Before we go into public comment, we Top  
3 Cops, which is what we traditionally do  
4 at each Legislative meeting. If you  
5 intend to come and speak during public  
6 comment portion, we ask that you fill out  
7 a slip as Meta Mereday is doing right now  
8 up at the front of the room and we'll  
9 call you in turn.

10 And for our Top Cops, Nassau County  
11 Police Benevolent Association, we have  
12 Vice President Kevin Mullick.

13 MR. MULLICK: Good afternoon,  
14 everyone. I want to thank everybody for  
15 the opportunity to allow me to speak to  
16 present our Top Cops for December 2023.  
17 But for some of you on the Legislature, I  
18 know you're moving on to better pastures.  
19 I want to thank you very much for having  
20 a good working relationship with you and  
21 being my friend. Thank you very much.

22 On December 9th, 2023, police  
23 officers from the Nassau County Emergency  
24 Service Unit, also known as ESU, visited  
25 Cohen's Children Medical Center in

1  
2 Manhasset. The event was coordinated by  
3 police officers Kevin Probst, Kenneth  
4 Tymecki and Dennis Sheehan. Twenty two  
5 Police officers from ESU did rappel from  
6 the 40 foot roof of the medical center.  
7 While rappelling from the roof, our ESU  
8 officers were waving and smiling at the  
9 children that were bedridden and confined  
10 to their rooms.

11 Our ESU police officers also  
12 collected and donated funds from their  
13 unit and purchased 75 Christmas gifts and  
14 presents for the children admitted to the  
15 hospital. ESU did personally deliver toys  
16 to the children at Cohen's medical  
17 center.

18 Being away from home in the hospital  
19 is, especially during the holidays, must  
20 be very difficult on these kids and their  
21 families. The love and compassion  
22 demonstrated by the members of ESU lifted  
23 their spirits. The Nassau County PBA is  
24 honored to announce police officers Kevin  
25 Probst, Kenneth Tymecki and Dennis

1  
2 Sheehan as Legislative Top Cops of 2023.

3 (Whereupon, applause.)

4 COMMISSIONER RYDER: I'm going to  
5 correct Kevin. You're not moving on to  
6 better pastures. These are the best  
7 pastures you can want. But you're moving  
8 on, and we thank you very much for your  
9 partnership and friendship, and I've said  
10 it before.

11 Every time at this time of year, we  
12 do a lot of different things. We do toy  
13 parades, we go and we visit schools and  
14 we give away toys to those unfortunate  
15 children that don't or cannot have it at  
16 Christmas time. They get to make a  
17 difference in people's lives.

18 This is a second year doing it, and  
19 they asked me if they wanted to lower me  
20 off the roof. And I thought about it for  
21 about a second and said no, because they  
22 wouldn't let me choose who was holding  
23 the rope.

24 But I got to tell you what they do  
25 and what they do for these children. When

1  
2 we did it during Covid, these kids not  
3 only couldn't be exposed to anything and  
4 they're in that recovery area, they come  
5 down the window. It was slippery, it was  
6 wet, it was raining last year and they  
7 still went forward with it. Taking that  
8 risk to make sure that these kids had  
9 that great day. And now they went above  
10 and beyond this year, and they raised  
11 their own money, their own funds, and  
12 they bought additional gifts for them. We  
13 could have knocked on -- everybody knows  
14 the Major -- and said, hey, give me some  
15 toys to give to these kids. No, they went  
16 and got their own. It shows that how much  
17 they care about their communities and  
18 what they do for them. So I'm very proud  
19 to be part of it. And I say thank you  
20 again to all of you, but more  
21 importantly, thank you to our cops.

22 OFFICER PROBST: Thank you,  
23 Commissioner, and thank you, Legislature.  
24 And thank you again for the opportunity  
25 to speak in front of you guys today.

1  
2 Thank you for the award. And again,  
3 it wasn't just Kenny, myself and Dennis.  
4 It did take an army, as the Commissioner  
5 always says, of everyone in the Unit to  
6 come support and help these kids.

7 Unfortunately, with everything in  
8 our day to day line of work, we see  
9 people at their worst and this just  
10 affords us the opportunity to go and  
11 spread some light, some love to these  
12 children and their families who  
13 unfortunately we're not able to or  
14 hopefully they can come out and we all  
15 want to see them get better for  
16 Christmas.

17 So just having that little bit --  
18 and again, as the Commissioner said,  
19 we're going to push real hard to get them  
20 over the edge again. But just to do  
21 something and have those kids see us for  
22 even if it's five minutes, everyone going  
23 on this side of the wall, it just it  
24 makes our lives and our hearts feel full,  
25 and we hope it does the same for the

1  
2 children and the parents as well.

3 Thank you again.

4 (Whereupon, applause.)

5 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: You  
6 know, this demonstrates another of the  
7 many, many, many ways that our Police  
8 Department makes our county better. It  
9 makes our county stronger. And I want to  
10 thank the three officers and all the  
11 officers who participated in this and  
12 making the days of these young people,  
13 children, brighter, especially this time  
14 of year.

15 Through the years, we've had Top Cop  
16 celebrations, recognitions before each of  
17 our legislative meetings, and we've seen  
18 countless ways that that our police have  
19 contributed to our county, countless ways  
20 that they've shown the courage,  
21 dedication, professionalism that makes  
22 you the finest police force in our  
23 country. And I just want to say, on  
24 behalf of the residents of Nassau County,  
25 thank you for everything that you and

1  
2 your brothers and sisters do to keep our  
3 county safe.

4 So thank you, folks.

5 LEGISLATOR FORD: I would like to  
6 echo what the Presiding Officer has said  
7 about you. I can only imagine the  
8 excitement that the children felt when  
9 they saw you going down the building,  
10 stopping to wave to them. Indeed, that is  
11 something that you just can't -- we take  
12 for granted what you do, but for these  
13 children to see you in such a positive  
14 way, a friendly way, doing something  
15 special for them just says a lot about  
16 your character. And I thank you very much  
17 for doing this.

18 And, Commissioner, I don't mean to  
19 put you on the spot, you have an  
20 absolutely wonderful police department,  
21 but I'm sure next year they can raise a  
22 lot of money if they could go by every  
23 foot you go down you could raise. So I'm  
24 just putting it out there.

25 COMMISSIONER RYDER: You hear him

1  
2 say, get me up there and push me over the  
3 side. He didn't say I was tied off.

4 (Whereupon, laughter.)

5 LEGISLATOR FORD: Well, I thought  
6 you would rappel (laughter).

7 But no, officers, in all sincerity,  
8 this is why you are Top Cops. And for the  
9 whole unit that did that. Really, I  
10 cannot underscore the thanks for what you  
11 did for those children and those  
12 families.

13 Thank you.

14 (Whereupon, applause.)

15 LEGISLATOR WALKER: And I too, just  
16 want to thank you so much. I know some of  
17 the children that are there right now  
18 and, you know, they're very, very sick.  
19 And like you said, they can't be out and  
20 about. They can't do some of the things  
21 that all of the rest of us can do with  
22 our families during the holidays, and  
23 what you did for those children and just  
24 brighten their day and how excited they  
25 were to see you. Just totally amazing. I



1  
2 mean, when they say, "the police officers  
3 were climbing down the building and  
4 waving to us", you touched their lives  
5 and and made a difference for them and  
6 for their families, more than you will  
7 ever know. So thank you so much for all  
8 you do.

9 And, Paddy, thank you for all of us,  
10 from all of us for having the best police  
11 department that there could ever be. So  
12 God bless you all and Merry Christmas to  
13 each and every one of you.

14 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: In a  
15 couple of moments. We'll have you up for  
16 a presentation. Thank you, folks.

17 Now for the Detectives Association,  
18 Inc., I'd like to introduce Joe Philbin,  
19 the Sergeant At Arms, for a presentation.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS PHILBIN: Thank  
21 you, Legislators. Good afternoon,  
22 everybody. Thank you to everybody who's  
23 been a team member of ours. For those of  
24 you moving on, we wish you the best of  
25 luck. For those of you coming in and

1  
2 moving forward, we look forward to  
3 working with you.

4 Today, we're here to recognize  
5 Detective Jason Green and Detective  
6 Anthony Barbieri, who on October 2nd,  
7 2023, around 1100 hours, Detective  
8 Barbieri and Detective Green were exiting  
9 the Southern State Highway at Exit 19S  
10 when they observed a Hempstead RMP  
11 blocking the road. As they drove by, they  
12 observed a uniform Hempstead police  
13 officer speaking with an individual  
14 sitting on the ledge of the overpass of  
15 the Southern State Parkway on the  
16 opposite side of the fence, contemplating  
17 suicide.

18 Detective Barbieri and Detective  
19 Green pulled over and asked the Hempstead  
20 unit if he needed assistance, at which  
21 time, and he accepted the help. Detective  
22 Barbieri and Detective Green initiated a  
23 conversation with the aided, who was in  
24 severe distress and stated she had been  
25 contemplating suicide and had taken

1  
2 multiple pills prior to climbing over the  
3 fence of the overpass. Detective Barbieri  
4 and Detective Green were able to have an  
5 ongoing conversation with the aided for  
6 approximately 10 to 15 minutes, and were  
7 eventually able to talk the aided into  
8 climbing back over to the sidewalk.

9 In order for the aided to get back  
10 onto the sidewalk, she had to stand up on  
11 the ledge of the overpass, which is  
12 approximately one foot in diameter, hold  
13 on to the fence and carefully walk back  
14 to the end of the overpass, which was  
15 another challenge. Detective Barbieri and  
16 Detective Green were able to calm the  
17 aided down enough to get her slowly and  
18 carefully walk back onto the sidewalk, at  
19 which time she was taken to new NUMC for  
20 a treatment evaluation.

21 I can say is as a hostage  
22 negotiator, there's nothing harder than  
23 talking to somebody in distress. You  
24 don't know what's going to set them off.  
25 You're talking to them at the worst time

1  
2 in their life. And for them to be not  
3 even called to this assignment, just  
4 happen on it, talk to this person and  
5 help them get back into a state where we  
6 can get them to treatment, just shows the  
7 professionals that we have in the  
8 detective division, which is why it is  
9 imperative that we get to full staffing.

10 So I'd like to ask you guys to join  
11 me in congratulating our top detectives,  
12 Detective Jason Green and Detective  
13 Anthony Barbieri.

14 COMMISSIONER RYDER: So once again,  
15 we have specialties in this department as  
16 you all know, because you help fund it  
17 and you help us get the training that we  
18 need. Our emergency service that, just  
19 spoke, BSO in the back. We have one of  
20 the best hostage negotiating teams in the  
21 country. And the training that they go  
22 through is why we never have to fire our  
23 weapons in this county, because they're  
24 so good at what we call verbal judo. But  
25 every single officer goes through some

1  
2 kind of negotiation training. Every  
3 single officer goes through that training  
4 that takes that decision to be made in  
5 that split second. They made a decision  
6 to talk. They made a decision to try to  
7 de-escalate and bring that person back.  
8 Because of that training, because of the  
9 support we get from this Body is the  
10 reason why these two detectives were able  
11 to do the job that they did that day. And  
12 again, I also congratulate both of them  
13 and thank you again.

14 DETECTIVE BARBIERI: Thank you. How  
15 are you doing?

16 I just want to thank the  
17 Legislature, the Commissioners, the  
18 Chiefs behind me. We're very grateful  
19 for this award. This is not a job that we  
20 do for awards or accolades. We do it to  
21 assist the members of Nassau County to  
22 the best of our ability.

23 I just wanted to say that day was a  
24 normal morning for us. We were doing our  
25 regular duties, and we happen to pull up

1  
2 on this situation. Our stress levels shot  
3 through the roof, and to stay calm in  
4 that situation was not something easy for  
5 for us. And to talk her down was  
6 extremely stressful situation for the  
7 both of us. So I can't even imagine how  
8 stressful it was for her and what this  
9 young 17-year-old girl was going through.  
10 So I just hope she got the help that she  
11 needs. And I hope that our interaction  
12 with her was was able to get her to a  
13 better place and to get her the help she  
14 needed and to start off to get her life  
15 going again. So thank you.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:

17 Legislator Ford.

18 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you.

19 First of all, thank you very much  
20 for saving a life. I think that that's  
21 the most important thing that we hear  
22 today. And yes, you're right, I can only  
23 imagine the stress that you both were  
24 going through watching this young woman,  
25 17 years old. And from the way that I

1  
2 heard the story, how it was depicted, was  
3 that there was a fence between you and  
4 the individual, or was she right there  
5 with you?

6 DETECTIVE BARBIERI: Yeah, she she  
7 was on the other side of the fence is  
8 approximately a ten foot fence. So for us  
9 to get over that, to actually physically  
10 help her was impossible.

11 LEGISLATOR FORD: Aside from your  
12 professionalism and your training, you  
13 brought into your into this whole  
14 situation such a compassion and an  
15 understanding and a connectedness that  
16 you had with this individual, to the  
17 point where not only did you stop her  
18 from jumping, but the fact that she  
19 actually walked, holding on to the fence,  
20 back to safety where you then could  
21 administer first aid to her, that says  
22 volumes about the character that you both  
23 have in regard to dealing with this  
24 situation, and I'm sure that the family  
25 is eternally grateful that you were able

1  
2 to save her.

3 And yes, we all pray that she did  
4 get the help that she needs. But the two  
5 of you, honestly, I just can't say enough  
6 and thank you enough on behalf of this  
7 county for the excellent job that you did  
8 and the bravery and the courage that you  
9 showed and you demonstrated in dealing  
10 with somebody because, yes, you never  
11 know what's going to set them off and  
12 what happens.

13 It takes special people to do this.  
14 And you two are very, very special  
15 individuals, the finest of our cops.  
16 Thank you.

17 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Deputy  
18 Presiding Officer Kopel.

19 DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL:  
20 Well, I see that the Police Department  
21 chooses its detectives wisely. You guys  
22 were just going along and not even  
23 looking for something like this. Your  
24 powers of observation are clearly very  
25 good. You noticed something going on



1  
2 there. Who looks over fences along the  
3 sideway.

4 So it's just a wonderful thing that  
5 you've gotten the right training. And the  
6 versatility that you show. I mean, your  
7 basic training is criminals. You're out  
8 there looking for criminals and you're  
9 out there trying to understand criminals  
10 and how they think and how they act and  
11 what to do about them. This is an  
12 entirely different thing altogether. And,  
13 you just pivoted and accomplished it.

14 For someone who lives in this  
15 neighborhood, in your neighborhood, that  
16 you gentlemen police, it's a tremendous  
17 feeling of comfort. And I also would like  
18 to join in thanking you. Can't thank you  
19 enough. Makes me feel good. Makes me feel  
20 safe. Makes me feel safer. All the people  
21 in the area. Thank you.

22 (Whereupon, applause.)

23 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Okay.  
24 Thank you very much.

25 We invite you and the PBA honorees

to come on up.

(Whereupon, photos taken and  
Citations given.)

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1  
2 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: So we  
3 now have a couple of points of personal  
4 privilege. The first would be with our  
5 Legislator John Ferretti.

6 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Thank you,  
7 Presiding Officer Jackie Testamark and  
8 Mom and Dad, if you want to come up to  
9 the podium.

10 So thank you for coming. It's an  
11 honor and privilege and privilege to  
12 recognize Levittown own Jacqueline  
13 Testamark here today. Jackie is a  
14 graduate of my alma mater, Division  
15 Avenue High School. She graduated in  
16 2020. I graduated in 2019. That's a joke.  
17 (Laughter).

18 At Division Avenue High School,  
19 Jackie excelled. She was an AP scholar  
20 with distinction who was not only  
21 academically gifted but also musically  
22 talented. She received the lead role in  
23 Division Avenue's musical production of  
24 Mamma mia! She was part of the school  
25 choir and brought her singing talents to

1  
2 the All-State Music Festival in 2018.

3 Jackie was also a member of the  
4 Tri-M Music Scholars Honor Society and  
5 vice president of the Thespian Honor  
6 Society. She played soccer for Division  
7 and was a student council representative.

8 After graduating salutatorian from  
9 division, Jackie took her countless  
10 talents to Yale University. She continues  
11 to excel at Yale, planning on graduating  
12 this spring.

13 While Jackie started her career at  
14 Yale as a political science major and I  
15 think in politics as well, she did have a  
16 plan to go to law school, but eventually  
17 changed her major and is currently  
18 studying classical civilizations in  
19 history. And incidentally, I think  
20 there's probably a few people up here  
21 that would say good choice.

22 At Yale, Jackie helped organize  
23 Yale's Classics anti-racism reading group  
24 and worked as a field archeologist in  
25 Rome.

1  
2           This past November, Jackie was named  
3           a Rhodes Scholar, an accomplishment that  
4           will enable her to pursue her passion for  
5           reframing museum exhibitions to show a  
6           globalized view of the ancient world.  
7           Jackie is among the roughly 30 Americans  
8           named to this prestigious scholarship,  
9           which will take her to the University of  
10          Oxford in October 2024 to pursue her  
11          graduate degree.

12          To put Jackie's accomplishments into  
13          context, more than 2500 students started  
14          the application process this year for a  
15          Rhodes Scholarship, aiming to pursue  
16          graduate degrees in areas ranging from  
17          the humanities to physical sciences. More  
18          than 860 were endorsed by roughly 250  
19          higher learning institutions, and only 30  
20          Americans -- 30 Americans -- were chosen,  
21          and they will join an international group  
22          representing more than 70 countries.

23          Jackie, we are so proud of you, not  
24          just for receiving this Rhodes  
25          Scholarship, but for all of your

1  
2 accomplishments. Your accomplishments are  
3 a reflection of your hard work, your  
4 upbringing by your parents who are here  
5 with you today, and I had the honor to  
6 meet. And I can tell you, you've got two  
7 great parents. They're supporting you the  
8 whole way. And it's also a reflection on  
9 our incredible school district in  
10 Levittown. You didn't go to Abbey Lane  
11 like me, we still let you in. But you did  
12 go to Wisdom Land and Division Avenue.

13 I know we have your principal and  
14 superintendent here are going to come up  
15 and say a few words in a little bit, and  
16 it's really a reflection on our great  
17 Levittown school district as well.

18 Again. We're so proud of you. Wish  
19 you the best of luck finishing up at  
20 Yale. And of course, in the fall at  
21 Oxford. God bless you.

22 Want to say a few words?

23 MS. TESTAMARK: I'll keep this short  
24 and sweet. If there's anything I've  
25 learned, it's that people like short and

1  
2 sweet. So I will keep this pretty short  
3 for you guys.

4 I think the question I've been asked  
5 the most since winning Rhodes was why  
6 does someone who wants to study art  
7 history deserve this kind of scholarship?  
8 To which I say, why not, usually. And  
9 then I go on a long, rambling tangent  
10 about all the things I'm interested in  
11 studying.

12 But more than anything, I think that  
13 winning this award is just proof that  
14 every person has something that they're  
15 supposed to do. And when you find that  
16 thing, the doors will start to open.

17 I did not start out studying art  
18 history or anything like that when I got  
19 to Yale. The reason that I'm on the  
20 trajectory I am now is because of my  
21 parents and the countless times that  
22 they've pushed me to pursue the things  
23 that interest me and the things that I  
24 love. I was always worried that, you  
25 know, there was no job security outside

1  
2 of law school and that was always a huge  
3 factor. Something I was thinking about.  
4 Time and time again, they told me that  
5 they wanted to see me wake up happy every  
6 morning and doing something that I loved,  
7 and that if I was doing that, I'd never  
8 be working a day in my life. So, I owe it  
9 all to my parents for giving me the  
10 courage to kind of keep pursuing this  
11 path, obviously.

12 And it's really just kind of been an  
13 absolutely surreal experience having my  
14 entire family behind me, some of whom are  
15 here today. And of course, my principal,  
16 John Coscia, my superintendent, Todd  
17 Winch, who kind of gave me the keys to  
18 success all those years ago. Absolutely  
19 would not be here without any of those  
20 people. So it's truly a dream come true.  
21 I'm very excited to be going to Oxford  
22 and to not be paying for it. Just, all  
23 my thanks to everyone who helped me get  
24 here today.

25 (Whereupon, applause.)



1  
2                   LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Thank you so  
3 much.

4                   And you know, from what I read  
5 online, there are politicians or elected  
6 officials that were Rhodes Scholars. One  
7 is President Bill Clinton, the other was,  
8 Senator Cory Booker. I saw that as well.  
9 So I told you, if you ever do go into  
10 politics and follow in their footsteps,  
11 that's what you got to live up to.  
12 President. Just make sure you skip over  
13 the county level, because you'll kick my  
14 butt if you ever run against me.

15                  Mom, Dad, do you want to say  
16 anything, we're good?

17                  (Whereupon, decline to  
18 speak.)

19                  LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: All right.  
20 Congratulations.

21                  Anybody from the school district  
22 want to come up?

23                  SUPERINTENDENT WINCH: Thank you,  
24 Legislator Ferretti, for giving me the  
25 opportunity to share a few words.

1  
2 A Rhodes Scholar once shared that  
3 people like short and sweet. So I'll do  
4 my best to comply (laughter).

5 On behalf of the entire Levittown  
6 School District, it is my honor to share  
7 our congratulations to Jackie Testamark  
8 on this tremendous achievement. Although  
9 we are looking to coordinate our own  
10 small celebration with our Board of  
11 Education, I didn't want to miss out on  
12 the opportunity to attend the Legislature  
13 recognition, as this is such a defining  
14 moment for both you, your family, and for  
15 your extended family of the Levittown  
16 School District.

17 While you achieved this incredible  
18 milestone all on your own, we are just  
19 proud to have been part of your  
20 educational journey. We wish you much  
21 success and happiness in the years ahead.  
22 And at this time, I'd like to just  
23 introduce the principal of Division  
24 Avenue High School, Mr. John Coscia, who  
25 will share a few brief words.

1  
2 Thank you.

3 MR. COSCIA: Thank you, Mr. Winch.

4 Walking in today, I was just  
5 reflecting on Jackie's high school  
6 career, and I expressed this to Jackie  
7 earlier on that when I would talk about  
8 her with whether it be Dr. McDonald at  
9 the time or Mr. Winch, if one of the  
10 Division Avenue students I'd come in  
11 contact with would receive a Rhodes  
12 scholarship, she's the least surprising  
13 of the bunch.

14 I had an opportunity to look back on  
15 some of the things I said about her and  
16 one thing really resonated, which was  
17 when I described her in my senior award  
18 speech, I described her as relentless,  
19 and someone who will do anything within  
20 her means to surpass her competition. And  
21 this is just further proof of it. She  
22 has impeccable character, which I know  
23 she gets from her mother and her father.  
24 We're just beyond proud of her at  
25 Division Avenue High School.

1  
2                   Congratulations, you've earned it.

3                   (Whereupon, applause.)

4                   LEGISLATOR WALKER: Jackie, I want  
5                   to congratulate you too, and congratulate  
6                   the Levittown School District. It really  
7                   shows everyone how great our school  
8                   districts are and what our students can  
9                   accomplish if they put their minds to it  
10                  and work as hard as you can.

11                  Although I don't know Jackie  
12                  personally, I do know her aunt very well,  
13                  Mrs. Christine Moyer (phonetic), who was  
14                  here in the audience today, who taught my  
15                  children over in Old Country Road  
16                  Elementary School. I'm sorry they didn't  
17                  become Rhodes Scholars, but you did a  
18                  great job anyway (laughter).

19                  Again, congratulations. We are so  
20                  very, very proud of you. And I feel like  
21                  I have a connection to you through  
22                  Christine. So congratulations. And to mom  
23                  and dad too, and again to Levittown  
24                  School District.

25                  (Whereupon, applause.)

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. Thank  
you.

\*\*\*\*\*

1  
2 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: We are  
3 fortunate to have with us today one of  
4 the outstanding educational leaders in  
5 our county. The president of Nassau  
6 Community College, Dr. Maria Conzatti.

7 MS. CONZATTI: Thank you, Presiding  
8 Officer.

9 It would seem that today's theme is  
10 about community, and I just wanted to  
11 take this opportunity to thank each and  
12 every one of you for the outstanding job  
13 that you do in supporting all of your  
14 community based organizations, including  
15 Nassau Community College.

16 And for the retiring legislators:  
17 Presiding Officer Nicolello, Legislator  
18 Abrahams, Legislator Ford and Legislator  
19 Schaefer, thank you so very much for your  
20 unwavering support for this college. For  
21 its 14,000 students and over 160,000  
22 alumni, this institution has been an  
23 opportunity to flourish in this county,  
24 to thrive in this county, to stay here,  
25 to raise families and continue the legacy

1  
2 of this county. And you can see from our  
3 outstanding police force to the number of  
4 individuals invested in this county and  
5 its successes, the work that you have  
6 done and continue to do.

7 We wish the four of you well. We  
8 look forward to continuing our rapport  
9 with the the rest of the legislative  
10 body. I wish you all very happy and  
11 healthy holidays.

12 MR. KORNBLUTH: I just want to say a  
13 few words.

14 I want to thank the entire  
15 legislature for all the support that  
16 you've given to Nassau Community College  
17 over the years, and especially as the  
18 retirees Presiding Officer Nicolello,  
19 Minority Leader Kevan Abrahams, and  
20 Legislators Laura Schaefer and Denise  
21 Ford. I want to thank you. We're going to  
22 miss you tremendously.

23 I have developed some great  
24 relationships. Kevan and I go back many,  
25 many years before I was standing here.

1  
2 And hopefully we'll get back to having  
3 our breakfast soon.

4 Again, I want to wish everyone here  
5 a healthy and happy holiday and New Year,  
6 and we'll see you right afterwards.

7 And just in closing, I just want to  
8 say something. Maria didn't say it, but I  
9 figured I'd say it. I can get away with a  
10 little bit more. We do feel good when you  
11 question us and you interrogate us when  
12 we come up here to do the budgets,  
13 because it makes us think about what  
14 we're doing, and we really appreciate it.  
15 And what it has done for us, it has  
16 helped us to provide a real quality  
17 education at a low cost for all the  
18 students that we serve in Nassau County.  
19 So for that, we really thank you. And  
20 have a great year again.

21 Thank you.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All  
23 right. All the rest of you heard that,  
24 right? They like to be interrogated  
25 (laughter).



1  
2 Thank you for joining us today for  
3 the for the recognition. And, you know, I  
4 think we are all proud of our association  
5 with the college and all proud to have  
6 supported the college, its budget, its  
7 capital projects throughout the years.  
8 And it is a real jewel of Nassau County.  
9 It will be going forward. Thank you.

10  
11 \*\*\*\*\*  
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1  
2                   PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Last,  
3 I'm going to take a moment to take my own  
4 point of personal privilege to say how  
5 fortunate I have been to be a legislator  
6 in this county, and how fortunate I've  
7 been to serve with my colleagues, many of  
8 whom both past and present, I consider  
9 friends for life.

10                  Thank you to all the dedicated  
11 Nassau County workforce. County workers,  
12 Government workers don't always get the  
13 recognition they deserve, but this county  
14 has done tremendous things for our  
15 residents. Still doing that. You're all  
16 serving selflessly, and you make all of  
17 us look good.

18                  I especially want to thank the  
19 department heads and agency heads who  
20 come and make presentations for us. You  
21 should get battle pay for having to  
22 listen to us year in and year out and  
23 meeting after meeting.

24                  To the staff, I want to thank both  
25 staff for the entire Legislature, but

1  
2 especially from my side, the Majority,  
3 our counsel, Chris Ostuni; Meredith  
4 Hughes; Bill Muller; communications, Mary  
5 Stoddard, Kevin Ryan, Bill Florio and all  
6 the members of the Majority staff who  
7 have made sure that we're prepared for  
8 every meeting. They have caught every  
9 issue, gotten us on the straight and  
10 narrow. So they've done a fantastic job.  
11 And throughout the pandemic, when most  
12 people were sheltering in their homes,  
13 they were all here working, making sure  
14 the County continued to work, the  
15 Legislature continue to work, and county  
16 operations continued.

17 And then last but not least,  
18 certainly not least, I want to thank my  
19 two assistants, Ursula and Pete. Been  
20 with me for many years. I truly  
21 appreciate everything that you do. They  
22 have been excellent in their roles and  
23 it's not me, just me observing it. But  
24 everywhere I've gone, I've gotten  
25 compliments on what they do, which is the

1  
2 true testament. So basically, I just want  
3 to say thank you all. And it's been a  
4 privilege.

5 (Whereupon, applause.)

6 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Good afternoon  
7 for the last time, at least for me up  
8 here.

9 I got a lot of different mixed  
10 emotions, a lot of different feelings,  
11 and wasn't too sure what I wanted to say  
12 today. But the most important thing I  
13 wanted to come across is just to say  
14 thank you. So many different levels of  
15 thank you. I apologize if I get a little  
16 bit long. And I'll take it that Rich also  
17 thanked a lot of people that I was going  
18 to thank.

19 Just starting first and foremost  
20 with my colleagues, the 18 of you, I know  
21 at times it didn't seem that way all the  
22 time, but I have a tremendous amount of  
23 respect for each and every one of you.  
24 Each of you bring a different background  
25 and perspective, which, if we don't

1  
2 always agree, we do agree that we are  
3 both advocating for what we believe is  
4 best and keep that within you. Keep that  
5 fire within you. Debate is good.  
6 Discussion is even better. So from that  
7 standpoint, I want to thank each and  
8 every one of you.

9 More specifically, to thank my  
10 colleagues in the Minority. We've been  
11 through thick and thin. We've been  
12 through good times. We've been through  
13 bad times. We've been through laughing  
14 times. We've been through sad times. I  
15 would be remiss if I don't remember some  
16 of the sad times to acknowledge them.  
17 One of my good friends in Judy Jacobs,  
18 when she passed away, she was one of my  
19 dearest friends, to the point today, it  
20 kind of chokes me up. Peter Schmitt as  
21 well. Even though Peter and I were  
22 sometimes at odds, he would say,  
23 Abrahams, you don't know anything. And  
24 then he would gavel the end of the  
25 meeting and say, what about those

1  
2 Yankees? We had a respect. We had a bond  
3 outside of the floor.

4 In many occasions, what the public  
5 sees is what I like to call the theater.  
6 But I think everyone up here has a mutual  
7 respect for each other. Obviously, Joe  
8 Scannell as well, and many others that  
9 have come here and have served. I want to  
10 thank them for the opportunity.

11 To my senior staff, we are enriched  
12 would attest to this as well as Denise  
13 and Laura and everybody here, quite  
14 frankly, we are pretty much nothing  
15 without them. They are a tremendous asset  
16 to us. It goes without saying that they  
17 give up their nights, their weekends to  
18 ensure that we look the best that we can  
19 look. Over the 20 years that there's so  
20 much senior staff that goes along. So  
21 it's very hard to thank all of them. But  
22 definitely the ones that are here today.  
23 Bill, Danny, Cecilia, Michelle, Sarah,  
24 Tony, Robin, Gabby. And I'm sure I'm  
25 missing somebody. I want to thank each

1  
2 and every one of you. It warms my heart  
3 for what you did today in terms of the  
4 celebration luncheon. And I want to  
5 continue to thank you again.

6 To my Legislative District 1 staff.  
7 I gotta tell you, these two ladies have  
8 been with me since day one. Robin Wheat  
9 and Sharon Gripper. Many times I have  
10 said that they are the Legislator, and I  
11 mean that in a joking way, because they  
12 have given up their -- forget their  
13 Saturdays and Sundays, they would give up  
14 Christmas Day for this office. They  
15 serve without expecting anything back. I  
16 have two tokens of appreciation for both  
17 of them. For somebody that's been with  
18 you for 20 years, they're not coworkers,  
19 they're family. And it's very hard  
20 sometimes to try to decide what you want  
21 to get for family. But I will say that  
22 these two ladies are by far the best  
23 things that this district has seen.  
24 They're going to be missed. They're  
25 going to go on their own paths, but it

1  
2 would be a disservice if I did not  
3 recognize them today. And I want to thank  
4 each and every one of you for being  
5 there.

6 (Whereupon, applause.)

7 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: And last but  
8 not least, I want to thank the community.  
9 You have entrusted me through I can't  
10 even remember how many elections. You  
11 have entrusted me with your vote. You've  
12 entrusted me with your confidence. And I  
13 am so appreciative of that.

14 I keep telling everybody I'm not  
15 going anywhere. But to some degree, I  
16 kind of am. But for the most part, I  
17 would be nothing without the people of  
18 Uniondale and Roosevelt and Hempstead and  
19 Freeport and Baldwin and East Meadow. You  
20 guys truly allowed me to stand and be  
21 strong without having to worry about an  
22 election, advocate for what I believe and  
23 what I think you wanted me to advocate  
24 fore because it's what you believe. I am  
25 truly honored to represent you for the



1  
2 last 21 years.

3 It goes without saying, I have to  
4 obviously thank my family. My kids made  
5 the ultimate sacrifice. Me missing  
6 basketball games and chorus events, you  
7 name it, theater events. It goes without  
8 saying, my wife, that's been very  
9 supportive to me, it goes without saying.  
10 Even though they couldn't be here today,  
11 I want to thank them as well.

12 It's a tough day, I'm happy for this  
13 institution. I'm looking forward to my  
14 good friend Delia DeRiggi-Whitton  
15 stepping in as the Minority Leader. And I  
16 think it's an opportunity for the  
17 legislature to redefine itself.

18 The Legislature, despite what people  
19 see and read, we agree on 98% of the  
20 stuff that happens here. It's the 2%  
21 that gets written about all the time.

22 But that being said, with four new  
23 legislators coming in, it's definitely a  
24 new opportunity. You can always make  
25 things better. So I know I was kind of

1  
2 long, but hey, today's our day. I  
3 decided to say a couple things and thank  
4 a couple people.

5 But I want to again, Rich, you've  
6 been always a stand up guy. You have  
7 been always a honor to serve with. I want  
8 to continue to thank you as well. But  
9 thank you, community. And thank you,  
10 senior staff, and thank you to my  
11 colleagues. God bless each and every one  
12 of you. And I wish you nothing but the  
13 best.

14 Thank you again.

15 (Whereupon, applause.)

16 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
17 you, Kevan. I just want to say the  
18 feelings are mutual. And absolutely, the  
19 respect is mutual; 100%.

20 LEGISLATOR FORD: Well, Kevan, you  
21 really brought this into the emotional  
22 level.

23 I too, want to say farewell to  
24 everyone as well, and to thank everybody  
25 who supported me to help me on this

1  
2 journey of 20 years of fantastic  
3 experiences, learning about so many  
4 different aspects of the county, and of  
5 course, my district.

6 I want to echo with what both Rich  
7 and Kevin said about the people that work  
8 here in the county. We have the finest  
9 workforce. People that are dedicated to  
10 their jobs, willing to do whatever they  
11 can to make this county better. They take  
12 great pride in the work that they do. Our  
13 CSEA workers, our public safety, our  
14 police officers, our fire marshals,  
15 anybody, whatever department they work  
16 in. And I'm going to forget if I keep  
17 talking about different departments. But  
18 in each and every single -- in all my  
19 experiences and encounters with them, I  
20 have to say that they really deserve the  
21 recognition of being the best, the best  
22 workforce in this great country of ours.

23 Also with their supervisors, their  
24 department heads that have to sit here.  
25 When I first came to this Legislature, we

1  
2           were over in one West Street and we would  
3           be starting at 10 a.m. and not ending  
4           till about 8 or 9:00 at night. And those  
5           department heads stayed and still would  
6           get up and testify. Me, I probably would  
7           have complained or whatever, but they did  
8           it with true professionalism. So that  
9           only goes to show you the quality of the  
10          people that we have working here.

11                 When I look at all the staff that  
12          works here, I look at both sides of the  
13          aisle -- and Robin, I want to wish you  
14          and Sharon good luck with your  
15          retirements, because I always had a great  
16          occasion of working with you, Robin. And  
17          it really was always a very, very  
18          positive one. But even on our side with  
19          our staff, when I think of all the people  
20          that support us and like Rich said, they  
21          help us to look good. Despite the times  
22          that we call them, we ask them to do  
23          certain things, they're always at the  
24          ready. And I know Chris Ostuni is going  
25          to miss my calling him up at all times of

1  
2 the night, every weekend, whether he's on  
3 vacation or not. I do actually start out  
4 with saying, I hope you're not on  
5 vacation, but if you are, I need to have  
6 this taken care of.

7 Meredith, who also has to field my  
8 phone calls. When I look, I'm looking  
9 over there. I'm probably going to forget  
10 everybody but Bill Florio Mary Studdard,  
11 we have Frank Maroney, Kevin Ryan, Rob,  
12 there's numerous. And even with our  
13 clerk, Mike, thank you very much. And  
14 with all the legislators that I work  
15 with, they have right from the beginning.

16 When I first came here, I worked  
17 with such a phenomenal group of  
18 legislators. Over the years they have  
19 changed. But still, I have to say, I'm  
20 working with the best of the best and on  
21 both sides of the aisle. And Kevan,  
22 you're right, we always got along. We  
23 were always friends. We may argue, but  
24 that was always left here up at the dais  
25 when we had to go out and interact with

1  
2 one another. And I have to say that we  
3 truly are friends.

4 I also have to give special  
5 recognition to my aide, Patty Dunham.  
6 We've been together for 15 years, and I  
7 have to say -- she's leaving with me as  
8 well. People don't realize that they are  
9 the first line in our job. They are the  
10 ones that received the initial phone  
11 call. They have no idea who's on the  
12 other side of the telephone line, what  
13 kind of mood they're in, are they going  
14 to complain or whatever. And they have to  
15 think at that split second, how to be  
16 able to handle each and every single  
17 phone call with professionalism. And I  
18 have to say that it's not just me that  
19 feels that she does a good job, but it's  
20 my public when I when I am out in my  
21 community, people will always comment on  
22 how she has handled them, how she has  
23 worked with them. And yes, not only do  
24 they take care of things in the office,  
25 but there are times, especially after

1  
2 Sandy, Patty would take forms to people's  
3 homes to make sure that they got these  
4 forms and that they needed to do so they  
5 would be able to secure the funding in  
6 order to rebuild from that storm. She has  
7 consistently gone above and beyond, in  
8 the job that she has done. And Patty,  
9 it's going to be tough of us separating,  
10 but we both will still be living in Long  
11 Beach. And even when I look at Dan McCloy  
12 and then when we look even with the  
13 Ursula and Pete who also have had to --  
14 Rich, I don't want to tell you, but  
15 they've had to help me out a number of  
16 times as well, and they always did.

17 So to all of you, thank you very  
18 much for giving me 20 years with the job  
19 that I truly love and that I will always  
20 miss. And I wish each and every single  
21 one of you good luck.

22 And I know we have two legislators  
23 that may be moving on, so when you do, I  
24 want to be I want to come to your final  
25 Legislative hearing.

1  
2 And Rich, thank you very much for  
3 your guidance. You helped me in the  
4 caucus when we first came, we had a lot  
5 of good conversations. And it's always  
6 the friendship that we had. Kevan, we  
7 started out together as well.

8 So I know that we're leaving this  
9 county in good hands with those that are  
10 staying here and with the new legislators  
11 that are coming on. And I'm very thankful  
12 to my district for making this especially  
13 sweet to leave, because I know that the  
14 legislator who will be taking over for me  
15 will do an outstanding job, and I know  
16 that they will be in good hands and I  
17 think that they'll reap the rewards of  
18 his professionalism and the character  
19 that he has.

20 So to all of you, good luck and  
21 enjoy the holidays. And I am signing off  
22 for the last time. Thank you.

23 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
24 Legislator Schaefer.

25 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Yes. Thank



1  
2 you. So I was fine earlier. Now I have  
3 three people I had to listen to, and I'm  
4 thinking things and feeling things. No,  
5 no, there's so many things I could echo  
6 the same sentiments for. Everybody here  
7 brings a unique perspective to the table.  
8 It's really been a pleasure to work with  
9 people who I've worked with from day one,  
10 and then people that have come in since  
11 then. I'm excited for the new people  
12 that are coming in the new legislature  
13 that we're going to have. I can say for  
14 the three people we have on our side,  
15 they're great and they're really going to  
16 contribute great things to this  
17 legislature and to this county. So I'm  
18 excited for the County as well.

19 I also want to thank the staff. The  
20 county government staff is just  
21 incredible. As was said, anytime we  
22 needed something, anytime my office  
23 needed something or I needed something, I  
24 could just pick up the phone and call  
25 people. Even if I needed to call a couple

1  
2 of people to figure out who to talk to,  
3 you could do that and you'd get the help  
4 you needed. Whether it was a snowstorm or  
5 it was Covid or things that were going or  
6 just anything that was happening. People  
7 are responsive and they really try and do  
8 the right thing, and that's what you need  
9 to make a county work. So I do want to  
10 say thank you to everybody and everybody  
11 who sits here every week, as well as Rich  
12 was saying and listens to us. It's a  
13 challenge, we know that. So thank you for  
14 your patience.

15 And again for our staff, our  
16 attorneys. I'll have to say about Chris  
17 as well. I've called Chris at times that  
18 I say, if you're at home or you're sick  
19 and somehow he has an amazing way of  
20 making it sound like he doesn't care.  
21 He's totally happy to help you, even if  
22 he's on his deathbed. He's just like, no,  
23 no, no, I'm good. I'll help you, what do  
24 you need? So that thank you so much for  
25 that. And certainly for Meredith and Dan

1  
2 and then for Bill Muller as well. You've  
3 always been there with incredible help  
4 and getting answers for us when we didn't  
5 have them. And our PR staff who makes us,  
6 as was said, makes us look good. And you  
7 guys go above and beyond as well to help  
8 us to do what we have to do to be out  
9 there in the community and make sure that  
10 we get out in the community, even if it's  
11 digitally or whatever we have to do.

12 Billy, for all the videos that you did  
13 with me, that was a lot of fun. And our  
14 staff, everybody's individual staff has  
15 been helpful as well. Everybody's always  
16 there to answer questions.

