1 2	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	
3 4 5	UNITED STATES FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION,  Plaintiff,  v.  ARDAGH GROUP, S.A., e	<ul><li>: Washington, D.C.</li><li>: Tuesday, September 24, 2013</li></ul>
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J LO	BEFORE THE HONORABLE BARBARA J. ROTHSTEIN UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE	
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## PROCEEDINGS

THE DEPUTY CLERK: The matter before the Court,

Civil Action Number 13-1021, the United States Federal Trade

Commission versus Ardagh Group S.A., et al.

Counsel, please come forward and identify yourselves for the record.

MR. HASSI: Good morning, Your Honor. I'm Ed Hassi. I'm with the Federal Trade Commission. With me at counsel table are Brendan McNamara, Cathy Moscatelli, and Angelike Mina.

THE COURT: Okay, good morning.

MR. SCHWED: Good morning, Your Honor. Richard Schwed of Shearman & Sterling for the Defendant Ardagh Group, and with me from Shearman & Sterling are Alan Goudiss and Heather Kafele.

MR. EVEN: Good morning, Your Honor. Yonatan Even with Cravath, Swaine & Moore, for Defendant Saint-Gobain.

THE COURT: Well, good morning, counsel.

I don't know if you were prepared to address me, but why don't we start out by my telling you my concerns, and then you probably can fill me in on your plans.

I know we're having a hearing in about a month, and my concern was just the structure of that hearing and what you anticipate will take place there, and giving you some idea of what I would expect in terms of the procedures

you will use, and my sort of idiosyncrasies in terms of conducting a hearing like this.

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My first concern would be that all exhibits be pre-marked and pre-admitted. I can't imagine that there would be any dispute about exhibits at a hearing like this, but I could be wrong and you can tell me if I am wrong. I don't want to -- you know, we only have that short period of time, and I know you're intending to fill it. I don't want to fill it with arguments about exhibits.

Just a word of caution. If it turns out both sides are using the same exhibit, pick a number, any number. I don't care whose side it is. Just don't use two different numbers. It's only going to confuse me, all right? One number will be enough. If you really can cooperate, you could number them consecutively, and then it will be very easy for the clerk and for me.

Are there any exhibits that you would like for me to review in advance that you think might speed things along? Now, let me just give you an idea of where I am coming from. I can't review them really in advance because I'm coming back from a trip just the day before, and I'm not taking them with me, I can tell you that. But like if you have some the night before the next day of the hearing you think it would be good for me to take a look at, keep that in mind. I'm willing to do so that I sort of have a nodding

acquaintance with them before a witness takes the stand.

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That's my next question. Are there going to be witnesses? If so, tell me. Tell me how many, both sides. Will you agree on an order? Will they be here, be ready to go? If you're going to have witnesses and they are kind of experts in their field of some kind, I can read CVs faster than they can tell me what they've done and what they've published, and where they went to school. You can take me as far back as high school as long as you put it in writing because then I can read it really fast.

I will throw out an idea, and I assume you're going to say, yes, there are going to be witnesses. One way of speeding things along -- I'm not sure it will work here. I just throw it out to you to think about -- many times in hearings like this it can be helpful to prepare the direct in the form of a statement and then have me read the statement, ask questions if there's something in there I don't understand, and then just proceed with cross-examination. Or with a limited direct if there are charts to show me to help me along. I don't know if that's helpful or not. Sometimes it is, sometimes it isn't.

It is helpful if you think that you've asked for three days and then all of a sudden you find you're going five and I don't have those five days, and then directs would be helpful. But if you're staying within your time

and you think it would be easier for me to get it with the person here and then being able to -- pros and cons. I will let you decide. I don't feel strongly about it because sometimes my ability to ask questions of the witness, I could do even with a written direct. You decide. It may be acceptable for some witnesses and not others.

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I'd like to hear from you if you've made any allocation of time. Are you splitting it? FTC is plaintiff, so usually you would get a rebuttal, although I'm not sure rebuttal really applies to something like this. But if you're thinking you want a rebuttal, then let's split the time, and you carefully reserve some time. I think we should try to keep the time in mind.

I will try to give you an hourly day so that you know how much time you have. I don't believe in chess clocks. I think they ruin the ambiance of the courtroom, but I do expect that my clerk will keep time. So I think you should be thinking of staying within your time limits.

Okay, I've given you my concerns. Who wants to lead off? You look like you're ready to go, counsel.

MR. HASSI: Yes, I think I am, Your Honor. Again, Ed Hassi for the Federal Trade Commission.

There are some concerns we have and some issues, some of which you have already addressed. I wanted to start out with scheduling. After our discussion with your law

clerk, we've had a further discussion about scheduling. We have some minors changes to the scheduling order. They are agreed by all parties. We can send in a revised scheduling order today, and I can walk you through those changes or we can simply send it in, however Your Honor would like to proceed.

THE COURT: Tell me now, and also send it in.

MR. HASSI: Okay. So the changes -- I'm sorry,

I've got a black line here that shows it, which I can hand up if Your Honor would like --

THE COURT: Sure.

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MR. HASSI: -- to the scheduling order.

THE COURT: Thank you.

MR. HASSI: So the changes don't start until page 6, paragraph 21, and that is as we've -- we just completed expert discovery on Friday. It may be that one or both parties choose to make Daubert motions, and so we've built into the schedule a briefing schedule for potential Daubert motions.

THE COURT: But you must know by now whether you're going to bring Daubert motions. It's not the 27th, but you must have a pretty good idea. You guys wouldn't start a brief on the night of the 26th. I know you better.

MR. HASSI: Your Honor, I think it's our expectation that we will bring one or more Daubert motions.

We, to be fair, are still evaluating that, but, yes, there is someone back at the office working on Daubert motions.

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THE COURT: Why would I think that might be the case, but let me explore this. You're bringing a Daubert motion to exclude the expert from this hearing?

MR. HASSI: To exclude the expert, some of the experts or some of the experts' testimony.

THE COURT: Now, you're aware that in order to make that ruling I need to hear from the expert, right?

MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor. I understand the

Catch 22 involved.

THE COURT: Yes. You still think that's a worthwhile motion to make? Is it because you don't want me to consider what that expert is saying, is that it?

MR. HASSI: I think what our intention is, is to limit — there are some opinions that are being offered here by, for example, experts in the field that are going to say, "Well, there's a trend, for example, to beer in cans," and at least one of these experts thinks that he knows better than the people that are — the businesspeople that in the field. It's not based on any methodology, anything testable. It's just, "Gee, I've done this before, and I know better than the people that are running these multimillion dollar businesses."

We think that that should be brought to light. I

understand it can be brought to light in cross-examination.

The concern we really have here is the limited period of time that we have before Your Honor, and we thought that if we could address some of these issues in advance in the form of a motion, it might help speed things along at the trial.

THE COURT: Okay. I can tell you right now that I probably will not have time to review those motions. I don't want to -- I don't want to nip in the bud any wonderful briefs that you're doing, but I'm going to hear these witnesses anyway.

MR. HASSI: Okay.

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THE COURT: Well, you can give me the -- I'll hear the witnesses. Just know that I'm not going to be reading those motions before I hear the witnesses, but I will read them, and if it's correct that the testimony I've heard should have been excluded or doesn't qualify as an expert, then I can do that later on. But in terms of your timekeeping, that's what I'm trying to help you with.

MR. HASSI: I appreciate that.

THE COURT: In terms of the timekeeping, I won't be in a position to exclude anybody before the hearing, okay?

MR. HASSI: Okay, Your Honor.

THE COURT: So count on the fact that whoever you're objecting to will testify, and if I do any excluding

of testimony, it will be later on when I have had a chance to read the briefs. Okay?

MR. HASSI: I understand.

THE COURT: So it's not going to help you in time, but it may still help. I didn't mean to say that you shouldn't pursue. It's just that in terms of timing, it's not going to happen beforehand, okay?

MR. HASSI: Okay. We will keep that in mind in terms of whether we file or don't file, Your Honor.

THE COURT: An updated witness list --

MR. HASSI: Witness list, and I think taking into account what Your Honor has already said this morning, we have this week to sort of work that out and try to provide each other with clear indications of who will actually be called to testify live at the hearing versus, for example, being submitted by deposition testimony. So that's scheduled to happen on Friday.

Some of these changes, for example, paragraph 23, these were made previously. In terms of the briefing schedule, we are just annotating them here. Our brief and reply will be due on September 30th. We propose to exchange exhibit lists, copies of exhibits and deposition designations, instead of on the 30th, on October 2nd, so moving that back by a couple of days.

Paragraph 25 goes to oppositions to Daubert

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motions.

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Paragraph 26, we propose to exchange objections instead of on -- to exhibits and counter deposition designations, instead of on October 3rd, on October 9th.

And then we have reply briefs on any Daubert motions scheduled for October 9th.

In the post trial briefing — in paragraph 31, we corrected the hearing dates and times. And then for the post trial briefing, what we would propose to do is, since the trial will continue into that Monday, instead of having the findings of fact due that Friday, we've pushed them to the following Monday. And then the reply findings of fact, instead of October 30th, to November 1st.

So those are the proposed changes. As I mentioned, they are agreed to by all parties.

THE COURT: Sounds good to me.

MR. HASSI: Okay.

THE COURT: I think that is a reasonable schedule, and if it gives you more time to get everything prepared, so much the better.

MR. HASSI: The parties will submit a proposed ordered this afternoon.

THE COURT: Great. Let me ask you your opinion.

Do you think there is going to be any problem with exhibits?

MR. HASSI: I hope not, Your Honor. I think for

the most part these are going to be business documents out of the companies' files and/or third parties' file, so I hope not.

THE COURT: Good.

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MR. HASSI: I understand with Your Honor's schedule -- we've already talked about the fact that we really need to work this out given when the hearing starts and we don't have -- that this is our opportunity for pretrial, and so we'll try to resolve that as much as possible.

THE COURT: Okay. Let me make one suggestion because I've found that's often where the best intentions can flounder.

If you are using the demonstrative exhibits, charts, things like that with your experts, and you might because they probably would be helpful to the Court -- if you're not using -- I say charts, and that's a --

MR. HASSI: We hope they will be helpful, Your Honor.

THE COURT: -- that's a give-away of my generation. If you're using something that you're going to put on the computer since nobody makes charts anymore, show it to the other side so that they don't see it for the first time the morning of and then say, "No, no, that's inaccurate. Can you make a change?" Since it's usually

very difficult to make a change at the last minute, include those as exhibits that you talk about, okay, so that --

MR. HASSI: Okay.

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THE COURT: It's just a matter of time, you know. Do you want to waste time saying, no, that should be this percentage and not that percentage?

MR. HASSI: Okay.

THE COURT: Just a word of advice.

MR. HASSI: Okay.

THE COURT: It sounds like you have anticipated pretty much everything. Is there anything else we need to talk about?

MR. HASSI: There are some housekeeping matters that I think we would like to address. There is also one, I think, fairly significant substantive matter that we wanted to raise with Your Honor as well. I can do those in either order. The substantive matter may be, in some respect, the elephant in the room, and so why don't I do that first?

And that is, if Your Honor has read Ardgh's brief that was filed last week, there's an 11th hour suggestion in that brief that they're going to propose a remedy here, to sell off four glass plants. That's news to us. It's news that comes after the close of fact discovery. It comes after our expert reports were in. It comes after our briefs were in.

Now, Ardagh has known for months that the Federal Trade Commission has concerns about this transaction.

Indeed, they understood that there were antitrust concerns when they entered into the transaction.

They decided not to address those concerns when they were in the investigatory stage. They decided not to address those concerns when they came before the Commission, and they decided not to address them in a timely fashion so that we could take fact discovery on that.

What they now propose to do is put these plans, hopes, wants, intentions in front of the Court at trial with no discovery whatsoever, and to ask you to evaluate that remedy without us having the opportunity to evaluate it, without us having the opportunity to take discovery on it, and without us having the opportunity to give Your Honor our views on whether that remedy is sufficient. Clearly, at this point it isn't. I mean, at this point it's just an intention to sell.

They haven't identified a buyer. They haven't identified how much these are being sold for. They haven't given us a chance to evaluate what they're proposing to do, is to sell four plants, two each from two of the companies. And they say, "Well, that will form a business that will restore competition in this market."

We don't know if those four plants can be combined

into a business, and so there are a lot of very serious questions we have about that. And we don't think that he gamesmanship that's being played here by waiting until the 11th hour should be addressed at this hearing. We don't think that that evidence should come in without us having a chance to have had discovery, and without us having had a chance to evaluate it, and, frankly, until the facts are jelled, if you will. I mean, there's not an agreement for sale here.

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The parties cite in their briefs three cases in which remedies have been litigated before. The first of those, Arch Coal, was a case that the FTC brought. In fact, it was Ms. Moscatelli's shop that brought it. In that case, the changes to the proposed transaction were two months before the case was first filed by the FTC. So they had a chance to address it in discovery, and they had a chance to consider it, and the Commission had a chance. When I say the "Commission," I mean the commissioners had a chance to evaluate it and vote on it. That hasn't happened here.

They cite Franklin Electric. That's a case involving the DOJ. In Franklin Electric, they changed the joint venture one day after the DOJ filed. Again, well before the -- I mean, the discovery period hadn't even started yet, and so the parties had a chance to address it and address it in discovery.

