

NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE
FULL LEGISLATURE MEETING

HOWARD J. KOPEL, PRESIDING OFFICER

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

Monday, January 22, 2024

2:19 p.m.

TAKEN BY: KAREN LORENZO, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

LEGISLATOR HOWARD KOPEL

Presiding Officer

7th Legislative District

LEGISLATOR THOMAS MCKEVITT

Alternate Presiding Officer

13th Legislative District

LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI, JR.

Alternate Deputy Presiding Officer

15th Legislative District

LEGISLATOR SCOTT DAVIS

1st Legislative District

LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE

2nd Legislative District

LEGISLATOR CARRIE SOLAGES

3rd Legislative District

LEGISLATOR PATRICK MULLANEY

4th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR SETH KASLOW

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5th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE

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6th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR JOHN J. GIUFFRE

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8th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR SCOTT STRAUSS

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9th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR MAZI MELESA PILIP

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10th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR MICHAEL GIANREGORIO

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12th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR C. WILLIAM GAYLOR, III

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14th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR ARNOLD W. DRUCKER

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16th Legislative District

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LEGISLATOR ROSE MARIE WALKER

17th Legislative District

LEGISLATOR SAMANTHA GOETZ

18th Legislative District

LEGISLATOR JAMES KENNEDY

19th Legislative District

MICHAEL PULITZER

Clerk of the Legislature

JAMES DARCY, ESQ.

Attorney for Clerk of the Legislature

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TOP COPS:

Eric Spaulding
Michael Caldarera

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Richard Clolery
Jaques Province
Susan Lubvano
Dimitrios Giouzepis
David Tellerman
Gayle Kligman
Larry Johnston
Linda Roeder
John O'Shea
Doron Spleen
Judy Cataldo
Sarah Golden
Stephanie Chase
Robin Garrison Bolling
Carmen Lloyd
Rhenaye Hornsby
Alisa Samuels-Stein
Mary Ellen Kreye

Public Comment Continued

John Gross

Jerry Kornbluth

Paul Gibson

Jeanine Maynard

Christiano Marcello

Fenol LaRock

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3 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: We're
4 going to get started and I'd ask
5 Legislator and former Marine Corporal
6 Mullaney to lead us in the Pledge of
7 Allegiance.

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

10 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
11 Now, Mr. Pulitzer, would you please call
12 the roll?

13 CLERK PULITZER: Thank you Presiding
14 Officer.

15 Deputy Presiding Officer Thomas
16 McKevitt?

17 LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Here.

18 CLERK PULITZER: Alternate Deputy
19 Presiding Officer John Ferretti?

20 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Here.

21 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Siela
22 Bynoe?

23 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Here.

24 CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Carrie
25 A. Solages?

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LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Debra
Mule?

LEGISLATOR MULE: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator C.
William Gaylor, III?

LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Present.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator John
Giuffre?

LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Mazi
Pilip?

LEGISLATOR PILIP: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Scott
Davis?

LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Present.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator James
Kennedy?

LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Patrick
Mullaney?

LEGISLATOR MULLANEY: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Seth
Koslow?

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Scott
Strauss?

LEGISLATOR STRAUSS: Present.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Arnold
Drucker?

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Rose
Marie Walker?

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Samantha
Goetz?

LEGISLATOR GOETZ: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Legislator Michael
Giangregorio?

CLERK PULITZER: Minority Leader
Delia DeRiggi-Whitton?

LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: Presiding Officer
Howard Kopel?

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Here.

CLERK PULITZER: We have a quorum,
sir.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: As is the
custom over here, we will start out with

1
2 a presentation we call Top Cops. Come on
3 forward, please.

4 MR. SHANAHAN: Good afternoon. On
5 December 15th, 2023, Police Officer Lopez
6 from the Fourth Precinct was on patrol in
7 a shopping center of Oceanside. He was
8 approached by an employee of Sephora. PO
9 Lopez was advised that two males just
10 committed a larceny from Sephora. Officer
11 Lopez immediately put out a notification
12 on the radio, and Officers Caldarera and
13 Spaulding started responding to the area
14 to begin canvassing. Officer Caldarera
15 observed a white BMW on Oceanside Road.
16 He recognized his vehicle as a subject
17 vehicle from a grand larceny that
18 occurred two days in the past. Officer
19 Caldarera activated his emergency lights
20 and siren and conducted a stop of that
21 vehicle. He transmitted his location and
22 Officer Spaulding responded.

23 The Sephora employees then came to
24 the scene of the car stop and positively
25 identified the two subjects in the

1
2 vehicle as the men that committed the
3 loss in earlier. The employee also
4 identified all three subjects as the
5 individuals that committed two other
6 larcenies from the store. All three
7 subjects were placed under arrest. Their
8 vehicle also contained proceeds from the
9 larceny.

10 All three subjects were charged with
11 grand larceny. Five cases countywide were
12 closed out, totaling approximately
13 \$40,000 in stolen merchandise. Thanks to
14 PO Lopez putting himself in the area
15 where larcenys were being committed, as
16 well as Officers Caldarera and
17 Spaulding's quick response and knowledge,
18 they were able to take these felons off
19 the street. This is why the Nassau County
20 PBA is proud to announce Officers
21 Caldarera, Spaulding and Lopez as
22 Legislative Top Cops for January of 2024.
23 Thank you.

24 (Whereupon, applause.)

25 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Good afternoon.

1
2 First of all, congratulations and
3 welcome. It's nice to see a whole bunch
4 of new faces up there. I had to look
5 around the room to the game playing field
6 down.

7 You know, it's a larceny arrest,
8 misdemeanor. Not the biggest thing in the
9 world, right? Except for this individual
10 had it five times. Five times that he was
11 caught. Five times that we can charge him
12 with. Not the other, probably 20 or 30
13 times that he committed these crimes,
14 these quality of life crimes that our
15 residents expect us to put a stop on. And
16 it's not easy. And the fact that our cops
17 use the intelligence that they're given,
18 put themselves in the right spot to be
19 there when these crimes are committed,
20 that's good police work day in and day
21 out. If it wasn't for the great work that
22 they do on quality of life, we' be
23 looking at a different scenario here in
24 Nassau County. But our cops go out there
25 day in and day out. They get the best

1
2 intelligence. They do that because of the
3 support that we get from this Body. We
4 thank you for that support, and we thank
5 you for giving us these young cops that
6 are out there doing this job every day.

7 (Whereupon, applause.)

8 OFFICER SPAULDING: I guess I'm just
9 humbled to be here, humbled to be able to
10 serve our community. And I'm happy that
11 what we did that day and what we do in
12 the future makes a difference. And thank
13 you for allowing us to be here and
14 recognizing us.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
16 Legislator Mullaney.

17 LEGISLATOR MULLANEY: Yes. Just to
18 echo what the Commissioner just said, I
19 give you guys, a good heads up. The
20 confidence to approach the car. A real
21 big point of even recognizing the vehicle
22 that had previously been in an accident,
23 I think is is commendable. Nice job doing
24 that.

25 Also on top of that, \$40,000 in

1
2 merchandise collectively is a lot of
3 money. So that and last I'll say is just,
4 thank you, not just for what you do with
5 what you guys are willing to do every
6 day. I think that that's the bigger
7 thing. The fact that you're willing even
8 just to step up to the plate is
9 commendable. Every tour that you work,
10 you make that same commitment. So again,
11 thank you.

12 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you,
13 Presiding Officer.

14 Legislator Mullaney and I represent
15 Oceanside, and so I, too, want to express
16 my gratitude to you for helping to keep
17 not only that community safe, but all of
18 our communities safe.

19 I was struck by the \$40,000 that's
20 that's amazing. As the Commissioner
21 said, that might only be the tip of the
22 iceberg, but we got them, and you got
23 them, and that's great. And we are so
24 appreciative. Thank you.

25 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Legislator

1
2 Pilip.

3 LEGISLATOR PILIP: Thank you.

4 I also would like to thank each one
5 of you for everything you do to protect
6 our county. Every single day you are out
7 there to protect us and to create a safe
8 county. And we as elected officials will
9 be there for you. We will support you and
10 we salute you for your dedication and
11 hard work. Thank you.

12 LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: As the third
13 legislator that represents Oceanside, I'd
14 be remiss if I didn't say something.

15 Quality of life matters and pursuit
16 of those crimes matters because it often
17 leads to bigger and better things; 40,000
18 in this case, we've heard last month, I
19 think it was handguns recovered in an
20 incident, drugs. We want you to keep
21 doing what you're doing. Be tough on
22 crime. Our constituents are continually
23 complaining about these petty little
24 crimes and how they affect the community.
25 It's just plain and simple; good police

1
2 work.

3 I know the Commissioner has got your
4 back. Keep doing what you're doing, all
5 right. I know the constituents really
6 appreciate it. So God bless you all and
7 keep it up. Thanks.

8 LEGISLATOR GIANREGORIO: Good
9 afternoon.

10 On a different topic, I would just
11 like to take a moment to thank
12 Commissioner Ryder, our police officers
13 and the special units that responded to
14 the swatting incident at Newbridge Road
15 School last week.

16 Your swift and thorough response was
17 outstanding. You helped ease fears of a
18 community and thank goodness it was
19 unfounded. After what the community
20 experienced, you went above and beyond.

21 Thank you for holding the police
22 interactive day at the school. The photos
23 were unbelievable. The students and this
24 staff, I'm sure, were beyond grateful as
25 a lot of the responses that I was able to

1
2 read.

3 This is the reason why Nassau County
4 Police Department is the finest police
5 department in the country. So thank you
6 for all you do.

7 (Whereupon, applause.)

8 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: So why
9 don't you all come up for a quick
10 picture?

11 (Whereupon, citation
12 presented. Photos taken.)

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2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Okay, now
3 we have a period of public comment. I
4 know many of you are here on a specific
5 item. And we're going to call that call
6 those when we get to the item.

7 Let's start out with Richard
8 Clolery. And by the way, comments are
9 limited to three minutes. So please make
10 sure that you stay within the time.
11 Richard, are you here?

12 MR. CLOLERY: Greetings, members of
13 the Legislature. I, Richard Clolery, have
14 come once again to plead for the safety
15 of pedestrians and also to increase the
16 bus funding.

17 Lately, I've been hearing nothing
18 but horror stories about people getting
19 hit by cars, whether it's distracted,
20 accidental, or drunk or whatever. Let me
21 ask you a question, I'd like an answer:
22 When you look at us, do you look at us as
23 people who pay taxes, who support this
24 county in our own ways? Or do you view as
25 a less than human? Come on. I'd like an

1
2 answer. Please.

3 (Whereupon, no verbal
4 response.)

5 MR. CLOLERY: Be that as it may, I
6 feel that too many lives are being taken
7 by drunk driving. Look, I get it. This
8 place is a car culture. But cars come
9 with a responsibility and people have
10 forgotten this, whether they're on their
11 phones there or distracted or drunk or
12 simply out of their minds.

13 We need to enforce our traffic laws,
14 the ones we have on the books, and create
15 new ones.

16 Also, we need to create alternatives
17 because gas prices are not going to get
18 any cheaper. And we need in some places
19 in Nassau County that we can't reach.
20 Like Jericho, for instance. I have a
21 doctor who's up there. I have to arrange
22 for a lift to get up there because
23 there's no buses that go up to Jericho.

24 I would like to increase funding to
25 places that need buses but don't prefer

1
2 fixed routes, can have an alternative
3 rideshare, you know? Anyway. Thank you.
4 Have a good day.

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Next is
6 Jacques Province.

7 MR. PROVINCE: Good afternoon. My
8 name is Jacques Province. I'm here
9 representing HAFLI. That stands for
10 Haitian American family of Long Island.

11 HAFLI is a non-profit organization,
12 501-C3, that has been working as a bridge
13 in facilitating acculturation process of
14 Haitian American in Long Island.

15 HAFLI, in its mission, is to
16 facilitate the adaptation of the Haitian
17 American community in Nassau County on
18 Long Island, and has been providing
19 direct and indirect services to
20 individuals, families, and service
21 providers for nearly 25 years, and it
22 assist also families with navigating
23 social service problem in the school
24 system and language barriers.

25 HAFLI provides counseling to

1
2 families in need. HAFLI is working in
3 partnership with other institution to
4 fulfill its mission.

5 Therefore, to end the short words
6 that I have to say, HAFLI needs funding
7 to continue its service to the Nassau
8 County residents.

9 I thank you.

10 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

11 Susan Lubrano.

12 MS. LUBRANO: My name is Susan
13 Lubrano. I'm the owner of Therapy
14 Services of Greater New York. We have
15 occupational therapists and physical
16 therapists in our clinic. Unfortunately,
17 in the past three years or more, two
18 years, I would say, it's almost
19 impossible to hire therapists. You put an
20 ad out, and the children from the ages of
21 3 to 5 years old are not getting
22 treatment. It's really sad. They have
23 neurological problems.

24 I've been a therapist for 40 years,
25 and the price has been the same that we

1
2 pay the therapists, or the rate has been
3 the same. In addition to that, the
4 therapists are going to New York City to
5 work because the rate is higher.

6 I don't know what to say, but I have
7 a waitlist of over 15 children who are
8 not getting services. It's been too long.
9 It's been really too long. And to watch
10 children not get their services is really
11 sad. The therapists just can't afford to
12 stay.

13 So that's what I have to say. Thank
14 you.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
16 Dimitrios Giuseppes.

17 MR. GIUSEPPES: Good afternoon,
18 ladies and gentlemen. My name is
19 Dimitrios Giuseppes. I'm honored to stand
20 before you as the assistant director at
21 Metro Therapy. With 25 years of
22 dedicated service in this field, I've
23 witnessed the evolving landscape of
24 therapy, holding various roles that have
25 led me to my current position.

1
2 Today, I'm here to help address the
3 pressing issue demanding our immediate
4 attention: The critical shortage of
5 therapists. The demand for their services
6 has reached unprecedented levels, yet we
7 face a shortage that poses a significant
8 challenge to meeting the needs of our
9 community. As related service providers
10 graduate, students are burdened by
11 financial obligations from student loans
12 to mortgages make it increasingly
13 difficult for them to prioritize the
14 crucial work of therapy.

15 Currently, service providers are not
16 incentivized to stay beyond their own
17 sense of dedication and eventually
18 succumb to economic responsibilities. The
19 disparities in reimbursement rates set 27
20 years ago have created a situation where
21 providers are forced to make difficult
22 choices merely to make ends meet. This is
23 not a matter of whether action is needed,
24 it's about how we address this challenge.

25 I propose the solution aim to both

1
2 support our current providers and invite
3 new ones into the field. Let's explore
4 increasing and equalizing the
5 reimbursement rates in Nassau County
6 across the field of early childhood. This
7 strategic move will encourage providers
8 residing in Nassau to serve within the
9 county, and those in Suffolk will be
10 drawn to Nassau due to the higher rate.
11 By doing this, we not only establish
12 equality among providers, but also create
13 an incentive for new therapists to
14 contribute to the well-being of Nassau
15 County's children. Furthermore, we have
16 the unique opportunity to set a precedent
17 for neighboring counties encouraging them
18 to follow suit.

19 To ensure the sustainability of this
20 initiative, I recommend a regular review
21 every four years. This periodic
22 assessment will enable us to adapt to
23 changing circumstances, preventing our
24 children from facing the same challenges
25 27 years from now.

1
2 In conclusion, I urge you to
3 consider this proposal seriously. By
4 equalizing reimbursement rates, we foster
5 a sense of equality, attract new
6 providers, set a precedent for
7 neighboring counties, and ultimately
8 safeguard the well-being of our families
9 of Long Island.

10 Thank you for your time and
11 sincerely hope your thoughtful
12 consideration of this matter.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

14 David Tellerman.

15 MR. TELLERMAN: Hello, my name is
16 David Tellerman and I am the director at
17 New York Therapy. I'm here to discuss the
18 crisis that we are facing with the
19 preschool special education population.
20 These children receive the services of
21 speech, occupational and physical
22 therapy. Unfortunately, hundreds of
23 children are not receiving these services
24 for one reason only. And that is, Nassau
25 County has not increased the rates for 27

1
2 years; 27 years. And what industry would
3 this ever be acceptable? Unfortunately,
4 in this industry, it's a special needs
5 children that are paying the price for
6 this.

7 Providers of these services are
8 leaving the industry in droves. They have
9 taken jobs working with other populations
10 in which to pay is significantly higher.
11 These providers have made it clear that
12 they cannot afford to work for such a low
13 rate. It is not a rate that is
14 sustainable for families to live on.

15 According to the US Bureau of Labor
16 Statistics, with inflation, the rate of
17 \$40, which was established 27 years ago,
18 is now equal to \$79.49. This is what it
19 should be today. It has not moved, again,
20 in 27 years. We are nowhere near this at
21 this point. How many of you would be
22 willing to work today for the pay that
23 you received in 1996?

24 There are 62 counties in New York
25 State. Some of these counties pay as high

1
2 as \$80 per session. At least a dozen
3 counties have a rate of \$70 or higher.
4 Nassau County's rate of \$40 per session
5 is at the bottom of the list, which you
6 can see in this picture.

7 (Whereupon, referring to his
8 poster presentation.)

9 MR. TELLERMAN: There is truly no
10 lower rate in the entire state. This
11 needs to be changed immediately, and only
12 Nassau County can make this change.
13 Nassau County should be a leader for
14 special education children.

15 As a top provider in special
16 education, New York Therapy is working
17 with razor thin margins and in many cases
18 we are losing money. This is
19 unsustainable. Many agencies have stopped
20 providing special education preschool
21 services due to these rates. When more
22 agencies follow suit, this would be
23 catastrophic for the special needs
24 preschool children in Nassau County. When
25 these children are not receiving their

1
2 services, it means that they are not
3 receiving their legal mandates.

4 Imagine that you learn for the first
5 time that your child was diagnosed with
6 autism, and that there were no providers
7 available to help your child. This can
8 only be described as devastation for a
9 family.

10 Preschool special education needs a
11 significant change in the rates and not a
12 quick fix small change. We need to
13 attract the providers that have left the
14 industry. This can only be done with a
15 rate change that reflects the fact that
16 there have been no changes in 27 years.

17 We are truly in crisis mode. Please
18 make the long overdue change today in
19 order for the Preschool Special Education
20 program to survive.

21 Thank you.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you,
23 Gayle Kligman.

24 MS. KLIGMAN: My name is Gayle
25 Kligman, executive chairman of Family of

1
2 Kids and founder of Kids Therapy
3 Services. Two weeks ago, my colleagues,
4 directors of special education,
5 therapists and parents, stood before this
6 legislature to share the state of
7 preschool special education in this
8 county. I will be brief and just provide
9 very important data for you to consider.

10 I have been providing these services
11 to the County for over 25 years and have
12 never experienced the critical junction
13 we are, we are at right now. We currently
14 have over 200 children waiting to be
15 assigned therapists, and we are just in
16 January when we begin to see the largest
17 number of new referrals and children
18 aging out of early intervention in need
19 of preschool services. Therapists have
20 abandoned the preschool program due to
21 the lower reimbursement rate.

22 Data show from NYSED that again, as
23 we just said, Nassau County is the lowest
24 in the state. Utilizing, as we just said,
25 also the CPI from 1996, when the last

1
2 increase was given, the \$40 rate should
3 now be \$79.47 for a 30 minute session. I
4 am submitting this information -- and I
5 have packets to share with all of you --
6 along with the sheet showing how
7 Westchester County, just recently in
8 September of this last year, raised their
9 rates. We have no difficulty attracting
10 and retaining therapists in that area.

11 Statistics show that for every
12 dollar spent, \$7 is saved in the future.
13 The burden will then be placed on local
14 school districts if these children do not
15 receive services. A significant and
16 timely raise in rates is the only way we
17 will bring therapists back and attract
18 new ones and retain the ones we have.

19 It is my understanding that monies
20 that were supposed to be used for
21 services in the Recovery Act are now
22 being earmarked for things such as
23 entertainment celebrating Nassau's
24 anniversary. There is no better way to
25 recognize Nassau history than by making

1
2 sure we do the right thing for its
3 future: Its children.

4 At this time, we look to each of you
5 and the constituents you serve to do
6 right by these at risk children and their
7 families. Time is running out.

8 Thank you.

9 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

10 Larry Johnston.

11 MR. JOHNSTON: Good afternoon. My
12 name is Larry Johnston, and my wife and I
13 are the owners of New York Therapy
14 Placement Services.

15 NYTPS has been servicing special
16 needs children in Nassau County since
17 1986. In that time, we have serviced
18 thousands of children in the preschool
19 age range, but we're at a crossroads now.

20 Isaac Newton's third Law of motion
21 states that for every action there is an
22 equal and opposite reaction. Nassau
23 County now raising reimbursement rates
24 for related services in a preschool arena
25 for 27 years and currently anchoring the

1
2 bottom rate of all New York State's 62
3 counties, has caused children aged 3 to
4 5, in many cases, either not to receive
5 services or to have their services
6 significantly delayed. This is a direct
7 result of the County not having to manage
8 this program robustly. That falls under
9 their sole purview. There's no deflection
10 here. It's not a New York State issue.
11 It's not a federal government issue. It's
12 a Nassau County issue.

13 Nassau County is solely responsible
14 for setting rates and has abdicated its
15 responsibility for this program. This is
16 a self-created problem. Therapists are
17 making informed decisions to find other
18 work in areas outside the preschool
19 services where they are paid a wage,
20 reflecting their level of education and
21 skill set. You have not made them valued
22 partners. You've actually pushed them
23 away. Those providers who live in Nassau
24 and border Queens and Suffolk have made
25 the informed decision to treat there

1
2 instead of Nassau because their rates are
3 higher, even though they are still below
4 the state average. Those providers living
5 in adjacent counties have also decided to
6 no longer service in Nassau County.

7 In addition, new graduates are being
8 steered away from pediatrics by local
9 universities here on the island because
10 of these bottom dwelling rates, causing
11 an even worse shortage of providers.

12 As an agency, we've only been able
13 to strategically manage the economics in
14 the back end of this program because of
15 the high volume of work we produce. This
16 is no longer a viable program to manage
17 as currently configured. Unless
18 significant action is taken by this Body
19 or other decision makers within the
20 county, this program will collapse very
21 quickly. Without your help and
22 assistance, you will send a clear message
23 that special needs children in Nassau
24 County are not worth the time or effort.
25 There is truly very little diligence to

1
2 do. In fact, I'll sum it up for you in
3 three words: 27 years.

4 By raising these reimbursement rates
5 to reflect the inflated cost of living,
6 Nassau County would be able to start the
7 process of recapturing those lost
8 providers and drive down the extended
9 delays and servicing these children.

10 We're all here today, including you,
11 because we have a passion for what we do.
12 But passion alone does not pay the high
13 cost of living on Long Island. Nor does
14 it help a company sustainability to
15 employ hundreds of workers in the area.
16 Nassau County is 35% below the State's
17 average reimbursement rate for this
18 program. That is unacceptable. You and
19 those who work alongside you have the
20 ability to correct this situation in
21 short order.

22 I respectfully request that a
23 sincere and serious effort be undertaken
24 to do so. We're always willing to meet
25 offline to discuss the matter.

1
2 Thank you very much.

3 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Linda
4 Roeder.

5 MS. ROEDER: Hi. Good afternoon. My
6 name is Linda Roeder. I would like to
7 talk about preschool related services in
8 Nassau County. Preschool related services
9 for those who don't know, are mainly
10 services provided by licensed speech
11 therapists, occupational therapists,
12 physical therapists, and licensed social
13 workers.

14 I am the mother of four. My youngest
15 son has autism. I have six grandchildren.
16 My five year old grandson still receives
17 speech therapy; he has since he was two.
18 I can personally attest to the benefits
19 and success of these services.

20 For over 20 years, I have been the
21 Business Manager for Kids Therapy
22 Services, an agency that provides
23 preschool services. I know there has been
24 no increase for preschool related
25 services in over 27 years.

1
2 My first few years with Kids
3 Therapy, I served as the evaluation
4 coordinator, speaking with hundreds of
5 parents. I can tell you from personal
6 experience and from talking with parents,
7 one of the most difficult things for a
8 parent to hear is that their child has a
9 disability, or is not developing the same
10 as other children. For some parents, this
11 is a shock. For others, it is a painful
12 confirmation of what they already knew.

13 After a child is evaluated, there is
14 a meeting at the district where the
15 strengths and weaknesses are discussed
16 and if warranted, an Individualized
17 Education Plan is created. Services are
18 granted based on the child's needs.
19 Parents are assured that there are
20 services that can help their child. My
21 family was very lucky. My son and
22 grandson received the services they need,
23 but for many children they are not so
24 lucky. They are waiting weeks or months
25 for services to begin. Some children

1
2 never received the services they so
3 greatly need because there are not enough
4 providers. They have to wait until they
5 enter kindergarten. And for most of these
6 children, this means that their
7 developmental delay will be worse, not
8 better, as they enter kindergarten.

9 For over 20 years, I have had the
10 honor and privilege of working with some
11 of the most hard working, devoted and
12 dedicated professionals in Nassau County.
13 I have seen hundreds of children come
14 through our doors and learn to talk,
15 walk, hold a crayon and basic other
16 childhood milestones that most parents
17 take for granted that their children will
18 be able to do. Why is it so hard to find
19 providers? Because they are leaving
20 preschool services and going to work in
21 school districts or other facilities
22 where they are making so much more money.
23 And who can blame them? They have to
24 provide for their selves and their
25 families as well.

1
2 I would ask that as you look at the
3 budget and consider an increase for these
4 services, you consider what it costs you
5 to live in 1997. How much did you earn in
6 1997? Could you afford to pay your 2024
7 bills with your 1997 paycheck? Neither
8 can they. Yet this is what is expected of
9 them.

10 I would also like to say that I
11 don't know how many children receive
12 Medicaid, but I do know that Medicaid
13 reimburses Nassau County for the services
14 that those children receive.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: John
16 O'Shea.

17 MR. O'SHEA: Good afternoon
18 everyone.

19 My name is John O'Shea and I am the
20 president and co-founder of the Ryan
21 Patrick O'Shea Foundation. I am here
22 today to ask the members of the
23 Legislature to consider allocating funds
24 from the American Rescue Plan to improve
25 mental health awareness and help end the

1
2 threats of suicide in the County of
3 Nassau.

4 As I am sure you are all aware,
5 suicide is a major public health crisis,
6 and it will take all of us to end the
7 threats of suicide.

8 My wife and I founded the Ryan
9 Patrick O'Shea Foundation five years ago,
10 when we lost our 18 year old son to
11 suicide. Sadly, we didn't understand that
12 Ryan and so many others don't have the
13 tools they need to navigate the struggles
14 they will encounter during their lives.
15 So many people, young and old, don't
16 understand that they are not alone in
17 their struggles. The mission of the Ryan
18 Patrick Foundation is to increase mental
19 health awareness and encourage education
20 to prevent suicide.

21 For the past five years, one of the
22 ways we have been advocating for suicide
23 prevention is to fund a program called
24 Sources of Strength in our local schools.
25 This program offers hope, health, and

1
2 strength to all that become involved in
3 it. The Source of Strength program has
4 been unifying and opening the lines of
5 communication in schools and in the
6 families of those involved with it. It is
7 a data driven, evidence based program
8 that is presented by certified trainers.
9 It is endorsed by New York State and many
10 other states in the country.

11 To date, with the support of many
12 generous supporters, the Ryan Patrick
13 O'Shea Foundation has been able to fund
14 this program in nine Nassau County school
15 districts, and it has had positive impact
16 on thousands of students and staff in
17 those districts. This is a life saving
18 and life altering program.

19 A little more than a week ago, I had
20 an opportunity to address guidance
21 counselors from 65 local school
22 districts. The message from all of them
23 was, how can we get this program into our
24 schools? Unfortunately, our foundation
25 will not be able to fund this program for

1
2 many more school districts in Nassau
3 County. Fortunately, you, the members of
4 this legislative body can make this
5 happen for those schools that desperately
6 need your help to get this life saving
7 and life altering program in.

8 Please consider allocating some of
9 the American Rescue Plan funds to rescue
10 the students of Nassau County from the
11 depression, anxiety, and suicidal
12 ideation that far too many are suffering
13 with.

14 The Ryan Patrick O'Shea Foundation
15 pledges to work with all of you to make
16 this happen in schools across Nassau
17 County. The Ryan Patrick O'Shea
18 Foundation stands to make nothing from
19 this request, except to promote the best
20 possible mental health for the students
21 of Nassau County.

22 You have the opportunity to make a
23 tremendous difference in the lives of
24 hundreds of thousands of students by
25 helping them understand that they do not

1
2 stand alone, that all of you here stand
3 with them.

4 If I could ask one more thing, could
5 you consider putting "988" in your
6 resources for mental health in the County
7 website?

8 Thank you.

9 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you,
10 Mr. O'Shea. Condolences on your loss.

11 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Doron
12 Spleen.

13 MR. SPLEEN: Good afternoon members
14 of the legislation. My name is Doron
15 Spleen, and I'm the founder and executive
16 director of Morrison Mentors, a
17 non-profit organization dedicated to
18 increase in educational opportunities for
19 underserved students and their families.

20 Established in 2012, Morrison
21 Mentors was named in honor of my mentor
22 and tutor, Arthur Morrison, a Hempstead
23 resident, educator and outstanding
24 community member who provided free
25 tutoring and mentorship to Nassau County

1
2 youth.

3 Our vision here at Morrison Mentors
4 is to engineer a self-sustaining
5 community model that embraces STEM as a
6 career pathway out of poverty. Our
7 programs not only aim to improve student
8 STEM literacy and develop 21st century
9 skills, but also to cultivate their STEM
10 identity by helping them develop a sense
11 of belonging, confidence, interests, and
12 academic achievement in STEM.

13 An integral part of our
14 organizations success is our high school
15 and collegiate STEM Apprenticeship and
16 Workforce Development program. Through
17 this program, we recruit students 14
18 years and older to learn, train, and
19 reteach our STEM curriculum to their
20 peers throughout Nassau County. What
21 better way to show that you've learned
22 something than to reteach it to someone
23 else?

24 Since the pandemic, we've noticed a
25 severe decline in employment readiness

1
2 traits among our young adults than ever
3 before. A majority of our young adults
4 lack consistency, self-awareness,
5 punctuality, presentation, preparedness,
6 basic hygiene habits, grit, confidence,
7 initiative, appropriateness, financial
8 literacy, and most importantly,
9 analytical reasoning. What is consistent
10 is that these same workforce deficiencies
11 can be found in the growing number of
12 individuals who are more interested in
13 consuming technology, rather than using
14 technology to create. And this is a
15 problem.

16 With STEM jobs expected to grow
17 10.5% between 2020 and 2030, compared to
18 7.5% growth for non-STEM jobs, it is
19 essential for us as a county to groom the
20 next generation of innovators and problem
21 solvers.

22 For that reason, I'm in full support
23 of the legislation to move the American
24 Rescue Plan funding into general funds.
25 These funds can be utilized by Nassau

1
2 County organizations like Morrison
3 Mentors to support, inspire, and empower
4 our young adults to pursue career
5 pathways that will enable them to thrive
6 and support their families here in Nassau
7 County.

8 Thank you for your time.

9 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Judy
10 Cataldo.

11 MS. CATALDO: Hi, my name is Judy
12 Cataldo, and I'm representing, the Elmont
13 Cultural Center and Mimi Johnson, who is
14 sick with the flu. So she asked me if I
15 would just read some statements.

16 She wanted to clarify, and the
17 community wants to clarify that we
18 understand that there was going to be
19 funding that was directly going to be
20 able to be used by the communities. And I
21 understand that there were federal funds
22 that weren't used, that were supposed to
23 be going to enhance the communities. And
24 is that the funding that we're talking
25 about today?

1
2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: By the
3 way, just everyone should understand this
4 is not a question and answer.

5 MS. CATALDO: Oh, that's okay. I
6 just wanted to make sure that I wasn't
7 talking in inaccurate terms, that's all
8 just clarifying.

9 And I understand that the funding is
10 being withheld. And I just wanted to
11 clarify again, open question that was,
12 was this the funding that was supposed to
13 be given to the communities in 2023, or
14 are we talking about the forthcoming for
15 2024?

16 The reason that I was asked to speak
17 today is because I understand that the
18 communities were going to be using these
19 funds to have a Juneteenth celebration,
20 which they were very excited about. This
21 celebration enhances the community, young
22 and old, and creates unity, pride and
23 civic awareness, which the complete
24 Legislature says is that that's what we
25 want for Nassau County. We want an

1
2 inclusive neighborhood, we want an
3 inclusive civic community.

4 And the other question, which I'm
5 hoping that you might be able to direct
6 me for, is that we understand that Nassau
7 County is planning this fabulous
8 celebration for our anniversary, and I
9 want to know if that's being cut also, if
10 everything else is being cut for the
11 community.

12 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I would
13 suggest, as I've said, that this is not a
14 question and answer. You do have a
15 legislator and I would urge you to
16 contact your legislator's office. The
17 phone numbers and contact is readily
18 available, and I'm sure whoever it is
19 will be quite responsive.

20 MS. CATALDO: Thank you very much.
21 Thank you for your time.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Sarah
23 Golden.

24 MS. GOLDEN: Good afternoon,
25 Legislators, and thank you for having us

1
2 here today to talk about Backyard Players
3 and Friends.

4 Backyard Players is a local,
5 inclusive, arts-based community program
6 for young adults with intellectual
7 disabilities. We currently have 15
8 interactive classes a week and have over
9 200 participants.

10 We are extremely proud of our new
11 community service project, Love Nana, a
12 volunteer and donation based program
13 creating baby bundles compiled of gently
14 used baby items provided to families in
15 need.

16 Love Nana's mission is twofold: To
17 assist these families while creating a
18 space for our Backyard Players and the
19 greater community to work together to
20 build skills with a shared goal of
21 helping others. I'd like to introduce
22 Nana, who is here with us today
23 (referencing). Joan Highland, Nana, is a
24 real person. Because behind every
25 initiative for social services to others

1
2 and change in the world is a real person
3 doing real work.

4 Love, Nana is constantly met with
5 donations. What started through word of
6 mouth and social media has moved to
7 sponsored drives held by schools, Girl
8 Scouts, Boy Scouts, sports teams and
9 families all over Long Island. Last
10 Sunday alone, we had over 40 CYO
11 basketball players run a detergent drive
12 for us.

13 Enter our volunteers. Our
14 participants from backyard players,
15 community members, students from local
16 schools from Rockville Center, East
17 Meadow, BOCES, Valley Stream and New Hyde
18 Park offer up their time at Love, Nana.

19 Donations are clean folded and
20 transformed into our Baby Bundles, each
21 carefully and beautifully packaged with a
22 signed card from the volunteers who
23 assembled it. These are our gifts to the
24 family, and they reflect the love that we
25 put into making them. We also have our

1
2 own team of Nana's, senior citizens who
3 share their talents by making sweaters,
4 hats, blankets, and dolls.

5 The bundles are then distributed to
6 local social services and delivered to
7 moms and babies in need. Our bundles have
8 been gifted in Hempstead, Lynbrook,
9 Massapequa, Oceanside, Baldwin, Mount
10 Sinai, Mercy Hospital, Bethany House,
11 Ukraine and a volunteer of ours
12 personally delivered two bundles to the
13 MODO Foundation on her trip to Africa.

14 We work hard to answer the call, but
15 we can't do it alone. We continue to work
16 and our collaborations have grown tenfold
17 with no signs of slowing down or
18 stopping. You will find that the words
19 "no" and "can't" are not in our
20 vocabulary.

21 I know we are in a room of people
22 who they themselves are busy doing the
23 work, but I would like to invite you to
24 come for a visit to Love, Nana. And we
25 are grateful and proud of the circle of

1
2 giving back that we have created. People
3 want to help. You just have to ask them.

4 Thank you.

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you,
6 Stephanie Chase.

7 MS. CHASE: Good afternoon,
8 Legislators.

9 The funds that were earmarked for
10 the communities to beautify, to help at
11 the food banks, the churches, the
12 libraries, my understanding is that it's
13 going to be taken away and put towards
14 Nassau County celebrations. I don't know
15 if any of you have gone throughout the
16 communities and seen people standing on
17 line at the food banks. It's really
18 jolting. And everybody up here is blessed
19 that they don't have to do that. Just
20 have some compassion. Have some
21 compassion for people.

22 The celebration for Nassau
23 anniversary, whoop-de-do. People need
24 services. And listening to this mental
25 health issue. Don't you realize what's

1
2 going on with these kids? I never saw so
3 many children or young adults wanting to
4 kill themselves. Kill themselves,
5 thinking that there's no better tomorrow.
6 How could that be? I mean, I used to play
7 with my Barbie dolls. I had no cares in
8 the world. But these kids now it's
9 different. They facing things that you or
10 I have never. They had to grow up too
11 fast.

12 So I'm just asking also to have that
13 money going to the libraries. That's
14 really valuable. I'm from the Lakeview
15 community, a proud member of the Lakeview
16 Civic Association, a proud member of the
17 board of the NAACP in Lakeview. And we do
18 that. We're out. We're out in the streets
19 and we see what's going on. And I just
20 just wish you would all take a moment to
21 see or just go through.

22 You don't have to be afraid.
23 Legislator Gaylor has been coming out and
24 he's listening to our concerns. And I'm
25 really happy about that because I really

1
2 didn't expect that from him. But you
3 should all come out and just see, go to
4 other areas and see, we're just people.
5 And just see what your constituents are
6 going through. It's the have and the have
7 nots. Thank you so much.

8 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
9 Robin Garrison Bolling.

10 MS. BOLLING: Good afternoon,
11 Legislators. My name is Robin Bolling and
12 I am representing the Westbury/New Cassel
13 NAACP. It is my understanding that the
14 funding from the American Red Cross Plan
15 Acting Fund is going to be used for other
16 things. I'm here requesting that we get
17 our share because we are an organization.

18 I just want to read you our vision
19 and mission statement, the vision of the
20 National Association for the Advancement
21 of Colored People: "We envision an
22 inclusive community rooted in liberation,
23 where all persons can exercise their
24 civil and human rights without
25 discrimination".

1
2 As a community, we're raising
3 children now. And in this society at this
4 time, our children need all the help they
5 can get. And if that means joining the
6 organization such as ours or any other
7 organization community based in their
8 community to uplift them so they have
9 other things to think about, to talk
10 about, to get involved with so they don't
11 turn to gangs, they don't turn to
12 depression. They have something to get
13 excited about. There's so much happening
14 in the world, and with organizations like
15 ours, we're teaching them. We're teaching
16 them how to uplift one another. We're
17 teaching them how to get involved into
18 other things besides themselves. We're
19 teaching them to include everyone, not
20 just the person that looks like you, but
21 everybody around you, because what
22 affects them affects you. And in the long
23 term, if we're not really thinking about
24 that in the long term, we're going to
25 build adults that think about no one. But

1
2 with our organization and many other
3 organizations that are here that are
4 represented, we're trying to make sure
5 that our children understand it's not
6 just about you, it's about everybody
7 around you.

8 And I want you guys to understand
9 that we need your help. And if that help
10 comes in the way of funding, whatever
11 funding you can give us, whatever funding
12 you can allot to us, please give it to
13 us. Please help us to continue doing what
14 we're doing in our communities to uplift
15 our children, our seniors and everyone
16 around, because what affects them affects
17 us. And thank you for your time.

18 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

19 Carmen Lloyd.

20 MS. LLOYD: Good afternoon,
21 Legislators. I come to you out of a
22 passion for children education and
23 equaling the playing field. I was invited
24 to come and speak on behalf of the NAACP.
25 With NAACP, I am the educational chair. I

1
2 also am on the Board of Trustees for the
3 Westbury Library. Education, again, is my
4 passion.

5 I served for over 40 years in the
6 public school system in New York City and
7 in other areas where I know about
8 advocacy and making sure that our voice
9 be heard when decisions about funding
10 have to be made.

11 I've lived in Westbury for over 40
12 years. I love my community and I serve
13 wherever I can to make sure that we get
14 an equal piece of the pie.

15 So my appeal before I go any
16 further, please make sure Westbury is up
17 there on the list and we get an equal
18 piece of the pie. Getting an equal piece
19 of the pie means coming to you guys and
20 saying, please make wise and informed
21 decisions about what the communities
22 need.

23 Robin spoke about NAACP. We do a lot
24 in that community. We'll do a lot more
25 with the resources given that will enable

1
2 us to do things like, we're talking about
3 putting a mentorship program together.
4 We're talking about working with our high
5 school children, many of whom -- and be
6 aware of that, too, when we talk about
7 education. Our children have lost at
8 least two or more years in learning, and
9 not only because of our fault, but
10 because of the condition in which we
11 live. Covid has changed the playing
12 field.

13 Our community is diverse. We service
14 as children from every part of the world.
15 We probably have the greatest amount of
16 need for education funding for programs
17 like ESL, second language learners. We
18 have a big need for just funding our
19 children and families.

20 I welcome the fact when everyone was
21 talking about mental health issues,
22 that's huge, and we need more funding for
23 it. I was very happy when our library was
24 able to offer mental health resources,
25 and we were like picking from crumbs to

1
2 get a student to come from one of our
3 local colleges, to volunteer as a person
4 who when children are in crisis, the
5 school is not filling that gap, but they
6 can come to the library and talk to a
7 social worker. So libraries are more than
8 just, come pick up a book.

9 So my appeal is, remember us in the
10 funding and make wise decisions, because
11 we are also going to be leaving a legacy
12 when we don't support the things we feel
13 are valued. Do we value our children? Do
14 we value education? Value them. And make
15 sure Westbury gets a piece of the pie.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
17 Rhenaye Hornsby.