17 And for the relationships that I've  
18 developed, I'm really happy about that.  
19 I'm very happy that Legislator Bynoe and  
20 I became friends because now she's my  
21 legislator. We'll probably have to talk  
22 occasionally. You know, it's just been a  
23 pleasure.

24 Office of Budget, thank you so much  
25 for your well wishes. I know you guys

1  
2 sent me a card. I do really appreciate  
3 that.

4 I'm really grateful to have had this  
5 opportunity. It's given me a lot of  
6 unique experiences that I'm sure I never  
7 would have had if I just practiced law or  
8 chose something else in life. There's no  
9 way I would have experienced some of the  
10 things that I've experienced with people  
11 learning about people, learning about  
12 dealing and working with different types  
13 of people. It's just been ten years of  
14 growth for me and I'm very appreciative  
15 of that because I think life is all about  
16 growth. And if you don't look to move  
17 further and farther in your life than,  
18 you're standing still, and that's never  
19 good.

20 So I am looking forward to moving  
21 on. But it's definitely bittersweet in  
22 some ways, although mostly sweet. No,  
23 it's definitely going to be great. I'm  
24 not going anywhere either, like Kevan was  
25 saying. So you never know where any of us

1  
2 will pop up. Like I said the last time,  
3 maybe right out there saying something to  
4 the Legislature, having something to  
5 complain about. Wouldn't you love that?

6 But anyway, thank you, everyone, for  
7 all that you've done. Rich, thank you for  
8 your leadership. I remember when I heard  
9 that you were going to be our presiding  
10 officer. I was really, really excited  
11 about that because I think you're just  
12 such a gentleman. You just have such a  
13 wonderful way about you. And I think  
14 you're really an incredible leader. So  
15 thank you.

16 And Rose, who was my buddy in  
17 Hicksville and Bethpage, you know, you  
18 know, we're going to stay friends and  
19 there's no way that's changing. And  
20 everybody, I hope to be able to see  
21 everybody in different places in life.  
22 And I wish you all the best.

23 Thank you.

24 LEGISLATOR WALKER: And I'm sure you  
25 probably don't want to hear from all of

1  
2 us. Being one of the senior legislators,  
3 now, four of them are moving on, but I,  
4 too, want to congratulate each and every  
5 one of you. Thank you for all you've  
6 done for each and every one of us who sit  
7 here. Many of us have reached out to you  
8 for questions or concerns that we had.  
9 Can you go over this with one of us? Can  
10 you explain this? Can you help us with  
11 this issue? Where our districts cross  
12 paths, we work together on so many  
13 issues.

14 Kevan, I'm going to miss talking  
15 about my grandkids' sports and your  
16 children's sports because we overlap  
17 there, even though it's my next  
18 generation. I will keep you posted on,  
19 uh, my little Aiden going to your alma  
20 mater and how he's doing over there at  
21 Saint Dom's.

22 Denise, you and I started our our  
23 careers together. Although I spent the  
24 first six years over in the Town of  
25 Oyster Bay. We worked together from the

1  
2 very get go.

3 Laura and I shared the district,  
4 like she said in Hicksville and Bethpage,  
5 and we continue to work together, and I  
6 know we'll continue to work together,  
7 even though she'll no longer be a  
8 legislator.

9 And as Laura said, Rich, you had  
10 such leadership for each and every one of  
11 us, and we cannot thank you enough. So on  
12 behalf of all of us here on the  
13 Legislature, we wish you the very, very  
14 best of luck in your future that you're  
15 heading off to and know that we will  
16 always be here for you, as we know you'll  
17 be here for us. And we will miss you  
18 being here with us. But our friendships  
19 will last forever. So thank you again for  
20 everything.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
22 you, all. Thank you, Rose.

23  
24 \*\*\*\*\*  
25

1  
2 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Public  
3 comments.

4 Maria Jordan Awalom.

5 MS. AWALOM: Good afternoon.

6 My name is Maria Jordan Awalom. I'm  
7 a Freeport resident and proud president  
8 of the Freeport School District Board of  
9 Education. As a 33-year resident of the  
10 village of Freeport, there is so much  
11 that I have learned and experienced while  
12 living in an incorporated village. We all  
13 know that local elections truly matter,  
14 but most importantly, the people who we  
15 elect to represent us matter.

16 I'm here today to briefly speak on  
17 how our minority leader, Legislator Kevan  
18 Abrahams, kept the residents of the  
19 village of Freeport hopeful. You see, if  
20 it were not for the leadership of someone  
21 who cares for all his constituents, we  
22 would have had no representation.

23 Legislator Abrahams is a reminder to  
24 us all that there is always a way to make  
25 things better, and that there are elected



1  
2 officials who actually care. Although  
3 Legislator Abrahams did not represent a  
4 big portion of Freeport, he is the  
5 legislator who managed to build the most  
6 relationships with his constituents. He  
7 has taken on the big issues in the  
8 village, from fighting for our parks to  
9 trying to save our armory, fighting for  
10 environmental justice, funding  
11 playgrounds and other initiatives in our  
12 schools, helping feed many families, and  
13 bringing joy to our children during the  
14 holiday seasons, partnering with local  
15 businesses during back to school events,  
16 getting our communities vaccinated during  
17 Covid, but most importantly, always  
18 fighting for a better Freeport and its  
19 people.

20 Legislator Abrahams, we thank you  
21 for all the amazing work you have done  
22 and for all the opportunities you  
23 provided to your constituents.

24 We also thank you for having an  
25 absolutely incredible staff. As I'm sure

1  
2           you know, your staff became family to  
3           many of us.

4           Miss Sharon, I appreciate you  
5           deeply, and it has been an absolute  
6           pleasure to have partnered and  
7           volunteered on so many events with you  
8           ladies.

9           Miss Robin Wheat, all I can say is  
10          that I'm blessed that I met you. You are  
11          truly an amazing person.

12          Legislator Abrahams, I know this may  
13          be the end of a long chapter, but it's  
14          definitely just the beginning of your  
15          book. Wherever the path of public service  
16          takes you, just know that you have an  
17          army ready to help and fight alongside  
18          you.

19          Forever thankful to you, our  
20          Minority Leader Legislator Kevin  
21          Abrahams, for many years of true  
22          dedication to us. Your constituents thank  
23          you. Thank you.

24          LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Maria, I just  
25          want to I just want to take the

1  
2 opportunity to thank you. You do a  
3 tremendous job with the school district,  
4 and it speaks volumes. And many of the  
5 stuff that you talked about is a  
6 partnership working with everyone. And  
7 Sharon and Robin, I could go on for days  
8 about how great they are. They are an  
9 extension of being able to work within  
10 their community. The community,  
11 everything that we've been able to do.

12 We still have one more event that's  
13 coming up on Saturday. A day of giving  
14 for those that are a little less  
15 unfortunate, it never ends. I'm so  
16 appreciative of you for not just being  
17 here today, but for all the things that  
18 you do and establishing a very strong  
19 partnership with our office. But thank  
20 you again.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
22 you.

23 Nancy Youngfert.

24 MS. YOUNGFERT: Good afternoon,  
25 ladies and gentlemen. I want to say

1  
2           congratulations to those who are leaving.  
3           I know some of you, you've seen my face  
4           here before.

5           I'm here today as a resident of  
6           Nassau County, Franklin Square, and the  
7           president of the Franklin Square  
8           Historical Society and Museum. We have a  
9           museum that's been opened -- took 15  
10          years to build it -- we've been open now  
11          for about a year and a half.

12          Back in September of 2021, I'm here  
13          today to ask you, I don't think you've  
14          got the answers to all my questions, but  
15          I'm going to ask them anyway, we  
16          submitted our paperwork for two grants  
17          that came through the Boost Covid relief.  
18          The first one was it was strictly for not  
19          for profits. It was for \$10,000 we  
20          received that. We were beyond ecstatic  
21          because that helped us keep the doors  
22          open during Covid.

23          The second grant was for 127,000,  
24          also only for not for profits. We  
25          submitted and I think September of 2021

1  
2 and we've heard nothing. I have been in  
3 contact with Dr. Regina Williams. She was  
4 your boost administrator. I do believe  
5 that's her title, Dr. Regina Williams,  
6 not heard anything. And then I was  
7 astounded to hear in *Newsday* that  
8 Blakeman is planning on using it for one  
9 offs. One concert. One, I don't know  
10 what. Whatever it is, whatever it is he's  
11 planning on doing with it. And in the  
12 meantime, the shovel ready projects that  
13 we've had waiting may not receive any  
14 kind of funding at all.

15 So I'm asking you, do you know how  
16 many not for profits applied for that  
17 second grant? Do you know what the total  
18 of that amount of money would have been?  
19 And do we have any reason to still  
20 believe that we might be receiving some  
21 of that money? And if not, I want to know  
22 why. It was federal money passed through  
23 to the County to give out to not for  
24 profits. I'm still waiting to know what  
25 happened. Anybody want to take a shot at

1  
2 it? Thank you. You're supposed to be  
3 voting on this, I think sometime today.

4 LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: No, we're not  
5 voting on this. But I do understand your  
6 concerns. I did get your letter dated  
7 December 6th. I have made inquiries of  
8 the administration. I have not gotten  
9 answers yet, but they are looking into  
10 it. And I will get back to you to find  
11 out whether the grant was approved. If  
12 so, where the money is and what the  
13 holdup is.

14 MS. YOUNGFERT: Thank you, I  
15 appreciate that. Thanks very much.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Just  
17 just to be clear that there is an item on  
18 the Calendar for \$10 million later on.  
19 We're not voting on the full spending,  
20 and we're not voting on spending with  
21 respect to nonprofits. But there is an  
22 item on the Calendar.

23 MS. YOUNGFERT: Well, the 10 million  
24 is supposed to be for these events.

25 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: You're

1  
2 correct. I just want to make sure that  
3 you didn't think that it was not on the  
4 Calendar. It is on the Calendar.  
5 Although, the lion's share of the ARPA  
6 funds still remains outstanding.

7 MS. YOUNGFERT: All right. Thank you  
8 very much.

9 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Dan  
10 Oppenheimer.

11 MR. OPPENHEIMER: Good afternoon.  
12 I'm on the same topic. Just to confirm  
13 Resolution 250, is that the resolution  
14 for the transfer of \$10 million from  
15 Covid 19 funds?

16 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: You  
17 can go ahead and speak. I'll just confirm  
18 that they got the right resolution number  
19 (perusing).

20 Yes. That's it. You're right.

21 MR. OPPENHEIMER: Okay.

22 As mentioned in *Newsday*, it appears  
23 that the County Executive has identified  
24 a critical shortage of golf tournaments  
25 and car shows and concerts that requires

1  
2 an immediate infusion of \$10 million to  
3 correct this this terrible shortfall.

4 You may think this is not a very  
5 good attempt at humor, but it seems  
6 pretty ludicrous to me that this funding,  
7 \$10 million of Covid 19 relief funding  
8 would even be considered for these  
9 purposes. Yes, there are budget lines  
10 that the County has established for all  
11 manner of veteran service, mental health  
12 services, substance abuse. But can you  
13 say that all of these have entirely  
14 adequate budgets, and that you should not  
15 consider putting money into those areas  
16 instead of tourism, which could easily be  
17 boosted by a modest matching fund for  
18 private commercial enterprises, so that  
19 if some someone like UBS or Sands Casino  
20 set aside a large amount of investment  
21 for tourism purposes, the County could  
22 put a small matching amount to go along  
23 with that.

24 While the funds may be approved for  
25 tourism -- apparently legally you can use



1  
2 these funds for that -- I would ask each  
3 of you, you serve on various  
4 subcommittees for seniors, for public  
5 housing, for mental health. And when you  
6 vote for appropriations for these special  
7 areas, would you rather that the money  
8 goes to a car show or a golf tournament?  
9 Or would you think maybe it should go for  
10 public safety?

11 How about technology? A lot of the  
12 towns and villages throughout Long  
13 Island, Nassau and Suffolk, are subject  
14 to potential dangers from cyber  
15 incursions within the government. Maybe  
16 you should look at putting \$10 million  
17 into upgrading the security within the  
18 computer systems within the county.

19 So if you're not going to vote on it  
20 today, I'm getting mixed message, I would  
21 like you to confirm whether you were  
22 going to approve yes or no, whether this  
23 money is going to be transferred.

24 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: It  
25 will be voted on later. What legislators

1  
2 choose to vote at that time, they'll  
3 choose to vote, but it will be on the  
4 Calendar. It will be subject to a vote.

5 MR. OPPENHEIMER: Thank you.

6 LEGISLATOR FORD: Chris Jacobs.

7 MR. JACOBS: Good afternoon, Chris  
8 Jacobs, Uniondale, New York.

9 I concur with the previous speakers  
10 about the \$10 million being voted on from  
11 the *Newday* article that County Executive  
12 Blakeman wanted to use that for car shows  
13 and concerts and golf tournaments. In my  
14 opinion, Nassau County already has plenty  
15 of that. We have concerts every week at  
16 Eisenhower Park during the summertime.  
17 We have car shows, and we have athletic  
18 events all throughout parks throughout  
19 Nassau County.

20 I think that money can be used for  
21 better things. Such as, like they said,  
22 the homeless crisis and mental health. I  
23 mean, we just honored the two detectives  
24 who helped that young lady who was having  
25 a mental breakdown. So to sit there and

1  
2 say, you know, good work, detectives, but  
3 we're not allocating any money for the  
4 people who are having that problem is a  
5 bit of a misnomer to me.

6 I think we can use that for camera  
7 technology and other things like that to  
8 make our county a much safer place. New  
9 York City uses cameras for everything,  
10 speed restriction and security. And  
11 Nassau County, we are limited on that.  
12 All we have red light cameras. And that's  
13 why our police have to do so much work  
14 because we have a lack of technology,  
15 which I think we can invest in.

16 Other than that, like I said,  
17 hopefully we're able to use that money  
18 correctly as opposed to adding golf  
19 tournaments. I'm an avid car guy too, but  
20 something we can also invest in is those  
21 noise cameras that basically catch those  
22 people. Every day I get these cars  
23 driving past me, blacked out windows to  
24 have those cars backfiring. And nobody  
25 likes that. I don't like it, nobody likes

1  
2 that, so maybe we can put it towards  
3 that. So in my opinion, it can be used  
4 for much better usage.

5 And that's all I have to say. Have a  
6 great afternoon.

7 LEGISLATOR FORD: All right. Thank  
8 you.

9 Pearl Jacobs.

10 MS. JACOBS: I wish all the  
11 Legislators who are moving on a happy and  
12 healthy life, and prosperous as well.

13 As a result of last week's Appellate  
14 Court ruling, the County should now  
15 follow all laws and complete the secret  
16 process in an open and transparent  
17 manner, then follow the open Meetings law  
18 and revote on the lease transfer. We are  
19 confident that once residents of Nassau  
20 County fully understand the many harmful  
21 implications of this massive casino, you,  
22 as a Legislative Body, will follow the  
23 will of the people and vote no on the  
24 leased transfer.

25 As you are aware, Uniondale, the

1  
2 host community for this project, has been  
3 identified as a community that has been  
4 disproportionately affected by high  
5 levels of air pollution, primarily  
6 attributed to high vehicle emissions. The  
7 New York State Department of  
8 Environmental Conservation Traffic Study,  
9 June 2022 to August 2023 revealed that on  
10 average, 100,000 to 130,000 vehicles  
11 traveled through Uniondale daily.  
12 Roadways studied where Hempstead  
13 Turnpike, Meadowbrook Parkway in the  
14 Northern State Parkway. How would adding  
15 20,000 plus vehicles daily improve  
16 Uniondale traffic and air quality issues?  
17 Asthma rates among union youth infants to  
18 17 years old is at 17% in the top three  
19 of highest asthma rates among youths,  
20 only behind Hempstead and Roosevelt, who  
21 was higher than 17%. Two other New York  
22 State Department of Environmental  
23 Conservation identified as identifying  
24 disadvantaged communities: Hempstead and  
25 Roosevelt.

1  
2 Building this mega casino project in  
3 Uniondale's backyard in environmentally  
4 disadvantaged community would be nothing  
5 other than environmental racism.

6 Concerning Blakeman's proposal to  
7 use \$10 million of Covid relief funds for  
8 the County's 125th year celebration of  
9 the County's break away from Queens is  
10 another bad idea. The surplus and Covid  
11 relief funds should be used for the  
12 plethora of social issues that are  
13 currently destroying our county: Opioid  
14 and drug addiction, alcoholism, suicide  
15 prevention, homelessness, veterans  
16 services and, yes, gambling addiction,  
17 which is rising right here in Nassau  
18 County.

19 Our county needs to address the  
20 out-of-control traffic accidents and the  
21 increase in traffic fatalities. Covid  
22 relief monies can be used to save lives  
23 by investing in camera technology that  
24 will insist in mitigating accidents and  
25 deaths on our roadways. So yes, he's

1  
2 celebrating being separated from Queens,  
3 but New York City has a lot over us  
4 because at least they're addressing their  
5 fatalities and the numbers are going  
6 down.

7 Thank you.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: Monica Kiely.

9 MS. KIELY: Good afternoon.

10 Congratulations to the two brave  
11 officers who talked that 17-year-old  
12 young woman off the bridge and prevented  
13 her from committing suicide.

14 As many of you up here know, I'm  
15 opposed to the Sands casino proposal, and  
16 I think it's going to come back around in  
17 front of you legislators again. And I  
18 hope that this time you will really  
19 consider your vote and vote your  
20 conscience this time. There is a  
21 connection between what you do up there  
22 and what happens in real life. There's a  
23 connection between gambling and suicide  
24 and crime and safety for our residents,  
25 and what our police officers are called

1  
2 upon to do. Thank God they don't have to  
3 talk somebody off a bridge every weekend.  
4 But we don't want more lives at risk. We  
5 don't want their lives at risk.

6 Up to half of the individuals in  
7 treatment for gambling disorder have  
8 suicidal ideation. 20% of US adults with  
9 gambling problems have attempted suicide  
10 in the last year. We have a national  
11 suicide epidemic. Gambling addiction  
12 rates, sadly, are rising, and the more  
13 available gambling is, the more gambling  
14 addicts we will create right here at home  
15 and we will be dealing with them.

16 To quote professor Earl Grinols,  
17 which please look this man up, he's not  
18 paid for by the gambling industry. He  
19 does independent research and he's  
20 excellent. And his name is spelled  
21 G-R-I-N-O-L-S. Look him up. To quote him,  
22 "it is impossible to offer a casino  
23 without creating additional social  
24 problems and pathological gamblers.  
25 Problem gamblers create elevated crime



1  
2 and suicide. The social costs are high".  
3 Legislators, please reconsider your vote  
4 next time around.

5 Regarding the \$10 million party that  
6 Bruce Blakeman wants to throw, Richard  
7 Nicolello, you, during the hearings last  
8 spring, characterized the economy here in  
9 Nassau County as, "teetering on the brink  
10 of recession". Well, first of all, if  
11 you're teetering on the brink of  
12 recession at casinos, the last thing you  
13 want here. But I'll just go with the  
14 false premise that casinos help your  
15 economy. So which is it? Are we teetering  
16 on the brink of recession, or are we big  
17 fat Nassau County, let's throw a \$10  
18 million party. Which one is it? Okay. I'm  
19 done. Thank you.

20 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Lynn  
21 Krug.

22 MS. KRUG: Good afternoon. I'd like  
23 to speak on two issues today. Other  
24 people have already spoken, but I have my  
25 own spin on this.

1  
2 Now that the effort to rush the  
3 casino project through has been  
4 interrupted, I hope that this legislative  
5 group will realize a few things. Saying  
6 over and over that there's community  
7 support for a casino with any size in the  
8 heart of our suburban Nassau County.  
9 Doesn't make it true. Hearing these  
10 falsehoods from the head of the  
11 Construction and Trade Council is to be  
12 expected. If you read about him in the  
13 newspaper or the news, it was despicable.  
14 Hearing it from our elected leaders is  
15 just unconscionable. Everyone here has  
16 seen the polls. Only a minority of Nassau  
17 residents support this folly. If there  
18 was a referendum on this in Nassau  
19 County, we all know it would fail.

20 Number two is an illusion of a done  
21 deal has now been exposed. As a process  
22 restarts and more light shines on this  
23 project, more people will learn how it  
24 will hurt our quality of life and  
25 property values. So I'm taking this

1  
2 opportunity, that you reconsider your  
3 support for this ill-considered project  
4 and vote with the people instead of the  
5 big money.

6 Secondly, I'd like to comment, as  
7 other people before me have said on the  
8 \$10 million project or party that Mr.  
9 Blakeman is proposing using Covid  
10 recovery funds on anniversary parties and  
11 advertising. What do anniversary  
12 celebrations have to do with recovering  
13 from Covid? We all know who is served by  
14 this advertising. Just look at the name  
15 in the largest block letters in every ad,  
16 on every pencil at the golf courses.  
17 Using taxpayer dollars in this way is  
18 shameful. There are so many needs in this  
19 county. The highest purpose and best use  
20 of \$10 million is parades and  
21 advertising? We have infrastructure that  
22 needs rebuilding and a hospital that  
23 needs updating, among other things. I'd  
24 rather see the money go back to the  
25 taxpayers than to see it spent on

1  
2 self-serving TV ads for so-called  
3 celebrations.

4 We have a water crisis in this  
5 county. Let's address it. Let's spend the  
6 money to fix the PFAs and get these wells  
7 so that everyone has a safe, healthful  
8 life.

9 Thank you for listening, and I hope  
10 you really vote with your conscience. As  
11 I've always said at every meeting I've  
12 attended to, this is your legacy, people  
13 will remember how you voted.

14 Thank you.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
16 Mariano Ugalde.

17 MR. UGLADE: Good afternoon. My  
18 name is Mariano Ugalde, I'm the president  
19 of the Uniondale Chamber of Commerce.

20 I'm here because I really want to  
21 thank Legislator Abrahams office for all  
22 their support to our chamber, to our  
23 neighborhood. I don't know what to say.  
24 Robin knows how I feel about this. Your  
25 staff is superb. We deal with a lot of

1  
2 government offices up and down the state,  
3 even on federal level. But your office is  
4 superb. Talk about a staff that goes  
5 well beyond whatever their criteria is  
6 for the job. Calls on the weekend, calls  
7 back at night. It's just a tireless  
8 effort to get to the bottom of whatever  
9 the issue is. It ranges from so many  
10 things, in some cases just connecting  
11 other people from Uniondale to your  
12 office.

13 But I really can't thank you enough.  
14 Really. Thank you for all the effort you  
15 put in. It's just been a remarkable  
16 relationship working with your office.  
17 Really, good luck wherever you go next.  
18 And you'll definitely be missed as well  
19 as your staff.

20 Thank you, Sharon. Thank you, Robin.

21 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Mariano, I  
22 just want to thank you again. From  
23 everything that we do, it's only done  
24 with partnerships like the with the  
25 Chamber and other communities and civic

1  
2 associations. I think about the National  
3 Night Out when we did at Uniondale, but  
4 we moved it from at the time it was in  
5 Freeport. Most thought it was going to be  
6 a challenge and it was going to be tough  
7 to do it. But the community came together  
8 and it's probably one of our most  
9 successful events of the year.

10 I keep telling people I'm not going  
11 anywhere, and you guys are making this  
12 really tough on me today. Because I  
13 wasn't anticipating this. But I want to  
14 thank you for your for your service and  
15 your partnership and working with these  
16 two classy ladies and being able to do  
17 what you do.

18 I know earlier too, Charles and  
19 LeVar were here. Those guys, they didn't  
20 want to speak. I guess they were a little  
21 too proud, but you know what I mean.  
22 Those guys too. The backpack events,  
23 everything we do in Freeport, those guys  
24 are great, too. Nothing gets done  
25 without you guys. I just want to thank

1  
2 you from the bottom of my heart again.

3 MR. UGLADE: Same here. Thank you to  
4 you and your staff. And the best to  
5 wherever you guys go. And for your staff,  
6 their retirement is well deserved.

7 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Thank you.  
8 I'll let them know. Thank you, Mariano.

9 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Meta  
10 Mereday.

11 MS. MEREDAY: Good afternoon.

12 I do share in the thanks or  
13 congratulations or well wishes for those  
14 who are moving on. It's often a  
15 transition sometimes. It's good that the  
16 number of you are able to walk away,  
17 since some who have served,  
18 unfortunately, kind of, you know, left  
19 too soon. When Judith Jacob's name was  
20 brought up, that definitely hit a chord  
21 with me because she was very responsive  
22 to the needs of the residents of Nassau  
23 County and she's definitely missed here.  
24 I wish those well who are moving on.  
25 Buckle up for those who are staying.

1  
2 Those who are coming on board, 2024 is  
3 going to be a significant year. I know  
4 Kevan is wiping the sweat off his brow.

5 But we've got issues, folks, we got  
6 issues. Residents have brought up about  
7 the medical center, have had state  
8 officials who have been told by Nassau  
9 County that that medical facility itself  
10 is beyond repair. I'm sorry, why are we  
11 continuing to see friends, relatives,  
12 donors and patrons who are getting  
13 \$200,000 jobs plus benefits to bolster  
14 something that is dead in the water?  
15 That's a problem for me.

16 The casino. I'm waiting for plan B,  
17 I said it here. I've said it to all those  
18 who have tried to feed me breakfast,  
19 lunch, dinner, outside of this facility.  
20 We need a plan B, okay. It's the Nassau  
21 County Veterans Memorial Coliseum. Okay?  
22 Our veterans still would not be able, in  
23 most part, to cross that threshold.  
24 They're dying at 44 per day; 44 per day.  
25 I was on the phone yesterday with the



1  
2 family of a 97-year-old war widow who got  
3 a 20 page document from Veterans Affairs.  
4 They're trying to claw back a little bit  
5 of money that they give her that she  
6 earned per month. That's an issue that  
7 we're facing here in Nassau County. We  
8 got veterans facing eviction, but the  
9 County Executive wants to give us,  
10 someone said, a \$10 million party, but we  
11 can't put out, what, \$2 million to do a  
12 study to address the empty facility that  
13 sits over there at the medical center  
14 that our crowded, overworked, hard  
15 working Veteran Services Agency could use  
16 what may be transitional housing, daycare  
17 support services, military and family  
18 resource center that other places in this  
19 region -- I read in *Newsday*, and as I  
20 stand here, somebody is stealing the  
21 money before you even give Bruce the \$10  
22 million, because you're going to give it  
23 to him. So just keep it honest. Keep it  
24 real. You're going to give him the money.  
25 You know, I would like to think you're

1  
2 going to think differently with residents  
3 standing here, but you're going to give  
4 it to them. Let's keep it real.

5 We need to change the dynamic. We  
6 need to do a better job. And we talk  
7 about saluting our officers. We don't  
8 give them cars, they're still riding  
9 three. And this will be the last time  
10 that I'm asking for my little privilege  
11 here.

12 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Well,  
13 You were saying nice things about us  
14 before we get some extra time (laughter).

15 MS. MEREDAY: Okay, I appreciate it.  
16 Thank you so much.

17 Okay, so we're saluting our officers  
18 here, but, you know, they're riding two  
19 and three a car. And if you talk to the  
20 local on the ground patrolman, they have  
21 a problem with this casino. They're going  
22 to have to man that, but you're going to  
23 have three in the car. So what is the  
24 person going to do if they arrest  
25 somebody? You're going to put the

1  
2 officer in the trunk? Let's give them  
3 some cars. Let's give them some  
4 resources. Let's change the dynamic.

5 You've got an element here to change  
6 the alcohol sales date. We've got a  
7 gambling problem, an alcohol problem, a  
8 mental health problem. Has anybody seen  
9 where drug and alcohol actually sits in  
10 Nassau County? It's not in a big office  
11 with windows. They don't have a lot of  
12 staffing.

13 Again, let's buckle up. Let's do  
14 what we need to do. Let's build out a  
15 genuine, bona fide facility, veteran and  
16 family services at that medical center.  
17 Let's do what we need to do. Let's not do  
18 the \$10 million for him because it's for  
19 him. It's not for us.

20 And all those who are moving on,  
21 maternal health. So if you want to be in  
22 Congress, you better think about what's  
23 happening to women of color with maternal  
24 health. Black women are dying three times  
25 more than the national average. So if

1  
2           you're not speaking up here in Nassau  
3           County, I can't see how you're going to  
4           do much for me in Washington, D.C..

5           And lastly, I also want to recognize  
6           Josh Lafazan. Young man, keep up the good  
7           work. Wherever you land, you will  
8           prosper.

9           Everybody have a happy holiday. And  
10          since Christmas is my birthday, I  
11          celebrate me. I brought my stocking and  
12          if you want to stuff some money in  
13          something, give it to me.

14          Thank you very much.

15          PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
16          you, Meta.

17          Susan Kaye.

18          MS. KAYE: I am against the casino.  
19          I have spoken at this meeting time and  
20          time again. You're going to hear me  
21          again.

22          Mr. Blakeman, you are trying to buy  
23          your way for the idiotic, stupid casino  
24          of Sands that nobody wants.

25          You're wasting \$10 million that

1  
2 could be used for a crisis that is very  
3 underground that nobody is talking about.  
4 But I'm bringing it up. We have a crisis  
5 in the state of young women from 20 to  
6 39, diagnosed with breast cancer, very  
7 late stages. They cannot get mammograms  
8 because they're under the age. That \$10  
9 million that you want to go for a stupid  
10 party could be used into research as to  
11 why many of these women are ending up  
12 with stage three and four. There was a  
13 woman who was on something on Netflix at  
14 the age of 19 diagnosed with breast  
15 cancer.

16 I can think of many projects that we  
17 could do instead of building a stupid  
18 casino. Build an allied health center  
19 that Memorial Sloan-Kettering would love,  
20 and other things. Have a Reiki in there,  
21 continuing education, emotional freedom,  
22 tapping, Reiki. Many other things than  
23 building this stupid casino which causes  
24 gambling addiction.

25 Somebody who I graduated high school

1  
2 with happens to be a gambling addiction  
3 counsel in the state of Delaware. Maybe  
4 we should have him come down here, talk  
5 at the next legislative meeting.

6 And I commend Delia DeWhicky (sic)  
7 the only legislative (sic) who voted with  
8 your heart and voted no to the casino.  
9 And I will be back next year to talk  
10 more.

11 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Gary  
12 Levine.

13 MR. LEVINE: Where did Denise escape  
14 off to? I wanted to thank all for being  
15 the template of what a legislator is all  
16 about. I'm not sure where she's at, but  
17 her and Patty, they killed it. That man  
18 over there is going to do some good  
19 things, I know it. I've gotten to know  
20 Patrick over the last couple of months.

21 I'm going to be here every month  
22 about the Nassau County Back Bay study.  
23 And Bruce Blakeman gets an F minus. He's  
24 too busy taking pictures. I had a six  
25 foot wave hit the back of my house during

1  
2 Sandy. Nothing's been done. I told you,  
3 folks, it's the most important  
4 infrastructure project that we could  
5 possibly do for our generation, our kids  
6 and our grandkids. Nobody's done anything  
7 but Denise Ford. Nobody. Nobody. And  
8 that's pathetic. Whether you're a North  
9 shore, mid shore, south shore, it affects  
10 every Long Islander. So tell Bruce  
11 Blakeman on his own website, it's a 217  
12 page voluminous document. Tell him to  
13 read it. Tell him to pick up the phone  
14 and call Chuck Schumer. Maybe Chuck  
15 Schumer will do something besides trying  
16 to get reelected again and again and  
17 again, because that guy's clueless.

18 Rich, you did a great job leading  
19 this Legislature. I'm proud to know you.  
20 But as far as the Nassau County Back Bay  
21 story, you guys need to wake up. You need  
22 to wake up. We need sea gates. We need  
23 sea berms. Pardon me, flood gates. We  
24 need berms. We need dunes. We need  
25 levees. Go to New Orleans. Drive to New

1  
2 Bedford like I've done three times. They  
3 work. They haven't flooded since. We have  
4 not done a thing since Sandy.

5 Now in my village of Island Park,  
6 our Mayor has done a bang up job with the  
7 Renaissance, handling all the inside  
8 stuff. But I was on record as saying we  
9 need to fix where the water comes from  
10 first. We need a seagate in the  
11 intersection in Jones Inlet. We need a  
12 barrier at the intersection of Hogg's  
13 Channel and Reynolds Channel. And I'm  
14 going to be here every month to find out  
15 what any of you have done.

16 Josh Lafazan, be proud of what  
17 you've done, son. You're awesome, bro.  
18 Now. I wish you would have called me  
19 back, but I understood why you didn't.  
20 You had to race to go after. I expect  
21 great things from you.

22 But seriously, the red light  
23 cameras, I'm going to finish what my late  
24 dad started. Okay. I am hereby declaring  
25 that "We the People" will be the third



1  
2 political party in Nassau. And I am  
3 declaring that I am going to be in the  
4 running to become the next county  
5 executive in 22 short months.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. LEVINE: Gary, we have a speaker  
8 in the back, I had to take an important  
9 call. No disrespect to you, but I want  
10 to thank you very much for your kind  
11 words on behalf of myself and Patty.

12 MR. LEVINE: My late dad, too. He  
13 would have said the same thing if he was  
14 here.

15 LEGISLATOR FORD: Your father, Judge  
16 Levine, was just a phenomenal individual,  
17 and I loved working with him. Your  
18 parents, I remember them at the senior  
19 center and everything. They touched my  
20 heart, and so do you. And I wish you good  
21 luck with everything.

22 But I know that with the back  
23 bays -- and I live right on the West End.  
24 We can throw rocks at one another --  
25 that's something that we had advocated

1  
2 for right at the beginning. I know I  
3 believe Mayor Kennedy down in Freeport  
4 was also.

5 MR. LEVINE: He's the liaison with  
6 Congress and Anthony D'Esposito's big  
7 time involved.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: This really falls  
9 to the federal government. We need to  
10 have that with the Army Corps of  
11 Engineers, EPA. We'll keep advocating on  
12 behalf of that.

13 MR. LEVINE: I need you guys to  
14 write a letter to Chuck Schumer tomorrow.

15 LEGISLATOR FORD: A lot of the FEMA  
16 money has been spent on doing the  
17 bulkheads and whatever.

18 MR. LEVINE: Denise, this is  
19 trillions of dollars. I've gotten this  
20 study to every public official from the  
21 Rockaways to Montauk at my own time and  
22 expense. You know how much it costs to  
23 print up 217 pages at a dime apiece? My  
24 own expense. Every public official has  
25 it. Every public official says, let's get

1  
2 going on it. I need you as a body,  
3 whether you're mid shore, south shore and  
4 north shore. Put your name. We need these  
5 gates. Drive to New Bedford, go up to  
6 Cape Cod while you're at it. It's  
7 wonderful. I did a clinic there last  
8 weekend. But New Bedford got it right.  
9 They haven't flooded since.

10 And the last thing we need to do is  
11 we need to eliminate towns. We need to  
12 combine them with the County. Their  
13 superfluous, their waste. There's deputy  
14 commissioners making high six figures.  
15 Deputies to deputy commissioners look at  
16 the Town of Hempstead roster. The last  
17 names are disgusting. Eliminate the  
18 towns. Do more with less.

19 And also I plan on taking on the  
20 school unions. And I also plan on taking  
21 the administrative unions. We need to  
22 lower school taxes.

23 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you. You  
24 have a lot on your plate and good luck  
25 with all of that.

MR. LEVINE: It's all going to get  
done.

LEGISLATOR FORD: Have a good  
holiday season and happy New Year.

MR. LEVINE: God bless you.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
you. Gary.

\*\*\*\*\*

1  
2                   PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  There  
3                   are a couple of items on the Full  
4                   Legislative Calendar that need to go  
5                   through the Rules Committee first.  So we  
6                   are going to briefly step out of the Full  
7                   Legislature and have a brief Rules  
8                   Committee to move those items along.

9                   (Whereupon, brief recess for  
10                  Rules Committee, 3:50 p.m.-3:51  
11                  p.m.)  
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PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Reconvening the Full Legislature. We  
need a motion suspend the Rules for those  
two items, because they were not filed 17  
days prior to the meeting.

Motion by Legislator Walker,  
seconded by Legislator Bynoe to suspend  
the Rules.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All in  
favor, signify by saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Rules Committee respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Carries unanimously.

\*\*\*\*\*

1  
2  
3                   PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:   The  
4                   next items are on the Consent Calendar,  
5                   which are items that went through  
6                   Committees a couple of weeks ago. It's  
7                   been agreed by the Majority and Minority  
8                   that no further debate and discussion is  
9                   needed on these items at this time.

10                  Starting with, Item 8, Ordinance 86;  
11                  Item 9, Ordinance 87; Item 10, Ordinance  
12                  88; Item 11, Ordinance 89; Item 12,  
13                  Resolution 235; Item 13, Resolution 236;  
14                  Item 14, Resolution 237; Item 15,  
15                  Resolution 238; Item 16, Resolution 239;  
16                  Item 17, Resolution 240; Item 18,  
17                  Resolution 241; Item 19, Resolution 242;  
18                  Item 20, Resolution 243; Item 21,  
19                  Resolution 244; Item 22, Resolution 245;  
20                  Item 23, Resolution 246; Item 24,  
21                  Resolution 247; Item 25, Resolution 248;  
22                  Item 26, Resolution 249; Item 28,  
23                  Resolution 251; Item 30, Resolution 253;  
24                  Item 31, Resolution 254; Item 32,  
25                  Resolution 255; Item 34, Resolution 257;

1  
2 Item 35, Resolution 258; Item 36,  
3 Resolution 259; Item 37, Resolution 260;  
4 Item 38, Resolution 261; Item 39,  
5 Resolution 262; Item 40, Resolution 263;  
6 Item 41, Resolution 264; Item 42,  
7 Resolution 265; Item 43, Resolution 266;  
8 Item 44, Resolution 267; Item 45,  
9 Resolution 268; Item 46, Resolution 269;  
10 Item 47, Resolution 270; Item 48,  
11 Resolution 271; Item 49, Resolution 272;  
12 Item 50, Resolution 273; Item 51,  
13 Resolution 274; Item 52, Resolution 275;  
14 Item 53, Resolution 276; Item 54,  
15 Resolution 277; Item 55, Resolution 278;  
16 Item 56, Resolution 279; Item 57,  
17 Resolution 280; Item 58, Resolution 281;  
18 Item 59, Resolution 282; Item 60,  
19 Resolution 283; Item 61, Resolution 284;  
20 Item 62, Resolution 285; Item 63,  
21 Resolution 286; Item 64; Resolution, 287;  
22 Item 65, Resolution 288; Item 66,  
23 Resolution 289.

24 Motion by Legislator Pilip, seconded  
25 by Legislator Mule.



Any debate or discussion?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:

Hearing none, all those in favor of those  
items, please say, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: They  
are carried unanimously.

\*\*\*\*\*

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:

Calendar number one. It's a hearing on a proposed local law to amend Section 21-11.4 of Title D of Chapter 21 of the Nassau County Administrative Code, as amended by Local Law 3, in relation to Home Improvement License applicants.

Need a motion to open the hearing, Legislator Ferretti, seconded by Legislator Lafazan.

All in favor of opening the hearing, signify by saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of the Full Legislature respond in favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Hearing is open.

MS. HARKINS: Good afternoon. My name is Mary Harkins, Deputy County Attorney for Consumer Affairs.

1  
2 We're seeking to amend 21-11.4(2).  
3 It's for the home improvement  
4 contractor's license. The first request  
5 we have is to change the language for the  
6 fingerprinting requirement. Currently,  
7 the fingerprinting requirement is not  
8 DCJS compliant, which means that we're  
9 not able to get any results of the  
10 fingerprint search with that language. So  
11 we're seeking to update the language to  
12 match the six other Consumer Affairs  
13 licenses. They all have the DCJS  
14 compliant language.

15 The second request we had was to  
16 increase the minimum for the insurance  
17 that the home improvement contractors  
18 have to carry. There were questions, I  
19 believe, about the policy that would be  
20 used by Consumer Affairs with when we get  
21 the results of the fingerprinting search.  
22 And I had a discussion with Legislator  
23 Bynoe and her staff this morning and I  
24 articulated a little bit clearer, I hope,  
25 about what we're doing already and what

1  
2 we're going to do with the home  
3 improvement fingerprinting results. And  
4 that's basically to follow the Correction  
5 Law, Section 751-753. And they require us  
6 to, not deny a license or take adverse  
7 action on a license just because someone  
8 has a prior criminal conviction for one  
9 or more than one offenses. And so we'll  
10 follow the formula in 752, which talks  
11 about whether there's a relationship  
12 between the license and the criminal  
13 offense and also the risk to the public  
14 of safety and well-being or property.

15 And also in 753, not to go on and  
16 on, but they give you factors to use when  
17 you're using the formula from Ssection  
18 752, and some of the factors are the age  
19 of the person when they were convicted,  
20 how much time has lapsed, what proof is  
21 there of rehabilitation? And you balance  
22 these factors and then you make a  
23 decision on the prior conviction and the  
24 applicant.

25 I was explaining to Legislator Bynoe

1  
2 that there's case law that says that if  
3 you use these eight factors and you  
4 balance the positive and the negative,  
5 that it's not arbitrary and capricious  
6 and it's not an abuse of discretion, and  
7 that a reviewing court is not allowed to  
8 relay those factors and substitute their  
9 own judgment for that of the  
10 administrative agency. So I think we're  
11 on some solid footing. And they've been  
12 we've been doing the right thing, and  
13 we'll continue to do the right thing.

14 At Consumer Affairs, if an applicant  
15 is in jeopardy of having their license  
16 denied for a prior criminal conviction  
17 will bring them in, give them an  
18 opportunity to be heard and go through  
19 those factors. If we make a decision to  
20 deny a license, then they're giving a  
21 written explanation and they have four  
22 months to bring in Article 78 proceeding.  
23 To date in 2023, we have not denied any  
24 licenses based on a prior criminal  
25 conviction.

