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4 SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE
5 JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL,
6 U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
7 WASHINGTON, D.C.

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11 INTERVIEW OF: JOHN ISAKSON

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15 Monday, April 25, 2022

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17 Washington, D.C.

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20 The interview in the above matter was held via Zoom, commencing at 10:03 a.m.

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2 Appearances:

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5 For the SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE

6 THE JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL:

7

8 [REDACTED], INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

9 [REDACTED], PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

10 [REDACTED], INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

11 [REDACTED], CHIEF CLERK

12

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14 For JOHN ISAKSON:

15

16 STEFAN PASSANTINO

17 MICHAEL BEST & FRIEDRICH LLP

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2 [REDACTED] Good morning. This is the transcribed interview of John Isakson
3 conducted by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the
4 United States Capitol pursuant to House Resolution 503.

5 At this time, I'd like to ask the witness to please state your full name and spell
6 your last name for the record.

7 Mr. Isakson. My name is John Andrew Isakson. Last name is I-s-a-k-s-o-n.

8 [REDACTED] Great. Thank you.

9 Counsel, would you like to state your name also for an appearance?

10 Mr. Passantino. Yes. Stefan Passantino of the law firm Michael Best &
11 Friedrich.

12 [REDACTED] Great. Thank you, Mr. Passantino.

13 So this will be a staff-led interview. Members of the select committee may, of
14 course, choose to join. If they do so, you should be able to see them in a participant list
15 on the Zoom screen here, and we will also do our best to announce their presence when
16 they join us.

17 As I said, this is going to be staff led. My name is [REDACTED]. I'm an
18 investigative counsel with the select committee. I'm joined here in the room today by
19 my colleague, [REDACTED] who is also an investigative counsel with the select
20 committee. And we have a couple of other members of our staff who are participating
21 remotely. You can see them on a participant list. And that includes [REDACTED] our
22 chief clerk.

23 So a few ground rules just to cover before we get started today, Mr. Isakson.

24 This is being conducted in executive session, this transcribed interview of the
25 select committee. So that means neither committee members nor staff will discuss the

1 substance of the testimony you provide today unless the committee has approved
2 release.

3 You and your attorney will have an opportunity to review the transcript.

4 And just some general reminders of interview/deposition best practices, especially
5 when we're doing it under these remote virtual circumstances.

6 The official reporters are on the line here today. They're going to be taking a
7 transcript of our questions and your answers. Even though we are recording the audio
8 and video from this Zoom call, the official reporters' transcript is the official record of our
9 interview today.

10 So to make that record as clean as possible, we'll ask for you to wait until we finish
11 our questions before you start your answers. And we will also try to do our best to wait
12 to make sure that your answers are complete before we ask our next question, just so
13 that we're not talking over each other.

14 If at any time you have any questions about or need to seek clarity about any of
15 our questions, please do so. We want you to tell us today to the best of your
16 recollection. So if there's something that you don't recall, then "I don't recall" is the
17 right answer. But, of course, if you do, you should tell us what it is that you recall.

18 Okay?

19 Even though this is not under oath, I will remind you that this is an official
20 proceeding of Congress and deliberately providing false information to Congress could be
21 a violation of Federal law.

22 Do you understand that?

23 Mr. Isakson. Absolutely.

24 [REDACTED] Okay. Logistically here today, I don't think that we'll be here for
25 too terribly long. But if at any point you'd like to take a break, whether for a comfort

1 break or to confer with your attorney, we're absolutely happy to do so. Just let us
2 know. We can go on mute and off video here so that you would have a chance to confer
3 privately and then proceed.

4 Mr. Isakson. Great. Thank you.

5 [REDACTED] Okay. Any questions about those ground rules or anything you'd
6 like to address, Mr. Passantino, before we get going?

7 Mr. Passantino. I think we're ready to proceed.

8 [REDACTED]. Okay, great. Thank you.

9 EXAMINATION

10 BY [REDACTED]

11 Q So, Mr. Isakson, let's go over just a little bit of background.

12 Where is it that you -- where do you reside?

13 A I live in Cobb County, Georgia, northwest Atlanta, just inside the perimeter.

14 Q And how long have you lived in Georgia?

15 A All of my life, with the exception of college at Tulane University and a short
16 stint in Washington, D.C.

17 Q Okay. And why don't you give us a brief summary of your educational and
18 professional background.

19 A I have an undergraduate degree in economics from Tulane University and I
20 have a graduate degree in economics from the University of Georgia.