18 MS. HORNSBY: Good afternoon. I am
19 speaking on behalf of the NAACP Westbury
20 branch, and I would just like to echo
21 what my two members spoke about, and
22 those are resources. A lot of the
23 activities that we do in the NAACP are on
24 a volunteer basis. And thank goodness for
25 organizations like Northwell Health and

1
2 LIJ hospital, that we're able to get free
3 services for them. And as Robin and
4 Carmen spoke about, sometimes you need to
5 hire people to come out. Not everybody is
6 willing or have the time to come out for
7 free. So we're advocating and hoping and
8 beseeching that you will provide funding
9 so that we could do the after school in
10 addition to what the schools do. They
11 can't do it all.

12 I visited a library out in Half
13 Hollow Hills for a meeting, and they
14 actually had a program where the children
15 after school came into the library to get
16 additional services. And we want to do
17 things like that. We have the Yes, We Can
18 Center where we can set up additional
19 programs.

20 The other piece is, one of the
21 biggest missions of the NAACP nationally:
22 Mental health. And I think every person
23 in here that drives or wherever you are,
24 somebody is doing something so crazy and
25 you're saying to yourself, what's going

1
2 on? We're all suffering. We're all
3 suffering from PTSD from what just
4 happened to us and what we're still going
5 through.

6 Basically, what I'm saying is give
7 us a little money and we'll help keep
8 some of those folk from being as crazy as
9 this world has made us. And I'm
10 particularly talking about Covid. We're
11 still going through it. I still wear my
12 mask. I just don't have it on right now.

13 But we really have to be careful
14 about where we put our money, because
15 what affects one community affects all
16 communities. It affects our cities, which
17 then boils over into our state and into
18 our country. And we need to be together
19 no matter what. Thank you for your time
20 and have a good day.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Alisa
22 Samuels-Stein,

23 MS. SAMUELS-STEIN: Hi, my name is
24 Alisa Samuel-Stein. I'm the district
25 psychologist for Port Washington School

1
2 District. I've been working there for 23
3 years, and currently I'm the chairperson
4 for preschool special education. And I
5 also oversee all of our out of district
6 students from 5 to 22.

7 So let me tell you a little bit
8 about how, because I'm one of the people
9 who actually determines who gets the
10 speech OT and PT, these related service
11 providers that all of these agencies are
12 here speaking about, that we can't find.

13 So what happens is we get a
14 referral, whether it's from EI or from
15 the parent. They come and the student is
16 first evaluated. Standardized testing is
17 used, it's empirically based. A whole
18 team meets, I'm the chairperson. Based on
19 not only the testing but also classroom
20 performance and hearing the parents, I
21 will determine if that child actually has
22 a disability and what type of a
23 disability it is. And we all know that
24 the range of typical and normal
25 development is great, but these are

1
2 children that don't fall in this range.
3 So whether the child needs speech, OT, PT
4 or everything will be determined at that
5 meeting. So I'm the person eventually who
6 makes that determination.

7 The problem is, is that we can all
8 be in agreement that I don't know,
9 "Johnny" needs speech, and I make the
10 recommendation and I give the parents all
11 of the agencies and we all go and try and
12 find someone, and then there's no one to
13 be found, not because they don't want to
14 work, but it's because they're not
15 getting paid enough money. So they are
16 going to other places like hospitals,
17 like public schools, and working for
18 early intervention. These are wonderful
19 people that we need.

20 I can tell you, having worked with
21 children all the way up until the age of
22 22, that when we get and intervene at an
23 early age, we see significant improvement
24 as these children grow up. So in the
25 terms of being pennywise and pound

1
2 foolish, I think that's what's happening
3 right now. Because eventually, if we
4 don't give these children at an early age
5 the right types of supports, eventually
6 we're going to pay for it. We're going to
7 have to provide the supports later on,
8 and it'll just be that much more money.

9 So I really, truly encourage you to
10 consider hearing what everyone else said
11 with all the statistics and increasing
12 their pay wages.

13 And one other thing, I just want to
14 let you know that I do really appreciate
15 seeing those posters up today. Thank you
16 so much.

17 (Whereupon, referring to
18 posters of missing children.)

19 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
20 Mary Ellen Kreye.

21 MS. KREYE: Good afternoon, Mary
22 Ellen Kreye from Uniondale. I'm on the
23 board for Uniondale Community Council,
24 which is a 46 year old organization
25 dedicated to youth services, community

1
2 development and civic concerns. Our youth
3 project has been deeply involved with our
4 young people since 1980. So we have a
5 track record.

6 Our Board urges the Legislature to
7 release the funds federal opioid
8 addiction funds to community
9 organizations, especially to serve our
10 youth at this time of crisis. It is our
11 understanding that only 1/12, 1/12 has
12 been distributed at this time of urgency.
13 Unbelievable.

14 Further, we have learned that the
15 American Rescue funding isn't being
16 designated for Covid abatement for
17 organizations and businesses. This is not
18 the way for this county to do business.
19 We urge you to follow the guidelines and
20 move the funding to the appropriate
21 places. Thank you.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
23 All right. This concludes our public
24 comment. We have public comment on items
25 for specific items and that will come

later.

1
2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Right now
3 we're going to call our Emergency, and
4 that would be on Clerk Item 20-2024. A
5 motion by Deputy Presiding Officer
6 McKevitt, seconded by Minority Leader
7 DeRiggi-Whitton on the emergency. That's
8 a motion to establish the emergency.

9 Any comment?

10 (Whereupon, no verbal
11 response.)

12 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: All right.
13 All those in favor of establishing the
14 emergency, please say, "Aye".

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

18 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
19 opposed?

20 (Whereupon, no verbal
21 response.)

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That is
23 unanimous.

24 So we have the emergency
25 established.

1
2 The item is a resolution confirming
3 the appointment by the County Executive
4 of Veronica Renta Irwin as a judge of the
5 District Court for the Second Judicial
6 District, pursuant to Section 21(D) of
7 the Article 6 of the Constitution.

8 That motion is made by Alternate
9 Deputy Presiding Officer Ferretti and
10 seconded by Legislator Mule.

11 All those in favor of this item,
12 please say, "Aye".

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

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
17 opposed?

18 (Whereupon, no verbal
19 response.)

20 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That item
21 is unanimous.

22 (Whereupon, applause.)

23 (Whereupon, off record
24 discussion.)

25 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: You're

1
2 here, I didn't realize. Come on up.
3 Congratulations from all of us. And would
4 you like to --

5 MS. IRWIN: Thank you, if I could. I
6 Just want to thank you all. Wish you
7 all, a good afternoon.

8 First, I would like to thank the
9 Nassau County Executive, of course, Bruce
10 Blakeman, for considering me for this
11 appointment to the district court bench.
12 I deeply appreciate his support and his
13 confidence in my ability to fill this
14 position. I would also like to thank all
15 of you for considering this appointment.

16 I would like to thank my family and
17 friends, both who are here and who are
18 unable to be here today. Of course, I'd
19 also like to thank Chairman Jay Jacobs
20 and Chairman Cairo.

21 As many of you know, I spent the
22 last four years as the principal law
23 clerk to the incomparable Justice Sharon
24 Gianelli. Prior to that, I was a
25 practicing attorney for 20 years. During

1
2 that time, I had the privilege of
3 litigating and trying cases at almost
4 every level, from the federal courts to
5 actually District Court in Nassau County.
6 I believe, and I hope I'll make a fair
7 and impartial judge. And I look forward
8 to the opportunity to administer justice.
9 I know you all have been provided with a
10 copy of my resume, and of course I'm
11 available for any questions.

12 Thank you.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL:
14 Congratulations to you again.

15 MS. IRWIN: Thank you.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Good luck.

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2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Now we
3 have a number of consent items. These
4 items have gone through previous
5 committees and have been approved and
6 have been discussed by the Majority and
7 Minority. Need no further discussion. And
8 those items:

9 Item 1, Ordinance 1 of 24; Item 2,
10 Ordinance 2; Item 3, Ordinance 3; Item 4,
11 Ordinance 4; Item 6, Resolution 2; Item
12 7, Resolution 3; Item 8, Resolution 4.

13 Motion on those items is made by
14 Legislator Pilip and seconded by
15 Legislator Davis.

16 All those in favor of those item,
17 please say, "Aye".

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

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
22 opposed?

23 (Whereupon, no verbal
24 response.)

25 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Those

items are unanimous.

1
2 Now I'm going to call Resolution 5
3 of 24 and Legislator Goetz is recusing
4 herself on this item. Leaving the chamber
5 will not take part in any debate or
6 discussion on the item. The record will
7 so reflect.

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

10 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: All right,
11 that motion on that item is made by
12 Legislator Strauss and is seconded by
13 Legislator Koslow.

14 All those in favor of establishing
15 the emergency, please say, "Aye".

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

19 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
20 opposed?

21 (Whereupon, no verbal
22 response.)
23
24
25

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That item
is unanimous. Would you invite Legislator
Goetz back?

1
2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I'm going
3 to call a Item 5, Resolution 1, which is
4 a resolution ratifying a memorandum of
5 agreement making certain amendments to
6 the Collective Bargaining Agreement in
7 the County of Nassau and Nassau Community
8 College as joint employers on the one
9 part, and the Nassau Community Federation
10 of Teachers.

11 Motion is made by Legislator Walker
12 and his seconded by Legislator Drucker.

13 Okay, Mr. Gross, please.

14 MR. GROSS: Good afternoon. I had
15 the opportunity to present the outline of
16 the agreement when the entire Legislature
17 was sitting, but you were in committee
18 formation.

19 The deal involves percentage
20 increases over a three year period. It
21 also involves for the first time,
22 contribution of health insurance premiums
23 by members of the faculty. That reduces
24 the annual cost of each of the increases
25 to approximately 1.5% for three years,

1
2 when you offset the savings.

3 We also were able to negotiate
4 contributions during retirement. We did
5 for the current faculty provide a period
6 of time during which unit members can
7 submit their resignations for the
8 purposes of retirement, and they will not
9 have to pay contributions during
10 retirement. So it's only future retirees
11 after the commencement of this agreement.
12 It's anticipated that approximately 20
13 faculty members of the 411 would avail
14 themselves of that benefit. However, we
15 don't know, of course, until the
16 Legislature approves the agreement and it
17 becomes effective before people, of
18 course, take the important step of
19 submitting their retirement papers.

20 We reduced the amount of sabbatical
21 leave by about a third, both full time
22 and part time leave. And we also were
23 able to get the Association to agree to
24 the removal of department chairs from the
25 bargaining unit because they really are

1
2 part of the administration, and it's
3 difficult for them from our perspective
4 as well, to be in the same bargaining
5 unit with persons that they're
6 administrating.

7 The one significant concession we
8 made was over Section 36.5 of the
9 agreement that provided that during the
10 hiatus period after expiration of the
11 contract, and when a new contract is
12 signed, that any increase imposed by the
13 New York State Health Insurance plan is
14 the responsibility of the employee. I
15 know that created a fair amount of
16 concern, and I know you've heard about
17 it, but the deal that was struck was to
18 eliminate Section 36.5 for the future, in
19 view of the fact that we now have
20 contributions from every bargaining unit,
21 which far outstrips, frankly, over a
22 longer period of time, the savings under
23 36.5, but we did concede the elimination
24 of that clause from the contract, which
25 will be in concert with, I understand,

1
2 other County contracts and now, of
3 course, with the full time faculty. That
4 was a concession.

5 There were scores of other
6 resolutions of language sought by both
7 sides that I'm not going to bore you
8 with. It would take hours and hours to go
9 through those. A very complicated
10 agreement. The actual agreement is
11 somewhere around 50/60 pages. It took a
12 year and a half to get closure: 28
13 negotiating sessions, five mediation
14 sessions, but ultimately we settled.

15 Thank you.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you,
17 Mr. Gross.

18 Jerry Kornbluth. How are you, Jerry?

19 MR. KORNBLUTH: Good afternoon,
20 Legislators. Thank you for giving me the
21 opportunity to share a few things with
22 you.

23 I was really going to speak after
24 afterwards when you hopefully support the
25 contract, but I just want to make a

1
2 couple of statements which I think are
3 important. And I want to urge you, of
4 course, to support this contract. The
5 timing is actually really good, because
6 classes begin for the spring semester on
7 Thursday and coming into the semester
8 with a signed contract that shows there
9 was good collegiality between the
10 administration and the faculty, will send
11 a good message of good relationships
12 between the administration and the
13 faculty.

14 I'd like to commend John Gross. It's
15 been a tedious long term of contract
16 negotiations. And I think his patience,
17 perseverance and his commitment to work
18 both with the Administration and the
19 NCCFT Union in supporting the things that
20 could work for both sides. And at the end
21 of the day, it supports our students and
22 it helps our students moving forward.

23 The contract was overwhelmingly
24 voted yes by the NCCFT. It's a fair
25 contract. And moving forward, it works

1
2 for both sides.

3 Just to give you a couple of little
4 things, I think, that are important in
5 terms of the state of higher education
6 today. As you look all around the United
7 States and you look in New York State
8 especially, you're going to see colleges
9 such as Fredonia, Potsdam, Saint Rose,
10 Buffalo State are all having issues in
11 terms of financial stability.

12 In the CUNY system, you see colleges
13 like Brooklyn College and Queens College
14 in York College recently laying off many,
15 many full time permanent faculty. That is
16 the one thing that Nassau Community
17 College is committed to. We are
18 definitely, and you can never say 100%,
19 but nowhere in our thought process is to
20 eliminate any full time faculty or
21 adjunct lines. So we're committed to
22 that.

23 What we're doing, and you will see
24 later on in, in in the year when we come
25 before you with our budgets, we are

1
2 definitely looking on how we streamline
3 the costs at the college so that we can
4 bring to you a sustainable financial
5 budget for years to come.

6 And just to give you the latest,
7 right now we're looking at about a 4.24%
8 in heads for the spring semester and
9 around 4% increase in total credits. So
10 when other colleges are losing
11 enrollment, Nassau Community College is
12 moving forward in terms of increasing
13 their enrollment. We're nowhere where we
14 were 15 years ago, but since the
15 pandemic, we're making moves upward to
16 increase our revenue.

17 So thank you for giving me the
18 opportunity just to share a few little
19 things with you. And hopefully the
20 contract will be overwhelmingly supported
21 by the Legislature.

22 Thank you, again.

23 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

24 Any debate or discussion on this
25 item?

(Whereupon, no verbal
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: All those
in favor of this item, please say, "Aye".

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

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That item
passes unanimously. Thank you.

1
2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Okay. Our
3 final item is Item 10, Resolution 6 of
4 24, which authorizes the transfer of
5 appropriations heretofore made within the
6 budget.

7 Now, that motion will be made by
8 Legislator Ferretti, seconded by
9 Legislator Kennedy.

10 Andy, let me just say that before
11 you even start, we, at least in the
12 Majority Caucus have the idea that we'd
13 like to keep a frugal outlook on things
14 being that we don't know what the future
15 holds. A good deal of the funds being
16 transferred, I understand, are being
17 transferred to make up -- most of the
18 funds are being transferred to make up
19 for the loss of revenue during Covid, for
20 which the County had to borrow a great
21 deal of money, as well as replenishing
22 the sewer fund, which has been depleted
23 over the last number of years, and that's
24 also being very prudent. We need to be
25 prudent.

1
2 At the same time we're making
3 available certain monies for various
4 programs. That would be \$15 million, I
5 believe. Those programs have not yet been
6 established as to which specific ones
7 they will be. We're going to get ideas
8 from all of the legislators, all 19. At
9 that time, we will work out what that
10 money is for.

11 But the overriding concern is to be
12 careful with the money and make sure that
13 the County, which has been steadily
14 moving forward in terms of its fiscal
15 position, continues to do so and protects
16 the taxpayers.

17 Anyway, sorry for that speech, but
18 all yours now, take it away.

19 MR. PERSICH: No, you've kind of
20 summed up my what I would have said in
21 summary.

22 What I would say is we lost about a
23 half \$1 billion, \$455 Million, in revenue
24 during Covid. We've been fortunate with a
25 couple things with some of the

1
2 transactions we've done, but now we're
3 starting to hit the headwinds of those
4 illls of the past.

5 Debt service is going up. Interest
6 rates are rising. Everybody knows the
7 real estate market has hit the wall, so
8 we're losing revenue on that side.
9 There's some pending litigations out
10 there. As fiscally sound as we are, we
11 still have to be very cautious about how
12 we proceed forward. And I will say that
13 there's been some noise, I would say
14 previous in the beginning part of the
15 year where Congress was playing some
16 games where they were thinking about
17 clawing back this money because we
18 haven't obligated it, which put us all
19 into, I would say, an uncomfortable
20 position.

21 We're moving the money. It's going
22 to be set aside in fund balance, and it
23 will be subject to negotiations and how
24 that money gets disproportionate it out
25 between this Body and the County

1
2 Executive.

3 I'll give you a little idea on what
4 we've spent already. We've obligated
5 roughly around \$86 million in
6 appropriated about \$118 million. So
7 there's still some unspent funds in the
8 ARPA world. We have researched programs
9 for Office of the Aging Behavioral Health
10 Support, Veterans Services, Groundwater
11 Conservation, some monies for VEED,
12 additional Health and Social Service
13 grant programs.

14 In addition, let's not forget, under
15 the CDBG and housing money, there was a
16 lot of money put out there that didn't
17 come through this mechanism of funds.
18 Housing did a lot of work on the other
19 side for small businesses and homeless
20 and all the the needs that they have to
21 service. So we have been pushing the
22 money out. I will say it's been a little
23 tough to get out there. And I think by
24 doing this, it sets the groundwork for
25 for locking the money up, protecting the

1
2 tax base.

3 Look as much as we think we're in
4 good financial standing, I've seen this
5 turn sideways. Covid was a sideways thing.
6 You can't predict these things. Sales tax
7 takes a downturn -- we've been living
8 very good on that right now, but that
9 takes a hit, we've positioned ourselves
10 with some of the financial transactions
11 we've done here with this Body, to
12 position it so that we don't have to harm
13 the tax base or cut programs or anything
14 else, which is what we don't want to do.

15 We are still striving to continue on
16 this financial glide slope that we're on.
17 So I'm here to field any additional
18 questions that this Body may have.
19 That's in a nutshell what we're trying to
20 do.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you,
22 Andy. Hang out. I think people will want
23 to ask you questions.

24 Any debate or discussion?

25 Minority Leader?

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

Thank you, Presiding Officer.

I have to admit that I was hopeful over the weekend that we were going to come to some type of good faith agreement regarding the ARPA funding. I understand, although you came up a little while ago stating what incredible shape our county's in financially and how you have such a great, you know, how much funding is available in our reserve and our Moody's rating. And now we're saying that maybe we'll get hit with Covid again or something, and we should be ready. And you know what? I'm at the point now where Andy, honestly, when you come up, I'm starting to lose faith. Because I really feel like you'll swing with whatever the mood is of what has to get done. And I appreciate it that you're in a tough spot, but I really never thought that you used to do that before. I thought I really felt that you were more on a solid basis with that.

1
2 However, my hope was and I and my,
3 my office met with Deputy County
4 Executive Arthur Walsh, and we had talked
5 about the fact that although we, of
6 course, would like to trust that if you
7 say 15 million is going to be allocated,
8 we'll split it up between legislators, we
9 have nothing to go on that. We asked that
10 19 million, which is really still a very
11 small percentage of the money that the
12 county has received for this ARPA
13 funding, at least 19 million giving each
14 legislator \$1 million to put in to
15 programs into each of our districts.
16 Think about what that would do. This is
17 what that money was for. There's a food
18 bank in Glen Cove that would save. There
19 are youth bureaus, there are seniors,
20 there are mental mental health groups
21 that could benefit. This is what that
22 money is for. This 19 million out of the
23 266 million is such a small percentage.

24 We were willing to try to hope that
25 I had a little bit of hope -- actually, I

1
2 had hope that we were starting a new
3 regime. I was hoping that Howard Kopel
4 and I could work together and have good
5 faith going forward with other issues
6 that we might want to negotiate together.
7 But my hope is dwindling.

8 All that we are asking for right now
9 is instead of 15 million to have it moved
10 up to 19 million, which would really only
11 be another 1.5 million for the Minority
12 caucus. It would actually benefit you
13 guys more. And we would really understand
14 putting almost all of it into the General
15 Fund. But I would really request that we
16 get \$19 million and it be put on the
17 record that it's going to be divided up
18 by all 19 legislators. Again, this is
19 what this money is for.

20 I really wish even one of you would
21 think about this. I mean, you know, the
22 needs of your of your districts, you
23 know. Even if you weren't a legislator, I
24 really wish, just for once, I would love
25 to see one of you just at least say that

1
2 you agree that you would like to see.
3 Have this funding which was allocated for
4 this reason be given to each legislator.

5 I know your districts. I know some
6 some areas in Oyster Bay. I know there
7 are a lot of areas that could really use
8 this funding. And to rely on 15 million,
9 we don't know when it's going to be given
10 out, we don't know who it's going to be
11 given out to, we have no control over it.
12 I'm sorry, but I think as a legislative
13 branch, we need to push back and say, no.
14 For us to pass this, we want it to be
15 equal for every legislator. We want to
16 have it full control. We want to have it
17 funded immediately. You new people have
18 no idea how important and what an
19 opportunity this is. This is really a
20 once in a lifetime opportunity to get
21 this funding that we could hand out to
22 groups in our district that would really
23 make a difference. Now, they might just
24 tell you, oh, we're gonna have 15
25 million. Don't worry about it. We don't

1
2 know where that's going and we don't know
3 when and we don't know how.

4 Again, I think as a new Body, as new
5 leadership, this is a real opportunity
6 for us to push back. I've been fighting
7 like crazy to get the opioid funding out.
8 We're fighting like crazy for so many
9 things. To sit here today and listen to
10 so many constituents, I'm sitting here
11 thinking, what kind of reputation do we
12 have? What kind of government are we?
13 What kind of county are we? It's really
14 been very disturbing lately, especially
15 mental health. How we sit here and we
16 don't react to our constituents, it's
17 really bothering me on a very deep level.

18 So I am formally requesting that we,
19 which we can do, Deputy County Executive
20 Walsh said that he's okay if we -- and I
21 wasn't in the meeting, so I'm just saying
22 what was conveyed to me -- he would be
23 okay if we went up to the 19 million and
24 we divided it by 19. I spoke with Howard
25 Kopel over the weekend, and he said he

1
2 would be okay, but he has to check with
3 the Administration. So the Administration
4 has to check with the Legislature. The
5 Legislature has to check with the
6 Administration. And here we are today and
7 nothing is happening. They're still going
8 to just say, oh, we'll put 15 million in
9 and we can't tell you who's getting it or
10 how it's being delivered or when.

11 So I'm asking not even as a minority
12 leader or as a legislator, I'm asking as
13 a resident of Nassau County, that we bond
14 together, all of us, and say, hey, it's
15 only another \$4 million; only 1.5 for us.
16 The most of it's going to go to you guys
17 in your communities. Let's just send a
18 message that we hear these people that
19 come to our meetings. We hear our
20 constituents.

21 I can tell you, we all have
22 firsthand examples of where this money
23 can be used, let's show that we can do
24 this. I would be so proud of us.

25 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you,

1
2 Presiding Officer. Hi, Andy. How are you?

3 MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon,
4 Legislator.

5 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Andy, you
6 mentioned, that half \$1 billion was --
7 Can you rephrase or restate your term?

8 MR. PERSICH: We did a calculation
9 that was confirmed by our consultants and
10 legal counsel that the County, during
11 Covid, lost almost \$455 million.

12 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: And how much of a
13 surplus did we have last year?

14 MR. PERSICH: Last year, it was
15 roughly around a half \$1 billion, I
16 think.

17 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: All right. I just
18 wanted to establish that. Because it
19 depends on the day and the spin. Some
20 days we're touting that half \$1 billion
21 surplus. And some days we're using what
22 we say was a deficit or a loss as the
23 anchoring content of the conversation. So
24 I just want to see which context you're
25 putting this into today.

1
2 MR. PERSICH: The fact that we did
3 finish with the surplus is a good thing.
4 The fact that we have liabilities for
5 unpaid claims out there. We had a tax --

6 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: We had a surplus,
7 right?

8 MR. PERSICH: We had a surplus, but--

9 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Just answer the
10 questions that I asked, okay. It'd be
11 better that way.

12 MR. PERSICH: Okay.

13 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: So the answer is
14 that we had a surplus.

15 MR. PERSICH: Yes.

16 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Presiding
17 Officer, to his comment, you made a
18 comment that, or I guess you prefaced it,
19 I should say, by saying we don't know
20 what the future holds and we should be
21 conservative in our approach in using the
22 ARPA money. Correct?

23 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Yes.

24 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Okay, good.
25 Because I totally agree. And being

1
2 conservative and how we're going to use
3 money moving forward most certainly
4 doesn't translate to \$10 million for a
5 125th anniversary party for the County.
6 It just doesn't translate.

7 I gotta tell you, I serve here very
8 humbly, and I serve to be a voice for my
9 community. And most days, I'm very proud
10 to be a part of this county framework.
11 But today is one of those days where I
12 hang my head low. I hang my head low
13 because I'm embarrassed that the people
14 that we entrust with our most vulnerable
15 children, who have special needs, are not
16 being valued appropriately, that we're
17 not meeting their needs to be able to
18 appropriately resource them to do the
19 work. They are getting salaries -- and
20 many of us who have served in this Body
21 prior to receiving a raise would
22 understand what it's like to have
23 salaries from 30 years ago or 20 years
24 ago. Rose, you could agree. Right? So
25 we took the painstaking task of raising

1
2 our income and then going before our
3 constituents and having to have them vote
4 us in or out because we took the chance
5 to give ourselves a raise. I don't
6 understand how we can't do that for the
7 people who are serving our children. I
8 don't understand how these folks are are
9 being paid at the same amount from 27
10 years ago, where they have come in here,
11 and they've been able to document that
12 they are getting paid 40 where they
13 should be paid, get paid 79. I'll round
14 up and say they should be paid \$80. So
15 we're paying them \$0.50 on the dollar to
16 which they should be paid.

17 We're sitting here today and we're
18 hearing from communities that are coming
19 up talking about the work that they'd
20 like to undertake in their community or
21 continue in their community, because they
22 see the need. We're sitting here today. A
23 county that does not do enough for its
24 homeless. And I know that because I've
25 done the research. I know that this

1
2 county pays \$60,000 to Long Island's
3 Coalition for the Homeless, when we have
4 an we have a state of an emergency. It's
5 a public emergency based on the number of
6 homeless people that we have in this
7 county. They're not in just one part of
8 this county. We all see them. We all see
9 them. And all of the things that I'm
10 enumerating, we still think a \$10 million
11 party for the 125th anniversary is an
12 appropriate use of money. We think that
13 our districts aren't worthy of \$1 million
14 apiece. That's what we're saying when we
15 take a vote today for \$15 million as
16 opposed to \$19 million. You're saying
17 each and every last one of you are saying
18 that your district is not worthy of \$1
19 million to be invested in it for the
20 purpose of stabilizing them after coming
21 out of the most historic time in US
22 history that we will live through with
23 Covid. You're saying your district
24 doesn't deserve that. Well, I say shame
25 on you. Shame on you because I know my

1
2 district is deserving of it. I know that
3 my district is deserving of twice as much
4 as that.

5 I don't understand how we're sitting
6 here today, and then we're going to say
7 that we won't even find a fair way to
8 remove politics out of this appropriation
9 of the funds. Now, you know that
10 everything that we do as a Body, when it
11 comes from the budget, when it goes to
12 CRP money to Hotel/Motel money, we have
13 always allocated it at 1/19 of the total
14 sum per legislator so that there was
15 fairness, equality, equity. So we remove
16 the politics from it so there was no
17 ability for one person to decide how the
18 money got spent.

19 I also don't believe that we're
20 sitting here at a time such as this,
21 where we have seen time and time again
22 when we put this money on the streets and
23 into our communities that we've put it
24 in, without understanding how these
25 community organizations work, how they

1
2 work. We can't do it on a reimbursement
3 plan because many of them don't have the
4 resources and the revenue to be able to
5 do it on consignment. To be able to put
6 the outlay first. We have to give the
7 people what they need to do the work for
8 our residents, for our neighbors, for our
9 families, for our friends. We're failing.
10 We're failing.

11 I'm telling you, I'm totally
12 perplexed with a touch of embarrassment
13 of where we sit here today, because we
14 can be doing so much better and so much
15 more. We have the ability, based on
16 resources alone, to change to the
17 trajectory of the homeless population,
18 the young people who need the early
19 intervention, to turn the corner on
20 people with food insecurities. But we
21 want to sit on this money because we want
22 our coffers to seem flush, because we
23 want to put on the dog and pony show that
24 this county is in a half \$1 billion
25 surplus when we know good and well that

1
2 money is based, it should be out for
3 programming, for opioids, for ARPA. We
4 know this.

5 I'm going to tell you right now that
6 I wrote a letter to the County Executive
7 this past Friday regarding homelessness.
8 I was able to put in there that we only
9 allocate \$60,000 for what we call what
10 was called the HIT team. Many of you
11 legislators have referred people to the
12 HIT team. Well, there is no more hit
13 team, folks. There's no more HIT team.
14 There's one person. And actually, that
15 person provides a half of a day's work
16 towards going out into the community to
17 identify those people that are homeless
18 on the street. There was a team. Just a
19 few years ago, there was a team, a whole
20 team of people, folks from the Homeless
21 Intervention Team, folks from Adult
22 Protective Services that went out into
23 the communities and found those people
24 and gave them the resources they need. We
25 did it, and we funded it up until a few

1
2 years ago, to the tune of \$325,000. Now
3 we do it at 60.

4 I could go on and on and on today,
5 but I don't want to be on a soapbox
6 today, because what I would rather do is
7 have us spend the time, maybe in
8 executive sessions in our own caucuses,
9 to figure out how are we going to raise
10 this money up to a minimum of \$19 million
11 and break it down to 1/19 of a district.
12 That's what I would rather see us do with
13 our time today, because anything short of
14 that is a failure on this Body.

15 Thank you.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I just
17 want to re-emphasize, and I believe,
18 Andy, you'll have to confirm this. We do
19 spend money on programs, but beyond that,
20 this \$15 million is additional money to
21 what we are spending on programs that has
22 not been allocated to specific things at
23 this point. And those programs that
24 you're all bringing up here are
25 potentially very worthy of consideration.

1
2 And they will be considered in terms of
3 how this money will be spent ultimately.

4 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: No. So here it
5 is --

6 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: And we're
7 not finished yet. In other words, we
8 haven't figured that out.

9 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Presiding
10 Officer, some of these programs are not
11 funded at all by the County that we're
12 suggesting funding.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: And you're
14 suggesting funding and the \$15 million
15 will be available.

16 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: We
17 don't trust it.

18 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: If you
19 don't trust it, I can't help you.

20 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Well, the problem
21 is that we have been in deliberations and
22 negotiations for this money for an
23 extended period of time. And it's taken
24 us this long to get to this point where
25 we're at 15 million as opposed to 19

1
2 million. We started negotiations for
3 these dollars, well before there was even
4 any mention of a 125 year anniversary at
5 \$10 million.

6 Presiding Officer, I just want to
7 set the record clear. We've been in
8 negotiations for this money well, in
9 advance of any mention of a \$10 million,
10 125th anniversary event. Well, in
11 advance. Let me just finish.

12 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That
13 brings extra money into the County.
14 That's the idea of that one. And it's
15 not a party.

16 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: It's a series of
17 parties. Can I finish though?

18 I just want to make it clear for the
19 record that we have been in negotiations
20 for this money for an extended period of
21 time, we being the Minority caucus. The
22 ability for the Legislature to get this
23 money at all has been through those
24 negotiations. I implore my colleagues
25 that we started out on this endeavor, and

1
2 we're happy that you have joined us, but
3 you're joining us without understanding
4 the full value of bringing \$1 million to
5 each one of your communities that no one
6 knows better than you, no one knows
7 better than you where that money should
8 go. No one knows better than you what the
9 needs are in your district, and to cut
10 your community short by \$4 million is a
11 disservice to your constituencies in this
12 community.

13 And I have to tell you, I'm all for
14 a party. I love a party. Okay, let me be
15 clear, but not at \$10 million at the
16 expense of these services and to the
17 benefit of our communities.

18 Thank you.

19 (Whereupon, Legislator Pilip
20 leaves dais.)

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Legislator
22 Drucker.

23 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you,
24 Presiding Officer. To follow that very
25 impassioned speech by my colleague,

1
2 really, really, very, very impactful.

3 There is a direct, verifiable
4 correlation between money that is
5 allocated to each of the 19 of us, and
6 that really should be a priority. You
7 know, that really should be a priority.
8 There's a direct correlation.

9 Each of us know how we can better
10 serve our particular constituents in our
11 respective districts. No one knows better
12 than each of us, each of the 19 of us.
13 We're only asking for what is fair. And
14 we need to go back to our constituents
15 and say, we have this money now. We're
16 going to allocate it in ways that we know
17 each of our communities need best.

18 Legislator Bynoe mentioned things
19 like homelessness. There should be zero
20 homelessness in Nassau County. A county
21 this affluent shouldn't have any
22 homelessness. We shouldn't have food
23 insecurity. It's something that's
24 reprehensible.

25 You know, we are so grateful to the

1
2 public who come here and inform us of the
3 inequities that go on in our county, the
4 inequities that impact services to our
5 most precious commodities, our children,
6 and how those services are not being met.
7 It is embarrassing. Each one of us, I
8 know that in your respective heart of
9 hearts, each one of us is embarrassed
10 when we heard of what the County is
11 repaying in reimbursement compared to
12 other jurisdictions, other counties. It's
13 terrible.

14 You know the expression, "oh, you
15 know, these are all worthy discussions
16 for another day", a few of us here are
17 attorneys. I know I've learned the hard
18 way, and I'm sure my colleagues have
19 learned the hard way. Fool me once,
20 shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.
21 Because if we say, okay, we're going to
22 have these items to discuss another day,
23 whether the 19 million or whether it's
24 increasing the allocation and the
25 reimbursement to the therapists, no,

1
2 let's deal with it head on. Thankfully,
3 to all of you who come out here and
4 inform us of what the problems are in our
5 respective districts and as a countywide,
6 we rely upon that and we're grateful to
7 you. But you know what? This county has a
8 surplus and we've navigated from really
9 rocky roads. Andy, I'm sure you'll agree
10 to that. We've navigated some rocky roads
11 and with coming out of the pandemic, with
12 the surpluses that we have.

13 And, a year ago, everyone was
14 sounding the alarms. Inflation is killing
15 us, the gas prices, food. Yet we are
16 navigating that through and we still have
17 money and we still have surpluses.

18 Our oath of office is to be stewards
19 of the money that come to Nassau County.
20 We have to be the ones that decide where
21 it should be applied. These are
22 unprecedented times. Yes, we should be
23 somewhat fiscally responsible. We should
24 always be fiscally responsible. And, you
25 know, prepare for a rainy day. But we can

1
2 balance that now because we have
3 unprecedented surpluses now. We have an
4 opportunity to not squander this
5 opportunity. We have programs. We have
6 injustices and inequities in our county
7 that we have the ability to address. And
8 it starts with each one of us. Each one
9 of the 19 of us has the ability to use
10 that money in a way that only benefits
11 our constituents, only benefits the
12 residents of Nassau County. And we have
13 to deal with that now. We can't deal with
14 it on another day and say it's worthy of
15 discussion. Now let's let's deal with it
16 now.

17 Thank you.

18 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you. I
19 have concerns about various statements
20 that you made, Andy, on behalf of your
21 employer, the County Executive. I mean,
22 you made many references to how the
23 County had a loss. You had a loss of \$455
24 million from Covid, from the pandemic. I
25 mean, was it the Legislative intent of

1
2 the American Rescue Plan for
3 municipalities to pad up their coffers in
4 order to seem fiscally solvent? Was that
5 the intent of the American Rescue Plan?

6 MR. PERSICH: It had many
7 intentions. It wasn't just one broad
8 based thing, but it was --

9 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: But it wasn't
10 the intent for the municipality to make
11 themselves look better by padding up
12 their coffers and not giving money and
13 funding to organizations and other
14 services and purposes that go to the
15 general welfare of the County. It was not
16 the intent of the Legislature of Congress
17 to design such a plan for municipalities
18 to pad up their coffers like this.

19 MR. PERSICH: The fact of the matter
20 is, the County did lose a half \$1 billion
21 in revenue. Look, I know nobody wants to
22 hear this because it is not -- we
23 sustained a lot of liabilities in the bad
24 years that we're trying to catch up for.
25 And the balance sheet --

1
2 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: The County has
3 a surplus. With all due respect, sir. I
4 think what County is in a better position
5 to balance out its balance sheets
6 compared to the everyday household where
7 we have children dying from depression,
8 opioid overdose and various other issues.

9 MR. PERSICH: I respectfully hear
10 what you're saying, but in fairness, we
11 built up a big backlog of liabilities as
12 a result of being in a control period
13 having to borrow for operating funds. We
14 still have \$1 billion in outstanding
15 debt.

16 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Do we have an
17 opinion from the County Attorney that it
18 is legally permissible for us to use this
19 money in this way? Do we have an opinion?

20 MR. PERSICH: Yes we do.

21 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Do we have it
22 in writing?

23 MR. PERSICH: Yes we do.

24 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Furthermore,
25 you mentioned that the 25 million would

1
2 be designated to the Sewer and Storm
3 Water Fund. What specific efforts and
4 programs will you achieve? Because, you
5 know, we had a recent rainstorm in
6 September in which many senior citizens
7 in Elmont lost their home and they're
8 still out of their home. Despite the
9 County Executive using them as props for
10 a press conference in front of the
11 courthouse, they're still out of their
12 homes. Will that money be used to help
13 those people who are now homeless?

14 MR. PERSICH: The money will be used
15 in the Sewer District to fund many
16 projects that are out there.

17 One is, as we know, our
18 infrastructure has been dilapidated as a
19 result of not being able to do that. So
20 the Sewer District is a direct result of
21 that. We have two big projects down there
22 right now, which is going to cost us a
23 lot of money. One is the diversion
24 project to clean up the western Nassau
25 bays, which is very expensive. We're

1
2 getting into the the part of where we're
3 running the pipe now, and the
4 construction costs are going up, so the
5 debt service is going up.

6 Additionally, we have an energy
7 project going on down in Bay Park, which
8 is going to escalate our electrical costs
9 as a result of that. So those two big
10 things are really, really big drains on
11 the district. So we're trying to
12 stabilize that without having to do any
13 increases on the revenue side to do that.

14 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: But why should
15 why should people who are suffering have
16 to suffer even more for you to reach
17 those goals?

18 MR. PERSICH: Well, you know, I wish
19 -- look, things cost money. And
20 unfortunately costs have gone up. We
21 struggle too. I mean, it's not like
22 we're not. And again, if we do have
23 outstanding liabilities that we do have
24 to pay. And what we've done with our
25 surpluses is strategically placed them to

1
2 kill some of the backlog, for lack of a
3 better thing, to dwindle down our
4 liabilities side of the balance sheet so
5 that we can sustain a more stable path.
6 It's still unstable right now.

7 I do a multi-year plan which is
8 scrutinized by NIFA, which is telling me
9 I'm still in a control period as a result
10 of that. So while we may think we're in
11 the best shape, I still have somebody
12 looking over my shoulder saying, you need
13 to be careful too, and we still have to
14 navigate that.

15 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: All due
16 respect, I think it is tone deaf for the
17 Administration to hear the cries of
18 parents, of young people. With all due
19 respect. It is tone deaf. It is similar
20 to Marie Antoinette saying, "let them eat
21 cake", while the County has a surplus,
22 but everyday people are suffering. We're
23 doing a huge disservice to ourselves here
24 to have the Presiding Officer agree 100%
25 with this Administration. This Body

1
2 should not be an extension of the County
3 Executive Executive Branch. It should
4 not. We cannot have a full agreement on
5 this issue.

6 We must do better for our
7 constituencies. We have veterans who are
8 homeless here in Nassau County. We're
9 reminded that of that on a monthly basis
10 when we have Meta come here and testify.
11 I thank everyone who has come here to
12 speak, especially all those who are
13 providing special education services to
14 young children, like my daughter. It is a
15 shame that this county does not have
16 resources to properly pay you what you
17 deserve. Shame on us.

18 Thank you.

19 LEGISLATOR MULE: My colleagues have
20 all been very eloquent and gone into
21 great detail. It's really simple for me.
22 We have all of this money from the ARPA
23 plan. I think an argument can be made
24 that some of it needs to go into the
25 General Fund. I think a very good

1
2 argument can be made that we need to be
3 fiscally conservative. I remember all of
4 the extremely concerned discussions
5 during Covid, when we were discussing
6 refinancing the debt and there were
7 voices against that. That turned out to
8 be one of the best things that we ever
9 did and that's what helped put us into
10 this good position that we're in now.

11 To make it simple, we're not asking
12 for much. We're asking for \$4 million
13 more. We're asking for the allocation to
14 be put on the record as being fair; each
15 of us getting \$1 million. We're asking
16 for provisions to be put into place to
17 make sure that the monies are spent in
18 the correct way, meaning that there isn't
19 too much red tape that the agencies will
20 need to go through.

21 To the community, I just want to
22 make clear that things will automatically
23 be put into place to make sure that only
24 organizations that are properly vetted
25 and verified will get the money. It

1
2 can't just go to anybody because those
3 real guardrails are already put into
4 place by the Federal Government. So I
5 just want everyone to be aware of that.