1  
2 Should I go on to the insurance? Are  
3 there any questions?

4 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
5 Legislator Bynoe has a question.

6 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Not necessarily a  
7 question. I just really wanted to thank  
8 you, Attorney Harkins, for taking the  
9 time to write that response to me, and I  
10 think the whole Body may have received  
11 it. And I thank you for taking the time  
12 and going through it thoroughly with us.  
13 I think it's Section 753 with the eight  
14 components. It really made a lot of sense  
15 after you walk me through it. So I  
16 appreciate that.

17 And I also appreciate you expressing  
18 that you're working towards having  
19 procedures for many of the different  
20 facets within the department. And so I  
21 salute that. I encourage that. And I  
22 thank you again for taking the time.

23 MS. HARKINS: Thank you, Legislator  
24 Bynoe. That's one of the Commissioner  
25 Capece's goals for us was to get those

1  
2 policies and procedures written down. So  
3 and we're working to get that done.

4 I think someone else had a question  
5 about the the use of the results and how  
6 they're handled, and that's through DCJS.  
7 We have a Use and Dissemination Agreement  
8 in place for the other licenses and will  
9 continue to abide by that. And we're  
10 subject to annual audits. We're having an  
11 audit meeting tomorrow with DCJS to make  
12 sure we're doing the right thing.

13 The insurance, that was interesting.  
14 I think one of the legislators was asking  
15 about the cost to the contractors, if we  
16 increase the minimum requirement and what  
17 we found out. Was that most of our home  
18 improvement contractors carry a million  
19 in liability insurance. Anyway, I wasn't  
20 able to find a Certificate of Insurance  
21 for 100/300 to try and get a price quote.  
22 So already our contractors are carrying  
23 much more than 100/300. Suffolk requires  
24 500 minimum liability insurance that the  
25 contractors purchase, and Westchester

1  
2 lets the insurance companies decide based  
3 upon the scope of work. So we still think  
4 that we should go up to at least 250, if  
5 not 500, to match the neighboring Suffolk  
6 County.

7 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Any  
8 questions?

9 (Whereupon, no verbal  
10 response.)

11 MS. HARKINS: Thank you to all the  
12 the legislators that are moving on to  
13 hopefully good times ahead and healthy  
14 good times ahead. Thank you.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
16 you.

17 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER CAPECE: I'd just like  
19 to add one thing. When they talked about  
20 exceptional county employees, Mary  
21 Harkins is an exceptional county employee  
22 and I'm blessed to have her. And good  
23 luck to everybody moving on. Let's all  
24 have safe and happy holiday.

25 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank



you.

Any public comments?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:

Hearing none, we need a motion to close  
the hearing.

Moved by Legislator Ford, seconded  
by Legislator Drucker.

All in favor of closing the hearing,  
signify by saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: The  
hearing is closed.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:

Calendar 4, a vote on a proposed  
local law to amend Section 21-11.4 of  
Title D of Chapter 21 of the Nassau

County Administrative Code, as last amended by Local Law 3 of 1987, in relation to Home Improvement License applicants.

Motion by Legislator Drucker, seconded by Legislator Gaylor.

Any further debate or discussion?

(Whereupon, no verbal response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All those in favor, signify by saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of the Full Legislature respond in favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: That item carries unanimously.

\*\*\*\*\*

1  
2                   PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: We're  
3 going to move on to Calendar Item 3, a  
4 hearing on a proposed Resolution  
5 234-2023, a resolution requesting the  
6 State Liquor Authority to change the  
7 hours of restriction on sales of  
8 alcoholic beverages by wine and liquor  
9 stores in Nassau County.

10                  Motion by Legislator Giuffre,  
11 seconded by Deputy Presiding Officer  
12 Kopel to open the hearing.

13                  All in favor of opening the hearing  
14 signify by saying, "Aye".

15                  (Whereupon, all members of  
16 the Full Legislature respond in  
17 favor with, "Aye".)

18                  PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
19 opposed?

20                  (Whereupon, no verbal  
21 response.)

22                  PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: The  
23 hearing is open.

24                  Chris?

25                  MR. LEIMONE: Good afternoon, Chris

1  
2           Leimone from the Administration.

3           As I discussed at the Committee  
4           meeting, Clerk Item 413-2023 is a  
5           resolution that requests the New York  
6           State Liquor Authority to change the  
7           hours of restriction to allow for the  
8           sale of alcoholic beverages by wine and  
9           liquor stores from 8 to 10 p.m. on  
10          Mondays through Wednesdays.

11          PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Okay.  
12          Thank you.

13          So it's basically just changing the  
14          hours for two hours per day on Monday,  
15          Tuesday and Wednesday.

16          MR. LEIMONE: Right. Thursday  
17          through Saturday is 8 a.m. to 10 p.m..

18          PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: And  
19          then the information that we have is that  
20          Nassau County is something of an outlier  
21          with respect to these hours and basically  
22          the rest of the state, with one or two  
23          exceptions or several exceptions, has  
24          actually longer hours than this.

25          MR. LEIMONE: Right. New York state

1  
2 law allows the sale from 8 a.m. to  
3 midnight Mondays through Saturdays. So  
4 we're definitely one of the exceptions.  
5 Forty five counties throughout the state,  
6 including all the New York City counties,  
7 allow for the sale from 8 a.m. to  
8 midnight. So we're just getting ourselves  
9 closer into compliance with what New York  
10 State allows.

11 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All  
12 right.

13 Any questions for Chris?

14 (Whereupon, no verbal  
15 response.)

16 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
17 you, Chris.

18 MR. LEIMONE: Thank you.

19 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Any  
20 public comment?

21 (Whereupon, no verbal  
22 response.)

23 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
24 Hearing none. We need a motion to close  
25 the hearing.

Motion by Legislator Walker,  
seconded by Legislator Schaefer.

All in favor of closing the hearing,  
signify by saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: I  
will now call the Item, which is Calendar  
7, a vote on a proposed Resolution  
234-2023, a resolution requesting the  
state Liquor Authority to change the  
hours of restriction on sales of  
alcoholic beverages by wine and liquor  
stores in Nassau County.

Motion by Legislator Giangregorio,  
seconded by Legislator Solages.

Any further debate or discussion?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All in  
favor, signify by saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: That  
carries unanimously.

\*\*\*\*\*

1  
2                   PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: There  
3 are two items on the Emergency Calendar.  
4 First, we need a motion to establish an  
5 emergency for Clerk Item 417 of 23. With  
6 the consent of the Minority, we're going  
7 to waive the reading of that entire item.

8                   Clerk Item 417, an ordinance  
9 amending Ordinance 72 of 2023, fixing the  
10 tax rates and levying taxes for the 12  
11 month 2024 fiscal year beginning January  
12 1st, 2024 and ending December 31st, 2024.

13                  Motion by Legislator Walker,  
14 seconded by Legislator Gaylor. That is  
15 to establish the emergency.

16                  All in favor of establishing the  
17 emergency, signify by saying, "Aye".

18                  (Whereupon, all members of  
19 the Full Legislature respond in  
20 favor with, "Aye".)

21                  PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
22 opposed?

23                  (Whereupon, no verbal  
24 response.)

25                  PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: The



1  
2 emergency is established.

3 Now, onto the item itself. Clerk  
4 Item 417, an ordinance amending Ordinance  
5 72 of 2023, fixing the tax rates and  
6 levying taxes for the 12 month 2024  
7 fiscal year beginning January 1, 2024 and  
8 ending December 31, 2024.

9 Motioned by Deputy Presiding Officer  
10 Kopel, seconded by Minority Leader  
11 Abrahams.

12 Any debate or discussion on the  
13 item?

14 (Whereupon, no verbal  
15 response.)

16 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
17 Legislator Mule.

18 LEGISLATOR MULE: Presiding Officer,  
19 I'd just like to put it on record again  
20 that we're requesting a written opinion  
21 from the County Attorney with regards to  
22 whether we're doing this legally, since  
23 we do not have an assessor.

24 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Okay.  
25 That's that's on the record now.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Okay.

Absolutely.

Any further debate or discussion or  
questions?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Hearing none, all in favor, signify by  
saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: That  
carries unanimously.

\*\*\*\*\*

1  
2                   PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:   The  
3                   other emergency relates to Clerk Item 391  
4                   of 2023. It's Item 29, the Calendar. We  
5                   need an emergency because of timing  
6                   issues.

7                   It's an emergency for a resolution  
8                   authorizing the County Executive to  
9                   execute a Grant Agreement between the  
10                  County of Nassau acting on behalf of the  
11                  Department of Parks, Recreation and  
12                  Museums and North Shore Historical  
13                  Museum.

14                  Motion to establish an Emergency by  
15                  a Legislator DeRiggi-Whitton, seconded by  
16                  Legislator McKevitt.

17                  Any debate or discussion on the  
18                  emergency?

19                  (Whereupon, no verbal  
20                  response.)

21                  PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:   Nope.  
22                  All in favor of establishing the  
23                  emergency, signify by saying, "Aye".

24                  (Whereupon, all members of  
25                  the Full Legislature respond in

favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: The  
emergency is established.

Now we need an amendment in the  
nature of a substitution to correct the  
term of the Grant Agreement.

Motion by Legislator Drucker,  
seconded by Legislator Walker.

Any debate or discussion on the  
amendment?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Hearing none, all in favor, signify by  
saying, "Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: The  
item's amended.

Now we have to vote on the item, as  
amended. We don't need another motion, so  
I'm going to call for a vote on the item  
as amended.

All in favor, signify by saying,  
"Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All  
right. We passed the item as amended.

\*\*\*\*\*

1  
2 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Item  
3 27, Resolution 250. A resolution to  
4 authorize the transfer of appropriations  
5 heretofore made within the budget for the  
6 year 2023.

7 Motion by Legislator Kennedy,  
8 seconded by Legislator Walker.

9 That puts this item before us. Andy,  
10 are you here to speak on this?

11 MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon, Andy  
12 Persich, Office of Management and Budget.

13 I'd be remiss if I didn't say good  
14 luck to all of you leaving Presiding  
15 Officer, Minority Leader, Legislator  
16 Ford, Legislator Schaefer, Legislator  
17 Lafazan. It's been a pleasure working  
18 with you. Been some bumps in the road,  
19 but we've seemed to make some progress  
20 here and we are living in a better place.  
21 So take that with you when you leave.  
22 I'll still be here for a little while  
23 longer, so.

24 Item 403 is before you. A couple  
25 updates that I just would like to give

1  
2 you since the last meeting. One is we're  
3 anticipating spending \$10 million and  
4 hoping to generate for every dollar we  
5 spend, \$3 in new revenues, roughly, in  
6 tourism and sales tax generation, about  
7 \$30 million.

8 We're planning on promoting events  
9 such as the Cricket World Cup, an LPGA  
10 event like we used to have in the old  
11 days with the senior tour at Eisenhower  
12 Red. We're going to work with the  
13 Legislative Body. The County Executive  
14 has made a commitment to work with you on  
15 your districts to see how we could  
16 promote your districts. There are many  
17 planned events that probably you guys can  
18 coordinate with him.

19 As far as what I see this as and  
20 what I spoke to the County Executive  
21 about, we have to look it a little  
22 differently. This is an economic  
23 generator. It's an economic development  
24 thing. And by promoting the County, I  
25 think you have to realize that we're

1  
2 going to be helping small businesses by  
3 doing that who don't really have  
4 advertising budgets. So when we do events  
5 like this, like I would say, when you do  
6 the cricket event, some of the  
7 communities over there, like the East  
8 Meadow community where I grew up, there's  
9 going to be a benefit, the more we  
10 generate a lot of excitement around that.  
11 And that's just a way of of promoting  
12 these small businesses: The delis, the  
13 small operators, the bagel stores, all  
14 the things that are out there. We're  
15 going to try and maximize the amount of  
16 money we're spending out there. But  
17 remember, these people don't have enough  
18 money for advertising. So I guess this is  
19 a form of us doing that for them.

20 In addition, we're going to work  
21 with you for projects on the remaining  
22 balance of the money. And anything else  
23 that we probably see that was permissible  
24 under the guidelines that ARPA defined  
25 for us.



1  
2           So I'm here to take any questions  
3           which I'm sure you're going to have for  
4           me. And I do not like being  
5           interrogated, unlike the college. I'm  
6           just letting you know that. But I'm sure  
7           I'm going to get interrogated (laughter).

8           PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: I just  
9           have one question or statement I'd like  
10          you to confirm. If we approve the  
11          authorization today, the expenditure of  
12          these monies have to come back to the  
13          Legislature. Correct?

14          MR. PERSICH: Absolutely. Any  
15          contract we do. So you have control over  
16          what we're doing with this. Even though  
17          we're moving the appropriation, it's  
18          kicking off the ball. So if we want to  
19          contract with somebody, we will do that.

20          In addition, we're looking for some  
21          public private partnerships for the 125th  
22          Centennial. I heard there was a lot of  
23          chatter about that, but we are looking  
24          for some sponsorship money for that. So  
25          and other events where we can get

1  
2 sponsorship, maybe the cricket. I'm sure  
3 there's going to be a lot of things that  
4 come out of this. I want to clear up the  
5 misnomer from the last time, having had  
6 an extensive conversation, that we are  
7 going to be looking for public private  
8 partnerships for some of these big events  
9 and everything else.

10 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: But  
11 the Legislature will be sitting here next  
12 year will have to approve any money  
13 that's actually spent for this purpose.

14 MR. PERSICH: The contracts will be  
15 before this Body as routinely as  
16 everything else as part of our  
17 procurement guidelines and the charter as  
18 how we have to follow.

19 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Thank  
20 you.

21 Anyone else? Legislator Drucker.

22 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you,  
23 Presiding Officer.

24 Andy, you stated that this will  
25 generate \$3 in revenue for every dollar,

1  
2 right? How did you how did you calculate  
3 that?

4 MR. PERSICH: Well, it's really hard  
5 to put a pin on that. But I will say  
6 this --

7 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: You have to put  
8 a pin on it.

9 MR. PERSICH: Well, here's what I  
10 will say. When I worked in a previous  
11 life, I worked for the Town of  
12 Huntington, and when there is a lot of  
13 economic development going on, there's a  
14 planning factor associated when you do  
15 something for a business, meaning like  
16 you're promoting a business and  
17 everything else, and the multiplier  
18 effect of every dollar coming in is seven  
19 times that when you do something like  
20 that. I'm thinking \$3 is probably within  
21 the ballpark, a conservative estimate, I  
22 think that's probably where it will land.  
23 We know that cricket has an economic  
24 benefit of \$150 million. That was, what  
25 they proposed to us. So that being just a

1  
2 guideline into itself, that's new money.  
3 How that's spent and gets divvied down to  
4 us, remember, there's sales tax is  
5 occupancy tax money that we're going to  
6 get. We're seeing an uptick in occupancy  
7 tax -- hotel/motel tax is what I'm  
8 referring to -- as a result of maybe  
9 coming out of Covid. Additionally, from  
10 some of the events we had done here and  
11 the restoration of life back to Covid  
12 times. But we are seeing an uptick in  
13 occupancies in hotels.

14 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: So can you  
15 quantify it by other examples. So let's  
16 say last summer County Executive had  
17 commercials that ran purportedly to  
18 promote tourism here in Nassau County.  
19 Did that generate the \$3 for every dollar  
20 spent?

21 MR. PERSICH: I wouldn't say  
22 specifically \$3, but I will say it did  
23 have an impact on our tourism budget,  
24 which impacted that upwards. We're up, I  
25 can tell you right now from last year. On

1  
2 a budget of approximately \$4.5 million,  
3 we're probably up almost to 5.5 million.  
4 I don't know the percentage dollar  
5 whether it's 1 to 3 on that ratio. But we  
6 do see an uptick right now of hotel/motel  
7 occupancy.

8 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: You can break  
9 down that 5.5 for us?

10 MR. PERSICH: I can break that down;  
11 Yes, I can. I can't break it down to  
12 that specific dollars. I can tell you  
13 that we're all seeing uptick there. Our  
14 sales taxes remain strong. That's a hard  
15 thing to put a pin on. You do realize  
16 that sales tax is not like -- consumer  
17 spending is a tough thing to figure out.  
18 But we do know that promoting and  
19 advertising does help generate an  
20 economic increase.

21 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: I have no doubt  
22 that it helps. But you're asking us to  
23 take a ride with you and hop on and hope  
24 for the best. You're very optimistic  
25 about it, but it's speculation. It's

1  
2 speculative at best. Whereas, I think \$10  
3 million, you talked about small  
4 businesses. How about if we gave \$10  
5 million to grants for small businesses?  
6 That's a direct correlation that directly  
7 helps these small businesses who are  
8 struggling. I know you keep saying that  
9 these departments are well funded, but  
10 \$10 million can help a bunch of  
11 floundering businesses right now. We have  
12 mental health crisis in this county, all  
13 over the country, but we have it in this  
14 county, as evidenced by the heroic  
15 efforts by the Police Department today in  
16 saving that young woman's life.

17 We have homelessness. This county  
18 should never have homelessness. It should  
19 not exist. We have the needs of veterans  
20 who have made the ultimate sacrifices for  
21 us, this county. They could get direct  
22 benefits of part of this \$10 million.  
23 There is no speculation in it. We have  
24 food insecurity. There should never be  
25 food insecurity in Long Island.

1  
2 Infrastructure improvements. We we heard  
3 people today talk about the remnants of  
4 Superstorm Sandy. We still have work to  
5 do. But the work that needs to be done in  
6 this county doesn't have to be  
7 speculative. It doesn't have to be  
8 projections. It can be accurate, direct  
9 correlation.

10 So I'm going to reiterate the  
11 comments I made in Committee two weeks  
12 ago, where I have a fundamental objection  
13 to the Administration prioritizing  
14 tourism over the life and living of our  
15 residents.

16 Thank you.

17 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
18 Legislator Solages.

19 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you.

20 Again, do you have a specific  
21 formula that clearly states the \$10  
22 million investment into that line will  
23 produce at least \$30 million? Do you have  
24 a specific formula; yes or no?

25 MR. PERSICH: I gave you my analysis

1  
2 of what I thought. A multiplier, when  
3 you do economics, some of these economic  
4 generators is seven times that when you  
5 do stuff like this. I'm using a  
6 conservative formula, which is three  
7 times. Can you tie this directly to sales  
8 tax and consumer spending? That's a hard  
9 thing. That's like trying to get into  
10 the market basket and Walmart, which they  
11 try and figure out what people are buying  
12 at the same time as they're buying other  
13 things. I do know that advertising in all  
14 forms is good. And to promote this county  
15 to the gold standard that it is, I think  
16 it's going to help drive the generators  
17 for these small businesses. It can't hurt  
18 us to do this. It fits within the  
19 guidelines of what the federal government  
20 told us to spend this money on, which was  
21 one of the things that they did say.

22 So I think this is a win win. Is  
23 this speculation? Sure. But I think this  
24 other things that we will probably be  
25 coming forward with in the future to see



1  
2 how we can make it better for these other  
3 businesses out there.

4 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: With all due  
5 respect, it's not just a win win. It's a  
6 it's a missed opportunity if we can  
7 perhaps put that funding in different  
8 lines to produce different results.

9 For example, we saw recently in  
10 August/September, a very terrible  
11 rainstorm. In my community, we're  
12 reaching out to the Governor and the  
13 President for help. We have homeowners  
14 and businesses that need compensation for  
15 damages they faced. Improving our  
16 infrastructure, our sewers, that is a  
17 very important goal. My outgoing  
18 colleague, Mr. Lafazan, had a great idea  
19 about an infrastructure report card that  
20 our county should be graded upon. I  
21 respect all the hard working people are  
22 doing at the Department of Public Works  
23 from the commissioner, Mr. Arnold. But  
24 but we need more improvements into our  
25 infrastructure, especially on our South

1  
2 Shore. And so it is a missed opportunity  
3 to not put this funding where we really  
4 need it in social services and addressing  
5 mental health concerns, as we saw today  
6 with the heroic efforts of our officers,  
7 which I thank.

8 So, you know, again, it's not just a  
9 win win. We're missing a great  
10 opportunity here. So I respectfully  
11 disagree. And and I look forward to  
12 again, declining a vote in favor of this  
13 at the portion of this hearing to vote.

14 Thank you.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:

16 Legislator Ford.

17 LEGISLATOR FORD: Good afternoon.

18 I guess it is touchy subject, this  
19 \$10 million. And I think that probably  
20 what makes it so maybe controversial is  
21 that we haven't really adequately spent a  
22 lot of the ARPA funding on projects  
23 throughout our areas, throughout our  
24 neighborhoods, such as the instance of  
25 infrastructure within Legislator

1  
2 Solages'. Is there any attempt to try to  
3 expedite it or place a priority on some  
4 of these projects? Because this \$10  
5 million represents only a small portion  
6 of the full amount of the money; am I  
7 correct?

8 MR. PERSICH: That is correct. And I  
9 do believe that the County Executive has  
10 conveyed to this Body that it will work  
11 with you on individual district projects,  
12 as well as countywide projects to to  
13 figure out what we want to prioritize.

14 I hate to say it, but 19 people have  
15 19 different priorities, which makes it a  
16 little bit difficult for him to manage  
17 through. So we have to work together with  
18 the balance of that money to figure out  
19 where we want to put that money. Some of  
20 these other programs may be eligible. We  
21 do have a lot of money in the budget for  
22 some of these other things. I have to  
23 convey that point. Because we've seen an  
24 uptick in cases in DSS, which we've amply  
25 funded, which we do get federal aid for.

1  
2 So we have to be careful. There are  
3 partners that take care to help us with  
4 some of these expenses that we have to  
5 bear.

6 So, yes, to answer your question,  
7 Legislator Ford, he's forthcoming and  
8 wants to meet with every individual  
9 legislator, to figure out what the  
10 priorities are and how to spend the  
11 balance of that money.

12 LEGISLATOR FORD: Well, I would urge  
13 him then, in the beginning of the new  
14 legislative term, that this is something  
15 that he does, and his whole  
16 administration. Because I think that we  
17 have up until a certain time where we  
18 have to expend all these funds, correct?

19 MR. PERSICH: That is correct. The  
20 clock is ticking on us for obligation,  
21 which is 2024 and to be fully spent by  
22 2026. I think that's when we have to  
23 expend it. But the obligated piece is a  
24 key component. We had some scares in the  
25 beginning of the year with Congress about

1  
2 talk about taking the money back,  
3 clawing it back. So it was a panic. I  
4 can't tell you that it wasn't. I  
5 personally don't like giving money back  
6 because we're in a different financial  
7 position now than we were. You've all  
8 lived through the tough times that we've  
9 been through. This is a different place  
10 that I think we're in. And I think it's  
11 just a better place than where we started  
12 at.

13 LEGISLATOR FORD: I agree, I hope  
14 they don't claw the money back because  
15 unfortunately, they clawed it back from  
16 some of my homeowners after Sandy and  
17 destroyed their lives.

18 Also then I guess we have another  
19 part of money that has been talked about,  
20 the opioid settlement money. And I did  
21 have a conversation with the County  
22 Executive. So I'm hoping that as much as  
23 you are going to pay attention and  
24 possibly put a priority on this \$10  
25 million to help with events or

1  
2 initiatives throughout the county,  
3 basically to celebrate Nassau County, to  
4 celebrate its anniversary or maybe to  
5 help stimulate economic activity, where  
6 are we going to be with that? We haven't  
7 expended and we talked about these brave  
8 cops that saved a woman, but how do we  
9 get a priority on that?

10 MR. PERSICH: Well, we've  
11 appropriated \$15 million in next year's  
12 budget when we did do that. I think  
13 there'll be a second plan coming forth  
14 for the next tranche of money. We're  
15 trying to be careful how we do this. You  
16 have to take steps. We expect performance  
17 from the vendors, we enlist. So we don't  
18 want to just say, here's the money. You  
19 have to, you know, set goals and  
20 guidelines and boundaries. Money is a  
21 dangerous thing sometimes. I hate to be  
22 that way, but we have to make sure. I  
23 can't give you statistically. I'm hoping  
24 that, I don't know statistically. But our  
25 overdoses are down, the fatalities are

1  
2 down. I think that some of the  
3 initiatives that we have done here,  
4 Project Natalie, that the Police  
5 Commissioner talks about, I think some of  
6 those homegrown things that we've done  
7 here have helped the problem, and we need  
8 to expand what the future's going to  
9 hold. Because the next fentanyl epidemic  
10 could be something else. I don't know  
11 what that is, but we've all experienced  
12 something with it. But I think there'll  
13 be a plan put forward to this Body, the  
14 new Body that will be coming in, and what  
15 the next tranche of the money --

16 LEGISLATOR FORD: And I'm not moving  
17 out of Nassau County. I'll still be in  
18 Long Beach. For me, it's also the mental  
19 health side. Unfortunately, in our  
20 neighborhood, we had a young student who  
21 killed himself on Thanksgiving. So when  
22 we talk about, like, with money, you  
23 know, just when people who want to spend  
24 it and you don't want to spend it willy  
25 nilly, we can't hoard it. We can't keep

1  
2 it close to ourselves and act like we  
3 need to save for the future or whatever.  
4 I think that we have to trust this Body  
5 as well as the Administration. Everybody  
6 must work together in order to get this,  
7 because we have a lot of people that are  
8 in need. And while I wasn't initially in  
9 favor of this legislation, the \$10  
10 million, but I'm somebody who supports  
11 tax credits in New York State. And it's  
12 something that can also be signified by a  
13 leap of faith as well. The amount of  
14 money that is given to allow agencies and  
15 industries to work here in New York  
16 State. And why they give it is because  
17 they know of the economic return. They  
18 cannot quantify to say that it would be 3  
19 to 1, 2 to 1 or 5 to 1.

20 My family works in the movie  
21 industry. So we saw the four months  
22 strike, the SAG strike, how it stopped  
23 all productions, all movies, commercials  
24 and everything, not only in Nassau  
25 County, but throughout New York State,



1  
2 specifically in New York City. And  
3 Governor Hochul lamented over the fact of  
4 the hundreds of millions of dollars that  
5 were lost in revenue because these movies  
6 were not being made and because the local  
7 delis, the local stores, they can shop  
8 in, like Home Depots and whatever -- so  
9 their dollars, whatever they spend does  
10 result in bringing in additional funding.  
11 And it does help the small store owners  
12 because of the work that they do. So with  
13 something like this, I'm glad to hear  
14 that all the contracts must come back to  
15 this Legislature.

16 And I'm going to ask, is it any  
17 amount of the contract, or does it have  
18 to be over a certain amount of money in  
19 order to come before the Rules Committee?

20 MR. PERSICH: I believe it's subject  
21 to what the Charter restrictions are. I  
22 don't know that off the top of my head,  
23 but I think it's \$25,000, whatever the  
24 dollar amount is, I forgot. I'm being  
25 honest with you. I don't know the answer

1  
2 to that, but there is a threshold with  
3 inside the charter.

4 (Whereupon, off the record  
5 discussion.)

6 MR. PERSICH: And anything over a  
7 thousand or over a year must come before  
8 this Body. Chris just opined on that for  
9 me.

10 LEGISLATOR FORD: Okay. I'm hoping  
11 that, and I hope the Administration, I  
12 hope you can convey to the County  
13 Executive that this is something that I  
14 think maybe this would be a little bit  
15 easier to swallow if we saw that on the  
16 other side, we were spending the money in  
17 areas that we as legislators feel that  
18 the money should be spent. So there has  
19 to be a give and take. And we need to  
20 have this from the County Executive.

21 MR. PERSICH: And I believe he's  
22 looking for full transparency with this  
23 and working with this Body to properly  
24 spend this funding. That's been conveyed  
25 to me to deliver to you guys. So I'm

1  
2 just going to reaffirm that.

3 LEGISLATOR FORD: Well, thank you  
4 for standing up to the task. Have a good  
5 one.

6 MR. PERSICH: Thank you. You too,  
7 Legislator.

8 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
9 Legislator Bynoe.

10 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you,  
11 Presiding Officer.

12 Good day, Mr. Persich.

13 MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon.

14 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Discover Long  
15 Island. They are a destination -- what  
16 are they? They're a visitors bureau,  
17 right?

18 MR. PERSICH: From what I  
19 understand, yes. I don't know  
20 specifically about the contract, but  
21 that's what I believe they are.

22 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Is there anybody  
23 in this chamber that represents the  
24 Administration who knows anything about  
25 Discover Long Island?

1  
2 (Whereupon, off the record  
3 discussion.)

4 MR. PERSICH: Chris Leimone has just  
5 told me that the contract with Discover  
6 Long Island expired last year, so we  
7 don't have one in place.

8 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: That was a  
9 visitors bureau to, to which we were a  
10 part of Nassau and Suffolk. And there was  
11 a reason why we were investing in that  
12 entity, so that they could work to bring  
13 visitors here to Long Island. Not by  
14 events that showcases the County  
15 Executive or any other department here.  
16 It was for the purpose, solely for the  
17 purpose of bringing visitors here, and  
18 with that, they were able to create hotel  
19 and attraction promotions and they were  
20 able to blast that out far and wide.  
21 Nothing that you talked about here today  
22 replaces what Discover Long Island does.  
23 And so because of that, I actually argue  
24 that we're hurting businesses. We're  
25 hurting local businesses and hotels

1  
2 because we are no longer engaging with  
3 Discover Long Island for the sole purpose  
4 of bringing tourists to spend their money  
5 here with our businesses. So we think  
6 that we're doing a better service by  
7 having these one offs where Boys II Men  
8 is here for one night and folks go back  
9 to -- I'll wait until you finish.

10 (Whereupon, off the record  
11 discussion.)

12 MR. PERSICH: So sorry about that,  
13 Legislator.

14 I just want to give you the update  
15 from what I got. We are planning to  
16 engage in a new contract with a different  
17 vendor from other than Discover Long  
18 Island. I think there's an RFP or  
19 whatever --

20 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: But they're a  
21 Long Island Visitors Bureau where we were  
22 working with them. Why are we doing  
23 that? Because they seem to have been  
24 doing a great work. Is there a differing  
25 of an opinion?

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MR. PERSICH: I cannot answer that.

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I don't know the answer to that. I can bring back the concerns to my principals and find out why we made the change. But I don't know off the top of my head as to why. Maybe one of the things I think was maybe it was they have a different planning of how to advertise as opposed to Discover Long Island. But I don't have the facts in front of me, so I can get back to you on that.

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LEGISLATOR BYNOE: We would be one of the only municipalities in the state of New York, that instead of using a visitor's bureau, we would be RFPing (sic) these services. And I can't help but think that that's because we want to drive the attention to one focal point, as opposed to doing what's right and making sure that somebody without any self-interest in the process has the ability to drive tourists here and do it in a way that would be above reproach, an objective. But instead, we want to have

1  
2 an RFP for a company that we can drive.  
3 That we personally can have some level of  
4 self-promotion. That's what it appears to  
5 me. I'm just calling it as I see it.  
6 This is a shame. Because now when people  
7 go to Discover Long Island, they no  
8 longer get any Nassau County  
9 opportunities. We've starved that conduit  
10 for our local businesses. But here today,  
11 now we want to say we're here working and  
12 fighting for that. I'll tell you, that's  
13 a shame; that's a shame.

14 MR. PERSICH: Understood. I will  
15 bring your concerns back to my  
16 principals.

17 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: It was my  
18 understanding that when we entered into  
19 this whole process for this cricket  
20 festivities that will be held later in  
21 the year, that they were going to be  
22 responsible for doing much of that work,  
23 that it wasn't going to cost the county  
24 taxpayers anything. And while you might  
25 think using ARPA money is not taking any

1  
2 money away from the county residents, I'm  
3 here to tell you today that's not a fact.  
4 Any money that's being sent over for that  
5 distinct purpose is taking away from the  
6 taxpayers up opportunity to have direct  
7 services that we know they need, that we  
8 know they need.

9 Legislator Solages talked about  
10 infrastructure that was an out-birth of  
11 Legislator Lafazan's effort. I could tell  
12 you right here, I submitted a bill for  
13 Alzheimer's help so that we could give a  
14 bracelet to each individual under a  
15 certain income threshold to have a  
16 bracelet on their arm, or a necklace  
17 where it had the GPS locating on it so  
18 that if they went missing, that they  
19 could be found easily, easier than when  
20 our police officers are out there  
21 stretched with resources trying to find  
22 them. But instead of funding that  
23 initiative, we still are allowing folks  
24 who are struggling with cognitive  
25 inabilities to be out there wandering. I



1  
2 see the silver alerts. We all get the  
3 missing notices to our e-mails. And the  
4 reason why I submitted that bill is  
5 because Mr. Chesnel Veillard of my  
6 district, went missing and died on the  
7 many on the train, on the train tracks  
8 here in Mineola. A second gentleman from  
9 my district, only three blocks from that  
10 one gentleman, went missing in that same  
11 week and he fell over into a small body  
12 of water, and couldn't turn himself over  
13 because of the disease. And  
14 unfortunately, when our brave men and  
15 women of Nassau County found each one of  
16 these individuals, they were dead. They  
17 were dead. But instead of funding  
18 something like that, funding the  
19 infrastructure, funding the things that  
20 would stabilize individuals who are  
21 currently homeless, we want to take \$10  
22 million and fund this. And break away  
23 from a visitors bureau that was serving,  
24 objectively serving our local businesses.

25 I'm a big fat no. And I'd love my

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colleagues to join me in that.

Thank you.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Legislator DeRiggi-Whitton.

LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Hi,  
Andy.

Andy, do you know the history of  
this tourism with NIFA? There was a  
connection with NIFA and Discover Long  
Island.

MR. PERSICH: I'm not aware of it.  
No.

LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: That it  
was required not use Discover Long Island  
because we used Hotel/Motel money.

MR. PERSICH: I don't believe  
there's an agreement between us and NIFA.  
I'm not aware of anything that might  
prohibits me or restricts me to use them.  
I can find out for you.

LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON:  
Definitely find out because I've heard  
directly that it is something that we are  
obligated, from what I understand, to use

1  
2 Discover Long Island because of something  
3 involving with NIFA and when we were --  
4 back having issues, we used Hotel/Motel  
5 for financing. You got to look at it.

6 MR. PERSICH: I will look into it.

7 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: But  
8 unfortunately, I think we should table it  
9 until we know for sure. Because I think  
10 for us to use a different agency other  
11 than this one, it's going to put us in a  
12 real situation with the NIFA agreement  
13 that was agreed upon when Hotel/Motel was  
14 used for the budget. It's something that  
15 they're very aware of and they're ready  
16 to -- I don't want to see the County get  
17 sued for something we're not aware of  
18 when we're agreeing to do this without  
19 using them.

20 MR. PERSICH: I don't want to  
21 conflate the issues here --

22 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: But we  
23 have to.

24 MR. PERSICH: The Discover Long  
25 Island contract is separate from this

1  
2 transfer.

3 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: It's  
4 not.

5 MR. PERSICH: I'm just saying,  
6 though, this is a legislative action to  
7 move money.

8 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Andy,  
9 you're wrong.

10 MR. PERSICH: Legislator, I'm not  
11 trying to pick a fight here.

12 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I'm not  
13 fighting. But the problem is it's  
14 specifically because it's tourism.  
15 Tourism funding is supposed to go to  
16 Discover Long Island. Any tourism funding  
17 -- what we're doing with the \$10 million  
18 supposed to go through Discover Long  
19 Island. It's a contract that supposedly  
20 NIFA -- that was the condition of us  
21 using Hotel/Motel when we were in a  
22 situation where we needed the budget, and  
23 they know it.

24 MR. PERSICH: I will check on that  
25 and get back to you. I don't believe

1  
2 there's a restriction, but I will find  
3 out for you. Because Hotel/Motel taxes is  
4 in another what I will call the "bucket",  
5 which is not a favorite term here. It's  
6 it's in two different grants that's over  
7 here (indicating). This what we're  
8 talking about here is a separate matter.

9 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: No,  
10 it's not, it's tourism. It's for tourism.  
11 Anytime that you use tourism, it's  
12 supposed to go through this agency,  
13 Discover Long Island.

14 MR. PERSICH: Okay.

15 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: And  
16 that's what Suffolk County does. There's  
17 a ratio. Actually, they've shown how much  
18 money we've lost by not using them  
19 recently. It's a lot more involved here.  
20 By using this money for tourism and not  
21 knowing the implications of that by not  
22 using Discover Long Island, I think we're  
23 putting the County at risk. That's what  
24 I've been told that there's a specific  
25 agreement through NIFA that we if we're

1  
2 going to be using money for tourism, it  
3 has to go through Discover Long Island.  
4 The fact that we've let this contract  
5 lapse is already a problem. I think we  
6 have to be careful before we move forward  
7 with even putting money into a place that  
8 can jeopardize this agreement.

9 It's also said that we can actually  
10 forego 160,000 of New York State regional  
11 funding just by doing this. I don't  
12 think we know enough about this. There's  
13 a history that we really have to be aware  
14 of. I've heard it from people that are  
15 directly involved. This will come back. I  
16 can tell you right now. I get a radar for  
17 some things. This is going to be a big  
18 problem if we transfer this money for  
19 tourism and it is not included with  
20 Discover Long Island and the conditions  
21 of NIFA.

22 I make a motion to table.

23 LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Second.

24 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:

25 Seconded by Minority Leader.

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Motion to table not debatable.

All in favor of tabling this item,  
signify by saying, "Aye".

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Aye.

LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Aye.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Aye.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Aye.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Aye.

LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Aye.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Aye.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed, "Nay".

Nay.

DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL:  
Nay.

LEGISLATOR FORD: Nay.

LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Nay.

LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Nay.

LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Nay.

LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Nay.

LEGISLATOR PILIP: Nay.

LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Nay.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Nay.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Nay.

1  
2 LEGISLATOR GIANREGORIO: Nay.

3 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Motion  
4 to table fails by a vote of seven, 12  
5 votes against.

6 MR. LEIMONE: Chris Leimone from the  
7 Administration.

8 Just to correct the record, we are  
9 required under Title 24 of the  
10 Miscellaneous Laws, to have a contract  
11 with the Tourist Promotion Promotion  
12 Agency, not necessarily Discover Long  
13 Island, but we do have to have one.

14 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: And do  
15 you have one, right now?

16 MR. LEIMONE: As was discussed, we  
17 will be having one.

18 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: You do  
19 not. You're in a lapse. Their's already  
20 expired. Chris, you're absolutely right.  
21 Thank you. Basically just said what I  
22 said. And that's a real problem,  
23 especially if you are accepting money  
24 into the tourism line. You said it better  
25 than I did. And I appreciate you



1  
2 validating it. Because basically we are  
3 in default and we're starting a really --  
4 I'm telling you now. Somebody that has  
5 been here for a long time, you put this  
6 10 million into that line and you start  
7 coming up with contracts and spending at  
8 different ways. I'm telling you -- and  
9 NIFA is involved with this. It is  
10 connected. With a deal that we entered  
11 into NIFA years ago, when Hotel/Motel  
12 money was transferred into the general  
13 fund. You guys have to be aware of this  
14 because honestly, it can come back and  
15 cost the County. We're not doing so well  
16 with lawsuits. I don't want to see  
17 another lawsuit like this.

18 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Any  
19 other legislators?

20 (Whereupon, no verbal  
21 response.)

22 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
23 Hearing none. Thank you, Andy.

24 MR. PERSICH: Thank you.

25 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Any

further debate or discussion?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Hearing none, all in favor of this item,  
signify by saying, "Aye".

Aye.

DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL:  
Aye.

LEGISLATOR FORD: Aye.

LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Aye.

LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Aye.

LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Aye.

LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Aye.

LEGISLATOR PILIP: Aye.

LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Aye.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Aye.

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Aye.

LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Aye.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

LEGISLATOR ABRAHAMS: Nay.

LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Nay.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Nay.

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Nay.

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Nay.

LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN: Nay.

LEGISLATOR MULE: Nay.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Passes  
by a vote of 12 to 7.

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2 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Last  
3 item on the Calendar is 33, which  
4 Legislator McKevitt will be recusing  
5 himself. He's leaving the chambers. He  
6 will not be participating in any debate  
7 or vote on this.

8 (Whereupon, Legislator  
9 McKevitt leaves the Chambers.)

10 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Item  
11 33, Resolution 256, a resolution  
12 authorizing the County Executive to  
13 execute a Grant Agreement between the  
14 County of Nassau, acting on behalf of the  
15 Nassau County District Attorney and the  
16 Interfaith Nutrition Network.

17 Motion by Legislator Giuffre,  
18 seconded by Legislator Walker.

19 ADA MCDERMOTT: Good afternoon,  
20 Presiding Officer, Legislators. Dennis  
21 McDermott, Assistant District Attorney.  
22 I'm glad to be the final full ledge  
23 presentment.

24 This is a grant agreement with the  
25 Interfaith Nutrition Network, or INN, to

1  
2 help them with their programs;  
3 specifically, the Center For  
4 Transformative Change and the Mary  
5 Brennan Inn. These programs go to fight  
6 poverty, homelessness, hunger, mental  
7 health issues and substance abuse issues,  
8 all of which are significant factors in  
9 the commissions of crime. It's a one  
10 year term with two, one year options  
11 where they would receive \$50,000 each  
12 year.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Okay.  
14 Very good. Thank you very much.

15 ADA MCDERMOTT: Thank you. Merry  
16 Christmas.

17 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: You  
18 too. All the best.

19 Any debate or discussion?

20 (Whereupon, no verbal  
21 response.)

22 PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All  
23 in, signify by saying, "Aye".

24  
25 (Whereupon, all members of

the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Carries unanimously.

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PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Legislator For, would you like to make a  
motion to adjourn?

(Whereupon, Legislator  
McKevitt returns to Chambers.)

LEGISLATOR FORD: So moved.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Legislator Schaefer?

LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Second.

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: All in  
favor of adjourning, signify by saying,  
"Aye".

(Whereupon, all members of  
the Full Legislature respond in  
favor with, "Aye".)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO: Those  
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal  
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER NICOLELLO:  
Carries unanimously. We're adjourned.

LEGISLATOR FORD: Everybody, have a  
good holiday and happy New Year.

(Whereupon, meeting is  
adjourned, 4:43 p.m.)



C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK )

: SS.:

County of Nassau )

I, KAREN LORENZO, a Notary Public  
for and within the State of New York, do  
hereby certify:

That the above is a correct  
transcription of my stenographic notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto  
set my hand this 18th day of December, 2023.

Karen Lorenzo

Karen Lorenzo

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<b>\$10</b> <sup>[28]</sup> - 70:18, 71:14, 72:2, 72:7, 73:16, 74:10, 78:7, 81:5, 81:17, 83:8, 83:20, 89:10, 89:21, 91:18, 92:25, 93:8, 127:3, 134:2, 134:4, 134:10, 134:22, 135:21, 138:19, 139:4, 141:24, 144:9, 153:21, 156:17 <b>\$10,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 68:19 <b>\$15</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:11 <b>\$150</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 131:24 <b>\$200,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:13 <b>\$25,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 145:23 <b>\$30</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 127:7, 135:23 <b>\$50,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 165:11	<b>12</b> <sup>[5]</sup> - 103:12, 120:10, 121:6, 160:4, 163:7 <b>125th</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 78:8, 129:21 <b>127,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 68:23 <b>12th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:18 <b>13</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:13 <b>130,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:10 <b>13th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:21 <b>14</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:14 <b>14,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 38:21 <b>14th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:24 <b>15</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 19:6, 54:6, 68:9, 103:14 <b>1550</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 1:15 <b>15th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:3 <b>16</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:15 <b>160,000</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 38:21, 158:10 <b>16th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:6 <b>17</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 22:25, 77:18, 102:5, 103:16 <b>17%</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 77:18, 77:21 <b>17-year-old</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 22:9, 79:11 <b>17th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:9 <b>18</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 1:18, 44:20, 103:16 <b>18th</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 4:12, 169:14 <b>19</b> <sup>[6]</sup> - 71:15, 72:7, 93:14, 103:17, 139:14, 139:15 <b>1987</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 114:3 <b>19S</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:9 <b>19th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:15 <b>1st</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 2:16, 120:12	<b>2</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 89:11, 144:19 <b>2%</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 49:20 <b>20</b> <sup>[7]</sup> - 46:19, 47:18, 51:2, 55:18, 89:3, 93:5, 103:18 <b>20%</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:8 <b>20,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:15 <b>2018</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:2 <b>2019</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:16 <b>2020</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:16 <b>2021</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 68:12, 68:25 <b>2022</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:9 <b>2023</b> <sup>[12]</sup> - 1:18, 9:16, 9:22, 11:2, 18:7, 77:9, 109:23, 120:9, 121:5, 123:4, 126:6, 169:14 <b>2024</b> <sup>[9]</sup> - 29:10, 88:2, 120:11, 120:12, 121:6, 121:7, 121:8, 140:21 <b>2026</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 140:22 <b>21</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 49:2, 103:18, 106:5, 113:25 <b>21-11.4</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 106:5, 113:24 <b>21-11.4(2)</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 107:2 <b>217</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 95:11, 98:23 <b>22</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 97:5, 103:19 <b>23</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 103:20, 120:5 <b>234-2023</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 115:5, 118:16	<b>235</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:13 <b>236</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:13 <b>237</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:14 <b>238</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:15 <b>239</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:15 <b>24</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 103:20, 160:9 <b>240</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:16 <b>241</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:17 <b>242</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:17 <b>243</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:18 <b>244</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:19 <b>245</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:19 <b>246</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:20 <b>247</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:21 <b>248</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:21 <b>249</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:22 <b>25</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:21 <b>250</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 29:18, 71:13, 112:4, 126:3 <b>2500</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:13 <b>251</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:23 <b>253</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:23 <b>254</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:24 <b>255</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:25 <b>256</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 164:11 <b>257</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:25 <b>258</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:2 <b>259</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:3 <b>26</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:22 <b>260</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:3 <b>261</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:4 <b>262</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:5 <b>263</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:5 <b>264</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:6 <b>265</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:7 <b>266</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:7 <b>267</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:8
1			
<b>1</b> <sup>[6]</sup> - 47:6, 121:7, 133:5, 144:19 <b>10</b> <sup>[7]</sup> - 19:6, 52:3, 70:23, 103:11, 116:9, 116:17, 161:6 <b>100%</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 50:19 <b>100,000</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:10 <b>100/300</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 111:21, 111:23 <b>10th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:12 <b>11</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:12 <b>1100</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:7 <b>11th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:15			

<b>268</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:9 <b>269</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:9 <b>27</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 126:3 <b>270</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:10 <b>271</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:11 <b>272</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:11 <b>273</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:12 <b>274</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:13 <b>275</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:13 <b>276</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:14 <b>277</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:15 <b>278</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:15 <b>279</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:16 <b>28</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:22 <b>280</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:17 <b>281</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:17 <b>282</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:18 <b>283</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:19 <b>284</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:19 <b>285</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:20 <b>286</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:21 <b>287</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:21 <b>288</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:22 <b>289</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:23 <b>29</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 123:4 <b>2:15</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 1:19 <b>2nd</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 2:19, 18:6	<b>32</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:24 <b>33</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 3:20, 164:3, 164:11 <b>33-year</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 64:9 <b>34</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:25 <b>35</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:2 <b>36</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:2 <b>37</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:3 <b>38</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:4 <b>39</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 93:6, 104:4 <b>391</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 123:3 <b>3:50</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 101:10 <b>3rd</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 2:22	112:5 <b>51</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:12 <b>52</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:13 <b>53</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:14 <b>54</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:14 <b>55</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:15 <b>56</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:16 <b>57</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:16 <b>58</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:17 <b>59</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:18 <b>5th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:3	<b>86</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:10 <b>860</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:18 <b>87</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:11 <b>88</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:12 <b>89</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:12 <b>8th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:9
	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>4</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 113:23 <b>4.5</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:2 <b>40</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:6, 104:5 <b>403</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 126:24 <b>41</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:6 <b>413-2023</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 116:4 <b>417</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 120:5, 120:8, 121:4 <b>42</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:6 <b>43</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:7 <b>44</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 88:24, 104:8 <b>45</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:8 <b>46</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:9 <b>47</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:10 <b>48</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:10 <b>49</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:11 <b>4:43</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 168:5 <b>4th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 2:12	<b>60</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:18 <b>61</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:19 <b>62</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:20 <b>63</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:20 <b>64</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:21 <b>65</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:22 <b>66</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:22 <b>6th</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 3:6, 70:7	<b>9</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:11 <b>97-year-old</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:2 <b>98%</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 49:19 <b>9:00</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 52:4 <b>9th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 9:22 <b>9TH</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 2:4
	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>A</b>
	<b>5</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:19 <b>5.5</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 133:3, 133:9 <b>50</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 104:12 <b>500</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 111:24,	<b>7</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 118:15, 163:7 <b>70</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:22 <b>72</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 120:9, 121:5 <b>75</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:13 <b>751-753</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:5 <b>752</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 108:10, 108:18 <b>753</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 108:15, 110:13 <b>78</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 109:22 <b>7th</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 2:8	<b>a.m</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 52:3, 116:17, 117:2, 117:7 <b>Abbey</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 30:10 <b>abide</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:9 <b>ability</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 21:22, 150:23 <b>able</b> <sup>[20]</sup> - 13:13, 19:4, 19:7, 19:16, 21:10, 22:12, 23:25, 54:16, 55:5, 61:20, 67:9, 67:11, 75:17, 86:16, 87:16, 88:22, 107:9, 111:20, 148:18, 148:20 <b>ABRAHAMS</b> <sup>[10]</sup> - 2:14, 8:15, 44:6, 48:7, 66:24, 85:21, 87:7, 158:23, 159:5, 162:23
<b>3</b>		<b>8</b>	
<b>3</b> <sup>[10]</sup> - 106:7, 114:3, 115:3, 127:5, 130:25, 131:20, 132:19, 132:22, 133:5, 144:18 <b>30</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 29:7, 29:19, 29:20, 103:23 <b>31</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 103:24, 121:8 <b>31st</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 120:12		<b>8</b> <sup>[6]</sup> - 52:4, 103:10, 116:9, 116:17, 117:2, 117:7	

**Abrahams** <sup>[13]</sup> - 6:5,  
8:14, 38:18,  
39:19, 45:23,  
64:18, 64:23,  
65:3, 65:20,  
66:12, 66:21,  
84:21, 121:11  
**absolute** <sup>[1]</sup> - 66:5  
**Absolutely** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
122:4, 129:14  
**absolutely** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
15:20, 32:13,  
32:18, 50:18,  
65:25, 160:20  
**abuse** <sup>[3]</sup> - 72:12,  
109:6, 165:7  
**academically** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
27:21  
**accepted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:21  
**accepting** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
160:23  
**accidents** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
78:20, 78:24  
**accolades** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
21:20  
**accomplish** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
36:9  
**accomplished** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
25:13  
**accomplishment**  
<sup>[1]</sup> - 29:3  
**accomplishments**  
<sup>[3]</sup> - 29:12, 30:2  
**accurate** <sup>[1]</sup> - 135:8  
**achieved** <sup>[1]</sup> - 34:17  
**achievement** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
34:8  
**acknowledge** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
45:16  
**act** <sup>[2]</sup> - 25:10,

144:2  
**acting** <sup>[2]</sup> - 123:10,  
164:14  
**action** <sup>[2]</sup> - 108:7,  
156:6  
**activity** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:5  
**ad** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:15  
**ADA** <sup>[3]</sup> - 5:7,  
164:19, 165:15  
**add** <sup>[1]</sup> - 112:19  
**addiction** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
78:14, 78:16,  
80:11, 93:24, 94:2  
**addicts** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:14  
**adding** <sup>[2]</sup> - 75:18,  
77:14  
**addition** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
128:20, 129:20  
**additional** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
12:12, 80:23,  
145:10  
**additionally** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
132:9  
**address** <sup>[3]</sup> - 78:19,  
84:5, 89:12  
**addressing** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
79:4, 138:4  
**adequate** <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:14  
**adequately** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
138:21  
**adjourn** <sup>[1]</sup> - 167:4  
**adjourned** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
167:22, 168:5  
**adjourning** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
167:12  
**administer** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
23:21  
**administration** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
70:8, 140:16  
**Administration** <sup>[7]</sup> -

5:4, 116:2,  
135:13, 144:5,  
146:11, 147:24,  
160:7  
**administrative** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
99:21, 109:10  
**Administrative** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
106:6, 114:2  
**administrator** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
69:4  
**admitted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:14  
**ads** <sup>[1]</sup> - 84:2  
**adults** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:8  
**adverse** <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:6  
**advertise** <sup>[1]</sup> - 150:9  
**advertising** <sup>[7]</sup> -  
83:11, 83:14,  
83:21, 128:4,  
128:18, 133:19,  
136:13  
**advocate** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
48:22, 48:23  
**advocated** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
97:25  
**advocating** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
45:3, 98:11  
**Affairs** <sup>[7]</sup> - 5:5, 5:6,  
89:3, 106:25,  
107:12, 107:20,  
109:14  
**affected** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:4  
**affects** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:9  
**affords** <sup>[1]</sup> - 13:10  
**afternoon** <sup>[18]</sup> -  
9:13, 17:21, 44:6,  
64:5, 67:24,  
71:11, 74:7, 76:6,  
79:9, 81:22,  
84:17, 87:11,  
106:23, 115:25,

126:11, 138:17,  
147:13, 164:19  
**afterwards** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
40:6  
**age** <sup>[3]</sup> - 93:8,  
93:14, 108:18  
**agencies** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
144:14  
**agency** <sup>[4]</sup> - 42:19,  
109:10, 155:10,  
157:12  
**Agency** <sup>[2]</sup> - 89:15,  
160:12  
**ago** <sup>[4]</sup> - 32:18,  
103:6, 135:12,  
161:11  
**agree** <sup>[4]</sup> - 45:2,  
49:19, 141:13  
**agreed** <sup>[2]</sup> - 103:7,  
155:13  
**agreeing** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
155:18  
**Agreement** <sup>[4]</sup> -  
111:7, 123:9,  
124:11, 164:13  
**agreement** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
154:18, 155:12,  
157:25, 158:8,  
164:24  
**ahead** <sup>[4]</sup> - 34:21,  
71:17, 112:13,  
112:14  
**aid** <sup>[2]</sup> - 23:21,  
139:25  
**aide** <sup>[1]</sup> - 54:5  
**aided** <sup>[5]</sup> - 18:23,  
19:5, 19:7, 19:9,  
19:17  
**Aiden** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:19  
**aiming** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:15

**air** <sup>[2]</sup> - 77:5, 77:16**aisle** <sup>[2]</sup> - 52:13,  
53:21**alcohol** <sup>[3]</sup> - 91:6,  
91:7, 91:9**alcoholic** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
115:8, 116:8,  
118:19**alcoholism** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
78:14**alerts** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:2**All-State** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:2**Allegiance** <sup>[2]</sup> - 6:6,  
6:8**allied** <sup>[1]</sup> - 93:18**allocating** <sup>[1]</sup> - 75:3**allow** <sup>[4]</sup> - 9:15,  
116:7, 117:7,  
144:14**allowed** <sup>[2]</sup> - 48:20,  
109:7**allowing** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
152:23**allows** <sup>[2]</sup> - 117:2,  
117:10**alma** <sup>[2]</sup> - 27:14,  
62:19**almost** <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:3**alongside** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
66:17**ALSO** <sup>[1]</sup> - 5:2**Alternate** <sup>[2]</sup> - 2:11,  
6:16**altogether** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
25:12**alumni** <sup>[1]</sup> - 38:22**Alzheimer's** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
152:13**amazing** <sup>[4]</sup> - 16:25,  
58:19, 65:21,

66:11

**amend** <sup>[3]</sup> - 106:4,  
107:2, 113:24**amended** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
106:7, 114:3,  
125:5, 125:7,  
125:9, 125:20**amending** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
120:9, 121:4**amendment** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
124:9, 124:15**Americans** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
29:7, 29:20**amount** <sup>[10]</sup> - 44:22,  
69:18, 72:20,  
72:22, 128:15,  
139:6, 144:13,  
145:17, 145:18,  
145:24**amply** <sup>[1]</sup> - 139:24**analysis** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
135:25**ancient** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:6**Andy** <sup>[8]</sup> - 5:3,  
126:9, 126:11,  
130:24, 154:7,  
154:8, 156:8,  
161:23**anniversary** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
83:10, 83:11,  
142:4**announce** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
10:24**annual** <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:10**answer** <sup>[5]</sup> - 59:16,  
140:6, 145:25,  
150:2, 150:3**answers** <sup>[3]</sup> - 59:4,  
68:14, 70:9**Anthony** <sup>[3]</sup> - 18:6,

20:13, 98:6

**anti** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:23**anti-racism** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
28:23**anticipating** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
86:13, 127:3**Anytime** <sup>[1]</sup> - 157:11**anytime** <sup>[2]</sup> - 57:21,  
57:22**anyway** <sup>[3]</sup> - 36:18,  
61:6, 68:15**Anyway** <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:19**AP** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:19**apiece** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:23**apologize** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
44:15**APPEARED** <sup>[1]</sup> - 5:2**Appellate** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
76:13**applause** <sup>[10]</sup> - 11:3,  
14:4, 16:14,  
25:22, 32:25,  
36:3, 36:25, 44:5,  
48:6, 50:15**applicant** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
108:24, 109:14**applicants** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
106:8, 114:5**application** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
29:14**applied** <sup>[1]</sup> - 69:16**appreciate** <sup>[9]</sup> -  
40:14, 43:21,  
60:2, 66:4, 70:15,  
90:15, 110:16,  
110:17, 160:25**appreciation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
47:16**appreciative** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
48:13, 60:14,

67:16

**appropriated** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
142:11**appropriation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
129:17**appropriations** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
73:6, 126:4**approve** <sup>[3]</sup> - 73:22,  
129:10, 130:12**approved** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
70:11, 72:24**arbitrary** <sup>[1]</sup> - 109:5**archeologist** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
28:24**area** <sup>[2]</sup> - 12:4,  
25:21**areas** <sup>[5]</sup> - 29:16,  
72:15, 73:7,  
138:23, 146:17**argue** <sup>[2]</sup> - 53:23,  
148:23**arm** <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:16**armory** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:9**Arms** <sup>[1]</sup> - 17:19**ARMS** <sup>[1]</sup> - 17:20**army** <sup>[2]</sup> - 13:4,  
66:17**Army** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:10**ARNOLD** <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:5**Arnold** <sup>[2]</sup> - 7:25,  
137:23**ARPA** <sup>[4]</sup> - 71:5,  
128:24, 138:22,  
151:25**arrest** <sup>[1]</sup> - 90:24**art** <sup>[2]</sup> - 31:6, 31:17**Article** <sup>[1]</sup> - 109:22**article** <sup>[1]</sup> - 74:11**articulated** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
107:24

**Aside**<sup>[1]</sup> - 23:11**aside**<sup>[1]</sup> - 72:20**aspects**<sup>[1]</sup> - 51:4**assessor**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
121:23**asset**<sup>[1]</sup> - 46:15**assignment**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
20:3**assist**<sup>[1]</sup> - 21:21**assistance**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
18:20**Assistant**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
164:21**assistants**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
43:19**associated**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
131:14**Association**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
9:11, 17:17**association**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
41:4**associations**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
86:2**Asthma**<sup>[1]</sup> - 77:17**asthma**<sup>[1]</sup> - 77:19**astounded**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
69:7**AT**<sup>[1]</sup> - 17:20**athletic**<sup>[1]</sup> - 74:17**attempt**<sup>[2]</sup> - 72:5,  
139:2**attempted**<sup>[1]</sup> - 80:9**attend**<sup>[1]</sup> - 34:12**attendance**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
8:24**attended**<sup>[1]</sup> - 84:12**attention**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
141:23, 150:19**attest**<sup>[1]</sup> - 46:12**Attorney**<sup>[5]</sup> -106:25, 110:8,  
121:21, 164:15,  
164:21**Attorney's**<sup>[1]</sup> - 5:7**attorneys**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
58:16**attraction**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
148:19**attributed**<sup>[1]</sup> - 77:6**audience**<sup>[1]</sup> - 36:14**audit**<sup>[1]</sup> - 111:11**audits**<sup>[1]</sup> - 111:10**August**<sup>[1]</sup> - 77:9**August/  
September**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
137:10**aunt**<sup>[1]</sup> - 36:12**Authority**<sup>[3]</sup> -  
115:6, 116:6,  
118:17**authorization**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
129:11**authorize**<sup>[1]</sup> - 126:4**authorizing**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
123:8, 164:12**available**<sup>[1]</sup> - 80:13**Avenue**<sup>[7]</sup> - 1:15,  
27:15, 27:18,  
30:12, 34:24,  
35:10, 35:25**Avenue's**<sup>[1]</sup> - 27:23**average**<sup>[2]</sup> - 77:10,  
91:25**avid**<sup>[1]</sup> - 75:19**AWALOM**<sup>[1]</sup> - 64:5**Awalom**<sup>[3]</sup> - 5:15,  
64:4, 64:6**award**<sup>[4]</sup> - 13:2,  
21:19, 31:13,  
35:17**awards**<sup>[1]</sup> - 21:20**aware**<sup>[7]</sup> - 76:25,  
154:12, 154:19,  
155:15, 155:17,  
158:13, 161:13**awesome**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
96:17**Aye**<sup>[19]</sup> - 159:5,  
159:6, 159:7,  
159:8, 159:9,  
159:10, 159:11,  
162:8, 162:10,  
162:11, 162:12,  
162:13, 162:14,  
162:15, 162:16,  
162:17, 162:18,  
162:19, 162:20**Aye"**<sup>[32]</sup> - 102:11,  
102:14, 105:7,  
105:10, 106:13,  
106:16, 113:12,  
113:15, 114:12,  
114:15, 115:14,  
115:17, 118:5,  
118:8, 119:3,  
119:6, 120:17,  
120:20, 122:11,  
122:14, 123:23,  
124:2, 124:20,  
124:23, 125:11,  
125:14, 159:4,  
162:7, 165:23,  
166:3, 167:13,  
167:16**B****backfiring**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
75:24**background**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
44:24**backpack**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
86:22**backyard**<sup>[1]</sup> - 78:3**bad**<sup>[2]</sup> - 45:13,  
78:10**bagel**<sup>[1]</sup> - 128:13**balance**<sup>[5]</sup> -  
108:21, 109:4,  
128:22, 139:18,  
140:11**Baldwin**<sup>[1]</sup> - 48:19**ball**<sup>[1]</sup> - 129:18**ballpark**<sup>[1]</sup> - 131:21**bang**<sup>[1]</sup> - 96:6**Barbieri**<sup>[7]</sup> - 18:6,  
18:8, 18:18,  
18:22, 19:3,  
19:15, 20:13**BARBIERI**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
21:14, 23:6**barrier**<sup>[1]</sup> - 96:12**based**<sup>[3]</sup> - 38:14,  
109:24, 112:2**basic**<sup>[1]</sup> - 25:7**basket**<sup>[1]</sup> - 136:10**basketball**<sup>[1]</sup> - 49:6**battle**<sup>[1]</sup> - 42:21**Bay**<sup>[3]</sup> - 62:25,  
94:22, 95:20**bays**<sup>[1]</sup> - 97:23**Beach**<sup>[2]</sup> - 55:11,  
143:18**bear**<sup>[1]</sup> - 140:5**became**<sup>[2]</sup> - 59:20,  
66:2**become**<sup>[2]</sup> - 36:17,  
97:4**Bedford**<sup>[3]</sup> - 96:2,  
99:5, 99:8**bedridden**<sup>[1]</sup> - 10:9

**beginning** <sup>[7]</sup> -

53:15, 66:14,  
98:2, 120:11,  
121:7, 140:13,  
140:25

**behalf** <sup>[8]</sup> - 14:24,  
24:6, 34:5, 63:12,  
97:11, 98:12,  
123:10, 164:14

**behind** <sup>[3]</sup> - 21:18,  
32:14, 77:20

**benefit** <sup>[2]</sup> - 128:9,  
131:24

**benefits** <sup>[2]</sup> - 88:13,  
134:22

**Benevolent** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
9:11

**berms** <sup>[2]</sup> - 95:23,  
95:24

**best** <sup>[22]</sup> - 11:6,  
17:10, 17:24,  
20:20, 21:22,  
30:19, 34:4, 45:4,  
46:18, 47:22,  
50:13, 51:21,  
53:20, 61:22,  
63:14, 83:19,  
87:4, 133:24,  
134:2, 165:18

**Bethpage** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
61:17, 63:4

**better** <sup>[19]</sup> - 9:18,  
11:6, 13:15, 14:8,  
22:13, 45:6,  
49:25, 51:11,  
64:25, 65:18,  
74:21, 76:4, 90:6,  
91:22, 126:20,  
137:2, 141:11,  
149:6, 160:24

**between** <sup>[7]</sup> - 23:3,  
79:21, 79:23,  
108:12, 123:9,  
154:18, 164:13

**beverages** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
115:8, 116:8,  
118:19

**beyond** <sup>[7]</sup> - 12:10,  
35:24, 55:7, 59:7,  
68:20, 85:5, 88:10

**big** <sup>[9]</sup> - 65:4, 65:7,  
81:16, 83:5,  
91:10, 98:6,  
130:8, 153:25,  
158:17

**bill** <sup>[2]</sup> - 152:12,  
153:4

**Bill** <sup>[6]</sup> - 33:7, 43:4,  
43:5, 46:23,  
53:10, 59:2

**Billy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 59:12

**birth** <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:10

**birthday** <sup>[1]</sup> - 92:10

**bit** <sup>[9]</sup> - 13:17,  
30:15, 40:10,  
44:16, 75:5, 89:4,  
107:24, 139:16,  
146:14

**bittersweet** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
60:21

**Black** <sup>[1]</sup> - 91:24

**blacked** <sup>[1]</sup> - 75:23

**Blakeman** <sup>[7]</sup> - 69:8,  
74:12, 81:6, 83:9,  
92:22, 94:23,  
95:11

**Blakeman's** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
78:6

**blast** <sup>[1]</sup> - 148:20

**bless** <sup>[4]</sup> - 17:12,

30:21, 50:11,  
100:6

**blessed** <sup>[2]</sup> - 66:10,  
112:22

**block** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:15

**blocking** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:11

**blocks** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:9

**board** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:2

**Board** <sup>[2]</sup> - 34:10,  
64:8

**Body** <sup>[11]</sup> - 21:9,  
76:22, 110:10,  
127:13, 130:15,  
139:10, 143:13,  
143:14, 144:4,  
146:8, 146:23

**body** <sup>[3]</sup> - 39:10,  
99:2, 153:11

**bolster** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:13

**bona** <sup>[1]</sup> - 91:15

**bond** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:2

**book** <sup>[1]</sup> - 66:15

**Booker** <sup>[1]</sup> - 33:8

**Boost** <sup>[1]</sup> - 68:17

**boost** <sup>[1]</sup> - 69:4

**boosted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:17

**bottom** <sup>[2]</sup> - 85:8,  
87:2

**bought** <sup>[1]</sup> - 12:12

**boundaries** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
142:20

**Boys** <sup>[1]</sup> - 149:7

**bracelet** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
152:14, 152:16

**brave** <sup>[3]</sup> - 79:10,  
142:7, 153:14

**bravery** <sup>[1]</sup> - 24:8

**break** <sup>[5]</sup> - 78:9,  
133:8, 133:10,  
133:11, 153:22

**breakdown** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
74:25

**breakfast** <sup>[2]</sup> - 40:3,  
88:18

**breast** <sup>[2]</sup> - 93:6,  
93:14

**Brennan** <sup>[1]</sup> - 165:5

**bridge** <sup>[2]</sup> - 79:12,  
80:3

**brief** <sup>[3]</sup> - 34:25,  
101:7, 101:9

**briefly** <sup>[2]</sup> - 64:16,  
101:6

**brighten** <sup>[1]</sup> - 16:24

**brighter** <sup>[1]</sup> - 14:13

**bring** <sup>[7]</sup> - 21:7,  
44:24, 109:17,  
109:22, 148:12,  
150:4, 151:15

**bringing** <sup>[5]</sup> - 65:13,  
93:4, 145:10,  
148:17, 149:4

**brings** <sup>[1]</sup> - 57:7

**brink** <sup>[3]</sup> - 81:9,  
81:11, 81:16

**bro** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:17

**brothers** <sup>[1]</sup> - 15:2

**brought** <sup>[6]</sup> - 23:13,  
27:25, 50:21,  
87:20, 88:6, 92:11

**brow** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:4

**Bruce** <sup>[4]</sup> - 81:6,  
89:21, 94:23,  
95:10

**BSO** <sup>[1]</sup> - 20:19

**bucket** <sup>[1]</sup> - 157:4

**Buckle** <sup>[1]</sup> - 87:25

**buckle** <sup>[1]</sup> - 91:13

**buddy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 61:16

**budget** <sup>[9]</sup> - 41:6,

72:9, 126:5,  
132:23, 133:2,  
139:21, 142:12,  
155:14, 156:22  
**Budget**<sup>[2]</sup> - 59:24,  
126:12  
**budgets**<sup>[3]</sup> - 40:12,  
72:14, 128:4  
**build**<sup>[4]</sup> - 65:5,  
68:10, 91:14,  
93:18  
**Building**<sup>[2]</sup> - 1:14,  
78:2  
**building**<sup>[4]</sup> - 15:9,  
17:3, 93:17, 93:23  
**bulkheads**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
98:17  
**bumps**<sup>[1]</sup> - 126:18  
**bunch**<sup>[2]</sup> - 35:13,  
134:10  
**bureau**<sup>[4]</sup> - 147:16,  
148:9, 150:16,  
153:23  
**Bureau**<sup>[1]</sup> - 149:21  
**business**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
131:15, 131:16  
**businesses**<sup>[15]</sup> -  
65:15, 128:2,  
128:12, 134:4,  
134:5, 134:7,  
134:11, 136:17,  
137:3, 137:14,  
148:24, 148:25,  
149:5, 151:10,  
153:24  
**busy**<sup>[1]</sup> - 94:24  
**butt**<sup>[1]</sup> - 33:14  
**buy**<sup>[1]</sup> - 92:22  
**buying**<sup>[2]</sup> - 136:11,  
136:12

**BY**<sup>[1]</sup> - 1:23  
**Bynoe**<sup>[8]</sup> - 6:20,  
59:19, 102:8,  
107:23, 108:25,  
110:5, 110:24,  
147:9  
**BYNOE**<sup>[12]</sup> - 2:18,  
6:21, 110:6,  
147:10, 147:14,  
147:22, 148:8,  
149:20, 150:13,  
151:17, 159:7,  
162:25

## C

**calculate**<sup>[1]</sup> - 131:2  
**Calendar**<sup>[14]</sup> -  
70:18, 70:22,  
71:4, 74:4, 101:4,  
103:4, 106:3,  
113:23, 115:3,  
118:14, 120:3,  
123:4, 164:3  
**calm**<sup>[2]</sup> - 19:16,  
22:3  
**camera**<sup>[2]</sup> - 75:6,  
78:23  
**cameras**<sup>[4]</sup> - 75:9,  
75:12, 75:21,  
96:23  
**cancer**<sup>[2]</sup> - 93:6,  
93:15  
**cannot**<sup>[6]</sup> - 11:15,  
16:10, 63:11,  
93:7, 144:18,  
150:2  
**Cape**<sup>[1]</sup> - 99:6  
**CAPECE**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
112:18  
**Capece**<sup>[1]</sup> - 5:6

**Capece's**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
110:25  
**capital**<sup>[1]</sup> - 41:7  
**capricious**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
109:5  
**car**<sup>[7]</sup> - 71:25, 73:8,  
74:12, 74:17,  
75:19, 90:19,  
90:23  
**card**<sup>[2]</sup> - 60:2,  
137:19  
**care**<sup>[6]</sup> - 12:17,  
53:6, 54:24,  
58:20, 65:2, 140:3  
**career**<sup>[2]</sup> - 28:13,  
35:6  
**careers**<sup>[1]</sup> - 62:23  
**careful**<sup>[3]</sup> - 140:2,  
142:15, 158:6  
**carefully**<sup>[2]</sup> - 19:13,  
19:18  
**cares**<sup>[1]</sup> - 64:21  
**CARRIE**<sup>[1]</sup> - 2:21  
**Carrie**<sup>[1]</sup> - 6:22  
**carried**<sup>[1]</sup> - 105:16  
**carries**<sup>[5]</sup> - 114:21,  
119:12, 122:20,  
166:9, 167:22  
**Carries**<sup>[1]</sup> - 102:20  
**carry**<sup>[2]</sup> - 107:18,  
111:18  
**carrying**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
111:22  
**cars**<sup>[4]</sup> - 75:22,  
75:24, 90:8, 91:3  
**case**<sup>[1]</sup> - 109:2  
**cases**<sup>[2]</sup> - 85:10,  
139:24  
**casino**<sup>[13]</sup> - 76:21,  
78:2, 79:15,

80:22, 82:3, 82:7,  
88:16, 90:21,  
92:18, 92:23,  
93:18, 93:23, 94:8  
**Casino**<sup>[1]</sup> - 72:19  
**casinos**<sup>[2]</sup> - 81:12,  
81:14  
**catch**<sup>[1]</sup> - 75:21  
**caucus**<sup>[1]</sup> - 56:4  
**caught**<sup>[1]</sup> - 43:8  
**causes**<sup>[1]</sup> - 93:23  
**Cecilia**<sup>[1]</sup> - 46:23  
**celebrate**<sup>[3]</sup> -  
92:11, 142:3,  
142:4  
**celebrating**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
79:2  
**celebration**<sup>[3]</sup> -  
34:10, 47:4, 78:8  
**celebrations**<sup>[3]</sup> -  
14:16, 83:12, 84:3  
**Centennial**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
129:22  
**Center**<sup>[2]</sup> - 9:25,  
165:3  
**center**<sup>[8]</sup> - 10:6,  
10:17, 88:7,  
89:13, 89:18,  
91:16, 93:18,  
97:19  
**certain**<sup>[4]</sup> - 52:23,  
140:17, 145:18,  
152:15  
**certainly**<sup>[2]</sup> - 43:18,  
58:25  
**Certificate**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
111:20  
**certify**<sup>[1]</sup> - 169:10  
**challenge**<sup>[3]</sup> -  
19:15, 58:13, 86:6



**Chamber**<sup>[2]</sup> - 84:19, 85:25  
**chamber**<sup>[2]</sup> - 84:22, 147:23  
**chambers**<sup>[1]</sup> - 164:5  
**Chambers**<sup>[2]</sup> - 164:9, 167:6  
**change**<sup>[8]</sup> - 90:5, 91:4, 91:5, 107:5, 115:6, 116:6, 118:17, 150:5  
**Change**<sup>[1]</sup> - 165:4  
**changed**<sup>[2]</sup> - 28:17, 53:19  
**changing**<sup>[2]</sup> - 61:19, 116:13  
**Channel**<sup>[2]</sup> - 96:13  
**chapter**<sup>[1]</sup> - 66:13  
**Chapter**<sup>[2]</sup> - 106:5, 113:25  
**character**<sup>[4]</sup> - 15:16, 23:22, 35:22, 56:18  
**characterized**<sup>[1]</sup> - 81:8  
**Charles**<sup>[1]</sup> - 86:18  
**charter**<sup>[2]</sup> - 130:17, 146:3  
**Charter**<sup>[1]</sup> - 145:21  
**chatter**<sup>[1]</sup> - 129:23  
**check**<sup>[1]</sup> - 156:24  
**Chesnel**<sup>[1]</sup> - 153:5  
**Chiefs**<sup>[1]</sup> - 21:18  
**Children**<sup>[1]</sup> - 9:25  
**children**<sup>[15]</sup> - 10:9, 10:14, 10:16, 11:15, 11:25, 13:12, 14:2, 14:13, 15:8,

15:13, 16:11, 16:17, 16:23, 36:15, 65:13  
**children's**<sup>[1]</sup> - 62:16  
**choice**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:21  
**choir**<sup>[1]</sup> - 27:25  
**chokes**<sup>[1]</sup> - 45:20  
**choose**<sup>[3]</sup> - 11:22, 74:2, 74:3  
**chooses**<sup>[1]</sup> - 24:21  
**chord**<sup>[1]</sup> - 87:20  
**chorus**<sup>[1]</sup> - 49:6  
**chose**<sup>[1]</sup> - 60:8  
**chosen**<sup>[1]</sup> - 29:20  
**Chris**<sup>[16]</sup> - 5:4, 5:18, 43:3, 52:24, 58:16, 58:17, 74:6, 74:7, 115:24, 115:25, 117:13, 117:17, 146:8, 148:4, 160:6, 160:20  
**Christine**<sup>[2]</sup> - 36:13, 36:22  
**Christmas**<sup>[7]</sup> - 10:13, 11:16, 13:16, 17:12, 47:14, 92:10, 165:16  
**Chuck**<sup>[3]</sup> - 95:14, 98:14  
**Citations**<sup>[1]</sup> - 26:4  
**City**<sup>[4]</sup> - 75:9, 79:3, 117:6, 145:2  
**civic**<sup>[1]</sup> - 85:25  
**civilizations**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:18  
**classical**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:18  
**Classics**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:23

**classy**<sup>[1]</sup> - 86:16  
**claw**<sup>[2]</sup> - 89:4, 141:14  
**clawed**<sup>[1]</sup> - 141:15  
**clawing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 141:3  
**clear**<sup>[2]</sup> - 70:17, 130:4  
**clearer**<sup>[1]</sup> - 107:24  
**clearly**<sup>[2]</sup> - 24:24, 135:21  
**clerk**<sup>[1]</sup> - 53:13  
**CLERK**<sup>[19]</sup> - 6:11, 6:16, 6:19, 6:22, 6:25, 7:4, 7:7, 7:10, 7:13, 7:16, 7:19, 7:22, 7:25, 8:4, 8:7, 8:10, 8:13, 8:16, 8:19  
**Clerk**<sup>[6]</sup> - 4:18, 116:4, 120:5, 120:8, 121:3, 123:3  
**climbing**<sup>[3]</sup> - 17:3, 19:2, 19:8  
**clinic**<sup>[1]</sup> - 99:7  
**Clinton**<sup>[1]</sup> - 33:7  
**clock**<sup>[1]</sup> - 140:20  
**close**<sup>[3]</sup> - 113:7, 117:24, 144:2  
**closed**<sup>[1]</sup> - 113:21  
**closer**<sup>[1]</sup> - 117:9  
**closing**<sup>[3]</sup> - 40:7, 113:11, 118:4  
**clueless**<sup>[1]</sup> - 95:17  
**Cod**<sup>[1]</sup> - 99:6  
**Code**<sup>[2]</sup> - 106:6, 114:2  
**cognitive**<sup>[1]</sup> - 152:24  
**Cohen's**<sup>[2]</sup> - 9:25,

10:16  
**Coliseum**<sup>[1]</sup> - 88:21  
**colleague**<sup>[1]</sup> - 137:18  
**colleagues**<sup>[5]</sup> - 42:7, 44:20, 45:10, 50:11, 154:2  
**collected**<sup>[1]</sup> - 10:12  
**College**<sup>[3]</sup> - 38:6, 38:15, 39:16  
**college**<sup>[4]</sup> - 38:20, 41:5, 41:6, 129:5  
**color**<sup>[1]</sup> - 91:23  
**combine**<sup>[1]</sup> - 99:12  
**comfort**<sup>[1]</sup> - 25:17  
**coming**<sup>[13]</sup> - 17:25, 27:10, 49:23, 56:11, 57:12, 67:13, 88:2, 131:18, 132:9, 136:25, 142:13, 143:14, 161:7  
**commend**<sup>[1]</sup> - 94:6  
**comment**<sup>[6]</sup> - 5:10, 9:2, 9:6, 54:21, 83:6, 117:20  
**comments**<sup>[3]</sup> - 64:3, 113:3, 135:11  
**Commerce**<sup>[1]</sup> - 84:19  
**commercial**<sup>[1]</sup> - 72:18  
**commercials**<sup>[2]</sup> - 132:17, 144:23  
**commissioner**<sup>[1]</sup> - 137:23  
**Commissioner**<sup>[7]</sup> -

5:6, 12:23, 13:4,  
13:18, 15:18,  
110:24, 143:5  
**COMMISSIONER**  
[4] - 11:4, 15:25,  
20:14, 112:18  
**commissioners** [2]  
- 99:14, 99:15  
**Commissioners** [1]  
- 21:17  
**commissions** [1] -  
165:9  
**commitment** [1] -  
127:14  
**Committee** [7] -  
101:5, 101:8,  
101:10, 102:13,  
116:3, 135:11,  
145:19  
**Committees** [1] -  
103:6  
**committing** [1] -  
79:13  
**communications**  
[1] - 43:4  
**communities** [5] -  
12:17, 65:16,  
77:24, 85:25,  
128:7  
**Community** [3] -  
38:6, 38:15, 39:16  
**community** [16] -  
38:10, 38:14,  
48:8, 50:9, 54:21,  
59:9, 59:10,  
67:10, 77:2, 77:3,  
78:4, 82:6, 86:7,  
128:8, 137:11  
**companies** [1] -  
112:2

**company** [1] - 151:2  
**compassion** [2] -  
10:21, 23:14  
**compensation** [1] -  
137:14  
**competition** [1] -  
35:20  
**complain** [2] -  
54:14, 61:5  
**complained** [1] -  
52:7  
**complete** [1] - 76:15  
**compliance** [1] -  
117:9  
**compliant** [2] -  
107:8, 107:14  
**compliments** [1] -  
43:25  
**comply** [1] - 34:4  
**component** [1] -  
140:24  
**components** [1] -  
110:14  
**computer** [1] -  
73:18  
**Concerning** [1] -  
78:6  
**concerns** [5] - 62:8,  
70:6, 138:5,  
150:4, 151:15  
**concert** [1] - 69:9  
**concerts** [3] - 71:25,  
74:13, 74:15  
**concur** [1] - 74:9  
**condition** [1] -  
156:20  
**conditions** [1] -  
158:20  
**conduit** [1] - 151:9  
**confidence** [1] -

48:12  
**confident** [1] -  
76:19  
**confined** [1] - 10:9  
**confirm** [4] - 71:12,  
71:17, 73:21,  
129:10  
**conflate** [1] - 155:21  
**congratulate** [4] -  
21:12, 36:5, 62:4  
**congratulating** [1] -  
20:11  
**Congratulations** [2]  
- 33:20, 79:10  
**congratulations** [6]  
- 34:7, 36:2,  
36:19, 36:22,  
68:2, 87:13  
**Congress** [3] -  
91:22, 98:6,  
140:25  
**connected** [1] -  
161:10  
**connectedness** [1]  
- 23:15  
**connecting** [1] -  
85:10  
**connection** [4] -  
36:21, 79:21,  
79:23, 154:10  
**conscience** [2] -  
79:20, 84:10  
**Consent** [1] - 103:4  
**consent** [1] - 120:6  
**Conservation** [2] -  
77:8, 77:23  
**conservative** [2] -  
131:21, 136:6  
**consider** [3] - 42:8,  
72:15, 79:19