The final case they cite is Libby, and in Libby that was the latest of the three. But in Libby, it was one month into — one month after the complaint was filed they made changes. And when I say "made changes," it's not like here where they're saying, "Gee, we're going to sell these four plants."

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They said, "Here's what we're going to do. Here's the modified agreement. Here's who's involved," and the parties had a chance to vet that in discovery. Here what they're saying is --

THE COURT: Let me ask you something.

MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: What are you asking the Court to do?

Are you asking the Court to just not allow testimony on this at all?

MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor. We're asking -- we can do this as a motion in limine, but we don't think that evidence of this 11th hour proposal -- it comes after fact discovery -- should be heard in these proceedings.

THE COURT: All right. Let me -- let me play out a scenario here, okay?

MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: It is in the Court's interest not to render advisory opinions or opinions that are going to be moot in about a day or two after I render it. Let's say I

grant whatever motion, whatever form you're going to bring a motion in, and I exclude all that evidence. Then I give you a ruling one way or the other. Obviously if I rule against the FTC, then the whole thing is moot, but if I rule for the FTC, then I presume they would come back with the excluded information and bring the whole thing all over again, right?

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MR. HASSI: Well, Your Honor, I think in light of the fact that this is a 13(B) proceeding, and that what we're asking Your Honor to do here is to preserve the status quo pending the trial, before the FTC and before the Commission, I'm not sure that that's correct. In other words, if there is a remedy to be fashioned, the Commission ought to have a chance to fashion that remedy.

What we're asking Your Honor to do is to decide are there serious and substantial questions going to this transaction such that I should require the parties — that Your Honor should require the parties to preserve the status quo, and that's all we're asking here. Whether that remedy, the sale of those four plants and the possible buyer that they may or may not come up with — and they're just starting to talk to buyers — whether that remedy suffices can be addressed, if necessary, in a merits trial. And I think that depends on whether they get to a deal and whether they get to a buyer, et cetera. But we don't think that these proceedings should be held up, or that Your Honor

should be deciding — with no evidence, frankly. I mean, if you look at their brief, there's not a footnote, there's not a citation to any evidence. This is just they're going to put somebody on the stand who says either: "Here's what we intend to do," or, "Here's what we've done in the weeks since discovery has closed." We think we're severely prejudiced by that, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. Did you want to address -well, I'll tell you what, let's address this now from the
other side, and then we'll go into your housekeeping
matters.

MR. HASSI: Very well, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay.

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MR. SCHWED: Thank you, Your Honor. Richard Schwed for Ardagh Group.

I think maybe I can start by backing up and explaining the revised transaction that we've proposed, and this isn't something that's a gambit. It's not an 11th hour strategy. Basically, since this case was filed, we've been trying to come up with the FTC to a consensual arrangement. We have not been able to do that. We've discussed a number plants. We have not been able to reach an agreement. We finally decided that there was not going to be time or ability to get that done, and that we would unilaterally agree to divest four of the plants that were going to be

part of the combined entity, two that we already own and two that we're purchasing.

This is relevant -- I'm not sure how much Your

Honor -- since you've been recently reassigned to this

case -- has gotten into the -- what the case is all about,

but essentially the fundamental question in this case is

whether glass bottles compete with other forms of packaging,

and, in particular, the most important is cans for beer and

plastics for spirits, alcohol. There is a fundamental

question that that brings up which is sort of the starting

point of all cases, which is what is the product market.

We strongly believe that we can win this on the definition of the product market. That's the exact same case that — the exact same product market issue that was addressed by the Supreme Court in Continental Can 50 years ago, and by this court about 25 years ago in the O-I Brockway case and by the FTC, where both courts have said that cans and glass are in the same product market. It is a rare case when you have a merger case and there's a relevant product market, and there's a Supreme Court case and a binding case that have said that the product market that the FTC is claiming is not the right product market, and, in fact, the FTC Commission itself has found that that is not the right product market.

Now, the revised transaction we are proposing is

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one that addresses the question: Well, what if Your Honor does not agree with us on the product market? Because it is our view that there is not going to be a diminution in competition with this transaction even in the revised product market, even if their product market is correct. But out of an abundance of caution, what we have done is agreed to sell these four plants which we believe 100 percent addresses the concerns that have been raised by the Commission.

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There are three plants that make beer. Those plants combined have — their beer sales that they have made in this past year are 110 percent of what Ardgh's beer sales were itself. So in other words, we're selling more than our own beer business effectively. And so the combined entity will have less beer business than just one of the two — the bigger of the two entities had before the transaction.

THE COURT: Are you going to do that even if the Court rules with you?

MR. SCHWED: Well, we are going to enter into a definitive purchase agreement because we recognize time is short, and we don't have time, necessarily, to wait for the Court to issue a ruling, and, then, if things don't go our way, to circle back and then complete this transaction and get this deal closed by the drop-dead date of mid-January. So what we have decided to do in order to make sure that

this can all be done in time, is to enter into binding agreements that are -- obviously they have to be contingent on the transaction closing because we can't sell what we don't own, but the binding agreements -- a single binding agreement with them to buy the four plants, and then immediately upon closing the transaction, those four plants will be transferred to the buyer.

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THE COURT: So if I rule in your favor about the market question, you will still go ahead with this plan?

MR. SCHWED: We will still go ahead with it. That's the situation we've agreed to be in.

THE COURT: Don't you think that the FTC should get a crack at what you're planning? You're telling me it's definitive. What I heard from counsel was that they don't even know that you have a binding contract.

MR. SCHWED: Well we don't yet have a binding contract. We're in negotiations. They've known for — they've known for two weeks now that we are — the identity of the four plants we are planning to sell. Since then, they have deposed our CEO and asked him extensively about the plans to sell the four plants. They have deposed our chairman who is running the process and asked him extensively about the plans to sell the plants. It was the primary focus of the deposition. There is nothing else that they have identified to us that they need that prevents them

from -- they're saying that we want try this without giving them a chance to put on their case about it, but they've known about -- they have detailed information about each of these four plants that they've had for a long time.

THE COURT: Two weeks?

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MR. SCHWED: No. I'm saying the detailed information about the four plants they've had for months. In other words, we've given them plant by plant detail in the whole discovery process, even before the lawsuit was filed. They have had plant by plant detail, and they have known about the exact contours of the transaction, the exact four plants, for two weeks.

Now, two weeks may not sound like a lot, but that ends up putting them about five weeks before the hearing, and a number of the cases that are cited by both sides in this were decided in the entire case, from the date it was filed until the date of the hearing, was between five and eight weeks. So it's not — in the context of maybe a five-year litigation, something that's five weeks before the actual hearing date may sound like the 11th hour, but in the context of lawsuits that often take five, six, seven, eight weeks, five weeks before the hearing gives them plenty of time to address what is really only one sub-issue of the case. It a doesn't affect the product market analysis, it doesn't affect the geographic market analysis, it only

affects the question of the harm to competition and --

THE COURT: Only?

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MR. SCHWED: I'm sorry?

THE COURT: Only affects the harm to --

MR. SCHWED: Well, just in terms of the amount of analysis. In other words, what I'm saying, Your Honor, is that there have been entire cases, from product market through the end of the case, that have been tried in six weeks.

THE COURT: Let me ask you something. Do you think there is a chance that if the commissioners had your current plan in front of them they might come out with a different result?

MR. SCHWED: We don't know. The FTC, frankly, has gone radio silent on us. We had originally proposed this as a settlement and never got an answer, so we don't know what the Commission would do. Frankly, I wish we could explore that, but the problem we have here is we have a mid-January drop-dead date. This transaction will terminate, and our ability to purchase the company will end by mid-January. So we don't have the luxury of time to explore that question.

THE COURT: Okay. Let me hear from --

MR. SCHWED: If I may just add one more point?

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. SCHWED: The arguments Mr. Hassi made are the

exact same arguments that were made in Arch Coal, which was they're trying to fashion their own remedy. They're trying to take the job of the Commission by deciding which plants get sold. They can't change the transaction. And this Court said, "I'm not going to get involved in a fiction.

I'm not going to hear a case about a transaction that is no longer the transaction that's being proposed."

Thank you.

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THE COURT: Thank you. Wait, that's what the Court said in Arch Coal?

MR. SCHWED: In Arch Coal, yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. SCHWED: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Let me hear back from Mr. Hassi.

MR. HASSI: Your Honor, I will start with Arch Coal and some of the differences.

The difference here for Arch Coal is, the Arch Coal court found it was integral to the deal, and it was done in good faith.

And the Libby court -- it cited the Libby court.

In its footnote 27 of the Libby court opinion, they talk about the good faith of the parties in an effort to resolve the FTC's concerns.

Dropping these facts on us the night before the CEO's deposition, which is already being taken after the

close of discovery, that's not in good faith, Your Honor.

This isn't a good-faith effort to resolve this.

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In terms of the questions that the commissioners would have, if -- our website has a whole section on divestitures and what a party has to do to try and satisfy the Commission on divestitures, and one of the main issues is, who is the buyer? How are they funded? Can they make this a go?

And then we talked to customers, and I will tell you -- this was announced on Friday to the public -- we've been hearing from customers already. They don't like this. So we haven't had a chance to vet that, and the Commission hasn't had a chance to vet that.

THE COURT: All right. I'm going to ask Mr. Schwed the same question. I will probably get a different answer, but I am concerned.

Mr. Hassi, do you believe there is still some benefit to be gained from -- let's say I exclude everything about the sale to -- the four different sales or the divestiture, whatever you would call it -- I exclude that and I don't hear any testimony on that, which is quite likely what I'm going to do because it doesn't sound like you are prepared to respond to it. If I did that, is there anything to be gained from going ahead with the rest of the hearing and getting a ruling from me on the market, the

geography, the whole thing?

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MR. HASSI: There absolutely is, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. HASSI: We think the product market issue is an important one here. We don't think it's a close call, but we do think if Your Honor takes a hard look at that, it would be helpful to the parties.

THE COURT: Okay.

What you think, Mr. Schwed?

MR. SCHWED: Your Honor, as a --

THE COURT: You had better come to the podium.

MR. SCHWED: Your Honor, we certainly don't want to put off the hearing because, as I've mentioned, we're basically running up against the clock. From the date of the hearing until the date that this deal must close, we have roughly three months, a little less from the last day of hearings.

We recognize that the parties are going to spend a week or so -- a little bit more -- submitting briefs, and then Your Honor has to decide weighty issues and will take -- you know, will need some time in order to do that. These are not things that can be decided on the spot overnight. So we recognize that all of this is going to take time, and, then, potentially, whichever side loses is going to try to take an emergency appeal up to the D.C.

Circuit. So we don't have the luxury of putting this off. I guess, in an ideal world, we would say let's delay this hearing, get some more time. But our view is that whatever needs to be done — so the first answer is, yes, we need to have a hearing. And then so the question is, what can be covered in that hearing. Our view is that, whatever needs to be done in order to have the FTC probe this deal can be done in three weeks.

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All of this -- in the CCC case, which is the most recent case that was before this court, the entire discovery record took about three weeks, and that was over Christmas. So our view is, there's a minimal amount that needs to be done in order to vet this process. They are in contact with the customers. They can talk to the customers, and there's no reason that this can't be fully teed up by this -- by the start of the hearing.

THE COURT: Let me talk to the side that's going to be doing the discovery.

Speaking with all due speed -- and don't tell me it's going to take six months because if you tell me it is going to take six months, I won't believe you -- how long would you need to do the discovery on the four transactions they are talking about?

MR. HASSI: Your Honor, I'm not sure I can answer that question and the reason is, is because a very important

part of what the FTC wants to consider here -- and, again, it's public, it's on our website -- is the identity of the buyer. Who is going to run these plants? How are these four plants going to fit together? Who is going to manage them? How well-capitalized are they?

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THE COURT: Well, they have binding contracts ready to go, so they could tell you today. Probably as soon as I get out of here, they'll tell you who the buyers are.

Right? Am I right, Mr. Schwed?

MR. SCHWED: No. We are still negotiating with buyers. We have identified to the FTC who will be managing the plants. Since this is an open courtroom, I won't say who it is, but we have identified to the FTC the type of buyer, that it is somebody who has got industrial experience and exactly who will be running the plants.

THE COURT: No, no. But you haven't told them who the buyers are? Please get to the microphone.

MR. SCHWED: Yes, Your Honor. We're still negotiating with two to three buyers.

THE COURT: Then they can't do their discovery in three weeks. You don't even have a definitive name for them to do discovery from or ask about. That's not reasonable, is it?

MR. SCHWED: Well, Your Honor, I think if you look at what discovery needs to be done, I think, frankly, the

identity of the buyer is a bit of a red herring here in the sense that the key question is: Do the divestiture of these plants satisfy their concerns about the power in the market that they are claiming that Ardagh will have? So we are now saying that Ardagh is going to have a new company that has less beer business than VNA had before. It's going to have a capacity in spirits that — or it's giving away enough capacity that they basically will be a competitor that replaces Ardagh in the market.

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THE COURT: Let me tell you right now, I do not believe that that can be thoroughly investigated in the three weeks between now and my hearing. I just don't see it. I just don't think the negotiations are far enough along the line, and I don't think it's fair to the other side to ask them to do that.