21 Q Okay. Great.

22 And in what industry have you made your professional career?

23 A When I got out of graduate school, I went to work for Wachovia Bank in real
24 estate finance. I spent a couple of years there. I went to work for a private real estate
25 developer here in Atlanta, worked there for about 5 years before I started my own firm.

1 Approximately 2005, I merged my firm in with a larger organization here in Atlanta
2 and proceeded to run a private equity fund. And then eventually we took the company
3 public -- or part of the company public -- in 2011, Preferred Apartment Communities, of
4 which I am now the chief financial officer.

5 Q Okay. Great. Thank you.

6 And what has been your connection with the Georgia Republican Party?

7 A I've served in a variety of voluntary and consultative roles for State, local,
8 Federal candidates over the last 35 years.

9 Q Okay. Great.

10 Have you held elected office in Georgia?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay.

13 And have you had experience with election law before?

14 A No.

15 Q Okay.

16 So you're here today because of your selection as a Republican elector in the 2020
17 Presidential election. Is that right?

18 A That's what I understand, yes.

19 Q Okay. Great.

20 And have you served as an elector in a Presidential election before 2020?

21 A No.

22 Q Okay. So 2020 was the first time?

23 A That's correct.

24 Q Okay. Why don't you tell us, to the best of your recollection, the process
25 by which you became one of the electors that was nominated to serve as a Presidential

1 elector for the Trump-Pence ticket?

2 A Sure. I was invited to qualify as an elector. I had to go down to the State
3 capitol and fill out some forms or sign something. And then I was on the ballot. That's
4 the process, as I recall it.

5 Q Okay. And you said you were invited. By whom were you invited?

6 A David Shafer.

7 Q And it's my understanding that Mr. Shafer is and was at that time the chair
8 of the Republican Party in Georgia. Is that correct?

9 A That's correct.

10 Q Okay, great.

11 How long have you known Mr. Shafer?

12 A Thirty-plus years.

13 Q A significant time. Okay, great.

14 And at the time that Mr. Shafer invited you to serve or to apply for your candidacy
15 for the -- to be a Presidential elector, what was generally your understanding of what that
16 would entail, what would be expected of you in the role?

17 A We would -- all the electors would be on the ballot. And if the President
18 won, we went to Washington to cast our votes in the electoral college.

19 Q Okay. And in that sense of the role, did you receive that from your
20 conversations with Mr. Shafer?

21 A I don't recall any other details from our conversation about
22 responsibilities or what was going to happen. It was not a long conversation.

23 Q Got it. Did you speak to anyone else at the time, before the election, at the
24 time that you were nominated as a Presidential elector, did you speak to anyone else
25 about the role or what would be expected of you?

1 A I don't remember.

2 Q Okay. And what about the other electors for Georgia, the other Republican
3 electors, that is, were you familiar with any of the other folks on that list?

4 A Some of them, yes, but not all of them.

5 Q Okay. And when you went to the capital to submit your paperwork, your
6 candidacy to be a Republican elector, just generally tell us what did that entail.

7 A I went down to the State capitol. There was a room. I don't know which
8 one. And I went in and there was a -- I think I had to show my driver's license and there
9 was a form to sign. And then I turned the form in, and that was it.

10 Q Okay. Do you remember approximately when it was that you went down
11 to the capital and turned in your form?

12 A Well, I mean, it would have had to have been before the primary. But, no, I
13 don't remember exactly when.

14 Q Okay. So sometime in spring of 2020. Is that fair?

15 A Yes, spring, sure. Sure.

16 Q Yeah. Okay. Great.

17 So from that time in the spring of 2020 when you turned in your form for your
18 candidacy as a Presidential elector until the Presidential election on November 3rd, did
19 you have any other communications about your role as a Presidential elector?

20 A No.

21 Q And you weren't asked to do anything in the interim time period. Is that
22 right?

23 A That's correct.

24 Q Okay. So at any point during this time, did you become aware of a concept
25 about convening electors in the event that the President had not -- that then President

1 Donald Trump had not won the State of Georgia?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. We're going to talk later about the meeting that happened in
4 December. But just generally this idea of convening an alternate slate of electors for the
5 Trump-Pence ticket even though the State had been certified, the election had been
6 certified in Georgia for the Biden-Harris ticket, when was it that you first heard of this
7 concept?