6 It wasn't a hard lift for my
7 partners on the other side, colleagues on
8 the other side, to say, yeah, we'll put
9 \$10 million towards the party. It
10 shouldn't be a hard lift to add \$4
11 million more to make sure that we each
12 get \$1 million in our districts to
13 provide for all of the needs that we just
14 heard about today. I mean, we hear about
15 them all the time, but we really heard
16 about them today. I don't even need to
17 repeat it because the need is there. We
18 have the ability to do it. It shouldn't
19 be a hard lift. That's it.

20 Thank you.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Mr. Davis.

22 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Please. Thank
23 you. Appreciate it.

24 Good afternoon, Andy.

25 MR. PERSICH: Good afternoon.

1
2 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: I just want to
3 clarify a couple of items that you spoke
4 about so I can be clear about it.

5 In terms of the actual amount of
6 ARPA money we received, would it be fair
7 to say it was about \$385 million?

8 MR. PERSICH: I think it's 392 or
9 something. It's 390 ish is what I would
10 say.

11 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: And that money
12 was received in two increments; is that
13 correct?

14 MR. PERSICH: Yes. It was. And the
15 first increment was March of 2021, and a
16 second was in March of 2022.

17 MR. PERSICH: Correct.

18 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: So by March of
19 2022, we received nearly \$380 million.

20 MR. PERSICH: That is correct.

21 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Was there any
22 additional funds besides those two?

23 MR. PERSICH: Historical
24 perspective, when Covid hit there was
25 CARES funding that was done. That was

1
2 \$104 million that was allocated.

3 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: I'm not talking
4 about CARES.

5 MR. PERSICH: And then we got this
6 money. This money was directly through
7 the County. The Housing Department,
8 Community Development Agency, received
9 some additional funds too that were to
10 promote small businesses and other
11 things. That number I don't have off the
12 top of my head, but there was significant
13 --

14 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: If I gave you
15 like, 29, \$30 million somewhere in that
16 ballpark?

17 MR. PERSICH: Somewhere in that
18 range of 50, I think. That was some of
19 the money that was funneled through CDBG
20 and other the ESG program over there.

21 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: So the total of
22 all of them would be over \$400 million.

23 MR. PERSICH: Yes.

24 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: And of the money
25 that's actually been spent, how much of

1
2 it from the ARPA money has been actually
3 spent?

4 MR. PERSICH: Okay. We've obligated
5 approximately \$86 million. We've
6 appropriated, which means we still have
7 unspent funds of about 119,000; 85 is
8 what's been spent.

9 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Eighty five
10 million of the 380 has been spent.

11 MR. PERSICH: Right.

12 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Now, in terms of
13 how that money is to be spent, there are
14 parameters from ARPA, right?

15 MR. PERSICH: Yes.

16 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: And with that
17 money, it has to be obligated by December
18 31, 2024.

19 MR. PERSICH: That is correct.

20 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: And it actually
21 has to be spent by December 31, 2026; is
22 that correct?

23 MR. PERSICH: That is correct.

24 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Now, I heard you
25 mention earlier that you indicated that

1
2 you heard "whispers" of money being
3 potentially clawed back.

4 MR. PERSICH: In May of this year,
5 there was conversations that were within
6 Congress that some of the ARPA funds
7 might have been clawed back.

8 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Can you be a
9 little bit more specific about what that
10 was?

11 MR. PERSICH: Well, I can't speak
12 for what happens in Washington,
13 Legislator. What I did hear only from
14 what I know from the news stories and
15 everything else that were out there, was
16 that there was a potential that to
17 balance the Federal Budget they were
18 going to claw back some of these funds,
19 which put the County at risk to lose this
20 money. So if they would have clawed that
21 back, this money we're discussing now
22 would be a moot point because Treasury
23 would come in and take it back. So we
24 wouldn't have this funds to do that
25 because it hasn't been obligated.

1
2 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: No, I appreciate
3 that. But you don't actually have a
4 specific basis for that, correct?

5 MR. PERSICH: I only know that it
6 was part of the negotiations that were
7 going on between Congress back when that
8 was happening.

9 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Can you attribute
10 that to a particular person, a particular
11 date, time?

12 MR. PERSICH: No. The date and
13 time? I can't tell you that it was a
14 scary moment when there was going to be a
15 government shutdown and this was a
16 resource that they were rumored to use.
17 I'm using that from what I know from the
18 press. That's what I'm telling you. And
19 it scared us a little bit here.

20 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: So that concern
21 is what is driving the need from your
22 perspective to get this money obligated
23 to the General Fund; is that right?

24 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: It's one of the
25 concerns I have. Yes. I would like to

1
2 secure this money, have it obligated
3 because it's hard to spend here. That's
4 the problem we have. It's becoming more
5 and more harder to spend.

6 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: It's hard to
7 spend?

8 MR. PERSICH: As we've seen here,
9 because there's some still unspent funds
10 in some of the programs we have out
11 there. We spent 85, but there's 120 out
12 that's still to be spent. So this 30 some
13 odd million out there in some program
14 existing programs that we're not using.

15 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: So do you think
16 that if we spent an additional \$4 million
17 that that would be significant at all?

18 MR. PERSICH: It would be a slippery
19 slope considering where we're at now.

20 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Not my question.
21 \$4 million additional -- you just said
22 that we have a hard time spending this
23 money. And if I'm saying to you, I have 4
24 million and a good place to use it; how
25 about that?

1
2 MR. PERSICH: I would leave that to
3 the principals and the elected officials
4 to do that, to make that determination.
5 Okay. I'm not a policymaker here,
6 Legislator.

7 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: I'm not asking
8 for that.

9 MR. PERSICH: So if that's what gets
10 determined, then that's what will be
11 done.

12 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: That would allay
13 one of your concerns about spending this
14 money, right?

15 MR. PERSICH: Possibly. Yes.

16 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Okay.

17 I just have a question for Mr.
18 Kopel. I don't know if this is the
19 appropriate forum for it, but I do have a
20 question for you as well.

21 Here's my question: Is it even a
22 question that whatever money, whether
23 it's 15 million or \$19 million, is there
24 even a question that this money will not
25 be allocated proportionately among --

1
2 equally -- among all the legislators?

3 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I'm sorry.
4 If I understand your question, you want
5 to be sure that each legislator gets a
6 proportionate amount?

7 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: I'll clarify it
8 for you. Hypothetically, let's say we
9 agreed on a number of \$19 million.

10 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Yeah. One
11 million per. Is that what you would
12 like?

13 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Yes. That's
14 exactly my question.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: No. I
16 think that that's going to be a
17 discussion the Administration is going to
18 have with us. And, and I would say that
19 the money will probably go where it's
20 needed the most. This is a big county.
21 Perhaps some very wealthy districts might
22 not need as much as some needy districts,
23 which might need more for certain
24 programs.

25 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: So it's possible

1
2 that my district could get actually more
3 than 1/19 based on the needs of my
4 constituents?

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: It's
6 possible. Again, that's something that
7 the Administration will be looking at.

8 Andy?

9 MR. PERSICH: The 15 million, what I
10 understand it to be is going to be
11 working between the this Body and the
12 County Executive with what project
13 specific things you come up with. And
14 then there will be a negotiation, is the
15 way I understand.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I'm just
17 seizing on one item that was mentioned
18 here without saying that that's going to
19 be one of the items or won't be, but it
20 was mentioned, for instance, homeless.
21 There are some areas that have more than
22 others. Some areas don't have much at
23 all. So you're going to allocate money
24 according to the need.

25 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: And just to

1
2 clarify, that's our prerogative as the
3 Legislature to do that, correct?

4 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Again,
5 this is something where the
6 Administration, the Executive Body,
7 typically will make the proposal -- we
8 can make our own proposal, but once
9 again, we're going to work with the
10 Executive Body, because you've got to
11 have both. If we don't have both, we're
12 not getting anywhere.

13 All right, Mr. Koslow.

14 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Thank you,
15 Presiding Officer.

16 As an initial question, I just want
17 to clarify something because I'm
18 obviously new to this dais. We do have
19 checks and balances here in Nassau
20 County, correct?

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Checks and
22 balances in the sense that we have two
23 co-equal branches of government; if
24 that's what you mean. And you have a
25 third as well, the Judiciary.

1
2 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: So all three
3 parts are separate and apart. They work
4 independently, right?

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: They work
6 independently, but they work together,
7 certainly. To some extent.

8 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: I just wanna
9 make sure that the Executive Branch
10 doesn't tell us what to do, correct. We
11 do it on our own, right?

12 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: The
13 Executive Branch will propose certain
14 things, we will evaluate it, and dispose
15 of it.

16 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: My question for
17 you is: We are an independent body,
18 correct? We are not part of the Executive
19 Branch, right?

20 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Of course
21 not.

22 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: And the
23 Executive Branch is not part of the
24 Legislative Branch, correct?

25 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Of course

1
2 not.

3 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: And
4 notwithstanding the judge we just
5 approved, the Judicial Branch is separate
6 apart from all three, correct?

7 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: You've got
8 an "A" in civics.

9 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: All right.
10 Thank you. I wanna make sure that you are
11 all on the same page with me.

12 My concern here today is, Andy, if
13 you could clarify something for me. If
14 I'm reading this correctly, there's
15 approximately \$222 million going into the
16 General Fund.

17 MR. PERSICH: That is correct.

18 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: And if we were
19 to take four more million to put towards
20 contractual services to make it 19
21 million, that would still leave almost
22 220 million, 218 million or so in General
23 Fund, correct?

24 MR. PERSICH: That would be the
25 math, yes, Legislator.

1
2 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Okay.

3 Now, as a new legislator, one of the
4 things I heard in talking to people
5 during my campaign was they're tired of
6 elected officials hiding things from
7 them. They're tired of wondering where
8 all the money is going in one of the
9 wealthiest counties in the country. We
10 have an opportunity here to do something
11 for our constituents with money that is
12 being given to us by the Federal
13 Government, and the Majority is expecting
14 us as legislators to just agree that
15 we're going to earmark money with no
16 agreed upon destination where it's going,
17 who's going to get it, or for what
18 reason, or how for that matter. Where we
19 have an opportunity to go back to our
20 independent individual districts and say,
21 look, we were able to secure \$1 million
22 or even \$780,000, if it's the 15 million,
23 whatever, it is, a substantial sum of
24 money for our independent district. Or
25 the alternative is, we were able to

1
2 secure \$15 million, but I don't know
3 where it's going and who's going to get
4 it.

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Mr.
6 Koslow, if I may just correct one thing
7 or a possible misapprehension and I
8 apologize for interrupting you, but I
9 just want to make sure you understand
10 that when the actual determination as to
11 where the money goes is made, that's
12 still got to be approved by this Body. I
13 will be approved by the Body.

14 LEGISLATOR DAVIS: Okay. That was
15 part of my point.

16 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
17 think that's completely not true. It is
18 completely not true. Once this is passed,
19 we have no control over where the money
20 goes or how it's distributed.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That is
22 inaccurate.

23 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: You're
24 effectively asking us to agree to an
25 allocation of \$15 million, and then we

1
2 have to politicize who gets what based on
3 what arguments we can make from a
4 political perspective.

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That's our
6 job.

7 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Our job is to
8 look out for our communities, our job is
9 not the fight with you about how much
10 money my district deserves versus your
11 district because we have money in the
12 County budget. Our job is to represent
13 our communities and our constituents, not
14 to agree to give a sum of money with no
15 allocation to it and no idea who it's
16 going to, when and why. Our job is to not
17 hide things from our constituents. And my
18 question for you is what are you hiding
19 by not giving us our fair share of
20 whatever money we're putting aside?

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: You keep
22 on -- all of you keep on going on about
23 how we're hiding things, and we're not
24 giving you your fair share and all that.
25 We are not spending this money here

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2 today. This money is being allocated for
3 programs, period. The programs have yet
4 to be determined as to what they are and
5 where they are and you're taking a leap
6 over here by suggesting that they're not
7 going to be given to your district or
8 somebody else's district. That has yet to
9 be determined, and that will be voted on
10 by this Body as to specific allocations
11 of money before any of it is actually
12 spent.

13 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: What about the
14 Administration and what they have to say
15 in this process?

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Of course,
17 they're involved in that process as well.

18 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: What happened to
19 separation and checks and balances? Why
20 are they making the determination of
21 where this money goes.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I'm sorry.
23 Every program and every government in the
24 country has a negotiation between the
25 Executive and the Legislative bodies.

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2 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: So now we have
3 to negotiate with the Administration to
4 figure out where that money goes, and
5 it's not going to our districts.

6 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Wait,
7 wait. The first half of your sentence is
8 correct; the second half of your sentence
9 is incorrect.

10 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: But you're
11 politicizing the money now. Now we have
12 to now negotiate with --

13 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Money is
14 not being politicized. The money is being
15 moved from one pot to the other. And the
16 new pot over here is for programs. What
17 the programs are, we're not voting on
18 that today. We are not talking about that
19 at all today. Where the money is going
20 exactly to what district, we're not
21 talking about that today. That is not on
22 the Agenda. We're simply allocating an
23 amount of money. We are not doing
24 anything more than that. We are not
25 discussing at all about how it's being

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2 spent, about whether one district gets
3 more than another district, or they all
4 get the exact same amount what kind of
5 programs we're actually going to spend it
6 on. That's not under discussion now.
7 We're just simply discussing moving \$15
8 million into a different pot of money, so
9 to speak, so that the Federal Government
10 does not get to claw it back so that we
11 know that we have the money so that it's
12 available for various things. And that's
13 all we're doing here today.

14 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: What assurances
15 can I give my district that we're going
16 to get any of that money or any way to
17 know who is going to get that money?

18 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That's
19 premature. We have to discuss that. We
20 have to see. That's a negotiation.

21 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: How is that
22 premature? We have a number here.

23 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: If you're
24 suggesting, sir, that you're anticipating
25 that we're going to go ahead and do all

1
2 kinds of nefarious things with this
3 money, and none of the money is going to
4 go to the proper programs, I'm sorry,
5 that's incorrect.

6 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: I don't want
7 this to be -- I don't want you to take
8 anything personally. I'm not saying
9 anything nefarious.

10 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: But that
11 is exactly what you're all saying.

12 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: We're saying
13 that there's no guarantee that the
14 minorities are going to get their share.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: There are
16 never guarantees.

17 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
18 Howard, it could be so easily --

19 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Before
20 money is is allocated -- and that has not
21 been done -- before it's allocated,
22 you're anticipating that that it's going
23 to be done improperly. That's just
24 incorrect.

25 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Presiding

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2 Officer, if I will, all we're trying to
3 do is get on the record that the money
4 will be allocated as every other pot of
5 money has been allocated across this
6 party, across this Body in the past,
7 which is 1/19, which is how we have done
8 Hotel/Motel.

9 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: That's
10 incorrect.

11 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Which is how we
12 have done Hotel/Motel, CRP and the
13 budget, 1/19. That was simply what we
14 were trying to get on the record.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: No. I'm
16 sorry, you're incorrect.

17 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: It is correct.

18 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: No. Let
19 me let me finish what I'm saying. It's
20 incorrect because you're seizing upon
21 specific programs. But there are many
22 other programs -- I'll tell you what, if
23 your district needs a new road and my
24 district doesn't --

25 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: That's Capital.

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2 You could apply that to the Capital
3 needs.

4 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Your
5 district needs more social services.

6 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: You can apply
7 that to the Capital and the Operating
8 Budget. On the Capital and the Operating
9 Budget, it is not at 1/19. But every
10 other allocation that has been made
11 directly to this Body, it has been at
12 1/19. So we're simply trying to get on
13 the record that it will be treated just
14 as any other legislative allocation has
15 been in the past.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Okay.
17 You have made your record. Thank you.

18 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: You're making a
19 statement that we're trying to act as
20 though that you're being nefarious. In
21 the contrary, all we're trying to do, for
22 the record, is established that it will
23 be treated as every other allocation to
24 this Body.

25 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: And you

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2 have abundantly made clear that that is
3 what you wish to have happen.

4 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: So what's the
5 answer?

6 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I'm sorry.
7 This isn't -- I think we're just running
8 in circles over here.

9 Legislator Ferretti.

10 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
11 Howard, you have to realize you do have
12 that power. You could --

13 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Thank you,
14 Presiding Officer.

15 I just want to start. You know, I
16 think I speak for everyone on the dais.
17 We would absolutely love to fund every
18 program for every one of the people,
19 every one of the not for profits
20 businesses, we heard from Mr. John
21 O'Shea, that heartbreaking story about
22 his son. That's absolutely something we
23 would all love to do.

24 Let me just, out of the ARPA money,
25 Mr. Persich, have we had any cuts since

1
2 Covid started to any Social Services
3 programs?

4 MR. PERSICH: No, actually, if I may
5 expand on that, we've increased the
6 spending in areas in Social Services for
7 certain services, TANF, SNAP in the '24
8 budget. In addition, we've increased the
9 the Early Intervention Budget by \$12
10 million because caseloads have increased.

11 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So we've
12 increased since Covid?

13 MR. PERSICH: Yes.

14 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: When the
15 County and the world was shut down, we
16 increased funds for those services?

17 MR. PERSICH: Yes. That is correct.

18 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay.

19 What about all the other services,
20 Veteran Services; have they been cut?

21 MR. PERSICH: No. We've not cut any
22 programs.

23 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Any programs,
24 any services during Covid, the worst
25 emergency and shutdown in the history of

1
2 the world, did we cut any services?

3 MR. PERSICH: Not to my knowledge,
4 no.

5 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So I'm going
6 to be a little bit of a mishmash. My
7 comments might not gel. I have some
8 questions for you, some responses,
9 because there was a lot of points made.

10 I heard a couple times, three times
11 from the Minority Leader, another time
12 from Legislator Solages asking with
13 reference to the money being transferred
14 to the General Fund, is this what this
15 money was intended for? They asked you
16 that three times. I'm sorry, "this is
17 what the money is for", was exactly what
18 you said.

19 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: To
20 help our communities is what the money is
21 for. But you are --

22 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I didn't
23 interrupt you. Excuse me.

24 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
25 think you just misquoted me.

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2 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: "This is what
3 the money is for", is that a misquote?

4 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
5 No. But it didn't say whether or not it
6 could be transferred to the General Fund.
7 I said that we're supposed to use a good
8 portion of this funding --

9 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I didn't
10 interrupt any of you.

11 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
12 But you misquoted me, and I have not
13 misquoted you. And if you want me to, I
14 will, because it doesn't sit right.

15 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: What did you
16 say?

17 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
18 What I said is that this is what the
19 funding is for.

20 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Thank you.
21 Okay.

22 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
23 The ARPA funding is -- listen, you can
24 take most of the money. You're going to
25 take 200 and something million dollars.

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2 You got it --

3 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Just let me
4 speak.

5 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:
6 We're asking for is \$1 million per
7 district.

8 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Got it.

9 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: It
10 has to be on the record. You know why?
11 We don't control what the Executive
12 Branch puts down for contracts. Okay. If
13 I want to put down something for
14 Veterans, there's no way that I can have
15 any guarantee.

16 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I know you
17 don't want to let me speak.

18 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: No, I don't,
19 because you know what? You misquoted me,
20 and I'm still correcting it.

21 We don't have any control after this
22 vote. It's up to the County Executive to
23 decide where this money is spent, because
24 he's the only one who can send down the
25 contracts. So after this vote, we do not

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2 have any say.

3 It is clear that the Presiding
4 Officer, if he wished, could basically
5 change the amount, because the
6 Administration has mentioned that it's
7 really up to him if he wants to ask for
8 it, and could allocate it in the 1.9.

9 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Legislator
10 Solages, did you ask what the money was
11 intended for?

12 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: I asked what
13 was the Legislative intent if passed.

14 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. All
15 right. So now we're clear on the record
16 what you both said.

17 The statute speaks for itself. Mr.
18 Persich, is tourism specifically listed
19 in the ARPA statute as permissible funds
20 to be spent?

21 MR. PERSICH: Every one of the
22 programs that we've submitted to this has
23 been vetted and is eligible under the
24 ARPA --

25 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: How about the

1
2 word, "tourism"; is that in the statute?

3 MR. PERSICH: Yes, it is.

4 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: How about
5 dedicating money for lost revenue?

6 MR. PERSICH: Yes.

7 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Specifically
8 in the statute?

9 MR. PERSICH: Yes.

10 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Now, again,
11 multiple members of the Minority referred
12 to the 125th anniversary party. Is there
13 an anniversary party scheduled? One
14 single party scheduled for \$10 million?

15 MR. PERSICH: I am not aware of
16 that.

17 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: The reality is
18 that's a completely disingenuous
19 interpretation of what that is. Okay. And
20 it's being said so people can cheer in
21 the audience or whatever. Maybe *Newsday*
22 picks up on it. But that's not the
23 reality. Each one of us have been
24 contacted by the Administration and
25 requested to participate, by offering

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2 opportunities in our districts where
3 businesses can participate in these
4 events, which quite frankly, are quite
5 profitable for them. The Minority all
6 declined the invitation. That's a
7 disservice to your districts. Okay. These
8 are opportunities for businesses who have
9 been hurting to get significant revenue.
10 You had no problem when there were
11 \$10,000 grants going out to businesses,
12 restaurants, that you were okay with. But
13 when it comes to stimulating the economy
14 with these events, not a singular party.
15 I know you want to minimize it. That's
16 not what this is. Okay. When it comes to
17 that, you said no, thank you. That's a
18 disservice. You should rethink that.

19 Now, you talked about the surplus.
20 Okay. We do have a surplus. That's a good
21 thing. But we also have debts that are
22 coming due. Isn't that right, Mr.
23 Persich?

24 MR. PERSICH: That is correct.

25 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: And isn't one

1
2 of those debts \$30 million,
3 approximately, a year as a result of the
4 refinance? Isn't that coming due?

5 MR. PERSICH: Yes. That's now.

6 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: How many more
7 years?

8 MR. PERSICH: We have it for the
9 next 15 or so years.

10 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So just to go
11 back -- because now we're being overly
12 conservative, apparently -- but a couple
13 of years ago, when we were projecting
14 sales tax to be what they actually turned
15 out to be, the Minority was saying,
16 "we're not going to recognize that sales
17 tax. We need to refinance our debt".
18 Remember that?

19 MR. PERSICH: I do, Legislator.

20 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. And as a
21 result of that refinancing -- and
22 refinancing helps you in the short term,
23 but ultimately you pay more money, right?
24 The bill comes due.

25 MR. PERSICH: You've remortgaged.

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LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: You've
remortgaged it for a longer period.
That's what refinancing is, right?

MR. PERSICH: That is correct.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: And ultimately
the grand scheme of things, we will pay
more money than if we did not refinance,
correct?

MR. PERSICH: Yes.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. And
that's starting to come due now, correct.

(Whereupon, off the record
interruption.)

MR. PERSICH: I'm sorry, Legislator.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I know they
like to interrupt. I didn't interrupt
them, but just focus on me for a second.
So that's coming due now, right?

MR. PERSICH: That is true. Yes. The
debt service is now going back and it's
going up as a result of the NIFA
transaction.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So
coincidentally, when we were sitting here

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2 and we were being told that our numbers
3 were off, we were right. When I say,
4 "we", the Majority, right?

5 MR. PERSICH: The sales tax that we
6 received in 2021 was more than what we
7 anticipated in the budget. Yes. And we
8 took that money and put it into a Special
9 Revenue Fund.

10 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Now, we heard
11 from many of the people with regard to
12 the \$40 an hour that they're receiving.
13 It's the lowest in the state. I think
14 that I think we all agree that's not
15 okay. I'm sorry, \$40 for half hour, I
16 apologize. Lowest in the state. I think
17 that's something that we need to address.
18 But just to be clear, can that be
19 addressed with ARPA money?

20 MR. PERSICH: I don't believe so.

21 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Okay. So
22 bringing it up in the context of this
23 hearing is again, disingenuous. And that
24 would be a recurring expense, correct?

25 MR. PERSICH: Yes.

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LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: And ARPA money
is not recurring, right.

MR. PERSICH: That is correct.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So again,
we're muddying the waters.

(Whereupon, off the record
disruption.)

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I'm not taking
out of context.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: I was speaking to
my point --

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I wasn't
interrupting you.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: You're taking it
out of context.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Listen,
everybody. Excuse me.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: I was speaking to
the point of being embarrassed in the
moment.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Legislator
Bynoe. Wait.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: You're spinning
it, John.

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(Whereupon, crosstalk.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: You will
you will have a fair chance to respond.

(Whereupon, off the record
disruption.)

(Whereupon, crosstalk.)

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: He's making a
point to attack me and my comments.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I will
call a recess.

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: I don't care. I
actually think it's a good idea.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: You have
to learn decorum over here.

(Whereupon, off the record
disruption.)

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Don't talk about
decorum. I've been on this Body for ten
years --

(Whereupon, crosstalk.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Listen,
everyone take a deep breath.

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: That was not
directed at you, Legislator Bynoe.

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2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Listen,
3 right now Legislator Ferretti has the
4 floor when he's --

5 (Whereupon, off the record
6 disruption.)

7 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: No, no.
8 When he is -- when he is done.

9 (Whereupon, off the record
10 disruption.)

11 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: When he is
12 done, whoever wants can respond and say
13 what you feel at that time. But right now
14 he's talking. And when you're talking, I
15 will request that neither he nor anyone
16 else interrupt you.

17 (Whereupon, off the record
18 disruption.)

19 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Just in
20 response, Legislator Bynoe, you're not
21 the only legislator that brought up that
22 point, so nothing personal. It was
23 multiple legislators on your side that
24 brought that up. And I'm responding to
25 that point. I think we're all in

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2 agreement that that is a disservice. But
3 in the context of this hearing, it, quite
4 frankly, can't be addressed by the ARPA
5 money. So bringing it up during this
6 hearing is, in my opinion, misleading.

7 Going forward --

8 (Whereupon, off the record
9 disruption.)

10 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Legislator,
11 I'm using my time as I feel fit to use
12 it.

13 (Whereupon, off the record
14 disruption.)

15 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I didn't
16 address you. You addressed me. But am I
17 not going to go back and forth.

18 The Minority has repeatedly brought
19 up this \$19 million number, yet seems
20 completely perplexed by \$15 million. Are
21 we really to believe that that difference
22 of 4 million is going to cure all the
23 County's problems? The reality is --

24 (Whereupon, off the record
25 disruption.)

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2 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Can you let
3 me just finish.

4 The reality is \$15 million can be
5 spent on these different services that
6 we've been funding this entire time, and
7 we are saying we're going to consider
8 funding going forward with this money. I
9 don't see why 19 you seem to be okay with
10 and 15 you want no part of.

11 Again, lastly, when we talk about
12 the remaining money being put into the
13 General Fund, and we've heard some
14 legislators talking about their
15 campaigns, my campaign, my biggest
16 promise to my residents, my constituents,
17 is I will do whatever I possibly can do
18 to not raise your taxes. I think we need
19 to hold to that promise, and this will be
20 a big step in that direction to make sure
21 we don't have to do that going forward in
22 the out years.

23 Thank you.

24 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: Can I just
25 respond to that? One last point.

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2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: It's fine,
3 but one at a time, please. And no one
4 will interrupt.

5 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: To that point
6 about what works for his district is
7 exactly why we want a 1/19 division so
8 that we can do what's best for our
9 districts. I didn't make a promise of
10 taxes to my district, and I didn't make a
11 promise that you made to your districts.
12 So that's the whole reason why we're
13 asking for the 1/19 divide, to make sure
14 we know where the money's going, and we
15 work for what's good for our districts.

16 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: I just want to
17 say that, Presiding Officer, I took
18 offense to your comment about that I need
19 to learn decorum. Because you've known
20 me for ten years.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Excuse me.
22 I was not directing that specifically at
23 one person at all. I was directing to the
24 entire dais.

25 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Perfect, perfect.

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2 I'm going to tell you that I'll
3 offer an apology. Because I did speak
4 over my colleague while he was speaking,
5 and I think I probably can count on one
6 hand the times that I've done that. And
7 that's because that I think it really
8 disingenuous that we're sitting here
9 today after having voted without even
10 giving a blink of an eye, a second
11 thought, to \$10 million for an
12 anniversary party. But we're going to sit
13 here today and fight against your
14 colleagues who have known needs, needs in
15 their district, needs pertaining to clean
16 water, needs pertaining to homeless
17 people living on the street, the needs of
18 communities where young people are
19 committing suicide. And I find it
20 disingenuous that we're talking about
21 holding the line on taxes, when people
22 are struggling. This is a humanitarian
23 issue. It's not an issue of politics.
24 It's not an issue of governance. It's
25 about being humanitarians and

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2 understanding that we have a fundamental
3 responsibility to the communities that we
4 serve. And if any community is not
5 performing at its best potential, then
6 the County itself fails.

7 And I find it disingenuous that
8 we're sitting here talking about money
9 that have been in our coffers from the
10 time that it has come down from the
11 federal government. Over half of it is
12 sitting here in our coffers. So I find it
13 perplexing that we want to argue or we
14 want to parse out or we shouldn't bring
15 one issue in with another. We're all
16 adults and elected to this Body because
17 we have the ability of being able to
18 understand we're having a conversation.
19 A conversation might bring in issues that
20 may not be able to be served or
21 remediated by this ARPA money, but it's a
22 globe. It's a conversation of global
23 impact, regional impact.

24 And at the end of the day,
25 Legislator Ferretti, you have the right

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2 to use your time to speak as you feel
3 freely. I'm just of the mindset that when
4 we're sitting here, we should not be
5 attacking each other. We should not be
6 taking the opportunity to attack each
7 other because it's not about each other,
8 it's about the people we serve.

9 And so I will apologize for speaking
10 over you today, because that is not how I
11 conduct myself on this dais. But I'm
12 going to tell you that it is because I
13 have passion about this issue.

14 Passionate about each one of the issues
15 that was brought up on this floor today,
16 that may not have all been tied to ARPA.
17 Some of these comments were tied to
18 opioid money. But again, that's not a
19 conversation of today. That's a
20 conversation that's yet delayed and
21 deferred, with the money sitting in the
22 bank not being used toward going toward
23 to fix these issues.

24 So today I'm going to tell you,
25 yeah, \$4 million, it may not it may not

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2 fix everything that you see fit. It may
3 not fix the ills of this full Body, but
4 it will go a long way than sitting in the
5 coffers of Nassau County being unused. It
6 goes a long way, a further distance than
7 being used for a \$10 million series of
8 parties. It'll go a much longer way.

9 (Whereupon, off the record
10 discussion.)

11 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: I'm sorry. I
12 thought we were using decorum.

13 At the end of the day, Presiding
14 Officer, I don't think the role of the
15 County Administration is to weigh in to
16 how we, this Body, splits our money. They
17 have never weighed into how we split our
18 money down here, how we allocate it. And
19 I don't think the Administration has a
20 role in that. We have the ability,
21 actually, by legislation to call down for
22 \$19 million, but we're deferring to the
23 Administration to be able to set aside
24 money for this Body to allocate to
25 community services. We're deferring to

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2 them. And because you're deferring to
3 them, that's one thing. But I don't think
4 in any way, shape, form or fashion will I
5 be deferring to the County Administration
6 on how this money is allocated, and I'd
7 ask my colleagues in government to stand
8 with me on that.

9 Thank you.

10 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: I just want to
11 comment on my friend John Ferretti.

12 One of my pet peeves is I get
13 irritated when there's an attempt to
14 rewrite history. And that happens every
15 day in the newspapers, on TV, both sides
16 of the aisle. I can't stand when the
17 history is attempted to be rewritten. So
18 I just wanted to address John.

19 The \$10 million for tourism that we
20 voted on last month to be given to the
21 Parks Department, we voted against that
22 because we believed and we still believe
23 that that \$10 million could be better
24 allocated to other things.

25 You know, Andy, you pointed out some

1
2 sort of off the cuff mathematical thing
3 about for every dollar invested in
4 tourism, you get \$3 back; do you recall
5 that?

6 MR. PERSICH: Yes, I do.

7 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: But you really
8 didn't have any sort of scientific data
9 to back that up. It was really more of an
10 off the cuff type of remark, correct?

11 MR. PERSICH: There was some
12 methodology to the number.

13 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: You haven't
14 showed us that methodology. We asked you
15 to. We asked you to last time, show us
16 the methodology. Show us how you
17 calculate that. Maybe we can better
18 justify allocating it for tourism. So the
19 reason why we voted against that was not
20 because we don't want to bolster up
21 Nassau County to the world, sure. But we
22 think the Parks Department has a lot in
23 their budget. Thankfully our County's
24 finances over the past couple of years,
25 that \$10 million could be used

1
2 immediately for some of the programs that
3 are being underfunded now. That's the
4 reason why we voted against it. We didn't
5 vote against it because we're
6 anti-tourism. So I think that's not
7 something that characterizes our position
8 very well.

9 The other thing, Legislator
10 Ferretti, we refinanced our debt through
11 the assistance of NIFA, and that was a
12 bipartisan measure that helped the County
13 save millions of dollars. So you can't
14 talk about it now and say, you know, we
15 refinanced the debt and now we have to
16 pay the bill. Well, we knew we had to pay
17 the bill, but that was an opportunity for
18 us at a particular vulnerable period of
19 time to save our county millions and
20 millions of dollars. So that was a
21 bipartisan measure that we can't look
22 back on now and try to point fingers at
23 that it wasn't the right thing to do.

24 And then finally, I just want to
25 say, we're talking about 19 million, 15

1
2 million. Let's make no false pretenses
3 about that there's going to be a small
4 pot of gold awaiting each of us down the
5 road for this 15 million or 19 million.
6 To delay the conversation for another
7 day, we make no false pretenses about it.
8 We're not going to have the ability to
9 determine where that money goes and how
10 it goes to each of our respective
11 districts. We're the Minority, it's not
12 going to be really a push comes to shove
13 up to us where that money goes. And
14 that's all we're trying to say here
15 today. We want to be able to know that
16 going in, there's going to be an equal
17 allocation. That's all we're trying to
18 say. Whether it's 15 million or 19
19 million, we're not objecting in substance
20 to or in principle to the 15 million or
21 the 19 million, but the 19 million makes
22 the math work better. And that's what
23 we're trying to say. In the overall
24 scheme of things, an extra \$4 million out
25 of the \$222 million is a drop in the

1
2 bucket. Add 4 million to it. Make it 19
3 million. Commit. We want a commitment
4 that it's going to be an equal
5 allocation. Don't say, well, we have to
6 consult with the Administration. We'll
7 talk about it. There's some worthy
8 things that each of you have in your
9 district. No. Let's commit to it today
10 on the record, 19 million. It makes the
11 math work very easy. And and this way
12 there's not going to be any need to
13 discuss it later on.

14 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

15 I would ask all of us and I'm
16 including myself not to repeat things.
17 New and different things. Not to say the
18 same thing. We don't have to get out of
19 here at any particular time, we'll take
20 as long as we need. Let's just, as I
21 say, not just run in circles.

22 I want to just correct one little
23 item that Mr. Drucker spoke about. I was
24 personally in the room when the borrowing
25 was discussed. It was not strictly

1
2 bipartisan. This was shoved down our
3 throats, literally. The refinance
4 borrowing. Borrowed a great deal of
5 additional money. It was shoved down our
6 throats, totally shoved down our throats
7 by NIFA.

8 (Whereupon, off the record
9 discussion.)

10 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Andy was
11 there. Andy was working with a different
12 Administration at the time. Don't blame
13 Andy. Andy is doing his job the way he's
14 told by his principal. He's doing it
15 fine. He does the right job.

16 But it was shoved down our throats
17 by NIFA, which deliberately
18 misinterpreted the sales tax receipts at
19 the time. They estimated a number that
20 was mathematically impossible at the
21 time. And I pointed it out, personally.
22 And we really had no choice. It resulted
23 in us borrowing, over time, hundreds of
24 millions of dollars additional. That's
25 what it's going to cost the County

1
2 overtime. But that's neither here nor
3 there for this particular thing.

4 Mr. Ferretti, I think you want --

5 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Real quick.
6 Howard doesn't want us talking in
7 circles, but I'm going to for a second.

8 Just to add on to what the Presiding
9 Officer was just saying, he may have said
10 it. They indicated they would not approve
11 the budget, they being NIFA, unless that
12 refinance happened. So we were faced,
13 despite our objections, as to the
14 refinancing and the necessity for it, we
15 were faced with literally shutting the
16 County down if we weren't to go along
17 with it. That's ultimately why we did it.
18 Look, there were benefits to it. There's
19 no question that were benefits to it, and
20 there's benefits to refinancing your home
21 and other things. But there are also
22 detriments to that. And those detriments
23 are coming. We're about to foot the bill
24 for that right now.

25 Legislator Drucker, just to correct

1
2 one other thing. With the tourism
3 allocation, the Minority did not vote
4 against it. They abstained. They didn't
5 vote for it. No vote against it is a no
6 vote. There's a reason you abstained.

7 (Whereupon, off the record
8 disruption.)

9 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Listen, I have
10 a great deal of respect for all of you.

11 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: One at a
12 time, please.

13 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: All I can tell
14 you is, you're critical of the tourism
15 application. You didn't vote for it or
16 against it. But the reality is, it's an
17 opportunity for our communities to have a
18 great stimulus to their economy. I
19 inherited Farmingdale, for example.

20 (Whereupon, off the record
21 disruption.)

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: One at a
23 time.

24 LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: I'm wrong?
25 Did you vote? Did you did you vote?

1

2

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: No, no.

3

We're not doing a back and forth. When

4

he's finished, then you'll have a chance

5

to say so. Just wait, please.

6

(Whereupon, off the record

7

discussion.)

8

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: So it's my

9

understanding that one of the reasons

10

that this money was given to us was to

11

stimulate our local economy after Covid.

12

That's what the purpose of this tourism

13

is. To characterize it as a party, in my

14

opinion, is not correct. And so my point,

15

and I apologize if anyone took offense to

16

it because none was intended, but my

17

point is that all of us should be

18

embracing that, because in my opinion,

19

it's in the best interest of our

20

districts and our communities to get this

21

money and these events in our districts

22

so they can recognize that benefit

23

financially. That was my point.

24

Thank you.

25

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Anyone

1
2 have anything new or different?

3 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Something new.

4 I make a motion to go into Executive
5 Session where I feel like we're very
6 close to making a negotiation here. I
7 feel like we're very close.

8 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I think
9 your feelings are probably incorrect.

10 Legislator Walker.

11 LEGISLATOR WALKER: I just wanted to
12 say one thing about about monies being
13 equally allotted, and I know it's across
14 the board with our CRPs and so on and so
15 forth. But any of the ARPA money that was
16 spent so far didn't go equally across our
17 districts. It did not go equally across
18 many districts. I'm not saying my
19 district didn't get any money, but other
20 other districts got a lot more, for
21 whatever reason, for the fact that they
22 needed it more. They needed to address
23 things in their district more so than I
24 had to address something in my own
25 district. Now all of a sudden -- I never

1
2 got the idea the \$15 million was going to
3 be spread equally amongst 19 of us
4 because someone might need something more
5 than I do. We all need something, let's
6 be honest. But someone might need
7 something more than my district does.
8 Many of the organizations that I spoke to
9 that spoke today, I was so happy to hear
10 from them, but I've never even heard of
11 them before. And perhaps because they're
12 not in my district, I don't know about
13 them. And you might not know about some
14 of the things that are in my district.

15 So I really just wanted to make that
16 statement that we did not disperse of
17 that equally before. So I don't really
18 know. I never thought about the fact
19 that this was going to be dispersed
20 equally, whether it was 15 or 19 or 12 or
21 10, whatever it was, it wasn't equally
22 spent across the district. So I really
23 just wanted to make that statement.

24 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Anyone
25 else?

1
2 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

3 I'm going to have to correct the record.

4 So he said that we didn't vote for
5 it or against it. The truth of the matter
6 is it went through Committees as an
7 abstention. And then once we really heard
8 about the gala and all this other stuff,
9 we all voted against the 10 million.

10 I just want to say one more thing.
11 Rose, I respect you and I understand what
12 you're saying, but what you just said is
13 absolutely the reason why we want to have
14 a 1/19 breakup. Whether or not it's for
15 the 15 million or the 19 million, it's
16 for exactly what you just said. There are
17 things in my district at the County
18 Executive has never, ever heard about. I
19 have no control over what contracts he
20 does. None. And not only that, they
21 probably won't do them if I ask for them.
22 I have been told that that's what's
23 happening with my CRPs.

24 So the bottom line is, the whole
25 idea of it is we trust each 19 of us to

1
2 know our districts. And with this money,
3 we have a once in a lifetime opportunity
4 to take it and give it to the groups and
5 to the areas that we all know are in
6 desperate need of it. I'm sure you could
7 find enough in your district to do it.

8 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

9 MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON: No,
10 I'm not done yet, Howard. I want to say
11 one more thing, Howard. I had a lot of
12 hope, and unfortunately, it's
13 diminishing. I think that you kind of
14 like to turn things off and get through
15 something. It's not personal, but I had
16 hope that you would be completely -- if
17 you don't know the answer, then we can we
18 can look into it.