So given what I have heard today, I would not be considering that factor in my decision. I just do not believe that you would both be in a position to present to me -- I don't think the FTC would be in a position in three weeks to present their side or their opinion about whether this really is an adequate cure to their concern about competition.

My sole question at this point, given that I don't think I am going into -- I can't go into that. I think it would be premature and precipitous for me to even look at

that.

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My question to both of you is -- look, I would love to have the hearing, set the days aside, sounds very interesting. I've got nothing else to do those three days. I'm all yours. On the other hand, as I sort of led into this, if this is going possibly to be a remedy that would resolve the situation, why am I going through all this about market, and geography, and all of this if, indeed, the divestiture would solve the problem of the competitive concerns that the FTC has? As I say, it is an interesting question, and I'm sure I'll enjoy good briefing, but, you know, I do have other cases that I probably could be attending to in those three days.

I'm just concerned that we're going to go through all of this, you'll get a ruling from me, and then you are going to have to go through this anyway. You are going to have to go through it. I mean, you already have a plan that you think, at least based on what I have heard today, would satisfy there concerns. Why not give them a crack at taking a look at it?

MR. SCHWED: Well, Your Honor, we would be more than happy to have the Commission agree that this satisfies their concerns and to make this all go away. Obviously, we're willing to do that deal. We've come out publicly and said it. We've said it to this Court.

The problem is that it's been a good two weeks since we proposed those four plants to the FTC staff, and we have not heard one way or the other whether they view those four plants as being sufficient. And so we just can't, frankly -- in my client's interest, I can't just sit back and say we're going to wait forever for the FTC to decide whether this is enough because their time is going to come and go.

THE COURT: Okay.

Mr. Hassi, let me ask you this.

MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I'm not buying into the fact that two weeks is enough for you to give a decision about whether the FTC is satisfied or not satisfied. I think I can tell what your answer is going to be, which is that you need more information, you need to do some discovery, and you need to know more facts surrounding the divestiture plans.

What do you need and how long would it take you to come up with a list of what you need for them to give it to you? I mean, you can't just sit there and say, no, we're going to go ahead with this hearing because we just heard about this yesterday. I understand your frustration and your concern, but let's move on from the fact that you just heard about it. I've already told you I'm not going to go into this at the hearing, so you're safe on that point,

okay?

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MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: So now you can just sit back and say, "Okay, how long, what do I need, and how will that timing mesh with the hearing?"

I have already said I don't think you can do everything in three weeks. I don't think you can. But if you made a list and they gave you — I mean, they really want to accelerate this, and so it's in their interest to give accelerated discovery. If you give them a list of what you need, I think what Mr. Schwed is saying is that he will do everything to get you the information that you need.

Now, that doesn't mean you can look at the information, get the commissioners to look at it, do the whole thing. But at least you could get the information.

Can you guys work on that in the three weeks and give me an idea of timing and how it would mesh with the hearing? I mean, if you're talking about a timing where another week or two would make a difference, that is important for me to know because then we could have a hearing on the whole thing, or maybe have no hearing at all is what I am saying.

I'm reluctant to put the hearing over because I have a tight schedule and these are your three days. On the other hand, I'm also reluctant to have a hearing -- I

suppose I could just have the hearing, listen to everything, not give you a decision, and then you can tell me that it was a nice three days but we've worked it out. I don't mind that, but if putting the hearing over, if it were at all possible -- I'll look at my calendar. What do you think? How much more time would you need? I understand three weeks isn't enough, and I understand that two weeks wasn't enough, but what are we looking at?

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MR. HASSI: I think the problem is the starting date, and that is, we need to start from a definitive agreement, an identified buyer and a contract with that buyer. There are a ton of questions. You know, I'm tempted to bring Dan Ducore up. He's the head of our Compliance Section, and he's the one — he and his team vet these things. So if you want to have an extended discussion about that, I can ask Dan to come up.

But there are a lot of unanswered questions here that can't be answered until we've got a contract. I mean, the idea that they've got somebody identified to manage the plants but they don't have a buyer yet, what makes anybody think that that buyer is going to accept that manager? Those questions have to be answered first, and then we can look at the discovery. Whether it is a matter of weeks or months, I don't know, but we need to have a definitive agreement to work from. We need to know what it is we're

shooting at.

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THE COURT: Mr. Schwed, what are we dealing with in terms of a definitive agreement here?

MR. SCHWED: We are working diligently to negotiate. I mean, let me just make this one point. The management team, or the lead manager — it's not somebody we're imposing on the buyer, it's somebody who the buyer wants to work with and that person wants to work with the buyer. This isn't just some fantasy.

But my understanding is that the FTC fashions consent decrees all the time where there is -- and negotiates consent decrees without there being a definitive agreement. They don't go up to somebody who is considering divesting some plants and say, "I'm not even going to consider your divestiture proposal until you have a definitive agreement," and they're supposed to sign a definitive agreement and then they hand it over, and then FTC says, "No, this isn't a good plan. I'd rather have it be different."

They are able to when they want to, when it's in their interest, they're able to figure out what is good and bad for competition without a definitive agreement. When they don't want to, all of a sudden they need a definitive agreement. So I think it's a little bit of an unfair standard to say they can't even start thinking about this

without a definitive agreement. They know what the plants are. They can make an assumption that it will be sold to a well-capitalized buyer who is reputable. And I think the — the analysis doesn't really change based on which well-capitalized, reputable person, who is not in the industry, has no competitive concerns — it's not somebody — it's somebody with industrial experience, but not somebody who, you know, is in the rigid packaging industry, owns a can company or anything like that. So they can assess this —

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THE COURT: Well, you have already disclosed a lot about the buyer. You may not have given the name, but you have already given them a lot to work with.

What I am concerned about is -- I will tell you what -- I mean, obviously, you guys are going back and forth in what is turning out to be a discovery dispute. I recognize one when I see it. I think the most I can do at this point is say we will go ahead with the hearing as scheduled. It will concern the issues that I understood it to concern before I came out here today, i.e., we will not be discussing any divestiture of plants that one side sort of knows about and the other side doesn't. It's not going to be fruitful for me to hear any testimony on that.

What I would urge you to do, and I'm not sure my sitting up here and going through this any further today

will be a help to you, but what I would urge you to do -- if necessary, I would -- if there were a way I could order you to do it, I would -- is to sit down and talk about this in the coming three weeks. I think the FTC needs to express a willingness to examine the plans. I think the defendants need an opportunity to put those plans in as much detail as they can so that they are presenting something -- I use the word "definitive" in a sort of sliding scale here -- but enough for them to be able to do some evaluating of what you're suggesting. I think it's very important that you discuss this because you are going to be spending three days, and you may get a ruling that turns out to be an advisory opinion because, in fact, this is all going to go away if you like the divestiture plans.

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I'm going to leave the hearing as scheduled. If the FTC hears enough to make them think that a week or two would help, then you should call my chambers and see what the alternatives are.

I'm trying to be realistic in the fact that you have witnesses scheduled, many of whom, you know, you have prepared for these three days. I don't know how flexible these people are. I realized there is an end line to this whole thing, but, frankly, it would do you more good than harm if the end result were that the whole thing went away and the divestiture plan was approved, and then the January

date would be fine. But right now I am going to leave the hearing date as scheduled, but I made a ruling on what we are going to hear at the hearing date, and I really urge counsel to -- I mean, I don't know if I need to set a date for you both -- both -- everybody else here -- to meet. I don't think I need to do that. You all know what is at stake here. I just urge you to get together, talk about the new plan.

Forget about the fact that it was sprung on you at the last moment, Mr. Hassi. Forget -- I mean, I realize to a litigator that's a bad thing, but right now you've got your hearing date and you've got your limited ruling. Now is the time to switch gears and see if this thing -- if there is a chance this can go away.

If you are working something out, the first call you need to make is to my chambers so that we don't spend time on this, okay? But otherwise, I will see you here in a month, or three weeks, or whatever we've got.

Now, housekeeping.

MR. HASSI: Housekeeping, and, Your Honor, I didn't mean to suggest that -- I mean, this was sprung on us at the last minute. We have had constructive discussions and we will continue to do that.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. HASSI: The way this was approached, we think,

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was the wrong way to approach it.

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THE COURT: Okay.

MR. HASSI: But housekeeping issues. The first question I had, Your Honor mentioned concerns before you came out here this morning, that we have a limited amount of time before Your Honor. If there are specific issues you would like us to address — I mean, it's true we've lined up certain witnesses to come, and we have our own conception of what we think is important for you to hear. If there are specific questions you want answered, or things you want addressed, we would be happy to try and address those in the limited time we have before Your Honor.

THE COURT: I think you both hit on the issues that are going to be the important ones, and that's market, the production market and that geographic market, though I think one is probably of more concern than the other. I think it is what -- what effect aluminum cans have on this, and plastic.

 $$\operatorname{MR.\ HASSI}$  : We thought that might be one of your questions, your Honor.

In terms of the hearing dates themselves, do you want openings and closings, or do you want to jump right in with testimony? We didn't know if you had a preference. We think it would be helpful, before putting a witness on the stand, to give you sort of an overview of what we're going

to try to present over the two-and-a-half days.

THE COURT: I think it be would very helpful, but how much time do you need? Half-hour each, would that do it?

MR. HASSI: Could we say 45 minutes?

THE COURT: Forty-five minutes. Well, let me ask you, could you do that in writing, or do you think it would be more helpful to -- would you be using demonstratives?

MR. HASSI: We would be using demonstratives, and I think it would be more helpful to walk through some exhibits.

THE COURT: Okay, 45 minutes.

MR. HASSI: Forty-five minutes is fine. Thank you, Your Honor.

In terms of closing, sometimes those are done at the end of the hearing dates, and sometimes they are done after the findings of fact. Our end, do you have a --

THE COURT: Why don't we wait and I'll let you know. Why don't we wait. First of all, let's see the timing; and, second of all, it may be useful after I get the findings of fact to have the closings.

MR. HASSI: Okay.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. HASSI: One of the questions we had was the courtroom technology. I assume we will be in this courtroom

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and there's somebody that we can liaise with in your absence to --

THE COURT: You're looking at her right now.

MR. HASSI: Okay. We'll be in touch with her.

THE COURT: She will help you, and both of you should make an appointment to come see her and arrange things.

MR. HASSI: We will do that, Your Honor.

Confidentiality issues, there — because this is dealing with on-going business, customers, contracts, prices — there are a lot — we will try to do as much as we can to sort of sanitize the presentation so that we're not discussing that kind of thing, but I'm not certain that we can remove all of it. Does Your Honor have a preference in terms of the way you handle information that parties, and in particular third parties witnesses, care about maintaining confidentiality over?

THE COURT: Well, testimony is a little more difficult. I don't see a problem with exhibits because you can use sanitized exhibits here, and then have a separate set that you give to either the clerk on my law clerk that you want us to see in chambers. Testimony, we'll have to play it as it goes. We'll see how we can handle that.

MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I don't know how much testimony there

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is going to be that really will be touching on this. I can't tell yet, but you will let me know and we will work it out.

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MR. HASSI: Okay, Your Honor. Then, finally, if Your Honor has a preference in terms of filings, things on paper, things on three-ring binders, that sort of thing. If Your Honor wants to let us know, we'll --

THE COURT: Three-ring binders is my preference because I still like paper.

MR. HASSI: I do, too, Your Honor.

THE COURT: And if you could give us a set each, you know, plaintiff's set and defendant's set, and I don't know if the defendants are going to have a joint set.

I would assume you will have one set, right?

MR. SCHWED: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: That really will keep things a lot more simple. So let's just call it the defendants' set, and just number yours consecutively, and plaintiff's set. I think that's probably the easiest way. Just have them for me and I can flip through them. Or if they're going to be on here, it may be easier.

MR. HASSI: We'll try to do a lot of it electronically, but if -- I was also thinking of exhibits to the brief. I know we provided a three-ring binder, but that was -- we had asked Judge Collyer what she wanted, and I

just want to make sure that we are providing what is most useful to you.

THE COURT: Okay.

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MR. HASSI: Those are all of the questions I had, your Honor. Unless you have anything else --

THE COURT: Did you have any housekeeping matters?

MR. SCHWED: Only one quick thing, Your Honor.

I'm just trying to get a -- so we can plan out our witnesses, just how long is a trial day, just in terms of what time you start, what time you end?

THE COURT: I knew you were going to ask me that.

I'm trying to -- I'm looking at the person on whom it is the hardest, which is our court reporter.

I am perfectly willing to start out -- well, what time are we starting on Thursday? Is it 2:00?

THE DEPUTY CLERK: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: So let's go 2:00 to 5:00 on Thursday.

Let's start with 9:00 to 4:30 on Friday. Monday would be, I guess, 9:00 to 4:30, too. I would like to take an hour and a-half for lunch, but that's not really necessary. You know, I will be asking you all how we're doing. We can cut the lunch hour to an hour. I'm just thinking back to my trial days. It's easy for me to set up something like, you know, 9:00 to 5:00 and an hour for lunch and, you know, 15 minutes. You guys are the ones who have to go back and do

some work in the evenings, and maybe even need a lunch hour to talk -- a longer lunch hour to talk to your witnesses and things. So you tell me, would you prefer an hour and a-half for lunch?

