

1 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Mr. Bob Waterbury.

2 MR. WATERBURY: Madam Chairwoman and commissioners,  
3 my name is Bob Waterbury. I've been the crime director for five  
4 years. I'm going to tell you about the crime activity on the  
5 coast for the years '94 to '97.

6 The top ten major crimes increased 10.7 percent  
7 during '94 to '97, from 30,900 to 34,200. However, '97 was down  
8 from '96 by 93 crimes. Homicides decreased from 36 in '93 to 19  
9 in '97, a 47 percent decrease.

10 Violent crimes decreased from '94 to '97 from 1,048  
11 to 761 or a 27 percent decrease. Property crimes decreased from  
12 '94 to '97 from 20,120 to 19,485 or a 3.2 reduction.

13 Top ten increases were in the assaults area, non-  
14 aggravated, and DUI and drug arrests which were a positive 41 and  
15 45 percent. A four-year average revealed that property type  
16 crimes accounted for 59 percent of all reported crimes. Violent  
17 crimes were 2.5 percent; DUI and drug arrests 20.5; and assaults  
18 are 18 percent.

19 We have comparisons of other cities with crime  
20 commissions. Those are New Orleans, Jackson, Mississippi,  
21 Atlanta and Kansas City. In the top seven major crimes, our  
22 neighbor city, Jackson, has one-half as many people as the coast  
23 with about the same crimes.

24 The other three cities mentioned have an average of  
25 21 percent violent crimes to our coast with 7 percent. Their  
26 property crimes are 79 percent and the coast is 93. Therefore,  
27 their violent crime, on the average, is three times more than the  
28 coast.

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1 Before gaming, the first eight months of 1992  
2 revealed more crime than the first months of 1998, the first  
3 eight months in the Gulfport area after gaming had already  
4 arrived on the coast.

5 Each casino has outstanding community and security  
6 divisions. Areas with no gaming have about the same crime  
7 percentages as those with gaming along our coast. Our crime  
8 office has no direct evidence to indicate that casinos have  
9 caused an increase of crime along our three county coast from  
10 1994 to 1997.

11 The main reason for our small crime increase is due  
12 mainly to substantial population increases. Crime for 1998 may  
13 be less than 1997 as 1997 was less than 1996. We, so far, this  
14 year in 1998 do have 500 more crimes for the first seven months.  
15 This is how we come up with a modest 3.2 percent.

16 Population, of course, was 312,000 in 1990. We  
17 expect 406,000 in 2010 and we expect visitors to be in excess of  
18 20 million next year and increasing each year. Thank you for  
19 allowing me to bring you these facts.

20 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you very much. Before we go  
21 to our next speaker, we've got some keys here that have been  
22 found. If these look familiar to you, I'm going to send them  
23 back out to the front table.

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