

MASSACHUSETTS GAMING COMMISSION  
MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2017  
10:00 A.M.

CONFIDENTIAL  
ROUGHLY EDITED REALTIME FILE

This file was created in real time by a Certified Realtime Captioner / CART Provider, for the purpose of communication access. It is not a certified legal transcript and may not be entirely verbatim. It is intended for use by the recipient only, as notes of the proceedings.

HRI CART  
Communication Access Realtime Translation  
813.404.2488 (cell/text) www.HRICART.com

P R O C E E D I N G S

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: Good morning, Commissioners. Normally the job of calling these meetings to order is that of their statutory designated chair. Obviously, with the resignation late yesterday of Chairman Crosby, that's not able to happen. So I am calling this meeting to order. Before we go any further, I'd like to thank Chairman for his service to the Commission and the Commonwealth. He was indeed the first chairperson, the first employee of the Commission and has served for a long time. So I thank him and wish him well.

Having said that, there will be some business to attend to. I am going to suggest that the Commission, among yourselves now, designate an interim or acting chair, which will help facilitate the continuing ongoing business of the Commission. Once you do that, I also have some suggestions on a few minor changes, and just the structure of the agenda today. But I would suggest the first item of business would be working out the interim chairpersonship.

>> MS. BLUE: Good morning, Commissioners. The first order of business, as Executive Director Bedrosian said, is to pick an interim chair. The purpose is to serve in that position until a statutory permanent chair is selected. We have this -- we didn't put this on the agenda today obviously because we didn't know we were going to be doing this. So if you could discuss amongst yourselves here and come to a consensus as to who -- as to who you would like to designate as the interim chair, that would be excellent. Then we will move forward in the meeting, and that person will continue with the conduct of the meeting.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thoughts?

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Before we get into that, I thank Chairman Crosby for his service, certainly respect his decision. And just one of his accomplishments, his contributions to the Commission I thought that was really noteworthy is he was such a champion of diversion, diversity and inclusion. And that's within our organization as well as with all our licensees and folks getting jobs in this industry. So I just -- I always found that noteworthy that he was such a champion there, and I just wanted to mention that and again wish him well.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I would echo that and thank him for his service. I

certainly have appreciated the opportunity to work with him over the last few years. And to your point, his efforts to focus on diversity as well as working through the change in the gaming statute, which I think allows a lot more residents in Massachusetts to access the career ladder in gaming. Certainly that was a multiyear effort and involved a lot of outreach and a lot of partnering with stakeholders. So I've enjoyed the chance to work with him on that issue. But certainly wish him well also.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: You know, I wanted to reference a little bit the statement from Steve Crosby yesterday. I agree with that statement in terms of the frustration. I feel this is a frustrating situation. I think I share in the sadness, in the way in which some comments get taken and are used to essentially try to undermine the work that we -- that we do. But I respect his decision. I think it's all for the better. The work of the Commission continues. We've done these before. This has always been a team effort. We've been in a situation like this for Commissioners. I think we will easily continue in that way.

I also wanted just to say in terms of Steve on a personal note, I think that when the -- I believe that in the near future when the legacy of Steve is written in a more holistic way, the headline of this morning is really just going to be a footnote. Because of all the contributions that we know he has made. But especially because of his unwavering belief and actions of the mission and values of this agency. There are too many to try to put in here. I just wanted to leave it at that.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: I did not have the opportunity to work with him as long as the other Commissioners here. I also was struck by his enthusiasm for the work of the Commission. I respect his decision and I look forward to working, the four of us, to keep marching forward with the work of the Commission.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: As Enrique pointed out, all of us, we've worked well as a team and certainly include our newest commissioner in that comment. But moving ahead with, you know, the business of the agency, which not only with the number of decisions that lie ahead of us but also our continuing obligation to monitor and regulate our two existing licensees who are responsible for employing 3,500 residents in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We've all taken our own opportunity at various times to chair meetings. So certainly view us as a team and all of us having an ability to step up and be leaders. But I know we need to find somebody to sit as temporary chair. I would certainly encourage Commissioner Cameron to think about that from the perspective that I think her background in the State Police has obviously made her a pretty good task master. Not that she's had to task mast me at any point, but again, I just think, again, all of us have certainly had the community to chair meetings. There's more of it that goes beyond that. Part of it is having a good working relationship with the executive director who reports to all of us. But to possibly also make his life a little bit easier, it would be helpful for him to have a good point of contact and one commissioner who can kind of direct his activities. So Commissioner Cameron, I don't know if you've given it any thought, but I certainly would feel comfortable with you as interim acting whatever type of title we want to give.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Commissioner, you're going to force me to give it some thought, I think, here.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Would you like to be nominated, Commissioner? I

agree with Commissioner --

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Enrique just kind of cut right to the chase.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: He did.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I agree with all the comments made here.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: I think there's unanimity in the suggestion that Commissioner Cameron take over as the interim/acting Commissioner in this case.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I don't know if it's appropriate to thank you, but I do -- I'm grateful for your confidence and, you know, if this is what you want, I'm happy to step in an interim role and keep the -- keep it rolling, keep the work going. One thing I think would be important for me to point out, frankly, and I wanted your thoughts, you know, we're very close. We're here. Today we will speak about a pending matter, and we're very close, although none of us have seen a report. That is coming. It's coming sometime in October, to the best of my knowledge, although we'll get a better update from the team here. And I, as one Commissioner, you know, with years of experience in investigations, I would not be speaking about this matter publicly, frankly. I look forward to a report and a hearing, and I know this team will make good decisions. I think any one of us could have done this, stepped in as an interim, but I do appreciate your confidence.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Let me, then, move that the Commission select commissioner Gayle Cameron.

>> MS. BLUE: Commissioner, we did not post this for a vote. I think the best way to do this is by consensus. And then at the next meeting if we want a formal vote, we can do that.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: It appears here that we do have a consensus, so let's proceed accordingly.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay. Okay. I think now we'll turn this back over to Executive Director Bedrosian. You didn't get a chance to complete your comments before we get into the agenda.

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: Sure. Yeah. So after my comments, I'm going to suggest you do the approval of minutes which you would normally do. I do suggest changing up the agenda a little bit. Obviously we have some folks who I think are interested in items that are later on the agenda in respect to their time. I would suggest that we move those items generally under the legal division with General Counsel Blue. So I would suggest we move those items up after the approval of minutes.

One -- a couple of issues, I'm going to suggest General Counsel Blue give her update on the Wynn Resorts hearing process which will be an oral briefing to the Commissioner. We are taking the Encore request for nondisclosure agreement off the agenda. I want to be very clear, there are issues that we need to look at that are boilerplate to all our nondisclosure agreements that affect operating issues with our licensee. So it is not just particular this one. They are across the board. We need to go back and look at those. That's why we're taking that off the agenda for now.

And then after we did the Wynn Resorts hearing process, I'm going to suggest we discuss matter 7A, the request to reopen Region C. I know there are people who are very interested and are here on that. After that, if we could take a break, I just want to -- then I could talk to staff and figure out the rest of the agenda depending upon where we are. We have some guests. The timeframes and stuff like that. So that

would be -- in short order, that would be my suggestions.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I think that's appropriate. So why don't we move on to approval of the minutes. Commissioner Stebbins.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Sure, Madam Chair, I move the Commission approve the minutes from our September 13th, 2018, meeting as included in the packet subject to any immaterial or grammatical changes.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Second that.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Any discussion? All in favor? 4-0 for the minutes.

So next we will move on to item 7, which is the legal division, General Counsel Blue.

>> MS. BLUE: Thank you, Commissioners. The first matter before you in this section today is a brief discussion of the adjudicatory process. We think that it's an appropriate time to just give an overview of how we think the adjudicatory process will work when you take the Wynn matter before you.

So the proceeding will be an adjudicatory proceeding. We have rules for that, Commission rules, as well as general adjudicatory proceeding rules in the Commonwealth. The rules are at 205 CMR 101. This particular matter under our regulations is a matter that comes before the Commission in the first instance. So there's no hearing officer involved. You sit as a panel in full to hear the matter and come to a decision. The difference here between an adjudicatory proceeding and a public meeting or what some people also think of as a public hearing is that in an adjudicatory proceeding, there are witnesses. They are under oath. You take testimony, both oral and documentary. There will be exhibits that you will consider. There will be a somewhat more formal process, but it is not like a public hearing where people just get up and speak and not like our general public meeting.

The testimony taking part of this process will be public. So members of the public can see it. But the deliberations will be afterwards, and they will be in private. The way the process will generally work, similarly to what we have done in the past with suitability hearings, that's the most common kind of adjudicatory proceeding that we've had. The IEB will present its report. Then Wynn will be able to put on testimony. They may have witnesses. They may have documents. Both parties can submit exhibits, and they will be marked, and they will be included in the record along with anything else, any oral testimony.

The Commissioners can ask questions of any participant, anyone from the Commission staff, anyone from the Wynn Group. They will all be represented by attorneys. Attorneys can ask questions of the witnesses as well. All of -- as I said before, all the testimony evidence is taken in public so that it will be available for you to see and for others to watch. At some point when you believe that you are done taking testimony -- and that process can take as long as you need it to take -- the hearing itself can be adjourned. It can take place in small parts over several days. It can take place all in one day, whichever the Commission is comfortable with. When you are comfortable that you have taken all of the testimony that you want to take, you will adjourn the proceeding.

You will then retire to deliberate in private. You can also take as long as you feel necessary to deliberate in private, and you will deliberate until you come to a

decision that you are comfortable with. Once you come to that decision, it will be put in writing that you will then get to review and approve. And once you're comfortable with that decision, then that will be made public. I would imagine that that written decision will probably be drafted a week or so after you finish your deliberations, and you'll have it for your review. That's been the general timeframe that we've had. But as I said before, you can take as long as you need to deliberate, and you can do it in, you know, in separate sessions. You can do it in long sessions. Whatever is the Commission's desire to do.

So that's the general overview. If there's any questions, I'm happy to answer them.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So I believe it's very similar to what we've done in the past, but it's certainly a good idea to refresh our memory on an adjudicatory procedure.

>> MS. BLUE: Yes. It should be very much like what you've done before.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah, for the RFA1 process, when we examine the suitability of the applicants at the time, those were all done in adjudicatory -- most, not all of them --

>> MS. BLUE: Most. There were a few that we did in a public meeting.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: That's right.

>> MS. BLUE: And they were a little quicker and a little simpler. The majority of them were done in an adjudicatory proceeding, yes.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I was also thinking of the racing appeals that get to us only after they have been through the hearing officer, which we deliberate in private but issue a written decision, you know.

>> MS. BLUE: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: It's also important for everybody to know that we've done that a number of times.

>> MS. BLUE: That's right.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Any other questions? Back to Executive Director Bedrosian.

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: Sure. So the import of this is I wanted not only you but the public and stakeholders to be aware of how this process would play out. So I will tell you, as I told you in the past in terms of an update, staff is working hard. We are -- staff is. They are getting towards the end of this investigation. They understand time is the urgency. And to be clear and hopefully to state the obvious, nothing that has transpired in the last 24 hours is going to slow staff down. They will continue to work as aggressively and as quickly as possible.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Is there a sense of timing? I think there was a reference to October. Do we have any kind of sense of when might the report be forthcoming or --

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: I can tell you that -- I'll just repeat that staff is working hard. They would like to get this completed. There are many, many, many stakeholders who would like to see this completed also, and we recognize that, so.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Fair enough.

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: We are just working as hard as we can.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Yeah. I think from a standpoint of the

Commission, we are certainly understand that investigations are not always easy to predict the ending, but nothing has changed since you briefed us two weeks ago and said that we were very close to ending that investigation?

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: That is correct. That is correct.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay. That's -- anything else?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: No.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay. Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: We're going to move on to the request to reopen Region C discussion.

>> MS. BLUE: If you recall, Commissioners, in July, we came before you with a request to consider reopening Region C along with some other matters. You instructed staff to draft a response to that request, and we have, in fact, drafted it. There is a response in your packet. The response deals with two of the questions that were raised in the request. The first is whether the Commission has the ability to just reconsider its prior decision. And the second question which is could you award the license without going through the competitive process.

The letter that we have in the packet talks about the fact that there is no process for reconsideration. And if the Commission wanted to consider that, they would need to think about what that process could look like, and then we would have to draft regulations and promulgate them. And then on the second question about whether you could award a license without going through the competitive process, right now there is -- there is a very detailed process in your regulations. And in fact, the statute seems to imply that there would be a competitive process. So we created one in accordance with the statute. If the Commission wished to change that process, it would be along the same lines. You would need to consider what that would look like, the circumstances in which you would invoke that process, and then what regulations you would use to support that. So both of those responses are in this letter.

Obviously, the Region C applicant at the time has raised other issues. We have not addressed any of those. I did, in the memo that I put in the Commission packet in July in which you looked at, include a number of items the Commission might want to consider. So those issues and that discussion is something that the Commission can have if they want to continue discussing it.

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: And if I could just add, attorneys Apfel and Braceras who represent Mr. Blum and MG&E are here. I'm sure they'd love to talk. We told them this wasn't the time. There may be a time down the line. But just to say they have been passionate advocates for Mr. Blum and their client in this matter. And they have been respectful of the process with General Counsel Blue and myself. So -- and also, they have made me aware that there is a representative from Senator Brady's office here. Senator Brady has been supportive of the process to reopen Region C and economic development in Brockton. So I wanted to acknowledge those folks.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Just a couple of quick questions. One, has this response -- I mean, I know we wanted to tackle this in two pieces. One, be respectful -- excuse me -- one, be respectful and respond to the original letter that we received. The second piece of that being how we would have a conversation about the future of Region C or what to do with respect to Region C. Has this reply gone out

officially? I see it's dated today.

>> MS. BLUE: Yeah, it has not. We want your guidance, if you're comfortable with it, we will issue it.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Obviously they raised a number of issues in the letter. Kind of give us your thinking as to why you wanted to specifically pull out what I think are two of the bigger issues that they raised with us and why maybe you didn't address some of the others.

>> MS. BLUE: Well, when we talked last time as a Commission, those were the two most prominent issues that the Commission asked to address first. The other issues that were raised in their letter I would say require more input, whether it be research -- certainly more input from the Commission as to how you want to proceed, but definitely more research, perhaps input from outside consultants. So we didn't -- before we proceed down that path, we wanted to make sure that as Commissioners, you were comfortable with that and you wanted to instruct us as to how to proceed.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Well, I just wanted to mention or follow up on the notion of the competitive process presumption that's in the statute and hence in our regulations. I think that's something that we should continue to follow. I don't see us necessarily changing regulations. In the near future, I may be only speaking for myself here, you know, in order to accommodate this request. I think we should think about the things that we discussed last time we did this, maybe in July. There were important matters, in my opinion, like a new market assessment or a review of conditions changed, in general, not just in Massachusetts but, you know, in the New England market. That really might affect what really is behind the request to rethink this in a fundamental way. So I would be in favor of really proceeding with either consultants, procurements or what have you relative to initially making an assessment of this market.