19 For instance, with the 19 million,
20 you have the right to say, to put on the
21 record, it's up to us to say it's going
22 to be divided -- or 15 million -- it's
23 going to be divided by 19 people. You
24 have that power. Now if you don't want
25 that power, I understand if you're going

1
2 to get in trouble from upstairs, I
3 understand. It's not an easy seat that
4 you're sitting in. It's not an easy seat
5 that I'm sitting in. But we both took
6 these positions not to be comfortable,
7 but to do the right thing. The power is
8 yours, you cannot convince anyone that it
9 is not your power. You don't have the
10 power to up it to 19. That we do need
11 the administration to approve. Honestly,
12 a lot of that was the number because it
13 was just an easier number to deal with.
14 We each have \$1 million. But if it's 15,
15 Howard, this is completely on you. You
16 can say right now it is going to be
17 divided by the 19 of us, and that is all
18 that we're really asking for. Because to
19 be honest with you, I've been told left
20 and right as of last Friday that I'm not
21 getting things that other people are
22 getting. That's not fair. You know,
23 we're dealing with the situation that is
24 not fair.

25 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: We got it.

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

No, you don't have it. And stop cutting me off. It's very rude. Because this is extremely important. This is the one time.

In my opinion, you other legislators, I really wish that you would just think about this, because you're not going to have much control over where the money goes either. I'm telling you, I've been here for so long, we've never had anything like this before. We'll never have it again. You can give it to your fire districts. You can give it to whoever you really feel needs it. Could you imagine having that as a legislator? This is an incredible opportunity. This is what this money is for. If you vote this right now, you're also giving up control. The bottom line is we're not going to have this come back to us. Once we vote for this, it's gone. And it's going to only be whatever it is sent down.

1
2 I know you guys. I know a lot of
3 you. I know you're good people. I really
4 can't express to you enough how important
5 it is that we maybe push back a little
6 and say, hey, you know what? We're going
7 to be the ones who decide this. Even if
8 one of you did it, I would feel that
9 there was some hope. Thank you.

10 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Let me
11 quickly respond and then I have a few
12 slips for public comment.

13 First of all, I have a little
14 calculator here, and I can divide 15 by
15 19 as well. The math is not hard; that's
16 easy, but that's not the issue. I
17 fundamentally do not agree, personally do
18 not agree, that it's a sensible way to
19 allocate things. I don't think so. As I
20 said before and as Legislator Walker so
21 nicely put it as well, this is not
22 intended as something where each
23 legislator gets to just allocate it for
24 whatever he or she thinks is important in
25 that district. It is a countywide

consideration for each amount of money.

Whether or not I have the power is not particularly relevant. I don't agree.

Let me go ahead and start calling.

Thank you, Andy.

1
2 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Mr. Paul
3 Gibson.

4 MR. GIBSON: Good afternoon. My name
5 is Paul Gibson, 869 Winter Avenue in
6 Uniondale.

7 I am the past president of the
8 Community Land Trust, and accordingly,
9 I'm going to allocate my time to the
10 current vice president of the Land Trust,
11 Jeanine Maynard.

12 MS. MAYNARD: Good afternoon. My
13 name is Jeanine Maynard. I am the vice
14 president of Uniondale Community Land
15 Trust and we have put in a request for
16 some of the ARPA funding that we
17 understand was in abundance and not
18 allocated.

19 Before I do that, I want to set up a
20 context for this and say that last
21 semester we were working with Hofstra
22 fellows in our community organization,
23 and one of them was a public health
24 master's program fellow. And he brought
25 down the data that Nassau County's life

1
2 expectancy is 81.9 years. Life
3 expectancy in Uniondale is 73.5 years.
4 That's 81.9 compared to 73.5. So when you
5 ask where are the Covid impacted
6 communities, we're saying it's cost us
7 life. It's cost us resources. It's cost
8 us seniors that help with childcare. It's
9 cost us in many, many ways. The medical
10 expenses have hurt our homeowners. When
11 we look at that instability, one of the
12 things we found is that through October,
13 we were looking at an average of 440 or
14 more homes that had been in some form of
15 lis pendens under some threat of their
16 stable homeownership. So homeowners are
17 needing help.

18 In addition to that, we were looking
19 at stats that approximately 4 to 6 homes
20 every month were coming up as having been
21 foreclosed, and somewhere between 4 and 9
22 homes were on the auction block. So I'm
23 giving you that scenario to frame some of
24 what we're trying to do here.

25 A letter was submitted and I'm going

1
2 to read this from our president:

3 "I'm writing to express direct
4 community funding needs on behalf of
5 Uniondale Community Land Trust, a not for
6 profit organization located in Legislator
7 Siela Bynoe's district.

8 We, the members of UCLT, understand
9 that the Federal Government is funded
10 Nassau County, a large sum of money under
11 the American Rescue Plan initiative.
12 However, to date, the Administration has
13 not earmarked sufficient funds to deliver
14 this critical support to worthy community
15 organizations. We're advocating for a
16 significantly impactful portion of ARPA
17 funding aid to be delivered to the people
18 and programs directly impacted by the
19 pandemic. This includes access to stable
20 and affordable housing -- (buzzer).

21 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: I'm going
22 to let you go a little bit further
23 because both of you put in separate
24 slips. I'll let you go ahead.

25 MS. MAYNARD: Thank you very much.

1
2 "...The ARPA funding should help
3 improve resilience in meaningful work of
4 local not-for-profit organizations,
5 residents, businesses within Nassau
6 County.

7 Specifically, we're referring to the
8 funding of projects and programs
9 undertaken and planned by UCLT for the
10 provision of permanently affordable,
11 completely renovated homes and resiliency
12 services to the community.

13 We're requesting funding to support
14 our work in areas such as improving local
15 security, resilience and safety,
16 addressing derelict and abandoned homes
17 structures. We're hoping to acquire three
18 facilities from recent lists of such
19 properties, or take three from the active
20 listing of foreclosed and condemned
21 properties, or auctioned and make them
22 permanently affordable.

23 When you talk about return on your
24 investment, the homes that come into the
25 land trust remain permanently affordable.

1
2 It doesn't sunset like so many of the
3 other affordable housing initiatives, so
4 that this continues to provide stable
5 resource for the county. And also, it
6 becomes permanently affordable homes for
7 homeowners at 50 to 80% AMI.

8 We also want to institute CERT
9 training initiative for the community
10 residents, which will improve stability
11 in hard times.

12 Environmental preventive health
13 responses are part of it also. We've been
14 providing water pitches for households to
15 deal with microplastics and PFOA, PFAs
16 and one for dioxane in our County's water
17 conditions.

18 We want to share equity in bringing
19 two homes up to current environmental
20 codes. Our community has homes that are
21 aged and have asbestos and other
22 conditions, which also put health
23 conditions at risk. We'd like to be able
24 to make that opportunity for legacy
25 homeowners of ten years or more.

1
2 We also want capacity development
3 for the organization itself and staff
4 infrastructure --

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Ms.
6 Maynard, you are coming towards the end?

7 MS. MAYNARD: Yes. This is it.

8 -- so that we have vacancies to fill
9 among our staff that allow us to do this
10 work.

11 Our hope is that if fairly funded,
12 this program becomes a demonstration
13 project for all of Nassau County about
14 affordable homeownership and sustainable
15 homeownership, and an investment now that
16 pays back the County with a stock of
17 reasonably affordable homes that are
18 environmentally correct for the entire
19 future going forward. It's a resource we
20 desperately need, and it's a
21 demonstration project."

22 Thank you.

23 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
24 Christiano Marcello.

25 MR. LAROCK: Hi. Good afternoon. My

1
2 name is Fenol LaRock. I am executive
3 director of a nonprofit Organization,
4 Universal Interactions.

5 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Sorry.
6 Who's Christiano?

7 MR. LAROCK: Yes, we're together.

8 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Okay.

9 MR. LAROCK: We are the Long Island
10 Herald Persons of the year. Being so we
11 have done great events within the
12 communities. We have done a basketball
13 tournament, 64 teams, over 250 players a
14 days; Thanksgiving dinner where we fed
15 over 300 people; back to school giveaway
16 where we gave book bags, pens, pencils to
17 over 400 kids; we have done toys
18 giveaways as well to kids that are less
19 fortunate.

20 We are here to do a great change
21 within this community. We understand that
22 with the funds allocated to -- we want to
23 do something great, which is, you know,
24 do events, right? We know that doing
25 events is a great thing within our

1
2 community, right? So we know that
3 generating avenues where we could do
4 great events such as concerts, carnivals,
5 which we can make money and still do
6 great things within the community to,
7 give back to the communities. So
8 Christiano is going to explain more
9 towards it.

10 MR. MARCELLO: So we came up with a
11 true idea that could go with both parties
12 to understand that you could use these
13 funds that's for the 125th anniversary
14 and use it to make sure that all the
15 money made could be allocated to each
16 district. So you are able to, instead of
17 looking at this money to just be spent,
18 use the money to be made and then divided
19 to each district after it's made.

20 We are able to organize huge events
21 through our great marketing skills so we
22 know how to make these events and
23 fundraise that will go towards mental
24 health, substance abuse, senior housing.
25 These are two things that I actually been

1
2 through personally. I've been through an
3 anxiety, so I had suffered through
4 anxiety for years. I know how important
5 it is to use this money to be put for
6 this type of issues.

7 We can put our idea to use our great
8 marketing skills and to do these huge
9 events with Nassau County as a partner
10 and making sure that it's allocated to
11 each district, that could be put into
12 actually using these funds to go straight
13 to however you spend. Such as like the
14 firehouse and everything. And to be well
15 spent through marketing.

16 MR. LAROCK: We could do the events
17 such as a carnival and the concerts where
18 we could get big name artists, where we
19 could generate large amount of money,
20 which both parties can still come
21 together.

22 Our mission statement is that we
23 have togetherness, right? We are
24 Universal Interactions. We want to make
25 sure that we still do things together as

1
2 a community, no matter what race, color,
3 necessities (sic) and such things like
4 that. So that's why we are here to want
5 to partner up with y'all. So we could do
6 these events where we can still find ways
7 to still do things within the district,
8 and also do ways where we can allocate
9 funds towards the things that we need,
10 such as substance abuse, you know, drug
11 addiction, mental health as well.

12 MR. MARCELLO: So just to conclude,
13 we would like to use the 125 year
14 anniversary as a way to fundraise more
15 money and make more money out of it and
16 distribute it to each district.

17 Thank you.

18 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.
19 Who's your legislator?

20 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you. I
21 am. Thank you.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Okay. So
23 please talk with your legislator and I'm
24 sure he'll do a fine job of putting it
25 forth.

1
2 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Thank you very
3 much, gentlemen, for coming today. We
4 look forward to working with you.

5 Thank you.

6 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Yes. Thank
7 you.

8 Elsie Saint Louis.

9 LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: Elsie Saint
10 Louis represents HAUP, a very important
11 non-profit. They left. They waited here
12 for quite a long time. But I believe they
13 put their statement in writing and will
14 provide it to the Body.

15 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Thank you.

16 I have one more from Spiro Tsirkes.
17 They left.

18 I would like the legislators to take
19 their seats.

20 (Whereupon, off the record
21 discussion.)

22 PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: We'll have
23 a five minute recess. I'm going to call
24 it in five minutes.
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(Whereupon, recess,

4:14-4:22 p.m.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: All
legislators, please take your seats so
that we can proceed.

Mr. Darcy, would you be so kind as
to call the roll?

MR. DARCY: Legislator Davis?

LEGISLATOR DAVIS: No.

MR. DARCY: Legislator Strauss?

LEGISLATOR STRAUSS: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: I'll take over.
Presiding Officer?

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Ms. Pilip?

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: She is not
here.

CLERK PULITZER: Samantha Goetz.

LEGISLATOR GOETZ: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Thank you.

Mr. Kennedy?

LEGISLATOR KENNEDY: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Mr. McKevitt?

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LEGISLATOR MCKEVITT: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Mr. Mullaney?

LEGISLATOR MULLANEY: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Mr. Ferretti?

LEGISLATOR FERRETTI: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Mr. Gaylor?

LEGISLATOR GAYLOR: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Ms. Walker?

LEGISLATOR WALKER: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Mr. Giuffre?

LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Mr. Giangregorio?

LEGISLATOR GIANGREGORIO: Yes.

CLERK PULITZER: Ms. Bynoe?

LEGISLATOR BYNOE: No.

CLERK PULITZER: Has Mr. Davis been
called?

(Whereupon, confirmation of
Mr. Davis being called is made
off the record.)

CLERK PULITZER: Mr. Solages?

LEGISLATOR SOLAGES: No.

CLERK PULITZER: Ms.
DeRiggi-Whitton?

MINORITY LEADER DERIGGI-WHITTON:

I'm going to explain my vote, and it's because of something that happened on Friday where there was a meeting and the Deputy County Executive was there, and I have 11 CRPs, and my staff was told that they're not doing anything for me, for my CRPs, because they didn't like my column about getting the opioid funding out. So because I'm trying to push the opioid funding out, they're denying fire departments and seven first responder CRPs.

So my trust is a real issue with this Administration. And that is why I asked for you guys just to consider allocating a certain amount for each district. It could have been 15. It could have been 19. It really was an easy process. It would just ensure that everyone is represented. And I'm sorry to say that this was really, in my opinion, to give all the control to the Executive Department as to what contracts come down

1
2 for your own districts, just doesn't make
3 sense to me. I vote no.

4 CLERK PULITZER: Thank you.

5 Ms. Mule?

6 LEGISLATOR MULE: No.

7 CLERK PULITZER: Mr. Drucker?

8 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: I vote no. I'm
9 also just going to briefly explain.
10 We're looking for a commitment here
11 today. The 15 million or the 19 million,
12 it's an insignificant sum when you
13 consider what what we're talking about,
14 the overall allocation of funds. We need
15 a commitment. There's no guarantee what's
16 going to happen down the road. And this
17 is purely a legislative function. The
18 Administration should not be involved in
19 this particular decision today. And for
20 that reason, I'm voting no.

21 CLERK PULITZER: Thank you.

22 Mr. Koslow?

23 LEGISLATOR KOSLOW: I echo what
24 Legislator Drucker said, and I vote no.

25 CLERK PULITZER: By a vote of 12

yes, five no -- I am sorry. Excuse me.

Eleven to seven.

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: All right.
The item passes by a vote of 11 to 7.

Mr. Giangregorio moves to adjourn,
seconded by Mr. Ferretti.

All those in favor of adjourning?

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

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Any
opposed?

(Whereupon, no verbal
response.)

PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL: Nobody is
opposed.

(Whereupon, the Full
Legislature meeting is
adjourned, 4:28 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 22nd day of January, 2024.

Karen Lorenzo

Karen Lorenzo

\$			
<p>\$0.50 ^[1] - 96:15</p> <p>\$10 ^[12] - 95:4, 97:10, 103:5, 103:9, 104:15, 116:9, 144:14, 155:11, 158:7, 159:19, 159:23, 160:25</p> <p>\$10,000 ^[1] - 145:11</p> <p>\$104 ^[1] - 118:2</p> <p>\$118 ^[1] - 85:6</p> <p>\$12 ^[1] - 139:9</p> <p>\$15 ^[10] - 83:4, 97:15, 101:20, 102:14, 130:2, 130:25, 134:7, 152:20, 153:4, 169:2</p> <p>\$19 ^[7] - 89:16, 97:16, 101:10, 123:23, 124:9, 152:19, 158:22</p> <p>\$222 ^[2] - 128:15, 162:25</p> <p>\$30 ^[2] - 118:15, 146:2</p> <p>\$325,000 ^[1] - 101:2</p> <p>\$380 ^[1] - 117:19</p> <p>\$385 ^[1] - 117:7</p> <p>\$40 ^[5] - 26:17, 27:4, 30:2, 148:12, 148:15</p> <p>\$40,000 ^[3] - 11:13, 13:25,</p>	<p>14:19</p> <p>\$400 ^[1] - 118:22</p> <p>\$455 ^[3] - 83:23, 93:11, 108:23</p> <p>\$60,000 ^[2] - 97:2, 100:9</p> <p>\$70 ^[1] - 27:3</p> <p>\$780,000 ^[1] - 129:22</p> <p>\$79.47 ^[1] - 30:3</p> <p>\$79.49 ^[1] - 26:18</p> <p>\$80 ^[2] - 27:2, 96:14</p> <p>\$86 ^[2] - 85:5, 119:5</p> <p>,</p> <p>'24 ^[1] - 139:7</p> <p>1</p> <p>1 ^[19] - 70:9, 74:3, 83:23, 88:14, 93:6, 93:15, 93:20, 97:13, 97:18, 99:24, 104:4, 109:20, 110:14, 115:15, 116:12, 129:21, 142:6, 172:14</p> <p>1.5 ^[2] - 89:11, 92:15</p> <p>1.5% ^[1] - 74:25</p> <p>1.9 ^[1] - 143:8</p> <p>1/12 ^[2] - 64:11</p> <p>1/19 ^[10] - 98:13, 101:11, 125:3, 136:7, 136:13, 137:9, 137:12, 154:7, 154:13,</p>	<p>170:14</p> <p>10 ^[3] - 82:3, 169:21, 170:9</p> <p>10.5% ^[1] - 44:17</p> <p>100% ^[2] - 79:18, 113:24</p> <p>10th ^[1] - 3:15</p> <p>11 ^[2] - 189:7, 191:5</p> <p>119,000 ^[1] - 119:7</p> <p>12 ^[2] - 169:20, 190:25</p> <p>120 ^[1] - 122:11</p> <p>125 ^[2] - 103:4, 185:13</p> <p>125th ^[5] - 95:5, 97:11, 103:10, 144:12, 183:13</p> <p>12th ^[1] - 3:18</p> <p>13th ^[1] - 2:8</p> <p>14 ^[1] - 43:17</p> <p>14th ^[1] - 3:21</p> <p>15 ^[25] - 22:7, 48:7, 80:14, 88:7, 89:9, 90:8, 90:24, 92:8, 102:25, 123:23, 125:9, 129:22, 146:9, 153:10, 161:25, 162:5, 162:18, 162:20, 169:20, 170:15, 171:22, 172:14, 174:14, 189:19, 190:11</p> <p>1550 ^[1] - 1:15</p> <p>15th ^[2] - 2:12, 10:5</p> <p>16th ^[1] - 3:24</p> <p>17th ^[1] - 4:3</p>	<p>18 ^[1] - 39:10</p> <p>18th ^[1] - 4:6</p> <p>19 ^[33] - 83:8, 88:10, 88:13, 88:22, 89:10, 89:18, 91:23, 91:24, 102:25, 105:5, 105:12, 106:23, 108:9, 128:20, 153:9, 161:25, 162:5, 162:18, 162:21, 163:2, 163:10, 169:3, 169:20, 170:15, 170:25, 171:19, 171:23, 172:10, 172:17, 174:15, 189:20, 190:11</p> <p>1980 ^[1] - 64:4</p> <p>1986 ^[1] - 31:17</p> <p>1996 ^[2] - 26:23, 29:25</p> <p>1997 ^[3] - 38:5, 38:6, 38:7</p> <p>19th ^[1] - 4:9</p> <p>1st ^[1] - 2:16</p> <p>2</p> <p>2 ^[3] - 70:9, 70:10, 70:11</p> <p>20 ^[6] - 12:12, 35:20, 37:9, 68:25, 75:12, 95:23</p> <p>20-2024 ^[1] - 66:4</p> <p>200 ^[3] - 29:14, 48:9, 141:25</p> <p>2012 ^[1] - 42:20</p>

2020 ^[1] - 44:17 2021 ^[2] - 117:15, 148:6 2022 ^[2] - 117:16, 117:19 2023 ^[2] - 10:5, 46:13 2024 ^[6] - 1:18, 11:22, 38:6, 46:15, 119:18, 192:14 2026 ^[1] - 119:21 2030 ^[1] - 44:17 21(D) ^[1] - 67:6 218 ^[1] - 128:22 21st ^[1] - 43:8 22 ^[3] - 1:18, 61:6, 62:22 220 ^[1] - 128:22 22nd ^[1] - 192:14 23 ^[1] - 61:2 24 ^[3] - 70:9, 72:3, 82:4 25 ^[4] - 20:21, 22:21, 29:11, 110:25 250 ^[1] - 182:13 266 ^[1] - 88:23 27 ^[11] - 23:19, 24:25, 25:25, 26:2, 26:17, 26:20, 28:16, 31:25, 34:3, 35:25, 96:9 28 ^[1] - 77:12 29 ^[1] - 118:15 2:19 ^[1] - 1:19	2nd ^[1] - 2:19 3 3 ^[6] - 21:21, 32:3, 70:10, 70:12, 160:4 30 ^[4] - 12:12, 30:3, 95:23, 122:12 300 ^[1] - 182:15 31 ^[2] - 119:18, 119:21 35% ^[1] - 34:16 36.5 ^[3] - 76:8, 76:18, 76:23 380 ^[1] - 119:10 390 ^[1] - 117:9 392 ^[1] - 117:8 3rd ^[1] - 2:22 4 4 ^[16] - 70:10, 70:11, 70:12, 92:15, 104:10, 115:12, 116:10, 122:16, 122:21, 122:23, 152:22, 157:25, 162:24, 163:2, 177:19, 177:21 4% ^[1] - 80:9 4.24% ^[1] - 80:7 40 ^[5] - 21:24, 49:10, 56:5, 56:11, 96:12 40,000 ^[1] - 15:17 400 ^[1] - 182:17 411 ^[1] - 75:13 440 ^[1] - 177:13	46 ^[1] - 63:24 4:14-4:22 ^[1] - 187:4 4:28 ^[1] - 191:21 4th ^[1] - 2:25 5 5 ^[5] - 21:21, 32:4, 61:6, 72:2, 74:3 50 ^[2] - 118:18, 180:7 50/60 ^[1] - 77:11 501-C3 ^[1] - 20:12 5th ^[1] - 3:3 6 6 ^[4] - 67:7, 70:11, 82:3, 177:19 60 ^[1] - 101:3 62 ^[2] - 26:24, 32:2 64 ^[1] - 182:13 65 ^[1] - 40:21 6th ^[1] - 3:6 7 7 ^[3] - 30:12, 70:12, 191:5 7.5% ^[1] - 44:18 73.5 ^[2] - 177:3, 177:4 79 ^[1] - 96:13 7th ^[1] - 2:4 8 8 ^[1] - 70:12 80% ^[1] - 180:7	81.9 ^[2] - 177:2, 177:4 85 ^[2] - 119:7, 122:11 869 ^[1] - 176:5 8th ^[1] - 3:9 9 9 ^[1] - 177:21 988 ^[1] - 42:5 9th ^[1] - 3:12 A abandoned ^[2] - 29:20, 179:16 abatement ^[1] - 64:16 abdicated ^[1] - 32:14 ability ^[11] - 34:20, 68:13, 98:17, 99:15, 103:22, 108:7, 108:9, 116:18, 156:17, 158:20, 162:8 able ^[29] - 11:18, 13:9, 16:25, 33:12, 34:6, 37:18, 40:13, 40:25, 45:20, 47:5, 57:24, 59:2, 75:3, 75:23, 95:17, 96:11, 99:4, 99:5, 100:8, 111:19, 129:21, 129:25, 156:17, 156:20, 158:23, 162:15, 180:23,

183:16, 183:20
absolutely ^[3] -
 138:17, 138:22,
 170:13
abstained ^[2] -
 166:4, 166:6
abstention ^[1] -
 170:7
abundance ^[1] -
 176:17
abundantly ^[1] -
 138:2
abuse ^[2] - 183:24,
 185:10
academic ^[1] -
 43:12
acceptable ^[1] -
 26:3
access ^[1] - 178:19
accident ^[1] -
 13:22
accidental ^[1] -
 18:20
according ^[1] -
 125:24
According ^[1] -
 26:15
accordingly ^[1] -
 176:8
acculturation ^[1]
 - 20:13
achieve ^[1] - 111:4
achievement ^[1] -
 43:12
acquire ^[1] -
 179:17
act ^[1] - 137:19

Act ^[1] - 30:21
Acting ^[1] - 53:15
action ^[3] - 23:23,
 31:21, 33:18
activated ^[1] -
 10:19
active ^[1] - 179:19
activities ^[1] -
 58:23
actual ^[3] - 77:10,
 117:5, 130:10
ad ^[1] - 21:20
adapt ^[1] - 24:22
adaptation ^[1] -
 20:16
Add ^[1] - 163:2
add ^[2] - 116:10,
 165:8
addiction ^[2] -
 64:8, 185:11
addition ^[6] - 22:3,
 33:7, 59:10,
 85:14, 139:8,
 177:18
additional ^[11] -
 59:16, 59:18,
 85:12, 86:17,
 101:20, 117:22,
 118:9, 122:16,
 122:21, 164:5,
 164:24
additionally ^[1] -
 112:6
address ^[9] - 23:2,
 23:24, 40:20,
 108:7, 148:17,
 152:16, 159:18,

168:22, 168:24
addressed ^[3] -
 148:19, 152:4,
 152:16
addressing ^[1] -
 179:16
adjacent ^[1] - 33:5
adjourn ^[1] - 191:6
adjourned ^[1] -
 191:21
adjourning ^[1] -
 191:8
adjunct ^[1] - 79:21
administer ^[1] -
 69:8
administrating
^[1] - 76:6
Administration
^[22] - 78:18, 92:3,
 92:6, 113:17,
 113:25, 124:17,
 125:7, 126:6,
 132:14, 133:3,
 143:6, 144:24,
 158:15, 158:19,
 158:23, 159:5,
 163:6, 164:12,
 178:12, 189:16,
 190:18
administration
^[4] - 76:2, 78:10,
 78:12, 172:11
admit ^[1] - 87:4
Adult ^[1] - 100:21
adults ^[7] - 44:2,
 44:3, 45:4, 48:6,
 52:3, 54:25,
 156:16

advance ^[2] -
 103:9, 103:11
Advancement ^[1]
 - 53:20
advised ^[1] - 10:9
advocacy ^[1] -
 56:8
advocating ^[3] -
 39:22, 59:7,
 178:15
affect ^[1] - 15:24
affects ^[7] - 54:22,
 55:16, 60:15,
 60:16
affluent ^[1] -
 105:21
afford ^[3] - 22:11,
 26:12, 38:6
affordable ^[8] -
 178:20, 179:10,
 179:22, 179:25,
 180:3, 180:6,
 181:14, 181:17
afraid ^[1] - 52:22
Africa ^[1] - 50:13
afternoon ^[24] -
 10:4, 11:25, 16:9,
 20:7, 22:17,
 31:11, 35:5,
 38:17, 42:13,
 47:24, 51:7,
 53:10, 55:20,
 58:18, 63:21,
 68:7, 74:14,
 77:19, 93:3,
 116:24, 116:25,
 176:4, 176:12,
 181:25

afterwards ^[1] -
77:24

age ^[4] - 31:19,
62:21, 62:23, 63:4

aged ^[2] - 32:3,
180:21

agencies ^[5] -
27:19, 27:22,
61:11, 62:11,
115:19

agency ^[2] - 33:12,
35:22

Agency ^[1] - 118:8

Agenda ^[1] -
133:22

ages ^[1] - 21:20

aging ^[1] - 29:18

Aging ^[1] - 85:9

ago ^[14] - 23:20,
26:17, 29:3, 39:9,
40:19, 80:14,
87:8, 95:23,
95:24, 96:10,
100:19, 101:2,
107:13, 146:13

agree ^[13] - 75:23,
90:2, 94:25,
95:24, 107:9,
113:24, 129:14,
130:24, 131:14,
148:14, 174:17,
174:18, 175:4

agreed ^[2] - 124:9,
129:16

agreement ^[11] -
62:8, 74:5, 74:16,
75:11, 75:16,
76:9, 77:10, 87:6,

114:4, 152:2

Agreement ^[1] -
74:6

ahead ^[3] - 134:25,
175:5, 178:24

aid ^[1] - 178:17

aim ^[2] - 23:25,
43:7

aisle ^[1] - 159:16

alarms ^[1] - 107:14

Alisa ^[3] - 5:24,
60:21, 60:24

allay ^[1] - 123:12

Allegiance ^[2] -
7:7, 7:9

allocate ^[10] -
100:9, 105:16,
125:23, 143:8,
158:18, 158:24,
174:19, 174:23,
176:9, 185:8

allocated ^[18] -
88:7, 90:3, 98:13,
101:22, 105:5,
118:2, 123:25,
132:2, 135:20,
135:21, 136:4,
136:5, 159:6,
159:24, 176:18,
182:22, 183:15,
184:10

allocating ^[5] -
38:23, 41:8,
133:22, 160:18,
189:18

allocation ^[11] -
106:24, 115:13,
130:25, 131:15,

137:10, 137:14,
137:23, 162:17,
163:5, 166:3,
190:14

allocations ^[1] -
132:10

allot ^[1] - 55:12

allotted ^[1] -
168:13

allow ^[1] - 181:9

allowing ^[1] -
13:13

almost ^[5] - 21:18,
69:3, 89:14,
93:11, 128:21

alone ^[6] - 34:12,
39:16, 42:2,
49:10, 50:15,
99:16

alongside ^[1] -
34:19

altering ^[2] -
40:18, 41:7

Alternate ^[4] - 2:7,
2:11, 7:18, 67:8

alternative ^[2] -
20:2, 129:25

alternatives ^[1] -
19:16

amazing ^[1] -
14:20

amendments ^[1] -
74:5

American ^[11] -
20:10, 20:14,
20:17, 38:24,
41:9, 44:23,
53:14, 64:15,

109:2, 109:5,
178:11

AMI ^[1] - 180:7

amount ^[12] -
57:15, 75:20,
76:15, 96:9,
117:5, 124:6,
133:23, 134:4,
143:5, 175:2,
184:19, 189:18

analytical ^[1] -
44:9

anchoring ^[2] -
31:25, 93:23

Andy ^[17] - 82:10,
86:22, 87:17,
93:2, 93:5,
101:18, 107:9,
108:20, 116:24,
125:8, 128:12,
159:25, 164:10,
164:11, 164:13,
175:6

anniversary ^[12] -
30:24, 47:8,
51:23, 95:5,
97:11, 103:4,
103:10, 144:12,
144:13, 155:12,
183:13, 185:14

announce ^[1] -
11:20

annual ^[1] - 74:24

answer ^[9] - 18:21,
19:2, 46:4, 47:14,
50:14, 94:9,
94:13, 138:5,
171:17

anti^[1] - 161:6
anti-tourism^[1] - 161:6
anticipated^[2] - 75:12, 148:7
anticipating^[2] - 134:24, 135:22
Antoinette^[1] - 113:20
anxiety^[3] - 41:11, 184:3, 184:4
Anyway^[2] - 20:3, 83:17
apart^[2] - 127:3, 128:6
apiece^[1] - 97:14
apologize^[4] - 130:8, 148:16, 157:9, 167:15
apology^[1] - 155:3
appeal^[2] - 56:15, 58:9
applause^[4] - 11:24, 13:7, 17:7, 67:22
application^[1] - 166:15
applied^[1] - 107:21
apply^[2] - 137:2, 137:6
appointment^[3] - 67:3, 68:11, 68:15
appreciate^[5] - 16:6, 63:14, 68:12, 87:21,

121:2
Appreciate^[1] - 116:23
appreciative^[1] - 14:24
Apprenticeship^[1] - 43:15
approach^[2] - 13:20, 94:21
approached^[1] - 10:8
appropriate^[3] - 64:20, 97:12, 123:19
appropriated^[2] - 85:6, 119:6
appropriately^[2] - 95:16, 95:18
appropriatenes^s^[1] - 44:7
appropriation^[1] - 98:8
appropriations^[1] - 82:5
approve^[2] - 165:10, 172:11
approved^[4] - 70:5, 128:5, 130:12, 130:13
approves^[1] - 75:16
area^[4] - 10:13, 11:14, 30:10, 34:15
areas^[10] - 32:18, 53:4, 56:7, 90:6, 90:7, 125:21,

125:22, 139:6, 171:5, 179:14
arena^[1] - 31:24
argue^[1] - 156:13
argument^[2] - 114:23, 115:2
arguments^[1] - 131:3
Arnold^[1] - 9:5
ARNOLD^[1] - 3:23
ARPA^[23] - 85:8, 87:7, 88:12, 94:22, 100:3, 114:22, 117:6, 119:2, 119:14, 120:6, 138:24, 141:23, 143:19, 143:24, 148:19, 149:2, 152:4, 156:21, 157:16, 168:15, 176:16, 178:16, 179:2
arrange^[1] - 19:21
arrest^[2] - 11:7, 12:7
Arthur^[2] - 42:22, 88:4
Article^[1] - 67:7
artists^[1] - 184:18
arts^[1] - 48:5
arts-based^[1] - 48:5
asbestos^[1] - 180:21
aside^[3] - 84:22, 131:20, 158:23
assembled^[1] -

49:23
assessment^[1] - 24:22
assigned^[1] - 29:15
assist^[2] - 20:22, 48:17
assistance^[2] - 33:22, 161:11
assistant^[1] - 22:20
Association^[3] - 52:16, 53:20, 75:23
assurances^[1] - 134:14
assured^[1] - 36:19
attack^[2] - 150:9, 157:6
attacking^[1] - 157:5
attempt^[1] - 159:13
attempted^[1] - 159:17
attention^[1] - 23:4
attest^[1] - 35:18
Attorney^[2] - 4:15, 110:17
attorney^[1] - 68:25
attorneys^[1] - 106:17
attract^[3] - 25:5, 28:13, 30:17
attracting^[1] -

30:9
attribute ^[1] -
 121:9
auction ^[1] -
 177:22
auctioned ^[1] -
 179:21
audience ^[1] -
 144:21
authorizes ^[1] -
 82:4
autism ^[2] - 28:6,
 35:15
automatically ^[1]
 - 115:22
avail ^[1] - 75:13
available ^[7] -
 28:7, 47:18,
 69:11, 83:3,
 87:12, 102:15,
 134:12
Avenue ^[2] - 1:15,
 176:5
avenues ^[1] -
 183:3
average ^[3] - 33:4,
 34:17, 177:13
awaiting ^[1] -
 162:4
aware ^[4] - 39:4,
 57:6, 116:5,
 144:15
awareness ^[4] -
 38:25, 39:19,
 44:4, 46:23
Aye ^[1] - 191:11
Aye" ^[10] - 66:14,

66:17, 67:12,
 67:15, 70:17,
 70:20, 72:15,
 72:18, 81:5, 81:8

B

babies ^[1] - 50:7
baby ^[2] - 48:13,
 48:14
Baby ^[1] - 49:20
backlog ^[2] -
 110:11, 113:2
Backyard ^[3] -
 48:2, 48:4, 48:18
backyard ^[1] -
 49:14
bad ^[1] - 109:23
bags ^[1] - 182:16
balance ^[7] -
 84:22, 108:2,
 109:25, 110:5,
 113:4, 120:17
balances ^[3] -
 126:19, 126:22,
 132:19
Baldwin ^[1] - 50:9
ballpark ^[1] -
 118:16
bank ^[2] - 88:18,
 157:22
banks ^[2] - 51:11,
 51:17
Barbie ^[1] - 52:7
Bargaining ^[1] -
 74:6
bargaining ^[3] -
 75:25, 76:4, 76:20

barriers ^[1] - 20:24
base ^[2] - 86:2,
 86:13
based ^[13] - 36:18,
 40:7, 48:5, 48:12,
 54:7, 61:17,
 61:18, 97:5,
 99:15, 100:2,
 109:8, 125:3,
 131:2
basic ^[2] - 37:15,
 44:6
basis ^[4] - 58:24,
 87:25, 114:9,
 121:4
basketball ^[2] -
 49:11, 182:12
Bay ^[2] - 90:6,
 112:7
bays ^[1] - 111:25
beautifully ^[1] -
 49:21
beautify ^[1] - 51:10
become ^[1] - 40:2
becomes ^[3] -
 75:17, 180:6,
 181:12
becoming ^[1] -
 122:4
begin ^[4] - 10:14,
 29:16, 36:25, 78:6
beginning ^[1] -
 84:14
behalf ^[4] - 55:24,
 58:19, 108:20,
 178:4
Behavioral ^[1] -

85:9
behind ^[1] - 48:24
belonging ^[1] -
 43:11
below ^[2] - 33:3,
 34:16
bench ^[1] - 68:11
benefit ^[5] - 75:14,
 88:21, 89:12,
 104:17, 167:22
benefits ^[6] -
 35:18, 108:10,
 108:11, 165:18,
 165:19, 165:20
beseeking ^[1] -
 59:8
best ^[8] - 12:25,
 41:19, 105:17,
 113:11, 115:8,
 154:8, 156:5,
 167:19
Bethany ^[1] -
 50:10
better ^[19] - 15:17,
 30:24, 37:8,
 43:21, 52:5,
 94:11, 99:14,
 104:6, 104:7,
 104:8, 105:9,
 105:11, 109:11,
 110:4, 113:3,
 114:6, 159:23,
 160:17, 162:22
between ^[10] -
 44:17, 78:9,
 78:12, 84:25,
 88:8, 105:4,
 121:7, 125:11,

132:24, 177:21
beyond ^[4] - 16:20,
 16:24, 23:16,
 101:19
big ^[9] - 13:21,
 57:18, 110:11,
 111:21, 112:9,
 112:10, 124:20,
 153:20, 184:18
bigger ^[2] - 14:6,
 15:17
biggest ^[3] - 12:8,
 59:21, 153:15
bill ^[4] - 146:24,
 161:16, 161:17,
 165:23
billion ^[7] - 83:23,
 93:6, 93:15,
 93:20, 99:24,
 109:20, 110:14
bills ^[1] - 38:7
bipartisan ^[3] -
 161:12, 161:21,
 164:2
bit ^[6] - 61:7, 88:25,
 120:9, 121:19,
 140:6, 178:22
Blakeman ^[1] -
 68:10
blame ^[2] - 37:23,
 164:12
blankets ^[1] - 50:4
bless ^[1] - 16:6
blessed ^[1] - 51:18
blink ^[1] - 155:10
block ^[1] - 177:22
BMW ^[1] - 10:15

Board ^[2] - 56:2,
 64:6
board ^[3] - 52:17,
 63:23, 168:14
BOCES ^[1] - 49:17
bodies ^[1] - 132:25
body ^[2] - 41:4,
 127:17
Body ^[25] - 13:3,
 33:18, 84:25,
 86:11, 86:18,
 91:4, 95:20,
 98:10, 101:14,
 113:25, 125:11,
 126:6, 126:10,
 130:12, 130:13,
 132:10, 136:6,
 137:11, 137:24,
 150:19, 156:16,
 158:3, 158:16,
 158:24, 186:14
boils ^[1] - 60:17
Bolling ^[3] - 5:21,
 53:9, 53:11
BOLLING ^[1] -
 53:10
bolster ^[1] - 160:20
bond ^[1] - 92:13
book ^[2] - 58:8,
 182:16
books ^[1] - 19:14
border ^[1] - 32:24
bore ^[1] - 77:7
borrow ^[2] - 82:20,
 110:13
borrowed ^[1] -
 164:4

borrowing ^[3] -
 163:24, 164:4,
 164:23
bothering ^[1] -
 91:17
bottom ^[5] - 27:5,
 32:2, 33:10,
 170:24, 173:21
Boy ^[1] - 49:8
Branch ^[8] - 114:3,
 127:9, 127:13,
 127:19, 127:23,
 127:24, 128:5,
 142:12
branch ^[2] - 58:20,
 90:13
branches ^[1] -
 126:23
break ^[1] - 101:11
breakup ^[1] -
 170:14
breath ^[1] - 150:23
bridge ^[1] - 20:12
brief ^[1] - 29:8
briefly ^[1] - 190:9
bring ^[4] - 30:17,
 80:4, 156:14,
 156:19
bringing ^[5] -
 101:24, 104:4,
 148:22, 152:5,
 180:18
brings ^[1] - 103:13
broad ^[1] - 109:7
Brooklyn ^[1] -
 79:13
brought ^[5] -

151:21, 151:24,
 152:18, 157:15,
 176:24
Bruce ^[1] - 68:9
bucket ^[1] - 163:2
Budget ^[4] -
 120:17, 137:8,
 137:9, 139:9
budget ^[10] - 38:3,
 80:5, 82:6, 98:11,
 131:12, 136:13,
 139:8, 148:7,
 160:23, 165:11
budgets ^[1] -
 79:25
Buffalo ^[1] - 79:10
build ^[2] - 48:20,
 54:25
Building ^[1] - 1:14
built ^[1] - 110:11
bunch ^[1] - 12:3
Bundles ^[1] -
 49:20
bundles ^[4] -
 48:13, 50:5, 50:7,
 50:12
burden ^[1] - 30:13
burdened ^[1] -
 23:10
Bureau ^[1] - 26:15
bureaus ^[1] -
 88:19
bus ^[1] - 18:16
buses ^[2] - 19:23,
 19:25
business ^[1] -
 64:18

Business ^[1] -

35:21

businesses ^[8] -64:17, 85:19,
118:10, 138:20,
145:3, 145:8,
145:11, 179:5**busy** ^[1] - 50:22**buzzer**) ^[1] -

178:20

BY ^[1] - 1:23**Bynoe** ^[6] - 7:22,105:18, 149:23,
150:25, 151:20,
188:15**BYNOE** ^[33] - 2:18,7:23, 92:25, 93:5,
93:12, 93:17,
94:6, 94:9, 94:13,
94:16, 94:24,
102:4, 102:9,
102:20, 103:16,
135:25, 136:11,
136:17, 136:25,
137:6, 137:18,
138:4, 149:11,
149:15, 149:19,
149:24, 150:8,
150:12, 150:18,
154:16, 154:25,
158:11, 188:16**Bynoe's** ^[1] -