MR. SCHWED: Personally, I think, given that we are on a very compressed schedule, I would suggest that we assume an hour, but we can see how the time is going as we progress.

THE COURT: Okay.

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MR. HASSI: I agree.

MR. SCHWED: But this is very helpful, at least, just to give us -- as Your Honor mentioned, this can be flexible, but this at least gives us some guideposts for how much time we have.

THE COURT: Yes. I mean, we can stretch from 4:30 to 5:00, and we can -- but let's start out thinking that we'll end at 4:30. We'll start at 9:00 and we'll have an hour for lunch.

Does that fit? I mean, do you think you can fit within that? But the first day we will go from 2:00 to 5:00 because we're starting late, okay?

MR. HASSI: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. See you back here unless, of course, you work it all out. Just don't work it out after I give you a decision and go through all that trouble. Work

it out sometime in between, okay? MR. SCHWED: Thank you, Your Honor. MR. HASSI: Thank you, Your Honor. (Whereupon, the proceedings in the above-entitled matter were concluded at 10:59 a.m.) CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter. Theresa M. Sorensen, CVR-CM Official Court Reporter 

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5:00 [4] 42/17 42/24 43/16 43/20	alcohol [1] 19/9	assumption [1] 35/2
6	all [36] 4/3 4/13 5/23 7/3 11/15 16/15 16/20	attending [1] 30/13
600 [2] 1/13 1/22	17/2 17/6 17/18 19/5 19/11 21/1 25/14 26/23	Avenue [9] 1/13 1/18 1/22 2/3 2/8 2/11 2/15
000 [4] 1/13 1/44	27/9 27/19 30/5 30/7 30/8 30/15 30/23 32/21	2/19 2/23
1		

A	С	combined [4] 14/25 19/1 20/11 20/14
aware [1] 8/8	CA [1] 1/3	come [13] 3/5 15/5 17/5 17/20 18/20 23/12 26/11 30/24 31/7 31/19 33/16 38/8 40/6
away [6] 12/20 29/7 30/23 36/14 36/24 37/14	calendar [1] 33/5	comes [4] 13/23 13/23 13/24 16/18
В	call [5] 25/20 26/5 36/17 37/15 41/17 called [1] 10/15	coming [3] 4/20 4/21 36/4   COMMISSION [21] 1/3 1/13 1/17 1/21 2/2
back [13] 4/21 5/9 8/2 10/24 17/5 20/23	came [3] 14/7 35/20 38/5	3/4 3/8 6/22 14/2 14/7 15/17 15/18 17/11
24/14 31/5 32/3 35/15 42/22 42/25 43/23	can [62]	17/12 19/23 20/9 23/17 24/3 25/6 25/12
backing [1] 18/16 bad [2] 34/22 37/11	can't [13] 4/4 4/20 21/3 24/4 27/15 28/20	30/22
BARBARA [1] 1/9	29/24 31/4 31/5 31/20 33/18 34/25 41/2 cans [4] 8/18 19/8 19/18 38/17	commissioners [4] 15/18 23/11 25/3 32/14   companies [1] 14/22
based [3] 8/21 30/18 35/4	capacity [2] 29/7 29/8	companies' [1] 12/2
basically [3] 18/19 26/14 29/8	capitalized [3] 28/5 35/3 35/5	company [3] 23/20 29/5 35/9
be [103] because [23] 4/20 5/10 6/3 8/13 12/12 12/16	care [2] 4/12 40/16 carefully [1] 6/12	compete [1] 19/7
20/2 20/20 21/3 25/22 26/13 27/20 27/25	case [23] 8/4 15/12 15/13 15/15 15/20 16/1	competition [7] 1/22 2/3 14/24 20/4 23/1 29/22 34/22
31/7 31/21 32/20 32/23 36/11 36/13 40/9	18/19 19/5 19/5 19/6 19/14 19/17 19/19	competitive [2] 30/9 35/6
40/19 41/9 43/21	19/19 19/20 19/21 22/2 22/16 22/24 23/8	competitor [1] 29/8
been [11] 9/16 15/11 18/19 18/21 18/22 19/4 20/8 23/7 23/8 25/11 31/1	24/6 27/9 27/10 cases [5] 15/10 19/11 22/15 23/7 30/12	complaint [1] 16/3   complete [1] 20/23
beer [8] 8/18 19/8 20/10 20/11 20/12 20/14	Catch [1] 8/11	complete [1]   20/25     completed [1]   7/16
20/15 29/6	CATHARINE [1] 1/21	Compliance [1] 33/13
before [28] 1/9 3/2 4/21 4/23 5/1 8/22 9/3	Cathy [1] 3/9	compressed [1] 43/6
9/14 9/21 14/7 15/11 15/15 15/23 17/10 17/10 20/16 22/9 22/14 22/19 22/22 24/24	caution [2] 4/10 20/6 CCC [1] 27/9	computer [1] 12/22 conception [1] 38/8
27/10 29/6 35/20 38/4 38/6 38/12 38/24	CEO [1] 21/20	concern [8] 3/23 4/3 9/2 29/21 31/23 35/19
beforehand [1] 10/7	CEO's [1] 24/25	35/20 38/16
being [9] 6/2 8/16 10/16 14/20 15/3 24/7	certain [2] 38/8 40/13	concerned [3] 25/16 30/14 35/14
24/25 31/4 34/12 believe [7] 6/15 19/12 20/7 25/17 27/21	certainly [1] 26/12 CERTIFICATE [1] 44/8	concerns [15] 3/20 6/19 6/23 14/2 14/3 14/5 14/7 20/8 24/23 29/3 30/10 30/19 30/23 35/6
29/11 29/18	certify [1] 44/9	14/7 20/8 24/25 29/5 50/10 50/19 50/25 55/0   38/4
benefit [1] 25/18	cetera [1] 17/24	concluded [1] 44/5
best [1] 12/12	chairman [1] 21/22	conducting [1] 4/2
better [5] 7/23 8/19 8/23 11/20 26/11 between [3] 22/17 29/12 44/1	chambers [3] 36/17 37/16 40/22 chance [16] 10/1 14/21 15/6 15/7 15/16	CONFERENCE [1] 1/9 confidentiality [2] 40/9 40/17
bigger [1] 20/16	15/16 15/17 15/18 15/24 16/9 17/13 22/2	confuse [1] 4/13
binder [1] 41/24	23/11 25/12 25/13 37/14	cons [1] 6/2
binders [2] 41/6 41/8	change [4] 12/25 13/1 24/4 35/4	consecutively [2] 4/15 41/18
binding [7] 19/21 21/1 21/4 21/4 21/15 21/16 28/6	changed [1] 15/21 changes [9] 7/2 7/4 7/8 7/14 10/18 11/14	consensual [1] 18/20   consent [2] 34/11 34/12
bit [3] 26/19 29/1 34/24	15/14 16/4 16/4	consider [4] 8/14 15/17 28/1 34/15
black [1] 7/9	charts [4] 5/20 12/15 12/17 12/22	considering [2] 29/17 34/13
bmcnamara [1] 1/20	chess [1] 6/15	Constitution [1] 2/23
both [11] 4/10 5/3 7/17 19/17 22/15 29/18 30/2 37/5 37/5 38/13 40/5	choose [1] 7/17 Christmas [1] 27/11	constructive [1] 37/22   contact [1] 27/13
bottles [1] 19/7	circle [1] 20/23	context [2] 22/18 22/21
BRENDAN [2] 1/16 3/9	Circuit [1] 27/1	Continental [1] 19/15
brief [6] 7/23 10/20 13/19 13/21 18/2 41/24	citation [1] 18/3	contingent [1] 21/2
briefing [5] 7/18 10/19 11/7 11/9 30/11   briefs [6] 9/9 10/2 11/5 13/24 15/10 26/19	cite [3] 15/10 15/20 16/1 cited [2] 22/15 24/20	continue [2] 11/10 37/23   Continued [1] 2/1
bring [5] 7/21 7/25 17/1 17/6 33/13	Civil [1] 3/3	contours [1] 22/11
bringing [1] 8/4	claiming [2] 19/22 29/4	contract [4] 21/15 21/17 33/11 33/18
brings [1] 19/10 Brockway [1] 19/17	clear [1] 10/14	contracts [2] 28/6 40/10
brought [4] 8/25 9/1 15/12 15/13	Clearly [1] 14/16 clerk [5] 4/16 6/17 7/1 40/21 40/21	cooperate [1] 4/14   copies [1] 10/22
bud [1] 9/8	client's [1] 31/5	correct [4] 9/15 17/11 20/5 44/9
built [1] 7/18	clock [1] 26/14	corrected [1] 11/8
Bureau [2] 1/22 2/3 business [7] 12/1 14/23 15/1 20/14 20/15	clocks [1] 6/16 close [4] 13/23 25/1 26/5 26/15	could [15] 4/6 4/15 6/5 9/4 14/9 23/17 28/7
29/6 40/10	closed [4] 13/23/25/1/20/5/20/15 closed [2] 18/6/20/24	30/12 32/15 32/20 33/1 36/2 39/5 39/7 41/11 counsel [6] 3/5 3/9 3/18 6/20 21/14 37/4
businesses [1] 8/24	closing [3] 21/3 21/6 39/15	count [1] 9/24
businesspeople [1] 8/20	closings [2] 38/22 39/21	counter [1] 11/3
buy [1] 21/5 buyer [17] 14/19 17/19 17/24 21/7 25/7 28/3	CM [2] 2/22 44/14 cmoscatelli [1] 1/24	couple [1] 10/24   course [1] 43/24
28/14 29/1 33/11 33/12 33/20 33/21 34/7	Coal [7] 15/12 24/1 24/10 24/11 24/16 24/17	court [23] 1/1 2/22 2/23 3/2 12/16 14/11
34/7 34/9 35/3 35/12	24/18	16/13 16/14 19/15 19/16 19/20 20/18 20/22
buyers [5] 17/21 28/8 28/11 28/17 28/19	Col J 41/25	24/5 24/10 24/18 24/20 24/20 24/21 27/10
buying [1] 31/12	COLUMBIA [1] 1/1	30/25 42/13 44/15