We have a lot more data points. Actually some of them coming from our own licensees. We had initial projections when we award the licenses. Those numbers, you know, have come in slightly below in some cases, are recouping in other cases. All of that could be looked at in order for us to begin to really think in terms of moving forward.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: I think the letter is consistent with what we talked about at the last meeting in terms of staying focused on sort of the two procedural questions about what they asked the Commission to do in the letter. To the extent you need a motion, I can certainly move, at the conclusion of comments, that we approve sending this letter out. I think it is responsive to the letter in that regard. In terms of C, Region C in particular, it's obviously an open question. And I think in the future, absolutely we bring forward a more detailed discussion about what steps to take. I think today the question for us is really this letter and whether it's appropriate to send it out as a response. And I think this is the appropriate response to the letter.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Commissioner, I think what you just spoke about was included in I believe the 14 points --

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Of the original.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: -- the original points that we could consider. I've had a chance to review that list.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: And also the list of comments, which are pro and con as far as, you know, reopening and the Brockton license. So it made me think that it would be appropriate -- I would like to hear from the public. I think any decision we make, we always make a better decision when we know what the region is thinking, what the people are thinking. So I would love to suggest that we take -- we take those points, and we get them out for public comment. So many points to consider. And that would help us in our decision with next steps with regard to this.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I would just add, you know, I went back and looked at that same memo that laid out a lot of the questions we should consider. Some of those I think are somewhat mirrored by our response in that some of the points that General Counsel Blue raised had to do with the process, looking to change our process. And what we're specifically spelling out here is that we're not a big fan of changing the process which the statute was pretty clear about. You know, I also would like to kind of look at a new market assessment of the region. I also think it's worthy of having a conversation with some of our federal government counterparts. They're obviously pursuing legislation which could have a big impact on what happens in Region C. I think it would be responsible of us to have a conversation with our colleagues. It's nice when every arm of government is talking to each other. They could give us an idea, you know, what their proposed legislation intends to do, what that might mean, kind of, you know, would hate to ask them to speculate on what can transpire in D.C. because that's a bigger question. But, you know, to get a full view of what activity is also taking place with respect to our colleagues in federal government.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Would it be appropriate to -- I would love to check with our General Counsel on a timeframe because there's so many voluminous lists of issues to consider for public comment and then take this conversation up maybe after those conversations with partners, federal partners, and come back with comments, because we have not put this item out for comment.

>> MS. BLUE: That's right.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: And then take up this discussion at a further date? Would that make sense?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: That makes sense to me. I actually -- I should come back to agree with Commissioner O'Brien's point that at least for the short term, the answer to this letter seems very much appropriate and, you know, to me anyway.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Do we have a motion?

>> MS. BLUE: Actually, you can just instruct me to send it out. That was your instruction from last time. I think in terms of comments, it's a long list. I think there's a lot of potential stakeholders. I would suggest roughly 45 days. We'll put together the usual request for comments. We'll attach the list, and we'll gather them and try to break them into portions in terms of what they might be responding to.

I think to let the public know, the more precise their comments are and the more information they can share with us, the more helpful it will be to us. So, you know, if we can get a lot of good, thoughtful thinking from the public on these comments, that would be great.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So it sounds like we don't need a motion. We just instruct staff?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: It's not down for a vote either. So by consensus.



There we go.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Great.

>> MS. BLUE: We will send it out.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thank you. I believe at this point we finished with all the items on number 7, and we will take a ten-minute break.

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thank you.

(A ten-minute break was taken).

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay, we'll resume our meeting at this time. And next on the agenda will be Ombudsman Ziemba.

>> MR. ZIEMBA: Good morning, Commissioners. Before I begin, I also want to express my well wishes to former Chairman Crosby. I'm sure that my fellow staff members share in these well wishes.

With that, Commissioners, up for consideration is a plan by the City of Lynn to utilize its 2017 transportation planning grant to catalog and evaluate the city's traffic signal systems and to identify necessary improvements needed to optimize traffic operations and improve safety for all modes and determine appropriate near-term and long-range signal improvement strategies required as a result of anticipated traffic generated by the ongoing construction for the casino and anticipated future casino-generated traffic.

Joining me here today is Joe Delaney, Construction Project Oversight Manager and Mary Thurlow, program manager. Also available today is Richard Benevento, transportation consultant for the City of Lynn, and the President of WorldTech Engineering LLC to answer any questions you may have.

By way of background, the Commission authorized a Community Mitigation Fund Transportation Planning Grant for up to \$100,000 in 2017 for a transportation study or studies to assist Lynn in planning to avoid or lessen potential traffic impacts related to the development of Encore Boston Harbor. At the time of the review of Lynn's 2017 application, the mitigation fund review team memorandum stated that in order to help Lynn plan to avoid or lessen potential traffic impacts from the Wynn, now Encore Boston Harbor facility, the review team recommends that the Commission authorize an additional \$100,000 for one or two non-ferry-related transportation planning studies. Subject to the condition that first Lynn would have to consult with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and Commission staff on how such funds would be best utilized to lessen any casino-related impacts on Lynn traffic.

I'm glad to report that the city has met with MassDOT, and MassDOT has provided a letter with support which is included in your packet. Although the Commission has given the staff the authority to approve this use, without further Commission approval, we bring this item to the Commission for two reasons. First, based on the 2018 CMF application rounds, it was expected that the City was planning to prioritize this study for a Route 107 study. Second, staff has questioned whether the new planned use of funds, a citywide review of traffic signal systems, has a sufficient nexus to impacts that may be caused by the Encore Boston Harbor Casino. In order to receive further information demonstrating this nexus, Commission staff held conversations first with city staff and then with Mr. Benevento, staff asked Lynn to

provide this further information in writing which is included in your packet.

Based on the information provided and MassDOT's recommendation, we believe that the Commission should approve or allow Commission staff to authorize the City of Lynn's request to utilize this funding for the traffic signal inventory. We believe that Lynn has sufficiently demonstrated the nexus between the proposed mitigation measure and the potential for traffic-related impacts on Lynn. So let me turn to Joe Delaney to provide you with some more specifics about the location of the signals being studied.

>> MR. DELANEY: When we first went through this application, we were a little bit concerned about the traffic signals being sort of broadly all over the city and whether or not this had that connection to the casino that we were looking at. WorldTech Engineering submitted a letter to us with some additional information, and there's a couple of figures in there, one of which shows the average daily traffic on some of these corridors and also another one that shows the locations of the traffic signals. And what we saw there was that really the main routes that would lead down towards the casino from the north and from the west, you know, that those traffic signals, the vast majority of them are on those corridors. And that if there's a few outliers studying those, it's not really detrimental to the whole project. And we felt that those routes were the main routes down to the casino and that that justification was there.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thoughts?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: You know, I first want to compliment -- I know this has been a long process in terms of trying to work with the City of Lynn and try to assess what the impacts are, and I know we've been through a couple of rounds with the mitigation grant funding. I personally am happy to see that the city kind of took a wider view of this and certainly came up with a very strategic approach to figuring out how to deal with traffic, something as simple as assessing when lights turn green and others turn red as well as the equipment. I think this proposal's a lot more thorough and takes a look at impact now, potentially what impact could be. So I certainly support your recommendation.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Anyone else?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Same here.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Yeah. I would agree, very well thought out and strong recommendation based on, you know, good information. So do we have a motion?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Madam Chair, I will move that the Commission approve the request from Lynn relative to the Community Mitigation Fund Award to be used in the manner described here today.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: Second.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Any further discussion? All in favor? 4-0.

Thank you very much.

>> MR. ZIEMBA: Thank you. That concludes my report.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Sorry. We'll invite you back to give us the results, right?

>> Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So next on the agenda is research and responsible gaming, Director Vander Linden.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Good morning.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Good morning.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Commissioner Cameron, congratulations. I am Mark Vander Linden, Director of Research and Responsible Gaming. I am joined by Dr. Sarah Nelson, John, and I can never pronounce your last name.

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: Kleschinsky.

>> MS. NELSON: Kleschinsky.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: I almost got it. And Dr. Debi LaPlante. We began working with the Cambridge Health Alliance Division on addiction, roughly, I would say, 3 years ago, maybe 3 1/2 years ago, as Plainridge Park Casino opened to evaluate a number of our responsible gaming programs including the voluntary self-exclusion program, which is what they will present findings from that evaluation to you today. As required by statute, so this is a direction by statute that we implement a voluntary self-exclusion program. This program is here to assist patrons who recognize that they have experienced a loss of control over their gambling and wish to invoke external controls. I want to emphasize this is the voluntary self-exclusion program. It's an individual who steps forward and voluntarily enrolls in this program and not be confused with the exclusion program.

Individuals utilizing this service can select a duration. It can be anywhere from six months to five years. If they've completed that shorter duration, they are offered an opportunity to enroll in the lifetime program but must complete a shorter duration first. Once on the list, they cannot collect any winnings or recover any losses from any gaming activity at a Massachusetts Gaming establishment for the duration of that period. At any time after the exclusion of the selected duration, they may request to have their name removed from the list. By doing so, they would also need to complete a brief reinstatement session. The purpose of this reinstatement session is to cover such topics as safe gambling tips, the risks and responsibilities of gambling, as well as referral or access to additional help, should they wish to access that.

That last piece, what I'm talking about, this reinstatement session, is not covered in the evaluation, but it's a component -- a required component by regulation in Massachusetts regulations. Many states, almost any state that offers voluntary -- or offers casino state-regulated gambling offers some form of voluntary self-exclusion. Massachusetts, when we began contemplating this program, chose to do what we call an engaged approach, ensuring that patrons obtain the assistance needed, that they're responded to in a timely, discreet manner, and that they feel supported. I hope that that is what is conveyed through the findings of the evaluation that will be presented to you today. But it's an aspect or an element of this program that I feel incredibly strongly about. This is not an administrative process. This is something that we want the patrons who are -- that have the courage that are stepping forward to enroll in this program, that they're stepping forward and saying I have a problem and I wish to enroll in this program, we want them to feel the support that they deserve.

So with that, I will turn it over to Dr. Nelson.

>> MS. NELSON: And I will turn it over to John.

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: Good morning. I want to thank members of the Commission for the invitation here today to discuss our findings of the study of the Massachusetts voluntary self-exclusion program. Today we'll be presenting the findings of a study that was conducted a little over two-plus years of the voluntary

self-exclusion program, and that study included surveys with self-excluders at the time of enrollment as well as 6 to 12 months after enrollment. We also collected and analyzed some data from their applications as well as data from their check-ins with the Mass Council on Compulsive Gambling and their player card data.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate voluntary self-exclusion. We can't do this with an experimental research design as much as we would like to, and that's because we can't randomly assign people to enroll in self-exclusion or not. We have to give them that opportunity to self-exclude. So the next best way to do that is to assess the experiences of all of those who enroll in the voluntary self-exclusion program. Specific goals related to that purpose are spelled out on this slide here. And we've organized the findings throughout the study -- throughout the slide set based on these goals.

So we want to understand -- excuse me -- I skipped, I apologize -- we wanted to understand enrollment trends across time and place, understand who signs up for self-exclusion and why they're signing up for self-exclusion, evaluate their satisfaction with the program and their experiences, examine outcomes for enrollees at about 6 to 12 months after their enrollment in self-exclusion and then examine whether enrollment in Mass self-exclusion is a gateway to treatment.

So quickly, and Mark covered some of this, I just wanted to give a brief overview going into this evaluation. Self-exclusion's been around for probably a couple decades now. It's been implemented by both governments and casinos across the globe. It allows individuals to ban themselves from entering specific casinos or regions, casinos and regions for a specified period of time. Patrons agree not to enter the casino, and the casinos agree that they'll remove the individual if they are caught. And they'll also remove them from marketing materials. Past research suggests that voluntary self-exclusion is associated with some changes in gambling behaviors, some positive changes, and problems among enrollees. And I would note here that there's been an evolution of self-exclusion over time. When we started looking at self-exclusion, it was a very punitive process where people who were caught were charged with trespassing as part of that agreement, and we've transitioned now to a more supportive or treatment-oriented program that, you know, provides some resources and help where it's needed and doesn't punish people who are caught on the gaming floor.

So in Massachusetts, at the time of the evaluation, people who self-excluded had three locations where they could self-exclude. They could do that down at Plainridge Park Casino, at the Mass Council on Compulsive Gambling which at the time was still in Boston, or the Mass Gaming Commission. Mark talked about the periods of exclusion. For initial enrollment, it's 6, 12, 36 or 60 months. After that initial enrollment period if they want to reenroll, there is the lifetime opportunity there. Exclusion covers all of the Massachusetts casinos. Again, at the time of the evaluation, it was just Plainridge Park. Obviously now that's changed. Those who are caught are escorted from the premises and forfeit any money wagered. And to be removed from voluntary self-exclusion, enrollees had to go through an exit interview process. Otherwise they were still self-excluded.

And this slide shows a time line of our study activities and how things changed over time in the study. So VSE enrollment began June 25th of 2015. The study did not begin until November. So what we did with the help of the Mass Gaming

Commission was to provide a release, a contact release form, so that enrollees who came into VSE between June and November would -- if they allowed us -- would have the opportunity to enroll in the study retroactively once the study began. The study began -- I think we had IRB approval in the middle of November, November 25th, we trained the game sense advisers who were the primary point of contact with voluntary self-excluders and did all of our enrollment early on. So we went down, we did the training. We kicked off November 25th. At that point the study began, we, division staff, myself included, began going back to those who had released their contact info to try to enroll them in the study retroactively, and the game agents began enrolling people who showed up down at Plainridge Park.

We went from November through March, this initial study period, with I think the game sensing agents only enrolled three VSEs in the study. So we recognized pretty early on, I think, December, January that some changes needed to happen. We met with Mark and members of the game sense agents to discuss some changes that we could make, modifications to the protocol. We put those in place, got IRB approval, and those changes started on March 1st.

We got rid of the randomization, VSEs who came in either had the opportunity to be in the -- the name's escaping me -- standard procedure versus an enhanced procedure for enrollment. And so we took the randomization out because game sense agents recognized that basically everyone was getting the enhanced protocol. So we took that out as well as we brought back in or reintroduced the ability for enrollees to either enroll in the moment of self-exclusion or to release their contact info and we would follow up with them later to try to get them enrolled in the study.