178:7

C**Cairo** ^[1] - 68:20**cake** ^[1] - 113:21**calculate** ^[1] -

160:17

calculation ^[1] -

93:8

calculator ^[1] -

174:14

Caldarera ^[6] -5:4, 10:12, 10:14,
10:19, 11:16,
11:21**campaign** ^[2] -

129:5, 153:15

campaigns ^[1] -

153:15

cannot ^[3] - 26:12,

114:4, 172:8

canvassing ^[1] -

10:14

capacity ^[1] -

181:2

Capital ^[4] -136:25, 137:2,
137:7, 137:8**car** ^[3] - 10:24,

13:20, 19:8

card ^[1] - 49:22**care** ^[1] - 150:12**career** ^[2] - 43:6,

45:4

careful ^[3] - 60:13,

83:12, 113:13

carefully ^[1] -

49:21

cares ^[1] - 52:7**CARES** ^[2] -

117:25, 118:4

Carmen ^[3] - 5:22,

55:19, 59:4

carnival ^[1] -

184:17

carnivals ^[1] -

183:4

Carrie ^[1] - 7:24**CARRIE** ^[1] - 2:21**cars** ^[2] - 18:19,

19:8

case ^[1] - 15:18**caseloads** ^[1] -

139:10

cases ^[4] - 11:11,

27:17, 32:4, 69:3

Cassel ^[1] - 53:12**Cataldo** ^[3] - 5:18,

45:10, 45:12

CATALDO ^[3] -

45:11, 46:5, 47:20

catastrophic ^[1] -

27:23

catch ^[1] - 109:24**caucus** ^[2] - 89:12,

103:21

Caucus ^[1] - 82:12**caucuses** ^[1] -

101:8

caught ^[1] - 12:11**caused** ^[1] - 32:3**causing** ^[1] - 33:10**cautious** ^[1] -

84:11

CDBG ^[2] - 85:15,

118:19

celebrating ^[1] -

30:23

celebration ^[4] -

46:19, 46:21,

47:8, 51:22

celebrations ^[1] -

51:14

center ^[1] - 10:7**Center** ^[3] - 45:13,

49:16, 59:18

century ^[1] - 43:8**CERT** ^[1] - 180:8**certain** ^[6] - 74:5,

83:3, 124:23,

127:13, 139:7,

189:18

certainly ^[2] -

95:3, 127:7

certified ^[1] - 40:8**certify** ^[1] - 192:10**chair** ^[1] - 55:25**chairman** ^[1] -

28:25

Chairman ^[2] -

68:19, 68:20

chairperson ^[2] -

61:3, 61:18

chairs ^[1] - 75:24**challenge** ^[2] -

23:8, 23:24

challenges ^[1] -

24:24

chamber ^[1] - 72:4**Chambers** ^[1] -

72:9

chance ^[3] - 96:4,

150:4, 167:4

change ^[9] - 27:12,

28:11, 28:12,

28:15, 28:18,

49:2, 99:16,
143:5, 182:20

changed ^[2] -
27:11, 57:11

changes ^[1] -
28:16

changing ^[1] -
24:23

characterize ^[1] -
167:13

characterizes ^[1]
- 161:7

charge ^[1] - 12:11

charged ^[1] -
11:10

CHASE ^[1] - 51:7

Chase ^[2] - 5:20,
51:6

cheaper ^[1] -
19:18

check ^[3] - 92:2,
92:4, 92:5

checks ^[2] -
126:19, 132:19

Checks ^[1] -
126:21

cheer ^[1] - 144:20

child ^[7] - 28:5,
28:7, 36:8, 36:13,
36:20, 61:21, 62:3

child's ^[1] - 36:18

childcare ^[1] -
177:8

childhood ^[2] -
24:6, 37:16

children ^[52] -
21:20, 22:7,

22:10, 24:15,
24:24, 25:20,
25:23, 26:5,
27:14, 27:24,
27:25, 29:14,
29:17, 30:14,
31:3, 31:6, 31:16,

31:18, 32:3,
33:23, 34:9,
36:10, 36:23,
36:25, 37:6,
37:13, 37:17,
38:11, 38:14,
52:3, 54:3, 54:4,
55:5, 55:15,
55:22, 57:5, 57:7,
57:14, 57:19,
58:4, 58:13,
59:14, 62:2,
62:21, 62:24,
63:4, 63:18,
95:15, 96:7,
106:5, 110:7,
114:14

choice ^[1] - 164:22

choices ^[1] - 23:22

Christiano ^[4] -
6:8, 181:24,
182:6, 183:8

churches ^[1] -
51:11

circle ^[1] - 50:25

circles ^[3] - 138:8,
163:21, 165:7

circumstances
^[1] - 24:23

citation ^[1] - 17:11

cities ^[1] - 60:16

citizens ^[2] - 50:2,
111:6

City ^[2] - 22:4, 56:6

civic ^[3] - 46:23,
47:3, 64:2

Civic ^[1] - 52:16

civics ^[1] - 128:8

civil ^[1] - 53:24

claims ^[1] - 94:5

clarify ^[8] - 45:16,
45:17, 46:11,
117:3, 124:7,
126:2, 126:17,
128:13

clarifying ^[1] -
46:8

classes ^[2] - 48:8,
78:6

classroom ^[1] -
61:19

clause ^[1] - 76:24

claw ^[2] - 120:18,
134:10

clawed ^[3] - 120:3,
120:7, 120:20

clawing ^[1] - 84:17

clean ^[3] - 49:19,
111:24, 155:15

clear ^[11] - 26:11,
33:22, 103:7,

103:18, 104:15,
115:22, 117:4,
138:2, 143:3,
143:15, 148:18

clerk ^[1] - 68:23

Clerk ^[3] - 4:12,
4:15, 66:4

CLERK ^[39] - 7:13,
7:18, 7:21, 7:24,
8:3, 8:6, 8:9, 8:12,
8:15, 8:18, 8:21,
8:24, 9:2, 9:5, 9:8,
9:11, 9:14, 9:16,
9:19, 9:22,
187:14, 187:17,
187:20, 187:22,
187:25, 188:3,
188:5, 188:7,
188:9, 188:11,
188:13, 188:15,
188:17, 188:22,
188:24, 190:4,
190:7, 190:21,
190:25

clinic ^[1] - 21:16

CLOLERY ^[2] -
18:12, 19:5

Clolery ^[3] - 5:8,
18:8, 18:13

close ^[2] - 168:6,
168:7

closed ^[1] - 11:12

closure ^[1] - 77:12

co ^[2] - 38:20,
126:23

co-equal ^[1] -
126:23

co-founder ^[1] -
38:20

Coalition ^[1] -
97:3

codes ^[1] - 180:20

coffers ^[7] - 99:22,
109:3, 109:12,
109:18, 156:9,

156:12, 158:5
coincidentally ^[1]
 - 147:25
collaborations
^[1] - 50:16
collapse ^[1] -
 33:20
colleague ^[2] -
 104:25, 155:4
colleagues ^[7] -
 29:3, 103:24,
 106:18, 114:19,
 116:7, 155:14,
 159:7
Collective ^[1] -
 74:6
collectively ^[1] -
 14:2
college ^[1] - 80:3
College ^[6] - 74:8,
 79:13, 79:14,
 79:17, 80:11
colleges ^[4] - 58:3,
 79:8, 79:12, 80:10
collegiality ^[1] -
 78:9
collegiate ^[1] -
 43:15
color ^[1] - 185:2
Colored ^[1] - 53:21
column ^[1] - 189:9
comfortable ^[1] -
 172:6
coming ^[13] -
 52:23, 56:19,
 78:7, 96:18,
 97:20, 107:11,

145:22, 146:4,
 147:19, 165:23,
 177:20, 181:6,
 186:3
commencemen
t ^[1] - 75:11
commend ^[1] -
 78:14
commendable
^[2] - 13:23, 14:9
Comment ^[1] - 6:2
COMMENT ^[1] -
 5:6
comment ^[9] -
 18:3, 64:24, 66:9,
 94:17, 94:18,
 154:18, 159:11,
 174:12
comments ^[4] -
 18:8, 140:7,
 150:9, 157:17
Commissioner
^[4] - 13:18, 14:20,
 16:3, 16:12
COMMISSIONER
R ^[1] - 11:25
Commit ^[1] - 163:3
commit ^[1] - 163:9
commitment ^[5] -
 14:10, 78:17,
 163:3, 190:10,
 190:15
committed ^[8] -
 10:10, 11:2, 11:5,
 11:15, 12:13,
 12:19, 79:17,
 79:21
committee ^[1] -

74:17
committees ^[1] -
 70:5
Committees ^[1] -
 170:6
committing ^[1] -
 155:19
commodities ^[1] -
 106:5
communicatio
n ^[1] - 40:5
communities ^[27]
 - 14:18, 45:20,
 45:23, 46:13,
 46:18, 51:10,
 51:16, 55:14,
 56:21, 60:16,
 92:17, 96:18,
 98:23, 100:23,
 104:5, 104:17,
 105:17, 131:8,
 131:13, 140:20,
 155:18, 156:3,
 166:17, 167:20,
 177:6, 182:12,
 183:7
community ^[48] -
 13:10, 14:17,
 15:24, 16:18,
 16:19, 20:17,
 23:9, 42:24, 43:5,
 45:17, 46:21,
 47:3, 47:11, 48:5,
 48:11, 48:19,
 49:15, 52:15,
 53:22, 54:2, 54:7,
 54:8, 56:12,
 56:24, 57:13,
 60:15, 63:25,

64:8, 95:9, 96:20,
 96:21, 98:25,
 100:16, 104:10,
 104:12, 115:21,
 156:4, 158:25,
 176:22, 178:4,
 178:14, 179:12,
 180:9, 180:20,
 182:21, 183:2,
 183:6, 185:2
Community ^[9] -
 63:23, 74:7, 74:9,
 79:16, 80:11,
 118:8, 176:8,
 176:14, 178:5
company ^[1] -
 34:14
compared ^[4] -
 44:17, 106:11,
 110:6, 177:4
compassion ^[2] -
 51:20, 51:21
compiled ^[1] -
 48:13
complaining ^[1] -
 15:23
complete ^[1] -
 46:23
completely ^[7] -
 130:17, 130:18,
 144:18, 152:20,
 171:16, 172:15,
 179:11
complicated ^[1] -
 77:9
concede ^[1] -
 76:23
concern ^[4] -

76:16, 83:11,
121:20, 128:12

concerned ^[1] -
115:4

concerns ^[5] -
52:24, 64:2,
108:19, 121:25,
123:13

concert ^[1] - 76:25

concerts ^[2] -
183:4, 184:17

concession ^[2] -
76:7, 77:4

conclude ^[1] -
185:12

concludes ^[1] -
64:23

conclusion ^[1] -
25:2

condemned ^[1] -
179:20

condition ^[1] -
57:10

conditions ^[3] -
180:17, 180:22,
180:23

Condolences ^[1]
- 42:10

conduct ^[1] -
157:11

conducted ^[1] -
10:20

conference ^[1] -
111:10

confidence ^[4] -
13:20, 43:11,
44:6, 68:13

configured ^[1] -
33:17

confirm ^[1] -
101:18

confirmation ^[2] -
36:12, 188:19

confirmed ^[1] -
93:9

confirming ^[1] -
67:2

congratulation
s ^[2] - 12:2, 68:3

Congratulation
s ^[1] - 69:14

Congress ^[4] -
84:15, 109:16,
120:6, 121:7

consent ^[1] - 70:3

Conservation ^[1]
- 85:11

conservative ^[4] -
94:21, 95:2,
115:3, 146:12

consider ^[11] -
25:3, 29:9, 38:3,
38:4, 38:23, 41:8,
42:5, 63:10,
153:7, 189:17,
190:13

consideration ^[3]
- 25:12, 101:25,
175:2

considered ^[1] -
102:2

considering ^[3] -
68:10, 68:15,
122:19

consignment ^[1]
- 99:5

consistency ^[1] -
44:4

consistent ^[1] -
44:9

constantly ^[1] -
49:4

constituencies
^[2] - 104:11, 114:7

constituents ^[16] -
15:22, 16:5, 31:5,
53:5, 91:10,
91:16, 92:20,
96:3, 105:10,
105:14, 108:11,
125:4, 129:11,
131:13, 131:17,
153:16

Constitution ^[1] -
67:7

construction ^[1] -
112:4

consult ^[1] - 163:6

consultants ^[1] -
93:9

consuming ^[1] -
44:13

contact ^[2] - 47:16,
47:17

contacted ^[1] -
144:24

contained ^[1] -
11:8

content ^[1] - 93:23

context ^[6] - 93:24,
148:22, 149:10,
149:16, 152:3,

176:20
continually ^[1] -
15:22

continue ^[5] -
21:7, 50:15,
55:13, 86:15,
96:21

Continued ^[1] -
6:2

continues ^[2] -
83:15, 180:4

contract ^[10] -
76:11, 76:24,
77:25, 78:4, 78:8,
78:15, 78:23,
78:25, 80:20

contracts ^[5] -
77:2, 142:12,
142:25, 170:19,
189:25

contractual ^[1] -
128:20

contrary ^[1] -
137:21

contribute ^[1] -
24:14

contribution ^[1] -
74:22

contributions ^[3]
- 75:4, 75:9, 76:20

control ^[11] -
90:11, 90:16,
110:12, 113:9,
130:19, 142:11,
142:21, 170:19,
173:10, 173:21,
189:24

conversation ^[7]

- 93:23, 156:18,
156:19, 156:22,
157:19, 157:20,
162:6

conversations

^[1] - 120:5

conveyed ^[1] -

91:22

convince ^[1] -

172:8

coordinator ^[1] -

36:4

Cops ^[2] - 10:2,

11:22

cops ^[3] - 12:16,

12:24, 13:5

COPS ^[1] - 5:2

copy ^[1] - 69:10

corner ^[1] - 99:19

Corporal ^[1] - 7:5

correct ^[33] -

34:20, 115:18,
117:13, 117:20,
119:19, 119:22,
119:23, 121:4,
126:3, 126:20,
127:10, 127:18,
127:24, 128:6,
128:17, 128:23,
130:6, 133:8,
136:17, 139:17,
145:24, 147:5,
147:9, 147:12,
148:24, 149:4,
160:10, 163:22,
165:25, 167:14,
170:3, 181:18,
192:11

Correct ^[2] - 94:22, 117:17

correcting ^[1] - 142:20

correctly ^[1] - 128:14

correlation ^[2] - 105:4, 105:8

cost ^[10] - 34:5, 34:13, 74:24, 111:22, 112:19, 164:25, 177:6, 177:7, 177:9

costs ^[5] - 38:4, 80:3, 112:4, 112:8, 112:20

Council ^[1] - 63:23

counsel ^[1] - 93:10

counseling ^[1] - 20:25

counselors ^[1] - 40:21

count ^[1] - 155:5

counties ^[9] - 24:17, 25:7, 26:24, 26:25, 27:3, 32:3, 33:5, 106:12, 129:9

country ^[5] - 17:5, 40:10, 60:18, 129:9, 132:24

county ^[24] - 15:6, 15:8, 18:24, 24:9, 29:8, 33:20, 44:19, 64:18, 88:12, 91:13, 95:10, 96:23, 97:2, 97:7, 97:8,

99:24, 105:20,
106:3, 107:7,
108:6, 114:15,
124:20, 161:19,
180:5

COUNTY ^[1] - 1:3

County ^[95] - 1:14,

11:19, 12:24,
17:3, 19:19,
20:17, 21:8, 24:5,
25:25, 27:12,
27:13, 27:24,
29:11, 29:23,
30:7, 31:16,
31:23, 32:7,
32:12, 32:13,
33:6, 33:24, 34:6,
34:16, 35:8,
37:12, 38:13,
39:2, 40:14, 41:3,
41:10, 41:17,
41:21, 42:6,
42:25, 43:20,
45:2, 45:7, 46:25,
47:7, 51:14, 67:3,
68:9, 69:5, 74:7,
77:2, 82:20,
83:13, 84:25,
88:3, 91:19,
92:13, 93:10,
95:5, 100:6,
102:11, 103:13,
105:20, 106:10,
107:19, 108:12,
108:21, 108:23,
109:15, 109:20,
110:2, 110:4,
110:17, 111:9,
113:21, 114:2,
114:8, 118:7,

120:19, 125:12,
126:20, 131:12,
139:15, 142:22,
156:6, 158:5,
158:15, 159:5,
160:21, 161:12,
164:25, 165:16,
170:17, 178:10,
179:6, 181:13,
181:16, 184:9,
189:6, 192:6

county's ^[1] - 87:10

County's ^[6] - 24:15, 27:4, 152:23, 160:23, 176:25, 180:16

countywide ^[3] - 11:11, 107:5, 174:25

couple ^[7] - 78:2, 79:3, 83:25, 117:3, 140:10, 146:12, 160:24

course ^[11] - 68:9, 68:18, 69:10, 75:15, 75:18, 77:3, 78:4, 88:6, 127:20, 127:25, 132:16

COURT ^[1] - 1:23

Court ^[2] - 67:5, 69:5

court ^[1] - 68:11

courthouse ^[1] - 111:11

courts ^[1] - 69:4

Cove ^[1] - 88:18

Covid^[17] - 57:11,
60:10, 64:16,
82:19, 83:24,
86:5, 87:14,
93:11, 97:23,
108:24, 115:5,
117:24, 139:2,
139:12, 139:24,
167:11, 177:5

CPI^[1] - 29:25

crayon^[1] - 37:15

crazy^[4] - 59:24,
60:8, 91:7, 91:8

create^[5] - 15:7,
19:14, 19:16,
24:12, 44:14

created^[5] - 23:20,
32:16, 36:17,
51:2, 76:15

creates^[1] - 46:22

creating^[2] -
48:13, 48:17

credits^[1] - 80:9

cries^[1] - 113:17

crime^[1] - 15:22

crimes^[5] - 12:13,
12:14, 12:19,
15:16, 15:24

crisis^[5] - 25:18,
28:17, 39:5, 58:4,
64:10

critical^[4] - 23:4,
29:12, 166:14,
178:14

Cross^[1] - 53:14

crossroads^[1] -
31:19

crosstalk^[3] -
150:2, 150:7,
150:21

CRP^[2] - 98:12,
136:12

CRPs^[5] - 168:14,
170:23, 189:7,
189:9, 189:14

crucial^[1] - 23:14

crumbs^[1] - 57:25

cuff^[2] - 160:2,
160:10

cultivate^[1] - 43:9

Cultural^[1] - 45:13

culture^[1] - 19:8

CUNY^[1] - 79:12

cure^[1] - 152:22

current^[5] - 22:25,
24:2, 75:5,
176:10, 180:19

curriculum^[1] -
43:19

custom^[1] - 9:25

cut^[7] - 47:9,
47:10, 86:13,
104:9, 139:20,
139:21, 140:2

cuts^[1] - 138:25

cutting^[1] - 173:3

CYO^[1] - 49:10

D

dais^[5] - 104:20,
126:18, 138:16,
154:24, 157:11

DARCY^[3] - 4:14,
187:10, 187:12

Darcy^[1] - 187:8

data^[5] - 29:9,
29:22, 40:7,
160:8, 176:25

date^[4] - 40:11,
121:11, 121:12,
178:12

daughter^[1] -
114:14

David^[3] - 5:12,
25:14, 25:16

Davis^[6] - 8:16,
70:15, 116:21,
187:10, 188:17,
188:20

DAVIS^[33] - 2:15,
8:17, 116:22,
117:2, 117:11,
117:18, 117:21,
118:3, 118:14,
118:21, 118:24,
119:9, 119:12,
119:16, 119:20,
119:24, 120:8,
121:2, 121:9,
121:20, 121:24,
122:6, 122:15,
122:20, 123:7,
123:12, 123:16,
124:7, 124:13,
124:25, 125:25,
130:14, 187:11

day's^[1] - 100:15

days^[6] - 10:18,
93:20, 93:21,
95:9, 95:11,
182:14

de^[1] - 51:23

deaf^[2] - 113:16,
113:19

deal^[12] - 74:19,
76:17, 82:15,
82:21, 107:2,
108:13, 108:15,
164:4, 166:10,
172:13, 180:15

dealing^[1] -
172:23

debate^[3] - 72:5,
80:24, 86:24

Debra^[1] - 8:3

DEBRA^[1] - 3:5

debt^[7] - 84:5,
110:15, 112:5,
115:6, 147:21,
161:10, 161:15

debt"^[1] - 146:17
debts^[2] - 145:21,
146:2

December^[3] -
10:5, 119:17,
119:21

decide^[4] - 98:17,
107:20, 142:23,
174:7

decided^[1] - 33:5

decision^[3] -
32:25, 33:19,
190:19

decisions^[4] -
32:17, 56:9,
56:21, 58:10

decline^[1] - 43:25

declined^[1] -
145:6

decorum ^[4] -
150:15, 150:19,
154:19, 158:12

dedicated ^[4] -
22:22, 37:12,
42:17, 63:25

dedicating ^[1] -
144:5

dedication ^[2] -
15:10, 23:17

deep ^[2] - 91:17,
150:23

deeply ^[2] - 64:3,
68:12

deferred ^[1] -
157:21

deferring ^[4] -
158:22, 158:25,
159:2, 159:5

deficiencies ^[1] -
44:10

deficit ^[1] - 93:22

definitely ^[2] -
79:18, 80:2

deflection ^[1] -
32:9

delay ^[2] - 37:7,
162:6

delayed ^[2] - 32:6,
157:20

delays ^[1] - 34:9

Delia ^[1] - 9:17

deliberately ^[1] -
164:17

deliberations ^[1]
- 102:21

deliver ^[1] - 178:13

delivered ^[4] -
50:6, 50:12,
92:10, 178:17

demand ^[1] - 23:5

demanding ^[1] -
23:3

demonstration
^[2] - 181:12, 181:21

denying ^[1] -
189:12

Department ^[5] -
17:4, 118:7,
159:21, 160:22,
189:25

department ^[2] -
17:5, 75:24

departments ^[1] -
189:13

depleted ^[1] -
82:22

depression ^[3] -
41:11, 54:12,
110:7

Deputy ^[8] - 2:11,
7:15, 7:18, 66:5,
67:9, 88:3, 91:19,
189:6

derelict ^[1] -
179:16

DeRiggi ^[3] - 9:17,
66:7, 188:25

DERIGGI ^[18] -
9:18, 87:2,
102:16, 130:16,
135:17, 138:10,
140:19, 140:24,
141:4, 141:11,
141:17, 141:22,

142:5, 142:9,
170:2, 171:9,
173:2, 189:2

DeRiggi-
Whitton ^[3] -
9:17, 66:7, 188:25

DERIGGI-
WHITTON ^[18] -
9:18, 87:2,
102:16, 130:16,
135:17, 138:10,
140:19, 140:24,
141:4, 141:11,
141:17, 141:22,
142:5, 142:9,
170:2, 171:9,
173:2, 189:2

described ^[1] -
28:8

deserve ^[2] -
97:24, 114:17

deserves ^[1] -
131:10

deserving ^[2] -
98:2, 98:3

design ^[1] - 109:17

designated ^[2] -
64:16, 111:2

desperate ^[1] -
171:6

desperately ^[2] -
41:5, 181:20

despite ^[2] - 111:8,
165:13

destination ^[1] -
129:16

detail ^[1] - 114:21

detergent ^[1] -

49:11

determination ^[4]
- 62:6, 123:4,
130:10, 132:20

determine ^[2] -
61:21, 162:9

determined ^[4] -
62:4, 123:10,
132:4, 132:9

determines ^[1] -
61:9

detriments ^[2] -
165:22

devastation ^[1] -
28:8

develop ^[2] - 43:8,
43:10

developing ^[1] -
36:9

development ^[3] -
61:25, 64:2, 181:2

Development ^[2]
- 43:16, 118:8

developmental
^[1] - 37:7

devoted ^[1] -
37:11

diagnosed ^[1] -
28:5

difference ^[4] -
13:12, 41:23,
90:23, 152:21

different ^[8] -
12:23, 16:10,
52:9, 134:8,
153:5, 163:17,
164:11, 168:2

difficult ^[4] -

23:13, 23:21,
36:7, 76:3
difficulty ^[1] - 30:9
dilapidated ^[1] -
111:18
diligence ^[1] -
33:25
diminishing ^[1] -
171:13
dimitrios ^[1] -
22:16
Dimitrios ^[2] -
5:11, 22:19
dinner ^[1] - 182:14
dioxane ^[1] -
180:16
direct ^[7] - 20:19,
32:6, 47:5, 105:3,
105:8, 111:20,
178:3
directed ^[1] -
150:25
directing ^[2] -
154:22, 154:23
direction ^[1] -
153:20
directly ^[4] - 45:19,
118:6, 137:11,
178:18
director ^[4] -
22:20, 25:16,
42:16, 182:3
directors ^[1] - 29:4
disabilities ^[1] -
48:7
disability ^[3] -
36:9, 61:22, 61:23

discrimination
" ^[1] - 53:25
discuss ^[5] -
25:17, 34:25,
106:22, 134:19,
163:13
discussed ^[3] -
36:15, 70:6,
163:25
discussing ^[4] -
115:5, 120:21,
133:25, 134:7
discussion ^[12] -
67:24, 70:7, 72:6,
80:24, 86:24,
108:15, 124:17,
134:6, 158:10,
164:9, 167:7,
186:21
discussions ^[2] -
106:15, 115:4
disingenuous ^[5]
- 144:18, 148:23,
155:8, 155:20,
156:7
disparities ^[1] -
23:19
disperse ^[1] -
169:16
dispersed ^[1] -
169:19
dispose ^[1] -
127:14
disproportiona
te ^[1] - 84:24
disruption ^[11] -
149:8, 150:6,
150:17, 151:6,

151:10, 151:18,
152:9, 152:14,
152:25, 166:8,
166:21
disservice ^[5] -
104:11, 113:23,
145:7, 145:18,
152:2
distance ^[1] -
158:6
distracted ^[2] -
18:19, 19:11
distribute ^[1] -
185:16
distributed ^[3] -
50:5, 64:12,
130:20
District ^[24] - 2:4,
2:8, 2:12, 2:16,
2:19, 2:22, 2:25,
3:3, 3:6, 3:9, 3:12,
3:15, 3:18, 3:21,
3:24, 4:3, 4:6, 4:9,
61:2, 67:5, 67:6,
69:5, 111:15,
111:20
district ^[47] - 36:14,
60:24, 61:5,
68:11, 90:22,
97:18, 97:23,
98:2, 98:3,
101:11, 104:9,
112:11, 125:2,
129:24, 131:10,
131:11, 132:7,
132:8, 133:20,
134:2, 134:3,
134:15, 136:23,
136:24, 137:5,

142:7, 154:6,
154:10, 155:15,
163:9, 168:19,
168:23, 168:25,
169:7, 169:12,
169:14, 169:22,
170:17, 171:7,
174:25, 178:7,
183:16, 183:19,
184:11, 185:7,
185:16, 189:19
districts ^[31] -
30:14, 37:21,
40:15, 40:17,
40:22, 41:2,
88:15, 89:22,
90:5, 97:13,
105:11, 107:5,
116:12, 124:21,
124:22, 129:20,
133:5, 145:2,
145:7, 154:9,
154:11, 154:15,
162:11, 167:20,
167:21, 168:17,
168:18, 168:20,
171:2, 173:15,
190:2
disturbing ^[1] -
91:14
diverse ^[1] - 57:13
diversion ^[1] -
111:23
divide ^[2] - 154:13,
174:14
divided ^[6] - 89:17,
91:24, 171:22,
171:23, 172:17,
183:18

division ^[1] - 154:7**doctor** ^[1] - 19:21**document** ^[1] -
96:11**dog** ^[1] - 99:23**dollar** ^[3] - 30:12,
96:15, 160:3**dollars** ^[5] - 103:3,
141:25, 161:13,
161:20, 164:24**dolls** ^[2] - 50:4,
52:7**donation** ^[1] -
48:12**donations** ^[1] -
49:5**Donations** ^[1] -
49:19**done** ^[19] - 28:14,
84:2, 86:11,
87:20, 96:25,
112:24, 117:25,
123:11, 135:21,
135:23, 136:7,
136:12, 151:8,
151:12, 155:6,
171:10, 182:11,
182:12, 182:17**doors** ^[1] - 37:14**Doron** ^[3] - 5:17,
42:11, 42:14**down** ^[24] - 12:6,
34:8, 50:17,
101:11, 111:21,
112:7, 113:3,
139:15, 142:12,
142:13, 142:24,
156:10, 158:18,158:21, 162:4,
164:2, 164:5,
164:6, 164:16,
165:16, 173:25,
176:25, 189:25,
190:16**downturn** ^[1] -
86:7**dozen** ^[1] - 27:2**drains** ^[1] - 112:10**drawn** ^[1] - 24:10**drive** ^[2] - 34:8,
49:11**driven** ^[1] - 40:7**drives** ^[2] - 49:7,
59:23**driving** ^[2] - 19:7,
121:21**drop** ^[1] - 162:25**droves** ^[1] - 26:8**DRUCKER** ^[7] -
3:23, 9:7, 104:23,
159:10, 160:7,
160:13, 190:8**Drucker** ^[7] - 9:6,
74:12, 104:22,
163:23, 165:25,
190:7, 190:24**drug** ^[1] - 185:10**drugs** ^[1] - 15:20**drunk** ^[3] - 18:20,
19:7, 19:11**due** ^[11] - 24:10,
27:21, 29:20,
110:3, 113:15,
113:18, 145:22,
146:4, 146:24,
147:12, 147:19**during** ^[12] - 39:14,
75:4, 75:6, 75:9,
76:9, 82:19,
83:24, 93:10,
115:5, 129:5,
139:24, 152:5**During** ^[1] - 68:25**dwelling** ^[1] -
33:10**dwindle** ^[1] - 113:3**dwindling** ^[1] -
89:7**dying** ^[1] - 110:7**E****early** ^[6] - 24:6,
29:18, 62:18,
62:23, 63:4, 99:18**Early** ^[1] - 139:9**earmark** ^[1] -
129:15**earmarked** ^[3] -
30:22, 51:9,
178:13**earn** ^[1] - 38:5**ease** ^[1] - 16:17**easier** ^[1] - 172:13**easily** ^[1] - 135:18**East** ^[1] - 49:16**easy** ^[6] - 12:16,
163:11, 172:3,
172:4, 174:16,
189:20**eat** ^[1] - 113:20**echo** ^[3] - 13:18,
58:20, 190:23**economic** ^[1] -

23:18

economics ^[1] -
33:13**economy** ^[3] -
145:13, 166:18,
167:11**Education** ^[3] -
28:19, 36:17, 56:3**education** ^[16] -
25:19, 27:14,
27:16, 27:20,
28:10, 29:4, 29:7,
32:20, 39:19,
55:22, 57:7,
57:16, 58:14,
61:4, 79:5, 114:13**educational** ^[2] -
42:18, 55:25**educator** ^[1] -
42:23**effective** ^[1] -
75:17**effectively** ^[1] -
130:24**effort** ^[2] - 33:24,
34:23**efforts** ^[1] - 111:3**El** ^[1] - 61:14**Eighty** ^[1] - 119:9**either** ^[2] - 32:4,
173:11**elected** ^[4] - 15:8,
123:3, 129:6,
156:16**electrical** ^[1] -
112:8**Eleven** ^[1] - 191:3

eligible^[1] -

143:23

eliminate^[2] -

76:18, 79:20

elimination^[1] -

76:23

Ellen^[3] - 5:25,

63:20, 63:22

Elmont^[2] - 45:12,

111:7

eloquent^[1] -

114:20

Elsie^[2] - 186:8,

186:9

embarrassed^[3]

- 95:13, 106:9,

149:20

embarrassing^[1]

- 106:7

embarrassmen**t**^[1] - 99:12**embraces**^[1] -

43:5

embracing^[1] -

167:18

Emergency^[1] -

66:3

emergency^[9] -

10:19, 66:7, 66:8,

66:14, 66:24,

72:15, 97:4, 97:5,

139:25

emphasize^[1] -

101:17

empirically^[1] -

61:17

employ^[1] - 34:15**employee**^[3] -

10:8, 11:3, 76:14

employees^[1] -

10:23

employer^[1] -

108:21

employers^[1] -

74:8

employment^[1] -

43:25

empower^[1] -

45:3

enable^[3] - 24:22,

45:5, 56:25

encounter^[1] -

39:14

encourage^[3] -

24:7, 39:19, 63:9

encouraging^[1] -

24:17

end^[8] - 21:5,

33:14, 38:25,

39:6, 78:20,

156:24, 158:13,

181:6

endeavor^[1] -

103:25

endorsed^[1] -

40:9

ends^[1] - 23:22**energy**^[1] - 112:6**enforce**^[1] - 19:13**engineer**^[1] - 43:4**enhance**^[1] -

45:23

enhances^[1] -

46:21

enrollment^[2] -

80:11, 80:13

ensure^[2] - 24:19,

189:21

enter^[3] - 37:5,

37:8, 49:13

entertainment^[1]

- 30:23

entire^[5] - 27:10,

74:16, 153:6,

154:24, 181:18

entrust^[1] - 95:14**enumerating**^[1] -

97:10

Environmental^[1] - 180:12**environmental**^[1] - 180:19**environmentall****y**^[1] - 181:18**envision**^[1] -

53:21

equal^[9] - 26:18,

31:22, 56:14,

56:17, 56:18,

90:15, 126:23,

162:16, 163:4

equaling^[1] -

55:23

equality^[3] -

24:12, 25:5, 98:15

equalizing^[2] -

24:4, 25:4

equally^[8] - 124:2,

168:13, 168:16,

168:17, 169:3,

169:17, 169:20,

169:21

equity^[2] - 98:15,

180:18

Eric^[1] - 5:3**escalate**^[1] -

112:8

ESG^[1] - 118:20**ESL**^[1] - 57:17**especially**^[4] -

64:9, 79:8, 91:14,

114:12

ESQ^[1] - 4:14**essential**^[1] -

44:19

establish^[3] -

24:11, 66:8, 93:18

established^[4] -

26:17, 66:25,

83:6, 137:22

Established^[1] -

42:20

establishing^[2] -

66:13, 72:14

estate^[1] - 84:7**estimated**^[1] -

164:19

evaluate^[1] -

127:14

evaluated^[2] -

36:13, 61:16

evaluation^[1] -

36:3

event^[1] - 103:10**events**^[12] - 145:4,

145:14, 167:21,

182:11, 182:24,

182:25, 183:4,

183:20, 183:22,
184:9, 184:16,
185:6
eventually ^[4] -
23:17, 62:5, 63:3,
63:5
everyday ^[2] -
110:6, 113:22
evidence ^[1] - 40:7
evolving ^[1] -
22:23
exact ^[1] - 134:4
exactly ^[6] -
124:14, 133:20,
135:11, 140:17,
154:7, 170:16
example ^[1] -
166:19
examples ^[1] -
92:22
Except ^[1] - 12:9
except ^[1] - 41:19
excited ^[2] - 46:20,
54:13
Excuse ^[4] -
140:23, 149:18,
154:21, 191:2
executive ^[4] -
28:25, 42:15,
101:8, 182:2
Executive ^[25] -
1:14, 67:3, 68:9,
85:2, 88:4, 91:19,
100:6, 108:21,
111:9, 114:3,
125:12, 126:6,
126:10, 127:9,
127:13, 127:18,

127:23, 132:25,
142:11, 142:22,
168:4, 170:18,
189:6, 189:24
exercise ^[1] -
53:23
existing ^[1] -
122:14
expand ^[1] - 139:5
expect ^[2] - 12:15,
53:2
expectancy ^[2] -
177:2, 177:3
expected ^[2] -
38:8, 44:16
expecting ^[1] -
129:13
expense ^[2] -
104:16, 148:24
expenses ^[1] -
177:10
expensive ^[1] -
111:25
experience ^[1] -
36:6
experienced ^[2] -
16:20, 29:12
expiration ^[1] -
76:10
explain ^[3] - 183:8,
189:3, 190:9
explore ^[1] - 24:3
express ^[3] -
14:15, 174:4,
178:3
expression ^[1] -
106:14

extended ^[3] -
34:8, 102:23,
103:20
extension ^[1] -
114:2
extent ^[1] - 127:7
extra ^[2] - 103:13,
162:24
extremely ^[3] -
48:10, 115:4,
173:5
eye ^[1] - 155:10

F

fabulous ^[1] - 47:7
face ^[1] - 23:7
faced ^[2] - 165:12,
165:15
faces ^[1] - 12:4
facilitate ^[1] -
20:16
facilitating ^[1] -
20:13
facilities ^[2] -
37:21, 179:18
facing ^[3] - 24:24,
25:18, 52:9
fact ^[12] - 12:16,
14:7, 28:15, 34:2,
57:20, 76:19,
88:5, 94:2, 94:4,
109:19, 168:21,
169:18
faculty ^[8] - 74:23,
75:5, 75:13, 77:3,
78:10, 78:13,
79:15, 79:20

failing ^[2] - 99:9,
99:10
fails ^[1] - 156:6
failure ^[1] - 101:14
fair ^[12] - 69:6,
76:15, 78:24,
98:7, 105:13,
115:14, 117:6,
131:19, 131:24,
150:4, 172:22,
172:24
fairly ^[1] - 181:11
fairness ^[2] -
98:15, 110:10
faith ^[3] - 87:6,
87:18, 89:5
fall ^[1] - 62:2
falls ^[1] - 32:8
false ^[2] - 162:2,
162:7
families ^[15] -
20:20, 20:22,
21:2, 25:8, 26:14,
31:7, 37:25, 40:6,
42:19, 45:6,
48:14, 48:17,
49:9, 57:19, 99:9
Family ^[1] - 28:25
family ^[5] - 20:10,
28:9, 36:21,
49:24, 68:16
far ^[3] - 41:12,
76:21, 168:16
Farmingdale ^[1] -
166:19
fashion ^[1] - 159:4
fast ^[1] - 52:11

fault^[1] - 57:9**favor**^[12] - 66:13,
66:17, 67:11,
67:15, 70:16,
70:20, 72:14,
72:18, 81:5, 81:8,
191:8, 191:11**fears**^[1] - 16:17**fed**^[1] - 182:14**federal**^[5] - 32:11,
45:21, 64:7, 69:4,
156:11**Federal**^[5] - 116:4,
120:17, 129:12,
134:9, 178:9**Federation**^[1] -
74:9**feelings**^[1] - 168:9**fellow**^[1] - 176:24**fellows**^[1] -
176:22**felons**^[1] - 11:18**felt**^[1] - 87:24**fenol**^[1] - 6:9**Fenol**^[1] - 182:2**Ferretti**^[11] - 7:19,
67:9, 82:8, 138:9,
151:3, 156:25,
159:11, 161:10,
165:4, 188:5,
191:7**FERRETTI**^[49] -
7:20, 138:13,
139:11, 139:14,
139:18, 139:23,
140:5, 140:22,
141:2, 141:9,
141:15, 141:20,142:3, 142:8,
142:16, 142:18,
143:9, 143:14,
143:25, 144:4,
144:7, 144:10,
144:17, 145:25,
146:6, 146:10,
146:20, 147:2,
147:6, 147:11,
147:16, 147:24,
148:10, 148:21,
149:2, 149:5,
149:9, 149:13,
150:24, 151:19,
152:10, 152:15,
153:2, 165:5,
166:9, 166:13,
166:24, 167:8,
188:6**FERRETTI, JR**^[1]
- 2:10**few**^[7] - 36:2,
77:21, 80:18,
100:19, 100:25,
106:16, 174:11**field**^[7] - 12:5,
22:22, 24:3, 24:6,
55:23, 57:12,
86:17**fight**^[2] - 131:9,
155:13**fighting**^[2] - 91:6,
91:8**figure**^[2] - 101:9,
133:4**figured**^[1] - 102:8**fill**^[2] - 68:13, 181:8**filling**^[1] - 58:5**final**^[1] - 82:3**finally**^[1] - 161:24**finances**^[1] -
160:24**financial**^[7] -
23:11, 44:7,
79:11, 80:4, 86:4,
86:10, 86:16**financially**^[2] -
87:10, 167:23**fine**^[3] - 154:2,
164:15, 185:24**finest**^[1] - 17:4**fingers**^[1] - 161:22**finish**^[5] - 94:3,
103:11, 103:17,
136:19, 153:3**finished**^[2] -
102:7, 167:4**fire**^[2] - 173:15,
189:12**firehouse**^[1] -
184:14**First**^[1] - 12:2**first**^[10] - 28:4,
36:2, 61:16, 68:8,
74:21, 99:6,
117:15, 133:7,
174:13, 189:13**firsthand**^[1] -
92:22**fiscal**^[1] - 83:14**fiscally**^[5] - 84:10,
107:23, 107:24,
109:4, 115:3**fit**^[2] - 152:11,
158:2**five**^[9] - 12:10,
35:16, 39:9,
39:21, 77:13,
119:9, 186:23,
186:24, 191:2**Five**^[3] - 11:11,
12:10, 12:11**fix**^[4] - 28:12,
157:23, 158:2,
158:3**fixed**^[1] - 20:2**floor**^[2] - 151:4,
157:15**flu**^[1] - 45:14**flush**^[1] - 99:22**focus**^[1] - 147:18**folded**^[1] - 49:19**folk**^[1] - 60:8**folks**^[4] - 96:8,
100:13, 100:20,
100:21**follow**^[4] - 24:18,
27:22, 64:19,
104:24**food**^[6] - 51:11,
51:17, 88:17,
99:20, 105:22,
107:15**fool**^[2] - 106:19,
106:20**foolish**^[1] - 63:2**foot**^[1] - 165:23**forced**^[1] - 23:21**foreclosed**^[2] -
177:21, 179:20**forget**^[1] - 85:14**forgotten**^[1] -

