1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES					
2	x					
3	DIANNE KNOX, ET AL., :					
4	Petitioners :					
5	v. : No. 10-1121					
6	SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL :					
7	UNION, LOCAL 1000. :					
8	x					
9	Washington, D.C.					
10	Tuesday, January 10, 2012					
11						
12	The above-entitled matter came on for oral					
13	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States					
14	at 10:19 a.m.					
15	APPEARANCES:					
16	WILLIAM J. YOUNG, ESQ., Springfield, Virginia; for					
17	Petitioners.					
18	JEREMIAH COLLINS, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; for					
19	Respondent.					
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1	CONTENTS	
2	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	PAGE
3	WILLIAM J. YOUNG, ESQ.	
4	On behalf of the Petitioners	3
5	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	
6	JEREMIAH COLLINS, ESQ.	
7	On behalf of the Respondent	25
8	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF	
9	WILLIAM J. YOUNG, ESQ.	
10	On behalf of the Petitioners	50
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1	PROCEEDINGS					
2	(10:19 a.m.)					
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument					
4	first this morning in Case 10-1121, Knox v. The Service					
5	Employees International Union.					
6	Mr. Young.					
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF WILLIAM J. YOUNG					
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS					
9	MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it					
10	please the Court:					
11	Before addressing SEIU's motion to dismiss					
12	for mootness, it is important to remember the underlying					
13	facts of this case. For 10 months in 2005 and 2006,					
14	more than 36,000 nonmembers, or nearly 40 percent of					
15	those employees represented by SEIU employed by the					
16	State of California, were compelled to contribute to					
17	SEIU's \$12 million Political Fight-Back Fund without					
18	being provided the opportunity to challenge the amount					
19	of the fee and to object to its exaction, required by					
20	the First Amendment.					
21	Adding insult to that injury, the Ninth					
22	Circuit said that nonmembers could never say no to					
23	contributing to SEIU's political expenditures for ballot					
24	propositions, at least Proposition 76. They have no					
25	right to refuse to bankroll that element of SEIU's					

- 1 political speech. This defies this Court's decisions,
- 2 distorting the political process on a massive scale.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Young, could I ask you
- 4 to speak to the mootness question first?
- 5 MR. YOUNG: I was just addressing that.
- 6 JUSTICE KAGAN: As -- as I understand your
- 7 brief, you're essentially saying that it's impossible to
- 8 moot a claim for nominal damages. Is -- is that a
- 9 correct reading of your position?
- 10 MR. YOUNG: I'm not sure I would go that
- 11 far, Justice Kagan. I think in this case, the
- 12 wishy-washiness, as it were, of the language used by
- 13 SEIU when it distributed this pasted-on dollar to the
- 14 class -- or dollars, more accurately -- was inadequate
- 15 because it failed to represent the importance of the
- 16 judgment that the nonmember class had won.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: So, that's a different
- 18 point, right, which is that the notice was inadequate?
- 19 MR. YOUNG: That would be correct.
- 20 JUSTICE KAGAN: And -- and when you say
- 21 "inadequate," I read you to be saying sort of not
- 22 apologetic enough. And -- in other words, not saying,
- look, you had a claim against us, we think you're right;
- 24 it was a valid claim; here is your judgment in
- 25 satisfaction of that claim. That it didn't forthrightly

- 1 say that. But do you think if it had forthrightly said
- 2 that, we would be living in a different Article III
- 3 universe?
- 4 MR. YOUNG: Not in this case, Justice Kagan.
- 5 Turning to the adequacy of the notice, of
- 6 the financial disclosure, that did not comply with the
- 7 district court's judgment, either. If -- if the only
- 8 question were the distribution of nominal damages, then
- 9 perhaps we would be living in that different Article III
- 10 universe. But this case is about the judgment of the
- 11 district court that the SEIU was attempting to comply
- 12 with. They failed to do so in virtually all of its
- 13 elements.
- 14 JUSTICE KAGAN: And how is that? How did
- 15 they fail to comply, other than, you know, the question
- 16 of whether they were forthright enough about the fact
- 17 that they were satisfying a claim?
- 18 MR. YOUNG: The -- the district court had
- 19 ordered -- described the type of notice that it
- 20 anticipated. The district court specifically determined
- 21 that SEIU's subsequent 2006 financial disclosure was
- inadequate to cure the problem that was caused by the
- 23 seizure of fees starting in September 2005. And that's
- 24 on 73a of the -- the Petition Appendix B.
- 25 The union in this case merely sent the same

- 1 financial disclosure in the notice that it sent, to try
- 2 to moot the case, that it had sent in June of 2006.
- 3 Well, the district court had already said this is
- 4 inadequate. That seems to me to -- to end the inquiry.
- 5 Obviously, the district court did not
- 6 contemplate that the notice that was sent in June 2006
- 7 satisfied the obligations of its judgment; else it
- 8 hardly could have ordered a -- a useless act in ordering
- 9 a new type of notice go out.
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And the reason
- 11 that's important in terms of the content of the notice,
- 12 the inadequacy, is what?
- MR. YOUNG: The reason that is important,
- 14 Justice -- Mr. Chief Justice, excuse me -- is that the
- 15 SEIU is asserting that the case has become moot because
- 16 it has now complied with the district court's judgment.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I thought your --
- MR. YOUNG: It has --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I thought your
- 20 argument was that the -- a different type of notice
- 21 would have resulted in more members electing to opt out,
- 22 to demand the refund of their assessments?
- MR. YOUNG: And that's certainly one of the
- 24 possible consequences. Obviously, I -- we would --
- 25 that's speculative to some extent. But since the

- 1 purpose of the notice is to provide the information
- 2 necessary to -- to object, one of the purposes, then we
- 3 certainly anticipate that there would be more objectors
- 4 were there to be an -- an adequate notice that complies
- 5 with the district court's judgment.
- 6 JUSTICE ALITO: If the special assessment
- 7 requires a different kind of notice and possibly a
- 8 different kind of opt-in or opt-out regime, would the
- 9 case be moot?
- 10 MR. YOUNG: If the notice -- I'm sorry. I
- 11 didn't understand.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, we're not dealing here
- 13 with the kind of notice -- with the typical Hudson
- 14 notice given at the beginning of the year, when the
- 15 annual dues are collected. We're dealing with a special
- 16 assessment. Now, if a different kind of notice is
- 17 constitutionally required in that context, would this
- 18 case be moot?
- 19 MR. YOUNG: No, it would not. Obviously, we
- 20 have -- we -- we still have the nominal damages question
- 21 and the adequacy of the payment --
- JUSTICE ALITO: My question is whether
- 23 the -- the different requirements, which presumably were
- 24 not met here in the context of the special assessment,
- 25 if there are different requirements in that context,

- 1 would that be enough to preserve this case as a live
- 2 controversy?
- 3 MR. YOUNG: So long as the union failed to
- 4 provide them, and at least in this case, the district
- 5 court's judgment, we believe, provides a -- an adequate
- 6 respect for Hudson's underlying requirements,
- 7 Justice Alito.
- 8 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. -- Mr. Young --
- 9 MR. YOUNG: Yes, Justice --
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- as I understand, the
- 11 union recognizes that a consequence of mootness would be
- 12 that the Ninth Circuit judgment is vacated. Now, if the
- 13 union would also recognize that that means the district
- 14 court judgment stays in place, so if the Ninth Circuit
- 15 judgment is worked out and you're left with the district
- 16 court judgment as the law of the case, then I think it
- 17 is moot, isn't it?
- 18 MR. YOUNG: No, Justice Ginsburg, and this
- 19 is why: The union would remain free to return to its
- 20 old ways, the -- the very type of reason that this Court
- 21 declined to find mootness in W.T. Grant. The union has
- 22 made much -- much of a showing -- or much of a show,
- 23 more accurately, of the fact that it has changed its
- 24 internal policy. It won't do this for 180 days. But
- 25 that can hardly be sufficient for this Court to find

- 1 mootness in this case. The union made this wonderful
- 2 and meaningful policy change on 6 days' notice.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: But it wasn't -- this --
- 4 this case is about a completed episode. It's about a
- 5 special assessment that is long over.
- 6 MR. YOUNG: That is true, Justice Ginsburg.
- 7 But it is also about the declaratory relief that was
- 8 ordered by -- that was entered by the district court.
- 9 It is about the -- which was virtually injunctive relief
- 10 in this case.
- It is also about the effect of that judgment
- 12 for future activities and -- and how that will affect
- 13 the way SEIU operates.
- 14 JUSTICE KAGAN: Does it have --
- 15 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, are you saying that
- 16 this is capable of repetition, yet evading review? I'm
- 17 not quite sure.
- 18 MR. YOUNG: It would certainly be so in this
- 19 case, Justice Kennedy. The union set a very short
- 20 time -- well, a relatively short time period, given the
- 21 length of time a case comes up from the courts as a rule
- 22 in this Court.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Does the injunction have
- 24 future -- future terms? Is it a permanent injunction or
- 25 is it just an injunction that relates to the notice

- 1 that's required in this case?
- 2 MR. YOUNG: Just -- just to be clear, there
- 3 is -- I'm talking about something that's tantamount to
- 4 an injunction, Justice Kennedy. It's -- it wasn't
- 5 actually phrased as an injunction. It was an
- 6 affirmative -- an act -- ordering an affirmative act.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: But isn't that important,
- 8 Mr. Young, because usually where we've talked about
- 9 capable of repetition or where we've talked about the
- 10 same thing could happen again, it's where an injunction
- 11 has been before us rather than a suit for damages as to
- 12 a past act?
- 13 MR. YOUNG: Yes, Justice Kagan, I think that
- 14 has been generally the case. I -- in my research, I
- 15 could find very few cases where it wasn't clear to me
- 16 that this Court was addressing injunctive relief.
- 17 Hudson itself, it seems to me, did not specifically
- 18 discuss the entry of injunctive relief in the lower
- 19 court, and Hudson itself addressed a mootness issue.
- I mean, if we -- if we talk about these
- 21 cases in their -- in their strictest sense, the union's
- 22 notices are all annual. So, by the theory that it
- 23 becomes moot when those notices expire, or potentially
- 24 moot when those notices expire, this Court would never
- 25 address these issues because it would -- I can't imagine

- 1 one of these cases ever getting up to this Court in as
- 2 little as a year.
- But the -- this Court in Hudson, in -- I
- 4 believe it was footnote 12, said that this Court reviews
- 5 the policy, the procedure, the acts as they were
- 6 defended in the district court. And the union's policy
- 7 and procedure and acts here were defended in the
- 8 district court. And, therefore, cases like this should
- 9 not become moot, because it is capable of repetition and
- 10 would be evading review simply by the mere limits of how
- 11 long these policies and procedures are in effect.
- 12 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Do you make that argument
- in your opposition?
- MR. YOUNG: It's -- it seems to me,
- 15 Justice Kennedy, it is implicit in our argument,
- 16 although clearly our main point in that argument is that
- 17 this is a -- a paradigm case of voluntary cessation of
- 18 allegedly unlawful activity. Until cert was granted in
- 19 this case, until the Petitioners' merits brief was
- 20 filed, SEIU was vigorously defending its practice. It
- 21 remains free to impose that practice.
- 22 JUSTICE GINSBURG: That's another --
- 23 something quite different than the capable of returning
- 24 to old ways, because here we do have a discrete episode
- 25 that's over. And there was no question that, even

- 1 though that -- what was it, in 2005 -- that the period
- 2 in 2005-2006, when the special assessment was in effect,
- 3 that was long over, but you were -- you were continuing
- 4 to litigate it. And nobody suggested that it would
- 5 become moot simply because the period was over.
- 6 MR. YOUNG: That's -- that's true, Justice
- 7 Ginsburg. Pardon me.
- 8 This argument -- this argument was not
- 9 raised until we were before this Court, the union's
- 10 argument that the case had somehow become moot, and
- 11 until it issued a notice --
- 12 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, they said that it
- 13 had become moot because they gave you all the relief you
- 14 requested; so, there was nothing left to the case.
- 15 MR. YOUNG: Well, "all the relief," Justice
- 16 Ginsburg, implies that they had complied with the
- 17 district court's judgment. As to the notice, we believe
- 18 that they have not, and we believe that's clear because
- 19 of the very fact that the district court rejected the
- 20 2006 financial disclosure as adequate. And --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Maybe it's a good
- 22 point for you to move to the merits.
- MR. YOUNG: Yes, thank you,
- 24 Mr. Chief Justice.
- 25 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could I ask you a

- 1 question about the merits?
- 2 MR. YOUNG: Yes, certainly, Justice
- 3 Sotomayor.
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Are you attacking the
- 5 normal system of basing assessments moving forward,
- 6 based on past accounting and chargeability and
- 7 non-chargeability? Or are you just attacking the
- 8 special assessment?
- 9 MR. YOUNG: I -- I appreciate the question,
- 10 Justice Sotomayor. No, we are not attacking the normal
- 11 Hudson procedures. On --
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All right. So,
- 13 articulate for me what's -- borrowing a phrase from one
- of my colleagues yesterday, how do we write this
- 15 opinion? When is a second Hudson notice required?
- 16 Let's presume for the sake of argument that the union
- 17 had cost overruns. Labor salaries went up; printing
- 18 costs went up, not for lobbying; but generally there was
- 19 a 10 percent increase in their expenses across the board
- 20 because various contracts that they were involved in
- 21 required it. Would you require a second notice in that
- 22 circumstance?
- MR. YOUNG: Yes, Justice Sotomayor. We
- 24 would -- we believe -- pardon me -- that a new Hudson
- 25 notice is required whenever there is a material

- 1 alteration in the obligations that are imposed upon
- 2 nonmembers. The values that this --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Articulate that again.
- 4 A material change --
- 5 MR. YOUNG: A material increase or --
- 6 increase in general terms, in the obligation imposed
- 7 upon the nonmembers. In this case, I don't think
- 8 anybody would dispute the 25 percent --
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: A material new assessment?
- 10 MR. YOUNG: A material new assessment.
- 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: Okay.
- MR. YOUNG: Yes, Justice --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: That's -- we're talking
- 14 about money here, right?
- MR. YOUNG: Yes, we are.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Okay.
- 17 MR. YOUNG: Yes. Certainly --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Without -- but
- 19 without regard to the reason for the assessment?
- 20 MR. YOUNG: I think as a matter of principle
- 21 I would have to say yes, Mr. Chief Justice. The
- 22 nonmember --
- 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I'm not sure
- 24 that -- this may just simply be repeating Justice
- 25 Sotomayor's question, but if they say we have to raise

- 1 the assessment 10 percent because, as she said, you
- 2 know, we estimated the printing costs for the union
- 3 newsletter, whatever, was going to be this and it turns
- 4 out they raised it, it's going to be that; so, we know
- 5 we're going to have to get additional money, for things
- 6 that are indisputably chargeable, why do you need
- 7 special procedures in that case?
- 8 MR. YOUNG: Well, it wouldn't be so much a
- 9 special procedure as a new opportunity to object and
- 10 challenge the amount of the fee, Mr. Chief Justice.
- 11 Certainly, one of the elements -- and we
- 12 recognize, of course, that the primary reason
- 13 individuals object is political expenditures, but this
- 14 Court said very clearly in Abood that people can object
- 15 for any reason, for no reason, for a good reason, for a
- 16 bad reason; nobody can inquire as to why someone
- 17 objects.
- 18 And certainly when a material alteration --
- 19 there has been a material increase in the obligation
- 20 imposed upon nonmembers, they may choose to make an
- 21 economic decision that heretofore they chose not to
- 22 make. They may choose to minimize -- particularly the
- 23 non-objectors. They may choose that they want to
- 24 minimize the financial obligation that they are paying
- 25 to the union at that time. And --