Baseline enrollment ended November of 2017, and we continued doing follow-up interviews through May 24th of 2018.

This slide shows the breakout of enrollment. I won't spend a lot of time on this slide unless there are questions. But we had 22 who enrolled in the study. At the time of enrollment. The rest were enrolled with division contacts and followed up later on. We got 64 completed baseline surveys out of the 263 first-time enrollees and 47 completed a follow-up.

And this slide kind of merges the last two. So the blue is the retroactive enrollment for all of those who enrolled before the study had started but released their contact info. The red is the initial study phase where we saw a drop in enrollment on site, and then the green is the longer period there is the modified period where we allowed enrollment onsite and offsite. The top is the total enrollment over time. The red is the GSAs enrolling on site, and then green is division. And the bottom -- the purple, excuse me, is those who had released but never got -- never completed a baseline.

>> And just to be clear, that's enrollment into the study.

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: Oh, sorry.

>> Enrollment into the program is done by game sense advisers, roughly 90% to date.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Maybe you mentioned this, but what percentage of people enrolled relative to those who --

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: Enrolled in the study? 24.3%. So lower than we would have hoped. But it was much lower, and that's why we made some changes to the

protocol.

>> And one other note, this is enrollment in the baseline survey and the follow-up interview. We collected additional records in order to have full information on the 263 enrollees in some areas.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Have you done other studies similar to this in other jurisdictions?

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: We did a previous evaluation for Missouri.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Numbers similar? Enrollment numbers?

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: I don't know exactly off the top of my head, but I do know, having been involved in that, the protocol was a little bit different. The Missouri Gaming Commission collected the contact info. They were responsible for vetting it. There was a long delay between phase 1 and phase 2 of that study where we were actually doing follow-up, which impacted our results. Do you remember the response rate?

>> We were actually cold calling people up to ten years after they had enrolled in the self-exclusion program itself, and I think it was around a quarter of the folks that we contacted.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Great. Thank you.

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: And this slide just shows our retention rate for those 64 who completed a baseline, 47 completed a follow-up survey for us. And this slide's a little bit hard -- we had some animations that didn't make it in, but the larger blue circle there, the 263, are the first-time self-excluders who we had application data. There's some survey questions and some other measures in the application itself that we were able to analyze for the full sample. The top left blue circle there is enrollees who had player card data that we could analyze. Moving around to the top right, our enrollees who had agreed to a one-week check-in with the Mass Council who were able to provide us with the data of those check-ins. And then the bottom right there are the enrollees who completed the baseline study for us. And there's obviously some overlap between those groups.

So this slide here shows the trends and enrollment across time. We had anticipated enrollment would drop off at a certain point, and we didn't end up seeing that throughout the study period, it was about one to two enrollments per week. VSE enrollments now, not study enrollments. Thank you, Debi. So this is from the beginning the opening of Plainridge Park, June of 2015, through the end of November 2017 when we completed our study enrollment. This shows cumulative enrollment across time, how many enrollments occurred at Plainridge Park with the game sense advisers and how many occurred with gaming agents. As Mark just said a few minutes ago, a little over 90% were with game sense advisers.

And then this is the same data presented a little bit differently. So instead of cumulative over time, this shows the monthly variability. There wasn't much of a trend line here. Obviously it started off high right when the casino opened, we had some anecdotal evidence of people who had enrolled previously at other casinos who came right in immediately upon opening and excluded themselves. And then some variability over time and then peaking again towards the end of enrollment.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Any idea why it peaked again toward the end?

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: Good question. I had a similar question. I don't have a

good answer. I don't know if Mark knows maybe at that time if there was any additional promotional efforts going on or game sense advisers doing anything different that might have increased it.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah. You know, it's in the range of responsible gaming education week, and perhaps there were additional efforts to promote that week. We always -- we always pay attention to that, but maybe it resulted in additional enrollments in the program.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay. Thanks.

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: The other thing to recognize here is the enrollment numbers are low. So it's tough to get a trend line, you know, you're going to see a lot of variability when you're looking at such small numbers each month. This is you.

>> MS. NELSON: Thank you, John. This shows which enrollees chose. They were able to enroll for 6, 12, 36 or 60 months upon their initial enrollment. The most common initial enrollment term was five years. That was selected by about 41% of initial enrollees. You'll see that on this chart one enrollment was listed as lifetime even though it appeared to be a first enrollment. This might have been a special case. In general, as Mark noted, lifetime enrollments are not allowed until an enrollee has served an initial term.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Is there a -- I'm trying to think of what our neighboring states do in terms of VSEs. And I know they don't offer as many options. Are we expecting that some people who came in initially signed up for the term they might already be under in another state, and that's maybe why these two are more popular than the other ones?

>> MS. NELSON: Yes, and I have some of that data later on. There was a significant portion of enrollees who were already enrolled in self-exclusion in Connecticut or other states.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Okay.

>> MS. NELSON: So we'll look at that in a minute. And there were several folks who, during our study period, signed up for the five-year -- or signed up for six months, went through the six months, and immediately signed up for a lifetime term. So they chose that shortest term in order to be able to sign up for lifetime as quickly as possible.

This is the geographic distribution of enrollees. And again, this is all enrollees. The majority were residents of Massachusetts, about 66%. And most of these lived in the eastern half of the state. However, more than a quarter were residents of Rhode Island. And then there were also a small percentage that lived in Connecticut and New Hampshire. There were no enrollees who were residents of Plainville itself where the casino is located. But you do see kind of a cluster at least in Eastern Mass.

So the take-home points in terms of understanding enrollment trends across time and place, first of all, by the end of the study, enrollment rates had not leveled off as we expected. So some of our previous work suggests some adaptation there, and we had not seen that yet, at least during the term of the study. The most popular enrollment term, again, was five years. And that point that most enrollees lived in Eastern Massachusetts, but we've got almost more than a quarter that are from Rhode Island that are coming up to self-exclude.

So our second goal was to understand who signs up for self-exclusion and why. This is important because knowing who you're serving can help a program tailor itself to

better meet the needs of that population. We list the demographics of the population of self-exclusion enrollees here. This is based on the entire population. 97% were non-Hispanic. 79% were white. 58% were male. And they tended to be in their 40s, although female enrollees were older than male enrollees. 57% were employed full time. 59% had a household income of \$50,000 or greater. And 36% were married, while 20% were divorced or separated. And there's more detail about these demographics in the report itself and how they compare to Massachusetts census numbers.

So application questions asked enrollees about gambling behavior. And one of those questions was about their frequency of gambling at different locations. You'll see on this slide there are only 167 respondents. And you're going to see this throughout because with application data, there were a couple different versions of the application that were in play throughout the study, and so we have missing data. This is based on 167 self-excluders. About 30% of these enrollees reported gambling a couple of times a week at Plainridge Park Casino, leading up to their exclusion. And more than 70% had frequented casinos or slot parlors in neighboring states within the past year. We also learned that most enrollees had placed their last bet within a week of signing up for Massachusetts self-exclusion. There was a small subset that came up and signed up for self-exclusion and had not gambled at all in more than a year. So this is a group of people who were kind of doing the rounds essentially. So either they had already self-excluded in Connecticut or other places and showed up on day one to exclude Plainridge Park when it opened.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So most of them had placed their last bet that week.

>> MS. NELSON: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: And then they came in and self-excluded.

>> MS. NELSON: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Do we know, is that common? It's hard to tell?

>> MS. NELSON: I don't know if it's common across studies. I haven't seen that level of detail there. I know from kind of the response of the game sense agents, that many of their self-exclusions, they were dealing, in essence, with people in crisis. So this was people who were reacting to something that was happening. I don't know the numbers on that.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: You know, I had expected to see many more enrollments coming through the Gaming Commission or people going to the Mass Council on Compulsive Gambling. Vast majority of them happened at the casino, and I think that they -- because they were at the casino, gambled, realized that it was beyond their control and then wished to enroll in the program.

>> MS. NELSON: So this figure is showing percentiles for the total amount that enrollees reported losing in the past year and the maximum amount they reported losing in one day. And this is also out of application data. And the past year amount is shown on the left axis, and the one-day amount is shown on the right axis. And I think the point on this chart is less -- the absolute amounts but the shape of the graph that you see. So in both cases, a few enrollees reported substantially greater losses than the rest of the sample. So you have this subset that was gambling and losing very high amounts compared to even the rest of the sample of self-excluders.



It's also important to note in terms of financial variables that 88% of this sample of enrollees is 122 to 129. Also endorsed needing to get more money in the middle of a gambling outing at some point in the past year. So the question is asking did you ever have to kind of get up in the middle of your gambling session to go get more money? And 88% said they had done that in the past year.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Doctor, I wonder if something like this could be analyzed, if there's enough data, to be analyzed relative to income, not just the losses. If I lose \$1,000, it's a lot more significant depending on the income that I had.

>> MS. NELSON: It's an important question. The problem with our data is the income question was asked with categories and ranges. So it would be difficult. But you could probably do kind of a more general look at that. We did not do that.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> MS. NELSON: What we did do is we looked at player card data to see if we saw a similar pattern between self-reported information and what we saw from the player cards. And when we look at player card data, the picture is similar. So this is the 91 people who used their player cards in the year before exclusion. And in this case, what we're looking at, the blue line shows the average total amount enrollees wagered per day, and the red line shows the average total amount they lost per day. And again, the shape of the curves are telling a story. There's a subset of enrollees here who are experiencing, again, significantly heavier wagering and greater losses than others.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Just so I get the graphs right, so when we're looking at the 95th percentile, we're talking about really 5% of the people?

>> MS. NELSON: Yeah, correct. You don't need to see all the information on this figure. It's in your packet. It shows what games the enrollees in our baseline sample reported gambling on. The blue bars show the percent of respondents who reported playing the game at all in the past year. And then the red bar shows the percent of those players who engaged with a game who were playing it on a weekly basis or more. The main point here is not surprisingly gambling machines at slot parlors or casinos in addition to being the most commonly played game also had the largest percentage of players who played weekly or more. This is among self-excluders. The figure also shows that many of the game types that were less prevalent in the sample, so not that many people were playing them, nevertheless who played them were playing them quite frequently.

On average, enrollees who completed our survey had engaged in between three and four different types of gambling during the year prior to enrollment.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Can you help me understand a little bit more about the next -- after the casinos, playing the lottery, there's this large discrepancy between those weekly or --

>> MS. NELSON: Right.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: What is it the insight in this case for the lottery?

>> MS. NELSON: For the lottery, it's telling you that just under 80% say that in the past year they've played the lottery. And it's telling you of those 80%, about 38% play it weekly or more often.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> MS. NELSON: To most of them are going to look -- you know, you've got the ones on the bottom are the most prevalent things that people do. So you've got the

blue bars that are the highest. But as you move up, not very many people reported that they engaged in day trading, but a significant proportion of those who said they did, did it weekly or more often.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Those figures -- I'm sorry -- just to go back one or two slides, those figures included only expenditures at the casino or all --

>> MS. NELSON: All. So this is all gambling for them.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: This is interesting, it's supported by the Sigma data as well that it's less about the type of gambling and more about the number of forms of gambling that people engage in as it relates to problem gambling.

>> MS. NELSON: And if you're interested in that, we have several papers on kind of that involvement effect as well.

So also not surprisingly, given most past work on people who sign up for self-exclusion, this figure shows how many gambling disorder criteria enrollees in our baseline sample endorsed. And overall, 92% of self-exclusion enrollees who completed the survey qualified for a past-year gambling disorder. This is similar to rates we see in other studies. We also, in the application itself, it included a screener for gambling disorder that didn't have all of these criteria but had three criteria, and even within that full sample, you're seeing the vast majority qualified for gambling disorder or are likely to.

I think one thing that's really important here is the sample of enrollees who completed the baseline survey also reported on their physical and mental health. And while they rated their physical health as, on average, good, close to 25% rated their mental health as poor and another 25% rated it as only fair. So you have a good proportion of people here who are suffering from mental health issues potentially beyond their gambling problems.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: How is mental health assessed in this case?

>> MS. NELSON: This is simply --

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Self-reported?

>> MS. NELSON: -- two questions that are self-reported. They're taken from the diagnostic interview, but just kind of screener questions generally. Just how would you rate your mental health.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Uh-huh.

>> MS. NELSON: Currently.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: It's interesting that people were -- peers, pretty honest about that.

>> MS. NELSON: Mm-hmm. People tend to be -- there's a gender difference, but people do tend to be fairly honest on mental health questions as long as they know it's not something that's going to be used in some way.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: There's a gender difference? Explain that one. Or do you want me to guess?

>> MS. NELSON: I don't -- I don't have it -- I don't know whether it came out in this study, but I know in general, women are more likely to report those issues and more likely potentially to seek treatment for them.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: That was my guess, too.

[ Laughter ]

>> MS. NELSON: Reasons for gambling. This was also in the application itself. And in general, close to 60% report gambling to have a good time. More than three-quarters for the excitement they get. But you also see that 45% endorsed gambling to get the money they needed. And more than one-third were endorsing gambling because they felt sad or depressed. So these questions they could endorse as many or as few as they wanted.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: I would find this specific slide, this specific information really helpful as we consider programmatic or communication planning moving forward, ways -- these paths towards problem gambling are really important.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Before I forget, is there anywhere in the study that you looked at how people gamble, whether they gamble alone or with friends? I'm going, you know, in this notion of whether it's a fun activity or sad to be by themselves.

>> MS. NELSON: Yeah. I don't think we asked that specifically in either interview, but you will see here on the reasons for gambling, the least endorsed were because it was an important part of my social life and because others around me were gambling.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> MS. NELSON: And then we asked both -- this slide shows kind of the forced choice options. We asked why are you signing up for the voluntary self-exclusion program? And then we also followed up with an open response question that said why are you signing up for the program today? This slide is showing the more general answers. So they selected from a list of reasons. And most enrollees really endorsed individual reasons for enrollment as opposed to reasons that indicated being influenced by others or signing up to improve relationships with others. So more than 80% of enrollees indicated that they signed up for financial reasons. And more than 70% indicated that they signed up because they were unable to control their gambling. And in their open responses, that same kind of theme came out, that they really -- they felt they could no longer control their gambling.

Despite that, most enrollees also indicated that they intended to quit all gambling upon enrollment. And that kind of becomes important when we look at what they were actually able to accomplish as well. So you've got 70% who are planning to quit all gambling pretty much cold turkey upon enrollment.