8 A I'm sorry. So which concept are you referring to?

9 Q The idea that the Trump-Pence electors would meet, notwithstanding the
10 fact that the outcome of the election had been certified for the Biden-Harris ticket.

11 A I'm a little confused by that question, because I don't -- I know about it after
12 the fact.

13 Mr. Passantino. Right, right. So I think he's confused about the sequencing of
14 the timing I think that you're asking about. Are you asking about sort of before, before
15 the -- it came in the press or -- maybe if you could apply some timeframe and walk him
16 through the timeline.

17 [REDACTED] Sure.

18 BY [REDACTED]:

19 Q Let me ask you specifically about like sort of each kind of relevant time
20 period, and then we'll get to the point where you did learn about it.

21 So I think I already asked you about before the election, so the time period in
22 between your candidacy and the election, and you told us that you had not heard
23 anything about this. Is that right?

24 A That's correct.

25 Q Okay. What about from the election until, say, early December?

1 A No.

2 Q Did you hear anything about this concept then?

3 A No.

4 Q Okay. And then what about in the days leading up to the electoral college
5 deadline of December 14th --

6 A No.

7 Q -- did you --

8 A I'm sorry. I apologize. I jumped again. Sorry about that.

9 Q Oh, no, that's totally fine.

10 A You told me this beforehand and I only lasted 15 minutes. I'm sorry.

11 Q No, don't worry at all. No, no. I'm breaking it down and repeating myself,
12 so it's totally understandable.

13 But so let me ask again. So the time period in the days, let's say, the weekend
14 before and the days leading up to December 14th, did you hear about this alternate
15 electors concept then?

16 A No.

17 Q Okay. After December 14th did you come to learn about it?

18 A Yes.

19 Q And when was that?

20 A When I was called by a Washington Post reporter earlier this year.

21 Q Okay. Do you remember approximately when you received that call?

22 A No, ma'am.

23 Q Okay. And you said earlier this year. So you mean 2022?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay. So let me ask you, before we go to that sort of fast-forward, let me

1 ask you some questions about the December time period. And based on what you've
2 said, some of this may already be covered by what you told us just now.

3 But in the time period after the election, after November 3rd, through December
4 14th or shortly after, so the sort of post-election time period, did you have any
5 communications with members or staff of the Trump reelection campaign?

6 A No.

7 Q Okay. I'm going to ask you a few names of individuals that were working
8 for or affiliated with the campaign. I'm asking you specifically to see if it jogs your
9 recollection about any communications in this time period, but it would be also helpful to
10 hear if you generally know these individuals and had communications about the election
11 with them. Okay?

12 A Okay.

13 Q Okay. There's an individual named Robert Sinners. Do you know
14 Mr. Sinners?

15 A I do not.

16 Q Okay. What about an individual named Mike Roman?

17 A No.

18 Q Michael Brown?

19 A No.

20 Q Boris Epshteyn?

21 A No.

22 Q Kenneth Chesebro?

23 A No.

24 Q James Troupis?

25 A No.

1 Q John Eastman?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. So no communications with any of those individuals about anything
4 related to the election. Is that fair?

5 A That's correct.

6 Q Okay. What about some other staff members for the campaign?

7 Q What about Justin Clark?

8 A No.

9 Q Matt Morgan?

10 A No.

11 Q And what about other lawyers acting on behalf of the campaign? You may
12 have seen them in the news around this time period. They were led by Mayor Rudy
13 Giuliani, and associated with him were several individuals, including Jenna Ellis, Christina
14 Bobb, Sidney Powell. Did you have any interaction with any of those lawyers?

15 A No.

16 Q Okay. Earlier you said that you had some familiarity with other members
17 of the nominated or proposed slate of Trump-Pence electors in Georgia in 2020. Other
18 than David Shafer, who you've described already, who were the folks on that list that
19 you're acquainted with?

20 A So apologies. Without having the list in front of me, there may be other
21 people. The two that I remember are Daryl Moody and Hennessy, Steve Hennessy.

22 Now, I may know others. I just -- those are the only two I -- I just don't know the
23 whole list.

24 Q Yes. Actually, this might be the first opportunity for me to see if I can
25 handle the screen share here. So let me see if I can pull up the list for you. Give me

1 one moment.