19:10
form ^[2] - 159:4,
 177:14
formally ^[1] -
 91:18
formation ^[1] -
 74:18
former ^[1] - 7:5
forth ^[4] - 152:17,
 167:3, 168:15,
 185:25
forthcoming ^[1] -
 46:14
fortunate ^[2] -
 83:24, 182:19
Fortunately ^[1] -
 41:3
forum ^[1] - 123:19
forward ^[14] - 10:3,
 69:7, 78:22,
 78:25, 80:12,
 83:14, 84:12,
 89:5, 95:3, 152:7,
 153:8, 153:21,
 181:19, 186:4
foster ^[1] - 25:4
foundation ^[1] -
 40:24
Foundation ^[7] -
 38:21, 39:9,
 39:18, 40:13,
 41:14, 41:18,
 50:13
founded ^[1] - 39:8
founder ^[3] - 29:2,
 38:20, 42:15
four ^[4] - 24:21,
 35:14, 68:22,

128:19
Fourth ^[1] - 10:6
frame ^[1] - 177:23
framework ^[1] -
 95:10
Franklin ^[1] - 1:15
frankly ^[3] - 76:21,
 145:4, 152:4
Fredonia ^[1] - 79:9
free ^[3] - 42:24,
 59:2, 59:7
freely ^[1] - 157:3
Friday ^[3] - 100:7,
 172:20, 189:5
friend ^[1] - 159:11
Friends ^[1] - 48:3
friends ^[2] - 68:17,
 99:9
front ^[1] - 111:10
frugal ^[1] - 82:13
fulfill ^[1] - 21:4
full ^[9] - 44:22,
 75:21, 77:3,
 79:15, 79:20,
 90:16, 104:4,
 114:4, 158:3
Full ^[7] - 66:16,
 67:14, 70:19,
 72:17, 81:7,
 191:10, 191:19
FULL ^[1] - 1:4
function ^[1] -
 190:17
fund ^[7] - 39:23,
 40:13, 40:25,
 82:22, 84:22,
 111:15, 138:17

Fund ^[11] - 53:15,
 89:15, 111:3,
 114:25, 121:23,
 128:16, 128:23,
 140:14, 141:6,
 148:9, 153:13
fundamental ^[1] -
 156:2
fundamentally
^[1] - 174:17
funded ^[5] - 90:17,
 100:25, 102:11,
 178:9, 181:11
funding ^[44] -
 18:16, 19:24,
 21:6, 44:24,
 45:19, 45:24,
 46:9, 46:12,
 53:14, 55:10,
 55:11, 56:9,
 57:16, 57:18,
 57:22, 58:10,
 59:8, 64:15,
 64:20, 87:7,
 87:11, 88:13,
 90:3, 90:8, 90:21,
 91:7, 102:12,
 102:14, 109:13,
 117:25, 141:8,
 141:19, 141:23,
 153:6, 153:8,
 176:16, 178:4,
 178:17, 179:2,
 179:8, 179:13,
 189:10, 189:12
fundraise ^[2] -
 183:23, 185:14
funds ^[30] - 38:23,
 41:9, 44:24,

44:25, 45:21,
 46:19, 51:9, 64:7,
 64:8, 82:15,
 82:18, 85:7,
 85:17, 98:9,
 110:13, 117:22,
 118:9, 119:7,
 120:6, 120:18,
 120:24, 122:9,
 139:16, 143:19,
 178:13, 182:22,
 183:13, 184:12,
 185:9, 190:14
funneled ^[1] -
 118:19
Furthermore ^[2] -
 24:15, 110:24
future ^[8] - 13:12,
 30:12, 31:3,
 75:10, 76:18,
 82:14, 94:20,
 181:19

G

gala ^[1] - 170:8
game ^[1] - 12:5
games ^[1] - 84:16
gangs ^[1] - 54:11
gap ^[1] - 58:5
Garrison ^[2] -
 5:21, 53:9
gas ^[2] - 19:17,
 107:15
Gayle ^[3] - 5:13,
 28:23, 28:24
Gaylor ^[3] - 8:7,
 52:23, 188:7
GAYLOR ^[4] -

3:20, 8:8, 15:12,
188:8

gel ^[1] - 140:7

General ^[8] -

89:14, 114:25,
121:23, 128:16,
128:22, 140:14,
141:6, 153:13

general ^[2] - 44:24,
109:15

generate ^[1] -
184:19

generating ^[1] -
183:3

generation ^[1] -
44:20

generous ^[1] -
40:12

gentlemen ^[2] -
22:18, 186:3

gently ^[1] - 48:13

Gianelli ^[1] - 68:24

Giangregorio ^[3]
- 9:15, 188:13,
191:6

GIANGREGORI

O ^[3] - 3:17, 16:8,
188:14

Gibson ^[3] - 6:6,
176:3, 176:5

GIBSON ^[1] -
176:4

gifted ^[1] - 50:8

gifts ^[1] - 49:23

Giouzepis ^[1] -
5:11

Girl ^[1] - 49:7

GIUFFRE ^[3] - 3:8,
8:11, 188:12

Giuffre ^[2] - 8:10,
188:11

Giuseppes ^[2] -
22:16, 22:19

gIUSEPPES ^[1] -
22:17

giveaway ^[1] -
182:15

giveaways ^[1] -
182:18

given ^[11] - 12:17,
30:2, 46:13,
56:25, 90:4, 90:9,
90:11, 129:12,
132:7, 159:20,
167:10

Glen ^[1] - 88:18

glide ^[1] - 86:16

global ^[1] - 156:22

globe ^[1] - 156:22

goal ^[1] - 48:20

goals ^[1] - 112:17

God ^[1] - 16:6

Goetz ^[5] - 9:12,
72:3, 72:8, 73:4,
187:20

GOETZ ^[3] - 4:5,
9:13, 187:21

gold ^[1] - 162:4

Golden ^[2] - 5:19,
47:23

GOLDEN ^[1] -
47:24

gonna ^[1] - 90:24

goodness ^[2] -

16:18, 58:24

gotta ^[1] - 95:7

governance ^[1] -
155:24

government ^[7] -
32:11, 91:12,
121:15, 126:23,
132:23, 156:11,
159:7

Government ^[4] -
116:4, 129:13,
134:9, 178:9

graduate ^[1] -
23:10

graduates ^[1] -
33:7

grand ^[3] - 10:17,
11:11, 147:7

grandchildren ^[1]
- 35:15

grandson ^[2] -
35:16, 36:22

grant ^[1] - 85:13

granted ^[2] -
36:18, 37:17

grants ^[1] - 145:11

grateful ^[4] -
16:24, 50:25,
105:25, 107:6

gratitude ^[1] -
14:16

great ^[17] - 12:21,
14:23, 61:25,
82:20, 87:11,
114:21, 164:4,
166:10, 166:18,
182:11, 182:20,
182:23, 182:25,

183:4, 183:6,
183:21, 184:7

Greater ^[1] - 21:14

greater ^[1] - 48:19

greatest ^[1] -
57:15

greatly ^[1] - 37:3

Greetings ^[1] -
18:12

grit ^[1] - 44:6

groom ^[1] - 44:19

Gross ^[3] - 6:4,
77:17, 78:14

gross ^[1] - 74:13

GROSS ^[1] - 74:14

Groundwater ^[1]
- 85:10

groundwork ^[1] -
85:24

groups ^[3] - 88:20,
90:22, 171:4

grow ^[3] - 44:16,
52:10, 62:24

growing ^[1] -
44:11

grown ^[1] - 50:16

growth ^[1] - 44:18

guarantee ^[3] -
135:13, 142:15,
190:15

guarantees ^[1] -
135:16

guardrails ^[1] -
116:3

guess ^[2] - 13:8,
94:18

guidance ^[1] -

40:20
guidelines ^[1] -
 64:19
guys ^[8] - 13:19,
 14:5, 55:8, 56:19,
 89:13, 92:16,
 174:2, 189:17

H

habits ^[1] - 44:6
HAFLI ^[6] - 20:9,
 20:11, 20:15,
 20:25, 21:2, 21:6
Haitian ^[3] - 20:10,
 20:14, 20:16
half ^[12] - 77:12,
 83:23, 93:6,
 93:15, 93:20,
 99:24, 100:15,
 109:20, 133:7,
 133:8, 148:15,
 156:11
Half ^[1] - 59:12
hand ^[3] - 90:21,
 155:6, 192:14
handguns ^[1] -
 15:19
Hang ^[1] - 86:22
hang ^[2] - 95:12
happy ^[5] - 13:10,
 52:25, 57:23,
 104:2, 169:9
hard ^[14] - 15:11,
 37:11, 37:18,
 50:14, 106:17,
 106:19, 116:6,
 116:10, 116:19,
 122:3, 122:6,

122:22, 174:15,
 180:11
harder ^[1] - 122:5
harm ^[1] - 86:12
hats ^[1] - 50:4
HAUP ^[1] - 186:10
head ^[4] - 95:12,
 107:2, 118:12
heads ^[2] - 13:19,
 80:8
headwinds ^[1] -
 84:3
health ^[18] - 38:25,
 39:5, 39:19,
 39:25, 41:20,
 42:6, 51:25,
 57:21, 57:24,
 59:22, 74:22,
 88:20, 91:15,
 176:23, 180:12,
 180:22, 183:24,
 185:11
Health ^[4] - 58:25,
 76:13, 85:9, 85:12
hear ^[9] - 36:8,
 92:18, 92:19,
 109:22, 110:9,
 113:17, 116:14,
 120:13, 169:9
heard ^[16] - 15:18,
 56:9, 76:16,
 106:10, 116:14,
 116:15, 119:24,
 120:2, 129:4,
 138:20, 140:10,
 148:10, 153:13,
 169:10, 170:7,
 170:18

hearing ^[7] -
 18:17, 61:20,
 63:10, 96:18,
 148:23, 152:3,
 152:6
heart ^[1] - 106:8
heartbreaking ^[1]
 - 138:21
hearts ^[1] - 106:9
held ^[1] - 49:7
Hello ^[1] - 25:15
help ^[20] - 23:2,
 28:7, 33:21,
 34:14, 36:20,
 38:25, 41:6, 51:3,
 51:10, 54:4, 55:9,
 55:13, 60:7,
 102:19, 111:12,
 140:20, 177:8,
 177:17, 179:2
helped ^[3] - 16:17,
 115:9, 161:12
helping ^[4] - 14:16,
 41:25, 43:10,
 48:21
helps ^[2] - 78:22,
 146:22
Hempstead ^[2] -
 42:22, 50:8
Herald ^[1] - 182:10
hereby ^[1] - 192:10
heretofore ^[1] -
 82:5
hereunto ^[1] -
 192:13
herself ^[1] - 72:4
Hi ^[5] - 35:5, 45:11,

60:23, 93:2,
 181:25
hiatus ^[1] - 76:10
hide ^[1] - 131:17
hiding ^[3] - 129:6,
 131:18, 131:23
high ^[5] - 26:25,
 33:15, 34:12,
 43:14, 57:4
higher ^[6] - 22:5,
 24:10, 26:10,
 27:3, 33:3, 79:5
Highland ^[1] -
 48:23
Hills ^[1] - 59:13
himself ^[1] - 11:14
hire ^[2] - 21:19,
 59:5
historic ^[1] - 97:21
historical ^[1] -
 117:23
history ^[5] - 30:25,
 97:22, 139:25,
 159:14, 159:17
hit ^[7] - 18:19, 84:3,
 84:7, 86:9, 87:14,
 100:12, 117:24
HIT ^[3] - 100:10,
 100:12, 100:13
Hofstra ^[1] -
 176:21
hold ^[2] - 37:15,
 153:19
holding ^[3] -
 16:21, 22:24,
 155:21
holds ^[2] - 82:15,

94:20
Hollow ^[1] - 59:13
home ^[3] - 111:7,
 111:8, 165:20
Homeless ^[2] -
 97:3, 100:20
homeless ^[9] -
 85:19, 96:24,
 97:6, 99:17,
 100:17, 111:13,
 114:8, 125:20,
 155:16
homelessness
^[4] - 100:7, 105:19,
 105:20, 105:22
homeowners ^[4] -
 177:10, 177:16,
 180:7, 180:25
homeownershi
p ^[3] - 177:16,
 181:14, 181:15
homes ^[11] -
 111:12, 177:14,
 177:19, 177:22,
 179:11, 179:16,
 179:24, 180:6,
 180:19, 180:20,
 181:17
honest ^[2] - 169:6,
 172:19
honestly ^[1] -
 87:17
Honestly ^[1] -
 172:11
honor ^[2] - 37:10,
 42:21
honored ^[1] -
 22:19

hope ^[12] - 25:11,
 39:25, 69:6, 88:2,
 88:24, 88:25,
 89:2, 89:7,
 171:12, 171:16,
 174:9, 181:11
hopeful ^[1] - 87:4
hopefully ^[2] -
 77:24, 80:19
hoping ^[4] - 47:5,
 59:7, 89:3, 179:17
HORNSBY ^[1] -
 58:18
Hornsby ^[2] - 5:23,
 58:17
horror ^[1] - 18:18
Hospital ^[1] -
 50:10
hospital ^[1] - 59:2
hospitals ^[1] -
 62:16
Hotel/Motel ^[3] -
 98:12, 136:8,
 136:12
hour ^[2] - 148:12,
 148:15
hours ^[2] - 77:8
House ^[1] - 50:10
household ^[1] -
 110:6
households ^[1] -
 180:14
Housing ^[1] -
 118:7
housing ^[5] -
 85:15, 85:18,
 178:20, 180:3,

183:24
Howard ^[9] - 9:20,
 89:3, 91:24,
 135:18, 138:11,
 165:6, 171:10,
 171:11, 172:15
HOWARD ^[2] -
 1:8, 2:2
huge ^[4] - 57:22,
 113:23, 183:20,
 184:8
human ^[2] - 18:25,
 53:24
humanitarian ^[1]
 - 155:22
humanitarians
^[1] - 155:25
humbled ^[2] - 13:9
humbly ^[1] - 95:8
hundreds ^[6] -
 25:22, 34:15,
 36:4, 37:13,
 41:24, 164:23
hurt ^[1] - 177:10
hurting ^[1] - 145:9
Hyde ^[1] - 49:17
hygiene ^[1] - 44:6
hypothetically ^[1]
 - 124:8

I

iceberg ^[1] - 14:22
idea ^[10] - 82:12,
 85:3, 90:18,
 103:14, 131:15,
 150:13, 169:2,
 170:25, 183:11,

184:7
ideas ^[1] - 83:7
ideation ^[1] -
 41:12
identified ^[2] -
 10:25, 11:4
identify ^[1] -
 100:17
identity ^[1] - 43:10
Ill ^[2] - 3:20, 8:7
ills ^[2] - 84:4, 158:3
Imagine ^[1] - 28:4
imagine ^[1] -
 173:17
immediate ^[1] -
 23:3
immediately ^[4] -
 10:11, 27:11,
 90:17, 161:2
impact ^[4] - 40:15,
 106:4, 156:23
impacted ^[2] -
 177:5, 178:18
impactful ^[2] -
 105:2, 178:16
impartial ^[1] - 69:7
impassioned ^[1] -
 104:25
implore ^[1] -
 103:24
important ^[10] -
 29:9, 75:18, 78:3,
 79:4, 90:18,
 173:5, 174:4,
 174:24, 184:4,
 186:10
importantly ^[1] -

44:8
imposed ^[1] -
 76:12
impossible ^[2] -
 21:19, 164:20
improperly ^[1] -
 135:23
improve ^[4] -
 38:24, 43:7,
 179:3, 180:10
improvement ^[1]
 - 62:23
improving ^[1] -
 179:14
IN ^[1] - 192:13
inaccurate ^[2] -
 46:7, 130:22
incentive ^[1] -
 24:13
incentivized ^[1] -
 23:16
incident ^[2] -
 15:20, 16:14
include ^[1] - 54:19
includes ^[1] -
 178:19
including ^[2] -
 34:10, 163:16
inclusive ^[4] -
 47:2, 47:3, 48:5,
 53:22
income ^[1] - 96:2
incomparable ^[1]
 - 68:23
incorrect ^[7] -
 133:9, 135:5,
 135:24, 136:10,

136:16, 136:20,
 168:9
increase ^[10] -
 18:15, 19:24,
 30:2, 35:24, 38:3,
 39:18, 42:18,
 76:12, 80:9, 80:16
increased ^[6] -
 25:25, 139:5,
 139:8, 139:10,
 139:12, 139:16
increases ^[3] -
 74:20, 74:24,
 112:13
increasing ^[4] -
 24:4, 63:11,
 80:12, 106:24
increasingly ^[1] -
 23:12
incredible ^[2] -
 87:9, 173:18
increment ^[1] -
 117:15
increments ^[1] -
 117:12
independent ^[3] -
 127:17, 129:20,
 129:24
independently
^[2] - 127:4, 127:6
indicated ^[2] -
 119:25, 165:10
indirect ^[1] - 20:19
individual ^[2] -
 12:9, 129:20
Individualized ^[1]
 - 36:16
individuals ^[3] -

11:5, 20:20, 44:12
industry ^[4] - 26:2,
 26:4, 26:8, 28:14
inequities ^[3] -
 106:3, 106:4,
 108:6
inflated ^[1] - 34:5
Inflation ^[1] -
 107:14
inflation ^[1] -
 26:16
inform ^[2] - 106:2,
 107:4
information ^[1] -
 30:4
informed ^[3] -
 32:17, 32:25,
 56:20
infrastructure ^[2]
 - 111:18, 181:4
inherited ^[1] -
 166:19
initial ^[1] - 126:16
initiative ^[5] -
 24:20, 44:7,
 48:25, 178:11,
 180:9
initiatives ^[1] -
 180:3
injustices ^[1] -
 108:6
innovators ^[1] -
 44:20
insecurities ^[1] -
 99:20
insecurity ^[1] -
 105:23

insignificant ^[1] -
 190:12
inspire ^[1] - 45:3
instability ^[1] -
 177:11
instance ^[3] -
 19:20, 125:20,
 171:19
instead ^[3] - 33:2,
 89:9, 183:16
institute ^[1] -
 180:8
institution ^[1] -
 21:3
Insurance ^[1] -
 76:13
insurance ^[1] -
 74:22
integral ^[1] - 43:13
intellectual ^[1] -
 48:6
intelligence ^[2] -
 12:17, 13:2
intended ^[4] -
 140:15, 143:11,
 167:16, 174:22
intent ^[5] - 108:25,
 109:5, 109:10,
 109:16, 143:13
intentions ^[1] -
 109:7
Interactions ^[2] -
 182:4, 184:24
interactive ^[2] -
 16:22, 48:8
Interest ^[1] - 84:5
interest ^[1] -

167:19
interested ^[1] - 44:12
interests ^[1] - 43:11
interpretation ^[1] - 144:19
interrupt ^[6] - 140:23, 141:10, 147:17, 151:16, 154:4
interrupting ^[2] - 130:8, 149:14
interruption ^[1] - 147:14
intervene ^[1] - 62:22
intervention ^[3] - 29:18, 62:18, 99:19
Intervention ^[2] - 100:21, 139:9
introduce ^[1] - 48:21
invested ^[2] - 97:19, 160:3
investment ^[2] - 179:24, 181:15
invitation ^[1] - 145:6
invite ^[3] - 24:2, 50:23, 73:3
invited ^[1] - 55:23
involved ^[7] - 40:2, 40:6, 54:10, 54:17, 64:3, 132:17, 190:18

involves ^[2] - 74:19, 74:21
irritated ^[1] - 159:13
Irwin ^[1] - 67:4
IRWIN ^[2] - 68:5, 69:15
Isaac ^[1] - 31:20
ish ^[1] - 117:9
island ^[1] - 33:9
Island ^[7] - 20:10, 20:14, 20:18, 25:9, 34:13, 49:9, 182:9
Island's ^[1] - 97:2
issue ^[13] - 23:3, 32:10, 32:11, 32:12, 51:25, 114:5, 155:23, 155:24, 156:15, 157:13, 174:16, 189:15
issues ^[8] - 57:21, 79:10, 89:5, 110:8, 156:19, 157:14, 157:23, 184:6
It'd ^[1] - 94:10
it'll ^[1] - 63:8
It'll ^[1] - 158:8
item ^[17] - 18:5, 18:6, 67:2, 67:11, 67:20, 70:16, 72:4, 72:6, 72:11, 73:2, 80:25, 81:5, 81:13, 82:3, 125:17, 163:23, 191:5

Item ^[10] - 66:4, 70:9, 70:10, 70:11, 70:12, 74:3, 82:3
items ^[11] - 48:14, 64:24, 64:25, 70:3, 70:4, 70:8, 70:13, 71:2, 106:22, 117:3, 125:19
itself ^[3] - 143:17, 156:6, 181:3

J

Jacobs ^[1] - 68:19
Jacques ^[2] - 20:6, 20:8
James ^[1] - 8:18
JAMES ^[2] - 4:8, 4:14
January ^[4] - 1:18, 11:22, 29:16, 192:14
Jaques ^[1] - 5:9
Jay ^[1] - 68:19
Jeanine ^[3] - 6:7, 176:11, 176:13
Jericho ^[2] - 19:20, 19:23
Jerry ^[3] - 6:5, 77:18
Joan ^[1] - 48:23
job ^[10] - 13:6, 13:23, 131:6, 131:7, 131:8, 131:12, 131:16, 164:13, 164:15,

185:24
jobs ^[3] - 26:9, 44:16, 44:18
JOHN ^[2] - 2:10, 3:8
John ^[11] - 5:16, 6:4, 7:19, 8:9, 38:15, 38:19, 78:14, 138:20, 149:25, 159:11, 159:18
Johnny ^[1] - 62:9
Johnson ^[1] - 45:13
Johnston ^[3] - 5:14, 31:10, 31:12
JOHNSTON ^[1] - 31:11
joined ^[1] - 104:2
joining ^[2] - 54:5, 104:3
joint ^[1] - 74:8
jolting ^[1] - 51:18
judge ^[3] - 67:4, 69:7, 128:4
Judicial ^[2] - 67:5, 128:5
Judiciary ^[1] - 126:25
Judy ^[3] - 5:18, 45:9, 45:11
junction ^[1] - 29:12
Juneteenth ^[1] - 46:19
jurisdictions ^[1] - 106:12

Justice^[1] - 68:23
justice^[1] - 69:8
justify^[1] - 160:18

K

KAREN^[2] - 1:23, 192:8
Karen^[2] - 192:16, 192:17
KASLOW^[1] - 3:2
keep^[7] - 14:16, 15:20, 16:7, 60:7, 82:13, 131:21, 131:22
Keep^[1] - 16:4
KENNEDY^[3] - 4:8, 8:20, 187:24
Kennedy^[3] - 8:19, 82:9, 187:23
kids^[4] - 52:2, 52:8, 182:17, 182:18
Kids^[4] - 29:2, 35:21, 36:2
kill^[2] - 52:4, 113:2
Kill^[1] - 52:4
killing^[1] - 107:14
kind^[7] - 83:19, 91:11, 91:12, 91:13, 134:4, 171:13, 187:8
kindergarten^[2] - 37:5, 37:8
kinds^[1] - 135:2
Kligman^[3] - 5:13, 28:23, 28:25
KLIGMAN^[1] -

28:24
knowledge^[2] - 11:17, 140:3
known^[2] - 154:19, 155:14
knows^[5] - 84:6, 104:6, 104:8, 105:11
Kopel^[4] - 9:20, 89:3, 91:25, 123:18
KOPEL^[133] - 1:8, 2:2, 7:3, 7:10, 9:21, 9:24, 13:15, 14:25, 17:8, 18:2, 20:5, 21:10, 22:15, 25:13, 28:22, 31:9, 35:3, 38:15, 42:9, 42:11, 45:9, 46:2, 47:12, 47:22, 51:5, 53:8, 55:18, 58:16, 60:21, 63:19, 64:22, 66:2, 66:12, 66:18, 66:22, 67:16, 67:20, 67:25, 69:13, 69:16, 70:2, 70:21, 70:25, 72:10, 72:19, 73:2, 74:2, 77:16, 80:23, 81:4, 81:9, 81:13, 82:2, 86:21, 94:23, 101:16, 102:6, 102:13, 102:18, 103:12, 104:21, 116:21, 124:3,

124:10, 124:15, 125:5, 125:16, 126:4, 126:21, 127:5, 127:12, 127:20, 127:25, 128:7, 130:5, 130:21, 131:5, 131:21, 132:16, 132:22, 133:6, 133:13, 134:18, 134:23, 135:10, 135:15, 135:19, 136:9, 136:15, 136:18, 137:4, 137:16, 137:25, 138:6, 149:17, 149:22, 150:3, 150:10, 150:14, 150:22, 151:2, 151:7, 151:11, 154:2, 154:21, 163:14, 164:10, 166:11, 166:22, 167:2, 167:25, 168:8, 169:24, 171:8, 172:25, 174:10, 176:2, 178:21, 181:5, 181:23, 182:5, 182:8, 185:18, 185:22, 186:6, 186:15, 186:22, 187:5, 187:16, 187:18, 191:4, 191:12, 191:16
Kornbluth^[2] - 6:5, 77:18
KORNBLUTH^[1] - 77:19
KOSLOW^[22] -

126:14, 127:2, 127:8, 127:16, 127:22, 128:3, 128:9, 128:18, 129:2, 130:23, 131:7, 132:13, 132:18, 133:2, 133:10, 134:14, 134:21, 135:6, 135:12, 153:24, 154:5, 190:23
Koslow^[4] - 8:25, 72:13, 126:13, 190:22
koslow^[1] - 130:6
KREYE^[1] - 63:21
Kreye^[3] - 5:25, 63:20, 63:22

L

Labor^[1] - 26:15
lack^[2] - 44:4, 113:2
ladies^[1] - 22:18
Lakeview^[3] - 52:14, 52:15, 52:17
Land^[4] - 176:8, 176:10, 176:14, 178:5
land^[1] - 179:25
landscape^[1] - 22:23
language^[3] - 20:24, 57:17, 77:6
larcenies^[1] - 11:6
larceny^[5] - 10:10,

10:17, 11:9,
11:11, 12:7
larcenys ^[1] -
11:15
large ^[2] - 178:10,
184:19
largest ^[1] - 29:16
LAROCK ^[4] -
181:25, 182:7,
182:9, 184:16
LaRock ^[2] - 6:9,
182:2
Larry ^[3] - 5:14,
31:10, 31:12
last ^[14] - 14:3,
15:18, 16:15,
29:25, 30:8,
68:22, 82:23,
93:13, 97:17,
153:25, 159:20,
160:15, 172:20,
176:20
Last ^[2] - 49:9,
93:14
lastly ^[1] - 153:11
Lately ^[1] - 18:17
lately ^[1] - 91:14
latest ^[1] - 80:6
law ^[1] - 68:22
Law ^[1] - 31:20
laws ^[1] - 19:13
laying ^[1] - 79:14
lead ^[1] - 7:6
leader ^[2] - 27:13,
92:12
Leader ^[4] - 9:16,
66:6, 86:25,

140:11
LEADER ^[17] -
87:2, 102:16,
130:16, 135:17,
138:10, 140:19,
140:24, 141:4,
141:11, 141:17,
141:22, 142:5,
142:9, 170:2,
171:9, 173:2,
189:2
leadership ^[1] -
91:5
leads ^[1] - 15:17
leap ^[1] - 132:5
learn ^[5] - 28:4,
37:14, 43:18,
150:15, 154:19
learned ^[4] - 43:21,
64:14, 106:17,
106:19
learners ^[1] -
57:17
learning ^[1] - 57:8
least ^[5] - 27:2,
57:8, 82:11,
88:13, 89:25
leave ^[4] - 75:21,
75:22, 123:2,
128:21
leaves ^[2] - 72:9,
104:20
leaving ^[3] - 26:8,
37:19, 58:11
Leaving ^[1] - 72:4
led ^[1] - 22:25
left ^[4] - 28:13,
172:19, 186:11,

186:17
legacy ^[2] - 58:11,
180:24
legal ^[2] - 28:3,
93:10
legally ^[1] - 110:18
legislation ^[3] -
42:14, 44:23,
158:21
Legislative ^[24] -
1:14, 2:4, 2:8,
2:12, 2:16, 2:19,
2:22, 2:25, 3:3,
3:6, 3:9, 3:12,
3:15, 3:18, 3:21,
3:24, 4:3, 4:6, 4:9,
11:22, 108:25,
127:24, 132:25,
143:13
legislative ^[4] -
41:4, 90:12,
137:14, 190:17
legislator ^[16] -
15:13, 47:15,
52:23, 88:14,
89:23, 90:4,
90:15, 92:12,
98:14, 124:5,
129:3, 151:21,
173:17, 174:23,
185:19, 185:23
LEGISLATOR
^[202] - 2:2, 2:6, 2:10,
2:15, 2:18, 2:21,
2:24, 3:2, 3:5, 3:8,
3:11, 3:14, 3:17,
3:20, 3:23, 4:2,
4:5, 4:8, 7:17,
7:20, 7:23, 8:2,

8:5, 8:8, 8:11,
8:14, 8:17, 8:20,
8:23, 9:4, 9:7,
9:10, 9:13, 9:18,
13:17, 14:12,
15:3, 15:12, 16:8,
92:25, 93:5,
93:12, 93:17,
94:6, 94:9, 94:13,
94:16, 94:24,
102:4, 102:9,
102:20, 103:16,
104:23, 108:18,
109:9, 110:2,
110:16, 110:21,
110:24, 112:14,
113:15, 114:19,
116:22, 117:2,
117:11, 117:18,
117:21, 118:3,
118:14, 118:21,
118:24, 119:9,
119:12, 119:16,
119:20, 119:24,
120:8, 121:2,
121:9, 121:20,
121:24, 122:6,
122:15, 122:20,
123:7, 123:12,
123:16, 124:7,
124:13, 124:25,
125:25, 126:14,
127:2, 127:8,
127:16, 127:22,
128:3, 128:9,
128:18, 129:2,
130:14, 130:23,
131:7, 132:13,
132:18, 133:2,
133:10, 134:14,

134:21, 135:6,
135:12, 135:25,
136:11, 136:17,
136:25, 137:6,
137:18, 138:4,
138:13, 139:11,
139:14, 139:18,
139:23, 140:5,
140:22, 141:2,
141:9, 141:15,
141:20, 142:3,
142:8, 142:16,
142:18, 143:9,
143:12, 143:14,
143:25, 144:4,
144:7, 144:10,
144:17, 145:25,
146:6, 146:10,
146:20, 147:2,
147:6, 147:11,
147:16, 147:24,
148:10, 148:21,
149:2, 149:5,
149:9, 149:11,
149:13, 149:15,
149:19, 149:24,
150:8, 150:12,
150:18, 150:24,
151:19, 152:10,
152:15, 153:2,
153:24, 154:5,
154:16, 154:25,
158:11, 159:10,
160:7, 160:13,
165:5, 166:9,
166:13, 166:24,
167:8, 168:3,
168:11, 185:20,
186:2, 186:9,
187:11, 187:13,

187:21, 187:24,
188:2, 188:4,
188:6, 188:8,
188:10, 188:12,
188:14, 188:16,
188:23, 190:6,
190:8, 190:23
Legislator ^[57] -
7:5, 7:21, 7:24,
8:3, 8:6, 8:9, 8:12,
8:15, 8:18, 8:21,
8:24, 9:2, 9:5, 9:8,
9:11, 9:14, 13:16,
14:14, 14:25,
67:10, 70:14,
70:15, 72:3, 72:8,
72:12, 72:13,
73:3, 74:11,
74:12, 82:8, 82:9,
93:4, 104:19,
104:21, 105:18,
120:13, 123:6,
128:25, 138:9,
140:12, 143:9,
146:19, 147:15,
149:22, 150:25,
151:3, 151:20,
152:10, 156:25,
161:9, 165:25,
168:10, 174:20,
178:6, 187:10,
187:12, 190:24
legislator's ^[1] -
47:16
legislators ^[11] -
83:8, 88:8, 89:18,
100:11, 124:2,
129:14, 151:23,
153:14, 173:8,
186:18, 187:6

Legislators ^[5] -
47:25, 51:8,
53:11, 55:21,
77:20
Legislature ^[21] -
4:12, 4:15, 18:13,
38:23, 46:24,
64:6, 66:16,
67:14, 70:19,
72:17, 74:16,
75:16, 80:21,
81:7, 92:4, 92:5,
103:22, 109:16,
126:3, 191:10,
191:20
LEGISLATURE
^[2] - 1:3, 1:4
legislature ^[1] -
29:6
less ^[2] - 18:25,
182:18
letter ^[2] - 100:6,
177:25
level ^[3] - 32:20,
69:4, 91:17
levels ^[1] - 23:6
liabilities ^[5] -
94:4, 109:23,
110:11, 112:23,
113:4
liberation ^[1] -
53:22
libraries ^[3] -
51:12, 52:13, 58:7
Library ^[1] - 56:3
library ^[4] - 57:23,
58:6, 59:12, 59:15
licensed ^[2] -

35:10, 35:12
Life ^[1] - 177:2
life ^[9] - 12:14,
12:22, 15:15,
40:17, 40:18,
41:6, 41:7,
176:25, 177:7
lifetime ^[2] - 90:20,
171:3
lift ^[4] - 19:22,
116:6, 116:10,
116:19
lights ^[1] - 10:19
LIJ ^[1] - 59:2
limited ^[1] - 18:9
Linda ^[3] - 5:15,
35:3, 35:6
line ^[4] - 51:17,
155:21, 170:24,
173:21
lines ^[2] - 40:4,
79:21
lis ^[1] - 177:15
list ^[2] - 27:5, 56:17
listed ^[1] - 143:18
Listen ^[3] - 149:17,
150:22, 151:2
listen ^[3] - 91:9,
141:23, 166:9
listening ^[2] -
51:24, 52:24
listing ^[1] - 179:20
lists ^[1] - 179:18
literacy ^[2] - 43:8,
44:8
literally ^[2] - 164:3,
165:15

litigating^[1] - 69:3**litigations**^[1] -
84:9**live**^[5] - 26:14,
32:23, 38:5,
57:11, 97:22**lived**^[1] - 56:11**lives**^[3] - 19:6,
39:14, 41:23**living**^[5] - 33:4,
34:5, 34:13, 86:7,
155:17**Lloyd**^[2] - 5:22,
55:19**LLOYD**^[1] - 55:20**loans**^[1] - 23:11**local**^[11] - 30:13,
33:8, 39:24,
40:21, 48:4,
49:15, 50:6, 58:3,
167:11, 179:4,
179:14**located**^[1] - 178:6**location**^[1] -
10:21**locking**^[1] - 85:25**look**^[19] - 12:4,
18:22, 19:7, 31:4,
38:2, 69:7, 79:6,
79:7, 109:11,
109:21, 112:19,
129:21, 131:8,
161:21, 165:18,
171:18, 177:11,
186:4**Look**^[1] - 86:3**looking**^[9] - 12:23,
80:2, 80:7,113:12, 125:7,
177:13, 177:18,
183:17, 190:10**looks**^[1] - 54:20**Lopez**^[5] - 10:5,
10:9, 10:11,
11:14, 11:21**Lorenzo**^[2] -
192:16, 192:17**LORENZO**^[2] -
1:23, 192:8**lose**^[3] - 87:18,
109:20, 120:19**losing**^[3] - 27:18,
80:10, 84:8**loss**^[6] - 11:3,
42:10, 82:19,
93:22, 108:23**lost**^[7] - 34:7,
39:10, 57:7,
83:22, 93:11,
111:7, 144:5**Louis**^[2] - 186:8,
186:10**Love**^[5] - 48:11,
48:16, 49:4,
49:18, 50:24**love**^[6] - 49:24,
56:12, 89:24,
104:14, 138:17,
138:23**low**^[3] - 26:12,
95:12**lower**^[2] - 27:10,
29:21**lowest**^[3] - 29:23,
148:13, 148:16**Lubrano**^[2] -

21:11, 21:13

LUBRANO^[1] -
21:12**Lubvano**^[1] - 5:10**luck**^[1] - 69:16**lucky**^[2] - 36:21,
36:24**Lynbrook**^[1] -
50:8**M****major**^[1] - 39:5**Majority**^[4] - 70:6,
82:12, 129:13,
148:4**majority**^[1] - 44:3**makers**^[1] - 33:19**males**^[1] - 10:9**manage**^[3] - 32:7,
33:13, 33:16**Manager**^[1] -
35:21**mandates**^[1] -
28:3**MARCELLO**^[2] -
183:10, 185:12**Marcello**^[2] - 6:8,
181:24**March**^[3] - 117:15,
117:16, 117:18**margins**^[1] -
27:17**Marie**^[2] - 9:9,
113:20**MARIE**^[1] - 4:2**Marine**^[1] - 7:5**market**^[1] - 84:7**marketing**^[3] -
183:21, 184:8,
184:15**Mary**^[3] - 5:25,
63:20, 63:21**mask**^[1] - 60:12**Massapequa**^[1] -
50:9**master's**^[1] -
176:24**math**^[4] - 128:25,
162:22, 163:11,
174:15**mathematical**^[1]
- 160:2**mathematically**
^[1] - 164:20**matter**^[8] - 23:23,
25:12, 34:25,
60:19, 109:19,
129:18, 170:5,
185:2**matters**^[2] -
15:15, 15:16**Maynard**^[4] - 6:7,
176:11, 176:13,
181:6**MAYNARD**^[3] -
176:12, 178:25,
181:7**MAZI**^[1] - 3:14**Mazi**^[1] - 8:12**MCKEVITT**^[3] -
2:6, 7:17, 188:2**McKevitt**^[3] -
7:16, 66:6, 187:25

Meadow ^[1] -

49:17

mean ^[7] - 52:6,
89:21, 108:21,
108:25, 112:21,
116:14, 126:24

meaning ^[1] -
115:18

meaningful ^[1] -
179:3

means ^[5] - 28:2,
37:6, 54:5, 56:19,
119:6

measure ^[2] -
161:12, 161:21

mechanism ^[1] -
85:17

media ^[1] - 49:6

mediation ^[1] -
77:13

Medicaid ^[2] -
38:12

medical ^[1] - 177:9

meet ^[2] - 23:22,
34:24

MEETING ^[1] - 1:4

meeting ^[8] - 23:8,
36:14, 59:13,
62:5, 91:21,
95:17, 189:5,
191:20

meetings ^[1] -
92:19

meets ^[1] - 61:18

MELESA ^[1] - 3:14

member ^[3] -
42:24, 52:15,

52:16

members ^[17] -
18:12, 38:22,
41:3, 42:13,

49:15, 58:21,
66:15, 67:13,
70:18, 72:16,
74:23, 75:6,
75:13, 81:6,
144:11, 178:8,
191:9

memorandum ^[1]
- 74:4

men ^[1] - 11:2

mental ^[13] - 38:25,
39:18, 41:20,
42:6, 51:24,
57:21, 57:24,
59:22, 88:20,
91:15, 183:23,
185:11

mention ^[3] -
103:4, 103:9,
119:25

mentioned ^[6] -
93:6, 105:18,
110:25, 125:17,
125:20, 143:6

mentor ^[1] - 42:21

Mentors ^[4] -
42:16, 42:21,
43:3, 45:3

mentorship ^[2] -
42:25, 57:3

merchandise ^[2] -
11:13, 14:2

Mercy ^[1] - 50:10

merely ^[1] - 23:22

message ^[4] -

33:22, 40:22,
78:11, 92:18

met ^[3] - 49:4, 88:3,
106:6

Meta ^[1] - 114:10

methodology ^[3]
- 160:12, 160:14,
160:16

Metro ^[1] - 22:21

MICHAEL ^[2] -
3:17, 4:11

Michael ^[2] - 5:4,
9:14

microplastics ^[1]
- 180:15

might ^[12] - 14:21,
47:5, 89:6, 90:23,
120:7, 124:21,
124:23, 140:7,
156:19, 169:4,
169:6, 169:13

milestones ^[1] -
37:16

million ^[108] - 83:4,
85:5, 85:6, 88:7,
88:10, 88:13,
88:14, 88:22,
88:23, 89:9,
89:10, 89:11,
89:16, 90:8,
90:25, 91:23,
92:8, 92:15,
93:11, 95:4,
97:10, 97:13,
97:15, 97:16,
97:19, 101:10,
101:20, 102:14,

102:25, 103:2,
103:5, 103:9,
104:4, 104:10,
104:15, 106:23,
108:24, 110:25,
115:12, 115:15,
116:9, 116:11,
116:12, 117:7,
117:19, 118:2,
118:15, 118:22,
119:5, 119:10,
122:13, 122:16,
122:21, 122:24,
123:23, 124:9,
124:11, 125:9,
128:15, 128:19,
128:21, 128:22,
129:21, 129:22,
130:2, 130:25,
134:8, 139:10,
141:25, 142:6,
144:14, 146:2,
152:19, 152:20,
152:22, 153:4,
155:11, 157:25,
158:7, 158:22,
159:19, 159:23,
160:25, 161:25,
162:2, 162:5,
162:18, 162:19,
162:20, 162:21,
162:24, 162:25,
163:2, 163:3,
163:10, 169:2,
170:9, 170:15,
171:19, 171:22,
172:14, 190:11