1	JUSTICE	BREYER:	It's	peculiar	because	in

- 2 the circumstance where the extra assessment is all going
- 3 to go to chargeable activities, in fact that means
- 4 economically speaking the following year the objector
- 5 will be better off, not worse off, because there is a
- 6 higher percentage of the total fee that's being paid to
- 7 chargeable activities.
- 8 So, this special assessment that Justice
- 9 Sotomayor and the Chief Justice were talking about is
- 10 one that will benefit the objector, if he keeps quiet
- 11 and says nothing. So, it's a little hard to imagine the
- 12 frame of mind that would say I need the notice because
- 13 now I might object, whereas I wouldn't have before.
- MR. YOUNG: Well, Justice Breyer, the reason
- 15 for the notice is these people may not trust the union.
- 16 They -- they may choose to challenge the amount of the
- 17 fee.
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: Yes, I see that point. Can
- 19 I ask you -- oh, are you -- you want to pursue that
- 20 further, or are we --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Go ahead.
- JUSTICE BREYER: All right. Let me give you
- 23 this example.
- MR. YOUNG: Sure.
- JUSTICE BREYER: And now I -- but I think I

- 1 see what your answer is. Imagine it's year two. In
- 2 year one, expenditures broke down so that it was
- 3 70 percent chargeable, 30 percent not chargeable. Got
- 4 that?
- 5 MR. YOUNG: Yes, sir.
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: And normally, under Hudson,
- 7 that means in year two the deal is the objectors pay
- 8 70 percent, right?
- 9 MR. YOUNG: Yes.
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: In the middle of year two,
- 11 surprisingly, something comes up. Something comes up.
- 12 A surprise to the union, and they want to have a special
- 13 assessment. And you're saying they just can't without
- 14 going through this procedure all over again?
- 15 MR. YOUNG: That would be correct,
- 16 Justice Breyer. The -- I'm now talking about --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And take the money that
- 18 they collected?
- 19 MR. YOUNG: I'm sorry.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Can they take the money
- 21 that they collected under the first notice, and, instead
- 22 of doing the special assessment, in the middle of it,
- 23 this campaign gets announced by the governor, and can
- 24 they then divert the chargeable amount that they had
- 25 predicted and spend it on the non-chargeable amount? Or

- 1 are you -- or does that require a second Hudson notice?
- 2 Without a special assessment.
- 3 MR. YOUNG: I understand, Justice Sotomayor.
- 4 And no, under that case, I don't believe it would.
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. So, this is a
- 6 peculiar rule that you have asked us to adopt. The rule
- 7 is that where there is a special assessment and it will
- 8 make all the objectors better off, they have to have a
- 9 special notice that they can object. But where the rule
- is that we're going to take money we already collected
- 11 from them and spend it for a totally political purpose,
- 12 we don't give them a special notice and they don't have
- 13 to object.
- Now, that seems totally backwards, but I
- 15 understand why you get there, and my suspicion is --
- 16 which you can confirm, is that's the only administrable
- 17 system you can think of.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: Do you concede that it's
- 19 going to make them better off? I would -- I would
- 20 assume that that's your principal objection. They don't
- 21 know whether this new assessment is indeed going to be
- 22 divided the way the original one was or not. They might
- 23 want to challenge --
- MR. YOUNG: That's --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: -- whether -- whether it's

- 1 all going to be used for -- for assessable activities or
- 2 not. And they have no -- you're telling me they have
- 3 no --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: Right. But in my
- 5 hypothetical --
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: At the very least, they
- 7 have to make a -- an interest-free loan to the -- to the
- 8 union until such time as they can challenge it.
- 9 MR. YOUNG: Well, that's exactly correct,
- 10 Justice Scalia. And I understand --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Yes, but the hypothetical,
- if I could continue with it, is -- is perhaps
- 13 unrealistic, but they have 20 bishops and 14 most honest
- 14 people in the United States, and they've all absolutely
- 15 guaranteed, and everybody agrees, that this goes to
- 16 chargeable activity. And where I was going with my
- 17 question, which you see where I was -- you're with me on
- 18 this, right?
- MR. YOUNG: Yes, I am, Justice --
- JUSTICE BREYER: And combine the two. What
- 21 I'm trying to point out and get your response is that
- 22 you've been forced into this position to create a
- 23 workable system. Now, why is that workable system one
- 24 whit better than the workable system we already have,
- 25 which is all this washes out in a fair manner the

- 1 following year, that there is an inevitable year's lag?
- 2 It doesn't work perfectly, but it's as good as any
- 3 other, and all we have to say is it's better than yours.
- 4 Now, why is yours better than that?
- 5 MR. YOUNG: Well, I recall the bishops from
- 6 the last time I was here, Justice Breyer. I think they
- 7 made an appearance then.
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: They're useful to me.
- 9 (Laughter.)
- 10 MR. YOUNG: They are, I'm sure.
- 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: I assume we wouldn't need a
- 12 Hudson notice at all, if -- if bishops affirmed all of
- 13 these things, right?
- 14 (Laughter.)
- 15 MR. YOUNG: You anticipate my next point,
- 16 Justice Scalia. These -- these aren't bishops, and with
- 17 due respect to our litigation opponents in this case,
- 18 these are people that nonmembers don't trust. These are
- 19 people with whom nonmembers do not wish to affiliate.
- 20 And these are people that the nonmembers do not wish to
- 21 support, and --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: The problem is in -- in
- 23 this system, and going back to Justice Breyer's
- 24 practicality, they will get a chance to object. It just
- 25 won't be at the moment of the special assessment; it

- 1 will be the following year. So, when the union gives
- 2 its new notice, it's going to set forth its chargeable
- 3 and non-chargeable amounts as audited, and it will say,
- 4 as it did -- as it's done in the briefs before us, on
- 5 Proposition 76, we're going to take 50 percent as
- 6 chargeable. And the union members can come in and give
- 7 a Lehnert objection, those who want to. Those who
- 8 don't, know it's happened, and they agree to it.
- 9 Isn't that correct? They do get a chance to
- 10 object; the question is the timing.
- 11 MR. YOUNG: Then the problem is, Justice
- 12 Sotomayor, understanding the --
- 13 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Is there an answer to
- 14 that? They will get a chance to object then?
- MR. YOUNG: Well, they'll get a chance to
- 16 object after they've already paid the interest-free
- 17 loan.
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, but that's true of
- 19 the first example I gave you. If something happens in
- 20 the middle of the year and the union needs to divert
- 21 already-assessed funds to challenge a election, they can
- 22 do it. And you said that's okay.
- MR. YOUNG: And the nonmembers would have
- 24 the chance to challenge that, but it would be within the
- 25 normal system of ordinary union dues.

- 1 We -- we, and I believe this Court in
- 2 Hudson, presume that any reasonable -- reasonably
- 3 competent union management would -- would have
- 4 relatively stable expenditures over the years.
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: Isn't -- isn't the premise
- 6 of Hudson that you give the notice before, before -- you
- 7 receive the notice before you have to cough up the
- 8 money?
- 9 MR. YOUNG: Yes.
- 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: And what's now proposed is,
- 11 well, for -- if there's an additional assessment, you
- 12 cough up the money first, and then later you straighten
- 13 it out. And I -- do you get -- do you get the interest?
- MR. YOUNG: That seems to me to be the
- 15 problem, Justice Scalia. The people who got the June --
- 16 June 2005 notice were left in the dark -- indeed, the
- 17 union may have been in the dark -- as to this special
- 18 assessment. But once the union agreed to -- decided to
- 19 impose the special assessment, the union was required by
- 20 Hudson's principles to shed some light. You know,
- 21 perhaps it is less predictive, less accurate, to say we
- 22 intend to spend the money this way. But when you have
- 23 an assessment which is purely intended for politics, and
- 24 that's what the union said, to create a Political
- 25 Fight-Back Fund, that's not, you know --

- 1 JUSTICE BREYER: Do you get -- does your
- 2 Hudson notice tell you about what's going to happen next
- 3 year? I thought your Hudson notice told you this was
- 4 the breakdown for the last year, and as far as we can
- 5 tell, that's what it will be next year, but -- but
- 6 things could change. What does the Hudson notice tell
- 7 you?
- 8 MR. YOUNG: The Hudson notice provides you
- 9 with an opportunity to object and some assurance,
- 10 because of the audit requirement --
- 11 JUSTICE BREYER: But am I right in my
- 12 description of it?
- 13 MR. YOUNG: I think -- I think that would be
- 14 a fair description, Justice Breyer.
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: All right.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Do they -- do they
- 17 carry over from one year to the next, or do you have to
- 18 refile your objection to the union expenditures every
- 19 year?
- MR. YOUNG: Most unions, Mr. Chief Justice,
- 21 require an annual objection. Now, of course, there
- 22 would be nothing -- we find nothing wrong with an annual
- 23 challenge requirement if you choose to challenge that
- 24 year's figures, because obviously it's a specific event.
- 25 But most unions seem to require annual objection. So,

- 1 you have to say again and again: I don't want to pay
- 2 for your politics.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, but what
- 4 happens --
- 5 MR. YOUNG: But that's not raised in this
- 6 case.
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But going back to the --
- 8 forget about special assessments. I think in one of the
- 9 briefs, I know in one of the briefs, someone says
- 10 elections happen every 4 years. So, in the normal cycle
- 11 of union activities, in an election year they're going
- 12 to divert more of whatever accessible moneys they have
- 13 to their lobbying efforts, and the following year
- 14 they'll go back to normal for 3 years.
- 15 You're not challenging that normal variation
- 16 in the -- in the distribution of the moneys, correct?
- 17 MR. YOUNG: Correct, Justice Sotomayor. And
- 18 that, too, may vary from union to union, from State to
- 19 State even. As some of the Justices I'm sure know,
- 20 Virginia has called for --
- 21 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, I quess my problem
- is I don't see how that, given your argument, is any
- 23 less alone than this special assessment where the
- 24 labor -- where the objecting members at the end of the
- 25 year will get notice of what has happened that year,

- 1 will have an opportunity to place their Lehnert
- 2 challenges and get them ruled upon, and will, as
- 3 Justice Breyer said, have a benefit because they're
- 4 going to either pay more if the Lehnert -- pay less if
- 5 the Lehnert challenges are upheld or pay more if -- if
- 6 they're not.
- 7 But I'm not quite sure how this is a
- 8 different loan.
- 9 MR. YOUNG: Well, we disagree with the
- 10 union's characterization of its supposed benefit. But I
- 11 -- Justice Sotomayor, I see my time has expired, and I'd
- 12 like to reserve a balance for rebuttal. I will try
- 13 address your question more thoroughly when I stand up
- 14 again.
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- Mr. Collins.
- 17 ORAL ARGUMENT OF JEREMIAH COLLINS
- 18 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
- 19 MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
- 20 please the Court:
- 21 Justice Ginsburg is absolutely correct
- 22 that what we have suggested to the Court is that the
- 23 court of appeals decision be vacated, with the
- 24 consequence of reinstating the district court judgment.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Why do -- why did

- 1 you give up once the case was granted here? You didn't
- 2 consider that until the case came before this Court.
- MR. COLLINS: That's correct, Your Honor,
- 4 and the reason for that is when the events in this
- 5 matter were new and the then union officers' actions
- 6 were being challenged, the instinct was we're going to
- 7 defend the case. And, as time went on, there was no
- 8 rethinking of that situation. When the case was granted
- 9 here over our opposition, noting that we didn't think
- 10 that the questions presented were really presented, the
- 11 officers of the union, who are not the ones involved in
- 12 the original case, thought about the situation and came
- 13 to the realization that they have no stake in the
- 14 procedures that are at issue here. This is a local that
- 15 had never done a mid-year increase in the past. The --
- 16 what was contemplated as a temporary increase here
- 17 turned into a permanent increase. The dues went up to
- 18 1.5 percent of salary a year after this increase ended.
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: What does this local, and
- 20 what will the other locals, do in the future when
- 21 special assessments are made? Will they provide notice
- 22 or will they go back to the old system?
- MR. COLLINS: This local -- and I won't
- 24 belabor the term "special assessment" at the moment, but
- 25 when we get to the merits, I think there's a

- 1 misunderstanding around that, Justice Alito. But this
- 2 local has put in a procedure which frankly would satisfy
- 3 the Petitioners' concerns for the future if future
- 4 conduct was legitimately at issue here. But it is not,
- 5 for two reasons.
- First, when we state that the district court
- 7 judgment be reinstated, that's a judgment that was not
- 8 appealed by the Petitioners. That defines the limits of
- 9 what they can attain from this case, whatever this Court
- 10 may decide, and that decision gives whatever protection
- 11 it gives against future conduct. Now, it gives
- 12 essentially none for a very good reason. This was a
- 13 case, as has been noted, brought only about a one-time
- 14 event. There were no allegations of an ongoing
- 15 practice. There was no request for declaratory or
- 16 injunctive relief to prevent --
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Collins, as I understand
- 18 Mr. Young's argument, there is a serious dispute about
- 19 the adequacy of this notice, and it might be a dispute
- 20 about whether it was clear enough, about that it was
- 21 satisfying claims, or it might be a dispute about
- 22 whether it allowed refunds easily enough, but that Mr.
- 23 Young is contesting whether the notice complied with the
- 24 district court's order.
- Now, as long as that's true, don't we have a

- 1 live case before us? Somebody has to answer that
- 2 question about whether your notice complied with the
- 3 order, and if it's the case that a court has to answer
- 4 that question, doesn't that depend on the questions
- 5 presented here, the substantive questions?
- 6 MR. COLLINS: No, it doesn't, Justice Kagan.
- 7 And the Court's explained in a number of cases,
- 8 beginning I think with Walling v. Reuter and also,
- 9 obviously, Munsingwear and U.S. Bancorp, a case can be
- 10 in a posture where this Court, in disposing of it, needs
- 11 to grant certain relief or clarification of the status
- of prior orders; and yet, the case is moot on the merits
- 13 such that the Court cannot appropriately reach the
- 14 merits.
- 15 That's what we have here. If there is a
- 16 dispute -- and I'll explain in a moment why there really
- 17 isn't. But if there is a dispute, for example, as to
- 18 whether an individual failed to get their refund because
- 19 the notice was inadequate, that dispute is not affected
- 20 by and requires no decision of this Court.
- 21 If the district court judgment is
- 22 reinstated, then the question of whether we have fully
- 23 provided all relief called for by that judgment, which
- 24 we believe we have, would be before the district court
- 25 for decision, unaffected by --

- 1 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But this is not --
- 2 this is not an incidental matter. I mean, the whole
- 3 point of your friend's argument with the Hudson notice
- 4 is they want people to understand what's happening with
- 5 the -- their union money. And they say this notice
- 6 didn't let people know that. And if the case is not
- 7 moot and if they prevail, they will have a right to be
- 8 heard on what the notice should say. And that will make
- 9 a difference in how many people opt out or how many
- 10 people don't.
- 11 And I guess I'm following up on Justice
- 12 Kagan's question. That's a very important part of this
- 13 case, what the notice is going to say, and if we accept
- 14 your view that it's moot, that issue goes by the
- 15 wayside.
- 16 MR. COLLINS: I think that's incorrect,
- 17 Mr. Chief Justice, for two reasons: First of all, the
- 18 district court required a certain kind of notice to be
- 19 given. We are stating the district court judgment
- 20 should be reinstated. If the notice we have given does
- 21 not comport with what the district court judgment, which
- 22 was not appealed by the Petitioners, requires, it will
- 23 be provided by the district court.
- We are -- we are not contesting -- the
- 25 Petitioners are looking a gift horse in the mouth.

- 1 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I'm sorry. I don't
- 2 see how that -- I don't see how that works.
- 3 The notice is only required by the district
- 4 court if the case is not moot. If the case is moot by
- 5 the notice you sent out, the district court doesn't have
- 6 a case on the basis of which to order a different
- 7 notice.
- 8 MR. COLLINS: No, I don't think that's
- 9 correct, Your Honor. A case can be moot in this Court
- 10 -- and this is what I believe Munsingwear, Walling v.
- 11 Reuter, and the other cases, U.S. Bancorp more recently,
- 12 explain. And, at first, it seems paradoxical, but it is
- 13 not paradoxical. A case -- there can be remaining
- 14 issues potentially in the district court, such as
- 15 whether the check that the plaintiff paid bounced or
- 16 not, that could potentially have to be resolved by a
- 17 district court. And it -- but it means, at least in
- 18 terms of prudential mootness, there is not a substantive
- 19 merits issue remaining for the court to be deciding.
- 20 And it's really quite simple. The Petitioners, as I
- 21 say, are looking a gift horse in the mouth.
- The apex, the acme, that they can achieve in
- 23 this case, is what they got from the district court, and
- 24 it was reversed. We are saying give it back to them.
- 25 Take back the reversal, reinstate the judgment.