2 Here we go. Okay. Can you see that document?

3 A Absolutely. Well done.

4 Q Okay. You know, 2 years into the pandemic still figuring out Zoom. Three
5 years in, where are we, again?

6 All right. Let's see here. All right. So here this is a document that we marked
7 as exhibit 3, and here's the list.

8 Do you see that, Mr. Isakson?

9 A I do.

10 Q Okay. Any other names of Trump-Pence electors on this list that you're
11 familiar with?

12 A I know David Hanna. And, I mean, I've met Burt Jones, but I don't -- I don't
13 really know him.

14 Q Okay. Great.

15 A And I apologize, I had the wrong Hennessy. I do know Mark Hennessy. I
16 know his brother Steve better. But I misspoke when I said Steve Hennessy.

17 Q Okay. Great. Thank you.

18 And just I pulled up a list that doesn't include your name. This is actually the
19 slate that was submitted, and there's two more names that go onto the next page there.
20 So this includes the replaced four electors that hadn't been on the original slate but that
21 were present at the meeting on December 14th.

22 So for those individuals that you identified already that you knew, including
23 Mr. Hennessy, Mr. Hanna, Mr. Moody, did you have any conversations with them in the
24 post-election time period about the meeting of the Trump-Pence electors?

25 A No.

1 Q Okay. Neither before nor after the meeting itself?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. So, Mr. Isakson, were you aware that members of the Trump
4 campaign staff were trying to reach you regarding this meeting that was to take place on
5 December 14th?

6 A I received a phone call asking me to attend a meeting at the capitol. I don't
7 remember who called me. It wasn't someone I knew or recognized. I was just told it
8 was a gathering of the electors at the capitol on a Monday. I think it was a Monday.

9 Q Got it. You said it was a phone call. Did you speak to the person on the
10 other line or did they leave you a message?

11 A I spoke to them.

12 Q Spoke to them. Okay.

13 And let me see if I can take this down. There we go.

14 Do you remember how far before the Monday meeting you received this phone
15 call?

16 A It was the weekend before. And it was actually -- it was over the weekend.
17 So it was Saturday or Sunday. I can't remember which.

18 Q Okay. Was the individual who called you a man or a woman?

19 A Man.

20 Q Okay. And do you remember what that person -- how they got your name
21 and your phone number?

22 A Don't know.

23 Q Okay. And did that person -- I know you said you couldn't recall the
24 identity, but did they identify themselves by their role, their reason for calling?

25 A I don't remember.

1 Q Okay. Let me show you one more document just to see if this helps.

2 There we go.

3 Can you see this document, exhibit 6, Mr. Isakson?

4 A I can.

5 Q Okay. Great. This is not an email that you are on, but it mentions you.

6 It's an email dated Saturday, December 12th, 2020. It's from an individual that I

7 mentioned a moment ago named Robert Sinners.

8 There are several individuals here on the "to" and the cc line, including David
9 Shafer; Stewart Bragg; a person with the last name Barrett, bbarrett for the email
10 address; Joshua Findlay with a donaldtrump.com email; and Mike Roman, who I also
11 mentioned earlier.

12 Other than Mr. Shafer, are you familiar with any of the people on this email?

13 A I'm not.

14 Q Okay. And I assume you would remember if it had been Mr. Shafer who
15 reached out to you. Is that fair?

16 A Oh, yeah. Yes, that I would have -- that part I would have remembered.

17 Q Okay. Any reason why you would be able to -- seeing these names, does it
18 ring any bells about who it was that reached out to you?

19 A No. Sorry.

20 Q That's okay. Yeah. In this email, in the bullet points below, it's written by
21 Robert Sinners, and it is introduced "Today's progress was as follows."

22 The email is, "Re: Electors Update," and in the third bullet point it identifies your
23 name after Mark Hennessy, John Isakson, and then says, "have not responded via email,
24 text, or voicemail."

25 Do you remember receiving other sort of outreach by email, text, or voicemail

1 from Mr. Sinners or anyone else associated with the campaign?

2 A Somebody may have called me and left -- somebody else may have called
3 me. It may have been the same person that called me back that I picked up for. But I
4 didn't get an email or a text.

5 Q Okay. The earlier call, other than the one that you picked up on, did they
6 leave a voicemail?

7 A I don't remember.

8 Q Okay. Have you by any chance checked your phone to see if you still have
9 anything reflecting those calls on your cell phone?

10 [REDACTED] Mr. Isakson or Mr. Passantino? It looks like you might be frozen.

11 Let's go off the record for a few minutes. It looks like we've lost the witness'
12 connection here.

13 [Recess.]

