

1 MS. CARLA DAVENPORT

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3 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Carla Davenport.

4 MS. DAVENPORT: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Have
5 you purchased your lottery ticket for tonight's biggest jackpot
6 drawing ever? Just kidding.

7 Hi, my name is Carla Davenport. I reside in
8 Valparaiso, Indiana and I'm a beverage server with the Majestic
9 Star casino. Three years ago I was busy raising my son Curtis,
10 attending college here in Chicago majoring in interior design and
11 expecting my second child. My husband Larry sold cars and our
12 income was substantial. However, with limited health benefits
13 and no dental or vision, we made sacrifices and did without all
14 but the essentials.

15 Larry worked an average of 60 hours per week or more,
16 as business demanded. Our time together as a family was minimal
17 but we did what we could to make the most of it and held hopes
18 for a brighter future when my schooling was finished.

19 By the time Buffington Harbor casino opened, my dream
20 of success as an interior designer had been put on hold. School
21 projects could not survive my rambunctious one year old daughter
22 Maggie and reluctantly I dropped out of school. I had become a
23 full time stay at home mother whose husband's career demanded
24 more time than he could spend with his family.

25 On a rare outing with my husband we visited the
26 Buffington Harbor casino. I was enthralled, not so much with the
27 gaming, but the atmosphere, the people. Something told me I
28 needed to be a part of that. I decided to pursue a position
29 working nights so I could still spend the days with my children.

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1 Soon after I began working steadily, Larry and I
2 decided that he should leave his position in the car business and
3 stay home full time with Curtis and Maggie. My earnings as a
4 beverage server had surpassed his wages and the benefits were
5 incomparable. Through his position we were required to pay a
6 premium of \$400 per month and at Majestic Star I am provided with
7 dental, medical and vision at a cost to us of less than \$50 per
8 month. However significant, the deciding factor was my four day
9 work week, at almost half the hours that my husband had been
10 putting in.

11 Presently Curtis, now five and Maggie three are
12 reaping the most rewards. Picnics, walks and outings such as
13 church with mom and dad are the norm rather than the exception.
14 Visits to the dentist and eye doctor are now made as needed, not
15 when we can afford it. In my life the casinos have made a
16 tremendous impact. It has brought my family together again.

17 Hopes and dreams, although different from those of
18 three years ago, are bright and shine with promise, the promise
19 of a family. Yes, love is tough, but together our families and
20 legal gaming can prevail.

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