- 1 Whatever they won, they will have. We believe we have
- 2 already given them everything they want. If we have
- 3 not, the district court will do that.
- But let me explain the second point, if I
- 5 may, Mr. Chief Justice, which is that there is no
- 6 legitimate issue here about whether the notice was
- 7 adequate. Mr. Young stated quite incorrectly that the
- 8 notice we have provided is the same as the notice the
- 9 district court struck down. That's absolutely
- 10 incorrect. The district court said that the 2005 notice
- 11 issued before the dues increase obviously did not give
- 12 specific notice of the dues increase, although it stated
- 13 that dues could be increased.
- 14 The district court specifically held, at
- 15 Petition Appendix 73a, that the 2006 notice, which
- 16 described the so-called fund and the dues increase, and
- 17 the purposes of it, was completely adequate. And the
- 18 notice the district court -- one also has to realize the
- 19 district court was requiring the union to refund only
- 20 the non-chargeable portion of activities attributed to
- 21 this increase.
- 22 A certain kind of notice would be needed for
- 23 that to justify how the union was computing what it was
- 24 saying with the chargeable portion to refund. But what
- 25 the union has done here is provide greater relief than

- 1 the district court ordered. We have refunded every
- 2 penny that anyone who requests had paid during the
- 3 increase.
- So, there's no serious question that the
- 5 notice that the union sent out, which explained what the
- 6 increase had been spent on, sufficiently informed
- 7 individuals as to whether they now want to get back
- 8 every penny, as we've offered them, of what they paid
- 9 under the increase.
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But -- I want you to
- 11 move to the merits. It may be a good time to do that.
- 12 MR. COLLINS: Fine. Turning to the
- 13 merits --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Can I clarify a point?
- 15 I thought I heard and maybe I just didn't look at the
- 16 union regulations, the new ones -- is it limited to
- 17 180 days? I thought I heard your adversary say that
- 18 the --
- 19 MR. COLLINS: It -- no, it has a provision
- 20 that it can't be repealed without 180-day notice. There
- 21 can't be a sudden repeal of the new procedure.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I see.
- MR. COLLINS: But I do want to make clear,
- 24 we think nothing -- our position on mootness is not
- 25 dependent on the Court determining that the new

- 1 procedure will be in effect forever. Our position --
- 2 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could you tell me what
- 3 the burden is on a union to give a second Hudson notice
- 4 whenever there is a special assessment? Meaning do you
- 5 happen to know how frequently unions impose special
- 6 assessments --
- 7 MR. COLLINS: Well --
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- and what the
- 9 incremental cost is to the union of giving such notice?
- 10 MR. COLLINS: That requires a fairly
- 11 extensive answer, I believe, Justice Sotomayor, partly
- 12 because --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Try to summarize it. I
- 14 wasn't looking to monopolize you.
- MR. COLLINS: I understand, but I believe --
- 16 I believe the word "special assessment" is being used
- 17 here with a meaning that doesn't correspond to what this
- 18 union did. I can say this much: There's never --
- 19 there's been only one other case in any Federal court
- 20 that I'm aware of, and only in a district court, there's
- 21 been no other appellate court, dealing with any kind of
- 22 assessment, a temporary dues increase, and how it
- 23 affects Hudson rights.
- 24 So, this is a -- a non-event in the real
- 25 world. There are -- there are no challenges that have

- 1 -- that have been made previously to any kinds of
- 2 assessments or increases.
- But unions use assessments in two -- in many
- 4 different ways. And let me contrast one way with what
- 5 happened here, and I think it will show why there's no
- 6 serious question here about a need for a notice.
- 7 Some unions have a dues structure which
- 8 covers only certain kinds of activities. And they
- 9 contemplate a new kind of activity that they would not
- 10 normally pay for out of dues or fees. They say often
- 11 with -- with a vote, which was not required here. There
- 12 was -- there was no vote required or taken here of
- 13 bargaining unit members for what occurred in this
- 14 instance.
- But you may have a union that says: We want
- 16 to make a kind of expenditure that's really
- 17 unanticipated. It's not what we normally do with our
- 18 dues. We're going to put it to a vote. If you approve
- 19 it, we'll collect it. We'll probably put it in a
- 20 segregated fund separate from our treasury.
- 21 That kind of an assessment can raise
- 22 potential issues, I would acknowledge, under Hudson.
- 23 It's worlds away from what we have here because all that
- 24 happened in this case was that the union increased, from
- 25 1 percent to 1.25 percent of salary, the regular

- 1 membership dues and the fees based on those dues that
- 2 were deducted by employers and paid into the union's
- 3 general treasury --
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Is it incorrect that this
- 5 was for what was termed a "Political Fight-Back Fund"?
- 6 MR. COLLINS: It was -- some union
- 7 communications described it as having that sole -- that
- 8 purpose. The October 27th letter, which was the most
- 9 detailed explanation, said it had two purposes,
- 10 basically to fight back at the bargaining table and to
- 11 fight back politically.
- But what's essential, Justice Alito, it was
- 13 never suggested nor was it ever the case that this money
- 14 would be in any way segregated or treated as a separate
- 15 entity, so to speak. So, we have the Schermerhorn
- 16 problem here. Basically, Petitioners' position is based
- on the fallacy exposed in Schermerhorn of trying to take
- 18 part of a unified general treasury and treat it as if it
- 19 were a distinct entity, because --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, let me give you this
- 21 example, and maybe you'll say that this is different
- from your case and the rules should be different in
- 23 these two cases. The annual dues for particular -- for
- 24 members of this union are 1 percent of their salaries,
- 25 and let's say that amounts to -- or it's a certain

- 1 percentage of their salaries, and let's say that amounts
- 2 to \$500 annual dues. And let's say that, in the prior
- 3 year, 90 percent of the money collected by the union was
- 4 used for chargeable purposes, 10 percent for
- 5 non-chargeable purposes. So, someone who objected, a
- 6 nonmember who objected, would be able to get back \$50.
- Now, during the course of the year, the
- 8 union levies a special assessment or whatever you want
- 9 to call it, and for this 90 -- the percentages are
- 10 exactly reversed: 90 percent is for non-chargeable; 10
- 11 percent is for chargeable. So, now a nonmember who
- 12 potentially wants to object has \$450 at stake. Now, in
- that situation, why shouldn't there be separate notice?
- 14 Aren't the economic incentives quite different?
- 15 MR. COLLINS: If I understand the
- 16 hypothetical, there could be a problem there if the
- 17 assumption is then that the union really is beginning a
- 18 kind of spending that's really foreign to the way it's
- 19 spent money in the past.
- What needs to be explained here, though,
- 21 Justice Alito, I don't think one would guess from
- 22 anything that has been said today that we're talking
- about a period of time when the union's chargeable
- 24 spending increased and its non-chargeable spending
- 25 decreased. We're talking about a period of time when

1 objecting nonmembers did not even pay their pro ra-	1	a 1a dia amin'ny dia amin'ny		2 2 2						
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- 2 share of the concededly chargeable expenditures, meaning
- 3 they did not pay one penny for any political activities.
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, as I said, my
- 5 hypothetical may be very different from what happened
- 6 here, and maybe it's an unrealistic hypothetical; and
- 7 you can answer that. But if -- if it were to occur,
- 8 should there not be Hudson notice?
- 9 MR. COLLINS: Well, the problem -- it would
- 10 be a closer question, but I think not, because, again,
- it would be caught up in the subsequent year.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: But what if the money is
- 13 going to be used for an election campaign? What if it
- 14 is going to be used to weigh in, in favor of one
- 15 gubernatorial candidate against another, in favor of one
- 16 slate of legislative candidates against another? And on
- 17 those issues, the nonmembers may have very strong
- 18 partisan and ideological objections. So, why should
- 19 they not be given a notice at that time --
- 20 MR. COLLINS: It would depend --
- 21 JUSTICE ALITO: -- and given the opportunity
- 22 not to give what would be at a minimum a -- an
- 23 interest-free loan --
- MR. COLLINS: Because --
- 25 JUSTICE ALITO: -- for the purpose of

- 1 influencing an election campaign?
- 2 MR. COLLINS: It would depend,
- 3 Justice Alito. I think in your hypothetical, one might
- 4 be able to say -- there might be more facts needed, but
- 5 one might be able to say that what is occurring is
- 6 something that could not be anticipated reasonably by
- 7 the person who got the notice.
- 8 In this case, however -- and this is crucial
- 9 to this case -- the notice in 2005 told every nonmember
- 10 that, of our \$38 million budget, we spent 43.6 percent
- 11 of it last year on non-chargeable activities. And if
- 12 you do not object, we will spend whatever amount out of
- our roughly \$40 million budget in the coming year on
- 14 various activities as we perceive the need, including
- 15 specifically ballot initiatives, which were specifically
- 16 mentioned in the notice as one of the things the union
- 17 spent its money on.
- 18 Now --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I thought your
- 20 point, though -- this was a very special ballot
- 21 initiative. That's what the literature suggests, that
- 22 this was not sort of the normal run in the course --
- 23 every 2 years, every election cycle, we spend something.
- 24 That's why it's a special assessment.
- MR. COLLINS: Well, I don't -- I wouldn't

- 1 call it a special assessment if one uses that term as
- 2 it's usually used, to mean a very short-term assessment
- 3 apart from general union functions for a new kind of
- 4 function.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No, it's not
- 6 short-term; it's just until November 7th or whatever.
- 7 MR. COLLINS: But it's nothing new under the
- 8 sun, Mr. Chief Justice. And we can see that -- for
- 9 example, the record reflects the audit for 2005 shows us
- 10 that, in addition to the money that was attributed to
- 11 the dues increase and spent in opposing these ballot
- 12 propositions, additional money, approximately
- 13 \$2 million, was spent on those same purposes from the
- 14 pre-increase dues.
- 15 So, ballot -- opposing ballot initiatives is
- 16 nothing new for this union.
- 17 JUSTICE BREYER: Can you think of for a
- 18 second -- to go back to Justice Sotomayor. Now, I would
- 19 like you to see, I think, why she asked the question.
- 20 As I understand it, the way it works now is
- 21 at the beginning of, say, September -- say it goes
- 22 September -- September. September of year two, we look
- 23 back to year one, and we see what the percentages were.
- 24 And now we in the union calculate a budget for year two.
- 25 And we go and get approval or opt-outs on that basis.

- 1 Now, what I thought coming in here is that
- 2 the problem was going to be, if you have to have a new
- 3 notice in the middle of the year for special political
- 4 assessments, you're going to discover that half the time
- 5 you don't know if they're special political assessments.
- 6 It's an impossible line to draw. It's really tough.
- 7 You're making the argument that however you
- 8 draw the line, we're on the right side of it, not the
- 9 wrong side. Isn't that what -- basically what you're
- 10 saying? It's not a special assessment. It wasn't
- 11 really -- et cetera. Okay.
- 12 Now -- but there's a new argument that's
- 13 come along that I hadn't focused on, that we can avoid
- 14 the administrative problem by saying all special
- 15 assessments require a new notice, whether they're for
- 16 political purposes or not. Hence the question that I
- 17 was trying to get -- I was very interested in your
- 18 answer. If we had that rule, which avoids the problem
- 19 of saying which is which, how does that affect the
- 20 union? Not necessarily yours but unions in general.
- 21 How often is it that you draw up your budget for year
- 22 two in September, you put it into effect, and then
- 23 during the year, you discover you need more money from
- 24 people for any reason, and, therefore, you change what
- 25 you thought they were going to contribute? How often,

- 1 if you can give us an estimate -- and you're in a better
- 2 position than I. Does it happen a lot, rarely, a
- 3 little? What do you want to say?
- 4 MR. COLLINS: I -- I --
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And a footnote: And if
- 6 it happens a lot, how burdensome is it?
- 7 MR. COLLINS: I will get to that, Justice
- 8 Sotomayor. I have tried to determine how frequent it
- 9 is, and I've been unable. All I've been able to
- 10 determine is there's no litigation over it. How
- 11 often -- and I've been able to determine that so-called
- 12 assessments take many different forms from -- and I
- 13 think there are crucial distinctions -- from funding
- 14 what would -- a kind of charge that would not otherwise
- 15 be funded out of dues for some short period of time, to
- 16 the opposite extreme, what we have here and what I don't
- 17 think would be called an assessment frankly by anything
- 18 I've read, a temporary dues increase which became
- 19 permanent and which simply increased the total flow of
- 20 dues and fees into the general treasury and which went
- 21 for the usual -- the kinds of activities the union had
- 22 always funded. And in that regard, there's one --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could you please answer
- 24 my question?
- MR. COLLINS: The burden?

- 1 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All right? The burden.
- 2 MR. COLLINS: The burden consists of two
- 3 things, Justice Sotomayor. The -- if a union has to
- 4 give a new Hudson notice in a situation like this,
- 5 whereas I've been trying to explain the spending that
- 6 went on is really not different from what one would have
- 7 reasonably anticipated given the notice, then we have
- 8 litigation and disputes about the need for new notices
- 9 whenever any number of things happen, because one thing
- 10 that happened here that is undisputed but hasn't been
- 11 discussed is that collective bargaining costs were up
- 12 six-fold in 2005 over 2004, and they were up six-fold in
- 13 2006 over 2005.
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: One reason -- I
- 15 mean, we're dealing with the situation where the union
- 16 is compelling nonunion members to give them money for
- 17 political activities. We allow, as I understand Hudson,
- 18 as I read it, because you can't figure out what that is,
- 19 you wait until the end of the year. In other words,
- 20 it's a compromise for administrative convenience.
- 21 Normally, you wouldn't allow it at all, as -- at least
- 22 under the law as I read it, you would not allow people
- 23 to take money -- you would not allow the union to take
- 24 money from people who don't want to spend it on
- 25 political activities so the union can spend it on

- 1 political activities. But we allow that in the course
- 2 of the year because it's impossible as you go on to sort
- 3 these things out. I thought the argument on the other
- 4 side was when you have a special assessment, an
- 5 additional charge, there you don't have the
- 6 administrative problem. You can tell it's .25 percent.
- 7 So, you can't take that until you tell them, do you want
- 8 to object or are you happy -- are you fine with having
- 9 this spent on political purposes?
- 10 MR. COLLINS: The reason, Mr. Chief Justice,
- 11 that it isn't that straight forward is quite simply that
- 12 all of these questions about it's a special assessment,
- 13 we can figure out what it is, we can treat it
- 14 separately, flounder when one realizes that the
- 15 so-called special assessment is simply a dues increase,
- 16 because if I were to try to imagine -- let's try to
- 17 imagine the notice that could have been given. If I was
- 18 giving a new notice in the fall of 2005 to explain to
- 19 all nonmembers how things look now compared to what
- 20 they -- how they may have looked when the Hudson notice
- 21 was given, I would say the following, completely
- 22 consistent with all the facts of record in this case as
- 23 revealed in the audits. I would say: We've determined
- 24 we need more income. Part of this is because we
- 25 anticipate \$3.7 million in fight-back expenses this

- 1 year. Another part is we expect more than \$3-1/2
- 2 million of additional bargaining costs this year, and we
- 3 expect a lot of other changes in our costs.
- 4 On the Petitioners' theory -- and this is
- 5 why Schermerhorn is the complete answer to their
- 6 theory -- there's a constitutional violation if the
- 7 union says we're going to view this increase as paying
- 8 for our additional political costs, and it's going to
- 9 free up our bargaining -- our general treasury for the
- 10 bargaining. That's a violation. But if you say we're
- 11 going to treat this increase as covering those new
- 12 bargaining costs we told you about, that's going to free
- 13 up our general treasury for the political costs --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But on the -- I'm
- 15 reading from the district court opinion. It said that
- 16 this assessment would be used -- and they're quoting
- 17 from union material -- "for a broad range of political
- 18 expenses, including television, radio advertising,
- 19 direct mail, voter registration, voter education, and
- 20 get out the vote activities in our work sites and in
- 21 communities across California." And it further said,
- 22 quote, "The fund will not be used for regular costs of
- 23 the union such as office rent, staff salaries or routine
- 24 equipment replacement."
- MR. COLLINS: But two points,

