

1 TRIBAL COUNCIL LISTENING SESSION

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Page, Arizona

8

May 17, 2017

4:48 p.m.

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17 REPORTED BY:

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19 Certified Reporter

20 Certificate No. 50296

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23 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

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25 (Original)

1 TRIBAL COUNCIL LISTENING SESSION was taken on
2 May 17, 2017, commencing at 4:48 p.m. at the Page Community
3 Center, Page, Arizona, before DANIELLE C. GRIFFIN, a
4 Certified Reporter in the State of Arizona.

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6 APPEARING:

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8 AS MODERATOR:

9 CENTRAL CREATIVE

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16 BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

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Washington, DC 20240-0001
19 Mayor Bill Diak
City of Page

20 President Russell Begaye
21 Navajo Nation
22 Joanna Austin-Manygoats
Navajo Language Interpreter
23
24
25

1 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Good afternoon, everyone.
2 Before we get started, I'd like to turn it over to
3 President Begaye to welcome us all here.

4 PRESIDENT BEGAYE: Welcome to Tuba -- I
5 almost said Tuba City -- Page. Welcome to Page and the
6 community center. Welcome, Mr. Palumbo, the team that's
7 here. I really appreciate you guys providing the
8 opportunity for the community to speak on the NGS situation
9 here, the proposed, possible proposed or extension, all of
10 those comments.

11 So and it looks like we have a good, full
12 house and I know we're going to receive a lot of good
13 comments on this.

14 (Native language spoken.)

15 MR. LEONARD BAILE: Hello. (Native language
16 spoken.)

17 Thank you for your presence here for this
18 discussion. And I'd like to say an opening prayer or this
19 invocation for this meeting. And I'll do that in my own
20 native language.

21 (Invocation in Navajo.)

22 PRESIDENT BEGAYE: Kristin.

23 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you. Good
24 afternoon, everyone. My name is Kristin Darr, and I know
25 from Monday about 80 percent of you guys.

1 You missed me, didn't you? Come on.

2 All right. So this is what we're going to
3 do, and a lot of you know this, but for those of you who
4 weren't with us on Monday, we have Leslie Meyers and
5 David Palumbo with the Bureau of Reclamation here. They
6 are here to listen to the community talk about the
7 long-term future of the Navajo Generating Station. My job
8 is to make sure that they are able to listen to you and to
9 get as many of you as possible in the next three hours up
10 to that microphone -- that's your microphone -- to speak to
11 them.

12 Does that make sense?

13 So for that, we are asking that you limit
14 your comments to three minutes.

15 Not five, right? Uh-huh. Three minutes.

16 And I'm going to be like I was the other night, the
17 three-minute police. So you'll have to bear with me,
18 because I'm -- what I'm trying to do is get as many of you
19 through as possible.

20 So, in addition, since many of you spoke
21 Monday night and it's on the record -- we have our court
22 reporter here, Danielle, whose taking down everything that
23 everybody says -- we're going to ask -- we're going to give
24 preference to people who we have not heard from yet to
25 start, and then we'll go through all the cards.

1 So we're sorting the cards based on trying to
2 hear from some new folks tonight.

3 Does that sound fair?

4 Okay. So I'm going to turn this over -- oh,
5 yes, I'm sorry. And Joanna here --

6 Joanna, could you stand up.

7 -- is our Navajo interpreter for tonight.

8 There is a check box at the bottom of the speaker card if
9 you would like for Joanna to provide interpretation for you
10 in the Navajo language.

11 Did you want to say anything, Joanna?

12 THE INTERPRETER: (Native language spoken.)

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you. Before I turn
14 it over to Dave to give you a short presentation, I just
15 want to go -- I mentioned the speaker cards. I'm assuming
16 you all saw them at the front, and also please make sure
17 that you signed in at the front. But this is what you fill
18 out to get in line to speak.

19 There is a smaller card, too, that has an
20 email address where you can provide written comments. And
21 there's a comment form that you can write a comment on
22 tonight and leave it with us. Okay? So you could take a
23 bunch of these back to your friends and family, because I
24 have a giant stack of them. Okay?

25 All right. And then the email address works,

1 too. And I've got a bunch of these cards. Okay?

2 So right now I'd like to introduce David
3 Palumbo. He will tell you who he is and give you a short
4 presentation before we start the listening session.

5 MR. DAVID PALUMBO: Thank you, Kristin.

6 Thank you, Joanna.

7 Thank you, everybody, for showing up here
8 today. We appreciate the turn out. And we appreciate your
9 comments.

10 I have a very brief presentation to go over
11 with you to kind of set the stage of what's going on
12 currently with Navajo Generating Station so everybody has
13 the same information.

14 So this is the second of four listening
15 sessions. We had a listening session in Phoenix on Monday.
16 Of course, we're here in Page today. We'll be in
17 Kykotsmovi, and then in Window Rock on Friday.

18 And as Kristin said, the purpose of this
19 listening session is to listen to you all. Leslie and I
20 will be up here listening throughout the period that we
21 have today, the three hours that we have today.

22 There is a web -- or an email address that
23 will show up at the end that's on the cards. You can
24 supplement anything you say today with an email. If you
25 don't wish to speak today and just wish to send something

1 in via email, you can do that. Or if you are reading from
2 any document, you could also submit that via email,
3 although we will have a court reporter recording
4 everything.

5 So we've gone over most of the process here
6 today. Again, filling out the signup cards. The three
7 minutes we're limiting you to today based on the number of
8 folks we have in the room. We want to make sure we get as
9 many people as possible that can speak.

10 Again, here is the email addresses. And
11 we're going to have that open for approximately 30 days to
12 accept your comments.

13 And Kristin is our third party moderator, and
14 we're very thankful to have her keep us on track and on
15 task, and Danielle, the court reporter here.

16 So a little bit about Navajo Generating
17 Station. I know most everybody is very familiar with some
18 of the facts regarding Navajo Generating Station. Navajo
19 Generating Station is a three unit 2,250 megawatt coal
20 fired power plant facility. It's located on tribal trust
21 lands. And the current lease, which began in 1969 was for
22 a period of 50 years, expires on December 22nd, 19 -- or
23 2019.

24 The coal that supplies the fuel to Navajo
25 Generating Station is from Kayenta Mine. Kayenta Mine is

1 on Navajo and Hopi trust lands, about 60 miles southeast.
2 Of NGS and is delivered via an electric railroad to supply
3 that fuel source for Navajo Generating Station.

4 We began an environmental impact statement in
5 2014, and we published a draft environmental impact
6 statement late last year regarding the continued operations
7 of Navajo Generating Station post 2019 through a period of
8 2044.

9 The NGS participants, as we call them, are
10 listed here on the screen. Salt River Project operates the
11 facility for those NGS participants and the United States,
12 the Bureau of Reclamation has an entitlement share for our
13 use at the Central Arizona Project, pump water from Lake
14 Havasu and throughout the system of the Central Arizona
15 Project.

16 The current status, February of this year,
17 the non-U.S. owners, those other participants that were
18 listed on the screen, indicated that they were not going
19 to -- they're not currently intending to operate the
20 facility post 2019. And that brought about the actions
21 that we are taking here today and the several activities
22 that I'll go over with you in just a moment.

23 I did want to also indicate they also noted
24 that they would be willing to operate the plant through the
25 end of 2019 if certain agreements are reached with the

1 Navajo Nation by July 1st of this year. And I'll tell you
2 a little bit about that in just a moment.

3 So again, that February announcement was the
4 impetus for three parallel activities, we like to call
5 them. One is getting to 2019. There's an ongoing
6 negotiation with the Navajo Nation and Salt River Project,
7 the United States Bureau of Reclamation, Department of
8 Interior, along with BIA were facilitating that process by
9 helping wherever we can. But it's a primary negotiation
10 between Salt River Project and Navajo Nation.

11 Then there's activities on the post 2019,
12 getting to post 2019, how can we look at ways in which it
13 could be economically operated post 2019?

14 That not only involves looking for ways in
15 which to, perhaps, reduce costs, but also seeking new plant
16 owners and new load to serve from those new plants owners.

17 The third parallel path is minimizing
18 negative impacts of any type of plant closure irrespective
19 of time. So if it's 2019, 2030, 2044, the Bureau of
20 Reclamation, the Department of Interior, along with BIA our
21 other sister agencies are working in ways to minimize a
22 negative impact to create economic development.

23 That's all I have for you here today. We're,
24 again, very eager to hear what you have to say. And the
25 email address is up on the screen should you wish to use

1 that. Thank you.

2 MS. KRISTIN DARR: So I have my stack of
3 cards and they're going to keep bringing them to me in
4 order. And what I'm going to do is read a name, and then
5 the name that's behind that, so that, like, the on deck
6 better, kind of.

7 So Chip, you're first.

8 Chip Davis with Congressmen O'Halleran's
9 office is going to be our first speaker this evening,
10 followed by M. Drassen.

11 Sir, okay. All right. So you're next.
12 You're on deck.

13 And you're on the clock, sir.

14 MR. CHIP DAVIS: Thank you. I'll be brief.
15 There's not anything that I could say that hasn't already
16 been said with the exception that Congressmen O'Halleran's
17 office is ready and prepared to assist in any way we can in
18 the outcome of the negotiations. Hopefully, it goes beyond
19 2019, but his office is here and ready and ready to help in
20 Washington, D.C.

21 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you, Mr. Davis.

22 Mr. Drassen.

23 And then the next after that is Mayor Diaz,
24 City of Page. You'll all learn. I'm really bad at
25 pronouncing names.

1 Right, everybody?

2 MR. MIKE DRASSEN: My name is Mike Drassen.
3 I'm a local here in Page. I appreciate the opportunity to
4 having this time to speak.

5 I've been carrying around this Navajo Times
6 for about four years waiting for the perfect opportunity to
7 read from it. I think this probably fits. So this is
8 written as a letter to the editor from a young lady from
9 Piñon Public School District. And I'll just read what I
10 can here.

11 To quote: Growing up on Black Mesa in
12 northeast Arizona on the Navajo Nation, we often live like
13 nomads following our sheep. I have distinct memories of
14 one particular camp -- and I can't pronounce it. It's in
15 Navajo -- which in Navajo means the green grass at the base
16 of the rock. And we get up before sunrise and take our
17 sheep to the seep there to drink because right around
18 4:00 a.m. pools of water would miraculously appear on the
19 dry arroyo bed. Then when the sun came up a few hours
20 later, the seeps would disappear.

21 Our livelihoods depended on those springs.
22 And I remember moving our herds to follow the water all the
23 way through my high school years until I left for college
24 in 1987. I returned home ten years later, university
25 degree in hand, ready to take my place as a productive

1 member of my community.

2 I discovered that the seeps had vanished, not
3 just with the rising sun each day, but for good. In fact,
4 the springs at all the camps from my childhood were drying
5 up. Over 20 years the natural economy of my ancestors had
6 disappeared. What was happening to this precious resource
7 that sustained so many hardworking locals for so long
8 allowing them to make their living in a changing landscape?

9 That was a question. She goes on to mention
10 Navajo Generating Station, and how that was built to
11 provide power for the Central Arizona Project and, of
12 course, the mine that provides the coal.

13 My community on Black Mesa, would strip mines
14 and sell the coal and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation would
15 receive cheap Indian energy to subsidize its operations of
16 one of the largest and costliest publicly funded waterworks
17 and energy projects in U.S. history. Central and southern
18 Arizona benefited most from the low cost electricity and
19 the subsidized water, meanwhile the aquifer suffered.

20 MS. KRISTIN DARR: You have about 30 seconds.

21 MR. MIKE DRASSEN: Okay. From 1971 to 2005
22 the coal industry removed water from the Navajo aquifer at
23 the rate of 4,000 to 6,000 acre-feet a year over three
24 times the aquifer's known ability to recharge. Since 2005
25 the Peabody Mining Company has decreased its use to under

1 2,000 acre-feet a year. That is still over 13 million
2 gallons a year for an area that gets less than 8 inches of
3 annual rainfall.

4 MS. KRISTIN DARR: And we are at three
5 minutes.

6 Did you want to punctuate your statement?

7 MR. MIKE DRASSEN: Yeah. Let me just read
8 her last statement here very briefly.

9 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay.

10 MR. MIKE DRASSEN: She talks about trying to
11 leave things for the next generation in as best shape as
12 possible. And she goes on to say: Prosperity for some
13 should no longer come from draining the livelihoods of
14 others.

15 This was Nicole Horseherder from Piñon,
16 Arizona's, word. And she said it better than I could have
17 ever done. Thank you.

18 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you, sir.

19 I was mistaken. The mayor is not arriving
20 until 5:00 o'clock.

21 So Louis Dodson. Louis. Yes. Okay.

22 And while Louis is making his way up, Dwight.
23 It starts with an L. Dwight, okay, you're next.

24 MR. LOUIS DODSON: Hello. Hello.

25 Louis Dodson. You know, I was born and raised here in

1 Page, to be honest, you know.

2 (Native language spoken.)

3 So I just wanted to, since I got the ears of
4 our Navajo Nation president, we have meetings many -- few
5 years ago before the elections, and we had an MOU with the
6 Navajo Federation of Laborers in Window Rock. And I just
7 wanted to know whatever happened to that.

8 Regarding the NGS, we wanted -- I stand -- or
9 I represent Boilermakers Local Lodge 4, union boilermakers
10 here in Page. The reason why it was built here was to get
11 into NGS many years ago back in 1998. I am the president
12 of the lodge, and I represent all the members.

13 We have the manpower to do the outages here
14 in Page. We've had many of them travel out of state just
15 to make ends meet. And we also, teaming up with a united
16 mineworkers at times, doing our march in Window Rock. And
17 we had strikes here in Page, and they were standing beside
18 us here.

19 Like an onion, there are layers in Window
20 Rock, Navajo Nation. When we ask questions, they say, "Go
21 over here." We go there, and they tell us, "Go that way."
22 And then, so we go that way. And we just wanted to let you
23 guys know, everybody here how it is.

24 The MOU, whatever happened to that,
25 Mr. President? Whatever years or time left here at NGS,

1 please, if you can have any chance of changing and giving
2 us union members, boilermakers, these last few years in NGS
3 if it should shut down, give it to our members here on at
4 the NGS Salt River Project. I believe that's -- that's it.
5 Thank you.

6 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you, sir.

7 Dwight, and I think it's Albert Nez.

8 Yes. Okay. And then Felix Fuller.

9 Okay. Dwight, you're on.

10 MR. DWIGHT LOMAINTEWA: Good evening. My
11 name is Dwight Lomaintewa. I'm employed with Peabody
12 Energy in the drilling and shooting department. I'm from
13 the Hopi tribe.

14 And working at Peabody, you have a sense of
15 pride and purpose and being able to provide for my family.
16 For the short time I've been employed with Peabody, I've
17 been able to provide a home, a four-bedroom home for my
18 children. Somewhere they can call a place home.

19 I feel that NGS should continue to operate,
20 being Hopi, the Hopi tribe receives royalties from the
21 Peabody. And so that's 85 percent of the Hopi tribe's
22 budget, what they run on. The Hopi tribe pays their
23 employees with that.

24 And if that goes away, the already high
25 unemployment rate that the Hopi tribe has, is just going to

1 shoot higher. And then we would have to go back to relying
2 on the Government. And I know the Hopi people are proud
3 people, and I don't want to see that for my tribe.

