

1 single mother of a two year old and worked at Harrah's  
2 for the past two years in the box office.

3 Her supervisor encouraged her to further  
4 her education, even though it meant losing a valuable  
5 employee.

6 From my perspective, Harrah's and the  
7 casino industry deserves a big pat on the back for  
8 giving people the opportunity to pull themselves up by  
9 their bootstraps and for developing the future of our  
10 young people.

11 I am a strong believer in Harrah's and in  
12 the casino industry, and from my experiences, I'm sure  
13 you can understand why.

14 Thanks for your time.

15 CHAIRMAN JAMES: And thank you.

16 Eustace Eggie.

17 MR. EGGIE: Yes, ma'am.

18 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

19 MR. EGGIE: Good evening, Chairwoman James  
20 and Commissioners. My name is Bud Eggie, and I  
21 represent the Carpenters Local 623.

22 I would like to take this opportunity to

1 describe the working environment in Atlantic City area  
2 before and after 1976 referendum approving casino  
3 gaming in Atlantic City.

4           Before the referendum, Local 623  
5 represented approximately 300 carpenters and work  
6 opportunities were scarce. If you worked six months  
7 per year, it was considered a good year.

8           Most of our members worked a second job to  
9 survive. Many of our brightest young people felt it  
10 necessary to leave the South Jersey area in order to  
11 take advantage of employment opportunities elsewhere.

12           Today Local 623 represents over 1,000  
13 carpenters, and work opportunities are abundant for  
14 our members working in construction, casino  
15 maintenance, mill carpenter shops, and the convention  
16 industry.

17           Today our members work 11 to 12 months per  
18 year. Our members with children that wish to attend  
19 college can now afford to pay tuition without having  
20 to work a second job.

21           Before the referendum our apprentice  
22 training program consisted of shared space in the

1 Atlantic County Vocation School and was only available  
2 in the evenings. The demand for trained carpenters to  
3 install the most advanced building and construction  
4 materials became so great that the Carpenters  
5 Educational Fund constructed a 25,000 square state-of-  
6 the-art training facility and is currently adding  
7 another 10,000 square feet, which is located 20  
8 minutes west of Atlantic City.

9           This facility is currently used for  
10 apprentice training and journeyman upgrade programs.

11           Casinos and contractors employing our  
12 members may request specialized training for the new-  
13 to-the-market products that require a factory  
14 representative to assist our instructors at the  
15 training facility during classes.

16           The training is completed and the members  
17 are certified before the project starts. Hence, the  
18 employees are familiar with the product so there is no  
19 lost time, and the job is completed in an expeditious  
20 fashion.

21           Our apprenticeship program is so  
22 comprehensive that applicants often wait in line for

1 12 hours to get an application. Our membership is  
2 very stable. Many are college educated and work for  
3 their entire career at the carpentry trade. They earn  
4 fair wages and benefits for their work, and they're  
5 involved in many volunteer activities, including  
6 construction of parks for the children, renovation  
7 work in numerous churches, and we hold golf and  
8 fishing tournaments annually where the proceeds are  
9 donated to benefit the South Jersey Cancer Fund.

10 Casino gaming has improved the quality of  
11 life for every working carpenter, whether employed  
12 directly or indirectly in the industry.

13 Commissioners, I remember the good old  
14 days and hope they never return.

15 I wish to conclude with a thank you to the  
16 gaming industry for the much improved quality of life  
17 they provide all their employees.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

20 Dorothea Meltzer.

21 MS. MELTZER: Good evening. My name is  
22 Dorothea Meltzer. I serve as chairman of the Board of