- 1 Mr. Chief Justice: First, as the court of appeals
- 2 pointed out, there were other statements that said the
- 3 money would be used for both purposes.
- But, as Schermerhorn points out,
- 5 Schermerhorn says even if you specifically say this part
- of our dues income is going to be earmarked for this
- 7 purpose, it's artificial when you're dealing with a
- 8 general union treasury, not a separate segregated fund,
- 9 to give that separate legal status. And that -- because
- 10 that is why -- my point to you, Mr. Chief Justice, is
- 11 nothing in the world would have changed here.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: Suppose that the --
- MR. COLLINS: If --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Suppose that the proponents
- of Propositions 75 and 76 had come to the union and
- 16 said, would you please give us an interest-free loan for
- 17 money because we want to use this money to -- to
- 18 persuade the electorate to enact these; but don't worry
- 19 because we're going to pay it back right after the
- 20 election, when we've achieved our electoral ends.
- 21 Would -- would the union provide the money
- 22 because it's all going to come out in the wash?
- MR. COLLINS: I -- I really can't answer
- 24 that question. I don't know. I --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, I -- gee, I really

- 1 doubt that you -- that they would. But what's the
- 2 difference? If you look at this from the perspective of
- 3 a nonmember who doesn't want those ballot initiatives to
- 4 be defeated, saying that we're going to give you your
- 5 money back -- we're going to use your money to achieve a
- 6 political end that you oppose, but don't worry because
- 7 we're going to give it back to you next year after we've
- 8 achieved our political end -- how does that solve the
- 9 problem?
- 10 MR. COLLINS: That's not the situation here,
- 11 Justice Alito. The nonmembers were told in June 2005 in
- 12 the Hudson notice that if you don't object, we may spend
- 13 millions of dollars on political activities, including
- 14 ballot initiatives. If a person didn't want to support
- 15 that, they merely need to object. What then happened --
- 16 and this is what gets lost in the messaging about the
- 17 dues increase. What actually happened in the real world
- 18 in the period that followed is that, compared to the
- 19 numbers in the 2004 Hudson notice, the union spent less
- 20 on non-chargeable matters and more on chargeable
- 21 matters. And the only reason there's a case here in the
- 22 Court is that the union, for whatever PR purposes,
- 23 whatever it may have been, instead of saying we're going
- 24 to treat the increase as covering our vastly increased
- 25 bargaining costs, thereby freeing up money for politics,

- 1 we're instead going to describe this increase as being
- 2 attributable to our political costs, thereby freeing up
- 3 money for bargaining. But what the union is spending
- 4 its -- its money on is bargaining. More money --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It -- it seems to me that
- 6 this answer is -- is so confusing that the Court
- 7 probably should consider whether or not an opt-in
- 8 requirement is -- is preferable. I -- we're talking --
- 9 in the first exchange, you had with Justice Alito, he
- 10 gave you a very simple question: 90 percent and 10
- 11 percent. Then, it's reversed. Special assessment for
- 12 90 percent political. And the point there was that
- 13 you're taking someone's money contrary to that person's
- 14 conscience. And that's what the First Amendment stands
- 15 against. And you simply wouldn't answer that question.
- 16 You would -- and then you say, well, maybe that it's --
- 17 it's fungible, it's hard to --
- MR. COLLINS: No, but --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: It seems to me that you're
- 20 avoiding --
- MR. COLLINS: No.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: -- a very, very critical
- 23 question on the constitutional rights of these objecting
- 24 members.
- 25 MR. COLLINS: I won't avoid the -- I don't

- 1 believe -- I was not meaning to avoid it,
- 2 Justice Kennedy. What I thought I said is, if you are
- 3 springing something on someone that's not anticipated in
- 4 the notice that gave them their rights to object, then
- 5 there's a problem.
- 6 My point is very simple. Anyone reading the
- 7 2005 Hudson notice, if that person was asked -- if I
- 8 don't -- if you -- if I don't object, might the union
- 9 spend \$3.7 million next year on ballot initiatives that
- 10 I may not want to oppose? The answer would be yes. The
- 11 notice made it perfectly clear.
- 12 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Let me ask you this --
- MR. COLLINS: And the person can object.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: -- by way of background:
- 15 In collective bargaining negotiations, do the unions
- 16 consider the -- as one factor the importance of ensuring
- 17 that the governmental employer has fiscal stability?
- 18 MR. COLLINS: That's generally considered,
- 19 yes, by unions.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, isn't that
- 21 ultimately a political judgment, so that even collective
- 22 bargaining involves a core political judgment?
- MR. COLLINS: And that's exactly what the
- 24 Court said in Abood. And the reason that exclusivity
- 25 and agency fees are permitted in -- in serving an

- 1 important government purpose is that the government has
- 2 concluded that its interest lies in having an exclusive
- 3 spokesperson who -- with whom it can negotiate so that
- 4 it won't have an array of different employment relations
- 5 or different --
- 6 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But you -- you concede, in
- 7 ordinary collective bargaining, there are critical and
- 8 important political -- significant political judgments
- 9 that are being made by the union in the course of
- 10 collective bargaining with chargeable expenses?
- 11 MR. COLLINS: Absolutely. And Abood
- 12 explicitly says that, and Abood then says that,
- 13 nevertheless, the government -- we're talking about a
- 14 regulatory scheme to promote the government's interest
- 15 in orderly labor relations. The government needs to
- 16 make arrangements and agreements on terms of employment.
- 17 It has a vital interest in having an exclusive
- 18 representational arrangement where that can be
- 19 accomplished. And that, the Court held in Abood -- and
- 20 it's not challenged by Petitioners -- that justifies the
- 21 degree of impingement that's inherent in the fact that,
- 22 as Your Honor correctly says, all bargaining,
- 23 particularly in the public sector, has political
- 24 elements in it.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.

1	Mr. Young, you have 4 minutes remaining.
2	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF WILLIAM J. YOUNG
3	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
4	MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice.
5	JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Young, I hope this
6	won't use up much of your time, but I do have a pressing
7	question to make sure that we're just not spinning our
8	wheels here.
9	What if the union here had simply said all
10	this additional assessment will go to bargaining
11	activities, and then simply used its original
12	assessment, the portion that had been anticipated to be
13	used for bargaining, for political activities? It could
14	do that, couldn't it?
15	MR. YOUNG: It would
16	JUSTICE SCALIA: I mean, it's not committed
17	to to, you know, an 80-20, or whatever the division
18	is, simply because that's what's given out in the first
19	notice. It can indeed use its the anticipated
20	portion for bargaining for political activities.
21	MR. YOUNG: It would be free to do so,
22	Justice Scalia.
23	JUSTICE SCALIA: So, why are we wasting our
24	time? I mean, all the unions are going to do is say
25	this is a general assessment for bargaining purposes,

- 1 and then use their -- their general funds for the
- 2 political thing.
- 3 MR. YOUNG: Because the nonmembers still
- 4 have that right to challenge, Justice Scalia.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But they don't lose it;
- 6 they're going to do it the following September. The
- 7 attractive part of your argument from the beginning was
- 8 that this is somehow a forced loan. And I understand
- 9 the attractiveness of that. But it goes back to what
- 10 Justice Breyer said from the beginning, which is, given,
- 11 as has been recognized, that money is fungible and that
- 12 you can't really often predict what's going to happen in
- 13 the future, it's been developed a system that cyclically
- 14 gets money to the people back.
- 15 MR. YOUNG: And money is fungible to a
- 16 degree, Justice Sotomayor -- Sotomayor -- excuse me.
- 17 And I respect that argument, but let's remember the
- 18 facts as we have them here. In the facts of this case,
- 19 it was a segregated fund. There's a separate portion, a
- 20 separate line item in the union's notice for both --
- 21 JUSTICE SCALIA: Okay. So, you win, and
- 22 it'll never happen again. It'll never again be called a
- 23 segregated fund for politics.
- 24 (Laughter.)
- MR. YOUNG: I lose, Justice Scalia, and it

- 1 will happen all the time, I'm afraid.
- 2 JUSTICE BREYER: No, but the -- the problem
- 3 if you win in this case, and then there is this other
- 4 way of getting to the same -- the same result, is that
- 5 the other way of getting to the same result, while
- 6 permissible, is far less transparent. And people won't
- 7 understand it, and it -- it encourages a kind of slyness
- 8 that seems highly undesirable.
- And the virtue of the present system is that
- 10 it does require some forced loans, that's true, but it
- 11 does wash out in the wash, and it ends up being fair to
- 12 the objectors. And it's simply hard to think of a
- 13 better system that doesn't provide more administrative
- 14 problems than the existing one.
- MR. YOUNG: But --
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: So, that's -- go ahead.
- 17 MR. YOUNG: And I thank you, Justice Breyer.
- 18 I'm sorry for interrupting.
- 19 It -- I understand that, Justice Breyer.
- 20 And for ordinary union dues, that's why when Justice
- 21 Sotomayor asked me at the beginning of the argument
- 22 whether we're challenging the ordinary Hudson system, I
- 23 answered no, because that system is perfectly adequate
- 24 for ordinary union dues.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: The problem is that I'm

- 1 being told by your adversary -- and since we don't know,
- 2 I'm always afraid of writing a decision in a vacuum,
- 3 okay?
- 4 MR. YOUNG: Sure.
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That unions structure
- 6 their business in a myriad number of ways, that some
- 7 have a very small due each year and a larger special
- 8 assessment for special projects. And I assume there's
- 9 endless variety.
- 10 You're proposing a rule that every single
- 11 time an assessment outside of annual dues is imposed,
- 12 that a new Hudson notice can be given. And you're
- 13 suggesting, Justice Scalia, that all they have to say is
- 14 we think it's going to be for chargeable effect.
- MR. YOUNG: Well, the -- I'm sorry.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Briefly, counsel.
- 17 MR. YOUNG: Yes, and I thank you,
- 18 Mr. Chief Justice.
- So, Justice Sotomayor, the answer is that
- 20 I'm saying it would -- it would be brief -- and my
- 21 friend Mr. Collins is saying that it doesn't happen that
- 22 often. So, the burden is minimal. Unions have other
- 23 options than extracting this money from unwitting
- 24 nonmembers -- interest-free loans, internationals.
- 25 And I thank the Court for its attention.

1		CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel
2	counsel.	
3		The case is submitted.
4		(Whereupon, at 11:20 a.m., the case in the
5	above-entit	led matter was submitted.)
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20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

	11010	1 21 21	120.25	26.21.22.6
A	addressed 10:19	21:21	approval 39:25	26:21 33:6
<b>able</b> 36:6 38:4,5	addressing 3:11	alteration 14:1	approve 34:18	34:2,3 40:4,5
41:9,11	4:5 10:16	15:18	approximately	40:15 41:12
<b>Abood</b> 15:14	adequacy 5:5	Amendment	39:12	assume 18:20
48:24 49:11,12	7:21 27:19	3:20 47:14	argument 1:13	20:11 53:8
49:19	adequate 7:4 8:5	amount 3:18	2:2,5,8 3:3,7	assumption
above-entitled	12:20 31:7,17	15:10 16:16	6:20 11:12,15	36:17
1:12 54:5	52:23	17:24,25 38:12	11:16 12:8,8	assurance 23:9
absolutely 19:14	administrable	amounts 21:3	12:10 13:16	attacking 13:4,7
25:21 31:9	18:16	35:25 36:1	24:22 25:17	13:10
49:11	administrative	announced	27:18 29:3	attain 27:9
accept 29:13	40:14 42:20	17:23	40:7,12 43:3	attempting 5:11
accessible 24:12	43:6 52:13	annual 7:15	50:2 51:7,17	attention 53:25
accomplished	<b>adopt</b> 18:6	10:22 23:21,22	52:21	attractive 51:7
49:19	adversary 32:17	23:25 35:23	arrangement	attractiveness
accounting 13:6	53:1	36:2 53:11	49:18	51:9
accurate 22:21	advertising	answer 17:1	arrangements	attributable
accurately 4:14	44:18	21:13 28:1,3	49:16	47:2
8:23	<b>affect</b> 9:12 40:19	33:11 37:7	array 49:4	attributed 31:20
achieve 30:22	affiliate 20:19	40:18 41:23	Article 5:2,9	39:10
46:5	affirmative 10:6	44:5 45:23	articulate 13:13	<b>audit</b> 23:10 39:9
achieved 45:20	10:6	47:6,15 48:10	14:3	audited 21:3
46:8	affirmed 20:12	53:19	artificial 45:7	<b>audits</b> 43:23
acknowledge	<b>afraid</b> 52:1 53:2	answered 52:23	asked 18:6	<b>avoid</b> 40:13
34:22	agency 48:25	anticipate 7:3	39:19 48:7	47:25 48:1
acme 30:22	agree 21:8	20:15 43:25	52:21	avoiding 47:20
act 6:8 10:6,6,12	agreed 22:18	anticipated 5:20	asserting 6:15	<b>avoids</b> 40:18
actions 26:5	agreements	38:6 42:7 48:3	assessable 19:1	aware 33:20
activities 9:12	49:16	50:12,19	assessment 7:6	<b>a.m</b> 1:14 3:2
16:3,7 19:1	agrees 19:15	anybody 14:8	7:16,24 9:5	54:4
24:11 31:20	<b>ahead</b> 16:21	<b>apart</b> 39:3	12:2 13:8 14:9	
34:8 37:3	52:16	apex 30:22	14:10,19 15:1	B
38:11,14 41:21	<b>AL</b> 1:3	apologetic 4:22	16:2,8 17:13	<b>B</b> 5:24
42:17,25 43:1	<b>Alito</b> 7:6,12,22	appealed 27:8	17:22 18:2,7	back 20:23 24:7
44:20 46:13	8:7 26:19 27:1	29:22	18:21 20:25	24:14 26:22
50:11,13,20	35:4,12,20	appeals 25:23	22:11,18,19,23	30:24,25 32:7
activity 11:18	36:21 37:4,12	45:1	24:23 26:24	35:10,11 36:6
19:16 34:9	37:21,25 38:3	appearance	33:4,16,22	39:18,23 45:19
acts 11:5,7	45:12,14,25	20:7	34:21 36:8	46:5,7 51:9,14
Adding 3:21	46:11 47:9	APPEARAN	38:24 39:1,2	background
addition 39:10	allegations	1:15	40:10 41:17	48:14
additional 15:5	27:14	appellate 33:21	43:4,12,15	backwards
22:11 39:12	allegedly 11:18	Appendix 5:24	44:16 47:11	18:14
43:5 44:2,8	<b>allow</b> 42:17,21	31:15	50:10,12,25	<b>bad</b> 15:16
50:10	42:22,23 43:1	appreciate 13:9	53:8,11	balance 25:12
address 10:25	allowed 27:22	appropriately	assessments	<b>ballot</b> 3:23
25:13	already-assess	28:13	6:22 13:5 24:8	38:15,20 39:11