Million ^[1] - 83:23

millions ^[4] -
161:13, 161:19,

161:20, 164:24
Mimi ^[1] - 45:13
minds ^[1] - 19:12
mindset ^[1] - 157:3
Mineola ^[1] - 1:16
minimize ^[1] - 145:15
minimum ^[1] - 101:10
minorities ^[1] - 135:14
Minority ^[13] - 9:16, 66:6, 70:7, 86:25, 89:11, 103:21, 140:11, 144:11, 145:5, 146:15, 152:18, 162:11, 166:3
minority ^[1] - 92:11
MINORITY ^[17] - 87:2, 102:16, 130:16, 135:17, 138:10, 140:19, 140:24, 141:4, 141:11, 141:17, 141:22, 142:5, 142:9, 170:2, 171:9, 173:2, 189:2
minute ^[2] - 30:3, 186:23
minutes ^[2] - 18:9, 186:24
misapprehensi
on ^[1] - 130:7
misdemeanor ^[1]

- 12:8
mishmash ^[1] - 140:6
misinterpreted ^[1] - 164:18
misleading ^[1] - 152:6
misquote ^[1] - 141:3
misquoted ^[4] - 140:25, 141:12, 141:13, 142:19
missing ^[1] - 63:18
mission ^[6] - 20:15, 21:4, 39:17, 48:16, 53:19, 184:22
missions ^[1] - 59:21
mode ^[1] - 28:17
model ^[1] - 43:5
MODO ^[1] - 50:13
moment ^[4] - 16:11, 52:20, 121:14, 149:21
moms ^[1] - 50:7
Monday ^[1] - 1:18
money ^[149] - 14:3, 27:18, 37:22, 52:13, 60:7, 60:14, 62:15, 63:8, 82:21, 83:10, 83:12, 84:17, 84:21, 84:24, 85:15, 85:16, 85:22, 85:25, 88:11, 88:17, 88:22,

89:19, 92:22, 94:22, 95:3, 97:12, 98:12, 98:18, 98:22, 99:21, 100:2, 101:10, 101:19, 101:20, 102:3, 102:22, 103:8, 103:13, 103:20, 103:23, 104:7, 105:4, 105:15, 107:17, 107:19, 108:10, 109:12, 110:19, 111:12, 111:14, 111:23, 112:19, 114:22, 115:25, 117:6, 117:11, 118:6, 118:19, 118:24, 119:2, 119:13, 119:17, 120:2, 120:20, 120:21, 121:22, 122:2, 122:23, 123:14, 123:22, 123:24, 124:19, 125:23, 129:8, 129:11, 129:15, 129:24, 130:11, 130:19, 131:10, 131:11, 131:14, 131:20, 131:25, 132:2, 132:11, 132:21, 133:4, 133:11, 133:14, 133:19, 133:23, 134:8, 134:11, 134:16, 134:17, 135:3, 135:20, 136:3, 136:5, 138:24,

140:13, 140:15, 140:17, 140:20, 141:3, 141:24, 142:23, 143:10, 144:5, 146:23, 147:8, 148:8, 148:19, 149:2, 152:5, 153:8, 153:12, 156:8, 156:21, 157:18, 157:21, 158:16, 158:18, 158:24, 159:6, 162:9, 162:13, 164:5, 167:10, 167:21, 168:15, 168:19, 171:2, 173:11, 173:19, 175:2, 178:10, 183:5, 183:15, 183:17, 183:18, 184:5, 184:19, 185:15
Money ^[1] - 133:13
money's ^[1] - 154:14
monies ^[5] - 30:19, 83:3, 85:11, 115:17, 168:12
month ^[3] - 15:18, 159:20, 177:20
monthly ^[1] - 114:9
months ^[1] - 36:24
mood ^[1] - 87:20
Moody's ^[1] - 87:13
moot ^[1] - 120:22
Morrison ^[5] -

42:16, 42:20,
42:22, 43:3, 45:2

mortgages^[1] -
23:12

most^[14] - 36:7,
37:5, 37:11,
37:16, 44:8,
82:17, 92:16,
95:3, 95:9, 95:14,
97:21, 106:5,
124:20, 141:24

mother^[1] - 35:14

motion^[9] - 31:20,
66:5, 66:8, 67:8,
70:13, 72:11,
74:11, 82:7, 168:4

Mount^[1] - 50:9

mouth^[1] - 49:6

move^[3] - 24:7,
44:23, 64:20

moved^[4] - 26:19,
49:6, 89:9, 133:15

moves^[2] - 80:15,
191:6

moving^[7] - 78:22,
78:25, 80:12,
83:14, 84:21,
95:3, 134:7

MR^[85] - 10:4,
18:12, 19:5, 20:7,
25:15, 27:9,
31:11, 42:13,
74:14, 77:19,
83:19, 93:3, 93:8,
93:14, 94:2, 94:8,
94:12, 94:15,
109:6, 109:19,
110:9, 110:20,

110:23, 111:14,
112:18, 116:25,
117:8, 117:14,
117:17, 117:20,
117:23, 118:5,
118:17, 118:23,
119:4, 119:11,
119:15, 119:19,
119:23, 120:4,
120:11, 121:5,
121:12, 122:8,
122:18, 123:2,
123:9, 123:15,
125:9, 128:17,
128:24, 139:4,
139:13, 139:17,
139:21, 140:3,
143:21, 144:3,
144:6, 144:9,
144:15, 145:24,
146:5, 146:8,
146:19, 146:25,
147:5, 147:10,
147:15, 147:20,
148:5, 148:20,
148:25, 149:4,
160:6, 160:11,
176:4, 181:25,
182:7, 182:9,
183:10, 184:16,
185:12, 187:10,
187:12

MS^[13] - 21:12,
28:24, 45:11,
46:5, 47:20,
47:24, 51:7,
60:23, 68:5,
69:15, 176:12,
178:25, 181:7

muddying^[1] -

149:6

Mule^[3] - 8:4,
67:10, 190:5

MULE^[5] - 3:5, 8:5,
14:12, 114:19,
190:6

Mullaney^[5] - 7:6,
8:22, 13:16,
14:14, 188:3

MULLANEY^[4] -
2:24, 8:23, 13:17,
188:4

multi^[1] - 113:7

multi-year^[1] -
113:7

multiple^[2] -
144:11, 151:23

municipalities^[2]
- 109:3, 109:17

municipality^[1] -
109:10

must^[1] - 114:6

N

NAACP^[8] - 52:17,
53:13, 55:24,
55:25, 56:23,
58:19, 58:23,
59:21

name^[16] - 20:8,
21:12, 22:18,
25:15, 28:24,
31:12, 35:6,
38:19, 42:14,
45:11, 53:11,
60:23, 176:4,
176:13, 182:2,
184:18

named^[1] - 42:21

Nana^[6] - 48:11,
48:22, 48:23,
49:4, 49:18, 50:24

Nana's^[2] - 48:16,
50:2

Nassau^[66] -
11:19, 12:24,
17:3, 19:19,
20:17, 21:7, 24:5,
24:8, 24:10,
24:14, 25:24,
27:4, 27:12,
27:13, 27:24,
29:23, 30:25,
31:16, 31:22,
32:12, 32:13,
32:23, 33:2, 33:6,
33:23, 34:6,
34:16, 35:8,
37:12, 38:13,
39:3, 40:14, 41:2,
41:10, 41:16,
41:21, 42:25,
43:20, 44:25,
45:6, 46:25, 47:6,
51:14, 51:22,
68:9, 69:5, 74:7,
74:9, 79:16,
80:11, 92:13,
105:20, 107:19,
108:12, 111:24,
114:8, 126:19,
158:5, 160:21,
176:25, 178:10,
179:5, 181:13,
184:9, 192:6

NASSAU^[1] - 1:3

Nassau's^[1] -

30:23
National ^[1] -
 53:20
nationally ^[1] -
 59:21
navigate ^[2] -
 39:13, 113:14
navigated ^[2] -
 107:8, 107:10
navigating ^[2] -
 20:22, 107:16
NCCFT ^[2] - 78:19,
 78:24
near ^[1] - 26:20
nearly ^[2] - 20:21,
 117:19
necessities ^[1] -
 185:3
necessity ^[1] -
 165:14
need ^[54] - 19:13,
 19:16, 19:18,
 19:25, 21:2,
 28:12, 29:18,
 36:22, 37:3,
 39:13, 41:6,
 48:15, 50:7,
 51:23, 54:4, 55:9,
 56:22, 57:16,
 57:18, 57:22,
 59:4, 60:18,
 62:19, 82:24,
 90:13, 96:22,
 99:7, 99:18,
 100:24, 105:14,
 105:17, 113:12,
 115:2, 115:20,
 116:16, 116:17,

121:21, 124:22,
 124:23, 125:24,
 146:17, 148:17,
 153:18, 154:18,
 163:12, 163:20,
 169:4, 169:5,
 169:6, 171:6,
 172:10, 181:20,
 185:9, 190:14
Need ^[1] - 70:7
needed ^[4] - 23:23,
 124:20, 168:22
needing ^[1] -
 177:17
needs ^[29] - 21:6,
 23:8, 26:4, 27:11,
 27:23, 28:10,
 31:16, 33:23,
 36:18, 62:3, 62:9,
 85:20, 89:22,
 95:15, 95:17,
 104:9, 114:24,
 116:13, 125:3,
 136:23, 137:3,
 137:5, 155:14,
 155:15, 155:16,
 155:17, 173:16,
 178:4
needy ^[1] - 124:22
nefarious ^[3] -
 135:2, 135:9,
 137:20
negotiate ^[4] -
 75:3, 89:6, 133:3,
 133:12
negotiating ^[1] -
 77:13
negotiation ^[4] -
 125:14, 132:24,

134:20, 168:6
negotiations ^[8] -
 78:16, 84:23,
 102:22, 103:2,
 103:8, 103:19,
 103:24, 121:6
neighborhood
^[1] - 47:2
neighboring ^[2] -
 24:17, 25:7
neighbors ^[1] -
 99:8
neurological ^[1] -
 21:23
never ^[14] - 29:12,
 37:2, 52:2, 52:10,
 79:18, 87:22,
 135:16, 158:17,
 168:25, 169:10,
 169:18, 170:18,
 173:12, 173:13
New ^[16] - 1:16,
 21:14, 22:4,
 25:17, 26:24,
 27:16, 31:13,
 32:2, 32:10, 40:9,
 49:17, 56:6,
 76:13, 79:7,
 163:17, 192:9
new ^[20] - 12:4,
 19:15, 24:3,
 24:13, 25:5,
 29:17, 30:18,
 33:7, 48:10,
 76:11, 89:2,
 90:17, 91:4,
 126:18, 129:3,
 133:16, 136:23,
 168:2, 168:3

NEW ^[1] - 192:4
Newbridge ^[1] -
 16:14
news ^[1] - 120:14
Newsday ^[1] -
 144:21
newspapers ^[1] -
 159:15
Newton's ^[1] -
 31:20
Next ^[1] - 20:5
next ^[2] - 44:20,
 146:9
Nice ^[1] - 13:23
nice ^[1] - 12:3
nicely ^[1] - 174:21
NIFA ^[6] - 113:8,
 147:22, 161:11,
 164:7, 164:17,
 165:11
nine ^[1] - 40:14
Nobody ^[1] -
 191:16
nobody ^[1] -
 109:21
noise ^[1] - 84:13
non ^[4] - 20:11,
 42:17, 44:18,
 186:11
non-profit ^[3] -
 20:11, 42:17,
 186:11
non-STEM ^[1] -
 44:18
None ^[1] - 170:20
none ^[2] - 135:3,
 167:16

nonprofit ^[1] -
182:3

normal ^[1] - 61:24

Northwell ^[1] -
58:25

not-for-profit ^[1] -
179:4

Notary ^[1] - 192:8

notes ^[1] - 192:12

nothing ^[5] -
18:17, 41:18,
88:9, 92:7, 151:22

noticed ^[1] - 43:24

notification ^[1] -
10:11

notes ^[1] - 53:7

notwithstanding
g ^[1] - 128:4

nowhere ^[3] -
26:20, 79:19,
80:13

number ^[13] -
29:17, 44:11,
70:3, 82:23, 97:5,
118:11, 124:9,
134:22, 152:19,
160:12, 164:19,
172:12, 172:13

numbers ^[2] -
47:17, 148:2

nutshell ^[1] -
86:19

NYSED ^[1] - 29:22

NYTPS ^[1] - 31:15

O

O'Shea ^[10] - 5:16,

38:16, 38:19,
38:21, 39:9,
40:13, 41:14,
41:17, 42:10,
138:21

O'SHEA ^[1] - 38:17

oath ^[1] - 107:18

objecting ^[1] -
162:19

objections ^[1] -
165:13

obligated ^[7] -
84:18, 85:4,
119:4, 119:17,
120:25, 121:22,
122:2

obligations ^[1] -
23:11

observed ^[1] -
10:15

obviously ^[1] -
126:18

occupational ^[3] -
21:15, 25:21,
35:11

occurred ^[1] -
10:18

Oceanside ^[5] -
10:7, 10:15,
14:15, 15:13, 50:9

October ^[1] -
177:12

odd ^[1] - 122:13

OF ^[1] - 192:4

offense ^[2] -
154:18, 167:15

offer ^[3] - 49:18,
57:24, 155:3

offering ^[1] -
144:25

offers ^[1] - 39:25

office ^[3] - 47:16,
88:3, 107:18

Office ^[1] - 85:9

OFFICER ^[133] -
1:8, 7:3, 7:10,
9:21, 9:24, 13:8,
13:15, 14:25,
17:8, 18:2, 20:5,
21:10, 22:15,
25:13, 28:22,
31:9, 35:3, 38:15,
42:9, 42:11, 45:9,
46:2, 47:12,
47:22, 51:5, 53:8,
55:18, 58:16,
60:21, 63:19,
64:22, 66:2,
66:12, 66:18,
66:22, 67:16,
67:20, 67:25,
69:13, 69:16,
70:2, 70:21,
70:25, 72:10,
72:19, 73:2, 74:2,
77:16, 80:23,
81:4, 81:9, 81:13,
82:2, 86:21,
94:23, 101:16,
102:6, 102:13,
102:18, 103:12,
104:21, 116:21,
124:3, 124:10,
124:15, 125:5,
125:16, 126:4,
126:21, 127:5,
127:12, 127:20,

127:25, 128:7,
130:5, 130:21,
131:5, 131:21,
132:16, 132:22,
133:6, 133:13,
134:18, 134:23,
135:10, 135:15,
135:19, 136:9,
136:15, 136:18,
137:4, 137:16,
137:25, 138:6,
149:17, 149:22,
150:3, 150:10,
150:14, 150:22,
151:2, 151:7,
151:11, 154:2,
154:21, 163:14,
164:10, 166:11,
166:22, 167:2,
167:25, 168:8,
169:24, 171:8,
172:25, 174:10,
176:2, 178:21,
181:5, 181:23,
182:5, 182:8,
185:18, 185:22,
186:6, 186:15,
186:22, 187:5,
187:16, 187:18,
191:4, 191:12,
191:16

Officer ^[30] - 2:3,
2:7, 2:11, 7:14,
7:15, 7:19, 9:19,
10:5, 10:10,
10:14, 10:18,
10:22, 14:13,
66:5, 67:9, 87:3,
93:2, 94:17,
102:10, 103:6,

104:24, 113:24,
126:15, 136:2,
138:14, 143:4,
154:17, 158:14,
165:9, 187:15

officers ^[1] - 16:12

Officers ^[3] -

10:12, 11:16,
11:20

OFFICIAL ^[1] -
1:23

officials ^[3] - 15:8,
123:3, 129:6

offline ^[1] - 34:25

offset ^[1] - 75:2

often ^[1] - 15:16

old ^[6] - 21:21,
35:16, 39:10,
39:15, 46:22,
63:24

older ^[1] - 43:18

once ^[8] - 18:14,
89:24, 90:20,
106:19, 126:8,
170:7, 171:3,
173:22

Once ^[1] - 130:18

One ^[5] - 111:17,
111:23, 144:13,
153:25, 166:22

one ^[72] - 15:4,
25:24, 36:7,
39:21, 42:4,
54:16, 54:25,
58:2, 59:20,
60:15, 61:8,
62:12, 63:13,
74:8, 76:7, 79:16,

89:20, 89:25,
95:11, 97:7,
97:17, 98:17,
100:14, 103:14,
104:5, 104:6,
104:8, 105:11,
106:7, 106:9,
108:8, 109:7,
115:8, 121:24,
123:13, 124:10,
125:17, 125:19,
129:3, 129:8,
130:6, 133:15,
134:2, 138:18,
138:19, 142:24,
143:21, 144:23,
145:25, 154:3,
154:23, 155:5,
156:15, 157:14,
159:3, 159:12,
163:22, 166:2,
166:11, 167:9,
168:12, 170:10,
171:11, 173:5,
174:8, 176:23,
177:11, 180:16,
186:16

ones ^[8] - 19:14,
19:15, 24:3,
30:18, 83:6,
107:20, 174:7

open ^[1] - 46:11

opening ^[1] - 40:4

operating ^[1] -
110:13

Operating ^[2] -
137:7, 137:8

opinion ^[7] -
110:17, 110:19,

152:6, 167:14,
167:18, 173:7,
189:23

opioid ^[6] - 64:7,
91:7, 110:8,
157:18, 189:10,
189:11

opioids ^[1] - 100:3

opportunities ^[3]
- 42:18, 145:2,
145:8

opportunity ^[20] -
24:16, 40:20,
41:22, 69:8,
74:15, 77:21,
80:18, 90:19,
90:20, 91:5,
108:4, 108:5,
129:10, 129:19,
157:6, 161:17,
166:17, 171:3,
173:18, 180:24

opposed ^[9] -
66:19, 67:17,
70:22, 72:20,
81:10, 97:16,
102:25, 191:13,
191:17

opposite ^[1] -
31:22

order ^[3] - 28:19,
34:21, 109:4

Ordinance ^[4] -
70:9, 70:10, 70:11

Organization ^[1] -
182:3

organization ^[10]
- 20:11, 42:17,

53:17, 54:6, 54:7,
55:2, 63:24,
176:22, 178:6,
181:3

organizations

^[13] - 43:14, 45:2,
54:14, 55:3,
58:25, 64:9,
64:17, 98:25,
109:13, 115:24,
169:8, 178:15,
179:4

organize ^[1] -
183:20

OT ^[2] - 61:10, 62:3

ourselves ^[3] -
86:9, 96:5, 113:23

outlay ^[1] - 99:6

outline ^[1] - 74:15

outlook ^[1] - 82:13

outside ^[1] - 32:18

outstanding ^[4] -
16:17, 42:23,
110:14, 112:23

outstrips ^[1] -
76:21

overall ^[2] -
162:23, 190:14

overdose ^[1] -
110:8

overdue ^[1] -
28:18

overly ^[1] - 146:11

overriding ^[1] -
83:11

oversee ^[1] - 61:5

overtime ^[1] -

165:2
overwhelmingl
y^[2] - 78:23, 80:20
own^[8] - 18:24,
 23:16, 50:2,
 101:8, 126:8,
 127:11, 168:24,
 190:2
owner^[1] - 21:13
owners^[1] - 31:13
Oyster^[1] - 90:6

P

p.m.^[3] - 1:19,
 187:4, 191:21
packaged^[1] -
 49:21
packets^[1] - 30:5
pad^[2] - 109:3,
 109:18
padding^[1] -
 109:11
page^[1] - 128:11
pages^[1] - 77:11
paid^[8] - 32:19,
 62:15, 96:9,
 96:12, 96:13,
 96:14, 96:16
painful^[1] - 36:11
painstaking^[1] -
 95:25
pandemic^[5] -
 43:24, 80:15,
 107:11, 108:24,
 178:19
papers^[1] - 75:19
parameters^[1] -

119:14
parent^[2] - 36:8,
 61:15
parents^[8] - 29:5,
 36:5, 36:6, 36:10,
 37:16, 61:20,
 62:10, 113:18
Parents^[1] - 36:19
Park^[2] - 49:18,
 112:7
Parks^[2] - 159:21,
 160:22
parse^[1] - 156:14
part^[16] - 43:13,
 57:14, 72:5, 74:9,
 75:22, 76:2,
 84:14, 95:10,
 97:7, 112:2,
 121:6, 127:18,
 127:23, 130:15,
 153:10, 180:13
participants^[2] -
 48:9, 49:14
participate^[2] -
 144:25, 145:3
particular^[7] -
 105:10, 121:10,
 161:18, 163:19,
 165:3, 190:19
particularly^[2] -
 60:10, 175:4
parties^[4] -
 103:17, 158:8,
 183:11, 184:20
partner^[2] - 184:9,
 185:5
partners^[2] -
 32:22, 116:7

partnership^[1] -
 21:3
parts^[1] - 127:3
party^[13] - 95:5,
 97:11, 103:15,
 104:14, 116:9,
 136:6, 144:12,
 144:13, 144:14,
 145:14, 155:12,
 167:13
pass^[1] - 90:14
passed^[2] -
 130:18, 143:13
passes^[2] - 81:14,
 191:5
passion^[5] -
 34:11, 34:12,
 55:22, 56:4,
 157:13
passionate^[1] -
 157:14
past^[9] - 10:18,
 21:17, 39:21,
 84:4, 100:7,
 136:6, 137:15,
 160:24, 176:7
path^[1] - 113:5
pathway^[1] - 43:6
pathways^[1] -
 45:5
patience^[1] -
 78:16
PATRICK^[1] -
 2:24
Patrick^[7] - 8:21,
 38:21, 39:9,
 39:18, 40:12,
 41:14, 41:17

patrol^[1] - 10:6
Paul^[3] - 6:6,
 176:2, 176:5
pay^[16] - 18:23,
 22:2, 26:10,
 26:22, 26:25,
 34:12, 38:6, 63:6,
 63:12, 75:9,
 112:24, 114:16,
 146:23, 147:7,
 161:16
paycheck^[1] -
 38:7
paying^[2] - 26:5,
 96:15
pays^[2] - 97:2,
 181:16
PBA^[1] - 11:20
pedestrians^[1] -
 18:15
pediatrics^[1] -
 33:8
peers^[1] - 43:20
peeves^[1] -
 159:12
pencils^[1] -
 182:16
pendens^[1] -
 177:15
pending^[1] - 84:9
pennywise^[1] -
 62:25
pens^[1] - 182:16
People^[2] - 51:2,
 53:21
people^[44] - 18:18,
 18:23, 19:9,

39:15, 50:21,
51:16, 51:21,
51:23, 53:4, 59:5,
61:8, 62:19, 64:4,
75:17, 86:22,
90:17, 92:18,
95:13, 96:7, 97:6,
99:7, 99:18,
99:20, 100:11,
100:17, 100:20,
100:23, 111:13,
112:15, 113:18,
113:22, 129:4,
138:18, 144:20,
148:11, 155:17,
155:18, 155:21,
157:8, 171:23,
172:21, 174:3,
178:17, 182:15

per ^[5] - 27:2, 27:4,
98:14, 124:11,
142:6

percentage ^[3] -
74:19, 88:11,
88:23

Perfect ^[1] -
154:25

perfect ^[1] - 154:25

performance ^[1] -
61:20

performing ^[1] -
156:5

perhaps ^[2] -
124:21, 169:11

period ^[12] - 18:3,
74:20, 75:5,
76:10, 76:22,
102:23, 103:20,
110:12, 113:9,

132:3, 147:3,
161:18

periodic ^[1] -
24:21

permanent ^[1] -
79:15

permanently ^[4] -
179:10, 179:22,
179:25, 180:6

permissible ^[2] -
110:18, 143:19

perplexed ^[2] -
99:12, 152:20

perplexing ^[1] -
156:13

perseverance ^[1]
- 78:17

PERSICH ^[66] -
83:19, 93:3, 93:8,
93:14, 94:2, 94:8,
94:12, 94:15,
109:6, 109:19,
110:9, 110:20,
110:23, 111:14,
112:18, 116:25,
117:8, 117:14,
117:17, 117:20,
117:23, 118:5,
118:17, 118:23,
119:4, 119:11,
119:15, 119:19,
119:23, 120:4,
120:11, 121:5,
121:12, 122:8,
122:18, 123:2,
123:9, 123:15,
125:9, 128:17,
128:24, 139:4,
139:13, 139:17,

139:21, 140:3,
143:21, 144:3,
144:6, 144:9,
144:15, 145:24,
146:5, 146:8,
146:19, 146:25,
147:5, 147:10,
147:15, 147:20,
148:5, 148:20,
148:25, 149:4,
160:6, 160:11

Persich ^[3] -
138:25, 143:18,
145:23

person ^[11] - 48:24,
49:2, 54:20, 58:3,
59:22, 62:5,
98:17, 100:14,
100:15, 121:10,
154:23

personal ^[3] -
36:5, 151:22,
171:15

personally ^[7] -
35:18, 50:12,
135:8, 163:24,
164:21, 174:17,
184:2

Persons ^[1] -
182:10

persons ^[2] -
53:23, 76:5

perspective ^[4] -
76:3, 117:24,
121:22, 131:4

pertaining ^[2] -
155:15, 155:16

pet ^[1] - 159:12

petty ^[1] - 15:23

PFAs ^[1] - 180:15

PFOA ^[1] - 180:15

phone ^[1] - 47:17

phones ^[1] - 19:11

photos ^[2] - 16:22,
17:12

physical ^[3] -
21:15, 25:21,
35:12

pick ^[1] - 58:8

picking ^[1] - 57:25

picks ^[1] - 144:22

picture ^[2] - 17:10,
27:6

pie ^[4] - 56:14,
56:18, 56:19,
58:15

piece ^[5] - 56:14,
56:18, 58:15,
59:20

PILIP ^[3] - 3:14,
8:14, 15:3

Pilip ^[5] - 8:13,
15:2, 70:14,
104:19, 187:17

pipe ^[1] - 112:3

pitches ^[1] -
180:14

place ^[5] - 19:8,
115:16, 115:23,
116:4, 122:24

placed ^[3] - 11:7,
30:13, 112:25

Placement ^[1] -
31:14

places ^[4] - 19:18,

19:25, 62:16,
64:21
plain ^[1] - 15:25
plan ^[5] - 76:13,
99:3, 109:17,
113:7, 114:23
Plan ^[8] - 36:17,
38:24, 41:9,
44:24, 53:14,
109:2, 109:5,
178:11
planned ^[1] -
179:9
planning ^[1] - 47:7
plate ^[1] - 14:8
play ^[1] - 52:6
players ^[3] - 49:11,
49:14, 182:13
Players ^[3] - 48:2,
48:4, 48:18
playing ^[4] - 12:5,
55:23, 57:11,
84:15
plead ^[1] - 18:14
Pledge ^[2] - 7:6,
7:8
pledges ^[1] - 41:15
PO ^[2] - 10:8, 11:14
point ^[18] - 13:21,
26:21, 87:16,
101:23, 102:24,
120:22, 130:15,
149:12, 149:20,
150:9, 151:22,
151:25, 153:25,
154:5, 161:22,
167:14, 167:17,
167:23

pointed ^[2] -
159:25, 164:21
points ^[1] - 140:9
police ^[5] - 12:20,
15:25, 16:12,
16:21, 17:4
Police ^[2] - 10:5,
17:4
policymaker ^[1] -
123:5
political ^[1] - 131:4
politicize ^[1] -
131:2
politicized ^[1] -
133:14
politicizing ^[1] -
133:11
politics ^[3] - 98:8,
98:16, 155:23
pony ^[1] - 99:23
population ^[2] -
25:19, 99:17
populations ^[1] -
26:9
Port ^[1] - 60:25
portion ^[2] - 141:8,
178:16
poses ^[1] - 23:7
position ^[8] -
22:25, 68:14,
83:15, 84:20,
86:12, 110:4,
115:10, 161:7
positioned ^[1] -
86:9
positions ^[1] -
172:6

positive ^[1] - 40:15
positively ^[1] -
10:24
possible ^[4] -
41:20, 124:25,
125:6, 130:7
possibly ^[1] -
153:17
Possibly ^[1] -
123:15
poster ^[1] - 27:8
posters ^[2] -
63:15, 63:18
pot ^[5] - 133:15,
133:16, 134:8,
136:4, 162:4
potential ^[2] -
120:16, 156:5
potentially ^[2] -
101:25, 120:3
Potsdam ^[1] - 79:9
pound ^[1] - 62:25
poverty ^[1] - 43:6
power ^[7] - 138:12,
171:24, 171:25,
172:7, 172:9,
172:10, 175:3
practicing ^[1] -
68:25
precedent ^[2] -
24:16, 25:6
Precinct ^[1] - 10:6
precious ^[1] -
106:5
predict ^[1] - 86:6
prefaced ^[1] -
94:18

prefer ^[1] - 19:25
premature ^[2] -
134:19, 134:22
premiums ^[1] -
74:22
prepare ^[1] -
107:25
preparedness ^[1]
- 44:5
prerogative ^[1] -
126:2
preschool ^[15] -
25:19, 27:20,
27:24, 28:10,
29:7, 29:19,
29:20, 31:18,
31:24, 32:18,
35:7, 35:23,
35:24, 37:20, 61:4
Preschool ^[2] -
28:19, 35:8
Present ^[3] - 8:8,
8:17, 9:4
present ^[2] -
74:15, 191:10
presentation ^[3] -
10:2, 27:8, 44:5
presented ^[2] -
17:12, 40:8
president ^[5] -
38:20, 176:7,
176:10, 176:14,
178:2
PRESIDING ^[132] -
1:8, 7:3, 7:10,
9:21, 9:24, 13:15,
14:25, 17:8, 18:2,
20:5, 21:10,

22:15, 25:13,
28:22, 31:9, 35:3,
38:15, 42:9,
42:11, 45:9, 46:2,
47:12, 47:22,
51:5, 53:8, 55:18,
58:16, 60:21,
63:19, 64:22,
66:2, 66:12,
66:18, 66:22,
67:16, 67:20,
67:25, 69:13,
69:16, 70:2,
70:21, 70:25,
72:10, 72:19,
73:2, 74:2, 77:16,
80:23, 81:4, 81:9,
81:13, 82:2,
86:21, 94:23,
101:16, 102:6,
102:13, 102:18,
103:12, 104:21,
116:21, 124:3,
124:10, 124:15,
125:5, 125:16,
126:4, 126:21,
127:5, 127:12,
127:20, 127:25,
128:7, 130:5,
130:21, 131:5,
131:21, 132:16,
132:22, 133:6,
133:13, 134:18,
134:23, 135:10,
135:15, 135:19,
136:9, 136:15,
136:18, 137:4,
137:16, 137:25,
138:6, 149:17,
149:22, 150:3,

150:10, 150:14,
150:22, 151:2,
151:7, 151:11,
154:2, 154:21,
163:14, 164:10,
166:11, 166:22,
167:2, 167:25,
168:8, 169:24,
171:8, 172:25,
174:10, 176:2,
178:21, 181:5,
181:23, 182:5,
182:8, 185:18,
185:22, 186:6,
186:15, 186:22,
187:5, 187:16,
187:18, 191:4,
191:12, 191:16
presiding ^[2] -
102:9, 135:25
Presiding ^[23] -
2:3, 2:7, 2:11,
7:13, 7:15, 7:19,
9:19, 14:13, 66:5,
67:9, 87:3, 93:2,
94:16, 103:6,
104:24, 113:24,
126:15, 138:14,
143:3, 154:17,
158:13, 165:8,
187:15
press ^[2] - 111:10,
121:18
pressing ^[1] - 23:3
pretenses ^[2] -
162:2, 162:7
prevent ^[1] - 39:20
preventing ^[1] -
24:23

prevention ^[1] -
39:23
preventive ^[1] -
180:12
previous ^[2] -
70:4, 84:14
previously ^[1] -
13:22
price ^[2] - 21:25,
26:5
prices ^[2] - 19:17,
107:15
pride ^[1] - 46:22
principal ^[2] -
68:22, 164:14
principals ^[1] -
123:3
principle ^[1] -
162:20
prioritize ^[1] -
23:13
priority ^[2] - 105:6,
105:7
privilege ^[2] -
37:10, 69:2
problem ^[8] -
20:23, 32:16,
44:15, 44:20,
62:7, 102:20,
122:4, 145:10
problems ^[3] -
21:23, 107:4,
152:23
proceed ^[2] -
84:12, 187:7
proceeds ^[1] -
11:8

process ^[6] -
20:13, 34:7,
79:19, 132:15,
132:17, 189:21
produce ^[1] -
33:15
professionals ^[1]
- 37:12
profit ^[5] - 20:11,
42:17, 178:6,
179:4, 186:11
profitable ^[1] -
145:5
profits ^[1] - 138:19
program ^[29] -
28:20, 29:20,
32:8, 32:15,
33:14, 33:16,
33:20, 34:18,
39:23, 39:25,
40:3, 40:7, 40:14,
40:18, 40:23,
40:25, 41:7,
43:16, 43:17,
48:5, 48:12, 57:3,
59:14, 118:20,
122:13, 132:23,
138:18, 176:24,
181:12
programming ^[1]
- 100:3
programs ^[33] -
43:7, 57:16,
59:19, 83:4, 83:5,
85:8, 85:13,
86:13, 88:15,
101:19, 101:21,
101:23, 102:10,
108:5, 111:4,

122:10, 122:14,
124:24, 132:3,
133:16, 133:17,
134:5, 135:4,
136:21, 136:22,
139:3, 139:22,
139:23, 143:22,
161:2, 178:18,
179:8
project^[7] - 48:11,
64:3, 111:24,
112:7, 125:12,
181:13, 181:21
projecting^[1] -
146:13
projects^[3] -
111:16, 111:21,
179:8
promise^[4] -
153:16, 153:19,
154:9, 154:11
promote^[2] -
41:19, 118:10
proper^[1] - 135:4
properly^[2] -
114:16, 115:24
properties^[2] -
179:19, 179:21
proportionate^[1]
- 124:6
proportionatel
y^[1] - 123:25
proposal^[3] -
25:3, 126:7, 126:8
propose^[2] -
23:25, 127:13
props^[1] - 111:9
protect^[2] - 15:5,

15:7
protecting^[1] -
85:25
Protective^[1] -
100:22
protects^[1] -
83:15
proud^[7] - 11:20,
48:10, 50:25,
52:15, 52:16,
92:24, 95:9
provide^[8] - 29:8,
37:24, 59:8, 63:7,
75:5, 116:13,
180:4, 186:14
provided^[5] -
35:10, 42:24,
48:14, 69:9, 76:9
provider^[1] -
27:15
providers^[18] -
20:21, 23:9,
23:15, 23:21,
24:2, 24:7, 24:12,
25:6, 26:11, 28:6,
28:13, 32:23,
33:4, 33:11, 34:8,
37:4, 37:19, 61:11
Providers^[1] -
26:7
provides^[3] -
20:25, 35:22,
100:15
providing^[5] -
20:18, 27:20,
29:10, 114:13,
180:14
PROVINCE^[1] -

20:7
Province^[3] - 5:9,
20:6, 20:8
provision^[1] -
179:10
provisions^[1] -
115:16
prudent^[2] -
82:24, 82:25
psychologist^[1] -
60:25
PT^[2] - 61:10, 62:3
PTSD^[1] - 60:3
public^[10] - 18:3,
39:5, 56:6, 62:17,
64:23, 64:24,
97:5, 106:2,
174:12, 176:23
PUBLIC^[1] - 5:6
Public^[2] - 6:2,
192:8
PULITZER^[40] -
4:11, 7:13, 7:18,
7:21, 7:24, 8:3,
8:6, 8:9, 8:12,
8:15, 8:18, 8:21,
8:24, 9:2, 9:5, 9:8,
9:11, 9:14, 9:16,
9:19, 9:22,
187:14, 187:17,
187:20, 187:22,
187:25, 188:3,
188:5, 188:7,
188:9, 188:11,
188:13, 188:15,
188:17, 188:22,
188:24, 190:4,
190:7, 190:21,

190:25
Pulitzer^[1] - 7:11
punctuality^[1] -
44:5
purely^[1] - 190:17
purpose^[2] -
97:20, 167:12
purposes^[2] -
75:8, 109:14
pursuant^[1] - 67:6
pursue^[1] - 45:4
pursuit^[1] - 15:15
purview^[1] - 32:9
push^[5] - 90:13,
91:6, 162:12,
174:5, 189:11
pushed^[1] - 32:22
pushing^[1] -
85:21
put^[37] - 10:11,
12:15, 12:18,
21:19, 49:25,
51:13, 60:14,
84:18, 85:16,
88:14, 89:16,
92:8, 98:22,
98:23, 99:5,
99:23, 100:8,
115:9, 115:14,
115:16, 115:23,
116:3, 116:8,
120:19, 128:19,
142:13, 148:8,
153:12, 171:20,
174:21, 176:15,
178:23, 180:22,
184:5, 184:7,
184:11, 186:13

puts ^[1] - 142:12**putting** ^[7] - 11:14,
42:5, 57:3, 89:14,
93:25, 131:20,
185:24**Q****quality** ^[3] - 12:14,
12:22, 15:15**Queens** ^[2] -
32:24, 79:13**questions** ^[5] -
69:11, 86:18,
86:23, 94:10,
140:8**quick** ^[4] - 11:17,
17:9, 28:12, 165:5**quickly** ^[2] - 33:21,
174:11**quite** ^[5] - 47:19,
145:4, 152:3,
186:12**quorum** ^[1] - 9:22**R****race** ^[1] - 185:2**radio** ^[1] - 10:12**rainstorm** ^[1] -
111:5**rainy** ^[1] - 107:25**raise** ^[5] - 30:16,
95:21, 96:5,
101:9, 153:18**raised** ^[1] - 30:8**raising** ^[4] - 31:23,
34:4, 54:2, 95:25**range** ^[4] - 31:19,61:24, 62:2,
118:18**rate** ^[14] - 22:2,
22:5, 24:10,
26:13, 26:16,
27:3, 27:4, 27:10,
28:15, 29:21,
30:2, 32:2, 34:17**rates** ^[14] - 23:19,
24:5, 25:4, 25:25,
27:21, 28:11,
30:9, 30:16,
31:23, 32:14,
33:2, 33:10, 34:4,
84:6**rather** ^[3] - 44:13,
101:6, 101:12**ratifying** ^[1] - 74:4**rating** ^[1] - 87:13**razor** ^[1] - 27:17**re** ^[1] - 101:17**re-emphasize** ^[1]
- 101:17**reach** ^[2] - 19:19,
112:16**reached** ^[1] - 23:6**react** ^[1] - 91:16**reaction** ^[1] -
31:22**read** ^[4] - 17:2,
45:15, 53:18,
178:2**readily** ^[1] - 47:17**readiness** ^[1] -
43:25**reading** ^[1] -
128:14**ready** ^[1] - 87:15**real** ^[9] - 13:20,
48:24, 49:2, 49:3,
84:7, 91:5, 116:3,
165:5, 189:15**reality** ^[5] - 144:17,
144:23, 152:23,
153:4, 166:16**realize** ^[3] - 51:25,
68:2, 138:11**really** ^[55] - 16:5,
21:22, 22:9,
22:10, 51:17,
52:14, 52:25,
54:23, 60:13,
63:9, 63:14,
75:25, 77:23,
78:5, 87:18,
87:22, 87:24,
88:10, 89:10,
89:13, 89:15,
89:20, 89:24,
90:7, 90:19,
90:22, 91:13,
91:17, 105:2,
105:6, 105:7,
107:8, 112:10,
114:21, 116:15,
143:7, 152:21,
155:7, 160:7,
160:9, 162:12,
164:22, 169:15,
169:17, 169:22,
170:7, 172:18,
173:8, 173:16,
174:3, 189:20,
189:23**reason** ^[13] - 17:3,
25:24, 44:22,46:16, 90:4,
129:18, 154:12,
160:19, 161:4,
166:6, 168:21,
170:13, 190:20**reasonably** ^[1] -
181:17**reasoning** ^[1] -
44:9**reasons** ^[1] -
167:9**recapturing** ^[1] -
34:7**receipts** ^[1] -
164:18**receive** ^[5] - 25:20,
30:15, 32:4,
38:11, 38:14**received** ^[9] -
26:23, 36:22,
37:2, 88:12,
117:6, 117:12,
117:19, 118:8,
148:6**receives** ^[1] -
35:16**receiving** ^[5] -
25:23, 27:25,
28:3, 95:21,
148:12**recent** ^[2] - 111:5,
179:18**recently** ^[2] - 30:7,
79:14**recess** ^[3] -
150:11, 186:23,
187:3**recognize** ^[3] -