**considered** [2] -  
72:8, 83:3  
**consistently** [1] -  
55:7  
**constituents** [4] -  
64:21, 65:6,  
65:23, 66:22  
**Construction** [1] -  
82:11  
**Consumer** [6] - 5:5,  
5:6, 106:25,  
107:12, 107:20,  
109:14  
**consumer** [2] -  
133:16, 136:8  
**contact** [2] - 35:11,  
69:3  
**contemplating** [2] -  
18:16, 18:25  
**context** [1] - 29:13  
**continue** [9] -  
38:25, 39:6,  
43:15, 47:5, 50:8,  
63:5, 63:6,  
109:13, 111:9  
**continued** [2] -  
43:14, 43:16  
**continues** [1] -  
28:10  
**continuing** [3] -  
39:8, 88:11, 93:21  
**contract** [10] -  
129:15, 129:19,  
145:17, 147:20,  
148:5, 149:16,  
155:25, 156:19,  
158:4, 160:10  
**contractor's** [1] -  
107:4  
**contractors** [5] -

107:17, 111:15,  
111:18, 111:22,  
111:25  
**contracts**<sup>[3]</sup> -  
130:14, 145:14,  
161:7  
**contribute**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
57:16  
**contributed**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
14:19  
**control**<sup>[2]</sup> - 78:20,  
129:15  
**controversial**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
138:20  
**conversation**<sup>[4]</sup> -  
18:23, 19:5,  
130:6, 141:21  
**conversations**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
56:5  
**convey**<sup>[2]</sup> - 139:23,  
146:12  
**conveyed**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
139:10, 146:24  
**convicted**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
108:19  
**conviction**<sup>[4]</sup> -  
108:8, 108:23,  
109:16, 109:25  
**CONZATTI**<sup>[1]</sup> - 38:7  
**Conzatti**<sup>[2]</sup> - 5:12,  
38:6  
**coordinate**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
34:9, 127:18  
**coordinated**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
10:2  
**Cop**<sup>[1]</sup> - 14:15  
**cops**<sup>[3]</sup> - 12:21,  
24:15, 142:8  
**Cops**<sup>[5]</sup> - 9:3, 9:10,  
9:16, 11:2, 16:8

**Corps**<sup>[1]</sup> - 98:10  
**Correct**<sup>[1]</sup> - 129:13  
**correct**<sup>[10]</sup> - 11:5,  
71:2, 72:3,  
124:10, 139:7,  
139:8, 140:18,  
140:19, 160:8,  
169:11  
**Correction**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
108:4  
**correctly**<sup>[1]</sup> - 75:18  
**correlation**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
134:6, 135:9  
**Cory**<sup>[1]</sup> - 33:8  
**Coscia**<sup>[2]</sup> - 32:16,  
34:24  
**COSCIA**<sup>[1]</sup> - 35:3  
**cost**<sup>[4]</sup> - 40:17,  
111:15, 151:23,  
161:15  
**costs**<sup>[2]</sup> - 81:2,  
98:22  
**Council**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:11  
**council**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:7  
**counsel**<sup>[2]</sup> - 43:3,  
94:3  
**counties**<sup>[2]</sup> - 117:5,  
117:6  
**countless**<sup>[4]</sup> -  
14:18, 14:19,  
28:9, 31:21  
**countries**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
29:22  
**Country**<sup>[1]</sup> - 36:15  
**country**<sup>[4]</sup> - 14:23,  
20:21, 51:22,  
134:13  
**COUNTY**<sup>[1]</sup> - 1:3  
**county**<sup>[42]</sup> - 14:8,  
14:9, 14:19, 15:3,

20:23, 24:7,  
33:13, 38:5,  
38:23, 38:24,  
39:2, 39:4, 42:6,  
42:11, 42:13,  
43:15, 51:4, 51:8,  
51:11, 56:9,  
57:17, 57:20,  
58:9, 73:18, 75:8,  
78:13, 78:19,  
83:19, 84:5, 97:4,  
112:20, 112:21,  
134:12, 134:14,  
134:17, 134:21,  
135:6, 136:14,  
137:20, 142:2,  
151:23, 152:2  
**County**<sup>[70]</sup> - 1:14,  
9:10, 9:23, 10:23,  
14:24, 21:21,  
40:18, 41:8,  
42:11, 43:14,  
57:18, 68:6,  
69:23, 71:23,  
72:10, 72:21,  
74:11, 74:14,  
74:19, 75:11,  
76:14, 76:20,  
78:18, 81:9,  
81:17, 82:8,  
82:19, 87:23,  
88:9, 88:21, 89:7,  
89:9, 91:10, 92:3,  
94:22, 95:20,  
99:12, 106:6,  
106:24, 112:6,  
114:2, 115:9,  
116:20, 118:20,  
121:21, 123:8,  
123:10, 127:13,

127:20, 127:24,  
132:16, 132:18,  
139:9, 141:21,  
142:3, 143:17,  
144:25, 146:12,  
146:20, 148:14,  
151:8, 153:15,  
155:16, 157:16,  
157:23, 161:15,  
164:12, 164:14,  
164:15, 169:6  
**County's**<sup>[2]</sup> - 78:8,  
78:9  
**countywide**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
139:12  
**couple**<sup>[9]</sup> - 17:15,  
27:3, 50:3, 50:4,  
57:25, 94:20,  
101:3, 103:6,  
126:24  
**courage**<sup>[3]</sup> - 14:20,  
24:8, 32:10  
**course**<sup>[3]</sup> - 30:20,  
32:15, 51:5  
**courses**<sup>[1]</sup> - 83:16  
**court**<sup>[1]</sup> - 109:7  
**Court**<sup>[1]</sup> - 76:14  
**COURT**<sup>[1]</sup> - 1:23  
**Covid**<sup>[14]</sup> - 12:2,  
58:5, 65:17,  
68:17, 68:22,  
71:15, 72:7, 78:7,  
78:10, 78:21,  
83:9, 83:13,  
132:9, 132:11  
**coworkers**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
47:18  
**create**<sup>[3]</sup> - 80:14,  
80:25, 148:18  
**creating**<sup>[1]</sup> - 80:23

**credits** <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:11  
**Cricket** <sup>[1]</sup> - 127:9  
**cricket** <sup>[4]</sup> - 128:6,  
 130:2, 131:23,  
 151:19  
**crime** <sup>[3]</sup> - 79:24,  
 80:25, 165:9  
**criminal** <sup>[4]</sup> - 108:8,  
 108:12, 109:16,  
 109:24  
**criminals** <sup>[3]</sup> - 25:7,  
 25:8, 25:9  
**crisis** <sup>[5]</sup> - 74:22,  
 84:4, 93:2, 93:4,  
 134:12  
**criteria** <sup>[1]</sup> - 85:5  
**critical** <sup>[1]</sup> - 71:24  
**cross** <sup>[2]</sup> - 62:11,  
 88:23  
**crowded** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:14  
**CSEA** <sup>[1]</sup> - 51:13  
**Cup** <sup>[1]</sup> - 127:9  
**cyber** <sup>[1]</sup> - 73:14

## D

**D'Esposito's** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 98:6  
**D.C.** <sup>[1]</sup> - 92:4  
**dad** <sup>[3]</sup> - 36:23,  
 96:24, 97:12  
**Dad** <sup>[2]</sup> - 27:8, 33:15  
**daily** <sup>[2]</sup> - 77:11,  
 77:15  
**dais** <sup>[1]</sup> - 53:24  
**damages** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 137:15  
**Dan** <sup>[4]</sup> - 5:17,  
 55:11, 58:25, 71:9  
**dangerous** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 142:21

**dangers** <sup>[1]</sup> - 73:14  
**Danny** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:23  
**date** <sup>[2]</sup> - 91:6,  
 109:23  
**dated** <sup>[1]</sup> - 70:6  
**daycare** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:16  
**days** <sup>[4]</sup> - 14:12,  
 67:7, 102:6,  
 127:11  
**DCJS** <sup>[4]</sup> - 107:8,  
 107:13, 111:6,  
 111:11  
**de** <sup>[1]</sup> - 21:7  
**de-escalate** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 21:7  
**dead** <sup>[3]</sup> - 88:14,  
 153:16, 153:17  
**deal** <sup>[3]</sup> - 82:21,  
 84:25, 161:10  
**dealing** <sup>[4]</sup> - 23:23,  
 24:9, 60:12, 80:15  
**dearest** <sup>[1]</sup> - 45:19  
**deathbed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 58:22  
**deaths** <sup>[1]</sup> - 78:25  
**debatable** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 159:2  
**debate** <sup>[12]</sup> - 45:5,  
 103:8, 105:2,  
 114:8, 118:23,  
 121:12, 122:5,  
 123:17, 124:14,  
 162:2, 164:6,  
 165:19  
**Debra** <sup>[1]</sup> - 6:25  
**DEBRA** <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:2  
**December** <sup>[7]</sup> -  
 1:18, 9:16, 9:22,  
 70:7, 120:12,  
 121:8, 169:14  
**decide** <sup>[2]</sup> - 47:20,

112:2  
**decided** <sup>[1]</sup> - 50:3  
**decision** <sup>[5]</sup> - 21:4,  
 21:5, 21:6,  
 108:23, 109:19  
**declaring** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 96:24, 97:3  
**decline** <sup>[1]</sup> - 33:17  
**declining** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 138:12  
**dedicated** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 42:10, 51:9  
**dedication** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 14:21, 66:22  
**deeply** <sup>[1]</sup> - 66:5  
**default** <sup>[1]</sup> - 161:3  
**defined** <sup>[1]</sup> - 128:24  
**defining** <sup>[1]</sup> - 34:13  
**definitely** <sup>[10]</sup> -  
 46:22, 49:23,  
 60:21, 60:23,  
 66:14, 85:18,  
 87:20, 87:23,  
 117:4, 154:23  
**degree** <sup>[2]</sup> - 29:11,  
 48:15  
**degrees** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:16  
**Delaware** <sup>[1]</sup> - 94:3  
**Delia** <sup>[3]</sup> - 7:13,  
 49:14, 94:6  
**DELIA** <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:14  
**delis** <sup>[2]</sup> - 128:12,  
 145:7  
**deliver** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:15,  
 146:25  
**demonstrated** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 10:22, 24:9  
**demonstrates** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 14:6  
**denied** <sup>[2]</sup> - 109:16,

109:23  
**DENISE** <sup>[1]</sup> - 2:10  
**Denise** <sup>[7]</sup> - 6:17,  
 39:20, 46:12,  
 62:22, 94:13,  
 95:7, 98:18  
**Dennis** <sup>[4]</sup> - 10:4,  
 10:25, 13:3,  
 164:20  
**deny** <sup>[2]</sup> - 108:6,  
 109:20  
**Department** <sup>[7]</sup> -  
 14:8, 24:20, 77:7,  
 77:22, 123:11,  
 134:15, 137:22  
**department** <sup>[9]</sup> -  
 15:20, 17:11,  
 20:15, 42:19,  
 51:15, 51:24,  
 52:5, 110:20,  
 148:15  
**departments** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 51:17, 134:9  
**depicted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 23:2  
**Depots** <sup>[1]</sup> - 145:8  
**Deputies** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:15  
**deputy** <sup>[2]</sup> - 99:13,  
 99:15  
**Deputy** <sup>[7]</sup> - 2:7,  
 6:13, 6:16, 24:17,  
 106:24, 115:11,  
 121:9  
**DEPUTY** <sup>[3]</sup> - 24:19,  
 159:15, 162:9  
**DERIGGI** <sup>[16]</sup> - 3:14,  
 7:15, 154:6,  
 154:14, 154:22,  
 155:7, 155:22,  
 156:3, 156:8,  
 156:12, 157:9,

157:15, 159:6,  
160:14, 160:18,  
162:24

**DeRiggi** <sup>[4]</sup> - 7:14,  
49:14, 123:15,  
154:5

**DERIGGI-**

**WHITTON** <sup>[16]</sup> -  
3:14, 7:15, 154:6,  
154:14, 154:22,  
155:7, 155:22,  
156:3, 156:8,  
156:12, 157:9,  
157:15, 159:6,  
160:14, 160:18,  
162:24

**DeRiggi-Whitton**  
<sup>[4]</sup> - 7:14, 49:14,  
123:15, 154:5

**described** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
35:17, 35:18

**deserve** <sup>[3]</sup> - 31:7,  
42:13, 51:20

**deserved** <sup>[1]</sup> - 87:6

**despicable** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
82:13

**despite** <sup>[2]</sup> - 49:18,  
52:21

**destination** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
147:15

**destroyed** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
141:17

**destroying** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
78:13

**Detective** <sup>[14]</sup> - 18:5,  
18:7, 18:8, 18:18,  
18:21, 18:22,  
19:3, 19:4, 19:15,  
19:16, 20:12

**detective** <sup>[1]</sup> - 20:8

**DETECTIVE** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
21:14, 23:6

**Detectives** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
17:17

**detectives** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
20:11, 21:10,  
24:21, 74:23, 75:2

**developed** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
39:23, 59:18

**development** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
127:23, 131:13

**DeWhicky** <sup>[1]</sup> - 94:6

**diagnosed** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
93:6, 93:14

**diameter** <sup>[1]</sup> - 19:12

**died** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:6

**difference** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
11:17, 17:5

**different** <sup>[21]</sup> -  
11:12, 25:12,  
44:9, 44:10,

44:14, 44:24,  
51:4, 51:17,

60:12, 61:21,  
110:19, 137:7,

137:8, 139:15,  
141:6, 141:9,

149:16, 150:8,  
155:10, 157:6,

161:8

**differently** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
90:2, 127:22

**differing** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
149:24

**difficult** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:20,  
139:16

**digitally** <sup>[1]</sup> - 59:11

**dime** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:23

**dinner** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:19

**direct** <sup>[4]</sup> - 134:6,

134:21, 135:8,  
152:6

**directly** <sup>[4]</sup> - 134:6,  
136:7, 154:24,  
158:15

**disadvantaged** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
77:24, 78:4

**disagree** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
138:11

**Discover** <sup>[19]</sup> -  
147:14, 147:25,

148:5, 148:22,  
149:3, 149:17,

150:10, 151:7,  
154:10, 154:15,

155:2, 155:24,  
156:16, 156:18,

157:13, 157:22,  
158:3, 158:20,

160:12

**discretion** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
109:6

**discussed** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
116:3, 160:16

**discussion** <sup>[15]</sup> -  
45:6, 103:8,

105:2, 107:22,  
114:8, 118:23,

121:12, 122:5,  
123:17, 124:14,

146:5, 148:3,  
149:11, 162:2,

165:19

**disease** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:13

**disgusting** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
99:17

**disorder** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:7

**disproportionatel**  
**y** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:4

**disrespect** <sup>[1]</sup> - 97:9

**Dissemination** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
111:7

**disservice** <sup>[1]</sup> - 48:2

**distinct** <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:5

**distinction** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
27:20

**distress** <sup>[2]</sup> - 18:24,  
19:23

**district** <sup>[11]</sup> - 30:9,  
30:17, 33:21,  
47:23, 51:5,  
56:12, 63:3, 67:3,  
139:11, 153:6,  
153:9

**District** <sup>[28]</sup> - 2:4,  
2:8, 2:12, 2:16,  
2:19, 2:22, 3:3,  
3:6, 3:9, 3:12,  
3:15, 3:18, 3:21,  
3:24, 4:3, 4:6, 4:9,  
4:12, 4:15, 5:7,  
34:6, 34:16, 36:6,  
36:24, 47:6, 64:8,  
164:15, 164:21

**districts** <sup>[4]</sup> - 36:8,  
62:11, 127:15,  
127:16

**Division** <sup>[8]</sup> - 27:14,  
27:18, 27:23,  
28:6, 30:12,  
34:23, 35:10,  
35:25

**division** <sup>[2]</sup> - 20:8,  
28:9

**divvied** <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:3

**document** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
89:3, 95:12

**dollar** <sup>[6]</sup> - 127:4,  
130:25, 131:18,  
132:19, 133:4,

145:24  
**dollars** <sup>[5]</sup> - 83:17,  
 98:19, 133:12,  
 145:4, 145:9  
**Dom's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:21  
**donated** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:12  
**done** <sup>[25]</sup> - 39:6,  
 40:15, 42:14,  
 43:10, 55:8, 61:7,  
 62:6, 65:21,  
 81:19, 82:20,  
 85:23, 86:24,  
 95:2, 95:6, 96:2,  
 96:4, 96:6, 96:15,  
 96:17, 100:3,  
 111:3, 132:10,  
 135:5, 143:3,  
 143:6  
**donors** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:12  
**doors** <sup>[2]</sup> - 31:16,  
 68:21  
**doubt** <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:21  
**down** <sup>[17]</sup> - 12:5,  
 15:9, 15:23, 17:3,  
 19:17, 22:5, 79:6,  
 85:2, 94:4, 98:3,  
 111:2, 132:3,  
 133:9, 133:10,  
 133:11, 142:25,  
 143:2  
**Dr** <sup>[4]</sup> - 35:8, 38:6,  
 69:3, 69:5  
**dream** <sup>[1]</sup> - 32:20  
**Drive** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:5  
**drive** <sup>[5]</sup> - 95:25,  
 136:16, 150:19,  
 150:23, 151:2  
**driving** <sup>[1]</sup> - 75:23  
**drove** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:11  
**Drucker** <sup>[5]</sup> - 8:2,

113:10, 114:6,  
 124:12, 130:21  
**DRUCKER** <sup>[9]</sup> - 4:5,  
 8:3, 130:22,  
 131:7, 132:14,  
 133:8, 133:21,  
 159:9, 163:3  
**drug** <sup>[2]</sup> - 78:14,  
 91:9  
**DSS** <sup>[1]</sup> - 139:24  
**due** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:4  
**dunes** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:24  
**Dunham** <sup>[1]</sup> - 54:5  
**during** <sup>[11]</sup> - 9:5,  
 10:19, 12:2,  
 16:22, 65:13,  
 65:15, 65:16,  
 68:22, 74:16,  
 81:7, 94:25  
**duties** <sup>[1]</sup> - 21:25  
**dying** <sup>[2]</sup> - 88:24,  
 91:24  
**dynamic** <sup>[2]</sup> - 90:5,  
 91:4

## E

**e-mails** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:3  
**Earl** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:16  
**earned** <sup>[2]</sup> - 36:2,  
 89:6  
**easier** <sup>[2]</sup> - 146:15,  
 152:19  
**easily** <sup>[2]</sup> - 72:16,  
 152:19  
**East** <sup>[2]</sup> - 48:19,  
 128:7  
**easy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 22:4  
**echo** <sup>[3]</sup> - 15:6,  
 51:6, 57:5  
**economic** <sup>[8]</sup> -

127:22, 127:23,  
 131:13, 131:23,  
 133:20, 136:3,  
 142:5, 144:17  
**economics** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 136:3  
**economy** <sup>[2]</sup> - 81:8,  
 81:15  
**ecstatic** <sup>[1]</sup> - 68:20  
**edge** <sup>[1]</sup> - 13:20  
**Education** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 34:11, 64:9  
**education** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 40:17, 93:21  
**educational** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 34:20, 38:4  
**effect** <sup>[1]</sup> - 131:18  
**effort** <sup>[4]</sup> - 82:2,  
 85:8, 85:14,  
 152:11  
**efforts** <sup>[2]</sup> - 134:15,  
 138:6  
**eight** <sup>[2]</sup> - 109:3,  
 110:13  
**Eisenhower** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 74:16, 127:11  
**either** <sup>[1]</sup> - 60:24  
**elect** <sup>[1]</sup> - 64:15  
**elected** <sup>[3]</sup> - 33:5,  
 64:25, 82:14  
**election** <sup>[1]</sup> - 48:22  
**elections** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 48:10, 64:13  
**element** <sup>[1]</sup> - 91:5  
**Elementary** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 36:16  
**elevated** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:25  
**eligible** <sup>[1]</sup> - 139:20  
**eliminate** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 99:11, 99:17

**Emergency** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
 9:23, 120:3,  
 123:14  
**emergency** <sup>[11]</sup> -  
 20:18, 120:5,  
 120:15, 120:17,  
 121:2, 123:3,  
 123:5, 123:7,  
 123:18, 123:23,  
 124:8  
**emissions** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:6  
**emotional** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 50:21, 93:21  
**emotions** <sup>[1]</sup> - 44:10  
**employee** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 112:21  
**employees** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 112:20  
**empty** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:12  
**enable** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:4  
**encounters** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 51:19  
**encourage** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 110:21  
**end** <sup>[3]</sup> - 19:14,  
 45:24, 66:13  
**End** <sup>[1]</sup> - 97:23  
**ending** <sup>[4]</sup> - 52:3,  
 93:11, 120:12,  
 121:8  
**endorsed** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 29:18  
**ends** <sup>[1]</sup> - 67:15  
**engage** <sup>[1]</sup> - 149:16  
**engaging** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 149:2  
**Engineers** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 98:11  
**enjoy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 56:21  
**enlist** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:17

**enriched** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:11  
**ensure** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:18  
**entered** <sup>[2]</sup> - 151:18, 161:10  
**enterprises** <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:18  
**entire** <sup>[5]</sup> - 32:14, 34:5, 39:14, 42:25, 120:7  
**entirely** <sup>[2]</sup> - 25:12, 72:13  
**entity** <sup>[1]</sup> - 148:12  
**entrusted** <sup>[3]</sup> - 48:9, 48:11, 48:12  
**Environmental** <sup>[2]</sup> - 77:8, 77:22  
**environmental** <sup>[2]</sup> - 65:10, 78:5  
**environmentally** <sup>[1]</sup> - 78:3  
**EPA** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:11  
**epidemic** <sup>[2]</sup> - 80:11, 143:9  
**escalate** <sup>[1]</sup> - 21:7  
**escape** <sup>[1]</sup> - 94:13  
**especially** <sup>[9]</sup> - 10:19, 14:13, 39:17, 42:18, 43:2, 54:25, 56:12, 137:25, 160:23  
**establish** <sup>[3]</sup> - 120:4, 120:15, 123:14  
**established** <sup>[3]</sup> - 72:10, 121:2, 124:8  
**establishing** <sup>[3]</sup> - 67:18, 120:16, 123:22

**estimate** <sup>[1]</sup> - 131:21  
**ESU** <sup>[6]</sup> - 9:24, 10:5, 10:7, 10:11, 10:15, 10:22  
**eternally** <sup>[1]</sup> - 23:25  
**evaluation** <sup>[1]</sup> - 19:20  
**event** <sup>[4]</sup> - 10:2, 67:12, 127:10, 128:6  
**events** <sup>[16]</sup> - 49:6, 49:7, 65:15, 66:7, 70:24, 74:18, 86:9, 86:22, 127:8, 127:17, 128:4, 129:25, 130:8, 132:10, 141:25, 148:14  
**eventually** <sup>[2]</sup> - 19:7, 28:16  
**everywhere** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:24  
**eviction** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:8  
**evidenced** <sup>[1]</sup> - 134:14  
**example** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:9  
**examples** <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:15  
**excel** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:11  
**excelled** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:19  
**excellent** <sup>[3]</sup> - 24:7, 43:22, 80:20  
**exceptional** <sup>[2]</sup> - 112:20, 112:21  
**exceptions** <sup>[3]</sup> - 116:23, 117:4  
**excited** <sup>[5]</sup> - 16:24, 32:21, 57:11, 57:18, 61:10

**excitement** <sup>[2]</sup> - 15:8, 128:10  
**execute** <sup>[2]</sup> - 123:9, 164:13  
**Executive** <sup>[14]</sup> - 1:14, 71:23, 74:11, 89:9, 123:8, 127:13, 127:20, 132:16, 139:9, 141:22, 146:13, 146:20, 148:15, 164:12  
**executive** <sup>[1]</sup> - 97:5  
**exhibitions** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:5  
**exist** <sup>[1]</sup> - 134:19  
**Exit** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:9  
**exiting** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:8  
**expand** <sup>[1]</sup> - 143:8  
**expect** <sup>[2]</sup> - 96:20, 142:16  
**expected** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:12  
**expecting** <sup>[1]</sup> - 47:15  
**expedite** <sup>[1]</sup> - 139:3  
**expend** <sup>[2]</sup> - 140:18, 140:23  
**expended** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:7  
**expenditure** <sup>[1]</sup> - 129:11  
**expense** <sup>[2]</sup> - 98:22, 98:24  
**expenses** <sup>[1]</sup> - 140:4  
**experience** <sup>[1]</sup> - 32:13  
**experienced** <sup>[4]</sup> - 60:9, 60:10, 64:11, 143:11

**experiences** <sup>[3]</sup> - 51:3, 51:19, 60:6  
**expired** <sup>[2]</sup> - 148:6, 160:20  
**explain** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:10  
**explaining** <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:25  
**explanation** <sup>[1]</sup> - 109:21  
**exposed** <sup>[2]</sup> - 12:3, 82:21  
**expressed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 35:6  
**expressing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 110:17  
**extended** <sup>[1]</sup> - 34:15  
**extension** <sup>[1]</sup> - 67:9  
**extensive** <sup>[1]</sup> - 130:6  
**extra** <sup>[1]</sup> - 90:14  
**extremely** <sup>[1]</sup> - 22:6

## F

**face** <sup>[1]</sup> - 68:3  
**faced** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:15  
**facets** <sup>[1]</sup> - 110:20  
**facility** <sup>[4]</sup> - 88:9, 88:19, 89:12, 91:15  
**facing** <sup>[2]</sup> - 89:7, 89:8  
**fact** <sup>[4]</sup> - 23:18, 145:3, 152:3, 158:4  
**factor** <sup>[2]</sup> - 32:3, 131:14  
**factors** <sup>[7]</sup> - 108:16, 108:18, 108:22, 109:3, 109:8, 109:19, 165:8  
**facts** <sup>[1]</sup> - 150:11

**fail**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:19  
**fails**<sup>[1]</sup> - 160:4  
**faith**<sup>[1]</sup> - 144:13  
**fall**<sup>[1]</sup> - 30:20  
**falls**<sup>[1]</sup> - 98:8  
**false**<sup>[1]</sup> - 81:14  
**falsehoods**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:10  
**families**<sup>[7]</sup> - 10:21, 13:12, 16:12, 16:22, 17:6, 38:25, 65:12  
**family**<sup>[12]</sup> - 23:24, 32:14, 34:14, 34:15, 47:19, 47:21, 49:4, 66:2, 89:2, 89:17, 91:16, 144:20  
**fantastic**<sup>[2]</sup> - 43:10, 51:2  
**far**<sup>[4]</sup> - 47:22, 95:20, 127:19, 148:20  
**farewell**<sup>[1]</sup> - 50:23  
**fat**<sup>[2]</sup> - 81:17, 153:25  
**fatalities**<sup>[3]</sup> - 78:21, 79:5, 142:25  
**father**<sup>[2]</sup> - 35:23, 97:15  
**favor**<sup>[33]</sup><sup>[1]</sup> - 102:11, 102:14, 105:6, 105:10, 106:12, 106:16, 113:11, 113:15, 114:12, 114:15, 115:13, 115:17, 118:4, 118:8, 119:3, 119:6, 120:16, 120:20, 122:10,

122:14, 123:22, 124:2, 124:19, 124:23, 125:10, 125:14, 138:12, 144:9, 159:3, 162:6, 166:3, 167:12, 167:16  
**favorite**<sup>[1]</sup> - 157:5  
**federal**<sup>[5]</sup> - 69:22, 85:3, 98:9, 136:19, 139:25  
**feed**<sup>[2]</sup> - 65:12, 88:18  
**feelings**<sup>[2]</sup> - 44:10, 50:18  
**fell**<sup>[1]</sup> - 153:11  
**felt**<sup>[1]</sup> - 15:8  
**FEMA**<sup>[1]</sup> - 98:15  
**fence**<sup>[7]</sup> - 18:16, 19:3, 19:13, 23:3, 23:7, 23:8, 23:19  
**fences**<sup>[1]</sup> - 25:2  
**fentanyl**<sup>[1]</sup> - 143:9  
**Ferretti**<sup>[4]</sup> - 7:23, 27:5, 33:24, 106:10  
**FERRETTI**<sup>[7]</sup> - 7:24, 27:6, 33:2, 33:19, 37:2, 159:24, 162:18  
**FERRETTI, JR**<sup>[1]</sup> - 4:2  
**Festival**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:2  
**festivities**<sup>[1]</sup> - 151:20  
**few**<sup>[7]</sup> - 28:20, 30:15, 30:22, 33:25, 34:25, 39:13, 82:5  
**fide**<sup>[1]</sup> - 91:15

**field**<sup>[2]</sup> - 28:24, 53:7  
**fight**<sup>[3]</sup> - 66:17, 156:11, 165:5  
**fighting**<sup>[5]</sup> - 65:8, 65:9, 65:18, 151:12, 156:13  
**figure**<sup>[6]</sup> - 58:2, 133:17, 136:11, 139:13, 139:18, 140:9  
**figured**<sup>[1]</sup> - 40:9  
**figures**<sup>[1]</sup> - 99:14  
**filed**<sup>[1]</sup> - 102:5  
**fill**<sup>[1]</sup> - 9:6  
**final**<sup>[2]</sup> - 55:24, 164:22  
**financial**<sup>[1]</sup> - 141:6  
**financing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 155:5  
**fine**<sup>[1]</sup> - 57:2  
**finest**<sup>[3]</sup> - 14:22, 24:15, 51:8  
**fingerprint**<sup>[1]</sup> - 107:10  
**fingerprinting**<sup>[4]</sup> - 107:6, 107:7, 107:21, 108:3  
**finish**<sup>[2]</sup> - 96:23, 149:9  
**finishing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 30:19  
**fire**<sup>[3]</sup> - 20:22, 45:5, 51:14  
**first**<sup>[13]</sup> - 23:21, 27:4, 44:19, 51:25, 53:16, 54:9, 56:4, 62:24, 68:18, 81:10, 96:10, 101:5, 107:4

**First**<sup>[2]</sup> - 22:19, 120:4  
**fiscal**<sup>[2]</sup> - 120:11, 121:7  
**fits**<sup>[1]</sup> - 136:18  
**five**<sup>[2]</sup> - 13:22, 117:5  
**fix**<sup>[2]</sup> - 84:6, 96:9  
**fixing**<sup>[2]</sup> - 120:9, 121:5  
**flood**<sup>[1]</sup> - 95:23  
**flooded**<sup>[2]</sup> - 96:3, 99:9  
**floor**<sup>[1]</sup> - 46:3  
**Florio**<sup>[2]</sup> - 43:5, 53:10  
**floundering**<sup>[1]</sup> - 134:11  
**flourish**<sup>[1]</sup> - 38:23  
**focal**<sup>[1]</sup> - 150:19  
**folks**<sup>[6]</sup> - 15:4, 17:16, 88:5, 95:3, 149:8, 152:23  
**follow**<sup>[7]</sup> - 33:10, 76:15, 76:17, 76:22, 108:4, 108:10, 130:18  
**folly**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:17  
**food**<sup>[2]</sup> - 134:24, 134:25  
**foot**<sup>[5]</sup> - 10:6, 15:23, 19:12, 23:8, 94:25  
**footing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 109:11  
**footsteps**<sup>[1]</sup> - 33:10  
**force**<sup>[2]</sup> - 14:22, 39:3  
**Ford**<sup>[9]</sup> - 6:17, 22:17, 38:18,



39:21, 95:7,  
113:9, 126:16,  
138:16, 140:7  
**FORD** <sup>[26]</sup> - 2:10,  
6:18, 15:5, 16:5,  
22:18, 23:11,  
50:20, 74:6, 76:7,  
79:8, 97:15, 98:8,  
98:15, 99:23,  
100:4, 112:17,  
138:17, 140:12,  
141:13, 143:16,  
146:10, 147:3,  
159:17, 162:11,  
167:7, 168:2  
**fore** <sup>[1]</sup> - 48:24  
**forego** <sup>[1]</sup> - 158:10  
**foremost** <sup>[1]</sup> - 44:19  
**Forever** <sup>[1]</sup> - 66:19  
**forever** <sup>[1]</sup> - 63:19  
**forget** <sup>[3]</sup> - 47:12,  
51:16, 53:9  
**forgot** <sup>[1]</sup> - 145:24  
**form** <sup>[1]</sup> - 128:19  
**forms** <sup>[3]</sup> - 55:2,  
55:4, 136:14  
**formula** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
108:10, 108:17,  
135:21, 135:24,  
136:6  
**forth** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:13  
**forthcoming** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
140:7  
**fortunate** <sup>[3]</sup> - 38:3,  
42:5, 42:6  
**Forty** <sup>[1]</sup> - 117:5  
**forward** <sup>[11]</sup> - 12:7,  
18:2, 39:8, 41:9,  
49:13, 60:20,  
136:25, 138:11,

143:13, 158:6  
**four** <sup>[6]</sup> - 39:7,  
49:22, 62:3,  
93:12, 109:21,  
144:21  
**Frank** <sup>[1]</sup> - 53:11  
**Franklin** <sup>[3]</sup> - 1:15,  
68:6, 68:7  
**frankly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:14  
**freedom** <sup>[1]</sup> - 93:21  
**Freeport** <sup>[10]</sup> -  
48:19, 64:7, 64:8,  
64:10, 64:19,  
65:4, 65:18, 86:5,  
86:23, 98:3  
**friend** <sup>[2]</sup> - 9:21,  
49:14  
**friendly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 15:14  
**friends** <sup>[8]</sup> - 42:9,  
45:17, 45:19,  
53:23, 54:3,  
59:20, 61:18,  
88:11  
**friendship** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
11:9, 56:6  
**friendships** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
63:18  
**front** <sup>[4]</sup> - 9:8,  
12:25, 79:17,  
150:11  
**full** <sup>[6]</sup> - 13:24, 20:9,  
70:19, 139:6,  
146:22, 164:22  
**Full** <sup>[17]</sup> - 101:3,  
101:6, 102:3,  
105:9, 106:15,  
113:14, 114:14,  
115:16, 118:7,  
119:5, 120:19,  
122:13, 123:25,

124:22, 125:13,  
166:2, 167:15  
**FULL** <sup>[1]</sup> - 1:4  
**fully** <sup>[2]</sup> - 76:20,  
140:21  
**fun** <sup>[1]</sup> - 59:13  
**fund** <sup>[4]</sup> - 20:16,  
72:17, 153:22,  
161:13  
**fundamental** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
135:12  
**funded** <sup>[2]</sup> - 134:9,  
139:25  
**funding** <sup>[17]</sup> - 55:5,  
65:10, 69:14,  
72:6, 72:7, 137:7,  
138:3, 138:22,  
145:10, 146:24,  
152:22, 153:17,  
153:18, 153:19,  
156:15, 156:16,  
158:11  
**funds** <sup>[10]</sup> - 10:12,  
12:11, 71:6,  
71:15, 72:24,  
73:2, 78:7, 78:11,  
83:10, 140:18  
**future** <sup>[3]</sup> - 63:14,  
136:25, 144:3  
**future's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 143:8

## G

**G-R-I-N-O-L-S** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
80:21  
**Gabby** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:24  
**gamblers** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
80:24, 80:25  
**gambling** <sup>[10]</sup> -  
78:16, 79:23,  
80:7, 80:9, 80:13,

80:18, 91:7,  
93:24, 94:2  
**Gambling** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
80:11  
**games** <sup>[1]</sup> - 49:6  
**Gary** <sup>[4]</sup> - 5:25,  
94:11, 97:7, 100:8  
**gates** <sup>[3]</sup> - 95:22,  
95:23, 99:5  
**gavel** <sup>[1]</sup> - 45:24  
**GAYLOR** <sup>[4]</sup> - 3:5,  
7:6, 159:19,  
162:13  
**Gaylor** <sup>[3]</sup> - 7:5,  
114:7, 120:14  
**general** <sup>[1]</sup> - 161:12  
**generate** <sup>[5]</sup> - 127:4,  
128:10, 130:25,  
132:19, 133:19  
**generation** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
62:18, 95:5, 127:6  
**generator** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
127:23  
**generators** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
136:4, 136:16  
**gentleman** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
61:12, 153:8,  
153:10  
**gentlemen** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
25:16, 67:25  
**genuine** <sup>[1]</sup> - 91:15  
**Giangregorio** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
8:11, 118:21  
**GIANGREGORIO**  
<sup>[4]</sup> - 4:14, 8:12,  
160:2, 162:20  
**gifted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:21  
**gifts** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:13,  
12:12  
**girl** <sup>[1]</sup> - 22:9

**Giuffre** <sup>[3]</sup> - 7:8,  
115:10, 164:17  
**GIUFFRE** <sup>[5]</sup> - 3:8,  
7:9, 70:4, 159:20,  
162:14  
**given** <sup>[5]</sup> - 26:4,  
39:16, 47:12,  
60:5, 144:14  
**glad** <sup>[2]</sup> - 145:13,  
164:22  
**globalized** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:6  
**goal** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:17  
**goals** <sup>[2]</sup> - 110:25,  
142:19  
**God** <sup>[5]</sup> - 17:12,  
30:21, 50:11,  
80:2, 100:6  
**gold** <sup>[1]</sup> - 136:15  
**golf** <sup>[5]</sup> - 71:24,  
73:8, 74:13,  
75:18, 83:16  
**gotta** <sup>[1]</sup> - 47:7  
**government** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
57:20, 73:15,  
85:2, 98:9, 136:19  
**Government** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
42:12  
**Governor** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
137:12, 145:3  
**GPS** <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:17  
**graded** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:20  
**graduate** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
27:14, 29:11,  
29:16  
**graduated** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
27:15, 27:16,  
93:25  
**graduating** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
28:8, 28:11  
**grandkids** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:6

**grandkids'** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
62:15  
**Grant** <sup>[3]</sup> - 123:9,  
124:11, 164:13  
**grant** <sup>[4]</sup> - 68:23,  
69:17, 70:11,  
164:24  
**granted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 15:12  
**grants** <sup>[3]</sup> - 68:16,  
134:5, 157:6  
**grateful** <sup>[3]</sup> - 21:18,  
23:25, 60:4  
**great** <sup>[21]</sup> - 12:9,  
30:7, 30:16, 36:7,  
36:18, 39:23,  
40:20, 51:12,  
51:22, 52:15,  
57:15, 57:16,  
60:23, 67:8, 76:6,  
86:24, 95:18,  
96:21, 137:18,  
138:9, 149:24  
**Green** <sup>[7]</sup> - 18:5,  
18:8, 18:19,  
18:22, 19:4,  
19:16, 20:12  
**grew** <sup>[1]</sup> - 128:8  
**Grinols** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:16  
**Gripper** <sup>[1]</sup> - 47:9  
**ground** <sup>[1]</sup> - 90:20  
**group** <sup>[4]</sup> - 28:23,  
29:21, 53:17, 82:5  
**growth** <sup>[2]</sup> - 60:14,  
60:16  
**guess** <sup>[4]</sup> - 86:20,  
128:18, 138:18,  
141:18  
**guidance** <sup>[1]</sup> - 56:3  
**guideline** <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:2  
**guidelines** <sup>[4]</sup> -

128:24, 130:17,  
136:19, 142:20  
**guy** <sup>[2]</sup> - 50:6, 75:19  
**guys** <sup>[18]</sup> - 12:25,  
20:10, 24:21,  
31:3, 48:20, 59:7,  
59:25, 86:11,  
86:19, 86:22,  
86:23, 86:25,  
87:5, 95:21,  
98:13, 127:17,  
146:25, 161:13

## H

**half** <sup>[2]</sup> - 68:11, 80:6  
**hand** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:14  
**handle** <sup>[1]</sup> - 54:16  
**handled** <sup>[2]</sup> - 54:22,  
111:6  
**handling** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:7  
**hands** <sup>[2]</sup> - 56:9,  
56:16  
**happiness** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
34:21  
**happy** <sup>[12]</sup> - 32:5,  
39:10, 40:5,  
49:12, 58:21,  
59:18, 59:19,  
76:11, 92:9,  
100:5, 112:24,  
168:3  
**hard** <sup>[10]</sup> - 13:19,  
30:3, 36:10,  
46:21, 47:19,  
89:14, 131:4,  
133:14, 136:8,  
137:21  
**harder** <sup>[1]</sup> - 19:22  
**HARKINS** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
106:23, 110:23,

112:11  
**Harkins** <sup>[4]</sup> - 5:5,  
106:24, 110:8,  
112:21  
**harmful** <sup>[1]</sup> - 76:20  
**hate** <sup>[2]</sup> - 139:14,  
142:21  
**head** <sup>[3]</sup> - 82:10,  
145:22, 150:6  
**heading** <sup>[1]</sup> - 63:15  
**heads** <sup>[4]</sup> - 42:19,  
51:24, 52:5  
**health** <sup>[11]</sup> - 72:11,  
73:5, 74:22, 91:8,  
91:21, 91:24,  
93:18, 134:12,  
138:5, 143:19,  
165:7  
**healthful** <sup>[1]</sup> - 84:7  
**healthy** <sup>[4]</sup> - 39:11,  
40:5, 76:12,  
112:13  
**hear** <sup>[6]</sup> - 15:25,  
22:21, 61:25,  
69:7, 92:20,  
145:13  
**heard** <sup>[10]</sup> - 23:2,  
40:23, 61:8, 69:2,  
69:6, 109:18,  
129:22, 135:2,  
154:23, 158:14  
**Hearing** <sup>[9]</sup> - 82:9,  
82:14, 105:6,  
113:7, 117:24,  
122:10, 124:19,  
161:23, 162:6  
**hearing** <sup>[15]</sup> - 55:25,  
106:3, 106:9,  
106:12, 106:22,  
113:8, 113:11,

113:21, 115:4,  
115:12, 115:13,  
115:23, 117:25,  
118:4, 138:13

**hearings** <sup>[1]</sup> - 81:7

**heart** <sup>[5]</sup> - 47:2,  
82:8, 87:2, 94:8,  
97:20

**hearts** <sup>[1]</sup> - 13:24

**held** <sup>[1]</sup> - 151:20

**help** <sup>[31]</sup> - 13:6,  
18:21, 20:5,  
20:16, 20:17,  
22:10, 22:13,  
23:10, 24:4,  
50:25, 52:21,  
55:15, 58:3,  
58:21, 58:23,  
59:3, 59:7, 62:10,  
66:17, 81:14,  
133:19, 134:10,  
136:16, 137:13,  
140:3, 141:25,  
142:5, 145:11,  
150:17, 152:13,  
165:2