				<u> </u>
39:15,15 46:3	17:6,10,16	10:14 11:17,19	25:10	<b>closer</b> 37:10
46:14 48:9	18:5 19:4,11	12:10,14 14:7	charge 41:14	colleagues 13:14
Bancorp 28:9	19:20 20:6,8	15:7 18:4	43:5	collect 34:19
30:11	23:1,11,14,15	20:17 24:6	chargeability	collected 7:15
bankroll 3:25	25:3 39:17	26:1,2,7,8,12	13:6	17:18,21 18:10
bargaining	51:10 52:2,16	27:9,13 28:1,3	chargeable 15:6	36:3
34:13 35:10	52:17,19	28:9,12 29:6	16:3,7 17:3,3	collective 42:11
42:11 44:2,9	<b>Breyer's</b> 20:23	29:13 30:4,4,6	17:24 19:16	48:15,21 49:7
44:10,12 46:25	<b>brief</b> 4:7 11:19	30:9,13,23	21:2,6 31:24	49:10
47:3,4 48:15	53:20	33:19 34:24	36:4,11,23	<b>Collins</b> 1:18 2:6
48:22 49:7,10	Briefly 53:16	35:13,22 38:8	37:2 46:20	25:16,17,19
49:22 50:10,13	<b>briefs</b> 21:4 24:9	38:9 43:22	49:10 53:14	26:3,23 27:17
50:20,25	24:9	46:21 51:18	check 30:15	28:6 29:16
<b>based</b> 13:6 35:1	<b>broad</b> 44:17	52:3 54:3,4	<b>Chief</b> 3:3,9 6:10	30:8 32:12,19
35:16	<b>broke</b> 17:2	cases 10:15,21	6:14,17,19	32:23 33:7,10
basically 35:10	brought 27:13	11:1,8 28:7	12:21,24 14:18	33:15 35:6
35:16 40:9	<b>budget</b> 38:10,13	30:11 35:23	14:21,23 15:10	36:15 37:9,20
basing 13:5	39:24 40:21	<b>caught</b> 37:11	16:9,21 23:16	37:24 38:2,25
<b>basis</b> 30:6 39:25	burden 33:3	caused 5:22	23:20 25:15,19	39:7 41:4,7,25
beginning 7:14	41:25 42:1,2	cert 11:18	25:25 29:1,17	42:2 43:10
28:8 36:17	53:22	certain 28:11	30:1 31:5	44:25 45:13,23
39:21 51:7,10	burdensome	29:18 31:22	32:10 38:19	46:10 47:18,21
52:21	41:6	34:8 35:25	39:5,8 42:14	47:25 48:13,18
<b>behalf</b> 2:4,7,10	business 53:6	certainly 6:23	43:10 44:14	48:23 49:11
3:8 25:18 50:3		7:3 9:18 13:2	45:1,10 49:25	53:21
belabor 26:24	<u> </u>	14:17 15:11,18	50:4 53:16,18	combine 19:20
<b>believe</b> 8:5 11:4	C 2:1 3:1	cessation 11:17	54:1	<b>come</b> 21:6 40:13
12:17,18 13:24	calculate 39:24	cetera 40:11	<b>choose</b> 15:20,22	45:15,22
18:4 22:1	California 3:16	challenge 3:18	15:23 16:16	comes 9:21
28:24 30:10	44:21	15:10 16:16	23:23	17:11,11
31:1 33:11,15	call 36:9 39:1	18:23 19:8	<b>chose</b> 15:21	<b>coming</b> 38:13
33:16 48:1	called 24:20	21:21,24 23:23	Circuit 3:22	40:1
benefit 16:10	28:23 41:17	23:23 51:4	8:12,14	committed
25:3,10	51:22	challenged 26:6	circumstance	50:16
<b>better</b> 16:5 18:8	campaign 17:23	49:20	13:22 16:2	communicatio
18:19 19:24	37:13 38:1	challenges 25:2	<b>claim</b> 4:8,23,24	35:7
20:3,4 41:1	candidate 37:15	25:5 33:25	4:25 5:17	communities
52:13	candidates	challenging	<b>claims</b> 27:21	44:21
bishops 19:13	37:16	24:15 52:22	clarification	compared 43:19
20:5,12,16	capable 9:16	chance 20:24	28:11	46:18
<b>board</b> 13:19	10:9 11:9,23	21:9,14,15,24	clarify 32:14	compelled 3:16
borrowing	carry 23:17	<b>change</b> 9:2 14:4	class 4:14,16	compelling
13:13	case 3:4,13 4:11	23:6 40:24	clear 10:2,15	42:16
<b>bounced</b> 30:15	5:4,10,25 6:2	changed 8:23	12:18 27:20	competent 22:3
breakdown 23:4	6:15 7:9,18 8:1	45:11	32:23 48:11	complete 44:5
<b>Breyer</b> 16:1,14	8:4,16 9:1,4,10	changes 44:3	clearly 11:16	completed 9:4
16:18,22,25	9:19,21 10:1	characterizati	15:14	completely
				l

	l	l	1	1
31:17 43:21	contracts 13:20	31:9,10,14,18	decreased 36:25	dismiss 3:11
complied 6:16	contrary 47:13	31:19 32:1,25	deducted 35:2	disposing 28:10
12:16 27:23	contrast 34:4	33:19,20,21	defeated 46:4	dispute 14:8
28:2	contribute 3:16	44:15 45:1	defend 26:7	27:18,19,21
complies 7:4	40:25	46:22 47:6	defended 11:6,7	28:16,17,19
<b>comply</b> 5:6,11	contributing	48:24 49:19	defending 11:20	disputes 42:8
5:15	3:23	53:25	defies 4:1	distinct 35:19
comport 29:21	controversy 8:2	courts 9:21	defines 27:8	distinctions
compromise	convenience	court's 4:1 5:7	degree 49:21	41:13
42:20	42:20	6:16 7:5 8:5	51:16	distorting 4:2
computing	core 48:22	12:17 27:24	demand 6:22	distributed 4:13
31:23	<b>correct</b> 4:9,19	28:7	depend 28:4	distribution 5:8
concede 18:18	17:15 19:9	covering 44:11	37:20 38:2	24:16
49:6	21:9 24:16,17	46:24	dependent	district 5:7,11
concededly 37:2	25:21 26:3	covers 34:8	32:25	5:18,20 6:3,5
concerns 27:3	30:9	create 19:22	describe 47:1	6:16 7:5 8:4,13
concluded 49:2	correctly 49:22	22:24	described 5:19	8:15 9:8 11:6,8
<b>conduct</b> 27:4,11	correspond	critical 47:22	31:16 35:7	12:17,19 25:24
confirm 18:16	33:17	49:7	description	27:6,24 28:21
confusing 47:6	<b>cost</b> 13:17 33:9	crucial 38:8	23:12,14	28:24 29:18,19
conscience	<b>costs</b> 13:18 15:2	41:13	detailed 35:9	29:21,23 30:3
47:14	42:11 44:2,3,8	cure 5:22	determine 41:8	30:5,14,17,23
consequence	44:12,13,22	<b>cycle</b> 24:10	41:10,11	31:3,9,10,14
8:11 25:24	46:25 47:2	38:23	determined 5:20	31:18,19 32:1
consequences	<b>cough</b> 22:7,12	cyclically 51:13	43:23	33:20 44:15
6:24	counsel 25:15		determining	divert 17:24
consider 26:2	49:25 53:16	<b>D</b>	32:25	21:20 24:12
47:7 48:16	54:1,2	<b>D</b> 3:1	developed 51:13	divided 18:22
considered	course 15:12	<b>damages</b> 4:8 5:8	DIANNE 1:3	division 50:17
48:18	23:21 36:7	7:20 10:11	difference 29:9	<b>doing</b> 17:22
consistent 43:22	38:22 43:1	dark 22:16,17	46:2	dollar 4:13
consists 42:2	49:9	days 8:24 9:2	different 4:17	dollars 4:14
constitutional	<b>court</b> 1:1,13	32:17	5:2,9 6:20 7:7	46:13
44:6 47:23	3:10 5:11,18	<b>deal</b> 17:7	7:8,16,23,25	<b>doubt</b> 46:1
constitutionally	5:20 6:3,5 8:14	<b>dealing</b> 7:12,15	11:23 25:8	draw 40:6,8,21
7:17	8:16,20,25 9:8	33:21 42:15	30:6 34:4	due 20:17 53:7
contemplate 6:6	9:22 10:16,19	45:7	35:21,22 36:14	dues 7:15 21:25
34:9	10:24 11:1,3,4	decide 27:10	37:5 41:12	26:17 31:11,12
contemplated	11:6,8 12:9,19	decided 22:18	42:6 49:4,5	31:13,16 33:22
26:16	15:14 22:1	deciding 30:19	<b>direct</b> 44:19	34:7,10,18
content 6:11	25:20,22,23,24	decision 15:21	disagree 25:9	35:1,1,23 36:2
contesting 27:23	26:2 27:6,9	25:23 27:10	disclosure 5:6	39:11,14 41:15
29:24	28:3,10,13,20	28:20,25 53:2	5:21 6:1 12:20	41:18,20 43:15
context 7:17,24	28:21,24 29:18	decisions 4:1	<b>discover</b> 40:4,23	45:6 46:17
7:25	29:19,21,23	declaratory 9:7	discrete 11:24	52:20,24 53:11
continue 19:12	30:4,5,9,14,17	27:15	discuss 10:18	<b>D.C</b> 1:9,18
continuing 12:3	30:19,23 31:3	declined 8:21	discussed 42:11	

E 2 1 2 1 1		22 11	20 17 20 12	6
<b>E</b> 2:1 3:1,1	essentially 4:7	extensive 33:11	29:17 30:12	<b>fungible</b> 47:17
earmarked 45:6	27:12	extent 6:25	45:1 47:9,14	51:11,15
easily 27:22	estimate 41:1	extra 16:2	50:18	<b>further</b> 16:20
economic 15:21	estimated 15:2	extracting 53:23	fiscal 48:17	44:21
36:14	et 1:3 40:11	extreme 41:16	flounder 43:14	<b>future</b> 9:12,24
economically	evading 9:16		flow 41:19	9:24 26:20
16:4	11:10		focused 40:13	27:3,3,11
education 44:19	event 23:24	<b>fact</b> 5:16 8:23 12:19 16:3	followed 46:18	51:13
<b>effect</b> 9:11 11:11	27:14		following 16:4	G
12:2 33:1	events 26:4	49:21	20:1 21:1	$\frac{\mathbf{G}}{\mathbf{G}3:1}$
40:22 53:14	everybody	factor 48:16	24:13 29:11	
efforts 24:13	19:15	facts 3:13 38:4	43:21 51:6	gee 45:25
either 5:7 25:4	exaction 3:19	43:22 51:18,18	footnote 11:4	general 14:6
electing 6:21	exactly 19:9	fail 5:15	41:5	35:3,18 39:3
election 21:21	36:10 48:23	failed 4:15 5:12	forced 19:22	40:20 41:20
24:11 37:13	example 16:23	8:3 28:18	51:8 52:10	44:9,13 45:8
38:1,23 45:20	21:19 28:17	fair 19:25 23:14	foreign 36:18	50:25 51:1
elections 24:10	35:21 39:9	52:11	forever 33:1	generally 10:14
electoral 45:20	exchange 47:9	fairly 33:10	forget 24:8	13:18 48:18
electorate 45:18	exclusive 49:2	fall 43:18	forms 41:12	getting 11:1
element 3:25	49:17	<b>fallacy</b> 35:17	<b>forth</b> 21:2	52:4,5
elements 5:13	exclusivity	far 4:11 23:4	forthright 5:16	gift 29:25 30:21
15:11 49:24	48:24	52:6	forthrightly	<b>Ginsburg</b> 8:8,10
employed 3:15	excuse 6:14	favor 37:14,15	4:25 5:1	8:18 9:3,6
employees 1:6	51:16	Federal 33:19	forward 13:5	11:22 12:7,12
3:5,15	existing 52:14	fee 3:19 15:10	43:11	12:16 25:21
employer 48:17	<b>expect</b> 44:1,3	16:6,17	<b>frame</b> 16:12	give 16:22 18:12
employers 35:2	expenditure	fees 5:23 34:10	frankly 27:2	21:6 22:6 26:1
employment	34:16	35:1 41:20	41:17	30:24 31:11
49:4,16	expenditures	48:25	free 8:19 11:21	33:3 35:20
<b>enact</b> 45:18	3:23 15:13	<b>fight</b> 35:10,11	44:9,12 50:21	37:22 41:1
encourages 52:7	17:2 22:4	<b>fight-back</b> 3:17	freeing 46:25	42:4,16 45:9
<b>ended</b> 26:18	23:18 37:2	22:25 35:5	47:2	45:16 46:4,7
endless 53:9	expenses 13:19	43:25	frequent 41:8	given 7:14 9:20
ends 45:20	43:25 44:18	<b>figure</b> 42:18	frequently 33:5	24:22 29:19,20
52:11	49:10	43:13	<b>friend</b> 53:21	31:2 37:19,21
ensuring 48:16	<b>expire</b> 10:23,24	<b>figures</b> 23:24	friend's 29:3	42:7 43:17,21
entered 9:8	expired 25:11	filed 11:20	fully 28:22	50:18 51:10
<b>entity</b> 35:15,19	explain 28:16	<b>financial</b> 5:6,21	function 39:4	53:12
entry 10:18	30:12 31:4	6:1 12:20	functions 39:3	gives 21:1 27:10
episode 9:4	42:5 43:18	15:24	<b>fund</b> 3:17 22:25	27:11,11
11:24	explained 28:7	find 8:21,25	31:16 34:20	<b>giving</b> 33:9
equipment	32:5 36:20	10:15 23:22	35:5 44:22	43:18
44:24	explanation	fine 32:12 43:8	45:8 51:19,23	<b>go</b> 4:10 6:9 16:3
<b>ESQ</b> 1:16,18 2:3	35:9	first 3:4,20 4:4	<b>funded</b> 41:15,22	16:21 24:14
2:6,9	explicitly 49:12	17:21 21:19	<b>funding</b> 41:13	26:22 39:18,25
essential 35:12	exposed 35:17	22:12 27:6	<b>funds</b> 21:21 51:1	43:2 50:10
		1	l	l

		I	I	I
52:16	37:5 42:10	49:21	influencing 38:1	item 51:20
goes 19:15 29:14	46:15,17	implicit 11:15	information 7:1	it'll 51:22,22
39:21 51:9	happening 29:4	implies 12:16	informed 32:6	
<b>going</b> 15:3,4,5	happens 21:19	importance 4:15	inherent 49:21	<u>J</u>
16:2 17:14	24:4 41:6	48:16	initiative 38:21	<b>J</b> 1:16 2:3,9 3:7
18:10,19,21	<b>happy</b> 43:8	important 3:12	initiatives 38:15	50:2
19:1,16 20:23	<b>hard</b> 16:11	6:11,13 10:7	39:15 46:3,14	January 1:10
21:2,5 23:2	47:17 52:12	29:12 49:1,8	48:9	JEREMIAH
24:7,11 25:4	hear 3:3	<b>impose</b> 11:21	injunction 9:23	1:18 2:6 25:17
26:6 29:13	<b>heard</b> 29:8	22:19 33:5	9:24,25 10:4,5	judgment 4:16
34:18 37:13,14	32:15,17	<b>imposed</b> 14:1,6	10:10	4:24 5:7,10 6:7
40:2,4,25 44:7	<b>held</b> 31:14 49:19	15:20 53:11	injunctive 9:9	6:16 7:5 8:5,12
44:8,11,12	heretofore	impossible 4:7	10:16,18 27:16	8:14,15,16
45:6,19,22	15:21	40:6 43:2	<b>injury</b> 3:21	9:11 12:17
46:4,5,7,23	higher 16:6	inadequacy 6:12	inquire 15:16	25:24 27:7,7
47:1 50:24	highly 52:8	inadequate 4:14	inquiry 6:4	28:21,23 29:19
51:6,12 53:14	<b>honest</b> 19:13	4:18,21 5:22	instance 34:14	29:21 30:25
good 12:21	<b>Honor</b> 26:3 30:9	6:4 28:19	instinct 26:6	48:21,22
15:15 20:2	49:22	incentives 36:14	insult 3:21	judgments 49:8
27:12 32:11	hope 50:5	incidental 29:2	<b>intend</b> 22:22	<b>June</b> 6:2,6 22:15
government	horse 29:25	including 38:14	intended 22:23	22:16 46:11
49:1,1,13,15	30:21	44:18 46:13	interest 22:13	<b>Justice</b> 3:3,9 4:3
governmental	Hudson 7:13	<b>income</b> 43:24	49:2,14,17	4:6,11,17,20
48:17	10:17,19 11:3	45:6	interested 40:17	5:4,14 6:10,14
government's	13:11,15,24	incorrect 29:16	interest-free	6:14,17,19 7:6
49:14	17:6 18:1	31:10 35:4	19:7 21:16	7:12,22 8:7,8,9
governor 17:23	20:12 22:2,6	incorrectly 31:7	37:23 45:16	8:10,18 9:3,6
<b>grant</b> 8:21 28:11	23:2,3,6,8 29:3	increase 13:19	53:24	9:14,15,19,23
granted 11:18	33:3,23 34:22	14:5,6 15:19	internal 8:24	10:4,7,13
26:1,8	37:8 42:4,17	26:15,16,17,18	International	11:12,15,22
greater 31:25	43:20 46:12,19	31:11,12,16,21	1:6 3:5	12:6,12,15,21
guaranteed	48:7 52:22	32:3,6,9 33:22	internationals	12:24,25 13:2
19:15	53:12	39:11 41:18	53:24	13:4,10,12,23
gubernatorial	Hudson's 8:6	43:15 44:7,11	interrupting	14:3,9,11,12
37:15	22:20	46:17,24 47:1	52:18	14:13,16,18,21
guess 24:21	hypothetical	increased 31:13	involved 13:20	14:23,24 15:10
29:11 36:21	19:5,11 36:16	34:24 36:24	26:11	16:1,8,9,14,18
	37:5,6 38:3	41:19 46:24	involves 48:22	16:21,22,25
H		increases 34:2	<b>issue</b> 10:19	17:6,10,16,17
half 40:4	I	incremental	26:14 27:4	17:20 18:3,5
<b>happen</b> 10:10	ideological	33:9	29:14 30:19	18:18,25 19:4
23:2 24:10	37:18	indisputably	31:6	19:6,10,11,19
33:5 41:2 42:9	<b>III</b> 5:2,9	15:6	<b>issued</b> 12:11	19:20 20:6,8
51:12,22 52:1	imagine 10:25	individual 28:18	31:11	20:11,16,22,23
53:21	16:11 17:1	individuals	<b>issues</b> 10:25	21:11,13,18
happened 21:8	43:16,17	15:13 32:7	30:14 34:22	22:5,10,15
24:25 34:5,24	impingement	inevitable 20:1	37:17	23:1,11,14,15