30:25, 146:16,
167:22

recognized ^[1] -
10:16

recognizing ^[2] -
13:14, 13:21

recommend ^[1] -
24:20

**recommendati
on** ^[1] - 62:10

record ^[34] - 64:5,
67:23, 72:6,
89:17, 103:7,
103:19, 115:14,
136:3, 136:14,
137:13, 137:17,
137:22, 142:10,
143:15, 147:13,
149:7, 150:5,
150:16, 151:5,
151:9, 151:17,
152:8, 152:13,
152:24, 158:9,
163:10, 164:8,
166:7, 166:20,
167:6, 170:3,
171:21, 186:20,
188:21

recovered ^[1] -
15:19

Recovery ^[1] -
30:21

recruit ^[1] - 43:17

recurring ^[2] -
148:24, 149:3

recusing ^[1] - 72:3

red ^[1] - 115:19

Red ^[1] - 53:14

reduced ^[1] -
75:20

reduces ^[1] -
74:23

reference ^[1] -
140:13

references ^[1] -
108:22

referencing ^[1] -
48:23

referral ^[1] - 61:14

referrals ^[1] -
29:17

referred ^[2] -
100:11, 144:11

referring ^[3] -
27:7, 63:17, 179:7

refinance ^[5] -
146:4, 146:17,
147:8, 164:3,
165:12

refinanced ^[2] -
161:10, 161:15

refinancing ^[6] -
115:6, 146:21,
146:22, 147:4,
165:14, 165:20

reflect ^[3] - 34:5,
49:24, 72:7

reflecting ^[1] -
32:20

reflects ^[1] - 28:15

regard ^[1] - 148:11

regarding ^[2] -
87:7, 100:7

regime ^[1] - 89:3

regional ^[1] -

156:23

regular ^[1] - 24:20

reimbursement

^[10] - 23:19, 24:5,
25:4, 29:21,
31:23, 34:4,
34:17, 99:2,
106:11, 106:25

reimburses ^[1] -
38:13

related ^[6] - 23:9,
31:24, 35:7, 35:8,
35:24, 61:10

relationships ^[1]
- 78:11

release ^[1] - 64:7

relevant ^[1] - 175:4

rely ^[2] - 90:8,
107:6

remain ^[1] - 179:25

remaining ^[1] -
153:12

remark ^[1] - 160:10

remediated ^[1] -
156:21

remember ^[2] -
58:9, 115:3

Remember ^[1] -
146:18

reminded ^[1] -
114:9

remiss ^[1] - 15:14

remortgaged ^[2] -
146:25, 147:3

removal ^[1] - 75:24

remove ^[2] - 98:8,
98:15

renovated ^[1] -
179:11

Renta ^[1] - 67:4

repaying ^[1] -
106:11

repeat ^[2] - 116:17,
163:16

repeatedly ^[1] -
152:18

rephrase ^[1] - 93:7

replenishing ^[1] -
82:21

REPORTER ^[1] -
1:23

reprehensible ^[1]
- 105:24

represent ^[2] -
14:14, 131:12

represented ^[2] -
55:4, 189:22

representing ^[3] -
20:9, 45:12, 53:12

represents ^[2] -
15:13, 186:10

reputation ^[1] -
91:11

request ^[5] -
34:22, 41:19,
89:15, 151:15,
176:15

requested ^[1] -
144:25

requesting ^[3] -
53:16, 91:18,
179:13

rescue ^[1] - 41:9

Rescue ^[7] - 38:24,

41:9, 44:24,
64:15, 109:2,
109:5, 178:11
research ^[1] -
96:25
researched ^[1] -
85:8
reserve ^[1] - 87:12
resident ^[2] -
42:23, 92:13
residents ^[7] -
12:15, 21:8, 99:8,
108:12, 153:16,
179:5, 180:10
residing ^[1] - 24:8
resignations ^[1] -
75:7
resilience ^[2] -
179:3, 179:15
resiliency ^[1] -
179:11
resolution ^[2] -
67:2, 74:4
Resolution ^[6] -
70:11, 70:12,
72:2, 74:3, 82:3
resolutions ^[1] -
77:6
resource ^[4] -
95:18, 121:16,
180:5, 181:19
resources ^[9] -
42:6, 56:25,
57:24, 58:22,
99:4, 99:16,
100:24, 114:16,
177:7
respect ^[5] - 110:3,

113:16, 113:19,
166:10, 170:11
respectfully ^[2] -
34:22, 110:9
respective ^[4] -
105:11, 106:8,
107:5, 162:10
respond ^[10] -
66:16, 67:14,
70:19, 72:17,
81:7, 150:4,
151:12, 153:25,
174:11, 191:11
responded ^[2] -
10:22, 16:13
responder ^[1] -
189:13
responding ^[2] -
10:13, 151:24
response ^[12] -
11:17, 16:16,
19:4, 66:11,
66:21, 67:19,
70:24, 72:22,
81:3, 81:12,
151:20, 191:15
responses ^[3] -
16:25, 140:8,
180:13
responsibilitie
s ^[1] - 23:18
responsibility ^[4]
- 19:9, 32:15,
76:14, 156:3
responsible ^[3] -
32:13, 107:23,
107:24
responsive ^[1] -

47:19
restate ^[1] - 93:7
restaurants ^[1] -
145:12
result ^[9] - 32:7,
110:12, 111:19,
111:20, 112:9,
113:9, 146:3,
146:21, 147:22
resulted ^[1] -
164:22
resume ^[1] - 69:10
retain ^[1] - 30:18
retaining ^[1] -
30:10
reteach ^[2] - 43:19,
43:22
rethink ^[1] - 145:18
retirees ^[1] - 75:10
retirement ^[4] -
75:4, 75:8, 75:10,
75:19
return ^[1] - 179:23
Revenue ^[1] -
148:9
revenue ^[9] -
80:16, 82:19,
83:23, 84:8, 99:4,
109:21, 112:13,
144:5, 145:9
review ^[1] - 24:20
rewrite ^[1] - 159:14
rewritten ^[1] -
159:17
Rhenaye ^[2] -
5:23, 58:17
Richard ^[4] - 5:8,

18:7, 18:11, 18:13
rideshare ^[1] -
20:3
rights ^[1] - 53:24
rising ^[1] - 84:6
risk ^[3] - 31:6,
120:19, 180:23
road ^[3] - 136:23,
162:5, 190:16
Road ^[2] - 10:15,
16:14
roads ^[2] - 107:9,
107:10
Robin ^[5] - 5:21,
53:9, 53:11,
56:23, 59:3
robustly ^[1] - 32:8
Rockville ^[1] -
49:16
rocky ^[2] - 107:9,
107:10
ROEDER ^[1] - 35:5
Roeder ^[3] - 5:15,
35:4, 35:6
role ^[2] - 158:14,
158:20
roles ^[1] - 22:24
roll ^[2] - 7:12, 187:9
room ^[3] - 12:5,
50:21, 163:24
rooted ^[1] - 53:22
Rose ^[4] - 9:8,
79:9, 95:24,
170:11
ROSE ^[1] - 4:2
roughly ^[2] - 85:5,
93:15

round^[1] - 96:13
routes^[1] - 20:2
rude^[1] - 173:4
rumored^[1] -
 121:16
run^[2] - 49:11,
 163:21
running^[3] - 31:7,
 112:3, 138:7
Ryan^[7] - 38:20,
 39:8, 39:12,
 39:17, 40:12,
 41:14, 41:17
Ryder^[1] - 16:12
RYDER^[1] - 11:25

S

sabbatical^[1] -
 75:20
sad^[2] - 21:22,
 22:11
Sadly^[1] - 39:11
safe^[3] - 14:17,
 14:18, 15:7
safeguard^[1] -
 25:8
safety^[2] - 18:14,
 179:15
Saint^[3] - 79:9,
 186:8, 186:9
salaries^[2] -
 95:19, 95:23
Sales^[1] - 86:6
sales^[4] - 146:14,
 146:16, 148:5,
 164:18
salute^[1] - 15:10

SAMANTHA^[1] -
 4:5
Samantha^[2] -
 9:11, 187:20
Samuel^[1] - 60:24
Samuel-Stein^[1] -
 60:24
Samuels^[2] -
 5:24, 60:22
SAMUELS^[1] -
 60:23
Samuels-Stein
^[2] - 5:24, 60:22
SAMUELS-
STEIN^[1] - 60:23
Sarah^[2] - 5:19,
 47:22
save^[3] - 88:18,
 161:13, 161:19
saved^[1] - 30:12
saving^[2] - 40:17,
 41:6
savings^[2] - 75:2,
 76:22
saw^[1] - 52:2
scared^[1] - 121:19
scary^[1] - 121:14
scenario^[2] -
 12:23, 177:23
scene^[1] - 10:24
scheduled^[2] -
 144:13, 144:14
scheme^[2] -
 147:7, 162:24
School^[2] - 16:15,
 60:25

school^[14] - 16:22,
 20:23, 30:14,
 37:21, 40:14,
 40:21, 41:2,
 43:14, 56:6, 57:5,
 58:5, 59:9, 59:15,
 182:15
schools^[9] -
 39:24, 40:5,
 40:24, 41:5,
 41:16, 49:7,
 49:16, 59:10,
 62:17
scientific^[1] -
 160:8
scores^[1] - 77:5
SCOTT^[2] - 2:15,
 3:11
Scott^[2] - 8:15, 9:2
Scouts^[2] - 49:8
scrutinized^[1] -
 113:8
seat^[2] - 172:3,
 172:4
seats^[2] - 186:19,
 187:6
Second^[1] - 67:5
second^[6] - 57:17,
 117:16, 133:8,
 147:18, 155:10,
 165:7
seconded^[7] -
 66:6, 67:10,
 70:14, 72:12,
 74:12, 82:8, 191:7
Section^[3] - 67:6,
 76:8, 76:18
secure^[3] - 122:2,

129:21, 130:2
security^[1] -
 179:15
see^[22] - 12:3, 27:6,
 29:16, 52:19,
 52:21, 53:3, 53:4,
 53:5, 62:23, 79:8,
 79:12, 79:23,
 89:25, 90:2,
 93:24, 96:22,
 97:8, 101:12,
 134:20, 153:9,
 158:2
seeing^[1] - 63:15
seem^[3] - 99:22,
 109:4, 153:9
seizing^[2] -
 125:17, 136:20
self^[3] - 32:16,
 43:4, 44:4
self-awareness
^[1] - 44:4
self-created^[1] -
 32:16
self-sustaining
^[1] - 43:4
selves^[1] - 37:24
semester^[4] -
 78:6, 78:7, 80:8,
 176:21
send^[4] - 33:22,
 78:10, 92:17,
 142:24
senior^[3] - 50:2,
 111:6, 183:24
seniors^[3] - 55:15,
 88:19, 177:8
sense^[5] - 23:17,

25:5, 43:10,
126:22, 190:3
sensible ^[1] -
174:18
sent ^[1] - 173:24
sentence ^[2] -
133:7, 133:8
separate ^[3] -
127:3, 128:5,
178:23
separation ^[1] -
132:19
Sephora ^[3] - 10:8,
10:10, 10:23
September ^[2] -
30:8, 111:6
series ^[2] - 103:16,
158:7
serious ^[1] - 34:23
seriously ^[1] -
25:3
serve ^[10] - 13:10,
24:8, 31:5, 56:12,
64:9, 95:7, 95:8,
105:10, 156:4,
157:8
served ^[4] - 36:3,
56:5, 95:20,
156:20
Service ^[1] - 85:12
service ^[14] -
20:20, 20:23,
21:7, 22:22, 23:9,
23:15, 33:6,
48:11, 57:13,
61:10, 84:5,
85:21, 112:5,
147:21

serviced ^[1] -
31:17
services ^[51] -
20:19, 22:8,
22:10, 23:5,
25:20, 25:23,
26:7, 27:21, 28:2,
29:10, 29:19,
30:15, 30:21,
31:24, 32:5,
32:19, 35:7, 35:8,
35:10, 35:19,
35:23, 35:25,
36:20, 36:22,
36:25, 37:2,
37:20, 38:4,
38:13, 48:25,
50:6, 51:24, 59:3,
59:16, 63:25,
104:16, 106:4,
106:6, 109:14,
114:13, 128:20,
137:5, 139:7,
139:16, 139:19,
139:24, 140:2,
153:5, 158:25,
179:12
Services ^[10] -
21:14, 29:3,
31:14, 35:22,
36:17, 85:10,
100:22, 139:2,
139:6, 139:20
servicing ^[2] -
31:15, 34:9
serving ^[1] - 96:7
Session ^[1] -
168:5
session ^[3] - 27:2,

27:4, 30:3
sessions ^[3] -
77:13, 77:14,
101:8
set ^[10] - 23:19,
24:16, 25:6,
32:21, 59:18,
84:22, 103:7,
158:23, 176:19,
192:14
Seth ^[1] - 8:24
SETH ^[1] - 3:2
sets ^[1] - 85:24
setting ^[1] - 32:14
settled ^[1] - 77:14
seven ^[2] - 189:13,
191:3
severe ^[1] - 43:25
sewer ^[1] - 82:22
Sewer ^[3] - 111:2,
111:15, 111:20
shame ^[4] - 97:24,
106:20, 114:15
Shame ^[2] - 97:25,
114:17
SHANAHAN ^[1] -
10:4
shape ^[3] - 87:9,
113:11, 159:4
share ^[10] - 29:6,
30:5, 50:3, 53:17,
77:21, 80:18,
131:19, 131:24,
135:14, 180:18
shared ^[1] - 48:20
Sharon ^[1] - 68:23
sheet ^[3] - 30:6,

109:25, 113:4
sheets ^[1] - 110:5
shock ^[1] - 36:11
shopping ^[1] -
10:7
short ^[5] - 21:5,
34:21, 101:13,
104:10, 146:22
shortage ^[3] -
23:4, 23:7, 33:11
shoulder ^[1] -
113:12
shove ^[1] - 162:12
shoved ^[4] - 164:2,
164:5, 164:6,
164:16
show ^[6] - 29:22,
30:11, 43:21,
92:23, 99:23,
160:15
Show ^[1] - 160:16
showed ^[1] -
160:14
showing ^[1] - 30:6
shows ^[1] - 78:8
shut ^[1] - 139:15
shutdown ^[2] -
121:15, 139:25
shutting ^[1] -
165:15
sic ^[1] - 185:3
sick ^[1] - 45:14
side ^[7] - 84:8,
85:19, 112:13,
113:4, 116:7,
116:8, 151:23
sides ^[4] - 77:7,

78:20, 79:2,
159:15
sideway^[1] - 86:5
sideways^[1] -
86:5
Siela^[2] - 7:21,
178:7
SIELA^[1] - 2:18
signed^[3] - 49:22,
76:12, 78:8
significant^[9] -
23:7, 28:11,
30:15, 33:18,
62:23, 76:7,
118:12, 122:17,
145:9
significantly^[3] -
26:10, 32:6,
178:16
signs^[1] - 50:17
similar^[1] - 113:19
simple^[3] - 15:25,
114:21, 115:11
simply^[5] - 19:12,
133:22, 134:7,
136:13, 137:12
Sinai^[1] - 50:10
sincere^[1] - 34:23
sincerely^[1] -
25:11
single^[2] - 15:6,
144:14
singular^[1] -
145:14
siren^[1] - 10:20
sit^[6] - 91:9, 91:15,
99:13, 99:21,

141:14, 155:12
sitting^[15] - 74:17,
91:10, 96:17,
96:22, 98:5,
98:20, 147:25,
155:8, 156:8,
156:12, 157:4,
157:21, 158:4,
172:4, 172:5
situation^[3] -
23:20, 34:20,
172:23
six^[1] - 35:15
skill^[1] - 32:21
skills^[4] - 43:9,
48:20, 183:21,
184:8
slippery^[1] -
122:18
slips^[2] - 174:12,
178:24
slope^[2] - 86:16,
122:19
slowing^[1] - 50:17
small^[6] - 28:12,
85:19, 88:11,
88:23, 118:10,
162:3
SNAP^[1] - 139:7
soapbox^[1] -
101:5
Social^[3] - 85:12,
139:2, 139:6
social^[7] - 20:23,
35:12, 48:25,
49:6, 50:6, 58:7,
137:5
society^[1] - 54:3

Solages^[4] - 7:25,
140:12, 143:10,
188:22
SOLAGES^[16] -
2:21, 8:2, 108:18,
109:9, 110:2,
110:16, 110:21,
110:24, 112:14,
113:15, 143:12,
168:3, 185:20,
186:2, 186:9,
188:23
sole^[1] - 32:9
solely^[1] - 32:13
solid^[1] - 87:24
solution^[1] -
23:25
solvent^[1] - 109:4
solvers^[1] - 44:21
someone^[4] -
43:22, 62:12,
169:4, 169:6
sometimes^[1] -
59:4
somewhat^[1] -
107:23
somewhere^[4] -
77:11, 118:15,
118:17, 177:21
son^[4] - 35:15,
36:21, 39:10,
138:22
Sorry^[1] - 182:5
sorry^[13] - 83:17,
90:12, 124:3,
132:22, 135:4,
136:16, 138:6,
140:16, 147:15,

148:15, 158:11,
189:22, 191:2
sort^[2] - 160:2,
160:8
sought^[1] - 77:6
sound^[1] - 84:10
sounding^[1] -
107:14
Source^[1] - 40:3
Sources^[1] -
39:24
space^[1] - 48:18
Spaulding^[4] -
5:3, 10:13, 10:22,
11:21
SPAULDING^[1] -
13:8
Spaulding's^[1] -
11:17
speaking^[7] -
36:4, 58:19,
61:12, 149:11,
149:19, 155:4,
157:9
speaks^[1] -
143:17
Special^[2] - 28:19,
148:8
special^[15] -
16:13, 25:19,
26:4, 27:14,
27:15, 27:20,
27:23, 28:10,
29:4, 29:7, 31:15,
33:23, 61:4,
95:15, 114:13
specific^[10] - 18:4,
64:25, 83:6,

101:22, 111:3,
120:9, 121:4,
125:13, 132:10,
136:21

specifically ^[3] -
143:18, 154:22,
179:7

Specifically ^[1] -
144:7

speech ^[8] - 25:21,
35:10, 35:17,
61:10, 62:3, 62:9,
83:17, 104:25

spend ^[7] - 101:7,
101:19, 122:3,
122:5, 122:7,
134:5, 184:13

spending ^[5] -
101:21, 122:22,
123:13, 131:25,
139:6

spent ^[24] - 30:12,
68:21, 85:4,
98:18, 102:3,
115:17, 118:25,
119:3, 119:8,
119:10, 119:13,
119:21, 122:11,
122:12, 122:16,
132:12, 134:2,
142:23, 143:20,
153:5, 168:16,
169:22, 183:17,
184:15

spin ^[1] - 93:19

spinning ^[1] -
149:24

Spiro ^[1] - 186:16

Spleen ^[3] - 5:17,
42:12, 42:15

SPLEEN ^[1] -
42:13

split ^[2] - 88:8,
158:17

splits ^[1] - 158:16

sponsored ^[1] -
49:7

sports ^[1] - 49:8

spot ^[2] - 12:18,
87:22

spread ^[1] - 169:3

spring ^[2] - 78:6,
80:8

squander ^[1] -
108:4

SS ^[1] - 192:5

stability ^[2] -
79:11, 180:10

stabilize ^[1] -
112:12

stabilizing ^[1] -
97:20

stable ^[4] - 113:5,
177:16, 178:19,
180:4

staff ^[5] - 16:24,
40:16, 181:3,
181:9, 189:7

stand ^[5] - 22:19,
42:2, 159:7,
159:16

standardized ^[1] -
61:16

standing ^[2] -
51:16, 86:4

stands ^[2] - 20:9,
41:18

start ^[6] - 9:25,
18:7, 34:6, 82:11,
138:15, 175:5

started ^[6] - 7:4,
10:13, 49:5,
103:2, 103:25,
139:2

starting ^[4] - 84:3,
87:18, 89:2,
147:12

starts ^[1] - 108:8

State ^[7] - 26:25,
32:10, 40:9,
76:13, 79:7,
79:10, 192:9

STATE ^[1] - 192:4

state ^[9] - 27:10,
29:6, 29:24, 33:4,
60:17, 79:5, 97:4,
148:13, 148:16

State's ^[2] - 32:2,
34:16

statement ^[6] -
53:19, 137:19,
169:16, 169:23,
184:22, 186:13

statements ^[3] -
45:15, 78:2,
108:19

States ^[1] - 79:7

states ^[2] - 31:21,
40:10

stating ^[1] - 87:9

Statistics ^[2] -
26:16, 30:11

statistics ^[1] -

63:11

stats ^[1] - 177:19

statute ^[4] -
143:17, 143:19,
144:2, 144:8

stay ^[3] - 18:10,
22:12, 23:16

steadily ^[1] - 83:13

steered ^[1] - 33:8

Stein ^[3] - 5:24,
60:22, 60:24

STEIN ^[1] - 60:23

STEM ^[8] - 43:5,
43:8, 43:9, 43:12,
43:15, 43:19,
44:16, 44:18

stenographic ^[1]
- 192:12

step ^[3] - 14:8,
75:18, 153:20

Stephanie ^[2] -
5:20, 51:6

stewards ^[1] -
107:18

still ^[32] - 33:3,
35:16, 60:4,
60:11, 84:11,
85:7, 86:15,
88:10, 92:7,
97:10, 107:16,
107:17, 110:14,
111:8, 111:11,
113:6, 113:9,
113:11, 113:13,
119:6, 122:9,
122:12, 128:21,
130:12, 142:20,
159:22, 183:5,

184:20, 184:25,
185:6, 185:7

stimulate ^[1] -
167:11

stimulating ^[1] -
145:13

stimulus ^[1] -
166:18

stock ^[1] - 181:16

stolen ^[1] - 11:13

stood ^[1] - 29:5

stop ^[4] - 10:20,
10:24, 12:15,
173:3

stopped ^[1] -
27:19

stopping ^[1] -
50:18

store ^[1] - 11:6

stories ^[2] - 18:18,
120:14

Storm ^[1] - 111:2

story ^[1] - 138:21

straight ^[1] -
184:12

strategic ^[1] - 24:7

strategically ^[2] -
33:13, 112:25

STRAUSS ^[3] -
3:11, 9:4, 187:13

Strauss ^[3] - 9:3,
72:12, 187:12

Stream ^[1] - 49:17

streamline ^[1] -
80:2

street ^[3] - 11:19,
100:18, 155:17

streets ^[2] - 52:18,
98:22

Strength ^[2] -
39:24, 40:3

strength ^[1] - 40:2

strengths ^[1] -
36:15

strictly ^[1] - 163:25

striving ^[1] - 86:15

struck ^[2] - 14:19,
76:17

structures ^[1] -
179:17

struggle ^[1] -
112:21

struggles ^[2] -
39:13, 39:17

struggling ^[1] -
155:22

student ^[4] -
23:11, 43:7, 58:2,
61:15

students ^[12] -
16:23, 23:10,
40:16, 41:10,
41:20, 41:24,
42:19, 43:17,
49:15, 61:6,
78:21, 78:22

stuff ^[1] - 170:8

subject ^[2] - 10:16,
84:23

subjects ^[4] -
10:25, 11:4, 11:7,
11:10

submit ^[1] - 75:7

submitted ^[2] -
143:22, 177:25

submitting ^[2] -
30:4, 75:19

substance ^[3] -
162:19, 183:24,
185:10

substantial ^[1] -
129:23

success ^[2] -
35:19, 43:14

succumb ^[1] -
23:18

sudden ^[1] -
168:25

suffer ^[1] - 112:16

suffered ^[1] -
184:3

suffering ^[5] -
41:12, 60:2, 60:3,
112:15, 113:22

sufficient ^[1] -
178:13

Suffolk ^[2] - 24:9,
32:24

suggest ^[1] -
47:13

suggesting ^[4] -
102:12, 102:14,
132:6, 134:24

suicidal ^[1] - 41:11

suicide ^[7] - 39:2,
39:5, 39:7, 39:11,
39:20, 39:22,
155:19

suit ^[2] - 24:18,
27:22

sum ^[6] - 34:2,

98:14, 129:23,
131:14, 178:10,
190:12

summary ^[1] -
83:21

summed ^[1] -
83:20

Sunday ^[1] - 49:10

sunset ^[1] - 180:2

Support ^[1] -
85:10

support ^[15] - 13:3,
13:4, 15:9, 18:23,
24:2, 40:11,
44:22, 45:3, 45:6,
58:12, 68:12,
77:24, 78:4,
178:14, 179:13

supported ^[1] -
80:20

supporters ^[1] -
40:12

supporting ^[1] -
78:19

supports ^[3] -
63:5, 63:7, 78:21

supposed ^[4] -
30:20, 45:22,
46:12, 141:7

surplus ^[12] -
93:13, 93:21,
94:3, 94:6, 94:8,
94:14, 99:25,
107:8, 110:3,
113:21, 145:19,
145:20

surpluses ^[4] -
107:12, 107:17,

108:3, 112:25
survive ^[1] - 28:20
Susan ^[3] - 5:10,
 21:11, 21:12
sustain ^[1] - 113:5
sustainability ^[2]
 - 24:19, 34:14
sustainable ^[3] -
 26:14, 80:4,
 181:14
sustained ^[1] -
 109:23
sustaining ^[1] -
 43:4
swatting ^[1] -
 16:14
sweaters ^[1] - 50:3
swift ^[1] - 16:16
swing ^[1] - 87:19
system ^[3] - 20:24,
 56:6, 79:12

T

TAKEN ^[1] - 1:23
talents ^[1] - 50:3
TANF ^[1] - 139:7
tape ^[1] - 115:19
task ^[1] - 95:25
tax ^[8] - 86:2, 86:6,
 86:13, 94:5,
 146:14, 146:17,
 148:5, 164:18
taxes ^[4] - 18:23,
 153:18, 154:10,
 155:21
taxpayers ^[1] -
 83:16

Teachers ^[1] -
 74:10
teaching ^[4] -
 54:15, 54:17,
 54:19
team ^[9] - 50:2,
 61:18, 100:10,
 100:12, 100:13,
 100:18, 100:19,
 100:20
Team ^[1] - 100:21
teams ^[2] - 49:8,
 182:13
technology ^[2] -
 44:13, 44:14
tedious ^[1] - 78:15
Tellerman ^[3] -
 5:12, 25:14, 25:16
TELLERMAN ^[2] -
 25:15, 27:9
ten ^[3] - 150:19,
 154:20, 180:25
tenfold ^[1] - 50:16
term ^[5] - 54:23,
 54:24, 78:15,
 93:7, 146:22
terms ^[9] - 46:7,
 62:25, 79:5,
 79:11, 80:12,
 83:14, 102:2,
 117:5, 119:12
terrible ^[1] -
 106:13
testify ^[1] - 114:10
testing ^[2] - 61:16,
 61:19
thankfully ^[1] -

160:23
Thankfully ^[1] -
 107:2
Thanksgiving ^[1]
 - 182:14
themselves ^[7] -
 12:18, 50:22,
 52:4, 54:18,
 75:14, 109:11
therapist ^[1] -
 21:24
Therapists ^[2] -
 29:19, 32:16
therapists ^[16] -
 21:15, 21:16,
 21:19, 22:2, 22:4,
 22:11, 23:5,
 24:13, 29:5,
 29:15, 30:10,
 30:17, 35:11,
 35:12, 106:25
therapy ^[4] -
 22:24, 23:14,
 25:22, 35:17
Therapy ^[8] -
 21:13, 22:21,
 25:17, 27:16,
 29:2, 31:13,
 35:21, 36:3
Therefore ^[1] -
 21:5
they've ^[1] - 96:11
thin ^[1] - 27:17
thinking ^[4] - 52:5,
 54:23, 84:16,
 91:11
thinks ^[1] - 174:24
third ^[4] - 15:12,

31:20, 75:21,
 126:25
THOMAS ^[1] - 2:6
Thomas ^[1] - 7:15
thorough ^[1] -
 16:16
thoughtful ^[1] -
 25:11
thousands ^[3] -
 31:18, 40:16,
 41:24
threat ^[1] - 177:15
threats ^[2] - 39:2,
 39:7
three ^[14] - 11:4,
 11:6, 11:10, 18:9,
 21:17, 34:3,
 74:20, 74:25,
 127:2, 128:6,
 140:10, 140:16,
 179:17, 179:19
thrive ^[1] - 45:5
throats ^[4] - 164:3,
 164:6, 164:16
throughout ^[2] -
 43:20, 51:15
Thursday ^[1] -
 78:7
tied ^[2] - 157:16,
 157:17
timely ^[1] - 30:16
timing ^[1] - 78:5
tip ^[1] - 14:21
tired ^[2] - 129:5,
 129:7
today ^[44] - 26:19,
 26:22, 28:18,

34:10, 38:22,
45:25, 46:17,
48:2, 48:22,
63:15, 68:18,
79:6, 91:9, 92:6,
93:25, 95:11,
96:17, 96:22,
97:15, 98:6,
99:13, 101:4,
101:6, 101:13,
116:14, 116:16,
128:12, 132:2,
133:18, 133:19,
133:21, 134:13,
155:9, 155:13,
157:10, 157:15,
157:19, 157:24,
162:15, 163:9,
169:9, 186:3,
190:11, 190:19

Today ^[1] - 23:2

together ^[10] -
48:19, 57:3,
60:18, 89:4, 89:6,
92:14, 127:6,
182:7, 184:21,
184:25

togetherness ^[1]
- 184:23

tomorrow ^[1] -
52:5

tone ^[2] - 113:16,
113:19

took ^[7] - 77:11,
95:25, 96:4,
148:8, 154:17,
167:15, 172:5

tools ^[1] - 39:13

Top ^[2] - 10:2,

11:22

top ^[3] - 13:25,
27:15, 118:12

TOP ^[1] - 5:2

topic ^[1] - 16:10

total ^[3] - 80:9,
98:13, 118:21

totaling ^[1] - 11:12

totally ^[3] - 94:25,
99:11, 164:6

touch ^[1] - 99:12

tough ^[3] - 15:21,
85:23, 87:21

tour ^[1] - 14:9

tourism ^[9] -
143:18, 144:2,
159:19, 160:4,
160:18, 161:6,
166:2, 166:14,
167:12

tournament ^[1] -
182:13

touting ^[1] - 93:20

toward ^[2] - 157:22

towards ^[8] -
51:13, 100:16,
116:9, 128:19,
181:6, 183:9,
183:23, 185:9

toys ^[1] - 182:17

track ^[1] - 64:5

traffic ^[1] - 19:13

train ^[1] - 43:18

trainers ^[1] - 40:8

training ^[1] - 180:9

traits ^[1] - 44:2

trajectory ^[1] -

99:17

transaction ^[1] -
147:23

transactions ^[2] -
84:2, 86:10

transcription ^[1] -
192:12

transfer ^[1] - 82:4

transferred ^[5] -
82:16, 82:17,
82:18, 140:13,
141:6

transformed ^[1] -
49:20

translate ^[2] -
95:4, 95:6

transmitted ^[1] -
10:21

Treasury ^[1] -
120:22

treat ^[1] - 32:25

treated ^[2] -
137:13, 137:23

treatment ^[1] -
21:22

tremendous ^[1] -
41:23

trip ^[1] - 50:13

trouble ^[1] - 172:2

true ^[4] - 130:17,
130:18, 147:20,
183:11

truly ^[4] - 27:9,
28:17, 33:25, 63:9

Trust ^[4] - 176:8,
176:10, 176:15,
178:5

trust ^[6] - 88:6,
102:17, 102:19,
170:25, 179:25,
189:15

Trustees ^[1] - 56:2

truth ^[1] - 170:5

try ^[3] - 62:11,
88:24, 161:22

trying ^[15] - 55:4,
69:3, 86:19,

109:24, 112:11,
136:2, 136:14,
137:12, 137:19,
137:21, 162:14,
162:17, 162:23,
177:24, 189:11

Tsirkes ^[1] -
186:16

tune ^[1] - 101:2

turn ^[5] - 54:11,
86:5, 99:19,
171:14

turned ^[2] - 115:7,
146:14

tutor ^[1] - 42:22

tutoring ^[1] - 42:25

TV ^[1] - 159:15

twice ^[2] - 98:3,
106:20

Two ^[1] - 29:3

two ^[16] - 10:9,
10:18, 10:25,
11:5, 21:17,
35:17, 50:12,
57:8, 58:21,
111:21, 112:9,
117:12, 117:22,
126:22, 180:19,

183:25
twofold ^[1] - 48:16
type ^[4] - 61:22,
 87:6, 160:10,
 184:6
types ^[1] - 63:5
typical ^[1] - 61:24
typically ^[1] -
 126:7

U

UCLT ^[2] - 178:8,
 179:9
Ukraine ^[1] - 50:11
ultimately ^[6] -
 25:7, 77:14,
 102:3, 146:23,
 147:6, 165:17
unable ^[1] - 68:18
unacceptable ^[1]
 - 34:18
unanimous ^[4] -
 66:23, 67:21,
 71:2, 73:3
unanimously ^[1] -
 81:14
unbelievable ^[1] -
 16:23
Unbelievable ^[1] -
 64:13
uncomfortable
^[1] - 84:19
under ^[8] - 11:7,
 32:8, 76:22,
 85:14, 134:6,
 143:23, 177:15,
 178:10

underfunded ^[1] -
 161:3
underserved ^[1] -
 42:19
undertake ^[1] -
 96:20
undertaken ^[2] -
 34:23, 179:9
Unfortunately ^[4]
 - 21:16, 25:22,
 26:3, 40:24
unfortunately ^[2]
 - 112:20, 171:12
unfounded ^[1] -
 16:19
unifying ^[1] - 40:4
Union ^[1] - 78:19
Uniondale ^[6] -
 63:22, 63:23,
 176:6, 176:14,
 177:3, 178:5
unique ^[1] - 24:16
unit ^[4] - 75:6,
 75:25, 76:5, 76:20
United ^[1] - 79:6
units ^[1] - 16:13
unity ^[1] - 46:22
Universal ^[2] -
 182:4, 184:24
universities ^[1] -
 33:9
unless ^[1] - 165:11
Unless ^[1] - 33:17
unpaid ^[1] - 94:5
unprecedented
^[3] - 23:6, 107:22,
 108:3

unspent ^[3] - 85:7,
 119:7, 122:9
unstable ^[1] -
 113:6
unsustainable
^[1] - 27:19
unused ^[1] - 158:5
up ^[66] - 12:4,
 13:19, 14:8, 16:7,
 17:9, 19:21,
 19:22, 19:23,
 34:2, 49:18,
 51:18, 52:10,
 56:16, 58:8,
 59:18, 62:21,
 62:24, 63:15,
 68:2, 82:17,
 82:18, 83:20,
 84:5, 85:25, 87:8,
 87:17, 88:8,
 89:10, 89:17,
 91:23, 96:14,
 96:19, 100:25,
 101:10, 101:24,
 109:3, 109:11,
 109:18, 109:24,
 110:11, 111:24,
 112:4, 112:5,
 112:20, 125:13,
 142:22, 143:7,
 144:22, 147:22,
 148:22, 151:21,
 151:24, 152:5,
 152:19, 157:15,
 160:9, 160:20,
 162:13, 171:21,
 172:10, 173:20,
 176:19, 177:20,
 180:19, 183:10,

185:5
uplift ^[3] - 54:8,
 54:16, 55:14
upstairs ^[1] -
 172:2
upward ^[1] - 80:15
urge ^[4] - 25:2,
 47:15, 64:19, 78:3
urgency ^[1] -
 64:12
urges ^[1] - 64:6
US ^[2] - 26:15,
 97:21
utilized ^[1] - 44:25
utilizing ^[1] - 29:24

V

vacancies ^[1] -
 181:8
Valley ^[1] - 49:17
valuable ^[1] -
 52:14
value ^[4] - 58:13,
 58:14, 104:4
valued ^[3] - 32:21,
 58:13, 95:16
various ^[5] - 22:24,
 83:3, 108:19,
 110:8, 134:12
VEED ^[1] - 85:11
vehicle ^[6] - 10:16,
 10:17, 10:21,
 11:2, 11:8, 13:21
verbal ^[9] - 19:3,
 66:10, 66:20,
 67:18, 70:23,
 72:21, 81:2,

81:11, 191:14
verifiable ^[1] -
 105:3
verified ^[1] -
 115:25
Veronica ^[1] - 67:4
versus ^[1] - 131:10
Veteran ^[1] -
 139:20
veterans ^[1] -
 114:7
Veterans ^[2] -
 85:10, 142:14
vetted ^[2] - 115:24,
 143:23
viable ^[1] - 33:16
vice ^[2] - 176:10,
 176:13
view ^[2] - 18:24,
 76:19
vision ^[3] - 43:3,
 53:18, 53:19
visit ^[1] - 50:24
visited ^[1] - 59:12
vocabulary ^[1] -
 50:20
voice ^[2] - 56:8,
 95:8
voices ^[1] - 115:7
volume ^[1] - 33:15
volunteer ^[4] -
 48:12, 50:11,
 58:3, 58:24
volunteers ^[2] -
 49:13, 49:22
vote ^[21] - 96:3,
 97:15, 142:22,

142:25, 161:5,
 166:3, 166:5,
 166:6, 166:15,
 166:25, 170:4,
 173:19, 173:23,
 189:3, 190:3,
 190:8, 190:24,
 190:25, 191:5
voted ^[8] - 78:24,
 132:9, 155:9,
 159:20, 159:21,
 160:19, 161:4,
 170:9
voting ^[2] - 133:17,
 190:20
vulnerable ^[2] -
 95:14, 161:18

W

wage ^[1] - 32:19
wages ^[1] - 63:12
Wait ^[1] - 149:23
wait ^[4] - 37:4,
 133:6, 133:7,
 167:5
waited ^[1] - 186:11
waiting ^[2] - 29:14,
 36:24
waitlist ^[1] - 22:7
walk ^[1] - 37:15
Walker ^[5] - 9:9,
 74:11, 168:10,
 174:20, 188:9
WALKER ^[4] - 4:2,
 9:10, 168:11,
 188:10
wall ^[1] - 84:7

Walsh ^[2] - 88:4,
 91:20
wanna ^[2] - 127:8,
 128:10
wants ^[4] - 45:17,
 109:21, 143:7,
 151:12
warranted ^[1] -
 36:16
Washington ^[2] -
 60:25, 120:12
watch ^[1] - 22:9
Water ^[1] - 111:3
water ^[3] - 155:16,
 180:14, 180:16
waters ^[1] - 149:6
ways ^[6] - 18:24,
 39:22, 105:16,
 177:9, 185:6,
 185:8
we' ^[1] - 12:22
weaknesses ^[1] -
 36:15
wealthiest ^[1] -
 129:9
wealthy ^[1] -
 124:21
wear ^[1] - 60:11
website ^[1] - 42:7
week ^[3] - 16:15,
 40:19, 48:8
weekend ^[2] -
 87:5, 91:25
weeks ^[2] - 29:3,
 36:24
weigh ^[1] - 158:15
weighed ^[1] -

158:17
welcome ^[2] -
 12:3, 57:20
welfare ^[1] -
 109:15
well-being ^[2] -
 24:14, 25:8
Westbury ^[5] -
 56:3, 56:11,
 56:16, 58:15,
 58:19
Westbury/New
^[1] - 53:12
Westchester ^[1] -
 30:7
western ^[1] -
 111:24
WHEREOF ^[1] -
 192:13
whispers ^[1] -
 120:2
white ^[1] - 10:15
Whitton ^[3] - 9:17,
 66:7, 188:25
WHITTON ^[18] -
 9:18, 87:2,
 102:16, 130:16,
 135:17, 138:10,
 140:19, 140:24,
 141:4, 141:11,
 141:17, 141:22,
 142:5, 142:9,
 170:2, 171:9,
 173:2, 189:2
whole ^[5] - 12:3,
 61:17, 100:19,
 154:12, 170:24
whoop ^[1] - 51:23

whoop-de-do ^[1]

- 51:23

wife ^[2] - 31:12,

39:8

William ^[1] - 8:7**WILLIAM** ^[1] - 3:20**willing** ^[6] - 14:5,

14:7, 26:22,

34:24, 59:6, 88:24

Winter ^[1] - 176:5**wise** ^[2] - 56:20,

58:10

wish ^[7] - 52:20,

68:6, 89:20,

89:24, 112:18,

138:3, 173:8

wished ^[1] - 143:4**withheld** ^[1] -

46:10

WITNESS ^[1] -

192:13

witnessed ^[1] -

22:23

wonderful ^[1] -

62:18

wondering ^[1] -

129:7

word ^[2] - 49:5,

144:2

words ^[4] - 21:5,

34:3, 50:18, 102:7

worker ^[1] - 58:7**workers** ^[2] -

34:15, 35:13

Workforce ^[1] -

43:16

workforce ^[1] -

44:10

works ^[2] - 78:25,

154:6

world ^[10] - 12:9,

49:2, 52:8, 54:14,

57:14, 60:9, 85:8,

139:15, 140:2,

160:21

worry ^[1] - 90:25**worse** ^[2] - 33:11,

37:7

worst ^[1] - 139:24**worth** ^[1] - 33:24**worthy** ^[7] - 97:13,

97:18, 101:25,

106:15, 108:14,

163:7, 178:14

writing ^[3] -

110:22, 178:3,

186:13

wrote ^[1] - 100:6**Y****y'all** ^[1] - 185:5**year** ^[17] - 30:8,

35:16, 39:10,

63:24, 74:20,

77:12, 79:24,

84:15, 93:13,

93:14, 103:4,

107:13, 113:7,

120:4, 146:3,

182:10, 185:13

years ^[51] - 20:21,

21:17, 21:18,

21:21, 21:24,

22:21, 23:20,

24:21, 24:25,

26:2, 26:17,

26:20, 28:16,

29:11, 31:25,

34:3, 35:20,

35:25, 36:2, 37:9,

39:9, 39:21,

43:18, 56:5,

56:12, 57:8, 61:3,

68:22, 68:25,

74:25, 80:5,

80:14, 82:23,

95:23, 96:10,

100:19, 101:2,

109:24, 146:7,

146:9, 146:13,

150:20, 153:22,

154:20, 160:24,

177:2, 177:3,

180:25, 184:4

York ^[15] - 1:16,

21:14, 22:4,

25:17, 26:24,

27:16, 31:13,

32:2, 32:10, 40:9,

56:6, 76:13, 79:7,

79:14, 192:9

YORK ^[1] - 192:4**young** ^[13] - 13:5,

39:15, 44:2, 44:3,

45:4, 46:21, 48:6,

52:3, 64:4, 99:18,

113:18, 114:14,

155:18

youngest ^[1] -

35:14

yourself ^[1] -

59:25

youth ^[5] - 43:2,

63:25, 64:2,

64:10, 88:19

Z**zero** ^[1] - 105:19