4 The Hopi, they pride themselves in being
5 sovereign, being a sovereign nation. If NGS shuts down,
6 we're going to lose that sovereignty. So I support the
7 continuation of the NGS and the Peabody Coal mine.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you, sir.

10 Albert. Whoa. I'm sorry about that. This
11 microphone has a life of its own.

12 MR. ALBERT NEZ: Good afternoon.

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: And then Felix.

14 I'm sorry, sir. And then Daniel Benally.

15 Okay.

16 MR. ALBERT NEZ: I've been working for
17 Peabody for 38 years now. I'm proud of it. I'm a welder.
18 And, first of all, I'd like to thank all the people that
19 gave up their land for putting up Peabody and NGS over
20 here. I never heard anybody says that maybe it's about
21 time that people start saying thank you to all those people
22 that live out there.

23 And my main concern is, we want to keep this
24 mine going for as long as possible for all the younger
25 generations that are finally getting their job, like a lot

1 of these younger generations. They just got their training
2 done. They're able to work up here on both sides, the mine
3 side. And NGS is probably the same way.

4 And we got a lot of good things that Peabody
5 does for the company. The company side, like we have
6 family day when all the people gets together on the mine
7 side. We do a lot of good things. Good food,
8 entertainment. Like our grandkids tour the equipments that
9 they put up so they can see what we work with.

10 So I'd like to see that again. And like,
11 Peabody, we're the only Peabody mine that won the million
12 man-hours. That's three times that we accomplished that.
13 So I'm really proud of these guys that I work with. They
14 did that including myself.

15 So I'd like to see this mine keep going. And
16 we got a health fair that has -- the mine that puts it on
17 for us so we can help our self-check once in a while, about
18 two to three times a year. So we have that facility up
19 there.

20 And we have a health and fitness center that
21 we have up there so we can do a little exercise and have
22 fun and talk with our coworkers, "How long you been
23 working?" And all this. And we like to keep that going,
24 so I'm for NGS and I'm for Peabody, too. Thank you

25 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

1 Felix Fuller, and then Dan, Daniel Benally
2 and then Paul Begay.

3 MR. FELIX FULLER: Good afternoon. Thank you
4 for giving me the opportunity to speak here now. My name
5 is Felix Fuller. I work as an NGS chemist at the plant
6 here, and I put in 17 years there. And also I'm an elected
7 official from Shonto Community Governance. I'm the
8 president over there.

9 What I wanted to speak of most importantly is
10 the convenience store that we've had a grand opening on the
11 2nd of this month. And a lot of that money that started
12 our business was from the Navajo Nation. And years back
13 our former chairman, Peterson Zah, had been investing some
14 money. And they waited for that money to mature. And then
15 finally they were able to draw up the interest off the
16 investment. So we were able to use that money to start
17 that store.

18 And right now, as everything else, we need to
19 wait for that business to mature for some of that
20 investment to come back to us. And we'd like to have that
21 opportunity if we can keep the mine and the plant going.
22 Because this was where that money was coming from.

23 This is unmarked money. Most of the money
24 that comes from the federal government is already
25 earmarked, and they're used for a certain purpose, and

1 definitely one of them is not economic development. And
2 that's a lot of the concern here that people have in
3 northern Arizona and, of course, the rest of the state,
4 too. But that's the emphasis that I wanted to put on.

5 And then also, secondly, we have a lot of
6 volunteers with our group at NGS and also Peabody, and we
7 do a lot of volunteer work with our community and events
8 and whatnot. Not only that, but a lot of our family, our
9 community members usually comes to us for assistance with
10 money. And a lot of these guys will gladly hand out some
11 money to these individuals so...

12 And then, as mentioned before, these guys
13 learn trade from these two facilities, and we want to train
14 these guys, because we don't want to see them leave the
15 Navajo Nation, because they hang around here.

16 And I remember one guy, a welder, was telling
17 me that there was a water tank that was leaking. And
18 because he had some training as a welder, he went out and
19 there with his own equipment and was able to fix that water
20 tank out there, you know, and they didn't have to pay him
21 for that. And it was all out of his generosity, whereas
22 everybody here in this room is probably sharing too. So
23 thank you for the opportunity, and I will see you later.

24 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

25 Daniel, Paul Begay and then Mark -- Mark with

1 Brown and Caldwell.

2 I can't read your last name, Mark.

3 Why don't you go ahead.

4 MR. DANIEL BENALLY: Good evening. My name
5 is Daniel Benally. I am originally from Black Mesa,
6 Arizona. I was born and raised next to the old Black Mesa
7 pipeline. And I'm a third generation coal miner. My
8 grandfather worked in a small mine where the contractor
9 provided coal to the BIAs to generate electricity and
10 furnace.

11 And my father was hired at Peabody in 1967 so
12 that he could support us. And he worked 16-hour days 7
13 days a week to get us through college, so that my siblings
14 could get a decent education and go into the world and
15 become professionals.

16 And I myself came home. Got a good education
17 and came home and was able to work at Peabody and provide
18 for my kids. And I believe in continuation of NGS and
19 Peabody Energy for, I say for my kids, my grandkids and for
20 all the southwest. Because if we do shut this down, it
21 would put a devastating effect on the whole southwest, not
22 just the communities of the Navajo Nation.

23 And on Black Mesa it does not only provide
24 black coal, but they also because of the excellent
25 reclamation program, we also have some of the best grass

1 fed beef. All of you probably like steaks and burgers.
2 Some of the finest -- steakhouse comes from Black Mesa
3 because of Peabody's excellent reclamation program. Thank
4 you.

5 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

6 Okay, Paul. And then Mark.

7 And then Jim Parks. I'm very sorry.

8 MR. PAUL BEGAY: Paul Begay.

9 (Native language spoken.)

10 As young people, we were told -- I want to
11 give you a little Navajo perspective on what's going on.
12 When we were young, we were told by our parents,
13 grandparents get an education and come home and help your
14 people. And that's the same thing that our -- our Navajo
15 government says, our community pay for, people say to us,
16 and that happened.

17 By closing Navajo Generating Station, we will
18 be doing opposite of what we we've been telling our young
19 people. That's exactly what they did. Those that built
20 Navajo Generating Station, their children and grandchildren
21 are the ones that are now highly educated and skilled
22 professionals at Navajo Generating Station. Our chemists,
23 our supervisors, they are very well and highly educated.
24 By closing the Navajo Generating Station, they will again
25 be going away from the reservation.

1 (Native language spoken.)

2 When asked, the government, the Navajo
3 Nation, our federal government to please heed our call.
4 Help us to continue at least to get us to 2019 so we can
5 plan. So we can plan on where our children might go to
6 school, where we can get another job. All these things we
7 need to help.

8 In the Navajo culture, unlike in the western
9 culture, you have a wife and your children and you support
10 them. You support those people. Navajo culture says, you
11 have a wife, you have your husband, your children, their
12 mothers, their parents, our parents, our nephews and nieces
13 and all because of kinship system, because of (native
14 language spoken), we have extended family.

15 One person might be employed at NGS or
16 Peabody, but he might be supporting -- it's not unlikely
17 that they would be supporting 40 or 50 people. I want
18 fight for the nephews and nieces. It is not only to look
19 at our children to get an education. We also help our
20 nephews and nieces get educated. We care for our -- for
21 them. They are not cheap these days. Our livelihood is
22 livestock. Hay prices, grain prices are going up. We need
23 jobs to be able to work at NGS.

24 (Native language spoken.)

25 We're telling you the truth about NGS and

1 Peabody operation maintenance, however it is. The
2 environmentalists that we've applied to keep what's in the
3 environment, environmental regulations, we have education.
4 I hope you understand --

5 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Three minutes, so --

6 MR. PAUL BEGAY: We want the delegates
7 behinds us.

8 And, Mr. President, have your pen ready.

9 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Mark.

10 Then Jim Parks. I saw him. There he is.
11 And Anthony Peterman.

12 MR. MARK MARYBOY: My name is Mark Maryboy.
13 I'd like to thank the president of Navajo Nation for coming
14 here and listening to everybody.

15 (Native language spoken.)

16 My job is I work with an engineering firm
17 Brown and Caldwell. We contract with Navajo Nation. We're
18 working on the western Navajo pipeline from Page to
19 Cameron, Arizona. We want to share this message with you.

20 One encourage reclamation to participate or
21 contribute to the Navajo Nation pro-climatic approach to
22 water infrastructure improvement. The approach is already
23 in place and proven. Look to Dilkon-Sweetwater pipeline,
24 Western Navajo pipeline Phase 1 build up groundwater
25 supplies and, by the way, Gap-Tuba City, and surface water

1 source of water source at LeChee. Strengthen water
2 capacity reliability. Take care of Lake Powell intake
3 treatment issue. Investigation connection to copper mine.

4 Western Navajo pipeline Phase 2, connect the
5 dots. Construct connecting pipe between LeChee, Bodaway,
6 Tuba City as needed and as funding becomes available in
7 large transmission conveyance capacity.

8 Antelope Canyon. Provide distribution
9 facility to serve Antelope Canyon road corridor commercial
10 development.

11 Thank you for giving up me the time to
12 present my presentation.

13 (Native language spoken.)

14 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

15 Mr. Parks.

16 And then Anthony Peterman.

17 MR. JIM PARKS: Okay. Thank you.

18 (Native language spoken.)

19 Coconino County, county supervisor
20 District 4. I came here to encourage you to all support
21 President Begaye and Salt River Project in their quest for
22 an agreement that we can all live with in order to continue
23 the operation of Navajo Generating Station and Peabody
24 Coal, the mine up there.

25 I also wanted to say that the Coconino County

1 Board of Supervisors three weeks ago passed a resolution
2 that states that we would -- that we support keeping Navajo
3 Generating Station open. This closure of the generating
4 station, not only closes the mine, but it would affect all
5 of Coconino County and all northern Arizona, ultimately all
6 of Arizona clear down to Tucson because they receive CAP
7 water. That is pumped with electricity from NGS.

8 I just wanted to thank you all for being
9 here. I wanted to thank President Begaye for being here to
10 listen to all of you. And I appreciate Mr. Palumbo being
11 here. He has done a great deal of work with this, and
12 Ms. Meyers also. They've both done a great deal of work to
13 help to bring this issue to the forefront and get support
14 for Navajo Nation from it.

15 Anyway, that's it.

16 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Anthony Peterman and then
17 Jonathan Miller.

18 MR. ANTHONY PETERMAN: Good evening,
19 everyone. My name is Anthony Peterman. I work with the
20 Office of the Speaker, part of the team that's trying to
21 negotiate the deal to keep NGS open until 2019. So we
22 should have our final draft in tonight and be able to
23 present that draft to council in the morning.

24 But I wanted to speak on another stance. I'm
25 wearing my overhaul shirt from 2010. I started with the

1 Office of the Speaker in 2011, and 2010 I did the overhaul
2 here with my wife. And we signed up to do the 2011
3 overhaul as well, and I got lucky and got a warm office
4 space, so I didn't have to work in the cold, so...

5 But I wanted to speak to that aspect because
6 I know there's many blue shirts in the room that are
7 working there, but from the NGS side there's permit workers
8 there as well. But there's an influx when the plant needs
9 to be maintained. And there's some thousand, 2,000
10 individuals that get to come home from out working in the
11 fields, different states, four or five states away. I know
12 because I come from that -- that environment. I was
13 working in Gillette, Wyoming, and to be able to come back
14 home and be able to work was huge. And even if it was only
15 for just a couple months, you know, two or three months.

16 My wife worked with me. She's a welder. And
17 she only needs to supplement our income, so she only needs
18 to work a couple of months out of the year. And NGS was
19 always a good place for her to work because it's not far
20 away. I'd be able to come up and stay and see her. Right
21 now she's in North Dakota, and she wasn't able to make that
22 shutdown this year. So she had to travel out to North
23 Dakota.

24 You know, we lost our son this year in March.
25 And we really need her home, but life goes on. And we need

1 that supplemental income. So she's out there in North
2 Dakota for another week or two. She's been out there for
3 three or four weeks.

4 But it's really important to have those jobs
5 for, not only the permanent jobs here, but those they're
6 out working in many of the states. And that's the worry
7 that I have with many in the room here. If this is not
8 open, you know?

9 And this is a hardworking bunch, a lot of
10 blue shirts here. And they're going to find work wherever
11 it takes if that means traveling four or five states away,
12 and that's going to be away from family. And I worry about
13 the family. That's who I'm worried about, the kids that
14 don't have the parents' home.

15 So that's the reason why I put so much
16 passion and heart into this is because of Navajo families.
17 So I wanted to bring that up.

18 The other thing I wanted to mention is it's
19 not just the workers there. Navajo Nation we're 300,000
20 strong now. And that would be hard pressed to know that
21 there's one Navajo that's not impacted by this. Because
22 aside from the jobs and the revenues that come from here, I
23 represent some 20, 25 percent of the direct revenues to the
24 general funds of the Navajo Nation.

25 Those general revenues go out to every

1 department, our police departments, those that support our
2 children and the elderly. There's not a Navajo person on
3 the Navajo Nation that would not be impacted by the
4 shutdown of this. And I worry about them as well.

5 So this is got very broad impacts. And I
6 just wanted to be able to speak to that point that this is
7 not just a handful of people that it's going to be the
8 entire Navajo Nation. And then you've got second and third
9 string jobs that would be impacted by that. So the burrito
10 stand on the side of the road that you all buy in the
11 morning, they will all be impacted as well. So I wanted to
12 say that thank you very much.

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

14 Jonathan Miller. And then Fern Benally.

15 MR. JONATHAN MILLER: Good afternoon,
16 President Begaye. As I sat back there thinking about what
17 to say, there's a quote I once read in a book called
18 500 Nations and there's a quote in there. I think it was
19 about Barboncito or Manuelito as they signed the Treaty of
20 1868, they looked towards the federal government, and they
21 said, "Now, you have become our Christian brother. We will
22 depend upon you."

23 And as you look at the Treaty of 1868,
24 there's lot of dependancy in there, how the nation tribe
25 began. We were once a sovereign people, strong, living off

1 the land, and then we were conquered.

2 Through the years as you study federal Indian
3 law, the federal government has never ever knew how to deal
4 with the native American people. And then until the 1950's
5 they finally figured out let's do -- let's pass the
6 self-preservation act. And from that on, I really believe
7 the Navajo Nation moved forward. Education soared. The
8 facilities soared. Everything began to grow and blossom.

9 And then any of you that farm or plant roses
10 or anything, there are times when it's going to be cut and
11 trimmed. But the bottom line is that we have a great
12 foundation that is the people here. The people of the
13 Navajo Nation, the community of Page, everywhere. We are a
14 strong people. No matter what happens, our prayer is that
15 we will all go moving forward.

16 We have come from obscurity to become a great
17 people. And letting NGS go and Peabody go and these
18 changes being made, we will suffer again. But the bottom
19 line is that many of us are prepared for that. Life will
20 go on.

21 But my prayer is, I hope there will be a
22 negotiation to help make life a little easier for us. And
23 I hope the people out there can hear my testimony that's
24 reported in here, and we come together in prayer. Whatever
25 religion we are, traditional or any other religions out

1 there, let's come together in our homes and throughout the
2 nation and soften the hearts of the owners and soften the
3 heart of all people that we may continue to benefit from
4 this as a nation, as a town and as the state of Arizona and
5 other surrounding areas.