22.16.20.24.2	20 10 21 22	1242 - 42 - 20 47	20.2.42.15	27.12.20.17
23:16,20 24:3	29:18 31:22	litigation 20:17	39:2 42:15	37:12 38:17
24:7,17,21	33:21 34:9,16	41:10 42:8	50:16,24	39:10,12 40:23
25:3,11,15,19	34:21 36:18	little 11:2 16:11	meaning 33:4,17	42:16,23,24
25:21,25 26:19	39:3 41:14	41:3	37:2 48:1	45:3,17,17,21
27:1,17 28:6	52:7	live 8:1 28:1	meaningful 9:2	46:5,5,25 47:3
29:1,11,17	kinds 34:1,8	<b>living</b> 5:2,9	means 8:13 16:3	47:4,4,13
30:1 31:5	41:21	loan 19:7 21:17	17:7 30:17	51:11,14,15
32:10,14,22	know 5:15 15:2	25:8 37:23	members 6:21	53:23
33:2,8,11,13	15:4 18:21	45:16 51:8	21:6 24:24	moneys 24:12
35:4,12,20	21:8 22:20,25	loans 52:10	34:13 35:24	24:16
36:21 37:4,12	24:9,19 29:6	53:24	42:16 47:24	monopolize
37:21,25 38:3	33:5 40:5	lobbying 13:18	membership	33:14
38:19 39:5,8	45:24 50:17	24:13	35:1	months 3:13
39:17,18 41:5	53:1	local 1:7 26:14	mentioned	moot 4:8 6:2,15
41:7,23 42:1,3	<b>Knox</b> 1:3 3:4	26:19,23 27:2	38:16	7:9,18 8:17
42:14 43:10	L	locals 26:20	mere 11:10	10:23,24 11:9
44:14 45:1,10		long 8:3 9:5	merely 5:25	12:5,10,13
45:12,14,25	labor 13:17	11:11 12:3	46:15	28:12 29:7,14
46:11 47:5,9	24:24 49:15	27:25	merits 11:19	30:4,4,9
47:19,22 48:2	lag 20:1	look 4:23 32:15	12:22 13:1	mootness 3:12
48:12,14,20	language 4:12	39:22 43:19	26:25 28:12,14	4:4 8:11,21 9:1
49:6,25 50:4,5	larger 53:7	46:2	30:19 32:11,13	10:19 30:18
50:16,22,23	Laughter 20:9	looked 43:20	messaging 46:16	32:24
51:4,5,10,16	20:14 51:24	looking 29:25	met 7:24	morning 3:4
51:21,25 52:2	law 8:16 42:22	30:21 33:14	<b>middle</b> 17:10,22	<b>motion</b> 3:11
52:16,17,19,20	left 8:15 12:14	lose 51:5,25	21:20 40:3	mouth 29:25
52:25 53:5,13	22:16	<b>lost</b> 46:16	mid-year 26:15	30:21
53:16,18,19	legal 45:9	<b>lot</b> 41:2,6 44:3	million 3:17	move 12:22
54:1	legislative 37:16	lower 10:18	38:10,13 39:13	32:11
Justices 24:19	legitimate 31:6		43:25 44:2	moving 13:5
justifies 49:20	legitimately	<u>M</u>	48:9	Munsingwear
justify 31:23	27:4	mail 44:19	millions 46:13	28:9 30:10
K	Lehnert 21:7	main 11:16	<b>mind</b> 16:12	myriad 53:6
	25:1,4,5	making 40:7	minimal 53:22	
Kagan 4:3,6,11	length 9:21	management	minimize 15:22	N
4:17,20 5:4,14	letter 35:8	22:3	15:24	N 2:1,1 3:1
9:14 10:7,13	let's 13:16 35:25	manner 19:25	<b>minimum</b> 37:22	nearly 3:14
27:17 28:6	36:1,2 43:16	massive 4:2	minutes 50:1	necessarily
<b>Kagan's</b> 29:12	51:17	material 13:25	misunderstan	40:20
keeps 16:10	levies 36:8	14:4,5,9,10	27:1	necessary 7:2
<b>Kennedy</b> 9:15	lies 49:2	15:18,19 44:17	<b>moment</b> 20:25	need 15:6 16:12
9:19,23 10:4	light 22:20	matter 1:12	26:24 28:16	20:11 34:6
11:12,15 47:5	limited 32:16	14:20 26:5	money 14:14	38:14 40:23
47:19,22 48:2	limits 11:10 27:8	29:2 54:5	15:5 17:17,20	42:8 43:24
48:12,14,20	line 40:6,8 51:20	matters 46:20	18:10 22:8,12	46:15
49:6	literature 38:21	46:21	22:22 29:5	needed 31:22
<b>kind</b> 7:7,8,13,16	litigate 12:4	mean 10:20 29:2	35:13 36:3,19	38:4

needs 21:20         normal 13:5,10         36:12 38:12         48:10         partly 33:11           28:10 36:20         21:25 24:10,14         43:8 46:12,15         opposing 39:11         pasted-on 4:13           49:15         48:15 38:22         48:4,8,13         39:15         opposite 41:16         opposition         39:17:7 24:1           negotiate 49:3         normally 17:6         34:10,17 42:21         objected 36:5,6         opposite 41:16         opposition         37:1,3 45:19           never 3:22 10:24         notice 4:18 5:5         objection 18:20         opt 6:21 29:9         opt 6:21 29:9         opt 6:21 29:9         opt of 6:21 29:9         opt-out 7:8         opt-out 39:25         penny 32:2,8           18:21 21:2         18:1,9,12         52:12         objects 15:17         order 27:24 28:3         37:3         people 15:14           16:15 19:14         22:6,7,16 23:2         objects 15:17         objects 15:17         order 27:24 28:3         02:18,19,20           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         15:19,24         ordering 6:8         22:15 29:1,6,5           42:8 43:18         28:2,19 29:3,5         14:1         10:6         52:6
28:10 36:20         21:25 24:10,14         43:8 46:12,15         opposing 39:11         pasted-on 4:13           49:15         49:15         48:4,8,13         opposite 49:3         opposite 41:16         opposition         39:15         pay 17:7 24:1           negotiate 49:3         normally 17:6         34:10,17 42:21         objected 36:5,6         opposition         37:1,3 45:19         paying 15:24           48:15         noted 27:13         notice 4:18 5:5         objection 18:20         opt 6:21 29:9         opt ont 7:8 47:7         opt ont 7:8 47:1         opt ont 7:8 47:1
49:15         24:15 38:22         48:4,8,13         39:15         pay 17:7 24:1           negotiate 49:3         normally 17:6         34:10,17 42:21         objected 36:5,6         opposition         37:1,3 45:19           48:15         noted 27:13         notice 4:18 5:5         objection 18:20         opt 6:21 29:9         opt opt 6:21 29:9         opt opt 6:21 29:9         opt opt 6:21 29:9         opt opt opt opt 6:21 29:9         opt opt opt opt opt 6:21 29:9         opt
negotiate 49:3 negotiations         normally 17:6 34:10,17 42:21 noted 27:13         objected 36:5,6 objecting 24:24 arewise field 37:1,3 45:19 arewer 3:22 10:24 power 3:22 10:24 arewer 3:22 10:24 power 3:22 10:24 arewer 3:22 10:24 power 4:18 5:5 power 4:18 5:2 power 4:18 5:5 power 4:18 5:2 power 4:18 5:2 power 4:18 5:5 power 4:18 5:2 power 4:18 5:2 power 4:18 5:2 power 4:18 5:2 power 4:18 5:5 power 4:18 5:5 power 4:18 5:19 power 4:18 5:18 power 4:18 5:18 power 4:18 5:19 powe
negotiations         34:10,17 42:21         objecting 24:24         opposition         37:1,3 45:19           never 3:22 10:24         notice 4:18 5:5         objection 18:20         opt 6:21 29:9         paying 15:24           26:15 33:18         5:19 6:1,6,9,11         21:7 23:18,21         opt 6:21 29:9         44:7           35:13 51:22,22         6:20 7:1,4,7,10         23:25         opt-in 7:8 47:7         payment 7:21           nevertheless         7:13,14,16 9:2         objections 37:18         opt-out 7:8         perout 7:8           49:13         9:25 12:11,17         objector 16:4,10         opt-outs 39:25         penny 32:2,8           14:9,10 15:9         16:12,15 17:21         17:7 18:8         3:7 25:17         people 15:14           18:21 21:2         18:1,9,12         52:12         opt-outs 39:25         penny 32:2,8           39:3,7,16 40:2         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         30:6         20:18,19,20           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         14:1         9:8 32:1         29:10 40:24           42:8 43:18         28:2,19 29:3,5         14:1         10:6         52:6           44:11 53:12         29:8,13,18,20         obviously 6:5,24         orders 28:12         perceive 38:14           newsletter 15:3         <
never 3:22 10:24         notice 4:18 5:5         objection 18:20         opt 6:21 29:9         44:7           26:15 33:18         5:19 6:1,6,9,11         21:7 23:18,21         options 53:23         payment 7:21           35:13 51:22,22         6:20 7:1,4,7,10         23:25         opt-out 7:8 47:7         peculiar 16:1           49:13         9:25 12:11,17         objectors 7:3         opt-outs 39:25         opt-outs 39:25           14:9,10 15:9         16:12,15 17:21         17:7 18:8         3:7 25:17         order 27:24 28:3           18:21 21:2         18:1,9,12         52:12         opt-out 7:8         order 27:24 28:3           39:3,7,16 40:2         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         order 27:24 28:3         16:15 19:14           40:12,15 42:4         26:21 27:19,23         obligation 14:6         ordered 5:19 6:8         22:15 29:4,6,9           42:8 43:18         28:2,19 29:3,5         14:1         ordering 6:8         42:22,24 51:1           44:11 53:12         29:8,13,18,20         obviously 6:5,24         orderly 49:15         perceive 38:14           newsletter 15:3         30:3,5,7 31:6,8         7:19 23:24         orderly 21:25         13:19 14:8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         32:20 33:3,9         occur 37:7         49:7 52:20,22         15:
26:15 33:18         5:19 6:1,6,9,11         21:7 23:18,21         options 53:23         payment 7:21           35:13 51:22,22         6:20 7:1,4,7,10         7:13,14,16 9:2         objections 37:18         opt-out 7:8         18:6           49:13         9:25 12:11,17         objector 16:4,10         opt-outs 39:25         penny 32:2,8           14:9,10 15:9         16:12,15 17:21         17:7 18:8         3:7 25:17         people 15:14           18:21 21:2         18:1,9,12         52:12         objects 15:17         order 27:24 28:3         people 15:14           26:5 32:16,21         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         odjects 15:17         ordered 5:19 6:8         20:18,19,20           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         15:19,24         9:8 32:1         29:10 40:24           40:12,15 42:4         26:21 27:19,23         obligations 6:7         14:1         10:6         22:15 29:4,6,9           44:11 53:12         29:8,13,18,20         obviously 6:5,24         orderly 49:15         perceive 38:14           Ninth 3:21 8:12         31:8,10,12,15         28:9 31:11         ordinary 21:25         13:19 14:8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         occurred 34:13         52:24         21:5 26:18
35:13 51:22,22         6:20 7:1,4,7,10         23:25         opt-in 7:8 47:7         peculiar 16:1           nevertheless         7:13,14,16 9:2         objections 37:18         opt-out 7:8         opt-out 7:8         penny 32:2,8           49:13         13:15,21,25         objector 16:4,10         opt-outs 39:25         opt-outs 39:25         penny 32:2,8           14:9,10 15:9         16:12,15 17:21         18:1,9,12         52:12         order 27:24 28:3         37:3           18:21 21:2         18:1,9,12         52:12         objects 15:17         order 27:24 28:3         people 15:14           26:5 32:16,21         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         order 27:24 28:3         20:18,19,20           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         15:19,24         9:8 32:1         20:18,19,20           42:8 43:18         28:2,19 29:3,5         14:1         ordering 6:8         42:22,24 51:1           44:11 53:12         29:8,13,18,20         obviously 6:5,24         orderly 49:15         perceive 38:14           newsletter 15:3         30:3,5,7 31:6,8         28:9 31:11         ordinary 21:25         13:19 14:8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         occur 37:7         49:7 52:20,22         15:1 17:3,3,8           14:1         20:24         20:24
nevertheless         7:13,14,16 9:2         objections 37:18         opt-out 7:8         penny 32:2,8           49:13         13:15,21,25         objectors 7:3         oral 1:12 2:2,5         37:3           14:9,10 15:9         16:12,15 17:21         17:7 18:8         3:7 25:17         people 15:14           18:21 21:2         18:1,9,12         52:12         order 27:24 28:3         people 15:14           26:5 32:16,21         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         odjects 15:17         ordered 5:19 6:8         22:15 29:4,6,9           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         15:19,24         9:8 32:1         29:10 40:24           40:12,15 42:4         26:21 27:19,23         obligations 6:7         ordering 6:8         42:22,24 51:1           42:8 43:18         28:2,19 29:3,5         14:1         10:6         52:6           44:11 53:12         29:8,13,18,20         obviously 6:5,24         orders 28:12         perceive 38:14           newsletter 15:3         31:8,10,12,15         28:9 31:11         ordinary 21:25         13:19 14:8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         occur 37:7         49:7 52:20,22         15:1 17:3,3,8           nominal 4:8 5:8         32:20 33:3,9         occurred 34:13         52:24         21:5 26:18
49:13         9:25 12:11,17         objector 16:4,10 objectors 7:3         opt-outs 39:25 oral 1:12 2:2,5         penny 32:2,8           14:9,10 15:9         16:12,15 17:21         17:7 18:8         3:7 25:17         people 15:14           18:21 21:2         18:1,9,12         52:12         order 27:24 28:3         people 15:14           26:5 32:16,21         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         30:6         20:18,19,20           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         15:19,24         9:8 32:1         29:10 40:24           40:12,15 42:4         26:21 27:19,23         obligations 6:7         perceing 6:8         42:22,24 51:1           42:8 43:18         28:2,19 29:3,5         14:1         orderly 49:15         52:6           newsletter 15:3         30:3,5,7 31:6,8         7:19 23:24         orders 28:12         perceive 38:14           Ninth 3:21 8:12         31:8,10,12,15         28:9 31:11         ordinary 21:25         13:19 14:8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         32:20 33:3,9         occurred 34:13         52:24         21:5 26:18
new 6:9 13:24         13:15,21,25         objectors 7:3         oral 1:12 2:2,5         37:3           14:9,10 15:9         16:12,15 17:21         17:7 18:8         3:7 25:17         people 15:14           18:21 21:2         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         order 27:24 28:3         16:15 19:14           26:5 32:16,21         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         ordered 5:19 6:8         20:18,19,20           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         15:19,24         9:8 32:1         29:10 40:24           40:12,15 42:4         26:21 27:19,23         obligations 6:7         10:6         29:10 40:24           42:8 43:18         28:2,19 29:3,5         14:1         10:6         52:6           44:11 53:12         29:8,13,18,20         obviously 6:5,24         orderly 49:15         perceive 38:14           newsletter 15:3         30:3,5,7 31:6,8         31:8,10,12,15         28:9 31:11         ordinary 21:25         15:1 17:3,3,8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         occur 37:7         49:7 52:20,22         15:1 17:3,3,8           nominal 4:8 5:8         32:20 33:3,9         occurred 34:13         52:24         21:5 26:18
14:9,10 15:9       16:12,15 17:21       17:7 18:8       3:7 25:17       people 15:14         18:21 21:2       20:12 21:2       objects 15:17       30:6       20:18,19,20         32:25 34:9       22:6,7,16 23:2       obligation 14:6       ordered 5:19 6:8       22:15 29:4,6,9         39:3,7,16 40:2       23:3,6,8 24:25       15:19,24       9:8 32:1       29:10 40:24         40:12,15 42:4       26:21 27:19,23       obligations 6:7       14:1       ordering 6:8       42:22,24 51:1         42:8 43:18       29:8,13,18,20       obviously 6:5,24       orderly 49:15       perceive 38:14         newsletter 15:3       30:3,5,7 31:6,8       28:9 31:11       ordinary 21:25       13:19 14:8         8:14       31:18,22 32:5       32:20 33:3,9       occur 37:7       49:7 52:20,22       15:1 17:3,3,8         nominal 4:8 5:8       32:20 33:3,9       occurred 34:13       52:24       21:5 26:18
18:21 21:2       18:1,9,12       52:12       order 27:24 28:3       16:15 19:14         26:5 32:16,21       30:6       20:18,19,20       20:12 21:2       20:12 21:2       20:12 21:2       20:18,19,20         39:3,7,16 40:2       23:3,6,8 24:25       23:3,6,8 24:25       23:3,6,8 24:25       23:3,6,8 24:25       23:15 29:4,6,9       20:18,19,20         40:12,15 42:4       26:21 27:19,23       28:2,19 29:3,5       28:2,19 29:3,5       29:8,13,18,20       29:8,13,18,20       29:8,13,18,20       29:8,13,18,20       29:8,13,18,20       29:8,13,18,20       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28:9 31:11       28
26:5 32:16,21         20:12 21:2         objects 15:17         30:6         20:18,19,20           32:25 34:9         22:6,7,16 23:2         obligation 14:6         22:15 29:4,6,9           39:3,7,16 40:2         23:3,6,8 24:25         15:19,24         9:8 32:1         29:10 40:24           40:12,15 42:4         26:21 27:19,23         obligations 6:7         10:6         52:6           42:8 43:18         29:8,13,18,20         obviously 6:5,24         orderly 49:15         perceive 38:14           newsletter 15:3         30:3,5,7 31:6,8         7:19 23:24         orders 28:12         percent 3:14           Ninth 3:21 8:12         31:8,10,12,15         28:9 31:11         ordinary 21:25         13:19 14:8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         occur 37:7         49:7 52:20,22         15:1 17:3,3,8           nominal 4:8 5:8         32:20 33:3,9         occur 37:7         52:24         21:5 26:18
32:25 34:9       22:6,7,16 23:2       obligation 14:6       ordered 5:19 6:8       22:15 29:4,6,9         39:3,7,16 40:2       23:3,6,8 24:25       15:19,24       9:8 32:1       29:10 40:24         40:12,15 42:4       26:21 27:19,23       obligations 6:7       ordering 6:8       42:22,24 51:1         42:8 43:18       28:2,19 29:3,5       14:1       10:6       52:6         44:11 53:12       29:8,13,18,20       obviously 6:5,24       orderly 49:15       perceive 38:14         newsletter 15:3       30:3,5,7 31:6,8       7:19 23:24       ordinary 21:25       13:19 14:8         8:14       31:18,22 32:5       occur 37:7       49:7 52:20,22       15:1 17:3,3,8         nominal 4:8 5:8       32:20 33:3,9       occurred 34:13       52:24       21:5 26:18
39:3,7,16 40:2       23:3,6,8 24:25       15:19,24       9:8 32:1       29:10 40:24         40:12,15 42:4       26:21 27:19,23       obligations 6:7       10:6       42:22,24 51:1         42:8 43:18       28:2,19 29:3,5       14:1       10:6       52:6         44:11 53:12       29:8,13,18,20       obviously 6:5,24       orderly 49:15       perceive 38:14         newsletter 15:3       30:3,5,7 31:6,8       7:19 23:24       orders 28:12       percent 3:14         Ninth 3:21 8:12       31:8,10,12,15       28:9 31:11       ordinary 21:25       13:19 14:8         8:14       31:18,22 32:5       occur 37:7       49:7 52:20,22       15:1 17:3,3,8         nominal 4:8 5:8       32:20 33:3,9       occurred 34:13       52:24       21:5 26:18
40:12,15 42:4       26:21 27:19,23       obligations 6:7       ordering 6:8       42:22,24 51:1         42:8 43:18       28:2,19 29:3,5       14:1       10:6       52:6         44:11 53:12       29:8,13,18,20       obviously 6:5,24       orderly 49:15       perceive 38:14         newsletter 15:3       30:3,5,7 31:6,8       7:19 23:24       orders 28:12       percent 3:14         Ninth 3:21 8:12       31:8,10,12,15       28:9 31:11       ordinary 21:25       13:19 14:8         8:14       31:18,22 32:5       occur 37:7       49:7 52:20,22       15:1 17:3,3,8         nominal 4:8 5:8       32:20 33:3,9       occurred 34:13       52:24       21:5 26:18
42:8 43:18       28:2,19 29:3,5       14:1       10:6       52:6         44:11 53:12       29:8,13,18,20       obviously 6:5,24       orderly 49:15       perceive 38:14         newsletter 15:3       30:3,5,7 31:6,8       7:19 23:24       orders 28:12       percent 3:14         Ninth 3:21 8:12       31:8,10,12,15       28:9 31:11       ordinary 21:25       13:19 14:8         8:14       31:18,22 32:5       occur 37:7       49:7 52:20,22       15:1 17:3,3,8         nominal 4:8 5:8       32:20 33:3,9       occurred 34:13       52:24       21:5 26:18
44:11 53:12       29:8,13,18,20       obviously 6:5,24       orderly 49:15       perceive 38:14         newsletter 15:3       30:3,5,7 31:6,8       7:19 23:24       orders 28:12       perceive 38:14         Ninth 3:21 8:12       31:8,10,12,15       28:9 31:11       ordinary 21:25       13:19 14:8         8:14       31:18,22 32:5       occur 37:7       49:7 52:20,22       15:1 17:3,3,8         nominal 4:8 5:8       32:20 33:3,9       occurred 34:13       52:24       21:5 26:18
newsletter 15:3         30:3,5,7 31:6,8         7:19 23:24         orders 28:12         percent 3:14           Ninth 3:21 8:12         31:8,10,12,15         28:9 31:11         ordinary 21:25         13:19 14:8           8:14         31:18,22 32:5         occur 37:7         49:7 52:20,22         15:1 17:3,3,8           nominal 4:8 5:8         32:20 33:3,9         occurred 34:13         52:24         21:5 26:18
Ninth 3:21 8:12       31:8,10,12,15       28:9 31:11       ordinary 21:25       13:19 14:8         8:14       31:18,22 32:5       occur 37:7       49:7 52:20,22       15:1 17:3,3,8         nominal 4:8 5:8       32:20 33:3,9       occurred 34:13       52:24       21:5 26:18
8:14
nominal 4:8 5:8         32:20 33:3,9         occurred 34:13         52:24         21:5 26:18
' e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e
7:20   34:6 36:13   <b>occurring</b> 38:5   <b>original</b> 18:22   34:25,25 35:2
<b>nonmember</b> 37:8,19 38:7,9 <b>October</b> 35:8 26:12 50:11 36:3,4,10,11
4:16 14:22   38:16 40:3,15   <b>offered</b> 32:8   <b>outside</b> 53:11   38:10 43:6
36:6,11 38:9   42:4,7 43:17   <b>office</b> 44:23   <b>overruns</b> 13:17   47:10,11,12
46:3 43:18,20 46:12 officers 26:5,11 percentage 16:0
nonmembers   46:19 48:4,7   oh 16:19   P   36:1
3:14,22 14:2,7   48:11 50:19   okay 14:11,16   P 3:1   percentages
15:20 20:18,19   51:20 53:12   21:22 40:11   <b>PAGE</b> 2:2   36:9 39:23
20:20 21:23   notices 10:22,23   51:21 53:3   paid 16:6 21:16   perfectly 20:2
37:1,17 43:19   10:24 42:8   <b>old</b> 8:20 11:24   30:15 32:2,8   48:11 52:23
46:11 51:3   <b>noting</b> 26:9   26:22   35:2   <b>period</b> 9:20 12:
53:24   November 39:6   once 22:18 26:1   paradigm 11:17   12:5 36:23,25
nonunion 42:16   number 28:7   ones 26:11 32:16   paradoxical   41:15 46:18
non-chargeab 42:9 53:6 one-time 27:13 30:12,13 permanent 9:24
13:7   numbers 46:19   ongoing 27:14   pardon 12:7   26:17 41:19
non-chargeable operates 9:13   13:24   permissible 52:
opinion 15.15   per initied 46.2.
31:20 36:5,10 O 2:1 3:1 44:15 43:24 44:1 person 38:7
36:24 38:11   <b>object</b> 3:19 7:2   <b>opponents</b> 20:17   45:5 51:7   46:14 48:7,13
46:20   15:9,13,14   opportunity   particular 35:23   person's 47:13
non-event 33:24         16:13 18:9,13         3:18 15:9 23:9         particularly         perspective 46:           non-objectors         20:24 21:10,14         25:1 37:21         15:22 49:23         persuade 45:18
non objectors   21.16.22.0
15:23