### entity [2] 19/1 20/14 directs [1] 5/24 disclosed [1] 35/11 erols.com [1] 2/25 discovery [24] 7/16 13/23 14/9 14/12 14/14 Court's [1] 16/23 ESQUIRE [8] 1/12 1/16 1/21 2/2 2/7 2/10 courtroom [4] 6/16 28/12 39/25 39/25 15/6 15/16 15/23 15/25 16/9 16/19 18/6 22/9 2/14 2/18 courts [1] 19/17 25/1 27/10 27/18 27/22 28/20 28/22 28/25 essentially [1] 19/6 covered [1] 27/6 31/16 32/10 33/23 35/16 et [3] 1/6 3/4 17/24 crack [2] 21/13 30/19 evaluate [5] 14/12 14/13 14/21 15/7 15/19 discuss [1] 36/11 CRAVATH [2] 2/18 3/17 discussed [1] 18/21 evaluating [2] 8/1 36/9 cravath.com [1] 2/21 discussing [2] 35/21 40/13 even [14] 2/18 3/16 6/5 15/23 20/4 20/5 20/17 21/15 22/9 28/21 29/25 34/14 34/25 cross [2] 5/19 9/1 discussion [3] 6/25 7/1 33/15 cross-examination [2] 5/19 9/1 discussions [1] 37/22 cure [1] 29/21 dispute [2] 4/5 35/16 evenings [1] 43/1 current [1] 23/12 DISTRICT [3] 1/1 1/1 1/10 everybody [1] 37/5 customers [5] 25/9 25/11 27/14 27/14 40/10 divest [1] 18/25 everything [6] 11/19 13/11 25/18 32/7 32/12 cut [1] 42/21 divesting [1] 34/14 CVR [2] 2/22 44/14 divestiture [8] 25/20 29/2 30/9 31/17 34/15 evidence [5] 15/5 16/18 17/2 18/1 18/3 CVR-CM [2] 2/22 44/14 exact [5] 19/13 19/14 22/11 22/11 24/1 35/21 36/14 36/25 CVs [1] 5/6 divestitures [2] 25/5 25/6 exactly [1] 28/15 **Division** [1] 1/17 examination [2] 5/19 9/1 D do [66] examine [1] 36/5 D.C [8] 1/5 1/14 1/19 1/23 2/4 2/15 2/24 documents [1] 12/1 example [4] 8/17 8/18 10/15 10/18 does [3] 20/2 40/14 43/19 exchange [2] 10/21 11/2 Dan [2] 33/13 33/16 doesn't [7] 9/16 22/24 22/25 25/22 32/13 exclude [6] 8/5 8/6 9/21 17/2 25/18 25/20 date [13] 20/24 22/16 22/17 22/20 23/19 35/4 35/22 excluded [2] 9/16 17/5 26/14 26/15 33/10 37/1 37/2 37/3 37/4 37/12 doing [3] 9/9 27/18 42/21 excluding [1] 9/25 dates [3] 11/8 38/21 39/16 DOJ [2] 15/21 15/22 exhibit [2] 4/11 10/22 Daubert [8] 7/17 7/19 7/21 7/25 8/2 8/4 dollar [1] 8/24 exhibits [13] 4/3 4/5 4/9 4/17 10/22 11/3 10/25 11/5 11/24 12/14 13/2 39/11 40/19 40/20 41/23 don't [62] DAVID [1] 1/12 done [14] 5/7 8/22 18/5 18/24 20/6 21/1 expect [2] 3/25 6/17 day [8] 4/21 4/23 6/14 15/22 16/25 26/16 24/19 27/4 27/7 27/8 27/13 28/25 39/15 expectation [1] 7/25 42/9 43/20 39/16 experience [2] 28/14 35/7 days [12] 5/23 5/24 10/24 30/3 30/4 30/13 expert [7] 7/16 8/5 8/6 8/9 8/14 9/16 13/24 down [1] 36/3 32/24 33/3 36/12 36/21 39/1 42/23 drop [2] 20/24 23/19 experts [5] 5/6 8/7 8/17 8/19 12/15 dead [2] 20/24 23/19 drop-dead [2] 20/24 23/19 experts' [1] 8/7 deal [6] 17/23 20/24 24/18 26/15 27/7 30/24 Dropping [1] 24/24 explaining [1] 18/17 explore [3] 8/4 23/17 23/21 dealing [2] 34/2 40/10 Ducore [1] 33/13 decide [5] 6/3 6/5 17/14 26/20 31/6 due [3] 10/21 11/11 27/19 express [1] 36/4 decided [7] 14/5 14/6 14/8 18/23 20/25 22/16 extended [1] 33/15 ${f E}$ extensively [2] 21/20 21/23 deciding [2] 18/1 24/3 each [5] 10/14 14/22 22/3 39/3 41/11 decision [4] 29/17 31/13 33/2 43/25 easier [2] 6/1 41/21 decrees [2] 34/11 34/12 fact [17] 9/24 11/11 11/12 12/6 13/23 14/9 easiest [1] 41/19 Defendant [4] 2/7 2/18 3/13 3/17 easy [2] 4/16 42/23 15/12 16/18 17/8 19/23 31/12 31/23 36/13 defendant's [1] 41/12 Ed [2] 3/7 6/22 36/19 37/9 39/17 39/21 defendants [2] 36/5 41/13 EDWARD [1] 1/12 factor [1] 29/17 defendants' [1] 41/17 effect [1] 38/17 facts [3] 15/7 24/24 31/17 definition [1] 19/13 effectively [1] 20/14 fair [2] 8/1 29/14 definitive [13] 20/20 21/14 28/21 33/10 effort [2] 24/22 25/2 fairly [1] 13/15 33/24 34/3 34/12 34/16 34/17 34/22 34/23 ehassi [1] 1/15 faith [4] 24/19 24/22 25/1 25/2 35/1 36/8 eight [2] 22/18 22/21 fantasy [1] 34/9 delay [1] 27/2 Eighth [1] 2/19 far [2] 5/9 29/13 demonstrative [1] 12/14 either [3] 13/16 18/4 40/21 fashion [3] 14/8 17/13 24/2 demonstratives [2] 39/8 39/9 Electric [2] 15/20 15/21 fashioned [1] 17/12 depends [1] 17/23 electronically [1] 41/23 fashions [1] 34/10 deposed [2] 21/20 21/21 elephant [1] 13/18 fast [1] 5/10 deposition [5] 10/16 10/22 11/3 21/24 24/25 else [5] 13/11 21/24 30/4 37/5 42/5 faster [1] 5/6 designations [2] 10/23 11/4 favor [1] 21/8 emergency [1] 26/25 detail [3] 22/8 22/10 36/6 end [8] 23/8 23/20 36/22 36/24 39/16 39/17 fax [2] 2/16 2/21 detailed [2] 22/3 22/6 42/10 43/17 FEDERAL [9] 1/3 1/13 1/17 1/21 2/2 3/3 3/8 did [3] 18/8 25/23 42/6 ends [1] 22/14 6/22 14/1 didn't [3] 10/5 37/21 38/23 enjoy [1] 30/11 feel [1] 6/3 enough [9] 4/14 29/7 29/13 31/7 31/13 33/7 difference [2] 24/17 32/19 fiction [1] 24/5 differences [1] 24/16 33/7 36/9 36/16 field [3] 5/6 8/17 8/21 different [5] 4/12 23/13 25/15 25/19 34/19 enter [2] 20/19 21/1 figure [1] 34/21 difficult [2] 13/1 40/19 file [3] 10/9 10/9 12/2 entered [1] 14/4 diligently [1] 34/4 filed [7] 13/20 15/15 15/22 16/3 18/19 22/10 entire [3] 22/16 23/7 27/10 **diminution** [1] 20/3 entities [1] 20/16 22/17 direct [3] 5/15 5/19 6/5 entitled [2] 44/4 44/11 files [1] 12/2

# filings [1] 41/5 fill [3] 3/21 4/8 4/9 final [1] 16/1 finally [2] 18/23 41/4 find [1] 5/23 findings [4] 11/11 11/12 39/17 39/21 fine [2] 37/1 39/13 first [11] 4/3 12/23 13/18 15/11 15/15 27/4 33/22 37/15 38/3 39/19 43/20 fit [3] 28/4 43/19 43/19 five [10] 5/24 5/24 22/14 22/17 22/19 22/19 22/21 22/22 39/6 39/13 five-year [1] 22/19 flexible [2] 36/21 43/13 flip [1] 41/20 flounder [1] 12/13 focus [1] 21/24 following [1] 11/12 footnote [2] 18/2 24/21 foregoing [1] 44/9 forever [1] 31/6 Forget [2] 37/9 37/10 form [4] 5/16 9/4 14/23 17/1 forms [1] 19/7 forth [1] 35/15 Forty [2] 39/6 39/13 Forty-five [2] 39/6 39/13 forward [1] 3/5 found [3] 12/12 19/23 24/18 four [19] 13/22 14/22 14/25 16/6 17/19 18/25 20/7 21/5 21/6 21/19 21/21 22/4 22/7 22/12 25/19 27/22 28/4 31/2 31/4 Franklin [2] 15/20 15/21 frankly [7] 15/7 18/1 23/14 23/17 28/25 31/5 36/23 Friday [5] 7/16 10/17 11/11 25/10 42/18 front [2] 14/11 23/12 fruitful [1] 35/23 frustration [1] 31/22 FTC [25] 6/8 15/12 15/15 17/4 17/5 17/10 18/20 19/17 19/22 19/23 21/12 23/14 27/7 28/1 28/11 28/13 29/19 30/10 31/2 31/6 31/14 34/10 34/18 36/4 36/16 FTC's [1] 24/23 ftc.gov [4] 1/15 1/20 1/24 2/5 fully [1] 27/15 fundamental [2] 19/6 19/9 funded [1] 25/7 further [2] 7/1 35/25 G

gained [2] 25/18 25/24 gambit [1] 18/18 gamesmanship [1] 15/3 gave [1] 32/8 gears [1] 37/13 Gee [2] 8/22 16/5 generation [1] 12/21 geographic [2] 22/25 38/15 geography [2] 26/1 30/8 get [22] 6/1 6/9 11/19 17/23 17/24 18/24 20/24 21/13 24/4 24/5 25/15 27/3 28/8 28/17 30/15 32/12 32/13 32/15 36/12 37/7 39/20 42/8 getting [1] 25/25 give [18] 4/19 6/14 9/12 12/20 14/15 17/2

30/19 31/13 31/19 32/10 32/10 32/17 33/2 38/25 40/21 41/11 43/12 43/25 give-away [1] 12/20 given [9] 6/19 12/7 14/21 22/8 29/16 29/23 35/12 35/13 43/5 gives [3] 11/19 22/22 43/13 giving [3] 3/24 22/1 29/7 glass [3] 13/22 19/7 19/18 go [24] 5/5 6/20 18/10 20/22 21/9 21/10 25/8 28/7 29/24 30/14 30/16 30/17 30/23 31/8 31/21 31/24 34/13 35/18 36/13 37/14 42/17 42/25 43/20 43/25 Gobain [2] 2/18 3/17 goes [2] 10/25 40/23 going [72] gone [1] 23/15 good [18] 3/7 3/11 3/12 3/16 3/18 4/24 7/22 11/16 12/4 24/19 24/22 25/1 25/2 30/11 31/1 34/18 34/21 36/23 good-faith [1] 25/2 got [9] 7/9 23/16 28/14 30/4 33/18 33/19 37/11 37/12 37/18 gotten [1] 19/5 GOUDISS [2] 2/10 3/14 grant [1] 17/1 Great [1] 11/23 GROUP [5] 1/6 2/7 3/4 3/14 18/15 guess [2] 27/2 42/19 guideposts [1] 43/13 guys [4] 7/22 32/16 35/15 42/25

# н

H-374 [1] 1/14 had [26] 7/1 10/1 15/6 15/6 15/15 15/16 15/17 15/18 15/24 16/9 20/16 22/4 22/7 22/10 23/11 23/15 25/12 25/13 26/11 29/6 37/22 38/4 38/23 39/24 41/25 42/4 hadn't [1] 15/23 half [4] 39/1 39/3 42/20 43/3 Half-hour [1] 39/3 hand [4] 7/9 30/5 32/25 34/17 handle [2] 40/15 40/23 happen [2] 10/7 10/17 happened [1] 15/19 happy [2] 30/22 38/11 hard [1] 26/6 hardest [1] 42/13 harm [3] 23/1 23/4 36/24 has [16] 10/12 13/19 14/1 14/2 18/6 19/5 19/23 23/14 25/4 25/5 26/20 28/14 29/5 30/10 35/6 41/5 hasn't [2] 15/19 25/13 HASSI [8] 1/12 3/8 6/22 23/25 24/14 25/17 31/10 37/10 have [106] haven't [5] 14/19 14/19 14/20 25/12 28/16 having [7] 3/22 11/10 14/13 14/14 14/15 15/5 15/6 he [4] 8/19 15/2 32/11 33/14 he's [2] 33/13 33/14 head [1] 33/13 hear [12] 6/7 8/9 9/9 9/12 9/14 23/22 24/6 24/14 25/21 35/23 37/3 38/9 heard [8] 9/15 16/19 21/14 29/16 30/18 31/3 31/21 31/24 hearing [43] 1/9 3/22 3/23 4/2 4/5 4/23 8/5 9/21 10/15 11/8 12/7 15/4 22/14 22/17 22/20 22/22 25/11 25/25 26/13 26/15 27/3 27/5

27/6 27/16 29/12 30/3 31/21 31/25 32/5 32/18 32/21 32/21 32/23 32/25 33/1 33/4 35/18 36/15 37/2 37/3 37/12 38/21 39/16 hearings [2] 5/15 26/17 hears [1] 36/16 HEATHER [2] 2/14 3/15 held [1] 17/25 help [8] 5/20 9/5 9/18 10/4 10/5 36/1 36/17 40/5 helpful [12] 5/15 5/21 5/22 5/25 12/16 12/18 26/7 38/24 39/2 39/8 39/10 43/11 her [3] 40/3 40/4 40/6 here [34] 5/4 5/13 6/2 7/9 8/16 9/2 10/20 13/21 15/3 15/9 15/19 16/5 16/9 16/21 17/9 17/18 23/18 24/17 26/5 28/1 28/8 29/1 33/17 34/3 35/20 35/25 36/8 37/5 37/7 37/17 38/5 40/20 41/21 43/23 Here's [5] 16/7 16/7 16/8 18/4 18/5 herring [1] 29/1 high [1] 5/9 him [2] 21/20 21/22 his [1] 33/14 hit [1] 38/13 hkafele [1] 2/17 Honor [67] Honor's [1] 12/5 HONORABLE [1] 1/9 hope [3] 11/25 12/3 12/18 hopes [1] 14/11 hour [15] 13/20 15/4 16/18 18/18 22/20 39/3 42/19 42/22 42/22 42/24 43/1 43/2 43/3 43/7 43/18 hourly [1] 6/14 housekeeping [6] 13/13 18/10 37/19 37/20 38/3 42/6 how [21] 5/3 6/15 14/20 19/3 25/7 27/21 28/3 28/5 31/18 32/4 32/4 32/17 33/6 36/21 39/3 40/23 40/25 42/9 42/21 43/7 43/13

## T

however [1] 7/5

I'd [2] 6/7 34/18 I'll [5] 9/12 18/9 30/11 33/5 39/18 I'm [38] 3/7 3/8 4/21 4/21 4/25 5/13 6/9 7/8 9/9 9/13 9/18 17/11 19/3 22/6 23/3 23/6 24/5 24/6 25/14 25/22 27/24 30/5 30/11 30/14 31/12 31/24 32/23 32/25 33/12 34/14 35/24 36/15 36/19 40/13 42/8 42/12 42/12 42/22 I've [8] 6/19 7/9 8/22 9/15 12/12 26/13 30/4 31/24 i.e [1] 35/20 idea [6] 3/25 4/19 5/11 7/22 32/17 33/19 ideal [1] 27/2 identified [7] 14/19 14/20 21/25 28/11 28/13 33/11 33/19 identify [1] 3/5 identity [3] 21/18 28/2 29/1 idiosyncrasies [1] 4/1 II [1] 1/17 imagine [1] 4/4 immediately [1] 21/6 important [7] 19/8 26/5 27/25 32/20 36/10 38/9 38/14 imposing [1] 34/7 inaccurate [1] 12/25 include [1] 13/1 indeed [2] 14/3 30/8 indications [1] 10/14