6 The impact of this will be dramatic. It
7 won't be like going back into the great depression. You
8 see what happened in Michigan with the auto industry with
9 them. We see the history of all of this.

10 But my thoughts, and my final conclusion
11 thought is, I support to keep this continually going with
12 NGS and also with Peabody and also Navajo Nation and also
13 the federal government.

14 Now, as you represent the federal government,
15 I plead to you on behalf of our people. You have the power
16 and authority, what's called plenary power in the
17 constitution, and you hold the power to do what you need to
18 do to sustain this.

19 Let it be known on to our president of the
20 United States and other people there in authority in
21 Congress that you guys hold the key to the success of this.
22 The owners can walk away. But you guys hold the keys to
23 the plenary power for making the decision to benefit from
24 so that we can continue to prosper here. Thank you.

25 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

1 Fern Benally and then Evelyn Singer.

2 MS. FERN BENALLY: Good evening.

3 (Native language spoken.)

4 A while back when I learned that NGS may
5 close, I was asked an important question of my life because
6 I live in the Peabody area, and I do have the environmental
7 effects from the coal mining. I do have asthma.

8 But my answer was, as a leader, I need to
9 look at it differently because I can't just think of myself
10 and my family. But I have little kids, elderlies, and
11 employees and beyond that are my family now. I have to
12 think of each one of them.

13 Some are school students at the county level,
14 not only Navajo, but Apache and Coconino. They benefit
15 from the taxes of these corporations. And also my elders
16 asked me: Are we going to have no coal to warm ourselves
17 in the winter? What do we do? Do we freeze?

18 Those were some of the questions that were
19 put to me. I do represent Forest Lake chapter. I'm their
20 president. I have to toss and turn and think about these
21 things. And I know my people up there on Black Mesa will
22 be affected in one way or the other.

23 One of them is, of course, the environmental.
24 The other is financial and economical. It's a tough
25 dilemma for me because of my health from that -- from

1 living near Peabody Coal Company. And -- but I thought
2 about it.

3 NGS employees, Peabody employees are asking
4 for two years. I said I would give -- as a leader, I would
5 give them that two years. But beyond that, I don't know.
6 It's a difficult decision because a lot of my people up
7 there on the mesa has been affected by the health effects
8 from that. They have passed on. They suffered in their
9 last days from respiratory issues, and I think about that.

10 But then I have to think about the little
11 ones who are in school that need these funds for their
12 schools as well. So I think that you all coming out and
13 speaking on this is a critical issue at this time. And I'm
14 glad DOI did come out and listen to us.

15 And our Navajo Nation president is here. I
16 want him to be wise. I want him to know that coal is not
17 going to economically help Navajo Nation. We need to think
18 about alternatives and beyond 2019 what do we do. How do
19 we live? How do we change and go move forward to make use
20 of what we do have, the sun and the solar?

21 And at the same time, we have to think about
22 our employees that are at these companies. They need time.
23 They need time for everything to settle in. I think
24 retraining of some sort should be one of the decisions that
25 the companies should do for the employees at least so that

1 we can have a -- you know, a career, a future, something to
2 look for to help their -- them in their financial
3 situation.

4 But at the same time, you know, think of us
5 as well, those of us that have asthma, especially when the
6 winter comes like this, you know, we can't breathe. And we
7 don't know when we will breathe our last breath. Think
8 about that as well. Because I give, I'm saying, give you
9 that opportunity to 2019. Thank you.

10 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

11 Evelyn Singer. And then Wesley Betsuie. Did
12 I get it right? I got one right. All right.

13 MS. EVELYN SINGER: (Native language spoken.)

14 My name is Evelyn Singer. I'd like to
15 address this to the Department of Interior. I'm thankful
16 for our Navajo Nation president, Mr. Begaye, here and all
17 that are present here. And I just want to thank you and
18 for your comments, your whatever. You got to listen to us
19 complain and then everything well beyond.

20 But I've been with Peabody Coal for 37 years
21 now. I was hired as a scraper operator back in 1980. I
22 was with the Reclamation department for 25 years. And
23 because of my job, I learned all these equipments. I
24 started as a scraper operator. I learned how to run a
25 dozer. I learned how to run a water truck, and I learned

1 how to run a motor grader. And the last twelve years I've
2 been on a truck, coal truck. The big trucks and the end
3 dumps. And so all combined, you know, I'm happy and I'm
4 there. I'm enjoying my work.

5 And I'm -- also out of that came to mind
6 there's, I believe, 320 something employees there, and out
7 of that 99 percent of us is Native American, and we're very
8 proud. And the 1 percent are the bilagáanas and other
9 nationalities, but we're proud of them, too. So all in all
10 we're a family of up here. And as usual, that's the case.

11 And I just want to say, I'm thankful for the
12 time here and also being a coal miner, a woman coal miner,
13 I've accomplished a lot of things. I have a big family. I
14 have a lot of grandkids, and I'm a great grandma right now.
15 So I'm proud of that.

16 And also I have younger -- my grandkids
17 growing up seeking jobs. I have my children seeking other
18 jobs like, for example, I have a son that's, like somebody
19 brought up, our kids are going away doing other jobs in
20 other states. And that's what one of my sons is doing. So
21 on account of that, the younger -- our younger generation
22 need to be -- after we retire, after I retire, my kids and
23 grandkids will be able to be -- to take over what we're
24 doing. And I just want to say I'm proud of that.

25 And also somebody brought up, you know, I've

1 got a big house, and I'm very thankful for that, and on
2 account of this job I have. So I want this NGS to keep
3 going. I hope and pray, I hope and pray that we will
4 continue as a coal provider and electric -- electric
5 provider to all over the Arizona state, and that we'll be
6 here forever. Thank you.

7 MS. KRISTIN DARR: All right. Thank you.
8 Wesley Betsuie and then Willis Lynch. All
9 right.

10 MR. WESLEY BETSUIE: Hello. Thank you for
11 giving me the opportunity to speak. My name is Wesley
12 Betsuie.

13 (Native language spoken.)

14 I live in Tuba City, Arizona. Go Warriors.
15 I'm originally from Bodaway, Arizona, which is on the rim
16 of the Colorado River in the southwest here. So as this
17 NGS goes on, the members suffer, because to this day we
18 still don't have electricity and running water.

19 I'm an electrician in the mining industry for
20 twelve years now. I've worked all across the western U.S.
21 helped building mines. And for three years now I've been
22 working at Peabody here at Kayenta Mine and never have I
23 felt a bigger sense of ownership or bigger sense of pride
24 in the mine until I came to work for Peabody.

25 A lot of us, you know, we take pride in what

1 we do. I'm fortunate enough to have come back home to be
2 here part of the younger coal mining generation. And we
3 take a lot of pride in what we do because of the big
4 families that we have. And we help feed the local
5 economy -- economy, and there's a lot of lives that are
6 impacted in a positive ways from us.

7 And with that being said, Navajo Nation
8 president, Hopi president, the Department of Interior, keep
9 NGS going. Keep it running because we're not finished
10 mining.

11 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Willis and then
12 Helen Blackrock. Helena.

13 MR. WILLIS LYNCH: Good evening. My name is
14 Willis Lynch. I'm from Sanders, Arizona. And I'm an
15 electrician at the Peabody Coal mine. Before I get started
16 I'd like to thank those who support NGS as well as Peabody.
17 I'd like to thank our troops. And if you're a veteran, my
18 hat is off to you.

19 I've been in the coal business for about five
20 years, close to five years. And, man, let me tell you,
21 these coal miners are a different breed of people. And I
22 see them getting dragged through dirt, mud, rain, snow and
23 sacrifice blood, sweat, tears, and come back and ask for
24 seconds just to provide for their family. And fight for
25 their family as well as power to millions of homes.

1 I literally have been around this world twice
2 and learned people who share those characteristics or any
3 of those that are troops who serve this great nation. Now,
4 within those five years, we have fought to extend our
5 contract. We have been through bankruptcy. And here we
6 are now still fighting. It seemed like an uphill battle,
7 but yet we're still at full throttle. And the resiliency
8 that these guys have embedded in them surprises me.

9 Now, whether the outcome of this is, you
10 know, in our favor, NGS and Peabody, or not, I just want to
11 let you all know that we're not going to take this laying
12 down. So with that said, I just want to thank you guys for
13 being here and letting me speak.

14 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

15 Helena and then Nathaniel Sneddy.

16 MS. HELENA BLACKROCK: Good evening. I'm
17 Helena Blackrock. I've worked with Peabody for 37 years.
18 And I was very fortune enough to be there, and I travel
19 like some of these people going here or there to find work.
20 I was there for 37 years, 15 years with the explosives, 23
21 years driving a truck. And I just want to thank all of you
22 for being here and listening to the concerns that we have
23 today and telling you about it, Begaye and the Interior
24 Department.

25 And I'm just going to -- the way I see it

1 it's going to be a big impact on the town of Page and the
2 -- the two tribes and the southern tribe. And it's --
3 there is a lot of us that say that it's health issues.

4 But my dad worked there for -- he started in
5 '68. He worked there for about almost 40 years and he
6 never lost his hearing of anything working there. He never
7 said anything about his lungs. So he -- we lived there and
8 in that 24/7, 365 days a year. And it, right now, none of
9 us in the family, hasn't affected us or anything.

10 So I just like to support the NGS to keep
11 running. I understand that it put like 600, 650 million.
12 That's how much it cost them to build it. And they added
13 200 million more for the environmental control equipment.
14 And 420 million to put in sulfur, sulfur dioxide discovered
15 in the '90s. 45 million to reduce the nitrogen, oxide
16 emission control in '09 and '11.

17 And with this much invested in a power plant,
18 I believe that we should just keep it -- help come to a
19 solution so we can keep it running for everybody from
20 Peabody and the NGS and the local town here. And everybody
21 benefits from it, either through education, health-wise,
22 health service, and the transportation, the police.

23 We have a lot of things that we didn't have
24 up there. We used to walk, like, maybe 7 miles, 8 miles to
25 a bus stop before we had the mine going. And those are the

1 things that we had to do when we didn't have the money. We
2 didn't have the road and the bus to -- bus route to go in
3 our area.

4 And so I'm very thankful for what we have now
5 and what's going, and I'm just hoping that it will keep,
6 continue on. And thank you for listening.

7 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

8 Nathaniel and then Mark Fischer.

9 Mark? Oh, okay. Got you. I just like to
10 make eye contact. Mark Fischer.

11 MR. NATHANIEL SNEDDY: Hello. Good evening.
12 My name is Nate Sneddy. I just wanted to say that I'm in
13 favor of keeping Peabody going. It's mainly because I'm a
14 third generation miner, too. My grandpa worked up there 30
15 plus years, and he retired. My dad's been up there 30 plus
16 years, and he just retired last year.

17 So me being that, being out there on the
18 road, traveling for work, being a welder, it's hard being
19 out there away from your family, missing events. Seeing,
20 being out there coming home knowing that you didn't make
21 certain events, funerals, birthdays, weddings, and it takes
22 a toll. I mean, especially for the people that got to
23 travel for work. I mean, we try not to show it. We try to
24 be strong. We try to be there for our family, and it's
25 just so they can have a good life.

1 I mean, you don't want to be traveling,
2 pulling your kids in and out of school so they can be there
3 with you. You want them to have a stable home, place to
4 nest. This is where we're from. And I don't mind
5 sacrificing that if I have to so they can grow up. But
6 since I've been back for six years -- I've been up there
7 six years, and just like these people said, they've been up
8 there 30 plus years, 40 years. And I'm hoping to one day
9 maybe at least say that. To say, yeah, I've been -- I've
10 been up there. And I've put in my time, put in my blood
11 and sweat and tears.

12 And for us it's to us younger ones to keep it
13 going. And we're standing here beside our brothers and
14 sisters, both NGS and Peabody. And no matter what the
15 outcome, I know it's going to be a positive. And that's
16 the way we've got to continue to look at things.

17 I mean, people are going to have their
18 negative thoughts about it. But, you know, we're going to
19 keep on going. Just so we can provide for our families.
20 That's the main thing. It all comes down to our kids, our
21 grandkids just so they can have a better life.

22 So I'm in favor of keeping Peabody open and
23 the NGS, so hopefully one day I can say, I can retire and
24 put up my hard hat. Thank you.

25 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

1 Okay. Mark Fischer. And then
2 Rolandyn Smallcanyon.

3 MR. MARK FISCHER: Hello. I'm Mark Fischer.
4 I'm a dozer operator at Peabody Coal. I started out in
5 Big Stack, Montana, and ended up closing that mine down.
6 So I moved to Clinica, Colorado, to work for Peabody and
7 they closed that mine down. So the only mine left for me
8 to come to get my retirement was here at Kayenta, because
9 they closed Black Mesa along with Big Stack.

10 So I'm down here trying to get my retirement,
11 and these people here are all trying to get their
12 retirement. And for you to come in and say we're shutting
13 her down in two months, that just ain't right. You've --
14 this place is going to be displacing all these people.

15 I get to go home once a year to see my family
16 because I'm 1400 miles away one way. So it's hard for me
17 to make it home to see my family and stuff. These guys all
18 got their families living here. They got a big place here
19 to call home. I don't. I've got to go 1400 miles, and I
20 get to go back on vacation.

21 So I would like to see it worked out between
22 generating station and Navajo people for me to continue so
23 I can finish my retirement just like everybody else. And I
24 want to thank you all. Thank you.

25 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay.

1 Rolandyn Smallcanyon and then Greg Saganey. Got you.

2 Black hat. All right.

3 MR. ROLANDYN SMALLCANYON: (Native language
4 spoken.) I've been working up at Peabody for almost six
5 years now, and I'm a serviceman.

6 And thank you, Mr. President, for this time
7 and everybody else. And I just wrote down some of my stuff
8 that I'd like to read right now.

9 I would like to see NGS and Kayenta mine to
10 continue to operate, not only to 2019, but longer. This
11 would not only benefit the Navajo and Hopi tribes, the
12 local economies, and in general the whole state of AZ. But
13 more importantly, it would continue to benefit the families
14 of NGS and Kayenta mine employees and their extended
15 families.

16 Growing up as a child, we would move and
17 follow my dad, who was a welder, and traveled a lot to
18 follow jobs. He did this for many years, and I saw how
19 hard it was on my mom and my siblings. And I always knew
20 he wanted something better for his family. Then one day he
21 was blessed with a permanent job as a metal fabricator at
22 NGS and has been working there for over 25 years now.

23 The benefits of him getting that job was
24 immediate in that he stopped traveling and we got to see
25 him every day. He provided us with a comfortable

1 upbringing and put us through school.

2 Now, fast forward to today. I now have my
3 own family. I have four kids who mean the world to me.
4 They depend solely on me as I am the only provider in my
5 home. They not only look to me to provide food and put a
6 roof over their head, but they expect me to be there for
7 them every day.

8 I know that being there for them daily is
9 very important to them, and I made that promise to them
10 ever since I started working up here that I would be home
11 for them every day. And this is what being employed at
12 Kayenta mine has done for me.

13 It not only provides a comfortable living for
14 my family and the opportunity to put them through school
15 and whatever they want to pursue after high school, but I
16 get to see my kids every day. I get to hug them and tell
17 each one of them that I love them face to face and not over
18 the phone.