So really quickly, take-home points in terms of who's signing up. They tend to be non-Hispanic, white and in their 40s. Now, this is specific to the Plainridge Park Casino in that area. Almost everybody, as Mark said, is signing up at the casino. Most enrollees are gambling frequently, both at Plainridge Park and elsewhere. There's a subset that has not gambled in over a year, but there's also a subset that's gambling and losing significantly more money than others. And many enrollees are experiencing not only significant gambling-related problems but also mental health issues. And there are reasons for enrollment tend to involve an ability to control their gambling.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Can I just ask, from that sub-bullet, the second subset of gambling, they tend to lose significantly more money than others while enrolling? I'm sorry, after they have been --

>> MS. NELSON: No, this is still before. We're about to switch over to after. Yep. This is kind of -- the snapshot when they enroll.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Good.

>> MS. NELSON: To the third goal we're looking at, the satisfaction and experiences of enrollees with the program itself. So part of the unique components of the Massachusetts version of self-exclusion is that enrollees are offered a one-week check-in call. If they accept a Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, staff member will check in on how they're doing and whether they need any additional resources. And we see that about one quarter of enrollees agreed to this call upon enrollment. And Mass Council staff were able to reach about 75% of those who agreed.

When we examined data from the 46 enrollees who completed a follow-up interview with us, about six months after enrollment, 76% reported that they had participated in voluntary self-exclusion in other states prior to enrolling in the Massachusetts program. And among those folks, 83% indicated that their experience with the Massachusetts program was better than their experience with the other programs. Those who chose to provide other comments about this noted that the other programs felt more like law enforcement and that this program felt more supportive to them.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: That's an excellent number, 83%. Wow!

>> MS. NELSON: Caveat, it's 83% of the 46 who did the -- but it's very positive, yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Yes.

>> MS. NELSON: And we're really seeing, you know, in terms of self-reported satisfaction, it's high. So more than 75% of self-exclusion enrollees who completed the baseline interview were extremely satisfied with their enrollment experience. Another 20% reported being very satisfied. In addition to rating the program highly, which you see here, the vast majority also had really favorable impressions of the GSAs. You have a little bit of a self-selection. I'm guessing the people not satisfied with the GSAs were not as likely to enroll in the study. So you do have that effect going on. At follow-up, numbers declined somewhat but the question was different somewhat because it was satisfaction with the program. Whereas enrollment, all they know is the enrollment process. But it's still, among those who completed the follow-up interview and rated their satisfaction, it's still quite high. They're very or extremely satisfied, on average.

When we asked how the program had helped people, enrollees who completed the follow-up interview indicated that the risk of being caught was a deterrent for them. And multiple respondents also indicated that the support that the program and the game sense agents provided was important to them.

Only 63% of follow-up respondents chose to provide any suggestions for improving the program. Those who did suggested more follow-up and check-ins from the program, better advertising, offering a single regional VSE program, and providing more sign-up opportunities that were away from the gaming floor and the casinos.

In terms of that first bit, it's interesting that only 25% agreed to a check-in call. But you see a lot of them wishing they had had one. And so I'm not sure how you work with that, but giving people more opportunities to sign up for that follow-up as they enroll.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Could there be --

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: Maybe a phone call as opposed to other avenues of support.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Oh, great point. Could it -- I was thinking maybe it was too close, the one week being such a close proximity? Maybe people come to appreciate it after, you know --

>> MS. NELSON: That's possible. I believe -- I've had to check in with the game sense advisers, but I also believe it was a checkbox kind of on the application, and it may have been people who were kind of I don't want to share my data with a bunch of people didn't realize this was a question more about just did you want somebody to check in with you. It might be more how that's portrayed to them.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah.

>> MS. NELSON: So this diagram is showing self-reported violations. So people in our follow-up sample, ten of them reported having returned to Plainridge Park during their exclusion period and seven of those reported trying to enter the gambling floor. Of those seven, one did not end up actually entering. I guess they just thought about it. Two entered once. Two entered twice. One entered three times, and one entered six times. That's not on the chart. And two were caught. One was told to leave the first and only time he tried to enter. The other was identified by a game sense adviser on one of the two occasions that he tried to enter and removed by staff. These numbers are too small to really do anything with in terms of the numbers that we're seeing here.

Take-home points. Enrollees in general are satisfied with the program. They appreciate the extra support it provided. And again, only a quarter of enrollees agreed to a one-week check-in upon enrollment, but many follow-up respondents wish there had been more check-ins provided.

So our fourth goal was to examine enrollee outcomes, looking at variables we measured both at baseline and at follow-up. And here we're examining intentions compared to post-enrollment behavior. So as I mentioned, you've got more than 60% even of our follow-up sample who intended to quit all gambling upon enrollment. That's the blue box on the left. And only about one-third of those succeeded when we followed up with them. So 10 of the 29. Enrollees who intended to quit either just casino gambling or intended just to quit gambling at Plainridge Park had more success. Again, very small numbers, though we're looking at two of five who intended to quit but continued casino gambling. And only one of the five who intended to quit gambling at Plainridge Park returned. And I think part of the point here is thinking about when enrollees are intending to quit all gambling, if there's a way to help them kind of figure out what they need to do to help them along that path. Because many of them are saying I don't have any control over my gambling. Self-exclusion is not a treatment program. And so how do you take that next step for them, getting the help they need to be able to accomplish those goals or to set maybe more reasonable goals for them going forward?

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah, I would say it reinforces the idea or the importance of some type of therapeutic intervention or treatment following enrollment. This is not treatment, and that even if people have the intention of quitting altogether, that's a really big decision for many of these folks, and additional support is really important.

>> MS. NELSON: Thanks, Mark. Mirroring findings from other self-exclusion

studies. Across enrollees who completed the survey, their frequency of gambling both at Plainridge Park and at other casinos decreased significantly from baseline to follow-up. Gambling at Plainridge Park had the greatest decrease. At follow-up they were gambling more frequently at neighboring casinos than at Plainridge Park obviously. But frequency decreases were significant across the board.

When asked to report their own perceived changes in gambling, as the figure shows, about one-third indicated that they were not gambling now but had been gambling prior to self-exclusion enrollment. And an additional 48%, about half, indicated they were gambling less now than when they enrolled.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: In that category about gambling less now, going back to the previous chart, that's that whole array of -- from charity to sports betting in the office to everything else.

>> MS. NELSON: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: It's not just strictly casino gambling.

>> MS. NELSON: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Okay.

>> MS. NELSON: And because of time, I didn't go into it, but their biggest decreases are on slots.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Sure.

>> MS. NELSON: And table games, but they're also decreasing in other games as well.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Okay.

>> MS. NELSON: And the follow-up sample were less likely to endorse every single one of the DSM gambling disorder criteria at follow-up than at baseline. So 41 of the 46 in the follow-up sample qualified for gambling disorder at baseline. That's 89%. And only 18 enrollees qualified at follow-up, 39%.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: What is that insight?

>> MS. NELSON: Hmm?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: What does that tell us?

>> MS. NELSON: Well, we looked at this two ways. One thing it tells us some people are stopping gambling and so they don't report symptoms when they're in an abstinence period. But we also looked at this among the people who were still gambling, and they also experienced significant decreases in all of these criteria. So it's possible that these are the people who are no longer gambling at Plainridge Park but are still playing the lottery or doing something that perhaps is -- this is speculation -- but it's perhaps less difficult to control for them.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> MS. NELSON: I think in general, you know, our research -- the research in general in the gambling field shows that there's natural recovery, that there are people who are able to control their gambling. There are people who have a much harder time doing that and are not yet very good at predicting who's who. Who really needs to go on an abstinence path versus a harm production path.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: So the idea of natural recovery is basically somebody admits but doesn't seek out treat -- additional treatment.

>> MS. NELSON: Right.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: And I think that enrollment in the voluntary self-exclusion

program, without seeking treatment, would still be considered -- that would be considered natural recovery, correct?

>> MS. NELSON: What do you think? I think that's an open question.

>> MS. LaPLANTE: (Away from mic).

>> MS. NELSON: But it would not count as treatment.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Debi, microphone next time.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: I think it's an interesting question. What role does voluntary exclusion for individuals that have no intention of accessing additional help. Is this, in and of itself, an important intervention that can stand alone and still provide evidence of support or help to people?

>> MS. NELSON: And that's the last thing we get into, trying to look at the small numbers but trying to look at treatment. So this slide shows that they also appear to have improved in terms of their mental health in the follow-up sample. So their self-reported mental health goes up. And also information I didn't report on earlier, their depression and anxiety scores go down significantly.

So we're seeing improvements in gambling behavior, gambling problems and mental health. The gambling behavior and gambling problems have been studied and found before with other self-exclusion programs. There's been less work looking at actual, more general mental health. And the more major the change the enrollees intended to make, the less successful they appeared to be at accomplishing that change with the caveat that this is based on the small follow-up sample.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So the more -- the more they wanted to change, the less successful they were?

>> MS. NELSON: It's not wanted. So this is the people who said I want to quit all gambling when I enroll. Those people who wanted to quit all gambling were less successful quitting all gambling than people who said I want to stop gambling at Plainridge Park or I want to stop gambling at casinos.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So realistic goals.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah, realistic goals.

>> MS. NELSON: Possibly, yep. So our last goal was really to test a specific hypothesis about treatment. And our idea was that enrollment and self-exclusion could serve as a gateway to further treatment for people with gambling problems. And this hypothesis was based on our past work with the Missouri self-exclusion program where we did find there was -- there were a lot of enrollees who had never sought treatment before who ended up seeking treatment after enrollment. So that's what we were looking at. And initially, the results looked promising. We have 41% of our follow-up respondents who indicated specifically that the self-exclusion program influenced them to seek additional help.

The picture is more complicated than that. When we look at what our sample reported at baseline, this is at enrollment, 68% had already talked to a doctor or other professional about problems with gambling. 48% had previously called a gambling help line. 22% within the past year. And 54% had sought help for gambling problems and reported previous treatment for a mental health or substance use problem.

So this figure also shows just the different types of treatment that they had attended prior to enrollment, and really outpatient mental health treatment was the most common followed by gambling treatment and financial counseling. And the point here

is that a good portion of our sample was already in some form of treatment at baseline. So if we look at that in more detail, and yes, with small numbers. I think I had this animated before. But what we're looking at in this chart is specifically gambling treatment, gambling treatment seeking. So, like, calling the help line, or attending Gamblers Anonymous before and after self-exclusion enrollment. So that top left box has 11 people in it. Nine of them didn't seek gambling treatment before and didn't seek gambling treatment after. And you have two who had never sought gambling treatment who went on to exhibit some kind of treatment seeking after enrollment. And then you can follow the boxes down as well. But you've got 24 in that middle box where you've got no gambling treatment but some kind of treatment seeking or Gamblers Anonymous prior to self-exclusion enrollment. And 14 of those kind of continue with that. And some of them don't seek. Some of them do.

More importantly, if you switch that box out and you're looking at treatment more generally, because we know a lot of people with gambling problems don't necessarily end up in gambling treatment. They may be in treatment for substance use problems. They may be in treatment for mental health problems, and they may address some of their gambling issues during that treatment. The picture you're really seeing here -- and again, it's very hard without animation to see -- that you have people who are already in treatment who stay in treatment, and that's a significant portion of what we're seeing, but you do have a subset who has had treatment in their lifetime, is not engaged with treatment in the past year, and then goes back to some form of treatment after enrollment. So the speculation here, again, based on a small number, is that self-exclusion might be providing a nudge for those people who were already engaged in some way with treatment previously. So it might -- and that would explain some of the comments we got about seeking additional help like oh, I went back to my counselor, or oh, I went back to Gamblers Anonymous.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So obviously you look at that as a positive.

>> MS. NELSON: Right. Right. So it's a different -- we're starting with a different sample than we expected. The self-excluders we saw in Massachusetts were already treatment engaged in a way we hadn't seen before. And that also matches with people who are -- you know, you've got this large majority of our follow-up sample who was already engaged with self-exclusion in other states, you know, because of the proximity of some of these other casinos.

So enrollment does not appear to serve as a gateway to treatment primarily because there was a high number of enrollees already engaged in treatment, and more enrollees were engaged in some way in mental health, substance use or gambling services after enrollment than in the year prior to it. Again, based on a small sample.

There are big limitations to the study that we shouldn't ignore. The study design limits the ability to draw causal conclusions. And this is a general problem. You can't randomly assign people to self-exclusion, in general. You can randomly assign people to different features of self-exclusion programs. And that might be something to pursue in the future to see if certain aspects of the program are having more efficacy than others. The recruitment rate was low. We ended up with a 24% recruitment rate. So you've got a self-selected sample in many ways. We attempted to compensate for this by using additional data sources wherever we could. And we have missing data kind of throughout the database that we had, and we go into more detail on that in the report as



well.

I'm going to skip this slide because it's in your packets and it's text heavy. And go straight into program recommendations. So we had sets of recommendations for the program, for the data systems themselves, and for evaluation of the program. The first is to publicize the program more widely throughout the state. This is based on the comments that are in the report for many of the self-excluders which is that they did not learn about the program until they spoke to a game sense adviser. Also, specifically collaborating with substance use and mental health treatment organizations to publicize the program. So as I said, many people with gambling problems are in treatment for something else. So if there's a way to have even more publicity around the program in those settings, that could be helpful.

Consider making one-week check-in calls a standard part of the program, not optional. At the very least, making sure to offer these calls and describe their purpose explicitly to every enrollee. So making sure that's a clear piece of the program.

And the fourth one is to include motivational interviewing training for program staff. And the rationale behind this is that thought about people who want to just quit all gambling and potentially having a little -- a small, brief intervention that takes place there in terms of helping people with their goals or those pieces as well. Conducting an assessment of treatment history and enrollment goals with enrollees at the time of enrollment. That goes hand in hand with that motivational interviewing piece. In terms of where they're at in that process.

Provide resources for gambling treatment and other forms of mental health and substance use treatment in enrollees' regions. So even if our sample was self-selected and we had a small sample, it's a quarter of the self-exclusion enrollees who were in our sample, and many of them were reporting mental health issues that were beyond gambling problems. Including Rhode Island as a region for which resources are provided. A quarter of enrollees came from Rhode Island.

And finally, considering offering regional VSE and making VSE enrollment available through gambling, substance use, and mental health treatment providers. I know very few people signed up at either the Gaming Commission or the Mass Council, but if it had been, you know, very easy to sign up at your substance use program, your mental health program, that might have increased those numbers.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: Can I ask you, who you do the follow-up calls, do you find the best time of day to reach out to them? If you get a cold call on something you don't want other people to know about, they're not going to want to engage.

>> MS. NELSON: Two separate things. The one-week check-in calls, and we did six-month interviews. And John can speak to that portion.

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: We've done a lot of these interviews with variation populations that are difficult to pop, and we try our best to vary both who's calling by gender. Sometimes we find they're more receptive to one versus the other. And we also did nights and weekends. So we tried to provide as many opportunities for follow-up as possible because of that.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: But do you determine the variant or do they ask you? Is there any opportunity for them to say, you know, I'd rather talk to a woman, you know, after 5:00? Please don't call me during the day?