14 [REDACTED]. We're back on the record for the transcribed interview of John
15 Isakson.

16 BY [REDACTED]

17 Q So, Mr. Isakson, before our little tech hiccup there, you had told us that you
18 had received a couple of phone calls related to the December 14th meeting.

19 Have you ever -- have you had a chance to review your phone to see if you have
20 any records still on it relating to those calls?

21 A I did review my phone and there were no voicemails.

22 Q Okay. What about any records of the incoming calls around that time
23 period?

24 A No. My phone doesn't save calls that far back.

25 Q Okay. Thank you.

1 So, just to recap, I believe what you've testified for us was that you received a
2 phone call, at least one call that you did not answer and then one call that you did. It
3 may have been from the same individual, it may have been from another individual. Is
4 that fair?

5 A That is fair, yes.

6 Q Okay. So the call that you did take and that you spoke to the individual on
7 the other end, you said that it was during the weekend before December 14th, possibly
8 Saturday, December 12th. Is that fair?

9 A Yes. I only remember that it was over the weekend.

10 Q Okay. Thank you.

11 So tell us what else you remember about what that individual told you about what
12 would be happening on December 14th?

13 A It was a very brief call. He said there was a gathering at the capitol for the
14 electors. And I indicated that I couldn't attend because of work.

15 Q Okay. Did the individual tell you what the gathering was for?

16 A I don't remember the exact words that he used. It came across to me like a
17 political rally.

18 Q Okay. What gave you the sense that it was a political rally?

19 A Again, I can't remember the exact words that he used. That's just the
20 impression that I have.

21 Q Okay. Did he tell you -- let me rephrase that.

22 In describing what was to occur on December 14th, did he refer to the casting of
23 electoral college ballots?

24 A No.

25 Q Did you have the sense that he was calling you because of your role as a

1 Trump-Pence elector?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Okay. What gave you that sense?

4 A Again, he said that there was going to be this gathering and all the electors
5 were invited.

6 Q Okay. Did he tell you anything about if you didn't attend what that would
7 mean?

8 A No.

9 Q Okay. Did he mention any comments about the need to find a replacement
10 for you if you didn't attend?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay. Did anyone ever provide you with any paperwork or tell you that
13 there was going to be paperwork that you would need to sign on the 14th?

14 A No.

15 Q Okay. Did the individual who called you over the weekend, did they give
16 you any sense for what the purpose, what the sort of reason was for why the electors
17 were meeting that day?

18 A No.

19 Q And did the person ask you either to keep it confidential, not to comment
20 publicly, or, in the alternative, to tell anyone else about it?

21 A Not that I remember, no.

22 Q Okay. So I think you said that you told the individual that you couldn't
23 attend because of work. Is that right?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Did you consider attending and decide not to, or how much consideration

1 did you give to this?

2 A Not much. I mean, I have a full-time job and that was a conflict, so I didn't
3 spend a lot of time thinking about it.

4 Q Okay. And what was your understanding of the status of the Presidential
5 election in Georgia at that time?

6 A I mean, I don't remember exactly where we were in that process. I
7 don't remember what I was thinking. I'm sorry.

8 Q Okay. If it's helpful just to -- I know it's been more than a year and a
9 half -- but going back to the timeline.

10 So the election itself was on November 3rd, but it took a fair amount of time in
11 several States, and in Georgia being one of them, to actually get all of the votes counted
12 after election day. Is that fair? Does that comport with your memory?

13 A Oh, yes, absolutely.

14 Q Yeah. Okay. If it's helpful just to put some stakes in the ground as far as
15 the timeline.

16 It was November 19th, so more than -- a little more than 2 weeks after the
17 election when the Associated Press called the State of Georgia for Biden. Do you recall
18 that?

19 A Not specifically, no. I mean, I recall the State was called for Biden, but I
20 don't recall the AP doing it or when that was.

21 Q Understood. But, generally speaking, at some point after the ballots had
22 been counted the media made a call that the Presidential election in Georgia had been
23 won by the Biden-Harris ticket. Is that fair?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay. And then I can represent to you that on November 20th, 2020,

1 Governor Kemp made a public statement affirming the election results that the
2 Biden-Harris ticket had won the State of Georgia. Do you remember that?

3 A Not specifically, no.

4 Q Okay. I can also represent to you that on December 7th the Governor of
5 Georgia, Governor Kemp, signed the official certificate of ascertainment for the outcome
6 of the election. Do you remember that?

