

**MR. MARIO DEBENEDETTI**

CHAIRMAN JAMES: Mr. Mario DeBenedetti.

MR. DE BENEDETTI: Good afternoon. My name is Mario DeBenedetti and I would like to tell you about the increase to my business since riverboat gaming came to Joliet, Illinois. I am the owner of Milano Baking Company which is located in Joliet, Illinois. We've been in business since 1915 and have been in our current location on South Chicago Street in Joliet since 1926. I have two sons, Mario and Darren who are now in business with me. We are a full service bakery with two retail locations and have truck routes that serve our customers, primarily in the Will County area. We currently employ approximately 70 people.

Our business is doing very well. In fact, over the past five years we have grown from about one million in sales to about three and a half million. We have added two additional routes and employed an additional 20 people. Most of our recent growth has been the result of the boats. They have been good about utilizing local vendors and have been very good customers. Additionally, they have helped us to acquire capital to expand our business.

As I mentioned earlier, our business has grown tremendously. We have been able to expand our baking operation, open a retail outlet at our Chicago Street location and just recently opened a new retail outlet on the west side of Joliet. We are currently planning to expand our production capacity at our main plant.

Another factor has been the improvements to the area where we are located. South Chicago Street was a blighted area

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1 but as a result of the boats, the road entry into Joliet was  
2 widened and improved and the entire area has seen significant  
3 rehabilitation. In summary, the last several years have been  
4 good to Milano Bakery and the entire Joliet area has significant  
5 economic rebound. We are looking forward to continued economic  
6 success. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

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