**helped** <sup>[7]</sup> - 28:22,  
32:23, 40:16,  
56:3, 68:21,  
74:24, 143:7

**helpful** <sup>[1]</sup> - 59:15

**helping** <sup>[2]</sup> - 65:12,  
128:2

**helps** <sup>[2]</sup> - 133:22,  
134:7

**Hempstead** <sup>[8]</sup> -  
18:10, 18:12,  
18:19, 48:18,  
77:12, 77:20,  
77:24, 99:16

**hereby** <sup>[2]</sup> - 96:24,  
169:10

**heretofore** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
126:5

**hereunto** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
169:13

**heroic** <sup>[2]</sup> - 134:14,  
138:6

**Hi** <sup>[1]</sup> - 154:6

**Hicksville** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
61:17, 63:4

**high** <sup>[5]</sup> - 35:5, 77:4,  
77:6, 93:25, 99:14

**High** <sup>[4]</sup> - 27:15,  
27:18, 34:24,  
35:25

**high"** <sup>[1]</sup> - 81:2

**higher** <sup>[2]</sup> - 29:19,  
77:21

**highest** <sup>[2]</sup> - 77:19,  
83:19

**Highway** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:9

**himself** <sup>[3]</sup> - 143:21,  
153:12, 164:5

**Historical** <sup>[2]</sup> - 68:8,  
123:12

**history** <sup>[5]</sup> - 28:19,  
31:7, 31:18,  
154:8, 158:13

**hit** <sup>[2]</sup> - 87:20, 94:25

**hoard** <sup>[1]</sup> - 143:25

**Hochul** <sup>[1]</sup> - 145:3

**Hogg's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:12

**hold** <sup>[2]</sup> - 19:12,  
143:9

**holding** <sup>[2]</sup> - 11:22,  
23:19

**holdup** <sup>[1]</sup> - 70:13

**holiday** <sup>[6]</sup> - 40:5,  
65:14, 92:9,

100:5, 112:24,  
168:3

**holidays** <sup>[4]</sup> - 10:19,  
16:22, 39:11,  
56:21

**Home** <sup>[3]</sup> - 106:8,  
114:4, 145:8

**home** <sup>[7]</sup> - 10:18,  
58:18, 80:14,  
107:3, 107:17,  
108:2, 111:17

**homegrown** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
143:6

**homeless** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
74:22, 153:21

**homelessness** <sup>[4]</sup> -  
78:15, 134:17,  
134:18, 165:6

**homeowners** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
137:13, 141:16

**homes** <sup>[2]</sup> - 43:12,  
55:3

**honest** <sup>[2]</sup> - 89:23,  
145:25

**honestly** <sup>[2]</sup> - 24:5,  
161:14

**Honor** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:4,  
28:5

**honor** <sup>[4]</sup> - 27:11,  
30:5, 34:6, 50:7

**honored** <sup>[3]</sup> - 10:24,  
48:25, 74:23

**honorees** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
25:25

**hop** <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:23

**hope** <sup>[13]</sup> - 13:25,  
22:10, 22:11,  
53:4, 61:20,  
79:18, 82:4, 84:9,  
107:24, 133:23,

141:13, 146:11,  
146:12

**hopeful** <sup>[1]</sup> - 64:19

**hopefully** <sup>[4]</sup> -

13:14, 40:2,  
75:17, 112:13

**hoping** <sup>[4]</sup> - 127:4,  
141:22, 142:23,  
146:10

**hospital** <sup>[3]</sup> - 10:15,  
10:18, 83:22

**host** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:2

**hostage** <sup>[2]</sup> - 19:21,  
20:20

**hotel** <sup>[1]</sup> - 148:18

**hotel/motel** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
132:7, 133:6

**Hotel/Motel** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
154:16, 155:4,  
155:13, 156:21,  
157:3, 161:11

**hotels** <sup>[2]</sup> - 132:13,  
148:25

**hours** <sup>[8]</sup> - 18:7,  
115:7, 116:7,  
116:14, 116:21,  
116:24, 118:18

**house** <sup>[1]</sup> - 94:25

**housing** <sup>[2]</sup> - 73:5,  
89:16

**Howard** <sup>[1]</sup> - 6:14

**HOWARD** <sup>[1]</sup> - 2:6

**huge** <sup>[1]</sup> - 32:2

**Hughes** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:4

**humanities** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
29:17

**humor** <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:5

**hundreds** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
145:4

**hunger** <sup>[1]</sup> - 165:6

<b>Huntington</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 131:12 <b>hurt</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 82:24, 136:17 <b>hurting</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 148:24, 148:25	23:10, 80:22 <b>improve</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:15 <b>Improvement</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 106:8, 114:4 <b>improvement</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 107:3, 107:17, 108:3, 111:18 <b>improvements</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 135:2, 137:24 <b>improving</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:15 <b>IN</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:13 <b>inabilities</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:25 <b>Inc</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 17:18 <b>incidentally</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:19 <b>included</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 158:19 <b>including</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 38:14, 117:6 <b>income</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:15 <b>incorporated</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 64:12 <b>increase</b> <sup>[4]</sup> - 78:21, 107:16, 111:16, 133:20 <b>incredible</b> <sup>[6]</sup> - 30:9, 34:17, 57:21, 59:3, 61:14, 65:25 <b>incursions</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 73:15 <b>Indeed</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 15:10 <b>indeed</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 8:23 <b>independent</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:19 <b>indicating</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 157:7 <b>individual</b> <sup>[8]</sup> - 18:13, 23:4,	23:16, 59:14, 97:16, 139:11, 140:8, 152:14 <b>individuals</b> <sup>[5]</sup> - 24:15, 39:4, 80:6, 153:16, 153:20 <b>industries</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:15 <b>industry</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 80:18, 144:21 <b>infants</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:17 <b>information</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 116:19 <b>Infrastructure</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 135:2 <b>infrastructure</b> <sup>[8]</sup> - 83:21, 95:4, 137:16, 137:19, 137:25, 138:25, 152:10, 153:19 <b>infusion</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:2 <b>initial</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 54:10 <b>initiated</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:22 <b>initiative</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:23 <b>initiatives</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 65:11, 142:2, 143:3 <b>Inlet</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:11 <b>Inn</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 165:5 <b>INN</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 164:25 <b>inquiries</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 70:7 <b>insecurity</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 134:24, 134:25 <b>inside</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 96:7, 146:3 <b>insist</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 78:24 <b>instance</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 138:24 <b>instead</b> <sup>[7]</sup> - 72:16,	83:4, 93:17, 150:15, 150:25, 152:22, 153:17 <b>institution</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 38:22, 49:13 <b>institutions</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:19 <b>Insurance</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:20 <b>insurance</b> <sup>[6]</sup> - 107:16, 110:2, 111:13, 111:19, 111:24, 112:2 <b>intend</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 9:5 <b>interact</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 53:25 <b>interaction</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 22:11 <b>interest</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 31:23, 150:22 <b>interested</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 31:10 <b>interesting</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:13 <b>Interfaith</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 164:16, 164:25 <b>international</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:21 <b>interrogate</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 40:11 <b>interrogated</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 40:24, 129:5, 129:7 <b>interrupted</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:4 <b>intersection</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 96:11, 96:12 <b>introduce</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 17:18, 34:23 <b>invest</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 75:15, 75:20
<b>I</b>			
<b>idea</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 54:11, 78:10, 137:18 <b>ideation</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:8 <b>identified</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 71:23, 77:3, 77:23 <b>identifying</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:23 <b>idiotic</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 92:23 <b>II</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 149:7 <b>III</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 3:5, 7:5 <b>ill</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:3 <b>ill-considered</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:3 <b>illusion</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:20 <b>imagine</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 15:7, 22:7, 22:23 <b>immediate</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:2 <b>impact</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:23 <b>impacted</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:24 <b>impeccable</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 35:22 <b>imperative</b> <sup>[1]</sup> - 20:9 <b>implications</b> <sup>[2]</sup> - 76:21, 157:21 <b>important</b> <sup>[5]</sup> - 22:21, 44:12, 95:3, 97:8, 137:17 <b>importantly</b> <sup>[3]</sup> - 12:21, 64:14, 65:17 <b>impossible</b> <sup>[2]</sup> -			

**invested** <sup>[1]</sup> - 39:4**investing** <sup>[2]</sup> -

78:23, 148:11

**investment** <sup>[2]</sup> -

72:20, 135:22

**invite** <sup>[1]</sup> - 25:25**involved** <sup>[4]</sup> - 98:7,

157:19, 158:15,

161:9

**involving** <sup>[1]</sup> - 155:3**Island** <sup>[24]</sup> - 73:13,

96:5, 134:25,

147:15, 147:25,

148:6, 148:13,

148:22, 149:3,

149:18, 149:21,

150:10, 151:7,

154:11, 154:15,

155:2, 155:25,

156:16, 156:19,

157:13, 157:22,

158:3, 158:20,

160:13

**Islander** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:10**issue** <sup>[4]</sup> - 43:9,

62:11, 85:9, 89:6

**issues** <sup>[12]</sup> - 62:13,

65:7, 77:16,

78:12, 81:23,

88:5, 88:6, 123:6,

155:4, 155:21,

165:7

**item** <sup>[15]</sup> - 70:17,

70:22, 114:21,

120:7, 121:3,

121:13, 125:6,

125:8, 125:20,

126:9, 126:24,

159:3, 162:6,

164:3, 164:10

**Item** <sup>[65]</sup> - 103:10,

103:11, 103:12,

103:13, 103:14,

103:15, 103:16,

103:17, 103:18,

103:19, 103:20,

103:21, 103:22,

103:23, 103:24,

103:25, 104:2,

104:3, 104:4,

104:5, 104:6,

104:7, 104:8,

104:9, 104:10,

104:11, 104:12,

104:13, 104:14,

104:15, 104:16,

104:17, 104:18,

104:19, 104:20,

104:21, 104:22,

115:3, 116:4,

118:14, 120:5,

120:8, 121:4,

123:3, 123:4,

126:2

**item's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 125:5**items** <sup>[8]</sup> - 101:3,

101:8, 102:5,

103:4, 103:5,

103:9, 105:7,

120:3

**itself** <sup>[4]</sup> - 49:17,

88:9, 121:3, 132:2

**J****Jackie** <sup>[14]</sup> - 27:7,

27:13, 27:19,

28:3, 28:9, 28:13,

28:22, 29:2, 29:7,

29:23, 34:7, 35:6,

36:4, 36:11

**Jackie's** <sup>[2]</sup> - 29:12,  
35:5**Jacob's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 87:19**JACOBS** <sup>[2]</sup> - 74:7,

76:10

**Jacobs** <sup>[6]</sup> - 5:18,  
5:20, 45:17, 74:6,  
74:8, 76:9**Jacqueline** <sup>[1]</sup> -

27:12

**JAMES** <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:17**James** <sup>[1]</sup> - 7:16**January** <sup>[2]</sup> -

120:11, 121:7

**Jason** <sup>[2]</sup> - 18:5,

20:12

**jeopardize** <sup>[1]</sup> -

158:8

**jeopardy** <sup>[1]</sup> -

109:15

**Jerry** <sup>[1]</sup> - 5:13**jewel** <sup>[1]</sup> - 41:8**job** <sup>[17]</sup> - 21:11,

21:19, 24:7,

31:25, 36:18,

38:12, 43:10,

54:9, 54:19, 55:8,

55:18, 56:15,

67:3, 85:6, 90:6,

95:18, 96:6

**jobs** <sup>[2]</sup> - 51:10,

88:13

**Joe** <sup>[2]</sup> - 17:18, 46:7**John** <sup>[5]</sup> - 7:8, 7:22,

27:5, 32:16, 34:24

**JOHN** <sup>[2]</sup> - 3:8, 4:2**join** <sup>[4]</sup> - 20:10,

25:18, 29:21,

154:2

**joining** <sup>[1]</sup> - 41:2**joke** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:16**joking** <sup>[1]</sup> - 47:11**Jones** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:11**Jordan** <sup>[3]</sup> - 5:15,

64:4, 64:6

**Jordan-Awalom** <sup>[1]</sup>

- 5:15

**Josh** <sup>[2]</sup> - 92:6,

96:16

**Joshua** <sup>[1]</sup> - 8:7**JOSHUA** <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:11**journey** <sup>[2]</sup> - 34:20,

51:2

**joy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:13**Judge** <sup>[1]</sup> - 97:15**judgment** <sup>[1]</sup> -

109:9

**Judith** <sup>[1]</sup> - 87:19**judo** <sup>[1]</sup> - 20:24**Judy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 45:17**jumping** <sup>[1]</sup> - 23:18**June** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:9**justice** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:10**K****KAREN** <sup>[2]</sup> - 1:23,

169:8

**Karen** <sup>[2]</sup> - 169:16,

169:17

**KAYE** <sup>[1]</sup> - 92:18**Kaye** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:24,

92:17

**keep** <sup>[17]</sup> - 15:2,

30:23, 31:2,

32:10, 45:4,

48:14, 51:16,

62:18, 68:21,

86:10, 89:23,

90:4, 92:6, 98:11,

134:8, 143:25

**Keep**<sup>[1]</sup> - 89:23**KENNEDY**<sup>[4]</sup> -3:17, 7:18,  
159:21, 162:15**Kennedy**<sup>[3]</sup> - 7:17,  
98:3, 126:7**Kenneth**<sup>[2]</sup> - 10:3,  
10:25**Kenny**<sup>[1]</sup> - 13:3**kept**<sup>[1]</sup> - 64:18**Kettering**<sup>[1]</sup> - 93:19**KEVAN**<sup>[1]</sup> - 2:14**Kevan**<sup>[12]</sup> - 6:4,  
8:14, 39:19,  
39:24, 50:17,  
50:20, 53:21,  
56:6, 60:24,  
62:14, 64:17, 88:4**Kevin**<sup>[8]</sup> - 9:12,  
10:3, 10:24, 11:5,  
43:5, 51:7, 53:11,  
66:20**key**<sup>[1]</sup> - 140:24**keys**<sup>[1]</sup> - 32:17**kick**<sup>[1]</sup> - 33:13**kicking**<sup>[1]</sup> - 129:18**kids**<sup>[8]</sup> - 10:20,  
12:2, 12:8, 12:15,  
13:6, 13:21, 49:4,  
95:5**Kiely**<sup>[2]</sup> - 5:22, 79:8**KIELY**<sup>[1]</sup> - 79:9**killed**<sup>[2]</sup> - 94:17,  
143:21**kind**<sup>[12]</sup> - 21:2,  
31:7, 32:10,  
32:12, 32:17,  
45:20, 48:16,  
49:25, 54:13,  
69:14, 87:18,

97:10

**knocked**<sup>[1]</sup> - 12:13**knowing**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
157:21**known**<sup>[1]</sup> - 9:24**knows**<sup>[3]</sup> - 12:13,  
84:24, 147:24**KOPEL**<sup>[5]</sup> - 2:6,  
6:15, 24:19,  
159:15, 162:9**Kopel**<sup>[4]</sup> - 6:14,  
24:18, 115:12,  
121:10**KORNBLUTH**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
39:12**Kornbluth**<sup>[1]</sup> - 5:13**KRUG**<sup>[1]</sup> - 81:22**Krug**<sup>[2]</sup> - 5:21,  
81:21**L****lack**<sup>[1]</sup> - 75:14**ladies**<sup>[5]</sup> - 47:7,  
47:22, 66:8,  
67:25, 86:16**lady**<sup>[1]</sup> - 74:24**Lafazan**<sup>[6]</sup> - 8:8,  
92:6, 96:16,  
106:11, 126:17,  
137:18**LAFAZAN**<sup>[4]</sup> - 4:11,  
8:9, 159:10, 163:4**Lafazan's**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
152:11**lamented**<sup>[1]</sup> - 145:3**land**<sup>[2]</sup> - 92:7,  
131:22**Land**<sup>[1]</sup> - 30:12**Lane**<sup>[1]</sup> - 30:10**language**<sup>[4]</sup> -107:5, 107:10,  
107:11, 107:14**lapse**<sup>[2]</sup> - 158:5,  
160:19**lapsed**<sup>[1]</sup> - 108:20**large**<sup>[1]</sup> - 72:20**largest**<sup>[1]</sup> - 83:15**Last**<sup>[2]</sup> - 42:2,  
164:2**last**<sup>[23]</sup> - 12:6,  
43:17, 44:7, 48:7,  
49:2, 56:22, 61:2,  
63:19, 76:13,  
80:10, 81:7,  
81:12, 90:9,  
94:20, 99:7,  
99:10, 99:16,  
114:2, 127:2,  
130:5, 132:16,  
132:25, 148:6**lastly**<sup>[1]</sup> - 92:5**late**<sup>[3]</sup> - 93:7,  
96:23, 97:12**laughing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 45:13**laughter**<sup>[1]</sup> - 16:4**laughter**<sup>[7]</sup> - 16:6,  
27:17, 34:4,  
36:18, 40:25,  
90:14, 129:7**Laura**<sup>[5]</sup> - 7:19,  
39:20, 46:13,  
63:3, 63:9**LAURA**<sup>[1]</sup> - 3:23**law**<sup>[8]</sup> - 28:16, 32:2,  
60:7, 76:17,  
106:4, 109:2,  
113:24, 117:2**Law**<sup>[3]</sup> - 106:7,  
108:5, 114:3**Laws**<sup>[1]</sup> - 160:10**laws**<sup>[1]</sup> - 76:15**lawsuit**<sup>[1]</sup> - 161:17**lawsuits**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
161:16**lead**<sup>[2]</sup> - 6:5, 27:22**Leader**<sup>[9]</sup> - 2:15,  
6:4, 8:13, 39:19,  
49:15, 66:20,  
121:10, 126:15,  
158:25**leader**<sup>[2]</sup> - 61:14,  
64:17**leaders**<sup>[2]</sup> - 38:4,  
82:14**leadership**<sup>[3]</sup> -

61:8, 63:10, 64:20

**leading**<sup>[1]</sup> - 95:18**leap**<sup>[1]</sup> - 144:13**learn**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:23**learned**<sup>[2]</sup> - 30:25,  
64:11**learning**<sup>[4]</sup> - 29:19,  
51:3, 60:11**lease**<sup>[1]</sup> - 76:18**leased**<sup>[1]</sup> - 76:24**least**<sup>[8]</sup> - 35:12,  
43:17, 43:18,  
44:7, 48:8, 79:4,  
112:4, 135:23**leave**<sup>[2]</sup> - 56:13,  
126:21**leaves**<sup>[1]</sup> - 164:9**leaving**<sup>[5]</sup> - 54:7,  
56:8, 68:2,  
126:14, 164:5**ledge**<sup>[3]</sup> - 18:14,  
19:11, 164:22**left**<sup>[3]</sup> - 8:22, 53:24,  
87:18**legacy**<sup>[2]</sup> - 38:25,

84:12  
**legally** <sup>[2]</sup> - 72:25,  
 121:22  
**legislation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 144:9  
**legislative** <sup>[7]</sup> -  
 14:17, 39:9, 82:4,  
 94:5, 94:7,  
 140:14, 156:6  
**Legislative** <sup>[27]</sup> -  
 1:14, 2:4, 2:8,  
 2:12, 2:16, 2:19,  
 2:22, 3:3, 3:6, 3:9,  
 3:12, 3:15, 3:18,  
 3:21, 3:24, 4:3,  
 4:6, 4:9, 4:12,  
 4:15, 9:4, 11:2,  
 47:6, 55:25,  
 76:22, 101:4,  
 127:13  
**legislator** <sup>[8]</sup> -  
 22:17, 42:5,  
 56:14, 59:21,  
 63:8, 65:5, 94:15,  
 140:9  
**LEGISLATOR** <sup>[137]</sup> -  
 2:2, 2:6, 2:10,  
 2:14, 2:18, 2:21,  
 3:2, 3:5, 3:8, 3:11,  
 3:14, 3:17, 3:20,  
 3:23, 4:2, 4:5, 4:8,  
 4:11, 4:14, 6:15,  
 6:18, 6:21, 6:24,  
 7:3, 7:6, 7:9, 7:12,  
 7:15, 7:18, 7:21,  
 7:24, 8:3, 8:6, 8:9,  
 8:12, 8:15, 15:5,  
 16:5, 16:15,  
 22:18, 23:11,  
 27:6, 33:2, 33:19,

36:4, 37:2, 44:6,  
 48:7, 50:20,  
 56:25, 61:24,  
 66:24, 70:4, 74:6,  
 76:7, 79:8, 85:21,  
 87:7, 97:15, 98:8,  
 98:15, 99:23,  
 100:4, 110:6,  
 112:17, 121:18,  
 122:2, 130:22,  
 131:7, 132:14,  
 133:8, 133:21,  
 135:19, 137:4,  
 138:17, 140:12,  
 141:13, 143:16,  
 146:10, 147:3,  
 147:10, 147:14,  
 147:22, 148:8,  
 149:20, 150:13,  
 151:17, 154:6,  
 154:14, 154:22,  
 155:7, 155:22,  
 156:3, 156:8,  
 156:12, 157:9,  
 157:15, 158:23,  
 159:5, 159:6,  
 159:7, 159:8,  
 159:9, 159:10,  
 159:11, 159:17,  
 159:18, 159:19,  
 159:20, 159:21,  
 159:22, 159:23,  
 159:24, 159:25,  
 160:2, 160:14,  
 160:18, 162:11,  
 162:12, 162:13,  
 162:14, 162:15,  
 162:16, 162:17,  
 162:18, 162:19,  
 162:20, 162:23,

162:24, 162:25,  
 163:2, 163:3,  
 163:4, 163:5,  
 167:7, 167:10,  
 168:2  
**Legislator** <sup>[80]</sup> -  
 6:19, 6:22, 6:25,  
 7:4, 7:8, 7:10,  
 7:13, 7:16, 7:19,  
 7:22, 7:25, 8:4,  
 8:7, 8:10, 8:21,  
 27:5, 33:24,  
 38:17, 38:18,  
 47:10, 56:24,  
 59:19, 64:17,  
 64:23, 65:3,  
 65:20, 66:12,  
 66:20, 84:21,  
 102:7, 102:8,  
 104:24, 104:25,  
 106:10, 106:11,  
 107:22, 108:25,  
 110:5, 110:23,  
 113:9, 113:10,  
 114:6, 114:7,  
 115:10, 118:2,  
 118:3, 118:21,  
 118:22, 120:13,  
 120:14, 121:17,  
 123:15, 123:16,  
 124:12, 124:13,  
 126:7, 126:8,  
 126:15, 126:16,  
 130:21, 135:18,  
 138:16, 138:25,  
 140:7, 147:7,  
 147:9, 149:13,  
 152:9, 152:11,  
 154:5, 156:10,  
 164:4, 164:8,

164:17, 164:18,  
 167:3, 167:5,  
 167:9  
**legislators** <sup>[13]</sup> -  
 38:16, 49:23,  
 53:14, 53:18,  
 55:22, 56:10,  
 62:2, 73:25,  
 79:17, 111:14,  
 112:12, 146:17,  
 161:19  
**Legislators** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
 17:21, 39:20,  
 76:11, 81:3,  
 164:20  
**Legislature** <sup>[31]</sup> -  
 4:18, 9:17, 12:23,  
 21:17, 34:12,  
 42:25, 43:15,  
 49:18, 51:25,  
 61:4, 63:13,  
 95:19, 101:7,  
 102:3, 105:9,  
 106:15, 113:14,  
 114:14, 115:16,  
 118:7, 119:5,  
 120:19, 122:13,  
 123:25, 124:22,  
 125:13, 129:13,  
 130:11, 145:15,  
 166:2, 167:15  
**legislature** <sup>[4]</sup> -  
 39:15, 49:17,  
 57:12, 57:17  
**LEGISLATURE** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 1:3, 1:4  
**LEIMONE** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
 115:25, 116:16,  
 116:25, 117:18,  
 160:6, 160:16

**Leimone** <sup>[3]</sup> - 116:2,  
148:4, 160:6  
**less** <sup>[2]</sup> - 67:14,  
99:18  
**letter** <sup>[2]</sup> - 70:6,  
98:14  
**letters** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:15  
**letting** <sup>[1]</sup> - 129:6  
**LeVar** <sup>[1]</sup> - 86:19  
**levees** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:25  
**level** <sup>[4]</sup> - 33:13,  
50:22, 85:3, 151:3  
**levels** <sup>[3]</sup> - 22:2,  
44:14, 77:5  
**LEVINE** <sup>[8]</sup> - 94:13,  
97:7, 97:12, 98:5,  
98:13, 98:18,  
100:2, 100:6  
**Levine** <sup>[3]</sup> - 5:25,  
94:12, 97:16  
**Levittown** <sup>[7]</sup> -  
27:12, 30:10,  
30:17, 34:5,  
34:15, 36:6, 36:23  
**levying** <sup>[2]</sup> - 120:10,  
121:6  
**liability** <sup>[2]</sup> - 111:19,  
111:24  
**liaison** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:5  
**License** <sup>[2]</sup> - 106:8,  
114:4  
**license** <sup>[6]</sup> - 107:4,  
108:6, 108:7,  
108:12, 109:15,  
109:20  
**licenses** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
107:13, 109:24,  
111:8  
**Liemone** <sup>[1]</sup> - 5:4  
**life** <sup>[17]</sup> - 20:2,

22:14, 22:20,  
32:8, 42:9, 60:8,  
60:15, 60:17,  
61:21, 76:12,  
79:22, 82:24,  
84:8, 131:11,  
132:11, 134:16,  
135:14  
**lifted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:22  
**light** <sup>[4]</sup> - 13:11,  
75:12, 82:22,  
96:22  
**limited** <sup>[1]</sup> - 75:11  
**line** <sup>[6]</sup> - 13:8, 54:9,  
54:12, 135:22,  
160:24, 161:6  
**lines** <sup>[2]</sup> - 72:9,  
137:8  
**lion's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 71:5  
**Liquor** <sup>[3]</sup> - 115:6,  
116:6, 118:17  
**liquor** <sup>[3]</sup> - 115:8,  
116:9, 118:19  
**listen** <sup>[2]</sup> - 42:22,  
57:3  
**listening** <sup>[1]</sup> - 84:9  
**listens** <sup>[1]</sup> - 58:12  
**live** <sup>[2]</sup> - 33:11,  
97:23  
**lived** <sup>[1]</sup> - 141:8  
**lives** <sup>[8]</sup> - 11:17,  
13:24, 17:4,  
25:14, 78:22,  
80:4, 80:5, 141:17  
**living** <sup>[4]</sup> - 55:10,  
64:12, 126:20,  
135:14  
**local** <sup>[10]</sup> - 64:13,  
65:14, 90:20,  
106:4, 113:24,

145:6, 145:7,  
148:25, 151:10,  
153:24  
**Local** <sup>[2]</sup> - 106:7,  
114:3  
**locating** <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:17  
**look** <sup>[23]</sup> - 18:2,  
35:14, 39:8,  
42:17, 46:18,  
46:19, 52:11,  
52:12, 52:21,  
53:8, 55:11,  
55:12, 59:6,  
60:16, 73:16,  
80:17, 80:21,  
83:14, 99:15,  
127:21, 138:11,  
155:5, 155:6  
**looking** <sup>[11]</sup> - 24:23,  
25:8, 34:9, 49:13,  
53:8, 60:20, 70:9,  
129:20, 129:23,  
130:7, 146:22  
**looks** <sup>[1]</sup> - 25:2  
**LORENZO** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
1:23, 169:8  
**Lorenzo** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
169:16, 169:17  
**lost** <sup>[2]</sup> - 145:5,  
157:18  
**love** <sup>[7]</sup> - 10:21,  
13:11, 31:24,  
55:19, 61:5,  
93:19, 153:25  
**loved** <sup>[2]</sup> - 32:6,  
97:17  
**low** <sup>[1]</sup> - 40:17  
**lower** <sup>[2]</sup> - 11:19,  
99:22  
**LPGA** <sup>[1]</sup> - 127:9

**luck** <sup>[11]</sup> - 17:25,  
30:19, 52:14,  
55:21, 56:20,  
63:14, 85:17,  
97:21, 99:24,  
112:23, 126:14  
**ludicrous** <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:6  
**lunch** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:19  
**luncheon** <sup>[1]</sup> - 47:4  
**Lynn** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:21,  
81:20

## M

**mails** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:3  
**major** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:14,  
28:17  
**Major** <sup>[1]</sup> - 12:14  
**Majority** <sup>[3]</sup> - 43:2,  
43:6, 103:7  
**Mamma** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:24  
**mammograms** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
93:7  
**man** <sup>[4]</sup> - 80:17,  
90:22, 92:6, 94:17  
**manage** <sup>[1]</sup> - 139:16  
**managed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:5  
**Management** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
126:12  
**Manhasset** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
10:2  
**manner** <sup>[2]</sup> - 72:11,  
76:17  
**Maria** <sup>[7]</sup> - 5:12,  
5:15, 38:6, 40:8,  
64:4, 64:6, 66:24  
**Mariano** <sup>[5]</sup> - 5:23,  
84:16, 84:18,  
85:21, 87:8  
**MARIE** <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:8  
**Marie** <sup>[1]</sup> - 8:5



**market**<sup>[1]</sup> - 136:10  
**Maroney**<sup>[1]</sup> - 53:11  
**marshals**<sup>[1]</sup> - 51:14  
**Mary**<sup>[6]</sup> - 5:5, 43:4, 53:10, 106:24, 112:20, 165:4  
**massive**<sup>[1]</sup> - 76:21  
**match**<sup>[2]</sup> - 107:12, 112:5  
**matching**<sup>[2]</sup> - 72:17, 72:22  
**mater**<sup>[2]</sup> - 27:14, 62:20  
**maternal**<sup>[2]</sup> - 91:21, 91:23  
**matter**<sup>[3]</sup> - 64:13, 64:15, 157:8  
**maximize**<sup>[1]</sup> - 128:15  
**Mayor**<sup>[2]</sup> - 96:6, 98:3  
**Mazi**<sup>[1]</sup> - 7:10  
**MAZI**<sup>[1]</sup> - 3:11  
**McCloy**<sup>[1]</sup> - 55:11  
**MCDERMOTT**<sup>[2]</sup> - 164:19, 165:15  
**McDermott**<sup>[2]</sup> - 5:7, 164:21  
**McDonald**<sup>[1]</sup> - 35:8  
**McKevitt**<sup>[5]</sup> - 8:22, 123:16, 164:4, 164:9, 167:6  
**MCKEVITT**<sup>[3]</sup> - 3:20, 159:23, 162:17  
**Meadow**<sup>[2]</sup> - 48:19, 128:8  
**Meadowbrook**<sup>[1]</sup> - 77:13  
**mean**<sup>[6]</sup> - 15:18,

17:2, 25:6, 47:11, 74:23, 86:21  
**meaning**<sup>[1]</sup> - 131:15  
**means**<sup>[2]</sup> - 35:20, 107:8  
**meantime**<sup>[1]</sup> - 69:12  
**Medical**<sup>[1]</sup> - 9:25  
**medical**<sup>[6]</sup> - 10:6, 10:16, 88:7, 88:9, 89:13, 91:16  
**meet**<sup>[2]</sup> - 30:6, 140:8  
**MEETING**<sup>[1]</sup> - 1:4  
**meeting**<sup>[14]</sup> - 6:3, 9:4, 42:23, 43:8, 45:25, 84:11, 92:19, 94:5, 102:6, 111:11, 116:4, 127:2, 168:4  
**meetings**<sup>[1]</sup> - 14:17  
**Meetings**<sup>[1]</sup> - 76:17  
**mega**<sup>[1]</sup> - 78:2  
**MELESA**<sup>[1]</sup> - 3:11  
**member**<sup>[2]</sup> - 17:23, 28:3  
**members**<sup>[18]</sup> - 10:22, 21:21, 43:6, 102:12, 105:8, 106:14, 113:13, 114:13, 115:15, 118:6, 119:4, 120:18, 122:12, 123:24, 124:21, 125:12, 165:25, 167:14  
**Memorial**<sup>[2]</sup> - 88:21, 93:19

**Men**<sup>[1]</sup> - 149:7  
**men**<sup>[1]</sup> - 153:14  
**mental**<sup>[9]</sup> - 72:11, 73:5, 74:22, 74:25, 91:8, 134:12, 138:5, 143:18, 165:6  
**mentioned**<sup>[1]</sup> - 71:22  
**Mereday**<sup>[3]</sup> - 5:19, 9:7, 87:10  
**MEREDAY**<sup>[2]</sup> - 87:11, 90:15  
**Meredith**<sup>[3]</sup> - 43:3, 53:7, 58:25  
**Merry**<sup>[2]</sup> - 17:12, 165:15  
**message**<sup>[1]</sup> - 73:20  
**met**<sup>[1]</sup> - 66:10  
**Meta**<sup>[4]</sup> - 5:19, 9:7, 87:9, 92:16  
**mia**<sup>[1]</sup> - 27:24  
**MICHAEL**<sup>[2]</sup> - 4:14, 4:17  
**Michael**<sup>[1]</sup> - 8:10  
**Michelle**<sup>[1]</sup> - 46:23  
**mid**<sup>[2]</sup> - 95:9, 99:3  
**midnight**<sup>[2]</sup> - 117:3, 117:8  
**might**<sup>[3]</sup> - 69:20, 151:24, 154:19  
**Mike**<sup>[2]</sup> - 6:9, 53:13  
**milestone**<sup>[1]</sup> - 34:18  
**military**<sup>[1]</sup> - 89:17  
**million**<sup>[38]</sup> - 70:18, 70:23, 71:14, 72:2, 72:7, 73:16, 74:10, 78:7, 81:5, 81:18, 83:8,

83:20, 89:10, 89:11, 89:22, 91:18, 92:25, 93:9, 111:18, 127:3, 127:7, 131:24, 133:2, 133:3, 134:3, 134:5, 134:10, 134:22, 135:22, 135:23, 138:19, 139:5, 141:25, 142:11, 144:10, 153:22, 156:17, 161:6  
**millions**<sup>[1]</sup> - 145:4  
**minds**<sup>[1]</sup> - 36:9  
**Mineola**<sup>[2]</sup> - 1:16, 153:8  
**minimum**<sup>[3]</sup> - 107:16, 111:16, 111:24  
**minority**<sup>[2]</sup> - 64:17, 82:16  
**Minority**<sup>[12]</sup> - 2:15, 6:4, 8:13, 39:19, 45:10, 49:15, 66:20, 103:7, 120:6, 121:10, 126:15, 158:25  
**minus**<sup>[1]</sup> - 94:23  
**minutes**<sup>[2]</sup> - 13:22, 19:6  
**Miscellaneous**<sup>[1]</sup> - 160:10  
**misnomer**<sup>[2]</sup> - 75:5, 130:5  
**Miss**<sup>[2]</sup> - 66:4, 66:9  
**miss**<sup>[6]</sup> - 34:11, 39:22, 52:25, 55:20, 62:14,

63:17  
**missed** <sup>[5]</sup> - 47:24,  
 85:18, 87:23,  
 137:6, 138:2  
**missing** <sup>[7]</sup> - 46:25,  
 49:5, 138:9,  
 152:18, 153:3,  
 153:6, 153:10  
**mitigating** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 78:24  
**mixed** <sup>[2]</sup> - 44:9,  
 73:20  
**modest** <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:17  
**mom** <sup>[2]</sup> - 33:15,  
 36:22  
**Mom** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:8  
**moment** <sup>[2]</sup> - 34:14,  
 42:3  
**moments** <sup>[1]</sup> - 17:15  
**Monday** <sup>[2]</sup> - 1:18,  
 116:14  
**Mondays** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 116:10, 117:3  
**money** <sup>[60]</sup> - 12:11,  
 15:22, 69:18,  
 69:21, 69:22,  
 70:12, 72:15,  
 73:7, 73:23,  
 74:20, 75:3,  
 75:17, 83:5,  
 83:24, 84:6, 89:5,  
 89:21, 89:24,  
 92:12, 98:16,  
 128:16, 128:18,  
 128:22, 129:24,  
 130:12, 132:2,  
 132:5, 136:20,  
 139:6, 139:18,  
 139:19, 139:21,  
 140:11, 141:2,

141:5, 141:14,  
 141:19, 141:20,  
 142:14, 142:18,  
 142:20, 143:15,  
 143:22, 144:14,  
 145:18, 146:16,  
 146:18, 149:4,  
 151:25, 152:2,  
 152:4, 154:16,  
 156:7, 157:18,  
 157:20, 158:2,  
 158:7, 158:18,  
 160:23, 161:12  
**Monica** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:22,  
 79:8  
**monies** <sup>[2]</sup> - 78:22,  
 129:12  
**Montauk** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:21  
**month** <sup>[5]</sup> - 89:6,  
 94:21, 96:14,  
 120:11, 121:6  
**months** <sup>[4]</sup> - 94:20,  
 97:5, 109:22,  
 144:21  
**mood** <sup>[1]</sup> - 54:13  
**morning** <sup>[3]</sup> - 21:24,  
 32:6, 107:23  
**most** <sup>[13]</sup> - 22:21,  
 31:5, 43:11,  
 44:12, 48:16,  
 64:14, 65:5,  
 65:17, 86:5, 86:8,  
 88:23, 95:3,  
 111:17  
**mostly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 60:22  
**mother** <sup>[1]</sup> - 35:23  
**motion** <sup>[8]</sup> - 102:4,  
 106:9, 113:7,  
 117:24, 120:4,  
 125:7, 158:22,

167:4  
**Motion** <sup>[13]</sup> - 102:7,  
 104:24, 114:6,  
 115:10, 118:2,  
 118:21, 120:13,  
 123:14, 124:12,  
 126:7, 159:2,  
 160:3, 164:17  
**Motioned** <sup>[1]</sup> - 121:9  
**move** <sup>[5]</sup> - 60:16,  
 101:8, 115:3,  
 156:7, 158:6  
**Moved** <sup>[1]</sup> - 113:9  
**moved** <sup>[2]</sup> - 86:4,  
 167:7  
**movie** <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:20  
**movies** <sup>[2]</sup> - 144:23,  
 145:5  
**moving** <sup>[16]</sup> - 9:18,  
 11:5, 11:7, 17:24,  
 18:2, 55:23,  
 60:20, 62:3,  
 76:11, 87:14,  
 87:24, 91:20,  
 112:12, 112:23,  
 129:17, 143:16  
**Moyer** <sup>[1]</sup> - 36:13  
**MR** <sup>[54]</sup> - 9:13, 35:3,  
 39:12, 71:11,  
 71:21, 74:5, 74:7,  
 84:17, 87:3,  
 94:13, 97:7,  
 97:12, 98:5,  
 98:13, 98:18,  
 100:2, 100:6,  
 115:25, 116:16,  
 116:25, 117:18,  
 126:11, 129:14,  
 130:14, 131:4,  
 131:9, 132:21,

133:10, 135:25,  
 139:8, 140:19,  
 142:10, 145:20,  
 146:6, 146:21,  
 147:6, 147:13,  
 147:18, 148:4,  
 149:12, 150:2,  
 151:14, 154:12,  
 154:17, 155:6,  
 155:20, 155:24,  
 156:5, 156:10,  
 156:24, 157:14,  
 160:6, 160:16,  
 161:24  
**MS** <sup>[16]</sup> - 30:23,  
 38:7, 64:5, 67:24,  
 70:14, 70:23,  
 71:7, 76:10, 79:9,  
 81:22, 87:11,  
 90:15, 92:18,  
 106:23, 110:23,  
 112:11  
**MULE** <sup>[6]</sup> - 3:2, 7:3,  
 121:18, 122:2,  
 159:11, 163:5  
**Mule** <sup>[3]</sup> - 7:2,  
 104:25, 121:17  
**Muller** <sup>[2]</sup> - 43:4,  
 59:2  
**Mullick** <sup>[1]</sup> - 9:12  
**MULLICK** <sup>[1]</sup> - 9:13  
**multiple** <sup>[1]</sup> - 19:2  
**multiplier** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 131:17, 136:2  
**municipalities** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 150:14  
**museum** <sup>[2]</sup> - 29:5,  
 68:9  
**Museum** <sup>[2]</sup> - 68:8,  
 123:13

**Museums** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
123:12

**Music** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:2,  
28:4

**musical** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:23

**musically** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
27:21

**must** <sup>[4]</sup> - 10:19,  
144:6, 145:14,  
146:7

**mutual** <sup>[3]</sup> - 46:6,  
50:18, 50:19

## N

**name** <sup>[8]</sup> - 49:7,  
64:6, 80:20,  
83:14, 84:18,  
87:19, 99:4,  
106:24

**named** <sup>[2]</sup> - 29:2,  
29:8

**names** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:17

**Nancy** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:16,  
67:23

**narrow** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:10

**Nassau** <sup>[48]</sup> - 9:10,  
9:23, 10:23,  
14:24, 21:21,  
38:5, 38:15,  
39:16, 40:18,  
41:8, 42:11, 68:6,  
73:13, 74:14,  
74:19, 75:11,  
76:19, 78:17,  
81:9, 81:17, 82:8,  
82:16, 82:18,  
87:22, 88:8,  
88:20, 89:7,  
91:10, 92:2,  
94:22, 95:20,

97:2, 106:6,  
113:25, 115:9,  
116:20, 118:20,  
123:10, 132:18,  
142:3, 143:17,  
144:24, 148:10,  
151:8, 153:15,  
164:14, 164:15,  
169:6