I	least [5] 8/19 30/18 32/15 43/11 43/13	matters [3] 13/13 18/11 42/6
	leave [2] 36/15 37/1	may [13] 6/5 7/16 10/5 13/17 17/20 17/20
industrial [2] 28/14 35/7	led [1] 30/5	22/13 22/20 23/23 35/12 36/12 39/20 41/21
industry [2] 35/6 35/9	less [3] 20/15 26/16 29/6	maybe [4] 18/16 22/18 32/21 43/1
information [8] 17/6 22/3 22/7 31/16 32/12	let [19] 4/19 6/3 8/4 11/23 12/11 16/11 16/20	McNAMARA [2] 1/16 3/9
32/13 32/15 40/15	16/20 23/10 23/22 24/14 27/17 29/10 31/10	me [53]
instead [5] 10/23 11/3 11/4 11/10 11/13	34/5 39/6 39/18 41/2 41/7	mean [21] 10/5 14/17 15/8 15/18 15/23 18/1
integral [1] 24/18	let's [11] 6/11 16/25 18/9 25/18 27/2 31/23	30/17 31/20 32/8 32/13 32/18 33/18 34/5
intend [1] 18/5		35/15 37/4 37/10 37/21 37/21 38/7 43/15
	39/19 41/17 42/17 42/18 43/16	
intending [1] 4/8	Lexington [2] 2/8 2/11	43/19
intention [2] 8/15 14/18	liaise [1] 40/1	meet [1] 37/5
intentions [2] 12/12 14/11	Libby [6] 16/1 16/1 16/2 24/20 24/20 24/21	mentioned [4] 11/15 26/13 38/4 43/12
interest [4] 16/23 31/5 32/9 34/21	light [3] 8/25 9/1 17/7	merger [1] 19/19
interesting [2] 30/4 30/10	like [24] 4/2 4/5 4/17 4/22 5/15 6/7 6/10 6/20	Mergers [1] 1/17
investigated [1] 29/11	7/5 7/10 12/15 13/10 13/14 16/4 22/13 22/20	merits [1] 17/22
investigatory [1] 14/6	25/11 25/22 35/9 36/14 38/7 41/9 42/19	mesh [2] 32/5 32/17
involved [3] 8/11 16/8 24/5	42/23	methodology [1] 8/21
involving [1] 15/21	likely [1] 25/22	microphone [1] 28/17
is [140]	limine [1] 16/17	mid [3] 20/24 23/18 23/20
isn't [7] 5/21 14/17 18/18 25/2 33/7 34/9	limit [1] 8/16	mid-January [3] 20/24 23/18 23/20
34/18	limite [1] 5/10 limited [5] 5/19 9/2 37/12 38/5 38/12	might [6] 4/18 8/3 9/5 12/15 23/12 38/19
issue [4] 19/14 20/22 22/23 26/4	limits [1] 6/18	Mina [2] 2/2 3/10
issues [9] 6/23 9/4 25/6 26/20 35/19 38/3	line [3] 7/9 29/14 36/22	mind [4] 4/25 6/13 10/8 33/3
38/6 38/13 40/9	lined [1] 38/7	minimal [1] 27/12
it [117]	list [5] 10/10 10/11 31/19 32/8 32/10	minors [1] 7/2
it's [36] 4/13 7/21 7/24 8/21 8/22 9/15 10/4	listen [1] 33/1	minute [2] 13/1 37/22
10/6 10/6 12/25 13/4 13/22 14/17 16/4 18/18	lists [1] 10/22	minutes [5] 39/5 39/6 39/12 39/13 42/25
21/13 22/18 26/5 27/20 28/2 28/2 29/6 29/7	litigated [1] 15/11	modified [1] 16/8
29/14 31/1 32/9 34/6 34/7 34/20 34/24 35/6	litigation [1] 22/19	moment [1] 37/10
35/7 35/22 36/10 38/7 42/23	litigator [1] 37/11	Monday [3] 11/10 11/12 42/18
its [1] 24/21	little [4] 26/16 26/19 34/24 40/18	month [4] 3/22 16/3 16/3 37/18
itself [2] 19/23 20/13	live [1] 10/15	months [7] 14/1 15/14 22/7 26/16 27/20
T	LLP [3] 2/11 2/14 2/18	27/21 33/24
J	long [6] 5/9 22/4 27/21 31/18 32/4 42/9	MOORE [2] 2/18 3/17
January [4] 20/24 23/18 23/20 36/25	longer [2] 24/7 43/2	moot [2] 16/25 17/4
jelled [1] 15/8	look [12] 4/24 6/20 18/2 26/6 28/24 29/25	more [16] 7/25 11/19 20/13 23/23 26/19 27/3
Jersey [2] 1/18 2/3	30/2 30/20 32/13 32/14 33/5 33/23	
job [1] 24/3		30/21 31/15 31/17 33/6 36/23 38/16 39/8
	looking [3] 33/8 40/3 42/12	39/10 40/18 41/17
joint [2] 15/22 41/13	loses [1] 26/24	morning [8] 3/7 3/11 3/12 3/16 3/18 10/12
JUDGE [2] 1/10 41/25	lot [8] 15/1 22/13 33/17 35/11 35/13 40/11	12/24 38/5
jump [1] 38/22	41/16 41/22	MOSCATELLI [2] 1/21 3/9
just [45]	love [1] 30/3	Moscatelli's [1] 15/13
K	lunch [7] 42/20 42/22 42/24 43/1 43/2 43/4	most [5] 12/1 19/8 27/9 35/17 42/1
	43/18	motion [6] 8/5 8/13 9/5 16/17 17/1 17/2
KAFELE [2] 2/14 3/15	luxury [2] 23/21 27/1	motions [9] 7/17 7/19 7/21 7/25 8/2 9/7 9/14
keep [5] 4/24 6/13 6/17 10/8 41/16	M	11/1 11/5
key [1] 29/2		move [1] 31/23
kind [3] 5/5 5/6 40/13	made [9] 6/7 10/19 16/4 16/4 20/11 23/25	moving [1] 10/24
knew [1] 42/11	24/1 32/8 37/2	Mr [3] 25/14 31/10 37/10
know [39] 3/19 3/22 4/7 4/8 5/20 6/15 7/20	main [1] 25/6	Mr. [7] 23/25 24/14 25/17 26/9 28/9 32/11
7/23 8/23 9/13 13/4 14/25 21/15 23/14 23/16	maintaining [1] 40/16	34/2
26/21 30/12 31/17 32/20 33/12 33/24 33/25	make [17] 7/17 8/9 8/13 12/11 12/25 13/1	Mr. Hassi [3] 23/25 24/14 25/17
35/1 35/8 36/20 36/21 37/4 37/6 38/23 39/19	20/10 20/25 25/7 30/23 32/19 34/5 35/2	Mr. Schwed [4] 26/9 28/9 32/11 34/2
40/25 41/2 41/7 41/12 41/13 41/24 42/21	36/16 37/16 40/6 42/1	Ms [1] 15/13
42/24 42/24	makes [2] 12/22 33/20	much [12] 6/15 11/20 12/9 13/11 14/20 19/3
known [5] 14/1 21/17 21/18 22/3 22/11	manage [2] 28/4 33/19	33/6 36/6 39/3 40/11 40/25 43/14
knows [2] 8/19 35/22	management [1] 34/6	
		multimillion [1] 8/24
$\mathbf{L}$	manager [2] 33/21 34/6	must [3] 7/20 7/22 26/15
LAMBERG [1] 2/14	managing [1] 28/11	my [23] 3/20 3/20 3/23 4/1 4/3 5/2 6/4 6/17
	many [3] 5/3 5/14 36/20	6/19 12/20 29/12 29/17 29/23 30/2 31/5 33/5
last [5] 13/1 13/20 26/16 37/10 37/22	marked [1] 4/4	34/10 35/24 36/17 37/16 40/21 41/8 42/22
late [1] 43/21	market [24] 14/24 19/11 19/13 19/14 19/18	N
later [2] 9/17 10/1	19/20 19/21 19/22 19/24 20/2 20/5 20/5 21/9	
latest [1] 16/2	22/24 22/25 23/7 25/25 26/4 29/3 29/9 30/8	N.W [6] 1/13 1/18 1/22 2/3 2/15 2/23
law [2] 6/25 40/21	38/14 38/15 38/15	name [2] 28/21 35/12
lawsuit [1] 22/9	MARY [1] 1/21	necessarily [1] 20/21
lawsuits [1] 22/21	matter [7] 3/2 13/4 13/15 13/17 33/23 44/5	necessary [3] 17/22 36/2 42/20
lead [2] 6/20 34/6	44/11	need [26] 8/9 12/7 13/11 21/25 26/21 27/4
•	1	•

### 26/21 27/7 27/13 36/2 plenty [1] 22/22 podium [1] 26/11 ordered [1] 11/22 need... [20] 27/22 31/15 31/16 31/16 31/18 originally [1] 23/15 point [8] 14/17 14/17 19/11 23/23 29/23 31/19 32/4 32/11 32/12 33/6 33/10 33/24 other [16] 10/14 12/23 17/3 17/11 18/10 19/7 31/25 34/5 35/18 33/25 34/23 36/6 37/4 37/6 37/16 39/3 43/1 20/13 22/8 23/6 29/14 30/5 30/12 31/3 32/25 position [3] 9/21 29/18 29/19 needs [5] 27/4 27/6 27/12 28/25 36/4 35/22 38/16 possible [3] 12/10 17/19 33/5 negotiate [1] 34/5 others [1] 6/6 possibly [1] 30/6 otherwise [1] 37/17 negotiates [1] 34/12 post [2] 11/7 11/9 negotiating [2] 28/10 28/19 ought [1] 17/13 potential [1] 7/18 negotiations [2] 21/17 29/13 our [24] 6/25 7/24 8/15 10/20 12/8 13/24 potentially [1] 26/24 never [1] 23/16 13/24 14/15 20/3 20/13 20/22 21/20 21/21 power [1] 29/3 new [7] 1/18 2/3 2/8 2/12 2/20 29/5 37/8 23/19 25/4 27/3 27/6 27/12 28/2 33/13 38/8 pre [3] 1/9 4/4 4/4 39/17 42/8 42/13 news [2] 13/22 13/22 pre-admitted [1] 4/4 next [2] 4/23 5/2 out [27] 3/20 4/10 5/11 5/14 6/25 10/13 12/1 PRE-HEARING [1] 1/9 nice [1] 33/3 12/7 16/20 20/6 23/12 28/8 30/24 33/3 34/21 pre-marked [1] 4/4 35/16 35/20 36/12 37/15 38/5 41/3 42/8 night [3] 4/23 7/23 24/24 precipitous [1] 29/25 nip [1] 9/8 42/14 43/16 43/24 43/24 44/1 prefer [1] 43/3 preference [4] 38/23 40/14 41/5 41/8 NJ [1] 1/23 over [7] 17/6 27/11 32/23 33/4 34/17 39/1 no [15] 12/24 12/24 13/5 14/12 18/1 22/6 40/17 prejudiced [1] 18/7 24/6 27/15 28/10 28/16 28/16 31/20 32/21 overnight [1] 26/23 premature [1] 29/25 34/18 35/6 overview [1] 38/25 prepare [1] 5/15 own [5] 19/1 20/14 21/4 24/2 38/8 nobody [1] 12/22 prepared [4] 3/19 11/19 25/23 36/21 nodding [1] 4/25 owns [1] 35/9 present [3] 29/18 29/20 39/1 not [64] presentation [1] 40/12 nothing [2] 21/24 30/4 presenting [1] 36/7 November [1] 11/13 packaging [2] 19/7 35/8 preserve [2] 17/9 17/17 now [21] 4/19 7/7 7/20 8/8 9/6 14/1 14/10 page [1] 7/15 presume [1] 17/5 18/9 19/25 21/18 22/13 29/4 29/10 29/12 page 6 [1] 7/15 pretrial [1] 12/9 32/3 32/13 37/1 37/11 37/12 37/19 40/3 paper [2] 41/6 41/9 pretty [2] 7/22 13/11 number [9] 1/3 3/3 4/11 4/11 4/14 4/15 18/21 paragraph [5] 7/15 10/18 10/25 11/2 11/7 prevents [1] 21/25 22/15 41/18 part [3] 12/1 19/1 28/1 previously [1] 10/19 particular [2] 19/8 40/16 numbers [1] 4/13 prices [1] 40/11 NY [3] 2/8 2/12 2/20 parties [14] 7/3 7/17 11/15 11/21 15/10 primary [1] 21/24 15/24 16/9 17/16 17/17 24/22 26/7 26/18 probably [8] 3/21 9/7 12/16 25/15 28/7 30/12 0 40/15 40/16 38/16 41/19 O-I [1] 19/16 parties' [1] 12/2 probe [1] 27/7 objecting [1] 9/25 party [1] 25/5 problem [6] 11/24 23/18 30/9 31/1 33/9 objections [1] 11/2 past [1] 20/12 40/19 obviously [4] 17/3 21/2 30/23 35/15 pending [1] 17/10 procedures [1] 3/25 October [5] 10/23 11/4 11/4 11/6 11/13 Pennsylvania [3] 1/13 1/22 2/15 proceed [2] 5/18 7/6 October 2nd [1] 10/23 people [3] 8/20 8/23 36/22 proceeding [1] 17/8 October 30th [1] 11/13 percent [2] 20/8 20/12 proceedings [4] 16/19 17/25 44/4 44/10 October 3rd [1] 11/4 process [3] 21/22 22/9 27/13 percentage [2] 13/6 13/6 October 9th [2] 11/4 11/6 perfectly [1] 42/14 product [14] 19/11 19/13 19/14 19/18 19/20 off [4] 6/20 13/22 26/13 27/1 period [3] 4/7 9/2 15/23 19/21 19/22 19/24 20/2 20/5 20/5 22/24 23/7 offered [1] 8/16 person [4] 6/2 34/8 35/5 42/12 office [1] 8/2 Personally [1] 43/5 production [1] 38/15 Official [2] 2/23 44/15 pick [1] 4/11 progress [1] 43/8 often [2] 12/12 22/21 place [1] 3/24 proposal [2] 16/18 34/15 okay [38] 3/11 6/19 7/8 9/6 9/11 9/22 9/23 plaintiff [4] 1/4 1/12 2/2 6/9 propose [5] 10/21 11/2 11/9 13/21 14/10 10/2 10/7 10/8 11/17 12/11 13/2 13/3 13/7 plaintiff's [2] 41/12 41/18 proposed [7] 11/14 11/21 15/14 18/17 23/15 13/9 16/21 18/8 18/13 23/22 24/12 26/3 26/8 plan [7] 21/9 23/12 30/17 34/18 36/25 37/8 24/7 31/2 31/9 32/1 32/4 37/17 37/24 38/2 39/12 39/22 42/8 proposing [2] 14/21 19/25 40/4 41/4 42/3 43/9 43/21 43/23 44/1 planning [2] 21/13 21/19 pros [1] 6/2 on-going [1] 40/10 plans [8] 3/21 14/10 21/21 21/23 31/17 36/5 provide [1] 10/13 one [27] 4/13 5/12 7/16 7/25 8/19 12/11 36/6 36/14 provided [1] 41/24 13/14 15/22 16/2 16/3 17/3 20/1 20/15 22/23 plant [4] 22/8 22/8 22/10 22/10 providing [1] 42/1 23/23 25/6 26/5 31/3 33/14 34/5 35/17 35/21 plants [30] 13/22 14/22 14/25 16/6 17/19 public [2] 25/10 28/2 38/16 38/19 39/24 41/14 42/7 18/22 18/25 20/7 20/10 20/11 21/5 21/6 publicly [1] 30/24 ones [2] 38/14 42/25 21/19 21/21 21/23 22/4 22/7 22/12 24/3 28/3 published [1] 5/8 only [7] 4/7 4/13 22/23 22/25 23/2 23/4 42/7 28/4 28/12 28/15 29/3 31/2 31/4 33/20 34/14 purchase [2] 20/20 23/20 open [1] 28/12 35/1 35/21 purchasing [1] 19/2 plastic [1] 38/18 openings [1] 38/22 pursue [1] 10/6 opinion [4] 11/23 24/21 29/20 36/13 plastics [1] 19/9 pushed [1] 11/11 opinions [3] 8/16 16/24 16/24 play [2] 16/20 40/23 put [8] 5/9 12/22 14/10 18/4 22/2 26/13 opportunity [5] 12/8 14/13 14/14 14/15 36/6 played [1] 15/3 32/23 36/6 oppositions [1] 10/25 Plaza [1] 2/19 putting [4] 22/14 27/1 33/4 38/24 order [11] 5/4 7/2 7/4 7/12 8/8 13/17 20/25 please [2] 3/5 28/17