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: Yes. Early on we did not ask that question. We did make

a modification to the release form, and all the game sense advisers were asking that question probably from about month four on, what's the best time of day? What are the best days of the week to try to reach you? To make our lives easier so that we could schedule appropriately.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: Okay.

>> MR. KLESCHINSKY: Yeah.

>> MS. NELSON: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So I was interested in your motivational interviewing training.

So we're really trying to get those folks that are interviewing to influence, have a greater influence, on the recipients, right? Maybe talk to them about realistic goals or how -- how successful the weekly calls are, something along those lines? Is that what we're referring to?

>> MS. NELSON: I think with the motivational interviewing, part of it -- and again, this is a voluntary program. It's for people interested. I think the game sense advisers gauge this pretty quickly. But if they have that training to be able to engage at enrollment when people are sitting in their office for potentially, you know, an hour or more to go through this process and to be able to have those tools as they're having a conversation with them, if those issues are coming up anyway, to engage in a way that can be helpful as a brief intervention, that could be useful.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: So the good news is that motivational interviewing is a part of every game sense adviser's sort of core training that they receive. I think that, you know, it's something that you need to practice, too. And I think that sort of ongoing training in motivational enhancement or motivational interviewing absolutely makes sense. I've had the training, and to me, it's about kind of tapping into people's motivations for change. What is it about this that makes you want to change? And it's mostly asking people questions and setting realistic goals, I think, goes hand in hand with that, too.

>> MS. NELSON: And the data nerd in me says that's also something you'd want to evaluate. So maybe you give half of the game sense advisers a booster course in their motivational interviewing, and you're looking at people's reactions and how that -- because there could be -- this is not -- self-exclusion is not treatment, and it shouldn't be portrayed as if it is. So there is a fine line there. But kind of evaluating whether that is helping.

Speaking of data nerds. So data systems recommendations. These ones are really more kind of set up and supported within the report itself. So we just had some recommendations related to the application itself, making it feed into a relational database so everything could be linked more easily and more efficiently for evaluation purposes. Setting up the application in a way that really has it feed directly into that database, and we had some specific recommendations about how the questions are set up so that you really can't not answer by accident.

And then creating a data system that can kind of generate reports automatically because, you know, we can go through and we can do this to your evaluation, but it's great if you can get some kind of evaluation basis. And if you have a database set up that can kick out more automated reports, that can help you.

So as Mark said, we didn't really get into the exit interviews because a lot of them

hadn't happened, as our study was wrapping up. But for continuing evaluation, we suggest really formalizing the information collected during both check-in calls and the exit interviews, collecting a standardized set of information about outcomes for all enrollees at that time. So then even if you're not conducting another study like this, you have some outcome information that you're getting at least for the people who are coming off the list.

And then include key domains of interest as mandatory components of the application throughout. So you've got a baseline in an exit interview for comparison.

Tracking information about the resources that are shared with enrollees to really look more at that treatment engagement since that is something that the program hopes this engaged process will help with.

And finally, examining program features that might be particularly effective at facilitating change. And this is where if you really want to look at causality, you've got to figure out how to do some kind of experiment where you're randomly assigning people to different versions if you have features that you think might be particularly effective.

That's it. Once again, I just want to thank the Commissioners for taking the time to invite us to speak today. I also want to thank Mark and the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling for their collaboration on the initial design of the study, and most importantly, the game sense advisers for their tireless work implementing the study and the voluntary self-exclusion program participants who took the time to answer our questions and participate in this study. Thank you.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: And as well as Teresa Fiore who is it is hands-on in this.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Mark, I had three quick questions. I assume when you say continuing evaluation recommendations, you're going to continue to roll this out obviously now that MGM has come online. Do you have a plan for tracking the success of the program as potentially more people from Western Mass, even out into New York or Vermont or anywhere else might be getting to take advantage of the program and how -- when you look at research, but secondly, how you look at the rollout of VSE, can you take some of these recommendations in hand and make changes to the program?

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah. You know, VSE, we are talking about relatively small numbers right now. I think we have over 300 people right now, but commissioner Zuniga and I were at MGM yesterday. It seems like the rate is increasing. On a standard day, it's one to two per day from MGM I think is what was reported to us yesterday.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yep.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: This list will eventually have thousands of people on it, and that's pretty standard if you look at state by state. Continuous improvement of the program. I think these are great recommendations, and I think that they're very doable for us to implement. So I really appreciate that. We continue to gather data of program enrollees, so we will have that. We don't have a formal evaluation under way of the voluntary self-exclusion program right now. I think that it's something that would be interesting to continue to pursue and use the recommendations of how we continue that evaluation moving forward. It comes down to a matter of timing and budget and that sort of thing at this point, though.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Two other just quick points. I'd welcome the chance to see whether we can collect information, whether somebody is a veteran as they're logging their information in. We know that's another vulnerable population. But two, I think, you know, beginning days of the Commission, we heard stories of if you wanted to sign up for VSE, you had to walk through the gaming floor past everything that would tempt you to register. It's more of an acknowledgment of the great work that you have done and Teresa has done and Mass Council has done that yes, you can still sign up at the casino. But I think the extra effort needs to be acknowledged -- and you shared this with me in Springfield -- is that the team was going proactively to Gamblers Anonymous meetings to give people the option of signing up right there.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I think there's a shout-out and kudos to you and the team for that response you got of what a positive experience it has been for the people that make it pretty brave and bold decision to do this.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah, I agree. You know, I want to do more. I really believe that we need to have more designated agents, as we call them, in the communities around the state, but especially around where our casinos are to enroll people through different avenues. And that could be strengthened a lot. There was the recommendation of the regional voluntary self-exclusion approach, and that -- there's been a lot of discussions with surrounding states. It was led by Chairman Crosby. We will continue to do that work to see that through. I think that's a huge piece, and it's reflected in here. So many people have enrolled in other states. Why are we making them go through process after process after process just to make sure that as gaming expands, that they are safe or on this list.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah. Yeah, I was actually -- that's well said, and I had a question. I realized that maybe this was not necessarily part of the study, but one of the -- some of the features -- one of the big barriers towards this regional effort has been that we have different features between around regulations and statutes and approach. A real simple and straightforward one, for example, is just the terms. We have a 6 months, 3, 5, 1 and lifetime and have to go through one before you go through lifetime. And I'll just say that other states have sometimes very different one and five and lifetime or just five and lifetime without the prerequisite. Is there anything from this study that you would say, you know, if you did one thing or another relative to options versus broadly -- is there anything that you could comment on?

>> MS. NELSON: Do you mean general take-homes or is there something specific about terms you're asking?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I was thinking specifically there's at least two things in this narrow topic of giving people a number of options to sign up for it.

>> MS. NELSON: Right.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: At the same time, we want to make this regional effort. And just many options are actually a barrier towards that whole effort. So if you had to guess as to what might be overall more effective, would you want to have -- to give people more options or less but more widely distributed?

>> MS. NELSON: I guess three thoughts come to mind. One is you can look at that data, and it seems important to have the two ends of our spectrum. So the six-month

and the five-year.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah.

>> MS. NELSON: The lifetime piece, I know our past work with Missouri, when we evaluated it, that program required lifetime. And people did kind of have regrets and issues. So it really hasn't been evaluated, but there still is that question about whether you would want to have lifetime be at first enrollment or not.

But my third thought is for a regional program, would it be possible, instead of trying to change our terms without evidence one way or the other, to really make it so that, you know, the gaming commissions within each of the neighboring states within New England somehow have the capability to sign people up for as many of these programs as -- so if I go into the Connecticut Gaming Commission and say I want to sign up for the Massachusetts, the Connecticut and the New Hampshire self-exclusion programs, can I do that, if there were the capability to do that, then --

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: I believe that's the direction --

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: That's the direction we're going, yeah. Still, there's this thought process that we ought to have a form that's as common as possible, relative to options, just for the management of the program. But I know that's not necessarily --

>> MS. NELSON: Yeah, the terms you've got a little bit over 40% choosing the five-year. You've got your next highest is 12 months with a little bit over 30% choosing that and then a little over 15% chose six months, and 10% chose three years.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I think really positive results from the study and I think really good sound recommendations to move forward and make it stronger. So I thank all of you for coming in. Thanks.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Next we have workforce supplier and diversity development, director Griffin, is your team here, or should we take a short break?

>> MS. GRIFFIN: My team is here.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Does anyone need a break? I know, but does anyone need a break? You good?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Yeah.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: (Away from mic).

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Hearing that we're going to go for another hour. We're going to take a five-minute break. Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Ready to resume our meeting. And with that, our item is workforce supplier and diversity development, Director Griffin.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Good afternoon, Commissioners.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Good afternoon.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Good afternoon.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: 12:01. First I would like to extend my regards and express gratitude for the work of Chairman Crosby, especially regarding the Chairman's champion related to diversity and inclusion and access to good-quality jobs. So I just wanted to start that way.

And I'll just add -- so in November, just to give a little bit of background, and then

I'll introduce our guests who are here today -- in November of 2017 in response to Gaming Commission RFP to consist with construction diversity improvement efforts for the casinos, the Northeast Center for Tradewoman's Equity was awarded a grant from the Commission to launch a first-of-its-kind statewide recruitment initiative to encourage more women to pursue a career in the union building trades. The Build a Life Campaign was kicked off in Massachusetts with the hope of encouraging women to consider a career in the building trades.

In addition to the broad advertising campaign comprehensive website featuring careers in various trades, a critical initiative within the campaign to help women gather the career information that they needed has been the Tradewoman's Tuesday programs offered in both Boston and Springfield. I'm going to have them talk a little bit more about that.

This initiative initially largely funded by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is the result of a unique collaboration of dedicated organizations that have joined forces to address a chronic challenge. I'd like to acknowledge the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, our licensees, and hosts in surrounding communities. There are additional partners that I'll have folks acknowledge here.

So we have some members of the Northeast Center for Tradewoman's Equity here today to provide you a one-year update of the program. And before I introduce them, I'd like to be the first to congratulate them for being the successful bidders for this year's \$50,000 diversity grant. So --

[ Applause ]

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Nice job. That's a big announcement.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: And we hope that this highly tangible, long-term solution will be a catalyst for a future of economic opportunity for women. So with those remarks, I'd like to introduce Kate Harrison who's the Pipeline Navigator and staff person for the Northeast Center for Tradewoman's Equity, and Susan Moir, board member of CTE, also co-founder of the policy group on Trade women's issues.

>> MS. HARRISON: Thank you, Jill and thank you to the Commissioners. Thanks to the Commissioners and thank you, Jill, for allowing us the opportunity to be here to present our progress today. So it's been one year since we launched a build a life works campaign to encourage women to pursue careers in building trades. As Jill explained, it's a partnership between many key partners, but the Gaming Commission being a big one, also the Metro Building Trades, and it's designed to address the need for eligible women workers in the pipeline to union apprenticeship so that we can get more women working to build the casino projects and other Massachusetts projects.

So we began doing outreach to women last September, 2017, with our very first Tradewoman's Tuesday event. It's an event where -- it's an open house where women with come in and get information about how to get started in the union building trades. So the first one was last September. And since then, we have had 20 Tradeswomen Tuesday events in Boston and also in Springfield. At those events we've met almost 400 women face to face and given them our pitch for trade careers. We also have collected the contact information of 784 women in the database who either -- many of them connected to us through our online comprehensive website where we can capture

information, some through other means like career fairs and Tradeswomen Tuesdays. But the website has been a really big way that women are connecting with us. And these days we're getting 75 to 100 new website contacts a month.

One of the main priorities of this campaign is to share the career opportunities in the union trades with women of color. And we've been doing that. 75% of the women who attend our Tradeswomen Tuesday events are women of color. 50% of them are African-American, and you can see on the slide the specific racial and ethnic breakdown, but we're happy to see that we're reaching our target there. Target audience.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Kate?

>> MS. HARRISON: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Which is great. That was obviously one of the major goals behind the program. I'm sure for Jill's benefit and Elaine's benefit, do you ask folks how they heard about the program or the events through any number of means, be it through social media, they're seeing the fliers? How are they learning about Tradeswomen Tuesdays for the most part?

>> MS. HARRISON: So we do ask that question, and the responses are pretty varied, which I see as meaning that we need to keep up all different forms of outreach. People report that they've seen the fliers. A lot of people hear about us through the transit ads. So we put up bus shelter ads inside of bus -- ads inside of the buses, and those were very effective. I'd say it would be the biggest source of how folks heard bus. But also, through friends, word of mouth, programs. Aside from the transit ads, it's pretty spread.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Okay. Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I like the ones on construction sites, and I look at one every day right out of, you know, right next door.

>> MS. HARRISON: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Which I think is great, too.

>> MS. HARRISON: We have our ads up on the jobsite screens or the bunting that goes around construction sites.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah.

>> MS. HARRISON: So in regard to our preliminary results, one big thing that we did this year was develop an automated database to track and sort these inquiries, these interested women. So we now have a pretty robust sales force system that can automatically determine a woman's eligibility for apprenticeship. It sends out automated e-mail communication, and it allows us to keep records of women's progress in the pipeline from being just an interested woman to someone who's applied to apprenticeship, so on and so forth.

Through our outreach this year, we identified 238 women who are actually eligible. So the system supported us doing that identification. And those 238 women are really -- they're in good hands now because we have their information. They're regularly updated with opportunities, and they're in the pipeline. They're on track to union careers. And we keep the line of communication open with these women, so they all have my contact information, my phone number and my e-mail. And as the pipeline navigator, I'm the central point of contact for their questions because it is a complicated system to apply to a specific trade union apprenticeship program. And so

without having a point of contact and without other portions of the build a life campaign like the website where we have frequently asked questions, it could be difficult for women to be successful. But with our support, they have all they need.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Retention? How are we doing with retention? I know that's sometimes an issue in nontraditional fields. Once they start the internship -- or the apprenticeship, rather, are they staying with it?

>> MS. HARRISON: Honestly, I don't think we're gathering data on retention yet. We'll talk more about next steps soon. But the next step is determining who has been applied and who has been accepted to these apprenticeship programs. Because the time line for applying and getting started in an apprenticeship program is actually pretty long. It can take up to a year just for the program that you're interested in to open up. So that's on the horizon for sure.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Too soon to tell.

>> MS. HARRISON: Yeah. So we already are seeing -- I mentioned we are going to be figuring out who's being accepted where, who's starting work where. And Susan will talk more about that soon. But I can say anecdotally, meaning through self-reporting, women are being accepted to an apprenticeship, and we've seen women start work with the sheet metal workers, the laborers, the carpenters and the painters. And looking it forward to seeing the data that comes from our formal outcome evaluation survey, which is going out soon.