**NASSAU** <sup>[1]</sup> - 1:3

**Natalie** <sup>[1]</sup> - 143:4

**National** <sup>[1]</sup> - 86:2

**national** <sup>[2]</sup> - 80:10,  
91:25

**nature** <sup>[1]</sup> - 124:10

**Nay** <sup>[19]</sup> - 159:14,  
159:16, 159:17,  
159:18, 159:19,  
159:20, 159:21,  
159:22, 159:23,  
159:24, 159:25,  
160:2, 162:23,  
162:24, 162:25,  
163:2, 163:3,  
163:4, 163:5

**Nay"** <sup>[1]</sup> - 159:13

**NCCC** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:12,  
5:13

**necessarily** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
110:6, 160:12

**necklace** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
152:16

**Need** <sup>[1]</sup> - 106:9

**need** <sup>[44]</sup> - 20:18,  
53:5, 58:8, 58:24,  
88:20, 90:5, 90:6,  
91:14, 91:17,  
95:21, 95:22,  
95:24, 96:9,  
96:10, 96:11,

98:9, 98:13, 99:2,  
99:4, 99:10,  
99:11, 99:21,  
101:4, 102:4,  
113:7, 117:24,  
120:4, 123:5,  
124:9, 125:7,  
137:14, 137:24,  
138:4, 143:7,  
144:3, 144:8,  
146:19, 152:7,  
152:8

**needed** <sup>[10]</sup> - 18:20,  
22:14, 55:4,  
57:22, 57:23,  
57:25, 58:4,  
103:9, 156:22

**needs** <sup>[9]</sup> - 22:11,  
24:4, 78:19,  
83:18, 83:22,  
83:23, 87:22,  
134:19, 135:5

**negative** <sup>[1]</sup> - 109:4

**negotiating** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
20:20

**negotiation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
21:2

**negotiator** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
19:22

**neighborhood** <sup>[4]</sup> -  
25:15, 84:23,  
143:20

**neighborhoods** <sup>[1]</sup>  
- 138:24

**neighboring** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
112:5

**Netflix** <sup>[1]</sup> - 93:13

**Network** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
164:16, 164:25

**never** <sup>[9]</sup> - 20:22,

24:10, 32:7, 60:6,  
60:18, 60:25,  
67:15, 134:18,  
134:24

**NEW** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:4

**new** <sup>[11]</sup> - 19:19,  
49:22, 49:24,  
56:10, 57:11,  
57:12, 127:5,  
132:2, 140:13,  
143:14, 149:16

**New** <sup>[24]</sup> - 1:16,  
40:5, 74:8, 75:8,  
77:7, 77:21, 79:3,  
95:25, 99:5, 99:8,  
100:5, 116:5,  
116:25, 117:6,  
117:9, 144:11,  
144:15, 144:25,  
145:2, 150:15,  
158:10, 168:3,  
169:9

**Newday** <sup>[1]</sup> - 74:11

**news** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:13

**Newsday** <sup>[3]</sup> - 69:7,  
71:22, 89:19

**newspaper** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
82:13

**next** <sup>[13]</sup> - 15:21,  
62:17, 81:4,  
85:17, 94:5, 94:9,  
97:4, 103:4,  
130:11, 142:11,  
142:14, 143:9,  
143:15

**nice** <sup>[1]</sup> - 90:13

**NICOLELLO** <sup>[116]</sup> -  
1:8, 2:2, 6:2, 6:9,  
8:18, 8:25, 14:5,  
17:14, 22:16,

24:17, 25:23,  
27:2, 38:2, 40:22,  
42:2, 50:16,  
56:23, 63:21,  
64:2, 67:21,  
70:16, 70:25,  
71:9, 71:16,  
73:24, 81:20,  
84:15, 87:9,  
90:12, 92:15,  
94:11, 100:7,  
101:2, 102:2,  
102:10, 102:15,  
102:19, 103:3,  
105:5, 105:11,  
105:15, 106:2,  
106:17, 106:21,  
110:4, 112:7,  
112:15, 112:25,  
113:6, 113:16,  
113:20, 113:22,  
114:11, 114:16,  
114:20, 115:2,  
115:18, 115:22,  
116:11, 116:18,  
117:11, 117:16,  
117:19, 117:23,  
118:9, 118:13,  
119:2, 119:7,  
119:11, 120:2,  
120:21, 120:25,  
121:16, 121:24,  
122:3, 122:9,  
122:15, 122:19,  
123:2, 123:21,  
124:3, 124:7,  
124:18, 124:24,  
125:4, 125:15,  
125:19, 126:2,  
129:8, 130:10,

130:19, 135:17,  
138:15, 147:8,  
154:4, 158:24,  
159:12, 160:3,  
161:18, 161:22,  
161:25, 162:5,  
162:21, 163:6,  
164:2, 164:10,  
165:13, 165:17,  
165:22, 166:4,  
166:8, 167:2,  
167:8, 167:11,  
167:17, 167:21  
**Nicolello** <sup>[4]</sup> - 8:17,  
38:17, 39:18, 81:7  
**NIFA** <sup>[10]</sup> - 154:9,  
154:10, 154:18,  
155:3, 155:12,  
156:20, 157:25,  
158:21, 161:9,  
161:11  
**night** <sup>[4]</sup> - 52:4,  
53:2, 85:7, 149:8  
**Night** <sup>[1]</sup> - 86:3  
**nights** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:17  
**nilly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 143:25  
**Nobody** <sup>[2]</sup> - 95:7  
**nobody** <sup>[4]</sup> - 75:24,  
75:25, 92:24, 93:3  
**Nobody's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:6  
**noise** <sup>[1]</sup> - 75:21  
**none** <sup>[7]</sup> - 105:6,  
113:7, 117:24,  
122:10, 124:19,  
161:23, 162:6  
**nonprofits** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
70:21  
**normal** <sup>[1]</sup> - 21:24  
**north** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:4  
**North** <sup>[2]</sup> - 95:8,

123:12  
**Northern** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:14  
**Notary** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:8  
**notes** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:12  
**nothing** <sup>[7]</sup> - 19:22,  
46:14, 48:17,  
50:12, 69:2, 78:4,  
86:24  
**Nothing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 148:21  
**Nothing's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:2  
**noticed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 24:25  
**notices** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:3  
**November** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:2  
**number** <sup>[5]</sup> - 39:3,  
55:15, 71:18,  
87:16, 106:3  
**Number** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:20  
**numbers** <sup>[1]</sup> - 79:5  
**NUMC** <sup>[1]</sup> - 19:19  
**numerous** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
53:12  
**Nutrition** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
164:16, 164:25

## O

**objection** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
135:12  
**objective** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
150:25  
**objectively** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
153:24  
**obligated** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
140:23, 154:25  
**obligation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
140:20  
**observation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
24:24  
**observed** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
18:10, 18:12  
**observing** <sup>[1]</sup> -

43:23  
**obviously** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
32:11, 46:7, 49:4  
**occasion** <sup>[1]</sup> - 52:16  
**occasionally** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
59:22  
**occasions** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:4  
**occupancies** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
132:13  
**occupancy** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
132:5, 132:6,  
133:7  
**October** <sup>[2]</sup> - 18:6,  
29:10  
**odds** <sup>[1]</sup> - 45:22  
**OF** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:4  
**offense** <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:13  
**offenses** <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:9  
**offer** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:22  
**Office** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:7,  
126:12  
**office** <sup>[10]</sup> - 47:14,  
54:24, 57:22,  
59:24, 67:19,  
84:21, 85:3,  
85:12, 85:16,  
91:10  
**officer** <sup>[5]</sup> - 18:13,  
20:25, 21:3,  
61:10, 91:2  
**OFFICER** <sup>[119]</sup> - 1:8,  
6:2, 6:9, 8:18,  
8:25, 12:22, 14:5,  
17:14, 22:16,  
24:17, 24:19,  
25:23, 27:2, 38:2,  
40:22, 42:2,  
50:16, 56:23,  
63:21, 64:2,  
67:21, 70:16,

70:25, 71:9,  
71:16, 73:24,  
81:20, 84:15,  
87:9, 90:12,  
92:15, 94:11,  
100:7, 101:2,  
102:2, 102:10,  
102:15, 102:19,  
103:3, 105:5,  
105:11, 105:15,  
106:2, 106:17,  
106:21, 110:4,  
112:7, 112:15,  
112:25, 113:6,  
113:16, 113:20,  
113:22, 114:11,  
114:16, 114:20,  
115:2, 115:18,  
115:22, 116:11,  
116:18, 117:11,  
117:16, 117:19,  
117:23, 118:9,  
118:13, 119:2,  
119:7, 119:11,  
120:2, 120:21,  
120:25, 121:16,  
121:24, 122:3,  
122:9, 122:15,  
122:19, 123:2,  
123:21, 124:3,  
124:7, 124:18,  
124:24, 125:4,  
125:15, 125:19,  
126:2, 129:8,  
130:10, 130:19,  
135:17, 138:15,  
147:8, 154:4,  
158:24, 159:12,  
159:15, 160:3,  
161:18, 161:22,

161:25, 162:5,  
162:9, 162:21,  
163:6, 164:2,  
164:10, 165:13,  
165:17, 165:22,  
166:4, 166:8,  
167:2, 167:8,  
167:11, 167:17,  
167:21  
**Officer**<sup>[20]</sup> - 2:3,  
2:7, 2:11, 6:12,  
6:13, 6:17, 8:16,  
15:6, 24:18, 27:7,  
38:8, 38:17,  
39:18, 115:11,  
121:9, 121:18,  
126:15, 130:23,  
147:11, 164:20  
**officers**<sup>[17]</sup> - 9:23,  
10:3, 10:5, 10:8,  
10:11, 10:24,  
14:10, 14:11,  
16:7, 17:2, 51:14,  
79:11, 79:25,  
90:7, 90:17,  
138:6, 152:20  
**offices**<sup>[1]</sup> - 85:2  
**OFFICIAL**<sup>[1]</sup> - 1:23  
**official**<sup>[3]</sup> - 98:20,  
98:24, 98:25  
**officials**<sup>[3]</sup> - 33:6,  
65:2, 88:8  
**offs**<sup>[2]</sup> - 69:9, 149:7  
**often**<sup>[1]</sup> - 87:14  
**old**<sup>[3]</sup> - 22:25,  
77:18, 127:10  
**Old**<sup>[1]</sup> - 36:15  
**OMB**<sup>[1]</sup> - 5:3  
**once**<sup>[3]</sup> - 20:14,  
34:2, 76:19

**One**<sup>[4]</sup> - 33:6, 69:9,  
127:2  
**one**<sup>[56]</sup> - 17:13,  
19:12, 20:19,  
35:9, 35:16, 38:3,  
38:12, 44:23,  
45:8, 45:17,  
45:18, 47:2, 47:8,  
48:4, 50:11, 52:2,  
52:18, 54:2,  
55:21, 57:9, 62:2,  
62:5, 62:6, 62:9,  
63:10, 67:12,  
68:18, 69:8,  
81:18, 86:8,  
97:24, 106:3,  
108:8, 108:9,  
110:24, 111:14,  
112:19, 116:22,  
117:4, 129:9,  
136:21, 147:5,  
148:7, 149:7,  
149:8, 150:7,  
150:13, 150:19,  
153:10, 153:15,  
155:11, 160:13,  
160:15, 160:17,  
165:9, 165:10  
**ones**<sup>[2]</sup> - 46:22,  
54:10  
**ongoing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 19:5  
**online**<sup>[1]</sup> - 33:5  
**open**<sup>[9]</sup> - 31:16,  
68:10, 68:22,  
76:16, 76:17,  
106:9, 106:22,  
115:12, 115:23  
**opened**<sup>[1]</sup> - 68:9  
**opening**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
106:12, 115:13

**operations**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
43:16  
**operators**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
128:13  
**opined**<sup>[1]</sup> - 146:8  
**opinion**<sup>[4]</sup> - 74:14,  
76:3, 121:20,  
149:25  
**opioid**<sup>[2]</sup> - 78:13,  
141:20  
**OPPENHEIMER**<sup>[3]</sup>  
- 71:11, 71:21,  
74:5  
**Oppenheimer**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
5:17, 71:10  
**opportunities**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
65:22, 151:9  
**opportunity**<sup>[19]</sup> -  
9:15, 12:24,  
13:10, 33:25,  
34:12, 35:14,  
38:11, 38:23,  
46:10, 49:16,  
49:24, 60:5, 67:2,  
83:2, 109:18,  
137:6, 138:2,  
138:10, 152:6  
**opposed**<sup>[21]</sup> -  
75:18, 79:15,  
102:16, 105:12,  
106:18, 113:17,  
114:17, 115:19,  
118:10, 119:8,  
120:22, 122:16,  
124:4, 124:25,  
125:16, 150:9,  
150:20, 159:13,  
162:22, 166:5,  
167:18  
**opposite**<sup>[1]</sup> - 18:16

**optimistic** <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:24  
**options** <sup>[1]</sup> - 165:10  
**order** <sup>[5]</sup> - 6:3, 19:9, 55:6, 144:6, 145:19  
**Ordinance** <sup>[6]</sup> - 103:10, 103:11, 103:12, 120:9, 121:4  
**ordinance** <sup>[2]</sup> - 120:8, 121:4  
**organizations** <sup>[1]</sup> - 38:14  
**organize** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:22  
**Orleans** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:25  
**Ostuni** <sup>[2]</sup> - 43:3, 52:24  
**ourselves** <sup>[2]</sup> - 117:8, 144:2  
**out-birth** <sup>[1]</sup> - 152:10  
**out-of-control** <sup>[1]</sup> - 78:20  
**outgoing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:17  
**outlier** <sup>[1]</sup> - 116:20  
**outside** <sup>[3]</sup> - 31:25, 46:3, 88:19  
**outstanding** <sup>[5]</sup> - 38:4, 38:12, 39:3, 56:15, 71:6  
**overdoses** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:25  
**overlap** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:16  
**overpass** <sup>[4]</sup> - 18:14, 19:3, 19:11, 19:14  
**overworked** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:14

**owe** <sup>[1]</sup> - 32:8  
**own** <sup>[13]</sup> - 12:11, 12:16, 27:12, 34:9, 34:18, 42:3, 47:25, 81:25, 95:11, 98:21, 98:24, 109:9  
**owners** <sup>[1]</sup> - 145:11  
**Oxford** <sup>[3]</sup> - 29:10, 30:21, 32:21  
**Oyster** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:25

## P

**p.m.** <sup>[4]</sup> - 1:19, 101:11, 116:9, 168:5  
**p.m.** <sup>[1]</sup> - 116:17  
**p.m.-3:51** <sup>[1]</sup> - 101:10  
**Paddy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 17:9  
**page** <sup>[2]</sup> - 89:3, 95:12  
**pages** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:23  
**paid** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:18  
**pandemic** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:11  
**panic** <sup>[1]</sup> - 141:3  
**paperwork** <sup>[1]</sup> - 68:16  
**parades** <sup>[2]</sup> - 11:13, 83:20  
**Pardon** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:23  
**parents** <sup>[6]</sup> - 14:2, 30:4, 30:7, 31:21, 32:9, 97:18  
**Park** <sup>[2]</sup> - 74:16, 96:5  
**Parks** <sup>[1]</sup> - 123:11  
**parks** <sup>[2]</sup> - 65:8, 74:18

**Parkway** <sup>[3]</sup> - 18:15, 77:13, 77:14  
**part** <sup>[9]</sup> - 12:19, 27:24, 34:19, 48:16, 88:23, 130:16, 134:22, 141:19, 148:10  
**participated** <sup>[1]</sup> - 14:11  
**participating** <sup>[1]</sup> - 164:6  
**parties** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:10  
**partnered** <sup>[1]</sup> - 66:6  
**partnering** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:14  
**partners** <sup>[1]</sup> - 140:3  
**partnership** <sup>[4]</sup> - 11:9, 67:6, 67:19, 86:15  
**partnerships** <sup>[3]</sup> - 85:24, 129:21, 130:8  
**party** <sup>[6]</sup> - 81:5, 81:18, 83:8, 89:10, 93:10, 97:2  
**passed** <sup>[3]</sup> - 45:18, 69:22, 125:20  
**Passes** <sup>[1]</sup> - 163:6  
**passion** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:4  
**past** <sup>[3]</sup> - 29:2, 42:8, 75:23  
**pastures** <sup>[3]</sup> - 9:18, 11:6, 11:7  
**path** <sup>[2]</sup> - 32:11, 66:15  
**pathetic** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:8  
**pathological** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:24  
**paths** <sup>[2]</sup> - 47:25, 62:12

**patience** <sup>[1]</sup> - 58:14  
**Patrick** <sup>[1]</sup> - 94:20  
**patrolman** <sup>[1]</sup> - 90:20  
**patrons** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:12  
**Patty** <sup>[5]</sup> - 54:5, 55:2, 55:8, 94:17, 97:11  
**pay** <sup>[2]</sup> - 42:21, 141:23  
**paying** <sup>[1]</sup> - 32:22  
**PBA** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:23, 25:25  
**Pearl** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:20, 76:9  
**pencil** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:16  
**People** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:25  
**people** <sup>[51]</sup> - 13:9, 14:12, 24:13, 25:20, 28:20, 30:25, 32:20, 34:3, 43:12, 44:17, 48:17, 49:18, 50:4, 51:7, 51:9, 52:10, 52:19, 54:8, 54:21, 57:3, 57:9, 57:10, 57:11, 57:14, 57:25, 58:2, 58:6, 60:10, 60:11, 60:13, 64:14, 65:19, 75:4, 75:22, 76:23, 81:24, 82:23, 83:4, 83:7, 84:12, 85:11, 86:10, 128:17, 135:3, 136:11, 137:21, 139:14, 143:23, 144:7, 151:6, 158:14

**people's** <sup>[2]</sup> - 11:17, 55:2  
**per** <sup>[4]</sup> - 88:24, 89:6, 116:14  
**percentage** <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:4  
**performance** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:16  
**perhaps** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:7  
**permissible** <sup>[1]</sup> - 128:23  
**Persich** <sup>[3]</sup> - 5:3, 126:12, 147:12  
**PERSICH** <sup>[31]</sup> - 126:11, 129:14, 130:14, 131:4, 131:9, 132:21, 133:10, 135:25, 139:8, 140:19, 142:10, 145:20, 146:6, 146:21, 147:6, 147:13, 147:18, 148:4, 149:12, 150:2, 151:14, 154:12, 154:17, 155:6, 155:20, 155:24, 156:5, 156:10, 156:24, 157:14, 161:24  
**person** <sup>[6]</sup> - 20:4, 21:7, 31:14, 66:11, 90:24, 108:19  
**personal** <sup>[2]</sup> - 27:3, 42:4  
**personally** <sup>[4]</sup> - 10:15, 36:12, 141:5, 151:3  
**perspective** <sup>[2]</sup> -

44:25, 57:7  
**perusing**) <sup>[1]</sup> - 71:19  
**Pete** <sup>[2]</sup> - 43:19, 55:13  
**Peter** <sup>[2]</sup> - 45:20, 45:21  
**PFA's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 84:6  
**phenomenal** <sup>[2]</sup> - 53:17, 97:16  
**Philbin** <sup>[1]</sup> - 17:18  
**PHILBIN** <sup>[1]</sup> - 17:20  
**phone** <sup>[6]</sup> - 53:8, 54:10, 54:17, 57:24, 88:25, 95:13  
**phonetic** <sup>[1]</sup> - 36:13  
**photos** <sup>[1]</sup> - 26:3  
**physical** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:17  
**physically** <sup>[1]</sup> - 23:9  
**pick** <sup>[3]</sup> - 57:24, 95:13, 156:11  
**pictures** <sup>[1]</sup> - 94:24  
**piece** <sup>[1]</sup> - 140:23  
**Pilip** <sup>[2]</sup> - 7:11, 104:24  
**PILIP** <sup>[4]</sup> - 3:11, 7:12, 159:22, 162:16  
**pills** <sup>[1]</sup> - 19:2  
**pin** <sup>[3]</sup> - 131:5, 131:8, 133:15  
**pivoted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 25:13  
**place** <sup>[9]</sup> - 22:13, 75:8, 111:8, 126:20, 139:3, 141:9, 141:11, 148:7, 158:7  
**places** <sup>[2]</sup> - 61:21, 89:18

**plan** <sup>[7]</sup> - 28:16, 88:16, 88:20, 99:19, 99:20, 142:13, 143:13  
**planned** <sup>[1]</sup> - 127:17  
**planning** <sup>[7]</sup> - 28:11, 69:8, 69:11, 127:8, 131:14, 149:15, 150:9  
**plate** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:24  
**played** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:6  
**playgrounds** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:11  
**pleasure** <sup>[4]</sup> - 57:8, 59:23, 66:6, 126:17  
**Pledge** <sup>[2]</sup> - 6:5, 6:7  
**plenty** <sup>[1]</sup> - 74:14  
**plethora** <sup>[1]</sup> - 78:12  
**plus** <sup>[2]</sup> - 77:15, 88:13  
**podium** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:9  
**point** <sup>[5]</sup> - 23:17, 42:4, 45:19, 139:23, 150:19  
**points** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:3  
**Police** <sup>[6]</sup> - 9:11, 10:5, 14:7, 24:20, 134:15, 143:4  
**police** <sup>[16]</sup> - 9:22, 10:3, 10:11, 10:24, 14:18, 14:22, 15:20, 17:2, 17:10, 18:12, 25:16, 39:3, 51:14, 75:13, 79:25, 152:20  
**policies** <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:2

**policy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 107:19  
**political** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:14, 97:2  
**politicians** <sup>[1]</sup> - 33:5  
**politics** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:15, 33:10  
**polls** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:16  
**pollution** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:5  
**pop** <sup>[1]</sup> - 61:2  
**portion** <sup>[4]</sup> - 9:6, 65:4, 138:13, 139:5  
**position** <sup>[1]</sup> - 141:7  
**positive** <sup>[3]</sup> - 15:13, 52:18, 109:4  
**possibly** <sup>[2]</sup> - 95:5, 141:24  
**posted** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:18  
**potential** <sup>[1]</sup> - 73:14  
**poverty** <sup>[1]</sup> - 165:6  
**powers** <sup>[1]</sup> - 24:24  
**PR** <sup>[1]</sup> - 59:5  
**practiced** <sup>[1]</sup> - 60:7  
**pray** <sup>[1]</sup> - 24:3  
**premise** <sup>[1]</sup> - 81:14  
**prepared** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:7  
**present** <sup>[2]</sup> - 9:16, 42:8  
**presentation** <sup>[2]</sup> - 17:16, 17:19  
**presentations** <sup>[1]</sup> - 42:20  
**presentment** <sup>[1]</sup> - 164:23  
**presents** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:14  
**president** <sup>[5]</sup> - 28:5, 38:5, 64:7, 68:7, 84:18  
**President** <sup>[4]</sup> - 9:12, 33:7, 33:12,

137:13  
**PRESIDING** <sup>[118]</sup> -  
 1:8, 6:2, 6:9, 8:18,  
 8:25, 14:5, 17:14,  
 22:16, 24:17,  
 24:19, 25:23,  
 27:2, 38:2, 40:22,  
 42:2, 50:16,  
 56:23, 63:21,  
 64:2, 67:21,  
 70:16, 70:25,  
 71:9, 71:16,  
 73:24, 81:20,  
 84:15, 87:9,  
 90:12, 92:15,  
 94:11, 100:7,  
 101:2, 102:2,  
 102:10, 102:15,  
 102:19, 103:3,  
 105:5, 105:11,  
 105:15, 106:2,  
 106:17, 106:21,  
 110:4, 112:7,  
 112:15, 112:25,  
 113:6, 113:16,  
 113:20, 113:22,  
 114:11, 114:16,  
 114:20, 115:2,  
 115:18, 115:22,  
 116:11, 116:18,  
 117:11, 117:16,  
 117:19, 117:23,  
 118:9, 118:13,  
 119:2, 119:7,  
 119:11, 120:2,  
 120:21, 120:25,  
 121:16, 121:24,  
 122:3, 122:9,  
 122:15, 122:19,  
 123:2, 123:21,

124:3, 124:7,  
 124:18, 124:24,  
 125:4, 125:15,  
 125:19, 126:2,  
 129:8, 130:10,  
 130:19, 135:17,  
 138:15, 147:8,  
 154:4, 158:24,  
 159:12, 159:15,  
 160:3, 161:18,  
 161:22, 161:25,  
 162:5, 162:9,  
 162:21, 163:6,  
 164:2, 164:10,  
 165:13, 165:17,  
 165:22, 166:4,  
 166:8, 167:2,  
 167:8, 167:11,  
 167:17, 167:21  
**presiding** <sup>[1]</sup> - 61:9  
**Presiding** <sup>[20]</sup> - 2:3,  
 2:7, 2:11, 6:12,  
 6:13, 6:17, 8:16,  
 15:6, 24:18, 27:7,  
 38:7, 38:17,  
 39:18, 115:11,  
 121:9, 121:18,  
 126:14, 130:23,  
 147:11, 164:20  
**prestigious** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 29:8  
**pretty** <sup>[3]</sup> - 31:2,  
 46:14, 72:6  
**prevented** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 79:12  
**prevention** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 78:15  
**previous** <sup>[2]</sup> - 74:9,  
 131:10  
**price** <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:21

**pride** <sup>[1]</sup> - 51:12  
**primarily** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:5  
**principal** <sup>[3]</sup> - 30:13,  
 32:15, 34:23  
**principals** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 150:4, 151:16  
**print** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:23  
**priorities** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 139:15, 140:10  
**prioritize** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 139:13  
**prioritizing** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 135:13  
**priority** <sup>[3]</sup> - 139:3,  
 141:24, 142:9  
**private** <sup>[3]</sup> - 72:18,  
 129:21, 130:7  
**privilege** <sup>[6]</sup> - 27:4,  
 27:11, 42:4, 44:4,  
 90:10  
**Problem** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:25  
**problem** <sup>[11]</sup> - 75:4,  
 88:15, 90:21,  
 91:7, 91:8, 143:7,  
 156:13, 158:5,  
 158:18, 160:22  
**problems** <sup>[2]</sup> - 80:9,  
 80:24  
**PROBST** <sup>[1]</sup> - 12:22  
**Probst** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:3,  
 10:25  
**procedures** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 110:19, 111:2  
**proceeding** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 109:22  
**process** <sup>[5]</sup> - 29:14,  
 76:16, 82:21,  
 150:22, 151:19  
**procurement** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 130:17

**produce** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 135:23, 137:8  
**production** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 27:23  
**productions** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 144:23  
**professionalism** <sup>[5]</sup>  
 - 14:21, 23:12,  
 52:8, 54:17, 56:18  
**professionals** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 20:7  
**professor** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 80:16  
**profits** <sup>[4]</sup> - 68:19,  
 68:24, 69:16,  
 69:24  
**programs** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
 139:20, 165:2,  
 165:5  
**progress** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 126:19  
**prohibits** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 154:20  
**Project** <sup>[1]</sup> - 143:4  
**project** <sup>[7]</sup> - 77:2,  
 78:2, 82:3, 82:23,  
 83:3, 83:8, 95:4  
**projections** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 135:8  
**projects** <sup>[8]</sup> - 41:7,  
 69:12, 93:16,  
 128:21, 138:22,  
 139:4, 139:11,  
 139:12  
**promote** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
 127:16, 132:18,  
 136:14  
**promoting** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
 127:8, 127:24,  
 128:11, 131:16,



133:18  
**promotion** <sup>[1]</sup> - 151:4  
**Promotion** <sup>[2]</sup> - 160:11  
**promotions** <sup>[1]</sup> - 148:19  
**proof** <sup>[3]</sup> - 31:13, 35:21, 108:20  
**properly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 146:23  
**property** <sup>[2]</sup> - 82:25, 108:14  
**proposal** <sup>[2]</sup> - 78:6, 79:15  
**proposed** <sup>[5]</sup> - 106:4, 113:23, 115:4, 118:15, 131:25  
**proposing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:9  
**prosper** <sup>[1]</sup> - 92:8  
**prosperous** <sup>[1]</sup> - 76:12  
**proud** <sup>[12]</sup> - 12:18, 29:23, 30:18, 34:19, 35:24, 36:20, 41:4, 41:5, 64:7, 86:21, 95:19, 96:16  
**provide** <sup>[1]</sup> - 40:16  
**provided** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:23  
**Public** <sup>[3]</sup> - 64:2, 137:22, 169:8  
**public** <sup>[17]</sup> - 5:10, 9:2, 9:5, 46:4, 51:13, 54:20, 66:15, 73:4, 73:10, 98:20, 98:24, 98:25, 108:13, 113:3,

117:20, 129:21, 130:7  
**PULITZER** <sup>[20]</sup> - 4:17, 6:11, 6:16, 6:19, 6:22, 6:25, 7:4, 7:7, 7:10, 7:13, 7:16, 7:19, 7:22, 7:25, 8:4, 8:7, 8:10, 8:13, 8:16, 8:19  
**pull** <sup>[1]</sup> - 21:25  
**pulled** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:19  
**purchase** <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:25  
**purchased** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:13  
**purportedly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:17  
**purpose** <sup>[6]</sup> - 83:19, 130:13, 148:16, 148:17, 149:3, 152:5  
**purposes** <sup>[2]</sup> - 72:9, 72:21  
**pursue** <sup>[4]</sup> - 29:4, 29:10, 29:15, 31:22  
**pursuing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 32:10  
**push** <sup>[2]</sup> - 13:19, 16:2  
**pushed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 31:22  
**put** <sup>[19]</sup> - 15:19, 29:12, 36:9, 72:22, 76:2, 85:15, 89:11, 90:25, 121:19, 131:5, 131:7, 133:15, 137:7, 138:3, 139:19, 141:24, 143:13,

155:11, 161:5  
**Put** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:4  
**puts** <sup>[1]</sup> - 126:9  
**putting** <sup>[5]</sup> - 15:24, 72:15, 73:16, 157:23, 158:7

## Q

**quality** <sup>[4]</sup> - 40:16, 52:9, 77:16, 82:24  
**quantify** <sup>[2]</sup> - 132:15, 144:18  
**Queens** <sup>[2]</sup> - 78:9, 79:2  
**questions** <sup>[9]</sup> - 59:16, 62:8, 68:14, 107:18, 110:3, 112:8, 117:13, 122:6, 129:2  
**quite** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:13  
**quorum** <sup>[1]</sup> - 8:19  
**quote** <sup>[3]</sup> - 80:16, 80:21, 111:21

## R

**race** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:20  
**racism** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:23, 78:5  
**radar** <sup>[1]</sup> - 158:16  
**raining** <sup>[1]</sup> - 12:6  
**rainstorm** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:11  
**raise** <sup>[3]</sup> - 15:21, 15:23, 38:25  
**raised** <sup>[1]</sup> - 12:10  
**rambling** <sup>[1]</sup> - 31:9  
**ran** <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:17  
**ranges** <sup>[1]</sup> - 85:9  
**ranging** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:16

**rappel** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:5, 16:6  
**rappelling** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:7  
**rapport** <sup>[1]</sup> - 39:8  
**rates** <sup>[5]</sup> - 77:17, 77:19, 80:12, 120:10, 121:5  
**rather** <sup>[2]</sup> - 73:7, 83:24  
**ratio** <sup>[2]</sup> - 133:5, 157:17  
**reached** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:7  
**reaching** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:12  
**read** <sup>[5]</sup> - 33:4, 49:19, 82:12, 89:19, 95:13  
**reading** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:23, 120:7  
**ready** <sup>[4]</sup> - 52:24, 66:17, 69:12, 155:15  
**reaffirm** <sup>[1]</sup> - 147:2  
**real** <sup>[8]</sup> - 13:19, 40:16, 41:8, 79:22, 89:24, 90:4, 155:12, 160:22  
**realize** <sup>[4]</sup> - 54:8, 82:5, 127:25, 133:15  
**Really** <sup>[2]</sup> - 16:9, 85:14  
**really** <sup>[33]</sup> - 30:16, 32:12, 35:16, 36:6, 40:14, 40:19, 50:21, 51:20, 52:17, 57:8, 57:15, 58:7, 59:18, 60:2, 60:4,

61:10, 61:14,  
79:18, 84:10,  
84:20, 85:13,  
85:17, 86:12,  
98:8, 110:7,  
110:14, 128:3,  
131:4, 138:3,  
138:21, 158:13,  
161:3  
**reap** <sup>[1]</sup> - 56:17  
**reason** <sup>[5]</sup> - 21:10,  
31:19, 69:19,  
148:11, 153:4  
**rebuild** <sup>[1]</sup> - 55:6  
**rebuilding** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
83:22  
**receive** <sup>[3]</sup> - 35:11,  
69:13, 165:11  
**received** <sup>[4]</sup> - 27:22,  
54:10, 68:20,  
110:10  
**receiving** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
29:24, 69:20  
**recently** <sup>[2]</sup> - 137:9,  
157:19  
**recess** <sup>[1]</sup> - 101:9  
**recession** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
81:12, 81:16  
**recession"** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
81:10  
**recognition** <sup>[5]</sup> -  
34:13, 41:3,  
42:13, 51:21, 54:5  
**recognitions** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
14:16  
**recognize** <sup>[4]</sup> - 18:4,  
27:12, 48:3, 92:5  
**reconsider** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
81:3, 83:2  
**Reconvening** <sup>[1]</sup> -

102:3  
**record** <sup>[7]</sup> - 96:8,  
121:19, 121:25,  
146:4, 148:2,  
149:10, 160:8  
**recovering** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
83:12  
**recovery** <sup>[2]</sup> - 12:4,  
83:10  
**Recreation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
123:11  
**recused** <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:20  
**recusing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 164:4  
**red** <sup>[2]</sup> - 75:12,  
96:22  
**Red** <sup>[1]</sup> - 127:12  
**redefine** <sup>[1]</sup> - 49:17  
**reelected** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:16  
**referendum** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
82:18  
**referring** <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:8  
**reflecting** <sup>[1]</sup> - 35:5  
**reflection** <sup>[3]</sup> - 30:3,  
30:8, 30:16  
**reframing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:5  
**regard** <sup>[1]</sup> - 23:23  
**regarding** <sup>[1]</sup> - 81:5  
**regards** <sup>[1]</sup> - 121:21  
**Regina** <sup>[2]</sup> - 69:3,  
69:5  
**region** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:19  
**regional** <sup>[1]</sup> - 158:10  
**regular** <sup>[1]</sup> - 21:25  
**rehabilitation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
108:21  
**Reiki** <sup>[2]</sup> - 93:20,  
93:22  
**reiterate** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
135:10  
**relates** <sup>[1]</sup> - 123:3

**relation** <sup>[2]</sup> - 106:7,  
114:4  
**relationship** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
9:20, 85:16,  
108:11  
**relationships** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
39:24, 59:17, 65:6  
**relatives** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:11  
**relay** <sup>[1]</sup> - 109:8  
**relentless** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
35:18  
**relief** <sup>[5]</sup> - 68:17,  
72:7, 78:7, 78:11,  
78:22  
**remain** <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:14  
**remaining** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
128:21  
**remains** <sup>[1]</sup> - 71:6  
**remarkable** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
85:15  
**remember** <sup>[7]</sup> -  
45:15, 48:10,  
61:8, 84:13,  
97:18, 128:17,  
132:4  
**reminder** <sup>[1]</sup> - 64:23  
**remiss** <sup>[2]</sup> - 45:15,  
126:13  
**remnants** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
135:3  
**Renaissance** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
96:7  
**repair** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:10  
**replaces** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
148:22  
**report** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:19  
**REPORTER** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
1:23  
**represent** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
48:25, 64:15, 65:3

**representation** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
64:22  
**representative** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
28:7  
**representing** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
29:22  
**represents** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
139:5, 147:23  
**reproach** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
150:24  
**request** <sup>[2]</sup> - 107:4,  
107:15  
**requesting** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
115:5, 118:16,  
121:20  
**requests** <sup>[1]</sup> - 116:5  
**require** <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:5  
**required** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
154:15, 160:9  
**requirement** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
107:6, 107:7,  
111:16  
**requires** <sup>[2]</sup> - 71:25,  
111:23  
**research** <sup>[2]</sup> - 80:19,  
93:10  
**resident** <sup>[3]</sup> - 64:7,  
64:9, 68:5  
**residents** <sup>[11]</sup> -  
14:24, 42:15,  
64:18, 76:19,  
79:24, 82:17,  
87:22, 88:6, 90:2,  
135:15, 152:2  
**Resolution** <sup>[57]</sup> -  
71:13, 103:13,  
103:14, 103:15,  
103:16, 103:17,  
103:18, 103:19,  
103:20, 103:21,

103:22, 103:23,  
103:24, 103:25,  
104:2, 104:3,  
104:4, 104:5,  
104:6, 104:7,  
104:8, 104:9,  
104:10, 104:11,  
104:12, 104:13,  
104:14, 104:15,  
104:16, 104:17,  
104:18, 104:19,  
104:20, 104:21,  
104:22, 104:23,  
115:4, 118:15,  
126:3, 164:11

**resolution** <sup>[8]</sup> -

71:13, 71:18,  
115:5, 116:5,  
118:16, 123:7,  
126:3, 164:11

**resonated** <sup>[1]</sup> -

35:16

**resource** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:18

**resources** <sup>[2]</sup> -

91:4, 152:21

**respect** <sup>[8]</sup> - 44:23,

46:2, 46:7, 50:19,  
70:21, 116:21,  
137:5, 137:21

**respectfully** <sup>[1]</sup> -

138:10

**respond** <sup>[15]</sup> -

102:13, 105:9,  
106:15, 113:14,  
114:14, 115:16,  
118:7, 119:5,  
120:19, 122:13,  
123:25, 124:22,  
125:13, 166:2,  
167:15

**response** <sup>[30]</sup> -

102:18, 105:4,  
105:14, 106:20,  
110:9, 112:10,  
113:5, 113:19,  
114:10, 114:19,  
115:21, 117:15,  
117:22, 118:12,  
118:25, 119:10,  
120:24, 121:15,  
122:8, 122:18,  
123:20, 124:6,  
124:17, 125:3,  
125:18, 161:21,  
162:4, 165:21,  
166:7, 167:20

**responsible** <sup>[1]</sup> -

151:22

**responsive** <sup>[2]</sup> -

58:7, 87:21

**rest** <sup>[4]</sup> - 16:21,

39:9, 40:23,  
116:22

**restarts** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:22

**restoration** <sup>[1]</sup> -

132:11

**restriction** <sup>[5]</sup> -

75:10, 115:7,  
116:7, 118:18,  
157:2

**restrictions** <sup>[1]</sup> -

145:21

**restricts** <sup>[1]</sup> -

154:20

**result** <sup>[3]</sup> - 76:13,

132:8, 145:10

**results** <sup>[5]</sup> - 107:9,

107:21, 108:3,  
111:5, 137:8

**retirees** <sup>[1]</sup> - 39:18

**retirement** <sup>[1]</sup> - 87:6

**retirements** <sup>[1]</sup> -

52:15

**retiring** <sup>[1]</sup> - 38:16

**return** <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:17

**returns** <sup>[1]</sup> - 167:6

**revealed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:9

**revenue** <sup>[2]</sup> -

130:25, 145:5

**revenues** <sup>[1]</sup> - 127:5

**reviewing** <sup>[1]</sup> -

109:7

**revote** <sup>[1]</sup> - 76:18

**rewards** <sup>[1]</sup> - 56:17

**Reynolds** <sup>[1]</sup> -

96:13

**RFP** <sup>[2]</sup> - 149:18,

151:2

**RFPing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 150:16

**Rhodes** <sup>[8]</sup> - 29:3,

29:15, 29:24,  
31:5, 33:6, 34:2,  
35:11, 36:17

**Rich** <sup>[10]</sup> - 44:16,

50:5, 51:6, 52:20,  
55:14, 56:2,  
58:11, 61:7, 63:9,  
95:18

**RICHARD** <sup>[2]</sup> - 1:8,

2:2

**Richard** <sup>[2]</sup> - 8:17,

81:6

**ride** <sup>[1]</sup> - 133:23

**riding** <sup>[2]</sup> - 90:8,

90:18

**rising** <sup>[2]</sup> - 78:17,

80:12

**risk** <sup>[5]</sup> - 12:8, 80:4,

80:5, 108:13,  
157:23

**RMP** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:10

**Road** <sup>[1]</sup> - 36:15

**road** <sup>[2]</sup> - 18:11,  
126:18

**Roadways** <sup>[1]</sup> -

77:12

**roadways** <sup>[1]</sup> -

78:25

**Rob** <sup>[1]</sup> - 53:11

**Robin** <sup>[8]</sup> - 46:24,  
47:8, 52:13,  
52:16, 66:9, 67:7,  
84:24, 85:20

**Rockaways** <sup>[1]</sup> -

98:21

**rocks** <sup>[1]</sup> - 97:24

**role** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:22

**roles** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:22

**roll** <sup>[2]</sup> - 6:10, 8:23

**Roll** <sup>[1]</sup> - 6:13

**Rome** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:25

**roof** <sup>[4]</sup> - 10:6, 10:7,  
11:20, 22:3

**room** <sup>[1]</sup> - 9:8

**rooms** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:10

**Roosevelt** <sup>[3]</sup> -

48:18, 77:20,  
77:25

**rope** <sup>[1]</sup> - 11:23

**ROSE** <sup>[1]</sup> - 4:8

**Rose** <sup>[3]</sup> - 8:4,

61:16, 63:22

**roster** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:16

**roughly** <sup>[3]</sup> - 29:7,

29:18, 127:5

**routinely** <sup>[1]</sup> -

130:15

**Rules** <sup>[7]</sup> - 101:5,

101:7, 101:10,  
102:4, 102:9,

102:13, 145:19  
**ruling** <sup>[1]</sup> - 76:14  
**run** <sup>[1]</sup> - 33:14  
**running** <sup>[1]</sup> - 97:4  
**rush** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:2  
**Ryan** <sup>[2]</sup> - 43:5,  
 53:11  
**RYDER** <sup>[3]</sup> - 11:4,  
 15:25, 20:14