Q	rule [3] 17/3 17/4 21/8  rules [1] 20/18	side [9] 4/12 12/23 18/10 26/24 27/17 29/15 29/20 35/21 35/22
question [15] 5/2 19/6 19/10 20/1 21/9 23/1	ruling [8] 8/9 17/3 20/22 25/25 30/15 36/12	sides [3] 4/11 5/3 22/15
23/21 25/15 27/5 27/25 29/2 29/23 30/2	37/2 37/12	sign [1] 34/16
30/11 38/4	run [1] 28/3	significant [1] 13/15
questions [12] 5/17 6/4 15/2 17/15 25/3	running [4] 8/23 21/22 26/14 28/15	silent [1] 23/15
33/12 33/17 33/22 38/10 38/20 39/24 42/4 quick [1] 42/7	$\mathbf{S}$	simple [1] 41/17 simply [1] 7/5
quite [1] 25/21	S.A [2] 1/6 3/4	since [9] 11/9 12/22 12/25 18/6 18/19 19/4
quo [2] 17/10 17/18	safe [1] 31/25	21/19 28/12 31/2
R	said [9] 10/12 16/7 19/17 19/21 24/5 24/10	single [1] 21/4
	30/25 30/25 32/6	sit [4] 31/5 31/20 32/3 36/3
radio [1] 23/15 raise [1] 13/16	Saint [2] 2/18 3/17 Saint-Gobain [2] 2/18 3/17	sitting [1] 35/25 situation [2] 21/11 30/7
raised [1] 20/8	sale [3] 15/9 17/19 25/19	six [4] 22/21 23/8 27/20 27/21
rare [1] 19/19	sales [3] 20/11 20/12 25/19	sliding [1] 36/8
rather [1] 34/18	same [6] 4/11 19/13 19/14 19/18 24/1 25/15	so [54]
reach [1] 18/22	sanitize [1] 40/12	sold [3] 14/20 24/4 35/2
read [6] 5/6 5/10 5/16 9/14 10/2 13/19 reading [1] 9/13	sanitized [1] 40/20 satisfied [2] 31/14 31/14	sole [1] 29/23 solve [1] 30/9
ready [3] 5/4 6/20 28/7	satisfies [1] 30/22	some [27] 3/25 4/23 5/6 6/6 6/12 6/23 6/23
realistic [1] 36/19	satisfy [3] 25/5 29/3 30/19	6/24 7/2 8/6 8/7 8/16 9/4 10/18 13/13 13/17
realize [1] 37/10	say [20] 5/12 8/17 10/5 12/17 12/24 14/23	24/16 25/17 26/21 27/3 31/16 34/9 34/14
realized [1] 36/22	15/17 16/4 16/25 25/18 27/2 28/12 30/10	36/9 39/10 43/1 43/13
really [14] 4/14 4/20 5/10 6/10 9/2 12/7 22/23 29/21 32/8 35/4 37/3 41/1 41/16 42/20	31/6 31/20 32/3 34/14 34/25 35/18 39/5 saying [10] 8/14 13/5 16/5 16/10 22/1 22/6	somebody [10] 18/4 28/14 33/19 34/6 34/7 34/13 35/7 35/7 35/8 40/1
reason [2] 27/15 27/25	23/6 29/5 32/11 32/22	someone [1] 8/2
reasonable [2] 11/18 28/22	says [2] 18/4 34/18	something [10] 5/17 6/10 12/21 16/11 18/18
reassigned [1] 19/4	scale [1] 36/8	22/19 23/10 36/7 37/15 42/23
rebuttal [3] 6/9 6/10 6/11	scenario [1] 16/21	sometime [1] 44/1
recent [1] 27/10 recently [1] 19/4	schedule [7] 7/18 7/18 10/20 11/18 12/6 32/24 43/6	sometimes [5] 5/21 5/21 6/4 39/15 39/16 soon [1] 28/7
recognize [4] 20/20 26/18 26/23 35/17	scheduled [6] 10/17 11/6 35/19 36/15 36/20	SORENSEN [2] 2/22 44/14
record [3] 3/6 27/11 44/10	37/2	sorry [2] 7/8 23/3
red [1] 29/1	scheduling [5] 6/25 7/1 7/2 7/3 7/12	sort [10] 4/1 4/25 10/13 19/10 30/5 35/21
relevant [2] 19/3 19/19	school [2] 5/8 5/9	36/8 38/25 40/12 41/6
reluctant [2] 32/23 32/25 remedies [1] 15/11	SCHWED [8] 2/7 3/13 18/15 25/15 26/9 28/9 32/11 34/2	sound [3] 22/13 22/20 25/22 sounds [3] 11/16 13/10 30/3
remedy [9] 13/21 14/13 14/16 17/12 17/13	second [1] 39/20	Speaking [1] 27/19
17/18 17/21 24/2 30/6	section [2] 25/4 33/14	specific [2] 38/6 38/10
remove [1] 40/14	see [13] 12/23 29/12 35/17 36/17 37/13 37/17	speed [3] 4/18 9/5 27/19
render [2] 16/24 16/25	39/19 40/6 40/19 40/22 40/23 43/7 43/23	speeding [1] 5/13
replaces [1] 29/9 reply [3] 10/21 11/5 11/12	sell [9] 13/22 14/18 14/22 16/5 20/7 21/3 21/19 21/21 21/23	spend [2] 26/18 37/16 spending [1] 36/11
reporter [5] 2/22 2/23 42/13 44/8 44/15	selling [1] 20/13	spirits [2] 19/9 29/7
reports [1] 13/24	send [3] 7/3 7/5 7/7	split [1] 6/11
reputable [2] 35/3 35/5	sense [1] 29/2	splitting [1] 6/8
require [2] 17/16 17/17	separate [1] 40/20	spot [1] 26/22
reserve [1] 6/12 resolve [4] 12/9 24/22 25/2 30/7	September [2] 1/6 10/21 September 30th [1] 10/21	sprung [2] 37/9 37/21 staff [1] 31/2
respect [1] 13/17	serious [2] 15/1 17/15	stage [1] 14/6
respond [1] 25/23	set [11] 30/3 37/4 40/21 41/11 41/12 41/12	stake [1] 37/7
rest [1] 25/24	41/13 41/14 41/17 41/18 42/23	stand [3] 5/1 18/4 38/25
restore [1] 14/24 result [2] 23/13 36/24	settlement [1] 23/16	standard [1] 34/25
review [3] 4/18 4/20 9/7	seven [1] 22/21 severely [1] 18/6	start [14] 3/20 6/24 7/14 7/23 18/16 24/15 27/16 33/10 34/25 42/10 42/14 42/18 43/16
revised [4] 7/3 18/17 19/25 20/4	she [2] 40/5 41/25	43/17
RICHARD [3] 2/7 3/12 18/14	SHEARMAN [5] 2/7 2/11 2/14 3/13 3/14	started [1] 15/24
right [17] 4/13 8/9 9/6 16/20 17/6 19/22	shearman.com [3] 2/9 2/13 2/17	starting [5] 17/21 19/10 33/9 42/15 43/21
19/24 25/14 28/9 28/9 29/10 37/1 37/11 38/22 39/23 40/3 41/14	shooting [1] 34/1 shop [1] 15/13	starts [1] 12/7
rigid [1] 35/8	short [2] 4/7 20/21	statement [2] 5/16 5/17 STATES [4] 1/1 1/3 1/10 3/3
ring [3] 41/6 41/8 41/24	should [15] 6/13 6/18 8/25 9/16 13/5 15/4	status [2] 17/9 17/17
room [1] 13/18	15/5 16/19 17/16 17/17 17/25 18/1 21/12	staying [2] 5/25 6/18
ROTHSTEIN [1] 1/9	36/17 40/6	STERLING [5] 2/7 2/11 2/14 3/13 3/14
roughly [1] 26/16 rschwed [1] 2/9	shouldn't [1] 10/6 show [2] 5/20 12/22	still [9] 8/1 8/12 10/5 21/9 21/10 25/17 28/10 28/18 41/9
ruin [1] 6/16	shows [1] 7/9	20/10 41/9 strategy [1] 18/19
· · ·		- OV L J