19 It has also allowed me to stay at home in
20 Shonto and raise my family, which was very important to me.
21 I did not want to leave the reservation and raise my family
22 anywhere else.

23 So in closing, just as NGS has provided a job
24 for my dad so that he could have a chance to provide a good
25 life for my siblings and I, Peabody has now given me the

1 chance to provide for my family and put them through school
2 so that they can go on and do great things for the
3 reservation and for everybody to contribute to society. So
4 thank you. Thank you for this time.

5 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Greg, and then
6 Marvin Russell.

7 MR. GREG SAGANEY: Good afternoon. My name
8 is Greg Saganey. I'm from Kayenta, Arizona. And the rains
9 that we're having right up here are rare for Page, and this
10 is the good rain. Good signs that are coming with this
11 rain saying good things will come to us. And the seasons
12 of this rain, if you notice the yucca plants. This one
13 don't have the flowers no more. They fell out. But if you
14 notice all the red yucca plants out in the area, they're
15 blooming and saying that it's going to rain.

16 All this rain that's coming out to this area
17 is a blessing for all of us. So in saying, I want to have
18 this blessing turned towards the NGS and Peabody to keep
19 going. Keep us out there.

20 I have a large family. I have nine girls and
21 three boys and 22 grandkids. And I like to stay here with
22 them and keep working here at Peabody. I do not want to
23 abandon my post. So please, keep this NGS and Peabody
24 going. Thank you.

25 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Marvin Russell, and

1 then Terrence Williams.

2 MR. MARVIN RUSSELL: Good evening.

3 (Native language spoken.)

4 My name is Marvin Russell, and I am of the Y
5 generation. I am a first shift driller shooter, and I've
6 been working at the mine for a total of four years. I
7 enjoy my work. I take pride in what I do because I know --
8 I've helped places other than Navajo Nation.

9 When I was a little boy, I grew up with
10 Peabody being there. My father would get up at 11:00 p.m.
11 to go to work from midnight until 8:00 o'clock in the
12 morning. At the time, I thought my father would -- at the
13 time, I thought my father worked for a pooping company,
14 because I just barely started to sound out words.

15 Peabody has supported my father, my
16 relatives, my uncles, my aunties, and other of my friends
17 families. And let me not forget to mention supporting the
18 family I have now. My wife and my two daughters mean so
19 much to me. I would do anything to keep them safe and
20 protected.

21 My wife attends school at USU, and she was
22 denied financial aid, financial assistance because of the
23 place I work at. So therefore, I have to pay it out of my
24 own pocket.

25 I am thankful to return home to my family

1 every day. In most jobs they don't offer these types of
2 benefits. If NGS were to ever shut down, I would let
3 actions speak for itself. My heart goes out to the
4 families that would be affected. I myself would be
5 devastated.

6 In conclusion, coal mined on Black Mesa is
7 American made. We do not have to import this product into
8 this country. Thank you.

9 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Terrence, and then
10 Ben Blackhorse.

11 Where is Ben?

12 Oh, I see you. Okay. Thank you.

13 MR. TERRENCE WILLIAMS: Hello. My name is
14 Terrence Williams. I'm from Lukachukai, Arizona. Every
15 day I drive two hours to work one way. And I do this for
16 one reason, my family. To provide, to secure our
17 livelihood; and most important, our self-reliance without
18 any dependence on government assistance or any of that
19 tribal assistance. I've never seen that.

20 When I got out of the high school, I left the
21 reservation with no experience. And I spent 15 years out
22 there. Having -- working from construction to mining
23 companies just to come back and get hired here at Peabody.
24 And when I started working at Peabody, I listened to my
25 fellow union brothers and sisters, and they talk about how

1 they got there with no experience when they first started,
2 and I envy that. I see them, some of them retire. Some of
3 them that are close to retirement. And I would like that
4 for myself and my family.

5 And, you know, like everybody says, it's
6 hard. It's hard when you're living, you know, and you're
7 out there and you have to leave the reservation for work,
8 and you come home one, two days. And you have to leave,
9 and you watch your kids come up to you and they're crying
10 because you have to leave again.

11 And they ask you when you're coming back and
12 you don't know, because sometimes you have to work extra
13 hours just to make a good paycheck. And I don't expect
14 anything from anybody except for what these two hands and
15 my gift, what I learned and my experience. Just so that I
16 can put food on the table and a roof over their head.

17 And that's all -- you know, that's all I
18 want, because it's my table for us and for our families and
19 for our self-reliance. Because every day when you're
20 looking at the news, that's all people say on the news.
21 Unemployment rate's high. And you shut this place down,
22 that's what -- you're adding us to it. And that's all I
23 got to say about that, you know. Thank you.

24 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

25 Okay. Ben. And then Lorenzo Daw.

1 MR. BEN BLACKHORSE: Good evening. My name
2 is Benjamin Blackhorse. I'm a dry line operator. And I'd
3 just like to welcome everyone here and say thank you for
4 all the officials here. I'm a dry line operator, and it
5 gets reclaim. We get safety environmental excellence
6 award, and we got a lot of young coal miners here ready,
7 willing and able to take over, so they're trained
8 professionals.

9 And we have always adapted, and we will
10 persevere. So we're going to hold Trump to his word. So
11 he said he's going to support coal miners. And don't flick
12 off the light switch to the southwest. That's all I would
13 like to say.

14 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

15 Okay. Lorenzo.

16 And then Supervisor Fowler?

17 There you are. You'll be after him. Okay.

18 MR. LORENZO DAW: Hello. My name is
19 Lorenzo Daw. I'm employed presently as a dozer operator at
20 the Peabody Kayenta mine. I've been employed for 33 years.
21 I've done different -- different occupations for them. And
22 we've learned -- I've learned a lot, so I'd like to thank
23 Peabody for that.

24 My family, one sister and two brothers has
25 had an employment history with Peabody. One of the

1 greatest benefit is to live and work close to home with a
2 good paying job. Peabody is an important part of my
3 personal life. I've been able to support four children
4 through college and post graduate schools. Otherwise it
5 wouldn't have been possible.

6 At a major university, state tuition is over
7 10,000 or more dollars for two semesters. This doesn't
8 include books, supplies, food, rent, and personal expenses.
9 I'm told by my children with the financial support staying
10 focused on studies are easier. I believe education is to
11 succeed, and I value education.

12 The benefit does not endure. The skills and
13 knowledge required to education passes to every child in
14 school, every person who sees a doctor, actually, the whole
15 community benefits. Let us continue to work so our
16 children and our grandchildren will get a decent education.

17 So if Peabody does not only bring economic
18 benefits, but also grows into benefit and educational
19 benefits for the Navajo and Hopi nation. If one person's
20 story, it is times by 325 skilled workers times 10 Navajo
21 Nation per capita income.

22 I'm lost.

23 Okay. Here we go. If NGS closes, the
24 economy's devastation for Navajo, Hopi tribes loss of
25 revenues through royalties. We as employees have a great

1 impact on our communities. These men and coworkers are
2 skilled and hard workers. Most of us commute long ways
3 every day to work. We want to continue to work and keep
4 NGS and Peabody open.

5 Our people that benefit -- depends on
6 benefits that we pass to them to continue to grow as
7 communities and the nation. So I'd like to thank NGS
8 people here. We're with you in all this, and I hope we
9 keep it running.

10 And I'd like to thank the Department of
11 Interior for being here to listen to us. So thank you very
12 much.

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you. Okay.
14 Supervisor Fowler. And then Mayor Diaz.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: With a K.

16 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Am I still saying it
17 wrong? I know he's here.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Diak with a K, not a Z.

19 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Oh, okay. I guess I can't
20 read either. So that's awesome. Okay.

21 Well, Mayor, you're after Supervisor Fowler,
22 wherever you are.

23 SUPERVISOR LENA FOWLER: Thank you. (Native
24 language spoken.) Thank you. Thank you for being here.
25 We have met in various places, in D.C., in Phoenix, and you

1 brought rain. Thank you. And it's really pretty driving
2 in with the rain and I hear snow in Flagstaff, so that's
3 really great. Thank you. And thank you for this
4 opportunity to speak to you again.

5 I am the Coconino County Board of Supervisor.
6 And you're in my district, District 5. Coconino County is
7 the second largest county in the country. And my district,
8 District 5, if it was -- if it was a standalone county, it
9 would be the 45th largest county in the country. We're a
10 very vast county, rural county. And we have, in Coconino
11 County we have 13 Navajo communities, and NGS is located
12 within our county, our county here.

13 And I am concerned about the proposed closure
14 of NGS. The Board of Supervisors has passed a resolution
15 asking for an extension of the lease. And we are in a
16 situation where we are not ready for NGS to close. It will
17 impact this region negatively. In the sense that we're
18 very concerned about our communities.

19 This is our job generator here. We have high
20 degree people working there. And it keeps our population,
21 our family home here. If NGS were to close, it will really
22 impact our taxing district. We have our schools, our
23 hospitals, our library, our fire stations. Those are all
24 going to be impacted, as well Coconino County.

25 Our service is going to be severely impacted

1 to the -- we can provide direct service to the communities.
2 And should NGS close, it's going to -- just the primary
3 numbers for school district alone is going to be 169
4 students that are going to -- that are going to end up
5 having to leave the schools. That means fewer teachers,
6 possibly closing buildings. Less dollars to our hospital
7 district. So maybe some staff may be let go.

8 And we're concerned about our housing market
9 because these are people that are the homeowners in this --
10 in the communities. These are workers that are not just
11 providing for themselves and their children. They provide
12 for extended families. And look at them. They are very
13 passionate people. They care about their community. They
14 volunteer in the community. And we're concerned about
15 population loss. Population loss, we're concerned about
16 our demographics.

17 Since the announcement -- well, actually,
18 prior to the announcement, when I was elected in 2010, I
19 learned that NGS was the center of discussion. And at the
20 time, it was announced that it was going to close in 2044.

21 So we said, okay, what do we -- what is it
22 that we're doing to prepare for this eventual closer?

23 Well, there wasn't really much going on, so I
24 started the regional economic outlook initiative. Really
25 looking at our schools, employers, and studied the region.

1 What do we have? I even started taking classes on economic
2 development, and saying, okay, what does it mean to develop
3 an economy? Especially in a region as diverse as ours.

4 We have Utah border right here, and we have
5 Arizona. We're right in between. We have Navajo Nation,
6 and we have the Glen Canyon National Park service. The
7 region is very diverse geographically population-wise, and
8 we're a tourist town. So what does this mean?

9 So we started working on the education part.
10 We're going to lose high paying positions. That means it's
11 going -- our education level is going to fall.

12 Now, when you study economic development,
13 your education labor force is what businesses look at. So
14 we started -- I started looking at that and realized that
15 Coconino Community College is about to close its doors.
16 It lost its bond election twice.

17 So I started asking the higher education
18 centers within our region to come together, and they
19 actually agreed. Navajo Community Dine College, NAU,
20 Coconino Community College, and Navajo Technical University
21 came together, and they're starting the higher education
22 center.

23 We're just at the beginning of planning our
24 future here in this region. So I ask of you, and I've been
25 asking the owners of NGS to keep the place open.

1 And I want to thank our president
2 Russell Begaye. He's been really working very hard on
3 behalf of the Navajo Nation who I see in the audience. And
4 just really looking at to see what the future holds.

5 So we are going to need help to help
6 ourselves. We're not asking for help as a give out. We're
7 already working. We are already planning ahead. We have a
8 conference tomorrow where we're going to be planning for
9 our future.

10 And so I ask of you, the federal government
11 and the NGS owners and everybody else, to help us help
12 ourselves. So thank you so much. Again, thanks.

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

14 Okay. Where is our mayor whose name I
15 evidently cannot read or say. I'll show you. It looks
16 like a D.

17 MAYOR DIAK: It is a D, and it's like. It's
18 like kayak spelled differently.

19 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Well, it looks like a Z,
20 too, so that's -- I'm sorry.

21 MAYOR DIAK: Next time I'll do a better job
22 of my printing.

23 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Or me with my readings.

24 MAYOR DIAK: I'd like to thank the Department
25 of Interior for this opportunity to come to Page and listen

1 to some of our people here. As you can see, there's a
2 great number here. We are very concerned about NGS's
3 possible closure. And just very simply, as an economic
4 impact to our region, as you drove up here, you saw that
5 there was a long way between here and there with a lot of
6 nothing.

7 So Page is an economic base for a large vast
8 area of the reservation. From Tuba City north, there is no
9 shopping at all except Page and not until you get to
10 Flagstaff. Or going north further from here, 6 miles out
11 of the town you reach the border of Utah, and then you can
12 go another 170 miles to St. George, next shopping base.

13 So when you take just the simple numbers, if
14 you take 3,000 jobs out of the region and their families
15 alone, that is a huge impact. If you take that and now
16 take that about ancillary jobs that it will affect, such as
17 here in Page, we have certain businesses that rely on the
18 power plant and those good paying jobs to support their
19 businesses. They're non-tourism related businesses.

20 You take that many people out of the region,
21 those businesses will not be able to keep their doors open.
22 It's not a matter of whether or not they will be able to
23 stay open. They will not be able to stay open. So you
24 take those things and take away a Walmart, take away an Ace
25 Hardware, and take away an optometrist, take away a clinic.

1 Those things all have an affect on other related things
2 themselves. That in itself can be destroying.

3 We have a very strong tourism market here.
4 And just recently the Daily Sun did an article that I was
5 part of. And I want to go on record to say when that
6 article came out, it seemed like I may not be in favor of
7 keeping the plant. That's farthest from the truth. It was
8 taken out of context. And they talked to a lot of tourism
9 people that said that they wouldn't be affected by the loss
10 of NGS.

11 That's true. Their business would not be.
12 But when that gentleman or those people decide they want to
13 go down and get their kids their sunglasses -- or excuse
14 me -- their eyeglasses, they may have to go to St. George
15 or Flagstaff to do so. If they're needing specialty care,
16 surgeries or something like that, they're going to have to
17 go to Flagstaff or to Dixie Regional and as far away as
18 St. George. So those things all have a very, very big
19 economic impact on our community.

20 The jobs can be replaced. As we move forward
21 in tourism, we can replace those jobs, because our tourism
22 is growing at a very, very fast rate. But you cannot
23 replace a \$40 an hour job with a \$9 an hour job in the
24 hospitality industry. Those jobs will absolutely not
25 support the top -- the economy that we're -- we have here.

1 Page has a population of approximately 8,000
2 people, but we serve a community of over 40,000 people in
3 the region. That is huge. You take Page out of that
4 equation, and the region suffers. Not just Page, the
5 region, all of northern Arizona. That's why it's important
6 to keep the plant going.

7 As early as December of this last year, SRP
8 and NGS were planning to close in 2030. All of those
9 things were in the works to make that happen. In a matter
10 of weeks, we've made a determination that it's no longer
11 economical to operate that plant.

12 Based on what? Based on a spot check of
13 natural gas versus coal? What is the history of these
14 markets? What does it mean to move forward?

15 The longevity of NGS is not just another two
16 years or to 2030, its life span as far as reaching 2044.
17 We're not talking about the closure of NGS. What we're
18 talking about here is NGS moving forward without SRP, and
19 how we will get there and replace those jobs.