## S

**sacrifice** <sup>[1]</sup> - 49:5  
**sacrifices** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 134:20  
**sad** <sup>[2]</sup> - 45:14,  
 45:16  
**sadly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:12  
**safe** <sup>[4]</sup> - 15:3,  
 25:20, 84:7,  
 112:24  
**safer** <sup>[2]</sup> - 25:20,  
 75:8  
**safety** <sup>[5]</sup> - 23:20,  
 51:13, 73:10,  
 79:24, 108:14  
**SAG** <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:22  
**Saint** <sup>[1]</sup> - 62:21  
**sale** <sup>[3]</sup> - 116:8,  
 117:2, 117:7  
**sales** <sup>[8]</sup> - 91:6,  
 115:7, 118:18,  
 127:6, 132:4,  
 133:14, 133:16,  
 136:7  
**salutatorian** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 28:8  
**salute** <sup>[1]</sup> - 110:21  
**saluting** <sup>[2]</sup> - 90:7,  
 90:17  
**Sands** <sup>[3]</sup> - 72:19,

79:15, 92:24  
**Sandy** <sup>[5]</sup> - 55:2,  
 95:2, 96:4, 135:4,  
 141:16  
**Sarah** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:23  
**Saturday** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 67:13, 116:17  
**Saturdays** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 47:13, 117:3  
**save** <sup>[4]</sup> - 24:2, 65:9,  
 78:22, 144:3  
**saved** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:8  
**saving** <sup>[2]</sup> - 22:20,  
 134:16  
**saw** <sup>[6]</sup> - 15:9, 33:8,  
 137:9, 138:5,  
 144:21, 146:15  
**Scannell** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:8  
**scares** <sup>[1]</sup> - 140:24  
**Schaefer** <sup>[7]</sup> - 7:20,  
 38:19, 39:20,  
 56:24, 118:3,  
 126:16, 167:9  
**SCHAEFER** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
 3:23, 7:21, 56:25,  
 159:18, 162:12,  
 167:10  
**Schmitt** <sup>[1]</sup> - 45:20  
**scholar** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:19  
**Scholar** <sup>[2]</sup> - 29:3,  
 34:2  
**Scholars** <sup>[3]</sup> - 28:4,  
 33:6, 36:17  
**scholarship** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
 29:8, 31:7, 35:12  
**Scholarship** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
 29:15, 29:25  
**School** <sup>[10]</sup> - 27:15,  
 27:18, 34:6,  
 34:16, 34:24,

35:25, 36:6,  
 36:16, 36:24, 64:8  
**school** <sup>[13]</sup> - 27:24,  
 28:16, 30:9,  
 30:17, 32:2,  
 33:21, 35:5, 36:7,  
 65:15, 67:3,  
 93:25, 99:20,  
 99:22  
**schools** <sup>[2]</sup> - 11:13,  
 65:12  
**Schumer** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
 95:14, 95:15,  
 98:14  
**science** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:14  
**sciences** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:17  
**scope** <sup>[1]</sup> - 112:3  
**sea** <sup>[2]</sup> - 95:22,  
 95:23  
**seagate** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:10  
**search** <sup>[2]</sup> - 107:10,  
 107:21  
**season** <sup>[1]</sup> - 100:5  
**seasons** <sup>[1]</sup> - 65:14  
**Second** <sup>[1]</sup> - 167:10  
**second** <sup>[10]</sup> - 11:18,  
 11:21, 21:5,  
 54:15, 68:23,  
 69:17, 107:15,  
 142:13, 153:8,  
 158:23  
**Seconded** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 158:25  
**seconded** <sup>[14]</sup> -  
 102:8, 104:24,  
 106:10, 113:9,  
 114:7, 115:11,  
 118:3, 118:22,  
 120:14, 121:10,  
 123:15, 124:13,

126:8, 164:18  
**Secondly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:6  
**secret** <sup>[1]</sup> - 76:15  
**Section** <sup>[4]</sup> - 106:4,  
 108:5, 110:13,  
 113:24  
**secure** <sup>[1]</sup> - 55:5  
**security** <sup>[3]</sup> - 31:25,  
 73:17, 75:10  
**see** <sup>[25]</sup> - 13:8,  
 13:15, 13:21,  
 15:13, 16:25,  
 24:20, 32:5, 39:2,  
 40:6, 49:19,  
 61:20, 64:19,  
 83:24, 83:25,  
 88:11, 92:3,  
 127:15, 127:19,  
 128:23, 133:6,  
 136:25, 151:5,  
 153:2, 155:16,  
 161:16  
**seeing** <sup>[3]</sup> - 132:6,  
 132:12, 133:13  
**seeking** <sup>[2]</sup> - 107:2,  
 107:11  
**seem** <sup>[3]</sup> - 38:9,  
 44:21, 149:23  
**sees** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:5  
**self** <sup>[3]</sup> - 84:2,  
 150:22, 151:4  
**self-interest** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 150:22  
**self-promotion** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 151:4  
**self-serving** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 84:2  
**selflessly** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
 42:16  
**Senator** <sup>[1]</sup> - 33:8

**senior**<sup>[7]</sup> - 35:17,  
46:11, 46:20,  
50:10, 62:2,  
97:18, 127:11

**seniors**<sup>[1]</sup> - 73:4

**sense**<sup>[1]</sup> - 110:14

**sent**<sup>[2]</sup> - 60:2,  
152:4

**sentiments**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
57:6

**separate**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
155:25, 157:8

**separated**<sup>[1]</sup> - 79:2

**separating**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
55:9

**September**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
68:12, 68:25

**Sergeant**<sup>[1]</sup> - 17:19

**SERGEANT**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
17:20

**seriously**<sup>[1]</sup> - 96:22

**serve**<sup>[5]</sup> - 40:18,  
42:7, 47:15, 50:7,  
73:3

**served**<sup>[3]</sup> - 46:9,  
83:13, 87:17

**service**<sup>[5]</sup> - 20:18,  
66:15, 72:11,  
86:14, 149:6

**Service**<sup>[1]</sup> - 9:24

**services**<sup>[7]</sup> - 72:12,  
78:16, 89:17,  
91:16, 138:4,  
150:17, 152:7

**Services**<sup>[1]</sup> - 89:15

**serving**<sup>[4]</sup> - 42:16,  
84:2, 153:23,  
153:24

**set**<sup>[5]</sup> - 19:24,  
24:11, 72:20,

142:19, 169:14

**settlement**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
141:20

**seven**<sup>[3]</sup> - 131:18,  
136:4, 160:4

**several**<sup>[1]</sup> - 116:23

**severe**<sup>[1]</sup> - 18:24

**sewers**<sup>[1]</sup> - 137:16

**shame**<sup>[3]</sup> - 151:6,  
151:13

**shameful**<sup>[1]</sup> - 83:18

**share**<sup>[5]</sup> - 33:25,  
34:6, 34:25, 71:5,  
87:12

**shared**<sup>[2]</sup> - 34:2,  
63:3

**Sharon**<sup>[5]</sup> - 47:9,  
52:14, 66:4, 67:7,  
85:20

**Sheehan**<sup>[2]</sup> - 10:4,  
11:2

**sheltering**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
43:12

**shines**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:22

**shop**<sup>[1]</sup> - 145:7

**Shore**<sup>[2]</sup> - 123:12,  
138:2

**shore**<sup>[6]</sup> - 95:9,  
99:3, 99:4

**short**<sup>[5]</sup> - 30:23,  
30:25, 31:2, 34:3,  
97:5

**shortage**<sup>[1]</sup> - 71:24

**shortfall**<sup>[1]</sup> - 72:3

**shot**<sup>[2]</sup> - 22:2,  
69:25

**shovel**<sup>[1]</sup> - 69:12

**show**<sup>[4]</sup> - 25:6,  
29:5, 52:9, 73:8

**showcases**<sup>[1]</sup> -

148:14

**showed**<sup>[1]</sup> - 24:9

**shown**<sup>[2]</sup> - 14:20,  
157:17

**shows**<sup>[6]</sup> - 12:16,  
20:6, 36:7, 71:25,  
74:12, 74:17

**sic**<sup>[3]</sup> - 94:6, 94:7,  
150:17

**sick**<sup>[2]</sup> - 16:18,  
58:18

**side**<sup>[10]</sup> - 13:23,  
16:3, 18:16, 23:7,  
43:2, 52:18,

54:12, 57:14,  
143:19, 146:16

**sides**<sup>[2]</sup> - 52:12,  
53:21

**sidewalk**<sup>[3]</sup> - 19:8,  
19:10, 19:18

**sideway**<sup>[1]</sup> - 25:3

**Siela**<sup>[1]</sup> - 6:19

**SIELA**<sup>[1]</sup> - 2:18

**significant**<sup>[2]</sup> -  
88:3, 165:8

**signified**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
144:12

**signify**<sup>[16]</sup> - 102:11,  
106:13, 113:12,  
114:12, 115:14,  
118:5, 119:3,  
120:17, 122:10,  
123:23, 124:19,  
125:10, 159:4,  
162:7, 165:23,  
167:12

**signing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 56:21

**silver**<sup>[1]</sup> - 153:2

**sincerity**<sup>[1]</sup> - 16:7

**singing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 27:25

**single**<sup>[5]</sup> - 20:25,  
21:3, 51:18,  
54:16, 55:20

**sisters**<sup>[1]</sup> - 15:2

**sit**<sup>[3]</sup> - 51:24, 62:6,  
74:25

**sits**<sup>[3]</sup> - 58:11,  
89:13, 91:9

**sitting**<sup>[2]</sup> - 18:14,  
130:11

**situation**<sup>[7]</sup> - 22:2,  
22:4, 22:6, 23:14,  
23:24, 155:12,  
156:22

**six**<sup>[4]</sup> - 62:24,  
94:24, 99:14,  
107:12

**size**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:7

**skip**<sup>[1]</sup> - 33:12

**slip**<sup>[1]</sup> - 9:7

**slippery**<sup>[1]</sup> - 12:5

**Sloan**<sup>[1]</sup> - 93:19

**Sloan-Kettering**<sup>[1]</sup>  
- 93:19

**slowly**<sup>[1]</sup> - 19:17

**small**<sup>[12]</sup> - 34:10,  
72:22, 128:2,  
128:12, 128:13,  
134:3, 134:5,  
134:7, 136:17,  
139:5, 145:11,  
153:11

**smiling**<sup>[1]</sup> - 10:8

**snowstorm**<sup>[1]</sup> -  
58:4

**so-called**<sup>[1]</sup> - 84:2

**soccer**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:6

**social**<sup>[4]</sup> - 78:12,  
80:23, 81:2, 138:4

**Society**<sup>[3]</sup> - 28:4,

28:6, 68:8  
**Solages** <sup>[4]</sup> - 6:23, 118:22, 135:18, 152:9  
**SOLAGES** <sup>[6]</sup> - 2:21, 6:24, 135:19, 137:4, 159:8, 163:2  
**Solages'** <sup>[1]</sup> - 139:2  
**sole** <sup>[1]</sup> - 149:3  
**solely** <sup>[1]</sup> - 148:16  
**solid** <sup>[1]</sup> - 109:11  
**someone** <sup>[8]</sup> - 25:14, 31:6, 35:19, 64:20, 72:19, 89:10, 108:7, 111:4  
**sometime** <sup>[1]</sup> - 70:3  
**sometimes** <sup>[4]</sup> - 45:22, 47:20, 87:15, 142:21  
**son** <sup>[1]</sup> - 96:17  
**soon** <sup>[2]</sup> - 40:3, 87:19  
**sorry** <sup>[3]</sup> - 36:16, 88:10, 149:12  
**sound** <sup>[1]</sup> - 58:20  
**South** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:25  
**south** <sup>[2]</sup> - 95:9, 99:3  
**Southern** <sup>[2]</sup> - 18:9, 18:15  
**speaker** <sup>[1]</sup> - 97:7  
**speakers** <sup>[1]</sup> - 74:9  
**speaking** <sup>[2]</sup> - 18:13, 92:2  
**speaks** <sup>[1]</sup> - 67:4  
**special** <sup>[5]</sup> - 15:15, 24:13, 24:14, 54:4, 73:6

**specialties** <sup>[1]</sup> - 20:15  
**specific** <sup>[4]</sup> - 133:12, 135:20, 135:24, 157:24  
**specifically** <sup>[6]</sup> - 45:9, 132:22, 145:2, 147:20, 156:14, 165:3  
**speculation** <sup>[3]</sup> - 133:25, 134:23, 136:23  
**speculative** <sup>[2]</sup> - 134:2, 135:7  
**speech** <sup>[1]</sup> - 35:18  
**speed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 75:10  
**spelled** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:20  
**spend** <sup>[9]</sup> - 84:5, 127:5, 136:20, 140:10, 143:23, 143:24, 145:9, 146:24, 149:4  
**spending** <sup>[8]</sup> - 70:19, 70:20, 127:3, 128:16, 133:17, 136:8, 146:16, 161:7  
**spent** <sup>[9]</sup> - 62:23, 83:25, 98:16, 130:13, 132:3, 132:20, 138:21, 140:21, 146:18  
**spin** <sup>[1]</sup> - 81:25  
**spirits** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:23  
**split** <sup>[2]</sup> - 21:5, 54:15  
**spoken** <sup>[2]</sup> - 81:24, 92:19  
**sponsorship** <sup>[2]</sup> - 129:24, 130:2

**sports** <sup>[2]</sup> - 62:15, 62:16  
**spot** <sup>[1]</sup> - 15:19  
**spread** <sup>[1]</sup> - 13:11  
**spring** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:12, 81:8  
**Square** <sup>[2]</sup> - 68:6, 68:7  
**SS** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:5  
**Ssection** <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:17  
**stabilize** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:20  
**staff** <sup>[23]</sup> - 42:24, 42:25, 43:6, 46:11, 46:20, 47:6, 50:10, 52:11, 52:19, 57:19, 57:20, 58:15, 59:5, 59:14, 65:25, 66:2, 84:25, 85:4, 85:19, 87:4, 87:5, 107:23  
**staffing** <sup>[2]</sup> - 20:9, 91:12  
**stage** <sup>[1]</sup> - 93:12  
**stages** <sup>[1]</sup> - 93:7  
**stand** <sup>[4]</sup> - 19:10, 48:20, 50:6, 89:20  
**standard** <sup>[1]</sup> - 136:15  
**standing** <sup>[4]</sup> - 39:25, 60:18, 90:3, 147:4  
**standpoint** <sup>[1]</sup> - 45:7  
**start** <sup>[5]</sup> - 22:14, 31:16, 31:17, 53:3, 161:6

**started** <sup>[6]</sup> - 28:13, 29:13, 56:7, 62:22, 96:24, 141:11  
**starting** <sup>[3]</sup> - 44:19, 52:3, 161:3  
**Starting** <sup>[1]</sup> - 103:10  
**starved** <sup>[1]</sup> - 151:9  
**state** <sup>[10]</sup> - 20:5, 85:2, 88:7, 93:5, 94:3, 116:22, 116:25, 117:5, 118:17, 150:14  
**State** <sup>[14]</sup> - 18:9, 18:15, 28:2, 77:7, 77:14, 77:22, 115:6, 116:6, 117:10, 144:11, 144:16, 144:25, 158:10, 169:9  
**STATE** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:4  
**statement** <sup>[1]</sup> - 129:9  
**states** <sup>[1]</sup> - 135:21  
**statistically** <sup>[2]</sup> - 142:23, 142:24  
**stay** <sup>[3]</sup> - 22:3, 38:24, 61:18  
**stayed** <sup>[1]</sup> - 52:5  
**staying** <sup>[2]</sup> - 56:10, 87:25  
**stealing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:20  
**stenographic** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:12  
**step** <sup>[1]</sup> - 101:6  
**stepping** <sup>[1]</sup> - 49:15  
**steps** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:16  
**still** <sup>[18]</sup> - 12:7, 30:11, 42:15, 52:5, 53:19,

55:10, 60:18,  
67:12, 69:19,  
69:24, 71:6,  
88:22, 90:8,  
112:3, 126:22,  
135:4, 143:17,  
152:23  
**stimulate** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:5  
**stocking** <sup>[1]</sup> - 92:11  
**Stoddard** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:5  
**stop** <sup>[1]</sup> - 23:17  
**stopped** <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:22  
**stopping** <sup>[1]</sup> - 15:10  
**store** <sup>[1]</sup> - 145:11  
**stores** <sup>[5]</sup> - 115:9,  
116:9, 118:20,  
128:13, 145:7  
**storm** <sup>[1]</sup> - 55:6  
**story** <sup>[2]</sup> - 23:2,  
95:21  
**straight** <sup>[1]</sup> - 43:9  
**Street** <sup>[1]</sup> - 52:2  
**stress** <sup>[2]</sup> - 22:2,  
22:23  
**stressful** <sup>[2]</sup> - 22:6,  
22:8  
**stretched** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
152:21  
**strictly** <sup>[1]</sup> - 68:18  
**strike** <sup>[2]</sup> - 144:22  
**strong** <sup>[3]</sup> - 48:21,  
67:18, 133:14  
**stronger** <sup>[1]</sup> - 14:9  
**struggling** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
134:8, 152:24  
**Studdard** <sup>[1]</sup> - 53:10  
**student** <sup>[2]</sup> - 28:7,  
143:20  
**students** <sup>[5]</sup> - 29:13,  
35:10, 36:8,

38:21, 40:18  
**studied** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:12  
**Study** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:8  
**study** <sup>[4]</sup> - 31:6,  
89:12, 94:22,  
98:20  
**studying** <sup>[3]</sup> - 28:18,  
31:11, 31:17  
**stuff** <sup>[5]</sup> - 49:20,  
67:5, 92:12, 96:8,  
136:5  
**stupid** <sup>[4]</sup> - 92:23,  
93:9, 93:17, 93:23  
**subcommittees** <sup>[1]</sup>  
- 73:4  
**subject** <sup>[5]</sup> - 73:13,  
74:4, 111:10,  
138:18, 145:20  
**submitted** <sup>[4]</sup> -  
68:16, 68:25,  
152:12, 153:4  
**substance** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
72:12, 165:7  
**substitute** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
109:8  
**substitution** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
124:10  
**suburban** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:8  
**success** <sup>[2]</sup> - 32:18,  
34:21  
**successes** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
39:5  
**successful** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
86:9  
**sued** <sup>[1]</sup> - 155:17  
**Suffolk** <sup>[5]</sup> - 73:13,  
111:23, 112:5,  
148:10, 157:16  
**suicidal** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:8  
**suicide** <sup>[8]</sup> - 18:17,

18:25, 78:14,  
79:13, 79:23,  
80:9, 80:11, 81:2  
**summer** <sup>[1]</sup> - 132:16  
**summertime** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
74:16  
**Sundays** <sup>[1]</sup> - 47:13  
**superb** <sup>[2]</sup> - 84:25,  
85:4  
**superfluous** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
99:13  
**superintendent** <sup>[2]</sup>  
- 30:14, 32:16  
**SUPERINTENDE**  
**NT** <sup>[1]</sup> - 33:23  
**Superstorm** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
135:4  
**supervisors** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
51:23  
**support** <sup>[10]</sup> - 13:6,  
21:9, 38:20,  
39:15, 52:20,  
82:7, 82:17, 83:3,  
84:22, 89:17  
**supported** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
41:6, 50:25  
**supporting** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
30:7, 38:13  
**supportive** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
49:9  
**supports** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
144:10  
**supposed** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
31:15, 70:2,  
70:24, 156:15,  
156:18, 157:12  
**supposedly** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
156:19  
**surpass** <sup>[1]</sup> - 35:20  
**surplus** <sup>[1]</sup> - 78:10

**surprising** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
35:12  
**surreal** <sup>[1]</sup> - 32:13  
**Susan** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:24,  
92:17  
**suspend** <sup>[2]</sup> - 102:4,  
102:8  
**swallow** <sup>[1]</sup> - 146:15  
**sweat** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:4  
**sweet** <sup>[5]</sup> - 30:24,  
31:2, 34:3, 56:13,  
60:22  
**systems** <sup>[1]</sup> - 73:18

## T

**table** <sup>[5]</sup> - 57:7,  
155:8, 158:22,  
159:2, 160:4  
**tabling** <sup>[1]</sup> - 159:3  
**TAKEN** <sup>[1]</sup> - 1:23  
**talented** <sup>[1]</sup> - 27:22  
**talents** <sup>[2]</sup> - 27:25,  
28:10  
**talks** <sup>[2]</sup> - 108:10,  
143:5  
**tangent** <sup>[1]</sup> - 31:9  
**tapping** <sup>[1]</sup> - 93:22  
**task** <sup>[1]</sup> - 147:4  
**taught** <sup>[1]</sup> - 36:14  
**tax** <sup>[10]</sup> - 120:10,  
121:5, 127:6,  
132:4, 132:5,  
132:7, 133:16,  
136:8, 144:11  
**taxes** <sup>[5]</sup> - 99:22,  
120:10, 121:6,  
133:14, 157:3  
**taxpayer** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:17  
**taxpayers** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
83:25, 151:24,

152:6  
**team**<sup>[1]</sup> - 17:23  
**teams**<sup>[1]</sup> - 20:20  
**technology**<sup>[4]</sup> - 73:11, 75:7, 75:14, 78:23  
**teetering**<sup>[3]</sup> - 81:9, 81:11, 81:15  
**telephone**<sup>[1]</sup> - 54:12  
**template**<sup>[1]</sup> - 94:15  
**ten**<sup>[2]</sup> - 23:8, 60:13  
**term**<sup>[4]</sup> - 124:11, 140:14, 157:5, 165:10  
**terms**<sup>[1]</sup> - 47:3  
**terrible**<sup>[2]</sup> - 72:3, 137:10  
**Testamark**<sup>[3]</sup> - 27:7, 27:13, 34:7  
**TESTAMARK**<sup>[1]</sup> - 30:23  
**testament**<sup>[1]</sup> - 44:2  
**testify**<sup>[1]</sup> - 52:6  
**thanked**<sup>[1]</sup> - 44:17  
**thankful**<sup>[2]</sup> - 56:11, 66:19  
**thanking**<sup>[1]</sup> - 25:18  
**Thanksgiving**<sup>[1]</sup> - 143:21  
**theater**<sup>[2]</sup> - 46:5, 49:7  
**Their's**<sup>[1]</sup> - 160:19  
**theme**<sup>[1]</sup> - 38:9  
**there'll**<sup>[2]</sup> - 142:13, 143:12  
**Thespian**<sup>[1]</sup> - 28:5  
**they've**<sup>[6]</sup> - 14:20, 31:22, 43:10, 55:15, 109:11,

157:17  
**thick**<sup>[1]</sup> - 45:11  
**thin**<sup>[1]</sup> - 45:11  
**thinking**<sup>[3]</sup> - 32:3, 57:4, 131:20  
**third**<sup>[1]</sup> - 96:25  
**THOMAS**<sup>[1]</sup> - 3:20  
**thoroughly**<sup>[1]</sup> - 110:12  
**thousand**<sup>[1]</sup> - 146:7  
**three**<sup>[12]</sup> - 14:10, 57:3, 57:14, 77:18, 90:9, 90:19, 90:23, 91:24, 93:12, 96:2, 136:6, 153:9  
**threshold**<sup>[3]</sup> - 88:23, 146:2, 152:15  
**thrive**<sup>[1]</sup> - 38:24  
**throughout**<sup>[10]</sup> - 41:7, 43:11, 73:12, 74:18, 117:5, 138:23, 142:2, 144:25  
**throw**<sup>[3]</sup> - 81:6, 81:17, 97:24  
**Thursday**<sup>[1]</sup> - 116:16  
**ticking**<sup>[1]</sup> - 140:20  
**tie**<sup>[1]</sup> - 136:7  
**tied**<sup>[1]</sup> - 16:3  
**timing**<sup>[1]</sup> - 123:5  
**tireless**<sup>[1]</sup> - 85:7  
**Title**<sup>[3]</sup> - 106:5, 113:25, 160:9  
**title**<sup>[1]</sup> - 69:5  
**today**<sup>[32]</sup> - 12:25, 18:4, 22:22,

27:13, 30:5, 32:15, 32:24, 35:4, 36:14, 38:3, 41:2, 44:12, 45:19, 46:22, 47:3, 48:3, 49:10, 64:16, 67:17, 68:5, 68:13, 70:3, 73:20, 81:23, 86:12, 129:11, 134:15, 135:3, 138:5, 148:21, 151:10, 152:3  
**today's**<sup>[2]</sup> - 38:9, 50:2  
**Todd**<sup>[1]</sup> - 32:16  
**together**<sup>[10]</sup> - 54:6, 56:7, 62:12, 62:23, 62:25, 63:5, 63:6, 86:7, 139:17, 144:6  
**tokens**<sup>[1]</sup> - 47:16  
**tomorrow**<sup>[2]</sup> - 98:14, 111:11  
**Tony**<sup>[1]</sup> - 46:24  
**took**<sup>[2]</sup> - 28:9, 68:9  
**Top**<sup>[6]</sup> - 9:2, 9:10, 9:16, 11:2, 14:15, 16:8  
**top**<sup>[4]</sup> - 20:11, 77:18, 145:22, 150:6  
**topic**<sup>[1]</sup> - 71:12  
**total**<sup>[1]</sup> - 69:17  
**totally**<sup>[2]</sup> - 16:25, 58:21  
**touched**<sup>[2]</sup> - 17:4, 97:19  
**touchy**<sup>[1]</sup> - 138:18  
**tough**<sup>[6]</sup> - 49:12,

55:9, 86:6, 86:12, 133:17, 141:8  
**tour**<sup>[1]</sup> - 127:11  
**tourism**<sup>[17]</sup> - 72:16, 72:21, 72:25, 127:6, 132:18, 132:23, 135:14, 154:9, 156:14, 156:16, 157:10, 157:11, 157:20, 158:2, 158:19, 160:24  
**Tourism**<sup>[1]</sup> - 156:15  
**Tourist**<sup>[1]</sup> - 160:11  
**tourists**<sup>[2]</sup> - 149:4, 150:23  
**tournament**<sup>[1]</sup> - 73:8  
**tournaments**<sup>[3]</sup> - 71:24, 74:13, 75:19  
**towards**<sup>[2]</sup> - 76:2, 110:18  
**Town**<sup>[3]</sup> - 62:24, 99:16, 131:11  
**towns**<sup>[3]</sup> - 73:12, 99:11, 99:18  
**toy**<sup>[1]</sup> - 11:12  
**toys**<sup>[3]</sup> - 10:15, 11:14, 12:15  
**tracks**<sup>[1]</sup> - 153:7  
**Trade**<sup>[1]</sup> - 82:11  
**traditionally**<sup>[1]</sup> - 9:3  
**traffic**<sup>[3]</sup> - 77:16, 78:20, 78:21  
**Traffic**<sup>[1]</sup> - 77:8  
**train**<sup>[2]</sup> - 153:7  
**training**<sup>[8]</sup> - 20:17,



20:21, 21:2, 21:3,  
21:8, 23:12, 25:5,  
25:7  
**trajectory** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
31:20  
**tranche** <sup>[2]</sup> - 142:14,  
143:15  
**transcription** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
169:12  
**transfer** <sup>[6]</sup> - 71:14,  
76:18, 76:24,  
126:4, 156:2,  
158:18  
**transferred** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
73:23, 161:12  
**Transformative** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
165:4  
**transition** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
87:15  
**transitional** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
89:16  
**transparency** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
146:22  
**transparent** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
76:16  
**traveled** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:11  
**treatment** <sup>[3]</sup> -  
19:20, 20:6, 80:7  
**tremendous** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
25:16, 34:8,  
42:14, 44:22,  
46:15, 67:3  
**tremendously** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
39:22  
**Tri** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:4  
**Tri-M** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:4  
**tried** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:18  
**trillions** <sup>[1]</sup> - 98:19  
**true** <sup>[5]</sup> - 32:20,  
44:2, 52:8, 66:21,

82:9  
**truly** <sup>[8]</sup> - 32:20,  
43:20, 48:20,  
48:25, 54:3,  
55:19, 64:13,  
66:11  
**trunk** <sup>[1]</sup> - 91:2  
**trust** <sup>[1]</sup> - 144:4  
**try** <sup>[7]</sup> - 21:6, 47:20,  
58:7, 111:21,  
128:15, 136:11,  
139:2  
**trying** <sup>[9]</sup> - 25:9,  
65:9, 89:4, 92:22,  
95:15, 136:9,  
142:15, 152:21,  
156:11  
**Tuesday** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
116:15  
**turn** <sup>[2]</sup> - 9:9, 153:12  
**Turnpike** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:13  
**TV** <sup>[1]</sup> - 84:2  
**Twenty** <sup>[1]</sup> - 10:4  
**Two** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:21  
**two** <sup>[24]</sup> - 10:4,  
21:10, 24:4,  
24:14, 30:6,  
43:19, 47:7,  
47:16, 47:22,  
55:22, 68:16,  
74:23, 79:10,  
81:23, 82:20,  
86:16, 90:18,  
102:5, 116:14,  
116:22, 120:3,  
135:11, 157:6,  
165:10  
**Tymecki** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:4,  
10:25  
**types** <sup>[1]</sup> - 60:12

## U

**UBS** <sup>[1]</sup> - 72:19  
**Ugalde** <sup>[3]</sup> - 5:23,  
84:16, 84:18  
**UGLADE** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
84:17, 87:3  
**ultimate** <sup>[2]</sup> - 49:5,  
134:20  
**unanimously** <sup>[7]</sup> -  
102:20, 105:16,  
114:21, 119:12,  
122:20, 166:9,  
167:22  
**unconscionable** <sup>[1]</sup>  
- 82:15  
**under** <sup>[4]</sup> - 93:8,  
128:24, 152:14,  
160:9  
**underground** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
93:3  
**underscore** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
16:10  
**Understood** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
151:14  
**understood** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
96:19  
**unfortunate** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
11:14, 67:15  
**Unfortunately** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
13:7  
**unfortunately** <sup>[6]</sup> -  
13:13, 87:18,  
141:15, 143:19,  
153:14, 155:8  
**uniform** <sup>[1]</sup> - 18:12  
**union** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:17  
**Uniondale** <sup>[8]</sup> -  
48:18, 74:8,  
76:25, 77:11,  
77:16, 84:19,  
85:11, 86:3  
**Uniondale's** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
78:3  
**unions** <sup>[2]</sup> - 99:20,  
99:21  
**unique** <sup>[2]</sup> - 57:7,  
60:6  
**unit** <sup>[3]</sup> - 10:13,  
16:9, 18:20  
**Unit** <sup>[2]</sup> - 9:24, 13:5  
**University** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
28:10, 29:9  
**unlike** <sup>[1]</sup> - 129:5  
**unwavering** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
38:20  
**Up** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:6  
**up** <sup>[55]</sup> - 9:8, 16:2,  
17:15, 19:10,  
21:25, 26:2, 27:8,  
28:20, 30:14,  
30:19, 32:5,  
33:11, 33:22,  
40:12, 44:7,  
45:20, 46:6,  
46:17, 47:12,  
47:13, 50:6, 52:6,  
52:25, 53:24,  
57:24, 61:2,  
67:13, 79:14,  
79:21, 80:17,  
80:21, 85:2,  
87:20, 87:25,  
88:6, 91:13, 92:2,  
92:6, 93:4, 93:11,  
95:13, 95:21,  
95:22, 96:6,  
98:23, 99:5,  
112:4, 128:8,  
130:4, 132:24,

133:3, 140:17,  
147:4, 152:6,  
161:7  
**upbringing** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
30:4  
**update** <sup>[2]</sup> - 107:11,  
149:14  
**updates** <sup>[1]</sup> - 126:25  
**updating** <sup>[1]</sup> - 83:23  
**upgrading** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
73:17  
**uptick** <sup>[5]</sup> - 132:6,  
132:12, 133:6,  
133:13, 139:24  
**upwards** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
132:24  
**urge** <sup>[1]</sup> - 140:12  
**Ursula** <sup>[2]</sup> - 43:19,  
55:13  
**US** <sup>[1]</sup> - 80:8  
**usage** <sup>[1]</sup> - 76:4  
**uses** <sup>[1]</sup> - 75:9

## V

**vacation** <sup>[2]</sup> - 53:3,  
53:5  
**vaccinated** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
65:16  
**validating** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
161:2  
**values** <sup>[1]</sup> - 82:25  
**various** <sup>[1]</sup> - 73:3  
**vehicle** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:6  
**vehicles** <sup>[2]</sup> - 77:10,  
77:15  
**Veillard** <sup>[1]</sup> - 153:5  
**vendor** <sup>[1]</sup> - 149:17  
**vendors** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:17  
**verbal** <sup>[30]</sup> - 20:24,  
102:17, 105:3,

105:13, 106:19,  
112:9, 113:4,  
113:18, 114:9,  
114:18, 115:20,  
117:14, 117:21,  
118:11, 118:24,  
119:9, 120:23,  
121:14, 122:7,  
122:17, 123:19,  
124:5, 124:16,  
125:2, 125:17,  
161:20, 162:3,  
165:20, 166:6,  
167:19  
**versatility** <sup>[1]</sup> - 25:6  
**Veteran** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:15  
**veteran** <sup>[2]</sup> - 72:11,  
91:15  
**Veterans** <sup>[2]</sup> -  
88:21, 89:3  
**veterans** <sup>[4]</sup> - 78:15,  
88:22, 89:8,  
134:19  
**vice** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:5  
**Vice** <sup>[1]</sup> - 9:12  
**videos** <sup>[1]</sup> - 59:12  
**view** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:6  
**village** <sup>[5]</sup> - 64:10,  
64:12, 64:19,  
65:8, 96:5  
**villages** <sup>[1]</sup> - 73:12  
**visit** <sup>[1]</sup> - 11:13  
**visited** <sup>[1]</sup> - 9:24  
**visitor's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 150:16  
**visitors** <sup>[5]</sup> - 147:16,  
148:9, 148:13,  
148:17, 153:23  
**Visitors** <sup>[1]</sup> - 149:21  
**volumes** <sup>[2]</sup> - 23:22,  
67:4

**voluminous** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
95:12  
**volunteered** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
66:7  
**vote** <sup>[21]</sup> - 48:11,  
73:6, 73:19, 74:2,  
74:3, 74:4, 76:23,  
79:19, 81:3, 83:4,  
84:10, 113:23,  
118:15, 125:6,  
125:8, 138:12,  
138:13, 160:4,  
163:7, 164:7  
**voted** <sup>[5]</sup> - 73:25,  
74:10, 84:13,  
94:7, 94:8  
**votes** <sup>[1]</sup> - 160:5  
**voting** <sup>[4]</sup> - 70:3,  
70:5, 70:19, 70:20

## W

**wait** <sup>[1]</sup> - 149:9  
**waiting** <sup>[3]</sup> - 69:13,  
69:24, 88:16  
**waive** <sup>[1]</sup> - 120:7  
**wake** <sup>[3]</sup> - 32:5,  
95:21, 95:22  
**walk** <sup>[4]</sup> - 19:13,  
19:18, 87:16,  
110:15  
**walked** <sup>[1]</sup> - 23:19  
**Walker** <sup>[7]</sup> - 8:5,  
102:7, 118:2,  
120:13, 124:13,  
126:8, 164:18  
**WALKER** <sup>[7]</sup> - 4:8,  
8:6, 16:15, 36:4,  
61:24, 159:25,  
162:19  
**walking** <sup>[1]</sup> - 35:4

**wall** <sup>[1]</sup> - 13:23  
**Walmart** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
136:10  
**wandering** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
152:25  
**wants** <sup>[5]</sup> - 31:6,  
81:6, 89:9, 92:24,  
140:8  
**war** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:2  
**warms** <sup>[1]</sup> - 47:2  
**Washington** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
92:4  
**waste** <sup>[1]</sup> - 99:13  
**wasting** <sup>[1]</sup> - 92:25  
**watching** <sup>[1]</sup> - 22:24  
**water** <sup>[4]</sup> - 84:4,  
88:14, 96:9,  
153:12  
**wave** <sup>[2]</sup> - 15:10,  
94:25  
**waving** <sup>[2]</sup> - 10:8,  
17:4  
**ways** <sup>[5]</sup> - 14:7,  
14:18, 14:19,  
60:22, 161:8  
**weapons** <sup>[1]</sup> - 20:23  
**website** <sup>[1]</sup> - 95:11  
**Wednesday** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
116:15  
**Wednesdays** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
116:10  
**week** <sup>[3]</sup> - 58:11,  
74:15, 153:11  
**week's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 76:13  
**weekend** <sup>[4]</sup> - 53:2,  
80:3, 85:6, 99:8  
**weekends** <sup>[1]</sup> -  
46:17  
**weeks** <sup>[2]</sup> - 103:6,  
135:11

**well-being** <sup>[1]</sup> - 108:14  
**wells** <sup>[1]</sup> - 84:6  
**West** <sup>[2]</sup> - 52:2, 97:23  
**Westchester** <sup>[1]</sup> - 111:25  
**wet** <sup>[1]</sup> - 12:6  
**Wheat** <sup>[2]</sup> - 47:8, 66:9  
**Whereas** <sup>[1]</sup> - 134:2  
**WHEREOF** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:13  
**WHITTON** <sup>[16]</sup> - 3:14, 7:15, 154:6, 154:14, 154:22, 155:7, 155:22, 156:3, 156:8, 156:12, 157:9, 157:15, 159:6, 160:14, 160:18, 162:24  
**Whitton** <sup>[4]</sup> - 7:14, 49:14, 123:15, 154:5  
**whole** <sup>[6]</sup> - 16:9, 23:13, 30:8, 110:10, 140:15, 151:19  
**wide** <sup>[1]</sup> - 148:20  
**widow** <sup>[1]</sup> - 89:2  
**wife** <sup>[1]</sup> - 49:8  
**William** <sup>[1]</sup> - 7:5  
**WILLIAM** <sup>[1]</sup> - 3:5  
**Williams** <sup>[2]</sup> - 69:3, 69:5  
**willing** <sup>[1]</sup> - 51:10  
**willy** <sup>[1]</sup> - 143:24  
**win** <sup>[6]</sup> - 136:22, 137:5, 138:9

**Winch** <sup>[3]</sup> - 32:17, 35:3, 35:9  
**WINCH** <sup>[1]</sup> - 33:23  
**window** <sup>[1]</sup> - 12:5  
**windows** <sup>[2]</sup> - 75:23, 91:11  
**wine** <sup>[3]</sup> - 115:8, 116:8, 118:19  
**winning** <sup>[2]</sup> - 31:5, 31:13  
**wiping** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:4  
**Wisdom** <sup>[1]</sup> - 30:12  
**wisely** <sup>[1]</sup> - 24:21  
**Wish** <sup>[1]</sup> - 30:18  
**wish** <sup>[14]</sup> - 17:24, 34:20, 39:7, 39:10, 40:4, 50:12, 52:13, 55:20, 61:22, 63:13, 76:10, 87:24, 96:18, 97:20  
**wishes** <sup>[2]</sup> - 59:25, 87:13  
**WITNESS** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:13  
**woman** <sup>[4]</sup> - 22:24, 79:12, 93:13, 142:8  
**woman's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 134:16  
**women** <sup>[5]</sup> - 91:23, 91:24, 93:5, 93:11, 153:15  
**wonderful** <sup>[4]</sup> - 15:20, 25:4, 61:13, 99:7  
**words** <sup>[6]</sup> - 30:15, 30:22, 33:25, 34:25, 39:13,

97:11  
**workers** <sup>[3]</sup> - 42:11, 42:12, 51:13  
**workforce** <sup>[3]</sup> - 42:11, 51:9, 51:22  
**works** <sup>[2]</sup> - 52:12, 144:20  
**Works** <sup>[1]</sup> - 137:22  
**World** <sup>[1]</sup> - 127:9  
**world** <sup>[1]</sup> - 29:6  
**worried** <sup>[1]</sup> - 31:24  
**worry** <sup>[1]</sup> - 48:21  
**worst** <sup>[2]</sup> - 13:9, 19:25  
**write** <sup>[2]</sup> - 98:14, 110:9  
**written** <sup>[4]</sup> - 49:21, 109:21, 111:2, 121:20

## Y

**Yale** <sup>[6]</sup> - 28:10, 28:11, 28:14, 28:22, 30:20, 31:19  
**Yale's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 28:23  
**Yankees** <sup>[1]</sup> - 46:2  
**year** <sup>[28]</sup> - 11:11, 11:18, 12:6, 12:10, 14:14, 15:21, 29:14, 40:20, 42:22, 68:11, 78:8, 80:10, 86:9, 88:3, 94:9, 120:11, 121:7, 126:6, 130:12, 132:25, 140:25, 146:7, 148:6, 151:21, 165:10, 165:12

**Year** <sup>[3]</sup> - 40:5, 100:5, 168:3  
**year's** <sup>[1]</sup> - 142:11  
**years** <sup>[21]</sup> - 14:15, 22:25, 32:18, 34:21, 39:17, 39:25, 41:7, 43:20, 46:19, 47:18, 49:2, 51:2, 53:18, 54:6, 55:18, 60:13, 62:24, 66:21, 68:10, 77:18, 161:11  
**yesterday** <sup>[1]</sup> - 88:25  
**York** <sup>[17]</sup> - 1:16, 74:8, 75:9, 77:7, 77:21, 79:3, 116:5, 116:25, 117:6, 117:9, 144:11, 144:15, 144:25, 145:2, 150:15, 158:10, 169:9  
**YORK** <sup>[1]</sup> - 169:4  
**young** <sup>[9]</sup> - 14:12, 22:9, 22:24, 74:24, 79:12, 92:6, 93:5, 134:16, 143:20  
**YOUNGFERT** <sup>[4]</sup> - 67:24, 70:14, 70:23, 71:7  
**Youngfert** <sup>[2]</sup> - 5:16, 67:23  
**youth** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:17  
**youths** <sup>[1]</sup> - 77:19