I'd like to mention that this campaign is actually an award-winning campaign. So a few months back in May, Commissioner Stebbins accepted the Roseoff Award for excellent in meaningful campaigns of diversity along with KHJ Marketing which put together all the really slick graphics for us and outreach materials. So that's a great accomplishment.

And we've received significant press on the Build a Life campaign in no small part thanks to press guru Elaine Driscoll from Mass. Gaming Commission. She's been very supportive in helping us put together press releases and get the word out. We've been featured in major media outlets including "The Boston Globe", "The Wall Street Journal," and most recently CNBC national news network. We've also been in some local news stations have done interviews with our featured tradeswomen, and we've been in trade publications and other press outlets. But we have, I believe, the CNBC news clip cued up, so we could play the video now and share it.

>> Up next, closing the gap.

>> Big new casinos are rising in the state of Massachusetts. But to get their gaming license, they had to commit to women in hard hats. I'm Contessa Brewer. I have more details coming up in my next report.

>> And finally tonight, we've been telling you about the shortage of skilled construction workers across the country. Well, now one project in Massachusetts has set out to address the skills gap and also the gender gap. Contessa Brewer is in Massachusetts for us tonight.

>> Reporter: Rising across from the Boston skyline, a new casino takes shape thanks to thousands of construction workers.

>> We do the heating and cooling, HVAC, for the building opinion.

>> Reporter: Sonny is one of 328 women working construction in Encore Boston Harbor. But it's taken her ten years to reach her goal. Journeyman pipefitter.



>> I would let them know that it's a great opportunity. It's great benefits. It's not hard as people view it as. Women are just as hard workers as men on the jobsite as well. We lace up our boots and tie them the same way they do.

>> Reporter: Now she's the face of a statewide initiative to recruit women in construction.

>> In order to make this work, you have to have a kickass champion. You've got to kick these doors down.

>> Reporter: The Massachusetts Gaming Commission has been instrumental, following a mandate by the legislature to increase workforce diversity. It requires these casinos to put women in 6.9% of the construction jobs. That's more than double the national average. And the Commission is tough about enforcing it.

>> We go union by union, contractor by contractor. Do you have -- have you met the target? And if you're an outlier, somebody else is doing 28% women. If you're doing 0% women, we call you out.

>> Reporter: But they soon realized there simply weren't enough skilled tradeswomen to meet those goals, so the Commission partnered with unions, casinos and nonprofits to get more women in the pipeline.

>> It's been very hard. It takes a concerted effort, and it really takes a partnership with the local trade unions as well as the contractors to be able to push these requirements down to the subcontractors. And it can be in many cases more expensive because you're taking inexperienced labor and you're putting them on the site and making sure they train them up. But we've made that investment as our partners.

>> Reporter: In the western part of the state, MGM Springfield will open its casino doors in mid-August. Its construction workforce exceeded the diversity requirement, employing 7.5% women, including an all-female demolition team.

>> It's important to get a woman's perspective on every aspect of the job, whether it's the office or on the construction site.

>> Reporter: Encore Boston Harbor just hit the 7% mark last month. A milestone achievement for the newly renamed project, struggling to emerge from the shadow of a #metoo scandal, engulfing its former CEO, Steve Wynn, and threatening the status of its gaming license. But its president expects a high return on investment made at the diversity initiative.

>> I think we'll wind up with a better work environment and a better place for our guests to enjoy because they'll look around and see that we are really reflective of today's society.

>> Reporter: The recruitment efforts also focus hiring workers of color and veterans.

>> As a journey worker, once they reach that level, they can make \$90,000 a year. So it can be a life-changing experience not only for the individual but the communities in which they live. It actually leads to economic stability and security for everybody.

>> Reporter: Ten years ago, Savi was making minimum wage and living with her father. Today --

>> I just bought a house.

>> Reporter: Would you have ever been able to do that on what you were earning?

>> Not at all, no.

>> Reporter: The statewide campaign aims to see 20% women employed in

construction by 2020. A lofty goal. But the winds of change are blowing in Massachusetts. In Everett, Contessa Brewer, Nightly Business Report.

>> MS. HARRISON: So we are really excited that we're going to be going into another grant year with funding for the Mass. Gaming Commission. And I'm actually going to turn it over to Susan Moir to tell you guys more about what's coming up next and where we're headed.

>> MS. MOIR: Thank you. Thanks, Kate and Jill and Elaine and Jennie is somewhere and all the other people who have made this happen.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Susan, turn on your microphone. There you go.

>> MS. MOIR: Is it on? I don't think it's on.

>> MS. HARRISON: Got to do a hard push. Or use mine.

>> MS. MOIR: I need someone younger and stronger to push my button. How about that one?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: That works.

>> MS. MOIR: Okay. So as Kate said, we wanted to report on what our next steps are. And also provide a little larger Context, Commissioner O'Brien, we want to share with you particularly what we've been doing here and the impact it has. So our next steps, we're expanding Tradeswomen Tuesday. We're going to be able to expand our Tradeswomen Tuesday. We're going to continue in Springfield even know the casino is open. We're going to move into Worcester. We're working with the labor coalition there which includes Coghlin Electric. You might have seen it went by pretty fast. A woman working for Coghlin Electric at MGM and Encore that was in the video, and we're going to expand to the South Coast. There are building pathway programs in both localities. It provides an opportunity to get the word out and to be a union tradesworker is there. They have the infrastructure to move women into pre-apprenticeship.

We are going to be documenting and sharing best practices in outreach and recruitment particularly for those localities and beyond Massachusetts. How do we actually get the women? What we have been able to substantiate with the program we've done with the partnership we've had with the Gaming Commission is we've killed the myth that women don't want this job. We've absolutely killed that. Every time that Kate pulls together a Tradeswomen Tuesday, we have 20 to 40 women show up. In Western Mass., we started slow but we've built up. Every time we go someplace and provide women with the information that there is an opportunity in this work, the women show up. The next step is to move them through that pipeline. As we like to say, it is not true that women would like a -- to wipe a bum for \$15 when they have an opportunity to dig a ditch for \$35 an hour. And that is the option that these women are looking at. Low-wage, dirty, heavy work with no future, no pensions, oftentimes no benefits versus doing a very similar kind of work with a real career and a future. And women will come out.

So we're documenting and sharing those best practices. And as Kate noted here, we're in the final stage of an outcome evaluation design. Like final stage like it was supposed to launch within the next couple of days where we're going to be following up with the over 700 women who we've been in contact with and the 230-odd women who actually have met the qualifications to begin to answer the questions that you asked, Commissioner. Are women applying? Are they getting in the door?

Where are the doors closed, and where are they opened? We have a better sense of how women are going to proceed through this pipeline.

It was very interesting to watch the previous presentation because, you know, I was one of the authors of the 2009 study of the impact of gaming in the state. And one of the things that is remarkable about our statute is that, demonstrated by the last presentation, this is not about controlling gambling among compulsive gamblers in our casinos. This is about the social benefits of addressing compulsive gambling throughout the Commonwealth.

This project is in the same vein. It is not simply about getting enough women so that we can say hey, hey, hey, we did great at the casinos. It is really about addressing the long-term policy failure of the doors that were closed to women in these careers in the union building trades. So what we've done in addition to the pipe -- the pipeline was a new project that we just started a year ago. The need for the pipeline was demonstrated by the lack of supply when we were trying to get women into the casinos. We had exhausted, through the demand strategy that we had built with the casinos -- and I do want to mention the UMASS building authority which has been a really strong development and ownership partner with us -- what we've been able to demonstrate through these two very strong partnerships and our targeted projects is that demand -- demand equaling jobs, we believe, is really if not the driver of retention, a critical driver of retention. When people can't -- they get workforce development industry is strewn with examples of training people where they couldn't get the jobs. We don't have retention if people don't get the jobs.

So what we've done is we've put women to work. Over 100 women at MGM, in Springfield. 350 -- I think almost 350 now women are working at Everett. This is groundbreaking. This has never happened in the history, in the history of the construction industry to have that many women working on a particular -- on a project. What we've also done there is we have tested and identified best practices. So there was a little comment that -- the comment that Encore had just reached 7%, that was very time -- in a particular point in time. At the particular point where they came out and they did that video, we were engaged in a process through our access and opportunity committee with the partners on why the numbers had dropped at Encore. The numbers had been 7% at Encore for a long time. And all of a sudden, over the course of our regular access and opportunity meetings where we closely monitored and examined the data, as Commissioner Crosby explained, we saw this drop. Why were we getting this drop in and through that partnership, through that learning process that we do for the access and opportunity committee, we realized that over time had gone up at the Encore job. And Encore, at our suggestion, went back and took a snapshot of Monday through Friday versus Saturday. Guess what was happening on Saturdays. White men were working on Saturdays. The foremen were choosing who got the overtime, and we had a significant drop in diversity, both gender and racial diversity on Saturdays. Once we identified that, Encore engaged in a process with their subcontractors, with their foremen, and the number has gone up. That's the kind of deep participatory work that we have been able to do through these partnerships.

I want to say that none of this happens without Commissioner Crosby. It is a great loss for us. We know that the commitment is broad-based through the Commissioners, through the staff, and the Gaming Commission. We know that this

work is going to continue. But in 2014 when we went to Commissioner Crosby and we said this is what you got. Jill was just recently on board. Your diversity plans are going to come from your developers. They're going to be boilerplate diversity plants. That's what always happens. And women are going to be way down on the bottom. This is what you can do to make this work. And he and Jill and others on the staff worked with the licensees. And you got diversity plans that really spoke to this long-term policy failure. A 30-year failure to open up these jobs to women. 50% of the workers -- the women workers in this industry are women of color. It addresses both gender and race. You have been wildly successful because of Steve's leadership from the beginning. He really carried this. He carried it to you. He carried it to the staff.

What we have done here is just -- it's world shaking. We are carrying this well beyond the casino. We have a new partner. I don't know if I -- I don't know, it's Millennium Partners, Winthrop Garage. They have a 12%, and they are committed to making that 12% women's hours on that project. When they did -- when the Leadership Millennium Partners, about a month ago, did their first pre-construction meeting with their subcontractors, two of their first three slides were based on the work that we've done here on how important it is to bring gender diversity to the population, how there are written best practices. We're going to launch our revised best practices next week, finishing the job. Based on the work that we have done here in this partnership.

We've been invited to go out -- Liz Skidmore from the carpenters and I are going to Portland, Oregon, next month to show them what we've done. We've been invited to British Columbia who has a whole new initiative. They're, like, yes, we want to get women to work and they have no idea how to do it. We can say we know how to do it because we've done it and we've proven it works.

One other additional thing is that we don't have the juice to tell the licensees that their permanent construction crews should be 20% women. We've said it to them. We've mentioned it to them. It's not written down anywhere that they have to do it. But the goal -- they have the women working there now. They could make a decision. Every casino is an ongoing construction project. Construction never stops. They have the juice to make the choice to have 20% women on their permanent construction crews. I leave you with that because that would be an outstanding contribution to our goal of 20% women by 2020. We have 20% in a couple places. A couple of the subcontractors on your licensees' jobs have reached 20%. We've had 20% at the cement masons. We have 20% women apprentices -- excuse me, 18% women apprentices at the laborers now. 12% women apprentices in the ironworkers. And that's because the casinos have demanded women to do these jobs. So we look forward to continuing this with you into the long-term future and express our specific appreciation to Commissioner Crosby for his service, for his longtime public service to the Commonwealth and to the Commission and the Commissioners for the work that you've done to make this successful. Thank you very much.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> MS. HARRISON: Thanks. And I also want to acknowledge Commissioner Stebbins who's been a strong supporter in this whole initiative. He came out to join us on Tradeswomen Tuesday in Springfield. It was awesome, apparently. And keeps us to date on my reports. I thank you and thank all the Commissioners for your support in

the first year, getting this off the ground.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: And just a reminder, I think our October AOC meeting, which is our last out in Springfield, is not only going to be a wrap-up of MGM's work, but it's also -- I think there's going to be an event MGM is hosting to celebrate the diversity and success that they've had through construction. I know all of my colleagues are invited as well as any staff that wish to attend. But hopefully we can use that event as an opportunity to keep spreading that message around Western Mass. Keep the ball rolling.

>> MS. MOIR: As part of MGM's soft launch, they had a contractors night. One of the contractors won -- I should have said more about how we're getting money. We're getting money from everybody. One of the contractors won a substantial amount of money that night. I was in a meeting with her unrelated to this the next day. And I said, well, the only reason you're making -- it's a woman-owned company, so everybody's going to know what it is -- the only reason you're making your numbers out there is because of the work we've done together. And two days after that she donated the winnings to the Northeast Center for Tradewoman's Equity.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: That's awesome.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Great story.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: You're also lucky. Not just hard work.

>> MS. MOIR: We're also lucky.

[ Laughter ]

Good social policy brings luck.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Anyone else?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Good stuff.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: No, thank you for all your work. You've also contributed quite a bit to this effort, we know, and you and many others in those AOC meetings. They're hard work happens month to month, day to day, and we also want to thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: And the enthusiasm and the never-say-die attitude is really apparent. I loved your story on overtime. I've experienced the same thing in policing, and we had to put a new policy in where we went down the list. Everyone had an opportunity in order to work the overtime, and that really helped. But you're right, you have to identify the issue first, which you were able to do. So that's -- I'm sure that call was an interesting one, right? Thank you. Great presentation. Thanks for all your work, and it's a tremendous initiative, and you pointed it out. It's not just the casinos. These women will have good-paying union jobs moving forward on all the projects. So thanks.

>> MS. HARRISON: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> MS. MOIR: Thank you very much.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you. And now we have a special guest from Cambridge College.

>> MS. HARRISON: We're bottlenecked.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Oh, watch the pitcher.

>> MS. HARRISON: Watch the water. Oh, man. Tougher job than you think.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Commissioners, as you are aware, a strong priority of the gaming

law is a focus on employment opportunities for the under and unemployed and jobs with career advancements for Massachusetts residents. The dealer position at a casino is one of those great opportunities. The basic requirements include an eighth grade-level math competency. Must be 18 at least on this side of the state and be willing to work weekends, holidays and have a great personality.

