

1 CHAIRMAN JAMES: With that, I'd like to go to our
2 first speaker, Lee Kerley.

3 MR. KERLEY: Good evening, Madam Chair, and the rest
4 of the commissioners. My name is Lee Kerley.

5 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Lee, I'm going to interrupt just for
6 a second, and I apologize, just to make sure that all of our
7 speakers know to keep an eye on our timer over here.

8 And I want to say this ahead of time so that no one
9 takes any personal offense, but my job is to make sure that all
10 of our speakers have an opportunity to speak so I will be very
11 precise with the timing. So please keep an eye on the timer.

12 With that, we're going to start our timing over and
13 let you have your full time, Mr. Kerley.

14 MR. KERLEY: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair. Hi, I'm
15 Lee Kerley and I am the Executive Director of the Boys and Girls
16 Clubs of the Gulf Coast. We have six units on the coast. We
17 have over 200 kids who use our facilities regularly.

18 We have over 15,000 kids who use our programs and the
19 outreach program. And I have been in this position for the last
20 16 years.

21 Coast casinos give generous amount of time, talent
22 and money towards success of the Boys and Girls Club. Casinos
23 sponsor special programs and make donations directly that
24 benefits this youth organization.

25 Casino owners and executives realize the economic
26 impact and importance of their industry to the livelihoods of
27 thousands of residents and municipalities in which they live and
28 work.

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1 Therefore, a strong charitable base has been created.
2 The casinos actively give back to the community and show a
3 tremendous commitment to the Gulf Coast. For this, we, the Boys
4 and Girls Club of the Gulf Coast, are grateful and looking
5 forward to continue a long and rewarding relationship with the
6 coast casino industry.

7 Corporate campaigns have given thousands of employees
8 the chance to give to social service agencies and United Way of
9 South Mississippi. In 1992, United Way total campaign was
10 \$718,409. Casino gaming contributed to this total was \$9,748.

11 In 1997, United Way campaign was \$1,420,561. Gaming
12 contributions to this total was \$428,259. Volunteers from
13 casinos have been instrumental in the planning and implementation
14 of special events at the Boys and Girls Club. Donation of
15 products and services, time and talent from the employees and
16 executives have been above and beyond expectation.

17 Serving on our board of directors are several key
18 casino industrial decision makers who use their influence and
19 knowledge to improve funding opportunity, fundraising and public
20 relations. Some of these committed individuals serve on other
21 boards of non-profit agencies as well, creating wonderful linkage
22 and a strong commitment to community.

23 Additional support comes from their affiliation with
24 local school boards. Some even join churches and I'm sure
25 contributions to their collection plates has increased.
26 Sponsorship of special individuals and special events and youth
27 programs have helped to increase our operational budget and
28 improve the overall service that we are able to provide to the
29 community.

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1 Donation of advertising space, partnership in special
2 events have skyrocketed the Boys and Girls Club and their message
3 to the local media. For all this and more, the Boys and Girls
4 Club says thanks to all of our friends and neighbors.

5 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you very much.

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