21.15	1	40 40 40 4	1.10	N 26.40
31:15	41:2	40:18 43:6	pursue 16:19	really 26:10
Petitioners 1:4	possible 6:24	46:9 48:5 52:2	put 27:2 34:18	28:16 30:20
1:17 2:4,10 3:8	possibly 7:7	52:25	34:19 40:22	34:16 36:17,18
11:19 27:3,8	posture 28:10	problems 52:14		40:6,11 42:6
29:22,25 30:20	potential 34:22	procedure 11:5	Q	45:23,25 51:12
35:16 44:4	potentially	11:7 15:9	<b>question</b> 4:4 5:8	<b>reason</b> 6:10,13
49:20 50:3	10:23 30:14,16	17:14 27:2	5:15 7:20,22	8:20 14:19
phrase 13:13	36:12	32:21 33:1	11:25 13:1,9	15:12,15,15,15
phrased 10:5	<b>PR</b> 46:22	procedures	14:25 19:17	15:16 16:14
<b>place</b> 8:14 25:1	practicality	11:11 13:11	21:10 25:13	26:4 27:12
plaintiff 30:15	20:24	15:7 26:14	28:2,4,22	40:24 42:14
please 3:10	practice 11:20	process 4:2	29:12 32:4	43:10 46:21
25:20 41:23	11:21 27:15	projects 53:8	34:6 37:10	48:24
45:16	predict 51:12	promote 49:14	39:19 40:16	reasonable 22:2
<b>point</b> 4:18 11:16	predicted 17:25	proponents	41:24 45:24	reasonably 22:2
12:22 16:18	predictive 22:21	45:14	47:10,15,23	38:6 42:7
19:21 20:15	preferable 47:8	proposed 22:10	50:7	reasons 27:5
29:3 31:4	premise 22:5	proposing 53:10	questions 26:10	29:17
32:14 38:20	present 52:9	Proposition	28:4,5 43:12	rebuttal 2:8
45:10 47:12	presented 26:10	3:24 21:5	quiet 16:10	25:12 50:2
48:6	26:10 28:5	propositions	quite 9:17 11:23	recall 20:5
pointed 45:2	preserve 8:1	3:24 39:12	25:7 30:20	receive 22:7
<b>points</b> 44:25	pressing 50:6	45:15	31:7 36:14	recognize 8:13
45:4	presumably	protection 27:10	43:11	15:12
policies 11:11	7:23	<b>provide</b> 7:1 8:4	quote 44:22	recognized
<b>policy</b> 8:24 9:2	presume 13:16	26:21 31:25	quoting 44:16	51:11
11:5,6	22:2	45:21 52:13	R	recognizes 8:11
<b>political</b> 3:17,23	prevail 29:7	provided 3:18	$\frac{\mathbf{R}}{\mathbf{R}}$ 3:1	record 39:9
4:1,2 15:13	prevent 27:16	28:23 29:23		43:22
18:11 22:24	previously 34:1	31:8	<b>radio</b> 44:18	<b>refile</b> 23:18
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3	previously 34:1 pre-increase	31:8 <b>provides</b> 8:5	radio 44:18 raise 14:25	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17 15:2	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17 15:2 prior 28:12 36:2	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17 15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23 24:2 46:25	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17 15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 <b>politically</b> 35:11 <b>politics</b> 22:23 24:2 46:25 51:23	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17 15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19 47:7	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1 purposes 7:2	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9 44:15 48:6	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19 regular 34:25
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23 24:2 46:25 51:23 portion 31:20,24	previously 34:1 pre-increase 39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17 15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19 47:7 problem 5:22	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1 purposes 7:2 31:17 35:9	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9 44:15 48:6 real 33:24 46:17	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19 regular 34:25 44:22
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23 24:2 46:25 51:23 portion 31:20,24 50:12,20 51:19	previously 34:1 pre-increase     39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17     15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19     47:7 problem 5:22     20:22 21:11	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1 purposes 7:2 31:17 35:9 36:4,5 39:13	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9 44:15 48:6 real 33:24 46:17 realization	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19 regular 34:25 44:22 regulations
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23 24:2 46:25 51:23 portion 31:20,24 50:12,20 51:19 position 4:9	previously 34:1 pre-increase     39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17     15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19     47:7 problem 5:22     20:22 21:11     22:15 24:21	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1 purposes 7:2 31:17 35:9 36:4,5 39:13 40:16 43:9	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9 44:15 48:6 real 33:24 46:17 realization 26:13	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19 regular 34:25 44:22 regulations 32:16
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23 24:2 46:25 51:23 portion 31:20,24 50:12,20 51:19 position 4:9 19:22 32:24	previously 34:1 pre-increase     39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17     15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19     47:7 problem 5:22     20:22 21:11     22:15 24:21     35:16 36:16	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1 purposes 7:2 31:17 35:9 36:4,5 39:13 40:16 43:9 45:3 46:22	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9 44:15 48:6 real 33:24 46:17 realization 26:13 realize 31:18	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19 regular 34:25 44:22 regulations 32:16 regulatory
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23 24:2 46:25 51:23 portion 31:20,24 50:12,20 51:19 position 4:9	previously 34:1 pre-increase     39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17     15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19     47:7 problem 5:22     20:22 21:11     22:15 24:21	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1 purposes 7:2 31:17 35:9 36:4,5 39:13 40:16 43:9	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9 44:15 48:6 real 33:24 46:17 realization 26:13	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19 regular 34:25 44:22 regulations 32:16
18:11 22:24 35:5 37:3 40:3 40:5,16 42:17 42:25 43:1,9 44:8,13,17 46:6,8,13 47:2 47:12 48:21,22 49:8,8,23 50:13,20 51:2 politically 35:11 politics 22:23 24:2 46:25 51:23 portion 31:20,24 50:12,20 51:19 position 4:9 19:22 32:24	previously 34:1 pre-increase     39:14 primary 15:12 principal 18:20 principle 14:20 principles 22:20 printing 13:17     15:2 prior 28:12 36:2 pro 37:1 probably 34:19     47:7 problem 5:22     20:22 21:11     22:15 24:21     35:16 36:16	31:8 provides 8:5 23:8 provision 32:19 prudential 30:18 public 49:23 purely 22:23 purpose 7:1 18:11 35:8 37:25 45:7 49:1 purposes 7:2 31:17 35:9 36:4,5 39:13 40:16 43:9 45:3 46:22	radio 44:18 raise 14:25 34:21 raised 12:9 15:4 24:5 range 44:17 rarely 41:2 rata 37:1 reach 28:13 read 4:21 41:18 42:18,22 reading 4:9 44:15 48:6 real 33:24 46:17 realization 26:13 realize 31:18	refile 23:18 reflects 39:9 refund 6:22 28:18 31:19,24 refunded 32:1 refunds 27:22 refuse 3:25 regard 14:19 41:22 regime 7:8 registration 44:19 regular 34:25 44:22 regulations 32:16 regulatory