With those basic requirements, you can be successful. So with the joint goal of ensuring that Massachusetts residents are prepared for these new careers in the Commonwealth, on August 24th of this year, the Commission licensed the first gaming school in Greater Boston to prepare for the expected spring hiring of more than 1,000 dealers to fill out the Encore Boston Harbor gaming staff. Encore Boston Harbor and Cambridge College announced in mid-September the first session of Bet on You, the dealer school at Cambridge College at their new facility in Charlestown. And I had the pleasure to join them for the ribbon cutting at their gorgeous new facility. The collaboration is known as the Greater Boston Gaming Career Institute. So I'd like to acknowledge, in the back row we have Jacqui Krum, Doug Williams, Vice President of table games, Jennie Peterson who I think you all know, Director of Employment. And here in the row next to me, President Deborah Jackson of Cambridge College, Phillip Page, Vice President of Strategic Partnerships and Marc Rotondo, VP of Innovation and Strategic Initiatives. I think I got your titles right. So I'm going to turn it over to President Jackson.

>> MS. JACKSON: Thank you so much, Jill. I have a big smile. We're very excited and proud of that. So first of all, good afternoon, Commissioners.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Good afternoon.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Good afternoon.

>> MS. JACKSON: It's nice to be here, and thank you for inviting us here to give you an update on the new greater Boston gaming career institute. We debated that title for a long time because it's pretty long, but we decided it said what we needed to say about it, at Cambridge College. I want to first start by acknowledging the Commission and the members of your staff who have provided such essential guidance to our team throughout this entire process of us securing certification and assuring that we are meeting all of the requirements of having a gaming school. And we worked very closely with your team, and we worked very hard to make sure we were being responsive, and so we're very pleased with the outcome.

I want to especially acknowledge, of course, Jill Griffin who is sitting next to me and the wonderful partnership she formed with our team, but also Paul Connelly, Director of Licensing, and William Curtis, your licensing manager. I also want to thank members of the Executive Office of Education, the Metro North Regional Employment Board, Boston Private Industry Council for their help in shaping the institute's approach especially around student engagement. And as you know, we're helping with pipeline development and also the provision of scholarships. And so the partnership with each of those organizations as well has been also very important to the outcome.

As Jill mentioned, we had a ribbon-cutting ceremony to launch the Institute on September 27th. There was just enthusiasm in the room from everyone who participated. But most especially from the instructors and the students. And I'll reference that a little bit later in my presentation. And it was really wonderful to see and wonderful to experience. So I also want to note that we're very proud of the

partnership we have with Encore to deliver this Institute. They've worked very closely with us every step of the way. You'll hear more from my team about how they were involved. But their engagement has been so instrumental in us reaching this point also. They were very responsive to our concerns. We had very specific concerns about the students, what they would experience, what it would be like when they finished and go into the casinos. We raised those issues. And every step of the way, we felt they were responsive. They tried to work with us, and we ended up addressing and resolving, you know, many of our concerns coming out of the gate on Cambridge College's role in this.

I want to tell you a little bit about Cambridge College. Just so you know, the context in which this gaming institute is operating. We are a private nonprofit nationally accredited higher institution -- higher education institution. We offer undergraduate school, and we also offer three graduate schools. One in psychology and counseling. We have a graduate school of management and a graduate school of education. We began nearly 50 years ago with a mission and based on a premise and a belief that everyone should have an opportunity to pursue higher education. So the college was founded with the purpose of opening the front door to that opportunity and providing any adult, willing, interested, motivated, willing to do the work, motivated to secure something greater for themselves and their family to pursue higher education. Ours is an access mission. We believe that opportunity should be available to you no matter your age, your gender, your race, your background. And so it was on that basis that Cambridge College was founded and on that basis that we exist today. And I say that to you because the partnership and our decision to do that was because we felt this aligned with our mission.

If we didn't think this opportunity was mission based, we would not have pursued it. So I wanted to say that we felt very strongly about this. Over the course of our 50 years, we have graduated over 36,000 students. We have 36,000 alumni. These alumni have come out of one of our four schools, and they've gone on to become some of the finest teachers in Boston Public Schools, some of the finest counselors in community service organizations throughout the Commonwealth, some of the most incredible managers in hospitals, healthcare institutions, biotech organizations, financial institutions. We are so proud. We produce the finest. But in addition to that, we're also proud of the fact that we believe we send graduates out into the world and mostly into this community with a commitment to social justice. It is part of our fabric. It is included in the way we teach our students and the way they engage in the classrooms. And that is a belief that you have a duty and a responsibility when you secure this credential to go out and help continue to change the world and make it a better place.

Our students are -- our schools operate in four locations -- sorry, five locations, Boston, Springfield, Lawrence, and also in Puerto Rico and California. We currently have about 3,500 students, a significant number of students. The average age of our students is 36 years old. They are experienced, they are motivated, they are for the most part working adults who are balancing family responsibilities, work responsibilities, and pursuing their education. So you can imagine for us, they are superheroes. They are really phenomenal that they are able to do all that and walk in every night with a smile.

57% of our students are based in Boston. Nearly 75% are women. And over

half of our students are students of color. So diversity is an important core value for us. Over 50% of our students are first in their family to pursue a degree. And so it's a phenomenal moment when they walk across the stage in June. Every one of them has at least four or five, sometimes ten people in the audience because the grandparents come, the cousins come, everyone comes to see that person who is first in the family who in that walk they change the future of the entire family.

We also serve veterans. And 80% of our students are financial aid eligible which tells you something about their background. As an institution and in addition to providing degrees, because our four schools are degree-granting schools, we have also over these many years, developed a number of certificate programs. Programs that provide you with an opportunity to get a credential, a piece of paper, that the world recognizes and that the market recognizes that says we have acquired a skill that makes me now marketable. Here is the certification to that, that attests to that, and now I'm ready for employment. And we see this partnership as fitting so nicely with that dimension of Cambridge College as well.

We had a few key principles when we entered this partnership which we feel we've been able to achieve in the partnership with Encore. One was our commitment to diversity and access. And affordability. We went back and forth about what the tuition would be on this, and we finally worked out a number that was viable for us but we also felt would be accessible for our students. And we made the commitment to diversity, and that's manifesting itself in the way we recruit, the way interviews are conducted, what we're looking for when we interview those students, and making sure we have those balanced, that balance.

We want it to be clear across the board that we're preparing these folks for careers. And we've been using that word "career" instead of job. It's not just a job and you're bouncing -- it is a career. We met people who were in management roles at Encore who started out at one of the tables. So there's a model for that and we wanted to make sure that the potential students were aware of this and this whole idea of providing options for future opportunities.

We had a shared commitment to serving the communities in the Greater Boston area and those neighborhoods. And finally, to having an impact, a positive impact, on our economic development in the region. And so we feel, again, this program supports all of those. And we're very proud of that. As you'll hear from Marc and Phillip, the results of what our students look like, you'll hear that.

So this partnership has been one that for us has been really successful, and I want to, again, acknowledge at Encore but especially a few members of their staff, Jennie Peterson, director of employment, Doug Williams, Vice President of table games who also is with us today, and, of course, the President of Encore Boston Harbor, Bob DiSalvio, who couldn't be with us today.

I want to close with a story about the day of the ribbon cutting. One of my favorite things to do as President is to walk around and talk to students. It's how I know whether or not we're doing our job. It's how I know whether or not they feel that they are getting what they believe they are going to get in coming to the institution. I sometimes walk around and look at them. And then I stop them in the hall, and I just have casual conversations with them. It's a way of me getting the heartbeat of the institution.



So I was really excited the morning of the ribbon cutting to learn that our first class was starting that morning at 8:00, and the ribbon cutting would be occurring after that. And that students were going to stay. So when I walked into the room, the cameras were there. But most importantly, there were tables. And I turned to Phillip and I said, "so, what's going on at the tables?" He said, "those are the students from our 8:00 session." They had stayed for the ribbon cutting. So after we finished the program, I had a chance to walk around and introduce myself to every one of the students and to hear their stories. And by the time I got to the end, I turned to one of my colleagues. I said, "this is such a good thing that we've done." Because what I saw were women, people of color from all ethnic backgrounds. It was visual. It was visible that we had achieved our diversity interest. But what I heard from them was how excited they were about this opportunity. How much they appreciated, in our remarks, describing it as a career. How they felt affirmed in pursuing something that really mattered. And then they talked about how wonderful was the space was. And I wanted to acknowledge and note that, too. And we heard from some of the Encore staff that we probably had the best career training space in the country. It is quite beautiful.

So I want to close by saying those comments and those testimonies from our students have said to me, we did the right thing, and we're doing a good thing in opening and launching and running this career institute -- gaming career institute. So I again want to thank you for your support, for your confidence in Cambridge College, and for allowing us this opportunity which would not have happened without your approval.

Finally, I want to invite you to come visit us and to see the space because I think you will leave with a smile on your face about what we're doing and how the program and the space is a reflection of our respect for the students who have come to secure these credentials. Thank you for allowing me to speak today.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thanks.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: I want to introduce now and I think you've met them already.

They've been here several times. Two of my Vice Presidents, Marc Rotondo to my far right and Phillip Page. Just to note, both of them will be embarrassed that I said this on the record, but these two gentlemen are incredible and have, from start to finish, made this vision become a reality, and they have dotted every "I" and crossed every "T" and assured that the partnerships with you and with Encore and with the other organizations I mentioned have all been wonderful every step of the way. So I want to acknowledge them and thank them for the work I've done. As I like to say, they do all the work and then allow me to come out and talk about it.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you, Phillip and Marc.

>> MR. PAGE: Thank you. Good afternoon, Commissioners.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Good afternoon.

>> MR. PAGE: Marc and I are excited to share where we are with the gaming school. The presentation we'll walk through will detail sort of how we got here, what was involved in setting it up, what was involved in outreach, and ultimately what we experienced in terms of the end result of having students come. So I'll walk you through all of that starting first with just a reflection of the time line. I think it's important

in appreciating all that was done how quickly everything came together. And I think to echo Deborah's -- President Jackson's sentiment, it was in large part because of the nature of the partnership. The team from Encore Boston Harbor were phenomenal to work with. Every step of the way, and they helped us really understand what it was that we needed to do to bring this all together and the support from the Gaming Commission, Jill, Paul, Bill was just phenomenal in getting to that finish line. So there's much appreciation on our part there.

So in March 2018, we created the partnership in formal terms with Encore Boston Harbor and named the Greater Boston Gaming Career Institute. By July we were prepared to submit a draft certification application to the Mass. Gaming Commission, working very closely with Paul Connelly and Bill. We were then able to flesh that out and present a final draft certification two weeks later by August 15th. And we are very proud that by August 24th, we were able to receive our certification and be prepared to go.

One of the things that is important to note, as we -- as we moved forward with the shaping of the school is that the conversation about what were the defining parameters were something that we did have very many detailed conversations with Bob DiSalvio, Jennie Peterson and the members of Encore Boston Harbor. And what we wanted to do was to make sure that the school, at the end of the day, prepared these students in the best possible way to be successful in being employed at Encore Boston Harbor. That's the end goal.

It started there but then included all of these other elements, a commitment to recruiting diverse and local students, ensuring that affordability was front and center with regards to the cost of entering. That scholarship options, as many as we could make available and as many as we could identify and direct students to that would be something that would be important to make sure we established, making sure, as is consistent with the college practices for our students outside of the program, that they were accessible and flexible in time of day and day of the week in terms of the students being able to attend.

A big opportunity presented itself to make sure that we had the strongest curriculum possible and the relationship with Encore Boston Harbor enabled us to acquire the Atlantic Come community college curriculum which is the gold standard for gaming school curriculum.

And finally but not least is making sure that not only did you have the curriculum, but you had the best-quality talent to teach the material. And working with Encore Boston Harbor to make sure that all of the instructors and professionals associated with the program would be top-notch, and not only in terms of what they taught around the games, but their understanding of what was important to be hired and to be a successful employee at Encore Boston Harbor.

The academic program itself and shaped with a lot of input -- in fact, significant input and helpful advice from Doug Williams at Encore Boston Harbor has come to be shaped this way. This fall term, we focused on blackjack and poker as the two core games that were delivered in the fall term, understanding the greatest need that the casino would have. The program is structured that we have a weekday format and weekend format. The weekday format has three time periods, 8:00 to 12:00, 1:00 to 5:00, and 6:00 to 10:00, giving folks an opportunity to attend and engage depending on

what their lives were encompassed by. Within that, the blackjack program would run nine weeks. And the poker program would run 14 weeks. And this runs parallel with the expectation for the amount of hours that each of those programs are required by the Commission rules.

The weekend program runs almost a full day from 8:00 to 4:30, and it's only blackjack right now, and it's nine weeks. And that's a matter of fitting the time and the amount of time we have in that fall semester. All of the programs include responsible gaming, CPR, and customer service training. So we don't actually even call it a dealing class because all of this is part of what you get when you pay your tuition to come to the program.

As part of the experience of being in the class, we wanted to make sure that we added even additional credibility to the students in their move from being a student to an employee by adding a final capstone that actually includes an interview and audition for the table game, which is much in sync with what would be expected of them making the transition into full-time employment at Encore. So they'll have an opportunity to audition even before they complete the program -- in fact, as a condition of completing the program, which would further ensure that they would be ready for the job market when they were done.

In the spring term, we'll begin to introduce additional games, baccarat, craps, but we'll continue to have poker and blackjack offered then as well.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Phillip, just a quick question. Is your recruiting students -- obviously -- there's a bunch of things, I think, to consider. One is, because of the partnership with Encore Boston Harbor, they have priority -- hiring goals for Everett and Malden? Is that right? So I hope -- I expect you're keeping all that in mind. Are you looking for or do you express to students kind of what -- is there any kind of, like, base-level skills, you know, math skills or something that you're kind of encouraging candidates to have or to be strong in before they start?

>> MR. PAGE: Yes. And Jill shared a little bit of that. The real key parameters for students coming in is that we expect them to be able to at least perform at an eighth grade math level. They have to be 18 years old and older. And we really want to make sure that they have the right aptitude for customer-friendly engagement. So there's -- in fact, as part of the recruitment process, an interview that all students go through who are applying to the school to make sure that they have the capacity, and both in terms of language skills and demeanor, to be in front of an audience. So we are -- we are looking at all of those parameters in addition to making sure that there's an interest and an engagement with the idea of being a dealer. So those are the core pieces of what we're looking for.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Obviously, these positions are -- require licensing. How much of that do you try to talk to the students about in advance of having to go through that Reg -- licensing process?

>> MR. ROTONDO: So for each of the sections, the weekday sections Monday through Thursday and the weekend sections, we actually performed a 30-minute orientation with all of the students. I delivered that orientation to make sure the message was the same to all of the groups. We also walk through a student contract which becomes part of the student's record. And in each of those we expressed and explained to them the partnership among the three organizations, the role of each

organization, and things like the certificate of good fit and so forth in the licensing. So we spent about 30 minutes orienting all of our students on all of those functions.