20 And I'm glad to see that the Navajo Nation is
21 well represented here, because I think what it's going to
22 take is a partnership with the Navajo Nation, the Bureau of
23 Reclamation, and other private entities to do that. I
24 would like them to explore the fact, do away with plant
25 leases, do away with royalties, and trade that for

1 partnerships where you'll be far better off economically
2 for the long run and into the future.

3 With that, I don't have a whole heck of a lot
4 else to say. I really appreciate the opportunity to speak
5 for you and, hopefully, you're listening, which I know you
6 are. You've got a lot of things you got to weigh, and the
7 decisions to make are going to be hard. We hope that you
8 take all of our conversation here with all of these people
9 into consideration as you move forward

10 And I thank you for your time this evening.

11 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you.

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Next up I have
14 Bert Parrish. Followed by Adrean --

15 I cannot read your last name from the City of
16 Page. Adrean? Pander. Okay. Perfect.

17 MR. BERT PARRISH: Good evening. My name is
18 Bert Parrish. I'm a groundsman over at the Peabody Energy
19 coal mine there. I just wanted to let you guys know that I
20 came from working off the reservation for many years,
21 working from project to project. It's not always fun, you
22 know. Some guys may know more equipment, more than you and
23 you may get bumped off by somebody that's just a little bit
24 closer to the boss than you are.

25 So getting hired here, allowed me to be able

1 to provide for my son and my family basically without
2 having to worry about, is this project that I'm about to
3 finish going to take me to another one. But also another
4 thing that I just wanted to touch base on and let you guys
5 know, is it also gave me an opportunity to work right next
6 to my dad. I'm a third generation miner myself. His dad
7 was, but he never got to meet him.

8 But funny thing was, it actually gave me an
9 opportunity to work right next to him, make fun of him.
10 You guys know, you know, I make fun of all of you guys.
11 You know, we get on the radio, hey, you guys aren't moving.
12 Come on let's go. But --

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think so it's the other
14 way around.

15 MR. BERT PARRISH: But like I said, it gives
16 me a lot of sense of pride knowing that, you know, I got to
17 work at the place where my dad works as well, you know. As
18 some of these younger guys have said or being able to
19 retire there would be desirable as well and not to have to
20 move, to go off the reservation, go away from home to
21 provide for our families.

22 But just a little bit of extra information,
23 sometimes on my days off, I did help a brother of mine
24 that's also a board member over at the Shonto chapter,
25 which is also a big advocate for solar energy. And solar

1 energy, it's really good for an individual household.
2 Systems can be built to provide energy for those rural
3 areas.

4 But as for power plant, that's not very
5 viable. Because it takes about ten acres of land in order
6 to produce one megawatt of energy. And that's -- in this
7 Page power plant is well over 2,000 megawatts a day. So, I
8 mean, that much of land just to even equal one of those
9 units, that's going to be much larger area and it's going
10 to push more people off of the land and around that
11 parkland just to make it a solar plant.

12 So I heard you guys, those that are
13 listening, keep the power plant as it is. We got miners,
14 younger generation that are coming up that are going to be
15 there. And want to stay there and don't want to leave. So
16 again, I urge you guys keep this place open and Kayenta
17 mine continue as well. Thank you.

18 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

19 Adrean, and I do have your card, too. It's
20 coming. Two Adrians, and then followed by Joe Bergen.

21 MR. ADREAN AUGUSTINE: Hi. My name is
22 Adrean Augustine. I came here tonight in support of
23 operations continuing at NGS to 2019 and beyond. My father
24 worked out there and retired from NGS, and me as a child
25 growing up, I received all the benefits of medical, vision,

1 dental and everything else that came with the job, and it
2 made my life a lot better. And so it did the same for a
3 lot of the children around the area.

4 I work for a local business now that was --
5 saw the economic impact of the recession from all sorts of
6 tradesmen in and around the area. And what it did during
7 that time was it just caused mayhem, destruction. A lot of
8 these people were deeply impacted and struggling throughout
9 those five to seven years.

10 And a lot of them still haven't, you know,
11 recovered from that impact. We still have tradesmen that
12 are out of work from ironworkers to electricians to
13 millwrights, fabricators, welders. And the NGS power plant
14 give them a better opportunity locally rather than seeking
15 jobs off the reservation.

16 Same with Kayenta coal mine. I worked for
17 Headwaters, and we provided fly ash for everything from the
18 City of Las Vegas to the installations that are built
19 around Nevada that made a super strong product. That in
20 itself was a huge benefit from the so-called waste that it
21 provided.

22 I've seen the power plant go from dirtying
23 the sky here in northern Arizona to cleaning up its act
24 within the past two decades. The effects of it aren't
25 really, you know, all that what they say it is.

1 I would rather see the power plant continue
2 to 2044 for the benefits of the community, the people here,
3 northern Arizona, the Navajo Nation, the state of Arizona,
4 and the best interests of the feds. And continuing to
5 provide power to the Central Arizona Canal Project. I,
6 myself, would love to see that, as I'm pretty sure
7 everybody else here as well in support of it.

8 I think that sums up what I got to say for
9 tonight. Thank you. And I ask that you make a good choice
10 for everybody here and think about everybody else that
11 couldn't be here. Thank you.

12 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

13 Joe, and then Adrian Herder.

14 MR. JOE BERGEN: Didn't think there was going
15 to be this many people here. I was born and raised in Tuba
16 City. My mom was (Native language spoken). I retired from
17 the Navajo Nation. And I worked for the Navajo Nation for
18 26 years. And during that time, I knew that the power
19 plants would eventually start closing down.

20 I did not hear anybody here mention
21 alternative energy, alternative resources of income. How
22 are we going to make money to hire individuals? I read
23 about it in the Navajo Times. I see all the promises that
24 are made by our own government.

25 I own three companies. I own

1 Sacred Mountain, LLC. I own Lenapi, LLC; Lenapi
2 Development Corporation, LLC. And I also created another
3 company called Native Helium Development.

4 What we do is I attempted to utilize my
5 services. I went to school off the reservation to get my
6 undergraduate and got it from Loyola University in Chicago.
7 I got my MBA in finance from Syracuse University; came back
8 to help my tribe. And at that time, I was hired by
9 Peter McDonald and I worked through seven or eight
10 different chairmen.

11 And what I want to say is: I couldn't get
12 any kind of development for my companies into Navajo Nation
13 even though I met with the administrative executive
14 offices. I met with economic development, and I met with
15 the tribal council.

16 So through our Lenapi Development
17 Corporation, we made an agreement and got a total economic
18 development for Papua New Guinea, which is off the coast of
19 northeast Australia. We've got 30,000 employees. We have
20 18 solar farms going in right now. We've got four Class 3,
21 one star casinos. We've got a bank going in. We've got
22 wind generations. We've got a hundred wind turbs
23 (phonetic) going in.

24 All of that can go -- okay. All of that can
25 be very helpful to the Navajo Nation. We just have to

1 think and get things done and follow what we promised our
2 people. And that's what I'm bringing back to the Navajo
3 Nation. Thank you.

4 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

5 Okay. Adrian Herder, and then Elvira Fuller.

6 Where is Elvira?

7 MR. ADRIAN HERDER: (Native language spoken.)

8 Hello, everybody. My name is Adrian Herder,
9 and I'm from the community of Hard Rock. And I'm coming to
10 you all as a community member, a sheep herder, and also a
11 student, a college student.

12 So with that in mind, being a sheep herder
13 and also a college student majoring in fitness and
14 wellness. The well-being of our people and the land was
15 one of the main objectives that come -- that I interact
16 with. And so with that being the well-being of the people
17 and also the land looking to the future, and all those
18 things, and so that's one of the main where I come to you
19 as an individual. And so with that, I would like to read
20 my little statement here that I've prepared.

21 So there is no longer a market for coal.
22 Declining energy market prices and rising production costs
23 that made the power produced by the plant more expensive
24 than power sold in the energy market. NGS is no longer
25 competitive. These factors are not likely to change

1 leaving the plants in financial viability and doubt
2 regardless of who owns it.

3 Who owns it? A substantial subsidy will be
4 needed to keep the plant operational.

5 CAP, Central Arizona Project, the largest
6 consumer of NGS power says the agency could have acquired
7 the power in 2016 for 38.5 million less than it paid for
8 power from the broader energy market instead of coming from
9 NGS.

10 We need to move beyond coal, beyond NGS. We
11 need our water from the Colorado that has been tied to the
12 NGS since 1969. We need full reclamation of coal
13 combustion waste. We need to diversify our economy.

14 So that's the statement that I have, and
15 thank you all your allowing me to come up here and speak.

16 And (Native language spoken).

17 MS. KRISTIN DARR: All right. Thank you.

18 All right. Which one of you fellows left
19 your pink phone in the bathroom?

20 Okay. Elvira and then Garrett Bennett.

21 Where is Garrett? Got you. Okay. All
22 right.

23 Go ahead.

24 MS. ELVIRA FULLER: My name is Elvira Fuller
25 and just to let you know, my husband's right here,

1 Felix Fuller. I am glad that you guys are here to listen
2 to what we have to say, our Navajo Nation president and
3 everybody else that's here.

4 My husband, when he asked me that he wanted
5 to run for chapter president and he wanted to run for the
6 councilman or any other type of position, I told him, "You
7 need to remember to listen to the people. The people are
8 the ones that voted you in." And so we have all of our
9 council delegates are out there, a lot of the people here,
10 a lot of chapter members have went and approved resolutions
11 for the NGS to continue.

12 I would like to see it go past 2019. My dad,
13 he used to work for -- as a welder for Peabody, and all the
14 Peabody workers are here. I lost my mom and my dad -- my
15 Mom and my sister in a vehicle accident. And you guys are
16 the one that donated the money so their funeral expense
17 could be covered. Thank you for that.

18 And when I turned 18 years old, my dad told
19 me that I was not living under his roof no more. I needed
20 to go get an education. And because of what my mom
21 instilled in me, to be -- to help people, I went into
22 social work.

23 And with my husband here, he encouraged me.
24 So when I graduated, I came back to the Navajo tribe to
25 help the people. I see a lot of the financial stability

1 that we're going to lose with Hopi tribe and with the
2 Navajo tribe if this lease is not approved.

3 The other thing that I see is all the monies
4 that are donated from NGS, from Peabody that the employees
5 have contributed to women's shelter, to every type of
6 project that I can think of.

7 I started working with the domestic violence
8 shelter in Kayenta, and I've seen all the problems there.
9 I worked here to open this women's shelter here in Page,
10 and I worked with Shonto School, and now I work with the
11 Arizona State, all as social workers. I love my job. It
12 was my husband's income here that helped me. It was my
13 dad's income.

14 So thank you, you guys, for listening to what
15 we have to say here. And I'm for continuing with the lease
16 for the -- thank you.

17 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

18 Okay. Garrett is making his way over. And
19 then after that Norman Honie, H-o-n-i-e. Okay.

20 MR. GARRETT BENNETT: Good evening. My name
21 is Garrett Bennett.

22 (Native language spoken.)

23 Welcome. It's good. I'm an employee here at
24 Navajo Generating Station. I've been here 33 years. And
25 I'm very grateful. I want to say welcome to all my

1 brothers and sisters from the mine, my brothers and sisters
2 from the plant. And I guess for me, like I said, I've been
3 very fortunate.

4 This operation and the way I understand it is
5 this is a government operation to build this power plant on
6 the reservation to use Navajo coal, Navajo workforce, and
7 it's worked for all these years. It's allowed us to
8 realize what it's like to live in a working economy.

9 I too, share -- you know, I own a home. I
10 put my kids through college. They're doing well. We're
11 community -- we're contributing to our livelihoods, all of
12 us. And it's because of the government. You guys made it
13 happen. The Navajo government, the United States
14 government.

15 What I'm trying to understand is it's been
16 working all these years. We still have a very efficiently
17 run operation. We maintain it at a high level. We get
18 awards every year. And the only thing I can -- that comes
19 back is the ownership.

20 The bureau was willing to go forward, SRP was
21 willing to go forward, but we had a couple of other owners
22 that were legislated out of coal in their own states,
23 California and Nevada. And five years ago, we all gathered
24 and went to Window Rock and lobbied hard within our own
25 government to extend this lease from '19 to '44, and we did

1 it. It was a struggle. It was hard. It made us go
2 against one another, and here we are again.

3 So I guess my request would be to the owners.
4 Because the owners are the ones that can make it all go
5 away. We were set to run to '44. The owners, you know,
6 the greed, and the -- we all are greedy to some extent.

7 But it's not fair for us to have to relocate.
8 You know, I have also gained many skills. I have
9 marketable skills that I can use. But the owners whether
10 SRP wants to stay or go, I understand that. But my pleas
11 to the ownership of those entities that they can step up
12 and keep this fine machine -- it's like an old Cadillac
13 that you prize -- keep it going and keep what the
14 government made in place. Thank you.

15 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

16 Norman and then Jennifer Taliman.

17 MR. NORMAN HONIE: (Native language spoken.)

18 My name is Norman Honie. I am of the Tewa
19 and Hopi tribe. And I noticed that Dwight is here in the
20 audience, and I believe that he's from the same village
21 that I am.

22 I am the director of the Hopi tribe's office
23 of mining and mineral resources. But most of my statements
24 will be from a tribal member perspective.

25 Now, when I first started working as a

1 reclamation technician for the Hopi tribe, there was a lot
2 of struggles between the, both the Hopi tribe, Navajo
3 Nation, and the company. But I'm glad to say that today
4 things are much, much better. We have a good relationship
5 with the company leadership and, you know, I'm proud to say
6 that I was part of that.

7 Now, some years back during Chairman
8 Shingoitewa chairmanship, he designated me to be a part of
9 the visibility of transport transmission. And that studied
10 all the air transports, from the power plants, offshore
11 shipping vehicles, dust, you name it, it was in the report.
12 And I was surprised at how much fugitive dust and other
13 sources of pollution, where they come from.

14 So you know, at that time, then I said, well,
15 the power plants are stationary, and that's what are being
16 targeted. But you know, there's a lot of other fugitive
17 dust and contamination from other sources.

18 Now, our tribal government's revenue comes
19 from the royalty payments and water payments. And that's
20 85 percent of our revenue. And if that were to go away, at
21 least 300 to 350 people would lose their jobs, and that
22 would have a devastating effect on the small businesses
23 that operate all out in Hopi and, you know, rely heavily on
24 tribal employees' payrolls.

25 And, of course, the employees that lose their

1 jobs, would have to go either to the nearby municipalities
2 or to the cities to find jobs. And guess what? They'll
3 take their children, their grandchildren with them. And
4 what happens, they begin to lose their cultural, religious
5 and traditional values.

6 And that's what's happening right now. You
7 know, some of our youngsters when they participate in
8 ceremonies, they don't really know what the songs are about
9 or what our, really our cultural values are. And this I'm
10 afraid is going to continue to happen if the plant shuts
11 down and the mining operation.

12 So take that into consideration. And I'd
13 also tell that to the outside groups who have attempted or
14 are still attempting to close down both the mining
15 operation and the power plant.

16 You know very little about our cultural,
17 traditional and religious values, and you don't know how
18 important those are to both of us, both tribes. You know,
19 us Native Americans, we're all brothers and sisters. We
20 pray to the great spirits. And, you know, that's important
21 to all of us, not just Hopi, not just Navajo, but all
22 Native Americans in Indian Country. You know, that's a
23 value that we're never going to forget.

