

1 every part of the state provide goods and services to
2 this vital industry, benefits from Sussex County in
3 the north all the way to Salem County in the south.

4 And also people consider the over 200,000
5 senior citizens whose property taxes will be frozen
6 thanks to the gaming industry.

7 The State Chamber urges this Commission to
8 make a full and fair study of legal gambling in the
9 United States. Such a study has to give substantial
10 emphasis to the powerful economic benefits associated
11 by this industry.

12 I thank you for the opportunity to be here
13 this evening and offer our continued assistance in
14 your investigation.

15 Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

17 Scott Ferguson, welcome.

18 MR. FERGUSON: Hi. I'm Scott Ferguson,
19 Executive Director of the United Way of Atlantic
20 County, and I appreciate the opportunity to address
21 the Commission.

22 The United Way of Atlantic County raises

1 money in a community-wide annual campaign. The
2 majority of the money we raise comes through payroll
3 deductions. We would not be successful without the
4 cooperation and active participation of the CEOs of
5 local companies and casinos.

6 During our most recent campaign we raised
7 \$2,672,000. The money is used to help fund over 50
8 health and human service programs and 30 local
9 agencies, agencies that last year touched the lives of
10 125,000 Atlantic County residents.

11 The area casinos and their employees last
12 year contributed over 53 percent of the total money
13 raised. Because of the casino industry, over 40,000
14 people are able to work and make a living wage.

15 Nearly 20,000 casino employees contribute
16 annually to the United Way of Atlantic County. Since
17 the debut of gaming in Atlantic City, the United Way
18 has raised over \$40 million, money that has been used
19 locally to not only improve the quality of our lives,
20 but to insure that people in need get the services
21 when they need them.

22 I estimate that without the support of the

1 casino industry, we would have raised approximately
2 only \$10 million during that same time period.

3 I think it's also important to note that
4 when I talk about 125,000 people, it's people that we
5 know, we work with; it's people that are in this room.

6 It's our friends and our neighbors because
7 each and every casino supports the efforts of the
8 United Way of Atlantic County, we are able to fund
9 vital community services, services like the Boys and
10 Girls Club of Atlantic City, Salvation Army, the Red
11 Cross, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and dozens of others.

12 The United Way is a volunteer driven
13 organization. The casino industry encourages active
14 community participation from their employees, and the
15 United Way and many other nonprofit organizations
16 benefit from their support.

17 The casino industry has impacted the
18 quality of life for everyone in the area. In my
19 opinion, the area would not be as successful as it is
20 without the casinos.

21 Sure, there are problems and issues, but
22 there are partnerships between the casinos, the United

1 Way, other nonprofits, other businesses to work on
2 them and address them.

3 I have been a United Way Executive
4 Director for nine years, in two other states. I think
5 it's important that you know I chose to move here. I
6 saw outstanding community support from all the
7 businesses, from the people, and from the casinos.
8 I'm excited about the second wave. We're already
9 working with these new casinos to see how we can
10 address and make positive changes for our community.

11 The total economic and social impact of
12 the casino industry in Atlantic County is enormous.
13 As you go forward with your study, I encourage you to
14 remember that whatever your findings may be, we are
15 talking about the lives of people, people like you and
16 me.

17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

19 Jim Brennan.

20 MR. BRENNAN: Good evening, Madame
21 Chairman, Commissioners, and a special welcome to Mr.
22 Lanni. I remember him from when he was running