MR. DAMIEN COTTON

CHAIRMAN JAMES: Mr. Damien Cotton.

MR. COTTON: Good afternoon. First of all, I'd like to say thank you to the Commissioners and the audience for letting me come down here to speak today. My name is Damien Cotton. I have lived in Gary all my life. In the 22 years I have been there, I have seen Gary come from having a little something, to having actually nothing. Since the casinos have come, they have been providing as far as pavement for the roads, more security, police officers and also job opportunities for a lot of what I can say now employees.

As far as me, I have an associate's degree in computer information systems. As you all know, there really aren't any computer jobs in Gary. A lot of them are in Chicago or should I say, in another city, none in my city close by. This job has given me the opportunity to have money in my pocket, also help my mom take care of the bills.

As far as other employees, those single parents, it provides them medical attention and dental care for their children that they can't provide without this job. It also helps me a lot. Now, a lot of people work on the boat, as far as dealers, they can make that a career because it pays them well. A person like me is just a foot in the door. As far as a lot of people in my position, if they would like, they can move up and find a better job. Really that's all I have to say.

CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you. It was very well said.

MR. COTTON: Thank you.