24 And so what I want to encourage
25 President Begaye to cooperate with Hopi Chairman

1 Herman Honanie, because it's a united voice, we will have a
2 stronger voice and possibly save the two mining operations.
3 Thank you.

4 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Jennifer, and then
5 Cheryl Secody.

6 Cheryl? There you are. Okay.

7 Did I say that right?

8 I did. Okay.

9 MS. JENNIFER TALIMAN: Hi. My name is
10 Jennifer Taliman Solee. I just came today because I
11 couldn't sleep last night and this morning. And it just
12 touched me that I should be here.

13 So I'm going to ask and probably the only
14 time I'll see all the employees here. I'm going to ask you
15 guys to bow with me so we can pray. Okay.

16 (Prayer spoken.)

17 And one thing that I want to say is that I
18 think that with -- when these start to come forward, the
19 Navajo Nation needs to make laws to monitor
20 environmentalist groups like the Grand Canyon Trust and
21 Sierra Club. They've come into our nation and hired Diné
22 grass root people for their agenda. And I think -- I think
23 they need to be monitored. And I think that those groups,
24 also, I think they should disclose who's getting paid and
25 who's their donors. Thank you.

1 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Cheryl, and then
2 Erwin Marks.

3 Erwin? There you are. Okay. You're after
4 Cheryl.

5 MS. CHERYL SECODY: Good evening, everybody.
6 My name is Cheryl Secody. I like to thank everyone. The
7 Department of Interior, the Navajo Nation president, Page
8 mayor, veteran employees for -- for coming. And I speak on
9 behalf of all the students who are in school now. And
10 they're going into trade techs, colleges, university now
11 and into the future. And my name is Cheryl Secody, like I
12 said.

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Cheryl, we're having a
14 real hard time hearing you. She needs to hear you so she
15 can get down what you're saying.

16 MS. CHERYL SECODY: Can you hear me?

17 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Yeah. Put your microphone
18 right up there.

19 MS. CHERYL SECODY: Okay. In English my name
20 is Cheryl Secody. In Navajo we say our clans to know
21 where, who we are. So because everybody, 90 percent of
22 everybody that's here is Navajo, I'm going to introduce
23 myself so they know who I am.

24 (Native language spoken.)

25 This morning I was trying to find out where

1 the meeting was here and what time it was. And I got on
2 the internet and I noticed that there was Beijing on there.
3 And I thought, oh, oh, my gosh this is, like, really big.
4 It goes all the way to Beijing. I wonder if they're going
5 to lose their jobs, too, and all these things are going to
6 happen to them just like what's going to happen and might
7 happen to us.

8 And -- but because of the royalty that's
9 coming from Peabody and from SRP and NGS, our Navajo
10 students are going to school. They are going to college,
11 and trade techs, and universities.

12 And my husband and I, we've been through
13 that. We had our shares and ramen noodles just like you.
14 I know you went to school to get to where you are at now,
15 to be where you are at now. But he got his -- we had three
16 children, and he was a full-time student, full-time
17 employee.

18 So he went to work, went to school at 6:00 in
19 the morning to 3:00 in the evening. But he got out at 2:30
20 to get to work at 3:00 and to get out of the work at 2:00
21 for four years. And -- but because of the his hard work,
22 he got 4.0 GPA.

23 And I just -- I just wanted to say that
24 because of the royalties, a lot of our kids are going to
25 school. And -- and I just want to tell you to help our

1 younger generation get to where they're going and to help
2 them bloom so they can help their people here. And thank
3 you.

4 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Erwin, and then
5 Sam Sullivan, Jr. Got you.

6 MR. ERWIN MARKS: Good evening. My name is
7 Erwin Marks, and I'm an employee at the Navajo Generating
8 Station. I wanted to just say a few things. There's
9 twelve points I have on here. I'll just go through it real
10 quick and just for the lack of time.

11 But I understand that the negotiations are
12 almost complete, and I'm sure that most of us in this room
13 are very interested in what's in that agreement.
14 And I'm sure soon enough we will find out what those are.

15 But from this point forward, the ball is now
16 in the Navajo Nation council's court, and it's imperative
17 that they vote to approve the lease extension. And as a --
18 we as tribal members, we need to get with our council
19 delegates and to educate them on why it's important to get
20 this lease extension.

21 And I just want to point out about three
22 things that it could affect, or it does affect. And one
23 is, of course, the hundreds of workers that would lose
24 their job if the lease extension doesn't happen.

25 About 25 percent of the Navajo Nation budget

1 will go away if the lease extension isn't signed. And I'll
2 just give you an example of one business. The NTUA will
3 lose about 40 percent of their business if the lease
4 extension isn't signed. So that just kind of gives you a
5 taste of why it's so important to get this lease extension
6 signed before July 1st.

7 Otherwise, really, we have no other option.
8 All the options go away if the lease extension isn't
9 signed. And all the talk and all the ideas that we have,
10 we will never be able to be given an opportunity to explore
11 those. And the lease extension will give us two more years
12 to see if we can work on some solutions. See if we can
13 come up with anything.

14 And I don't look at this as an impossibility
15 because NGS or Salt River Project is a list of companies
16 that I've worked for. And I've seen in my career a lot of
17 things that happened and, you know, companies being sold,
18 companies being bought, companies being taken over by new
19 ownership, contracts canceled, so and on and so forth.

20 So what we're looking at is, you know, we
21 need to find new owners, and we also need to cut costs. To
22 me those are the two primary things that we have to look at
23 NGS and Peabody in order to even be remotely competitive.

24 And so the two years gives us, at least for
25 our individual families, time to prepare and time to plan

1 on the what ifs. Otherwise, if the lease isn't signed,
2 then we're looking at severance, you know, from the
3 companies we work for, you know, sometimes this year.

4 And so basically it also doesn't give any of
5 the interested parties any time to explore and come up with
6 ideas to, you know, various solutions that could possibly
7 work. And so my -- my plea is to the Navajo Nation
8 council, and as tribal members, that we need to contact
9 them, and we need to educate them, and we need to make sure
10 that they understand where, you know, we are coming from
11 and what our needs are and those things

12 And so I would like to just leave that with
13 you, and thank you for your time.

14 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

15 Sam Sullivan, and then Dale Tsosie.

16 MR. SAM SULLIVAN, JR.: Sam Sullivan, Jr.

17 (Native language spoken.)

18 And I would like to thank the partner and the
19 chair for the time that we put our inputs to listen to us
20 for our concerns that we want this job to go on and carry
21 on for our needs and for the benefit of the Navajo tribe
22 and also the Hopi tribe, and also down south they utilize
23 us to use it.

24 So I just want this job to go on and listen
25 to us for our concerns and whatnot. And also that all my

1 brothers and sisters, that they put their inputs to use
2 making overtime to keep that light switch on, and day in
3 and out, rain, snow or what. And I just want this to go on
4 and make it like this for all that listen here.

5 (Native language spoken.) Thank you.

6 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Dale? Dale Tsosie. Oh,
7 there he is. Okay.

8 And then David Mallavia, Page Eye Center.
9 Okay. Does he know he's next? David? Okay. Got you.
10 Okay.

11 MR. DALE TSOSIE: Okay. Thank you. I just
12 wanted to make sure that I'm addressing the reclamation;
13 correct?

14 MS. KRISTIN DARR: That's (indicating).

15 MR. DALE TSOSIE: Okay. And David Palumbo
16 and Leslie Meyers. Thank you for being here.

17 (Native language spoken.)

18 I'm an employee of NGS. It will be 39 years
19 in October. This plant is the vision of many people who
20 came together nearly 50 years ago. My fathers of the
21 Navajo Nation saw a great employment opportunity for the
22 people of the reservation and took that opportunity. I'm
23 greatly indebted to them for this opportunity. But the
24 vision also extended to the people of this region. The
25 City of Page and the rest of Arizona.

1 It took a lot of courage and trust on behalf
2 of the Navajo leaders as they were still learning the ropes
3 of business. I hate to think that they were taken
4 advantage of. Trust that the future leaders of Navajo
5 today would extend the lease and many more Navajos and
6 non-Navajos would continue to benefit for another 25 years
7 after the lease ends. This is an option in the lease.

8 I believe the owners of NGS have a moral
9 obligation to the people of the Navajo Nation, the Hopi
10 Nation, the City of Page and Arizona. These people are the
11 ones who allow you to benefit and to build your companies
12 and further your businesses.

13 As part of the owner of NGS, you're the
14 variable, also have a treaty obligation with the Navajo
15 Nation to speak on behalf of the Navajos. You own a large
16 part of the plant. You need not to be silent anymore.
17 Don't allow history to judge you as being silent when you
18 could have spoken for the people.

19 It's a bit late now since the fate of the
20 plant has been decided. However, you can take the lead to
21 fight to keep the plant open beyond 2019 and start now to
22 find alternative sources if coal is definitely doomed.
23 In the time that the plant remains open beyond 2019, the
24 transition will be a lot easier than we're facing today.
25 Thank you.

1 MS. KRISTIN DARR: David. And then we start
2 with hearing from people that we heard from on Monday
3 night, and the first one up is Audry.

4 Was he here? I saw him. I'm not going to
5 try the to say the last name. I know who he is. Okay.

6 Go ahead, David.

7 MR. DAVID MALLAVIA: I was asked this morning
8 at my office from Mayor Diak to kind of express my feelings
9 as far as how the plant closure would affect my business.
10 I'm an optometrist in town. I own Page Eye Center, and
11 I've been here for about 13 years. And I took over an
12 existing practice that was here by Stanford --
13 Dr. Stanford Bracken, who had the practice here for about
14 30 years.

15 So Page Eye Center has been here for a long
16 time since the inception of the plant and, hopefully, not
17 the closure of it but, obviously, that's what we're talking
18 about now.

19 As far as my practice goes, I see lots of
20 people from the plant, a lot of good people. I, you know,
21 doing exact numbers is hard for me. I haven't really sat
22 down to see exactly what kind of economic impact it would
23 make as far as percentage, but it's a large part of my
24 practice and those that come to patron me with safety
25 glasses and with, you know, annual eye exams and the

1 glasses and contacts.

2 And they're also, not to mention, the
3 disposable income that those that work at the plant because
4 of the good salaries they make, that they were able to buy
5 things. So they will impact me greatly, plus their
6 insurance plan that they have out there is the best in town
7 and in the area. They get more than most that are on other
8 plans from a vision plan or ESP.

9 So you know, if the plant does shut down,
10 that would affect my practice significantly. But I think
11 more as a member of the community here in Page, like I
12 said, I've been here 13 years. I'm raising my children
13 right now, and my youngest is nine and my oldest is -- or
14 the next one to leave the house is 15. My oldest just left
15 the house. And we've raised our kids here in Page.

16 And I think about the how the community will
17 be affected when and if the plant does close down. I know
18 there's some good people that work at the plant,
19 hardworking people contribute to the community, and we'll
20 be losing those.

21 You know, I talk to my son quite often about
22 the prospect of the plant closing. So a lot of his best
23 friends that would be leaving because of that. And, you
24 know, sports and academics and all that kind of stuff will
25 suffer and the community will suffer because of the plant

1 closing. It's unfortunate.

2 But at the same time it's been a big blessing
3 to have that plant here and for the people around this
4 area. I've been very thankful, not just, you know,
5 economically. I mean, financially it's been good, but also
6 because of the people that I've been able to meet or help.
7 They're just great people. And I can't stress that enough,
8 that they contribute to the community.

9 So when that plant goes, it's not just the
10 economic and the financial part of it, but it's we're
11 losing good people and good members of the community. And
12 that makes me sad. But thank you for hearing.

13 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Audry will be
14 followed by Annie Walker.

15 Where is Annie? There she is. Okay.

16 MR. AUDRY RAPPLEYEA: Well, good evening. My
17 name Audry Rappleyea. I'm the general manager at Kayenta
18 mine and proud to lead all these folks wearing blue hats
19 and blue shirts out there each and every day. I think
20 there have been some really powerful testimony here.

21 And, Mr. Palumbo, I know you'll take the
22 message back to Washington, D.C., because I'm a good judge
23 of character, and you're a good man. I know you'll deliver
24 the message.

25 I have 25 years' experience in the coal

1 mining industry and have been in my current role at Kayenta
2 mine for five years. It's been a great honor to work on
3 the reservation and to be part of an operation that
4 contributes so much to the Navajo Nation, the Hopi tribe
5 and the people of Arizona.

6 I strive to operate the mine in a safe and
7 cost effective manner, so we can remain competitive to
8 natural gas. I am personally committed to both tribes and
9 will work diligently to keep the revenue stream flowing.

10 Kayenta mine is a world class operation. We
11 have a strong track record in safety, environmental
12 compliances and sustainable practices. The land we reclaim
13 is ten times more productive than preexisting land in terms
14 of livestock and grazing capacity. And we've heard that
15 from Helena and then others.

16 With me today are many of the miners that
17 help keep our power supply reliable and affordable. Over
18 95 percent of our workforce is Native American. We have 60
19 employees here today to share their stories.

20 And I think one of the things that we missed
21 is that these folks you've heard anywhere from 30 to 40
22 plus years, have worked day in and day out at the mine and
23 not only provide for their families but to provide income
24 for the Navajo Nation and the Hopi tribe. And I'd just
25 like to acknowledge all the miners in the room and thank

1 you.

2 I just want to briefly touch on some of the
3 economic benefits. Kayenta mine paid more than \$167
4 million per week as it benefits, coal royalties, business
5 payments, scholarships, outside services and capital in
6 2016. This equals nearly \$430 million in direct and
7 indirect benefits flowing into regional economies last
8 year. You heard from the mayor. There's 8,000 people
9 here. There's 40,000 people that they have to support.

10 The mine and power plant also contributed
11 \$455,000 in tribal scholarships alone this year. We
12 participate actively in the Hopi education endowment fund
13 and take a lot of pleasure in hearing the students get up
14 and explain in their words what it means to get that money.

15 Last month we released the study by Navigant
16 Consulting we commissioned to review the economics. The
17 study was based on revised, reduced coal pricing and
18 comprehensive analyses of long-term natural gas. The study
19 concluded that NGS would remain one of the lowest variable
20 cost generating resources, and it will be dispatching at a
21 high level through 2044.

22 In closing, I want to emphasize that Peabody
23 believes NGS will continue to be competitive for natural
24 gas over the long haul. And thank you for my opportunity
25 to comment here today.

1 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you, sir.

2 Annie Walker and Daryl Long? Daryl?

3 MS. ANNIE WALKER: Annie Walker.

4 (Native language spoken.)

5 Well, the easiest way to say is that I live
6 west of the Hopi mesa, and I have interacted with our
7 neighbors for a long time. I remember them when I was a
8 child.

9 But I'd like to first start out with how we
10 were affected by Peabody. All of our water was pumped out
11 of the water, out of the water sources for -- our community
12 went dry. And it's -- we only -- there's only -- arsenic
13 is in the water. They have often capped. And I don't
14 think I can ever forgive Peabody for that.

15 And then Fern over here earlier mentioning
16 the health problem on top of Black Mesa. But we do live on
17 the west side of the -- the bottom of the Black Mesa in a
18 community called Sand Springs. It's located between Tuba
19 City and Leupp, so this one community.