#### 24/2 28/20 29/3 29/20 29/20 29/21 30/23 today [6] 7/4 28/7 29/16 30/18 35/20 35/25 31/7 32/9 34/21 together [2] 28/4 37/7 stretch [1] 43/15 them [27] 4/15 4/20 4/22 5/1 9/15 10/20 told [2] 28/16 31/24 ton [1] 33/12 strongly [2] 6/3 19/12 11/11 14/8 21/5 21/25 22/2 22/8 22/14 22/22 structure [1] 3/23 23/12 28/5 28/16 28/21 29/15 30/19 31/19 too [2] 41/10 42/19 sub [1] 22/23 32/10 35/13 36/9 36/16 41/19 41/20 took [1] 27/11 sub-issue [1] 22/23 themselves [1] 38/21 touch [1] 40/4 submit [1] 11/21 touching [1] 41/1 then [37] 3/21 4/15 5/10 5/16 5/18 5/23 5/24 6/2 6/11 9/17 11/5 11/8 11/12 12/24 17/2 submitted [1] 10/16 TRADE [9] 1/3 1/13 1/17 1/21 2/2 3/3 3/8 submitting [1] 26/19 17/4 17/5 18/10 20/22 20/23 21/5 21/19 25/9 6/22 14/2 substantial [1] 17/15 26/20 26/24 27/5 28/20 30/15 32/20 33/2 transaction [16] 14/2 14/4 15/14 17/16 18/17 substantive [2] 13/15 13/17 19/25 20/4 20/16 20/23 21/3 21/6 22/11 33/22 34/17 34/17 36/17 36/25 40/20 41/4 such [1] 17/16 there [42] 3/24 4/4 4/17 5/2 5/12 5/17 5/19 23/19 24/4 24/6 24/7 sudden [2] 5/23 34/23 6/23 8/1 8/16 11/24 13/11 13/13 13/14 14/3 transactions [1] 27/22 suffices [1] 17/21 15/1 17/12 17/15 18/23 19/9 20/3 20/10 transcript [2] 1/9 44/10 sufficient [2] 14/16 31/4 21/24 23/7 23/11 25/17 25/23 26/2 30/19 transferred [1] 21/7 suggest [2] 37/21 43/6 31/20 33/12 33/17 34/11 34/12 36/2 36/22 trend [1] 8/18 suggest that [1] 37/21 37/14 38/6 38/9 40/9 40/11 40/25 trial [9] 9/5 11/7 11/9 11/10 14/11 17/10 suggesting [1] 36/10 17/22 42/9 42/23 there's [11] 5/17 8/18 13/20 15/8 18/2 18/2 suggestion [2] 12/11 13/20 19/19 19/20 27/12 27/14 40/1 tried [1] 23/8 Suite [3] 1/14 1/18 2/4 THERESA [2] 2/22 44/14 trip [1] 4/21 suppose [1] 33/1 trouble [1] 43/25 theresams [1] 2/25 supposed [1] 34/16 these [23] 8/19 8/23 9/4 9/10 10/18 10/19 true [1] 38/7 Supreme [2] 19/15 19/20 12/1 14/10 14/20 16/5 16/19 17/25 20/7 22/4 try [11] 6/13 6/14 10/13 12/9 22/1 25/5 26/25 sure [10] 5/13 6/10 7/11 17/11 19/3 20/25 38/11 39/1 40/11 41/22 24/24 26/22 28/3 28/3 29/2 32/24 33/14 27/24 30/11 35/24 42/1 trying [7] 9/18 18/20 24/2 24/2 36/19 42/8 36/21 36/22 surrounding [1] 31/17 they [75] 42/12 SWAINE [2] 2/18 3/17 thev'll [1] 28/8 **Tuesday** [1] 1/6 switch [1] 37/13 they're [12] 13/21 14/21 16/5 16/10 17/20 turning [1] 35/16 18/3 22/1 24/2 24/2 34/16 34/21 41/20 turns [2] 4/10 36/12 they've [8] 5/7 5/7 21/17 21/18 22/2 22/4 two [20] 4/12 14/22 14/22 15/14 16/25 19/1 table [1] 3/9 22/7 33/19 19/1 20/15 20/16 21/18 22/5 22/12 22/13 take [14] 3/24 4/24 5/8 14/9 14/14 22/21 24/3 thing [12] 17/4 17/6 26/1 32/14 32/21 36/23 28/19 31/1 31/12 32/19 33/7 36/16 39/1 26/21 26/24 26/25 27/20 27/21 31/18 42/19 36/24 37/11 37/13 40/13 41/6 42/7 two-and-a-half days [1] 39/1 taken [1] 24/25 things [13] 4/18 5/13 9/5 12/15 20/22 26/22 type [1] 28/13 33/15 38/10 40/7 41/5 41/6 41/16 43/3 takes [2] 5/1 26/6 IJ taking [3] 4/22 10/11 30/19 think [69] talk [10] 13/2 13/12 17/21 24/21 27/14 27/17 unanswered [1] 33/17 thinking [6] 6/11 6/18 34/25 41/23 42/22 understand [8] 5/18 8/10 9/1 10/3 12/5 31/22 36/3 37/7 43/2 43/2 43/16 talked [2] 12/6 25/9 33/6 33/7 thinks [1] 8/19 talking [2] 27/23 32/18 third [2] 12/2 40/16 understanding [1] 34/10 team [2] 33/14 34/6 understood [2] 14/3 35/19 this [100] technology [1] 39/25 unfair [1] 34/24 thoroughly [1] 29/11 those [23] 5/24 7/4 9/7 9/14 11/14 13/2 13/16 teed [1] 27/15 unilaterally [1] 18/24 tell [19] 4/6 4/22 5/3 5/3 5/7 7/7 9/6 18/9 25/9 14/5 14/7 14/25 15/12 17/19 20/10 21/6 30/4 UNITED [4] 1/1 1/3 1/10 3/3 27/19 27/20 28/7 28/8 29/10 31/14 33/2 30/13 31/2 31/3 33/22 36/6 38/11 39/15 42/4 unless [2] 42/5 43/23 35/14 41/2 43/3 until [7] 7/14 15/3 15/7 22/17 26/15 33/18 though [1] 38/15 telling [2] 3/20 21/13 34/15 thought [2] 9/3 38/19 tempted [1] 33/12 three [25] 5/23 15/10 16/2 20/10 26/16 27/8 up [17] 7/10 17/20 17/25 18/16 18/20 19/10 terminate [1] 23/19 27/11 28/19 28/21 29/12 29/19 30/4 30/13 22/14 26/14 26/25 27/15 31/19 33/13 33/16 terms [15] 3/25 4/1 9/17 9/20 10/6 10/9 34/13 35/25 38/7 42/23 32/7 32/16 32/24 33/3 33/6 36/4 36/11 36/21 10/19 23/5 25/3 34/3 38/21 39/15 40/15 41/5 37/18 41/6 41/8 41/24 updated [1] 10/10 42/9 three-ring [3] 41/6 41/8 41/24 upon [1] 21/6 testable [1] 8/22 urge [4] 35/24 36/1 37/3 37/7 through [10] 7/4 23/8 30/7 30/14 30/16 testify [2] 9/25 10/15 30/17 35/25 39/10 41/20 43/25 us [18] 13/22 14/13 14/14 14/15 14/21 15/5 testimony [11] 8/7 9/15 10/1 10/16 16/14 throw [2] 5/11 5/14 15/6 20/2 21/25 23/15 24/24 37/21 38/7 40/22 41/7 41/11 43/12 43/13 25/21 35/23 38/23 40/18 40/22 40/25 Thursday [2] 42/15 42/17 than [9] 5/7 8/20 8/23 20/13 20/15 29/6 use [4] 4/1 4/12 36/7 40/20 tight [1] 32/24 30/22 36/23 38/16 time [39] 4/8 5/25 6/8 6/12 6/12 6/13 6/15 useful [2] 39/20 42/2 Thank [8] 7/13 18/14 24/8 24/9 24/13 39/13 using [6] 4/11 12/14 12/17 12/21 39/8 39/9 6/17 6/18 9/3 9/7 10/4 11/19 12/24 13/4 13/5 44/2 44/3 usually [2] 6/9 12/25 18/23 20/20 20/21 21/1 22/4 22/23 23/21 that [257] 26/21 26/24 27/3 31/7 33/6 34/11 37/13 that's [27] 5/2 5/20 8/12 9/18 10/16 12/12 37/17 38/6 38/12 39/3 42/10 42/10 42/15 12/17 12/20 12/24 13/22 15/3 15/20 17/11 venture [1] 15/22 43/7 43/14 17/18 18/18 19/13 21/11 22/19 24/7 24/9 versus [2] 3/4 10/15 timekeeping [2] 9/18 9/20 very [10] 4/15 13/1 15/1 18/12 27/25 30/3 25/1 27/17 28/22 37/11 38/14 41/19 42/20 timely [1] 14/8 the brief [1] 41/24 times [2] 5/14 11/8 36/10 39/2 43/6 43/11

timing [5] 10/6 32/4 32/17 32/18 39/20

vet [5] 16/9 25/12 25/13 27/13 33/14

their [16] 5/6 15/10 18/2 20/5 20/11 22/2

### who [19] 6/19 10/14 18/4 21/22 25/7 28/3 28/4 28/8 28/11 28/13 28/14 28/15 28/16 view [5] 20/3 27/3 27/6 27/12 31/3 34/7 34/13 35/3 35/5 35/8 42/25 views [1] 14/16 who's [1] 16/8 VNA [1] 29/6 whoever [1] 9/24 vote [1] 15/19 whole [9] 17/4 17/6 22/9 25/4 26/1 32/14 32/21 36/23 36/24 $\mathbf{W}$ whom [2] 36/20 42/12 wait [5] 20/21 24/9 31/6 39/18 39/19 whose [1] 4/12 waiting [1] 15/3 why [7] 3/20 8/3 13/18 30/7 30/19 39/18 walk [2] 7/4 39/10 39/19 want [20] 4/7 4/8 6/11 8/13 9/8 9/8 13/5 18/8 will [61] 22/1 26/12 32/9 33/15 34/20 34/23 38/10 willing [3] 4/25 30/24 42/14 willingness [1] 36/5 38/10 38/22 38/22 40/22 42/1 wanted [3] 6/24 13/15 41/25 win [1] 19/12 wants [6] 6/19 14/11 28/1 34/8 34/8 41/7 wish [1] 23/17 was [31] 3/23 13/20 15/12 15/13 15/15 16/2 within [3] 5/25 6/18 43/20 16/2 16/3 18/19 18/23 19/14 21/14 21/23 without [9] 14/13 14/14 14/15 15/5 15/6 22/1 22/9 22/16 22/17 24/1 24/18 24/18 25/10 34/12 34/22 35/1 27/10 27/11 33/3 36/25 37/9 37/21 37/25 witness [5] 5/1 6/4 10/10 10/11 38/24 38/1 39/24 41/23 41/25 witnesses [12] 5/3 5/5 5/12 6/6 9/10 9/13 9/14 36/20 38/8 40/16 42/9 43/2 Washington [7] 1/5 1/14 1/19 1/23 2/4 2/15 2/24 won't [3] 9/20 27/21 28/12 wasn't [1] 33/7 wonderful [1] 9/9 waste [1] 13/5 word [3] 4/10 13/8 36/8 way [9] 5/12 17/3 20/23 31/3 36/2 37/25 38/1 words [4] 17/12 20/13 22/8 23/6 40/15 41/19 work [13] 5/13 10/13 12/7 32/16 33/25 34/8 we [139] 34/8 35/13 41/2 43/1 43/24 43/24 43/25 we'll [10] 12/9 18/10 40/4 40/22 40/23 41/7 worked [1] 33/3 41/22 43/17 43/17 43/17 working [3] 8/2 34/4 37/15 we're [23] 3/22 16/5 16/7 16/16 17/9 17/14 world [1] 27/2 17/18 18/6 19/2 20/13 21/17 26/13 28/18 Worldwide [1] 2/19 30/14 30/24 31/6 31/20 33/25 34/7 38/25 worthwhile [1] 8/13 40/12 42/21 43/21 would [56] we've [18] 7/1 7/15 7/17 11/11 12/6 18/5 wouldn't [1] 7/22 18/17 18/19 18/21 21/11 22/8 25/10 30/24 writing [2] 5/9 39/7 30/25 33/3 33/18 37/18 38/7 written [1] 6/5 website [2] 25/4 28/2 wrong [3] 4/6 4/6 38/1 week [5] 10/13 13/20 26/19 32/19 36/16 Y weeks [25] 18/5 21/18 22/5 22/12 22/13 22/14 22/18 22/19 22/22 22/22 23/9 27/8 year [2] 20/12 22/19 27/11 28/21 29/12 29/20 31/1 31/13 32/7 years [2] 19/15 19/16 32/16 33/6 33/7 33/23 36/4 37/18 yes [19] 5/12 6/21 8/1 8/10 8/12 16/12 16/16 weighty [1] 26/20 16/22 23/24 24/11 27/4 28/18 31/11 32/2 well [23] 3/18 8/18 9/12 13/16 14/23 15/22 40/24 41/15 42/16 43/15 43/22 17/7 18/9 18/12 20/1 20/19 21/16 23/5 28/5 yesterday [1] 31/22 28/6 28/24 30/21 35/3 35/5 35/11 39/6 40/18 yet [4] 15/24 21/16 33/20 41/2 42/14 yeven [1] 2/21 well-capitalized [3] 28/5 35/3 35/5 YONATAN [2] 2/18 3/16 went [2] 5/8 36/24 York [3] 2/8 2/12 2/20 were [16] 3/19 10/19 13/24 13/25 14/3 14/6 you [209] 15/14 18/25 20/13 22/16 24/1 33/4 36/2 you'll [1] 30/15 36/24 42/11 44/5 you're [22] 4/8 5/5 5/11 5/23 5/25 6/11 6/20 7/21 8/4 8/8 9/9 9/25 12/17 12/21 12/21 17/1 what [72] whatever [6] 17/1 17/1 25/20 27/3 27/6 21/13 21/13 31/25 32/18 36/10 40/3 37/18 you've [5] 5/22 6/7 19/4 37/11 37/12 whatsoever [1] 14/12 your [88] when [12] 10/1 12/7 14/4 14/5 14/7 15/17 vours [2] 30/5 41/18 16/4 19/19 34/20 34/20 34/22 35/17 vourselves [1] 3/6 where [7] 4/19 5/8 12/12 16/5 19/17 32/18 34/11 Whereupon [1] 44/4 whether [13] 7/20 10/9 14/16 17/18 17/21 17/23 17/23 19/7 29/20 31/3 31/7 31/13 33/23 which [14] 6/24 7/9 15/11 19/10 19/11 20/7

24/1 24/3 24/25 25/21 27/9 31/15 35/4 42/13

whichever [1] 26/24