>> MR. PAGE: And we also have that on our frequently asked questions on the website. So there's information even before the students apply that they can read and understand, these are the requirements or expectations that will be had of you in making your transition through the school and then into employment. So understanding that you have to be licensed, understanding that there are background checks, things like that are purposefully given to the students up front so they are fully aware of what's expected of them in making that transition from being a student to being an employee.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Thanks.

>> MR. PAGE: So next what I want to do -- oops, I jumped ahead -- is talk a little bit about that outreach and how that was fashioned and where we went to realize the kind of engagement that we were looking for from the school's standpoint. From a marketing promotions standpoint, one of the things that I think was very important for us was ensuring that we were as clear and explicit in the communication to all parties around what the program was and what the school had to offer. We were tactical in sharing and making the notion that the -- this experience would be life-changing from a career standpoint because it not only was the position itself of being a dealer but where that could potentially take you. So that's a part of the experience in the marketing process that we wanted everyone to be fully aware of.

There were multiple mediums used to present the program and to reach out to the market. The starting point would be our website, which was cleverly and I think appropriately branded as Bet on U. If you've traveled on any of the public transportation, certainly the Orange Line, you've seen some of the signs. For me it's always encouraging. I'm a Public T rider. To see the signs and the reactions people get is quite nice.

The website was designed to be as user friendly as possible, providing both a broad overview of the program, but the level of detail we thought was important for students and prospective students to be aware of. I don't have a link to that right this minute, but I would encourage you to go to Bet on U to explore and test it through. It's as user friendly as it can possibly be. The home page tells the story of what it's like to be a dealer on a video of someone who's made that their career. We have a directory that is very clear and easy to manage your way through in terms of where the specific information is that you need to apply, to understand about scholarships, and frequently asked questions as well as policies of the school. And we're very clear about making sure people know where we are. So we've got that information in terms of where the school is located and who to contact if you have questions or require additional information.

So in addition to the website, we were on radio. We were on MBTA ads. We've done digital. Website search optimization as well as print media broadly. There certainly was a focus to make sure that the communities, both the host community and surrounding communities that are part of the workforce development plan were front and center in that outreach. But the breadth of this marketing and promotion strategy, I think, is quite impressive. Sports stations, urban stations, Spanish language stations, ethnic papers, everywhere and anywhere we could get to

the population that we were targeting for outreach for student population.

With that, the application process -- the application process for the institute, we wanted, again, to circle back to that notion of making it as easy as possible. So it's an online application. Multiple places on our website where you can click a button and get right to the application. The application itself is fairly straightforward and I think really easy for folks to complete. Once an application is completed, students are invited to come to the institute for an initial admissions interview and to complete the math exam. Students are given as much time as they need, about 20-question math exam, again, eighth grade level. Once they've completed that math exam, then they move to an interview room where they have a brief conversation with representatives of the school. And in doing that, we're able to determine whether or not the student has the capacity to both be successful through the course but also be successful in their pursuit for employment. We've had over 500 students actually come through that process when we held those.

Students were notified within 24 hours of that interview, so they weren't waiting long before they knew what their status was. And we took an approach where the denied students who we thought had potential but were missing on maybe one aspect of the process that we would get back to them, inform them of what the issue was, and give them information that would potentially help them pursue resources that could possibly get them in on a second go 'round for the spring.

Accepted students were provided all the registration materials. They were given scholarship application information. So we made sure that they were directly informed about that opportunity, and we encouraged everyone to apply. We made sure that the student contract, as Marc referenced, was available to them so that they knew that that was something that was going to be required for admission and for acceptance into the program because we wanted to make sure that they were -- they were really truly committed to understanding what they needed to do to get not only through the program but ultimately to get employment. That they weren't halfway or all the way through and then realizing that there was something that they needed to do that wasn't clear. So we actually had them sign that contract to ensure that they are saying that they've done that.

Students who were coming in and we recognized that very many people were looking at this as many of the students came in, that they've been out of school for a while just like our students. This may be a very pivotal moment in their family's life history, just like our students. And so just like our students, we made sure that we had our student navigator, dedicated individuals, who were available to these students when they came on campus to walk them through everything from how to properly go into through the application process or admissions process on their computer to how to complete their scholarships and walk them through in terms of coming for enrollment and the first day of school. So there was a lot of caring and concern providing to every student who came to that point of saying we wanted to be in the institute.

The program size was capped in part to meet occupancy code for the space. But also because we wanted to make sure -- and we needed to make sure -- that we had enough equipment to manage the number of students. The maximum number of students for the fall term -- the target was about 210. That would have had every seat filled. And everyone running around like crazy, I'm sure.

So with that, with all of the work that was done in setting up the outreach and the marketing and promotion, we had over 1,900 applicants in the course of about four weeks, I believe it was, that came through. So that was really truly amazing. 60% of those applicants were male. 40% were female. 4% veterans and self-reported. 41% persons of color. And 45% from the host and surrounding communities, Everett, Malden, Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Somerville and Medford.

Of those 1,900, the enrollment status was that we had 324 accepted applicants. These were the applicants who went through the interview, passed the math test, passed the interview, and chose to continue down the path towards applying. That was quite significant for us. The total registered for the program out of that 324 was 166. 62% of them choosing blackjack, 38% choosing poker. Of that 166 enrolled student population, 68% were male. 32% were female. 3% veterans. 49% persons of color. And 49% from the host and surrounding communities. What's important about this data is that it now gives us an opportunity to shape some of the strategies we will employ going forward to make sure that we are not only meeting but exceeding the goals that were set in the workforce development plan. And so we recognize that even within this short window, we were successful in numbers, but we want to make sure that we're also successful in meeting some of the other goals as well, and that's going to be very much an intentional part of the long-term strategy for the spring term that's coming up.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Any idea the discrepancy from those accepted and those entering the program? Are there interviews with folks to find out why they chose not to continue?

>> MR. ROTONDO: You may not want to know, but it is the number of hours of instruction.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Oh.

>> MR. ROTONDO: So you have people who need to make a decision on an opportunity cost, am I going to spend 200 hours coming to poker Monday through Thursday? Or am I going to bypass going and getting overtime to help pay for my family? So the number of hours was the number one reasons given by students, not tuition, not instruction, but the number of hours of instruction.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: And your total accepted applicants, is that -- did you cap it because you figured I don't want to accept so many people that I can't get into the program or --

>> MR. ROTONDO: No, we didn't cap our accepted students. We literally went through and did a very vigorous interview process and looked at those who were qualified or eligible.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay.

>> MR. ROTONDO: And as my colleague mentioned, for those that didn't pass the math test, we actually sent them on a math study packet, and we were going to re-enter view them after they passed that or sent them to the community college as they come back to us.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I'm curious if you know whether those 20% Asian might be also Cantonese or Chinese Mandarin speakers, or is that something you know?

>> MR. ROTONDO: We don't know which dialect they speak. We do know, though, that there was an organization in the City of Malden who sent many individuals. So a community-based organization, Malden sent many individuals to us. And so Malden, in terms of our surrounding area as a host community, actually came second only to Boston in the number of residents that came in.

>> MR. PAGE: I also want to share that with regards to the affordability of the school, as I said, we encouraged every student who was getting through the pipeline no matter where they were in the pipeline that they should apply for the scholarship because you just never know. Of that, we received 61 total applicants for the Encore Boston Harbor scholarship, which as you know, it's 50 scholarships for folks applying to the school. Of the 61, 41 were awarded. And what that means is that their income level was within the guidelines of what we set for the scholarship. And we had 300% of the poverty level as the ceiling. But the majority, 51%, were at 200% of poverty level. So we recognized that, you know, it really was serving an important function for very many of these students who were being accepted.

50% of that pool was female. 62% persons of color. And 59% from host and surrounding communities. So with that, let me move to just sharing a little bit about the location and the layout. So to give you a sense of that, I think in the first presentation I indicated where we were on the site. But Cambridge College's main building is 500 Rutherford Ave. The Gaming Career Institute is a satellite which is 510 Rutherford Ave, so it's a standalone entity. Within that, we have four poker tables, four Roulette tables, 12 blackjack and 2 craps tables. And in this next slide, you can see the basic layout and positioning of the school.

As President Jackson noted, we're very excited about having the school -- the Gaming Institute in this location and in this particular site because it is quite attractive. If you walk up there, the experience for both the instructors and the students, I think, is quite profound. And in doing so, we think it actually adds another added value for some of the recruitment process that we'll follow for the spring term.

Certainly you can see in these images here, before we had the students coming in. So the next steps for us includes addressing some of the things that happened or that were the end result of the fall term. We have a waiting list of some students who either were, from a timing perspective, not able to get in in time to be part of the starting class. The programs have a very rigorous and important-to-be kept time line for participation. Anything beyond that first day would be difficult. We are assessing the waiting list that we have for students to see if it might be possible to even launch a second nine-week blackjack program in November that will end before the start of the spring term.

We are assessing, with the students who are currently enrolled, what kind of options we might want to offer for second games for the spring term so that we can be very clear to make sure that those that are in -- of high interest are available to those students. And we will also begin, as I shared earlier on, to launch strategic outreach efforts within the community organizations -- with community organizations to engage the underrepresented groups, both in terms of the fall enrollment but also what we are addressing from the workforce development plan. That is very much part of the next steps that we are engaged in.

And the time line going forward is as such. In October, we will work with -- we'll

work with the team to identify the spring term instructors to make sure that we have a full array of appropriate instructors for the gaming programs that we'll be running. In November, registration will open for the spring term. By December, we will begin the interviewing process for the new students who are coming in. Spring term will launch on January 14th, and all programs will be completed by April, which will give us May and June the opportunity to provide refresher courses for those who are going to be moving then into the employment realm. We're very excited about what can happen in the spring term because we've learned so much in this fall term execution that not only will we, I think, be even more effective in reaching our goals, but I think we'll probably have bigger smiles on our faces at the end of that journey as well. So thank you very much for the opportunity to share what we have, and we're open for questions.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Yeah, just a couple of notes, and thank you for this presentation. I also want to acknowledge not only are you positioning yourself as a solid partner here in Boston, Cambridge College, Springfield campus has also been a solid partner for our MGM licensee in terms of the apprentice program that you launched there to teach not just MGM employees but other hospitality and tourism workers around the region about the region itself. So that's been a tremendous success.

>> MS. JACKSON: A pleasure having you at that ribbon cutting.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I was there, too. And my relationship with Cambridge College goes back even further, helping to recruit you guys to downtown Springfield.

>> MS. JACKSON: Oh.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Just two other quick questions -- and I'm glad you highlighted, you know, launching strategic outreach efforts with community organizations. Jill has heard a lot from those organizations, so I'm going to offer up her time and talent and hours to help you out with that.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: So many available.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: But also, you know, keeping in mind -- and some of this is borne out of our experience in Springfield with the gaming school there -- is that folks obviously have a sincere interest in working for our licensee. And at some point pursuing a gaming position career may not be what fits best for them or fits for our licensee. But in Springfield, we saw some success in helping those people who were really interested in working for a licensee maybe to consider another career path that might best fit their skills. So I hope you'll kind of keep that in mind as well. There are a number of positions to be filled. So, you know, shepherding students to rethinking that if they hit a point that being a dealer may not work out for them, I would encourage you.

>> MR. ROTONDO: Let me assure you in the interview process, if we did not accept them, they were denied. The interview committee literally was writing, could be better fit for this and this. And that information has been shared with Encore. We'll continue that and also with the people coming through the school, also making sure they're aware of it, so thank you for that suggestion.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Good. Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Anything else?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: No, thank you for the presentation. Those numbers



look great.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: They really do. And the enthusiasm and the desire to really help these folks change their life is terrific. And it's good that Encore is partnering with you with this initiative, and we look forward to further updates as the time gets closer. >> MS. JACKSON: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thank you all.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Thank you all.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I think we're up to Commissioner updates. Do we have any updates?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I have just one, and I'll say it was great to be out in Springfield yesterday to hear my colleague, Commissioner Zuniga's, presentation on the public health trust fund along with DPH Commissioner Tucker, and it was great to see a lot of the local stakeholders who are interested in how that money is going to be expended and how it might help residents from Western Mass. who might find themselves dealing with an addiction issue.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah, it was a good meeting. There's a group that's called Plan For Progress. They're very much engaged members of the community, the business community, the nonprofit human service agencies, and we were in front of them. There was quite a bit of interest in terms of that public health trust fund. I think there's a lot for us to think about in terms of going forward from that executive committee, but it was good to be out there. We also took a few key members of that group to a tour of MGM, and they were equally impressed with the facility, many of the things that we all know about, some of the back -- behind-the-scenes games and space. So it was a good day overall.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Question?

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: I don't.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I have a couple of things. First of all, I was fortunate enough to represent us last week at the International Gaming Regulators' conference. I spoke on a panel about regulators' dilemmas. It's very interesting what the rest of the world is doing. I think 76 countries were represented at this conference. Folks were very interested in what we do around responsible gaming. And we had some of our staff work hard on the statistics committee, which really documents who is doing what around the world. So if you're going to -- something new. For example, your state legislature passes some new piece of gaming and makes it legal. Well, who does it around the world? Who does it well? Who has the experience? What are the best practices? So Joan Matsumoto was our lead on that project. Also, I want to give kudos, as the rest of the board did to our staff, led by Commissioner Zuniga, who -- we volunteered -- or maybe I volunteered -- I asked nicely, but we translated that report into Spanish so that the countries in South America, Mexico could participate in this project. So we got credit for that as well, but lots of folks interested in what we're doing.

Secondly, I did have an opportunity earlier this week to speak at a women's conference, a women's leadership conference that was hosted by Penn National and the regional chamber. And 90 women, about 10 supportive men at the event. You know, we shared stories. I know I told a few stories, right? And it was really interesting because we talked about some strategies. There's a group that Penn is

doing a national project, a women's leadership, because frankly, they were very honest about the fact that their numbers are not great when it comes to women in leadership positions throughout all their properties, and they really do want to address it, so they have a leadership program. 16 young women at Penn National are part of this program. It's -- you know, they have homework assignments. They listen to guest speakers, books that they read, and a very engaged group. And one of the things I talked about was not being afraid to try, right? Not being afraid to raise your hand and say, yes, I'd like to be a leader. I'd like to move up. And one young woman of color came to me afterwards and said, "Oh, my God, that's exactly what just happened to me. I was a beverage manager," and there was an opportunity for food and beverage, a larger position. She said, "Well, I've never done food. Should I apply?" And she actually got the position, and she just loves learning the food part of the business. And I think it's a good initiative that they've started, and it was nice to be out there. I guess that was on Tuesday. So just something that I wanted to report.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: That's great.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Anything else? Do we have a motion to adjourn?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: So moved.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Second.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: We're adjourned. Thanks.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

(The meeting concluded at 1:22 P.M.)