20 So but I do want to say and, and say that the
21 Navajo Nation and its people have contributed a lot to the
22 state of Arizona every year. The state of Arizona benefits
23 in terms of -- of -- a third of a trillion dollars of
24 growth in its economy. And what about us? We get like 45
25 million a year for lease payment? And maybe it's the same

1 amounts of wages. To me that's like not even 1 percent --
2 maybe 10 percent of 1 percent. That's about it.

3 So we -- we contribute substantially to the
4 wealth to making sure that Arizona benefits and the
5 trillions of dollars. In three years they would have
6 contribute -- the Navajo will have contributed a trillion
7 dollars of growth. You know, what about us? Think in
8 those terms.

9 So but it seems like we are the Indian
10 givers. We have the burden of carrying the state of
11 Arizona since Peabody started its operation, and think
12 about a trillion dollars every three years. And to me, we
13 get nothing.

14 It's about time we ask for what is due us?
15 We don't want to be -- we don't want Arizona to be our
16 burden anymore.

17 And, also, I urge our council as well as your
18 president to hang onto any water rights that we still have.
19 Because if we just give it away, we're not going to have
20 anything.

21 So that's my message to all of you. And I
22 say it because I am concerned about every one of you, your
23 future children. Think about those children. Will they
24 have anything when they grow up or are they going to be in
25 the same boat? Thank you.

1 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

2 Daryl? I remember you from Monday.

3 Jesse Clint? Jesse. I just want to see
4 where you are. You're next.

5 No? Okay. Give me a second, Daryl. I've
6 got to get someone on deck.

7 Jerry Williams. Jerry. Okay.

8 MR. DARYL LONG: (Native language spoken.)
9 I am a mechanic, Kayenta mine. I am a
10 graduate of MDHS. I am a Mustang. I am a K-Towner. But
11 above all, I am Navajo, a Native American of this great
12 nation. For decades we have supplied affordable and
13 reliable energy for much of the southwest. For the
14 protestors and residents of the Phoenix area, you are
15 welcome.

16 Somebody has to do it. You use just as much
17 energy if not more than I do. I see no horses out in the
18 parking lot. I see no donkeys out in the parking lot. I
19 see no wagons in the parking lot. People living off the
20 grid here? Nope. We are all guilty. We are all guilty of
21 the fossil fuels that we use.

22 Everybody wants to eat the sirloin steaks,
23 the hot dogs and the hamburgers, but nobody wants to do the
24 actual slaughtering and butchering. We do the dirty work.
25 We safely and efficiently extract potential energy from the

1 earth, ship it to NGS, and they convert it to electric
2 energy. It is then consumed by the American people. The
3 water pumps to the valley being one.

4 We don't crave for fancy recognition for
5 power and parts of Phoenix and Nevada. That's what we do.
6 We just want to work safely and provide for our families.

7 I am all for green energy. Go for it. Let's
8 pursue that. We should have been pursuing that. Other
9 than K mine, there is really no other alternative source of
10 income. We simply lack infrastructure to cease operation
11 at NGS and K mine. It's bad already.

12 According to the Navajo Nation we are
13 hovering at about 50 percent of unemployment rate. And it
14 simply did not make sense to shut down. Let's mine it.
15 Continue operation. The Navajo Nation needs more time and
16 more money to go green.

17 The people that are fighting to end this
18 mine, shut down the mine and wish hardship for hundreds of
19 Navajo families, which translates to thousands of Navajos,
20 this mind-set, in my opinion, to wish bad upon so many
21 families is borderline evil and is something I cannot
22 comprehend. Thank you.

23 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Jerry Williams. Is that
24 you? Okay. Yep, you're next.

25 And then Jesse Clint? Where did that person

1 go?

2 Okay. So who's going to be on deck is Gerald
3 Alton?

4 No. Vincent Yazzie.

5 Okay. You're on deck.

6 Go ahead, sir. Thank you.

7 MR. JERRY WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you, ma'am.

8 My name is is Jerry Williams. I'm a LeChee. (Native
9 language spoken.) This is how I was taught to introduce
10 myself, so that's how I'm going to introduce myself to my
11 relatives here and DOI. And thank you for coming down to
12 Page and hearing the employees of both NGS and Kayenta,
13 Kayenta mine. I represent the LeChee Chapter, and I'm
14 their LeChee Chapter president.

15 LeChee chapter has about 1,008 registered
16 voters and 2,100 plus residents. And LeChee Chapter is
17 right next to Page over on the south side. And there's
18 employees that live in the community that worked in both
19 NGS and Kayenta mine.

20 And there's a lot of money that's pumped into
21 the Navajo Nation government from both of these companies.
22 And the -- the monies, the general funds go into Navajo
23 Nation, and it's divided between 110 chapters. So my
24 chapter gets a portion of the funds that go through the
25 Navajo Nation. And my chapter gets about \$210,000. And

1 with that, we support the residents of LeChee, and also we
2 support senior citizens, also we support college students
3 for them to attend college.

4 So as you know and it was mentioned a little
5 bit while ago, the unemployment rate is high here in our
6 region, about 55, 60 percent. So with doing away with the
7 power plant and the mine, it doesn't make sense to a lot of
8 mine community people. And they're -- they probably won't
9 feel the effects until about a year later, because we have
10 our FY budgets that come in yearly. So a year post 2019 if
11 it does shut down, then it will have the effects of the
12 funding for my chapter.

13 So and with closing down both NGS and Kayenta
14 mine, a lot of these families are going to have to relocate
15 to elsewhere. And NGS, SRP, mentioned to the employees
16 that they will be relocated down to St. Johns or Phoenix
17 area. And a lot of these kids, families will have broken
18 ties between the families, I mean like the grandparents.

19 And we as Navajo, we were born and raised to
20 respect the elderlies and listen to the elderlies, and
21 that's how we are raised. And if this happens, the family
22 bond's going to be broken. So I've talked to some elderly
23 people, and they're not really happy about what's going to
24 happen.

25 So with that, I want to mention that. And

1 also the workers at both places, NGS, and Kayenta mine,
2 they don't only support their own family, they support
3 their extended family, the grandparents on both sides,
4 aunts, uncles, nieces, down to the little kids. I mean, it
5 trickles down. So that's going to affect all the families,
6 and the funding won't be there.

7 So -- and another thing that I like to
8 mention to you about NGS and its owners, they donated a
9 little over \$2 million to build the infrastructure for the
10 power line along Highway 98. And these families that live
11 there never had electricity until a couple of years ago.

12 And it was always mentioned that, you know,
13 there's a power plant next door and a house a mile away
14 that has electricity. But with NGS and its owners stepping
15 up and helping my community of LeChee, they were able to
16 build the power line to people that never had power line
17 and never had electricity.

18 So -- and then I'd like to mention that my
19 community here, the LeChee Chapter, we're in need of
20 economic development. Once the power plants and the coal
21 mine closes down, we're pretty much going to be depending
22 on economic development.

23 And as you know, you probably seen today,
24 Antelope Canyon, lower Antelope and upper Antelope, they
25 were packed today. They're about to turn people away. So

1 if the higher-ups, like the state representatives, state
2 senators or DOI or the government can help my community and
3 others communities around here with economic development,
4 then that would sure help my community and the other
5 communities around here. So --

6 MS. KRISTIN DARR: You need to wrap up.
7 We're trying to stick to three minutes per person, and
8 we're at about five-and-a-half.

9 MR. JERRY WILLIAMS: I want to thank you guys
10 for giving me time to speak. And I get long-winded, but
11 thank you very much.

12 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

13 All right. I'll do one more speaker, and the
14 rest of them, you guys, the rest of the speaker cards were
15 folks that got on the record on Monday. One more speaker,
16 and then the -- President Begaye is going to speak and then
17 we will be done for the night.

18 So Vincent.

19 MR. VINCENT YAZZIE: Vincent Yazzie. And my
20 mother's clan is (native language spoken), and my mother's
21 mother's clan is (native language spoken) clan and my
22 father's mother's clan is (native language spoken) Dine and
23 my father's father's clan is (native language spoken) clan,
24 but, yeah, Vincent Yazzie, Flagstaff and Sand Springs area.

25 February 1st, CAP agreement from U.S and

1 Central Arizona Water Conservation District is actually
2 from real water for efficient wildlife is one of the
3 purposes, also is to use non-project Indian water. So that
4 really helps that, because a few days later that's when the
5 owners pulled out of NGS.

6 Now, that's what I considered a final
7 solution in the Navajo Nation. Because the Arizona Water
8 Settlement Act, Navajo Nation only gets 64 or less
9 acre-feet of water per year. Tuba City uses about 10,000
10 acre-feet per year. So it's like a death sentence for the
11 Navajo like two coats in the desert.

12 Arizona GDP when the plant opened in '70 --
13 well, '76 was around \$20 billion per year. When the CAP
14 opened later in 19 -- around the '90s, GDP jumped to \$90
15 billion per year. That's from the Bureau of Economic
16 Analysis. Today in 2016 Arizona's GDP is about \$320
17 billion a year. So NGS has bridged that water, and Calcot
18 has tremendous growth for the state of Arizona.

19 The NGS, Kayenta economic analysis report by
20 ASU Carey, they project \$12.94 billion, but that's for
21 between 2020 to 2044. So that's coming out about \$500
22 million a year, but that's a 2020 dollars, so you got to
23 bring that down.

24 So what's your value in the state of Arizona?
25 400 -- a little bit \$400 million. Compare that to \$300

1 billion that the State takes advantage of us. That's about
2 1/10th of 1 percent, a little bit over. That's coupons
3 value. You guys are just worth coupons to them. So, yeah,
4 they're going to go elsewhere.

5 So they know this is going on Forest Lake
6 presentation, and the Navajo Generating Station update.
7 They say, gas prices, yeah, we're going to beat out NGS,
8 but in there it says \$3.50 for gas prices for a million
9 Btu. But Peabody gas fuel costs are \$2 per million Btu, so
10 that's not right. But in the -- I'm sorry.

11 MS. KRISTIN DARR: 30 seconds.

12 MR. VINCENT YAZZIE: -- family of curves that
13 Peabody strategy in there it says \$2 per million Btu, but
14 also it has other fuel costs for coal, Wyoming, CAP, NAP,
15 Illinois basin, PCB 179 per billion Btu. The cheapest 55
16 cents per million Btu from in PRB.

17 So there's something going on, and I call it
18 a scam.

19 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Okay. Did you want to
20 punctuate, so we can get on one more? Okay.

21 MR. VINCENT YAZZIE: This is it. But this is
22 a Bureau of Reclamation study that transports water from
23 Jackass Canyon to Kaibito. It's about \$50 million for 2002
24 and a hundred million for pumping 11,400 acre-feet. Yeah.
25 That's why the NGS gets the naturalized pump water for the

1 Colorado River and then aquifer that was damaged.

2 Oh, yeah, water leases were \$1,000 an
3 acre-foot. Colorado River that's 15 million acre-feet per
4 year, so that's \$15 billion flowing past us that Navajo
5 Nation has claim. Thank you.

6 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you.

7 The president is going to give us some
8 closing remarks, but I wanted to just remind you real
9 quickly there's these cards on the front table that have an
10 the e-mail address that you can submit written comments.
11 And then these forms that are also there that you can
12 submit written comments. There's -- you can email them,
13 scan them, e-mail them, or you can actually mail them to
14 me. And I'll make sure that these guys get them. Okay?

15 So with that, Mr. President.

16 PRESIDENT BEGAYE: (Native language spoken.)
17 Thank you for speaking from your heart, from your
18 experiences and the impact that NGS and Peabody has made on
19 your lives. Plus what I really like hearing is that you
20 educated your children. And those children are coming back
21 to help us build this nation to what it should be. And
22 I've seen medical doctors coming out of western -- western
23 Navajo is one of the most educated part of Navajo Nation,
24 and I believe it's us.

25 What you guys have done, and the attorney

1 general is from Western, a Harvard Law graduate. And so I
2 can just go on and on and on and talk about some of the
3 great educated people that have been come out of Western.
4 And I believe a lot of it's because of the skills, the
5 experiences, the professionalism that's been developed, not
6 only at NGS, but also at Peabody. And so you have already
7 made a big impact on Navajo from the standpoint of making
8 Navajo more professional.

9 Now, when I came to office, we made it our
10 goal for me was to get all the five owners sign off on the
11 new lease going through 2044. (Native language spoken.)
12 That was our mission was to get the signature of the five.
13 And so we began meeting with each one of them to get them
14 to sign on to make sure that this whole agreement moved
15 forward.

16 The first person, the first company that
17 said, that we were told was saying no was Nevada Energy.
18 And Nevada Energy was, they said, the only one out of the
19 five that was not wanting to sign. So I met with the
20 president of Nevada Energy, their attorneys and one other
21 person, and they said, "We are ready to sign."

22 And so, you know, we settled that one.
23 Talked to Tucson Electric with the president, the people
24 there, of course, APS and SRP, we've always had an ongoing
25 conversation with them. And so we felt we were about to

1 break through the standstill, what was stalling the
2 agreement from going forward to 2044.

3 So we were just right about to get there when
4 we met with one of the owners, and the owner said, "Well,
5 we're changing our mind because of the economy. And
6 because it's cheaper. We're operating at this level, and
7 the revenue is down here at this level.

8 And so because of the economics, not because
9 of CPP, not because of this, not because of that. It's all
10 about the fact that we can make more money using natural
11 gas is what they told us. And so that whole thing just
12 turn around about August, September, October, became more
13 of a reality.

14 When November hit Peabody was informed that
15 NGS may close. And so I met with the -- with the, I guess,
16 the Americas, the person that oversees the Peabody Coal all
17 over the U.S., Central America, South America, met with
18 that individual and we sat down in my office, and we start
19 to talk about strategy, how do we keep NGS moving forward?
20 What can Peabody do in terms of lowering prices? And
21 they're asking you to lower this by a certain percentage.
22 If you guys do that, then NGS may continue moving forward.
23 That's what we were told.

24 So and also the American, the U.S. director
25 for coal for Peabody, those two were in my office sitting

1 there talking about what Peabody needs to do. So we talked
2 through it. They presented it, and the percentage went up.
3 They said, Now, we -- NGS owners said, "We need more monies
4 from Peabody. We need them to go down even more in their
5 prices."

6 So they did go down one more time. The
7 owners rejected that. So it's been one of those things.
8 It's been really a trying to get NGS to move forward to
9 2044. And so when that became almost an impossibility,
10 then we said, okay, 2029. We need them, because 2030 is
11 when they're going to have to spend millions to retrofit
12 beginning in 2030.

13 And so we said, "Okay. We're willing to go
14 and we'll fight for going to 2029. We'll do everything we
15 can to make sure that the plant moves forward to 2029. So
16 that became our mission, our goal.

17 But then as we began talking, you know, the
18 thing that I appreciate about the CEO of SRP and some of
19 the higher-ups is sitting down with them, talking with them
20 on a casual basis. And we got to know each other. And so
21 we can sit down, have breakfast, have dinner, have lunch,
22 whatever, and talk about these issues.

23 And in these conversations, we start talking
24 about, you know, rather than closing down 2019, "Why don't
25 you give us -- why don't you guys go full 2019, and then

1 two years decommission. We need that time to get ready to
2 see what we can do to move to 2029. So we can make plans,
3 so we can get things ready."