	I		I	I
reinstate 30:25	requirements	54:1	18:1 31:4 33:3	12:5 14:24
reinstated 27:7	7:23,25 8:6	roughly 38:13	39:18	41:19 43:11,15
28:22 29:20	requires 7:7	routine 44:23	<b>sector</b> 49:23	47:15 50:9,11
reinstating	28:20 29:22	<b>rule</b> 9:21 18:6,6	see 16:18 17:1	50:18 52:12
25:24	33:10	18:9 40:18	19:17 24:22	<b>single</b> 53:10
rejected 12:19	requiring 31:19	53:10	25:11 30:2,2	<b>sir</b> 17:5
relates 9:25	research 10:14	<b>ruled</b> 25:2	32:22 39:8,19	sites 44:20
relations 49:4	reserve 25:12	rules 35:22	39:23	situation 26:8
49:15	resolved 30:16	run 38:22	segregated	26:12 36:13
relatively 9:20	respect 8:6		34:20 35:14	42:4,15 46:10
22:4	20:17 51:17	<u>S</u>	45:8 51:19,23	six-fold 42:12,12
relief 9:7,9	Respondent	S 2:1 3:1	<b>SEIU</b> 3:15 4:13	<b>slate</b> 37:16
10:16,18 12:13	1:19 2:7 25:18	sake 13:16	5:11 6:15 9:13	slyness 52:7
12:15 27:16	response 19:21	salaries 13:17	11:20	<b>small</b> 53:7
28:11,23 31:25	result 52:4,5	35:24 36:1	<b>SEIU's</b> 3:11,17	<b>sole</b> 35:7
remain 8:19	resulted 6:21	44:23	3:23,25 5:21	<b>solve</b> 46:8
remaining 30:13	rethinking 26:8	salary 26:18	seizure 5:23	Somebody 28:1
30:19 50:1	return 8:19	34:25	sense 10:21	<b>someone's</b> 47:13
remains 11:21	returning 11:23	satisfaction 4:25	sent 5:25 6:1,2,6	<b>sorry</b> 7:10 17:19
remember 3:12	Reuter 28:8	satisfied 6:7	30:5 32:5	30:1 52:18
51:17	30:11	satisfy 27:2	separate 34:20	53:15
rent 44:23	revealed 43:23	satisfying 5:17	35:14 36:13	sort 4:21 38:22
repeal 32:21	reversal 30:25	27:21	45:8,9 51:19	43:2
repealed 32:20	reversed 30:24	saying 4:7,21,22	51:20	Sotomayor
repeating 14:24	36:10 47:11	9:15 17:13	separately 43:14	12:25 13:3,4
repetition 9:16	review 9:16	30:24 31:24	September 5:23	13:10,12,23
10:9 11:9	11:10	40:10,14,19	39:21,22,22,22	14:3 16:9
replacement	reviews 11:4	46:4,23 53:20	40:22 51:6	17:17,20 18:3
44:24	<b>right</b> 3:25 4:18	53:21	serious 27:18	20:22 21:12,13
represent 4:15	4:23 13:12	says 16:11 24:9	32:4 34:6	21:18 24:3,7
representatio	14:14 16:22	34:15 44:7	<b>Service</b> 1:6 3:4	24:17,21 25:11
49:18	17:8 18:5 19:4	45:5 49:12,12	serving 48:25	32:14,22 33:2
represented	19:18 20:13	49:22	set 9:19 21:2	33:8,11,13
3:15	23:11,15 29:7	scale 4:2	<b>share</b> 37:2	39:18 41:5,8
request 27:15	40:8 42:1	<b>Scalia</b> 14:9,11	shed 22:20	41:23 42:1,3
requested 12:14	45:19 51:4	14:13,16 18:18	<b>short</b> 9:19,20	51:5,16,16
requests 32:2	<b>rights</b> 33:23	18:25 19:6,10	41:15	52:21,25 53:5
require 13:21	47:23 48:4	20:11,16 22:5	short-term 39:2	53:19
18:1 23:21,25	ROBERTS 3:3	22:10,15 50:5	39:6	Sotomayor's
40:15 52:10	6:10,17,19	50:16,22,23	show 8:22 34:5	14:25
required 3:19	12:21 14:18,23	51:4,21,25	showing 8:22	<b>so-called</b> 31:16
7:17 10:1	16:21 23:16	53:13	shows 39:9	41:11 43:15
13:15,21,25	25:15,25 29:1	scheme 49:14	side 40:8,9 43:4	speak 4:4 35:15
22:19 29:18	30:1 32:10	Schermerhorn	significant 49:8	speaking 16:4
30:3 34:11,12	38:19 39:5	35:15,17 44:5	simple 30:20	special 7:6,15,24
requirement	42:14 44:14	45:4,5	47:10 48:6	9:5 12:2 13:8
23:10,23 47:8	49:25 53:16	second 13:15,21	<b>simply</b> 11:10	15:7,9 16:8
				l

17:12,22 18:2	19:14	21:25 26:22	14:7,20 16:25	20:18
18:7,9,12	stating 29:19	51:13 52:9,13	18:17 20:6	try 6:1 25:12
20:25 22:17,19	status 28:11	52:22,23	23:13,13 24:8	33:13 43:16,16
24:8,23 26:21	45:9		26:9,25 28:8	trying 19:21
26:24 33:4,5	stays 8:14	T	29:16 30:8	35:17 40:17
33:16 36:8	straight 43:11	<b>T</b> 2:1,1	32:24 34:5	42:5
38:20,24 39:1	straighten 22:12	<b>table</b> 35:10	36:21 37:10	Tuesday 1:10
40:3,5,10,14	strictest 10:21	take 17:17,20	38:3 39:17,19	turned 26:17
43:4,12,15	<b>strong</b> 37:17	18:10 21:5	41:13,17 52:12	<b>Turning</b> 5:5
47:11 53:7,8	struck 31:9	30:25 35:17	53:14	32:12
specific 23:24	structure 34:7	41:12 42:23,23	thoroughly	turns 15:3
31:12	53:5	43:7	25:13	<b>two</b> 17:1,7,10
specifically 5:20	submitted 54:3	taken 34:12	thought 6:17,19	19:20 27:5
10:17 31:14	54:5	talk 10:20	23:3 26:12	29:17 34:3
38:15,15 45:5	subsequent 5:21	talked 10:8,9	32:15,17 38:19	35:9,23 39:22
speculative 6:25	37:11	talking 10:3	40:1,25 43:3	39:24 40:22
speech 4:1	substantive 28:5	14:13 16:9	48:2	42:2 44:25
spend 17:25	30:18	17:16 36:22,25	time 9:20,20,21	type 5:19 6:9,20
18:11 22:22	<b>sudden</b> 32:21	47:8 49:13	15:25 19:8	8:20
38:12,23 42:24	sufficient 8:25	tantamount	20:6 25:11	typical 7:13
42:25 46:12	sufficiently 32:6	10:3	26:7 32:11	
48:9	suggested 12:4	television 44:18	36:23,25 37:19	U
spending 36:18	25:22 35:13	tell 23:2,5,6 33:2	40:4 41:15	ultimately 48:21
36:24,24 42:5	suggesting	43:6,7	50:6,24 52:1	unable 41:9
47:3	53:13	telling 19:2	53:11	unaffected
<b>spent</b> 32:6 36:19	suggests 38:21	temporary	<b>timing</b> 21:10	28:25
38:10,17 39:11	<b>suit</b> 10:11	26:16 33:22	today 36:22	unanticipated
39:13 43:9	summarize	41:18	<b>told</b> 23:3 38:9	34:17
46:19	33:13	term 26:24 39:1	44:12 46:11	underlying 3:12
spinning 50:7	sun 39:8	termed 35:5	53:1	8:6
spokesperson	support 20:21	terms 6:11 9:24	<b>total</b> 16:6 41:19	understand 4:6
49:3	46:14	14:6 30:18	totally 18:11,14	7:11 8:10 18:3
Springfield 1:16	Suppose 45:12	49:16	tough 40:6	18:15 19:10
springing 48:3	45:14	thank 12:23	transparent	27:17 29:4
stability 48:17	supposed 25:10	25:15 49:25	52:6	33:15 36:15
stable 22:4	<b>Supreme</b> 1:1,13	50:4 52:17	treasury 34:20	39:20 42:17
staff 44:23	sure 4:10 9:17	53:17,25 54:1	35:3,18 41:20	51:8 52:7,19
stake 26:13	14:23 16:24	theory 10:22	44:9,13 45:8	understanding
36:12	20:10 24:19	44:4,6	treat 35:18	21:12
<b>stand</b> 25:13	25:7 50:7 53:4	thing 10:10 42:9	43:13 44:11	undesirable
<b>stands</b> 47:14	surprise 17:12	51:2	46:24	52:8
starting 5:23	surprisingly	things 15:5	treated 35:14	undisputed
<b>state</b> 3:16 24:18	17:11	20:13 23:6	tried 41:8	42:10
24:19 27:6	suspicion 18:15	38:16 42:3,9	<b>true</b> 9:6 12:6	<b>unified</b> 35:18
<b>stated</b> 31:7,12	system 13:5	43:3,19	21:18 27:25	<b>union</b> 1:7 3:5
statements 45:2	18:17 19:23,23	think 4:11,23	52:10	5:25 8:3,11,13
<b>States</b> 1:1,13	19:24 20:23	5:1 8:16 10:13	<b>trust</b> 16:15	8:19,21 9:1,19
-				

	1	1		1
13:16 15:2,25	<b>U.S</b> 28:9 30:11	52:11,11	42:19	4:5,10,19 5:4
16:15 17:12		washes 19:25	work 20:2 44:20	5:18 6:13,18
19:8 21:1,6,20	V	Washington 1:9	workable 19:23	6:23 7:10,19
21:25 22:3,17	<b>v</b> 1:5 3:4 28:8	1:18	19:23,24	8:3,8,9,18 9:6
22:18,19,24	30:10	wasn't 9:3 10:4	worked 8:15	9:18 10:2,8,13
23:18 24:11,18	vacated 8:12	10:15 33:14	works 30:2	11:14 12:6,15
24:18 26:5,11	25:23	40:10	39:20	12:23 13:2,9
29:5 31:19,23	vacuum 53:2	wasting 50:23	world 33:25	13:23 14:5,10
31:25 32:5,16	<b>valid</b> 4:24	way 9:13 18:22	45:11 46:17	14:12,15,17,20
33:3,9,18	values 14:2	22:22 34:4	<b>worlds</b> 34:23	15:8 16:14,24
34:15,24 35:6	variation 24:15	35:14 36:18	worry 45:18	17:5,9,15,19
35:24 36:3,8	variety 53:9	39:20 48:14	46:6	18:3,24 19:9
36:17 38:16	various 13:20	52:4,5	worse 16:5	19:19 20:5,10
39:3,16,24	38:14	ways 8:20 11:24	wouldn't 15:8	20:15 21:11,15
40:20 41:21	vary 24:18	34:4 53:6	16:13 20:11	21:23 22:9,14
42:3,15,23,25	vastly 46:24	wayside 29:15	38:25 42:21	23:8,13,20
44:7,17,23	view 29:14 44:7	<b>weigh</b> 37:14	47:15	24:5,17 25:9
45:8,15,21	vigorously	went 13:17,18	write 13:14	27:23 31:7
46:19,22 47:3	11:20	26:7,17 41:20	writing 53:2	50:1,2,4,5,15
48:8 49:9 50:9	violation 44:6	42:6	wrong 23:22	50:21 51:3,15
52:20,24	44:10	<b>we'll</b> 3:3 34:19	40:9	51:25 52:15,17
unions 23:20,25	<b>Virginia</b> 1:16	34:19	<b>W.T</b> 8:21	53:4,15,17
33:5 34:3,7	24:20	we're 7:12,15		<b>Young's</b> 27:18
40:20 48:15,19	virtually 5:12	14:13 15:5	X	
50:24 53:5,22	9:9	18:10 21:5	<b>x</b> 1:2,8	\$
union's 10:21	virtue 52:9	26:6 34:18	Y	<b>\$12</b> 3:17
11:6 12:9	<b>vital</b> 49:17	36:22,25 40:8		<b>\$2</b> 39:13
25:10 35:2	voluntary 11:17	42:15 44:7,10	year 7:14 11:2	<b>\$3-1/2</b> 44:1
36:23 51:20	<b>vote</b> 34:11,12,18	45:19 46:4,5,7	16:4 17:1,2,7	<b>\$3.7</b> 43:25 48:9
<b>unit</b> 34:13	44:20	46:23 47:1,8	17:10 20:1	<b>\$38</b> 38:10
<b>United</b> 1:1,13	<b>voter</b> 44:19,19	49:13 50:7	21:1,20 23:3,4	<b>\$40</b> 38:13
19:14	$\mathbf{w}$	52:22	23:5,17,19	<b>\$450</b> 36:12
universe 5:3,10		<b>we've</b> 10:8,9	24:11,13,25,25	<b>\$50</b> 36:6
unlawful 11:18	wait 42:19	32:8 43:23	26:18 36:3,7	<b>\$500</b> 36:2
unrealistic	<b>Walling</b> 28:8	45:20 46:7	37:11 38:11,13	1
19:13 37:6	30:10	wheels 50:8	39:22,23,24	-
unwitting 53:23	want 15:23	<b>whit</b> 19:24	40:3,21,23	<b>1</b> 34:25 35:24
upheld 25:5	16:19 17:12	<b>WILLIAM</b> 1:16	42:19 43:2	<b>1.25</b> 34:25
use 34:3 45:17	18:23 21:7 24:1 29:4 31:2	2:3,9 3:7 50:2	44:1,2 46:7	<b>1.5</b> 26:18
46:5 50:6,19		win 51:21 52:3	48:9 53:7	<b>10</b> 1:10 3:13
51:1	32:7,10,23	wish 20:19,20	years 22:4 24:10 24:14 38:23	13:19 15:1
useful 20:8	34:15 36:8	wishy-washin		36:4,10 47:10
useless 6:8	41:3 42:24	4:12	year's 20:1 23:24	<b>10-1121</b> 1:5 3:4
uses 39:1	43:7 45:17	<b>won</b> 4:16 31:1		<b>10:19</b> 1:14 3:2
usual 41:21	46:3,14 48:10	wonderful 9:1	yesterday 13:14	<b>1000</b> 1:7
usually 10:8	wants 36:12	word 33:16	Young 1:16 2:3	<b>11:20</b> 54:4 <b>12</b> 11:4
39:2	wash 45:22	words 4:22	2:9 3:6,7,9 4:3	14 11.4

			66
141012	00.20.50.15	1	 . 7
<b>14</b> 19:13	<b>80-20</b> 50:17		
<b>180</b> 8:24 32:17	9		
<b>180-day</b> 32:20	-		
2	<b>90</b> 36:3,9,10		
	47:10,12		
<b>2</b> 38:23 <b>20</b> 19:13			
<b>201</b> 9.13 <b>2004</b> 42:12			
46:19			
<b>2005</b> 3:13 5:23			
12:1 22:16			
31:10 38:9			
39:9 42:12,13			
43:18 46:11			
48:7			
<b>2005-2006</b> 12:2			
<b>2006</b> 3:13 5:21			
6:2,6 12:20			
31:15 42:13			
<b>2012</b> 1:10			
<b>25</b> 2:7 14:8 43:6			
27th 35:8			
3			
<b>3</b> 2:4 24:14			
<b>30</b> 17:3			
<b>36,000</b> 3:14			
4			
<b>4</b> 24:10 50:1			
<b>40</b> 3:14			
<b>43.6</b> 38:10			
5			
<b>50</b> 2:10 21:5			
<b>50</b> 2:10 21:3			
6			
<b>6</b> 9:2			
7			
<b>7th</b> 39:6			
<b>70</b> 17:3,8			
<b>73a</b> 5:24 31:15			
<b>75</b> 45:15			
<b>76</b> 3:24 21:5			
45:15			
8			
<del></del>			