4 And so we just verbally agreed. Okay. NGS
5 will go 2019, and then two years, maybe three years to
6 decommission. So we made that our goal. How do we do
7 that? So I formed three task forces.

8 One task force was to start working on an
9 agreement, decommission agreement to go to 2019 and then
10 maybe two to three years of decommissioning. So that was
11 one group. We started working on it. And we shared that
12 with NGS owners. NGS owners said, "We want to be part of
13 that group, too."

14 And so we joined forces with the -- bypassed
15 the task force that we formed, and NGS started -- they came
16 on board with us. So that's how these two start working on
17 2019, and then extended it beyond 2019 for decommissioning.

18 And the whole goal was, let's make that
19 happen so that we can start getting ready to move it
20 forward to 2029. And so that was always a conversation.
21 We had a lot of meetings. We asked meetings with what's --
22 Acting Secretary Cason, had a good conversation. Initial
23 conversation went really well

24 And one of the questions he asked me, he
25 said, when we sat down, he said, "What do you want from

1 me?" I think was the question he asked me. I don't know
2 if Mr. Palumbo was there, but Mr. Cason said, "What do you
3 want from me?"

4 And I said, "Well, you guys are voting on
5 whether to close or to continue." And I said, "I want you
6 to vote no. I want you to tell all the owners that you
7 will vote against closing down NGS." I said, "That's
8 number one. Number two, I want you to work with the NGS
9 owners to make sure that you guys go to 2029."

10 I said, "Those two things I'm asking you
11 since you asked me what you want from me, I want those two
12 things from you."

13 And so that was the -- and so we talked about
14 it, you know, different ways from then. So let's have
15 another meeting. March 1st, it was set as the big meeting.
16 So there was where we brought all the stakeholders together
17 and started talking about those things

18 So we had our team going, the extension team.
19 Then we had another task force, which was to find new
20 owners. So we got those two running.

21 And then we had another task force going,
22 which is, how do we replace the revenues beyond coal,
23 beyond power plants? How do we do that? That means
24 economic development. That means develop the basis of the
25 foundation for us to have a strong economic development

1 take off.

2 So we're talking about those three. So we
3 have three task force: One, the extension --

4 Am I making a lot of noise?

5 So we had three task force. One the
6 extension task force, the attorneys, the guys working on
7 it. The second task force working on going to 2029,
8 getting new owners, all of that.

9 Third task force that we had going from
10 Navajo Nation was, we said, "We need to replace the
11 revenue, create economic development, go to solar, start
12 looking at solar, 500 megawatt. How much land will it
13 take? All of those types of things.

14 So when -- and so that says another group
15 that's over here working. So we have three groups working
16 on this whole thing in anticipation.

17 And so people would ask me, "Well, why are
18 you guys doing that?" Because I don't want to ever be in a
19 place where we're not thinking and talking about these
20 possibilities. So let me go with the extension first.

21 So with the extension, the two groups working
22 day and night, day and night, today driving up, they're
23 calling me, they said, "We're stuck, and so we need
24 decisions made. And so we're stuck on -- we got all the
25 different points. And we -- Bob Russell was here earlier.

1 Yesterday afternoon, we spent -- we went
2 through about three or four critical areas that we were
3 disagreeing on. We worked our way through it, talked our
4 way through, put some solutions on the table. They agreed
5 with that. We look at the language. We tweaked it
6 overnight.

7 And then just upon driving up here, they
8 called me and they said, "We're almost done. We have one
9 more thing that we're just -- they just don't want to
10 budge. We don't want to budge. They don't want to budge.
11 So what we do?"

12 All right. So I said, "Well, what's the
13 issue?" So we went through the issue, and I said, okay,
14 try this one. If it doesn't work, try this one. So they
15 haven't called me back yet. However, tonight is we're
16 getting ready to present the agreement to extend to go to
17 the 2019 and then to the three years decommissioning.

18 So I believe -- I haven't got word yet, but
19 all I'm saying is that we worked through all the critical
20 issues. There were some major issues, big issues that we
21 had to struggle through, work through yesterday with the
22 chairman of the board for SRP, with some of the higher-ups
23 sitting there talking about things, putting solutions on
24 the table.

25 And so I think we've worked through about

1 everything that we needed to work through except this one
2 thing. But the one thing, I said, this is what we did with
3 HUD. This is what we did with this. This is what we did
4 with USCA. Let's follow the same format, I think, because
5 it's been done already, maybe we can push this thing
6 through and get it done and have it count so it will start
7 considering it. We'll drop it tomorrow to legislation.

8 And -- but our team worked really, really
9 hard. We drafted the legislation -- well, we will be
10 drafting the legislation, put all of the agreements in
11 there. And I'll tell you, I really like some of the stuff
12 that are in the agreement.

13 Some, I think, those -- there are some things
14 that's going to replace a lot of the lost revenue. And
15 we're asking for a little bit more than what we were
16 presented with, right? So we're still talking about those.
17 And because I know that we can get a little more of this
18 and that, we will be able to replace and even go beyond.
19 We can even make more than what NGS and Peabody together
20 are giving to Navajo Nation today.

21 And so I'm excited about -- about if we can
22 get it through, I think we will place ourself in that
23 position. We've created the (native language spoken)
24 corporation is a federal tax, state tax-exempt vehicle.
25 And we rolled it out. This was one of the teams, one of

1 the task force rolled that out. And so we are getting a
2 lot of interests from companies all over -- all over the
3 world, different places, big companies wanting to come and
4 set up manufacturing plants for us, Boeing, Microsoft, and
5 things like that. So these guys are now seeing what our
6 task force developed and wanting to come and see what they
7 can do now.

8 So the first one we're ready to roll, and
9 we'll drop it tomorrow, and five-day comment period. So
10 next week sometime, maybe go through the committees, we're
11 saying make an emergency, because we've done that before.
12 And it goes right into the council, and they vote on it,
13 and it's done and over with.

14 And so that's where, somebody said we need to
15 go and just educate our delegates regarding this agreement
16 that we structured, we pulled together. And like I said, I
17 believe that if we can get it through, get it done, approve
18 it, we position ourselves, I believe, to be able to replace
19 the lost revenue even more than what we're getting from
20 Peabody and NGS if the closure takes place.

21 Now, the other group that's working to extend
22 it to 2029 and find new owners, I'll tell you, a couple of
23 weeks ago there was a group that was given that
24 responsibility to start looking for new owners. So
25 yesterday, I believe it was, they said, "Well, we still

1 need some information from SRP. It's premature, and, you
2 know." Those words, 77 days they were given that
3 assignment, March 1, and they're still saying it's
4 premature. That got me upset. And these guys know that so
5 (Native language spoken).

6 So two weeks ago we started learning that
7 finding new owners may be kind of slowed down or it's not
8 happening. So we took it upon ourselves to do it and go
9 look for new owners. And the possibilities are there.
10 We've talked to several companies that are interested in
11 assuming ownership of NGS so we can run through 2029, and
12 maybe even beyond that.

13 So I've had some long meetings with people
14 that are interested in becoming owners of NGS in the last
15 week and a half. And since our team took on that
16 responsibility and said, well, since they're not doing it
17 and they're dragging their feet -- that's what we felt --
18 let's just do it ourselves and put the word out there and
19 see if we can find some new owners someplace.

20 And since we've been developing this and
21 (native language spoken) corporation, we've been connected
22 with companies all over the world, from China, India,
23 North, South Korea, places like that, and throughout the
24 U.S. re-shoring companies that President Trump is wanting
25 to do. So taking advantage of all the connections, so

1 we're saying, "Okay, are you guys interested in becoming
2 owners of NGS so we can move it forward beyond 2019?"

3 And so I'm excited about some of the
4 conversations that we're having with companies that would
5 like to assume ownership of that entity, but I know it's
6 going to impact salary. It's going to impact royalties.
7 It's going to impact taxation both at the mine and at the
8 plant.

9 And so that's the only thing is that, but
10 we're not there yet. So when we get there, I'm just kind
11 of anticipating that that may happen. So it may mean lower
12 salary, lower royalties, if we can get rid of taxation from
13 the State, which we're working on.

14 So we're working everybody. The members of
15 Congress, we're lobbying them really hard to amend the
16 Indian Traders Act. If we can amend that, get rid of fuel
17 taxation, then Peabody will not have to pay taxes. Because
18 that's been like 14 million plus dollars a year that
19 Peabody pays out.

20 So that could be, you know, part of the
21 negotiation tool that we'll use in getting a new owner on
22 board. Things like that, so we're working at all levels
23 trying to -- trying to make sure that we move forward into
24 beyond 2019. So that's the other group.

25 The third group, I tell you they are

1 phenomenal. I'm really excited about the things that
2 they've developed. We're trying to educate our delegates
3 to understand business and how you leverage your monies,
4 because I always tell them, I said, "You know, you either
5 are spending money, in a real simple term, you're spending
6 money, you're saving money or you're making money." I said
7 we're really good at the first one and kind of good at the
8 second one, but we don't know how to do the third one.

9 So this is where we can get there and get our
10 council to think that way, then I know that we can become
11 one of the biggest, largest employers in the southwest,
12 Navajo Nation can. Because you guys really are
13 professional. We have real good skilled workers.

14 And everything that's out there, it's just --
15 you know, some of things that I can just share at some
16 exciting developments taking place, tweaking federal
17 policies so that it works with what we were trying to do in
18 Navajo.

19 So I can say those things. First legislation
20 will be dropped Friday, tomorrow morning at 8:30,
21 Quality Inn, delegates, hopefully everybody shows up. And
22 we'll roll it out and say, "Here's the agreement. Here's
23 the potential. This is what we worked hard on."

24 And so understand what it is, so because
25 tomorrow, the next day, Friday morning, it will be dropped

1 in the hopper, and next week they'll be voting on it. And
2 let's get it approved and moved over to NGS owners, let
3 them look at it, approve it, and then it comes to my desk
4 and we'll sign off on that. And then from there, it goes
5 to, right here this lady, BIA. They're going to have her
6 signature on it. Her signature is the last one. Actually,
7 and with -- with the BIA.

8 So we can all play a role. The delegates,
9 myself, BIA will have their signatures on this, and then
10 we're good to go. Then we have a deal that will run full
11 operation 2019, and then decommissioned. But while that's
12 happening, we're working on getting new owners on board,
13 and then we're developing this whole other economy that I
14 believe will move Navajo Nation to where we have never
15 been, knowing how to leverage our monies, dollars. And we
16 can do a lot better than where we've been, so (Native
17 language spoken.)

18 So way back August is when we developed these
19 task force. October it really took off. And so we've been
20 working on this all the way through. There's been a lot of
21 back and forth negotiations, stop, take off, stop. Little
22 bitty words changes, and it seemed like the whole thing
23 kind of stalls on us. And then we get in there and have
24 lunch, dinner, and breakfast with the CEO and the board
25 chair, and we give a little nudge, and that's sometimes

1 enough to get the guys excited and rolling forward again.

2 So it's been really good. And some of the
3 things that we're talking about in terms of partnership
4 with the owners is there. We're working on seeing those
5 projects that were using coal.

6 We know that if NGS goes away, our goal is to
7 continue the mine. If the power plant that we just can't
8 do anything, can't find the owners, can't do anything with
9 it, and the mine closes down, decommissioning starts, we
10 want to make sure that the coal mine continues.

11 And I think that the conversation we're
12 having, that it will be able to continue moving the mine
13 forward. That's what I think, anyway.

14 And so coal is still a huge commodity. Even
15 the owners are saying, "Maybe we'll buy some of your coal
16 from you." You know, because they have other plants,
17 right, that runs -- that uses coal. The Coronado, so
18 there's two power plants that uses coal. And they're not
19 going to shut those two down. And then we have Four
20 Corners power plant that uses coal, that's not going to go
21 away.

22 (Native language spoken.)

23 So coal is still a till commodity that the
24 energy that people need energy utilizes. So we'll work
25 hard in the next couple of years to see how we can continue

1 utilizing the coal in different ways. There's so many ways
2 that coal can be used that we're looking at those things.

3 So I believe even though, you know, NGS is
4 talking about closing down and with that Peabody goes away,
5 and we're confident that this two years that we're going to
6 have, we'll be able to find ways, find owners, find a way
7 to keep the plant running through 2029. And the mine keep
8 it running all the way through.

9 Because there's so many years left in the
10 uses of the coal. And as long as we protect our
11 environment, our health, all of those, our water supply --
12 and that's the other thing the water supply. That was one
13 of the first thing when we were doing the -- the new
14 agreement, 50,000 acre-feet per year. I want that showing
15 up.

16 And we fought over that. We fought over
17 that. Fought over that. And so we're now back to fighting
18 over the water again. So by the looks, I mean, there's
19 some -- it looks good. That's all I can say in terms of
20 getting more water that we need to develop our economy.
21 And so we have to work with feds, the State. And we're,
22 again, doing this type, you know, this tug-of-war type
23 thing. And if we can get DOI to back us up, the Trump
24 administration to back us up, I know that we can get the
25 water that we need utilize coal beyond 2029, continue using

1 it, and find new owners and things like that.

2 (Native language spoken.)

3 So tonight, teams they're working hard. So
4 I'm sure on my way back home, I'll be getting calls again.
5 This one area, we're almost done, just one more, one more
6 little, little hitch.

7 We can get that one resolved, then we're good
8 to go in the morning, 8:00, 7:30, the council will start
9 reviewing the new agreement and then the next day drop, and
10 then next week start voting on the agreement, so within a
11 couple of weeks or so, we should have a new agreement in
12 place.

13 (Native language spoken.)

14 So again, thank you for the testimony, your
15 passion and how you're providing for your families, and as
16 you provided for your families, you provide for the nation.

17 (Native language spoken.)

18 Thank you.

19 And, Mr. Palumbo, thank you

20 And, Leslie Meyers, thank you. And really
21 appreciate that. And your signature really gave us this
22 two years, you know, the ability to move two years.

23 (Native language spoken.)

24 I saw the signature on there and said, who is
25 this lady? So it was good, good to know you.

1 And, Mr. Palumbo, you've been good. Bureau
2 of Reclamation has been what was the majority owner first,
3 and then now you're second majority owner of the plants.
4 So thank you for being here and for giving the appearance.
5 Thank you.

6 MS. KRISTIN DARR: Thank you, everybody.
7 Good night.

8 (Listening Session concludes at
9 8:23 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF CERTIFIED REPORTER

BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me; that the witness before testifying was duly sworn by me to testify to the whole truth; that the foregoing pages are a full, true, and accurate record of the proceedings, all done to the best of my skill and ability; that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to print under my direction; that I have complied with the ethical obligations set forth in ACJA 7-206(F) (3) and ACJA 7-206 J(1) (g) (1) and (2).

I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the parties hereto, nor am I in any way interested in the outcome hereof.

Review and signature was requested; any changes made by the witness will be attached to the original transcript.

Review and signature was waived/not requested.

Review and signature not required.

Dated at Phoenix, Arizona, this 2nd day of June, 2017.



DANIELLE C. GRIFFIN, RPR
Certified Reporter
Arizona CR No. 50296

* * * * *

I CERTIFY that GRIFFIN & ASSOCIATES, LLC, has complied with the ethical obligations set forth in ACJA 7-206 (J) (1) (g) (1) through (6).



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