7 A Again, not specifically, no.

8 Q Okay. What about just generally during this time period, do you remember
9 any of the actions or statements by the Governor of Georgia regarding the outcome of
10 the 2020 election?

11 A I mean, I was paying attention at the time and I was aware of what the
12 Governor did, generally speaking, but I don't recall the specific dates or the specific
13 actions. Not now, anyway.

14 Q Sure. That's fair.

15 At the time that you received this call on the weekend of December 12th and
16 13th, though, was it your understanding or opinion that the outcome of the race was
17 determined, or did you believe that it was still in doubt?

18 A I don't understand that.

19 Mr. Passantino. I think what she's asking is whether you had an opinion about
20 the legal status of the race at that time period.

21 And don't let me characterize your question for you. But I think that was the
22 question, but if you wanted to rephrase. Are you asking for his opinion about at the
23 time whether he thought it was a -- the legal matter was still unresolved or --

24 [REDACTED] Yeah, that's fair, Mr. Passantino.

25 BY [REDACTED]

1 Q I think really what I'm trying to get at, Mr. Isakson, is when you get this
2 phone call saying that there's going to be a meeting of the Trump-Pence electors on
3 December 14th, what was your state of mind at that time about whether -- which ticket
4 had won, whether the outcome of the race was certain at that point.

5 A I mean, I was aware that the -- I was generally aware of the things you
6 mentioned, that the Governor had done what he had done. I was aware that there
7 were challenges in process. But specifically what was happening, I really just don't
8 recall.

9 Q Okay. So when you get this phone call on December 12th, did it surprise
10 you to think that you still had a role to play as a Trump-Pence elector?

11 A Again, I mean, it came across to me like a political rally and that I had just
12 been called because I was an elector. I didn't have any sense that they were asking me
13 to play a role. I got the sense they were asking me to attend a rally.

14 Q Got it. Okay. And other than having had this phone call, sort of setting
15 that aside, but it sounds like you had work commitments lined up on the 14th.

16 So is it fair to say that you were not expecting to be casting electoral votes for
17 Trump and Pence on December 14th, 2020?

18 A That's fair.

19 [REDACTED] Okay. Let's see. I'll ask my colleague, [REDACTED], if you have
20 anything to follow up on this.

21 [REDACTED] Mr. Isakson, I just had -- I was hoping you could maybe unpack a
22 bit what you meant by political rally and what gave you the impression that this was a
23 political rally. For instance, did they say that there was going to be -- we want a large
24 crowd there, we want to pack the capitol? What gave you that impression, to the
25 extent you can recall?

1 Mr. Isakson. Again, it was a brief phone call over a year and a half ago. That's
2 just the impression that I had when I hung up is they were having a rally, they wanted the
3 electors there. But I don't have any other specific color or context that I can provide.

4 ██████████. And we might have already touched this but just to confirm, in
5 that phone call do you remember the other person mentioning the state of the litigation
6 and that this meeting would have any sort of effect or could play a role in the litigation,
7 anything to do with the litigation going on in Georgia at the time?

8 The Witness. Nothing like that came up.

9 ██████████ Okay. That's it for me. Thank you.

10 BY ██████████

11 Q Okay. On this call, Mr. Isakson, did the individual you were speaking with
12 mention that there was a similar kind of occurrence happening in other contested States
13 across the country?

14 A No.

15 Q Okay. Did the individual mention the example of what happened in Hawaii
16 following the 1960 election?

17 A No.

18 Q Okay. At any point later did anyone tell you the relationship between the
19 meeting of Trump-Pence electors in Georgia and this example of Hawaii following 1960?

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. And on this phone call, were you invited to participate in any other
22 conference calls with the other Trump-Pence electors, either in Georgia or other States?

23 A No.

24 Q Okay. So after that call on the weekend, did you reach out to Mr. Shafer or
25 anyone else to ask questions about this?

1 A No.

2 Q Did you discuss it with Mr. Shafer at any point?

3 A After the article in The Washington Post came out.

4 Q I see. So this year, 2022, you've spoken to Mr. Shafer about it?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Got it. But at any point after you had that phone call the weekend of
7 December 12th, 2020, through the inauguration of President Biden, did you have any
8 conversations with Mr. Shafer about this?

9 A No.

10 Q Okay. So I have here the quote that I think you're referring to that you
11 gave to the Washington Post reporter who reached out to you this year. They reported
12 that you told them that you had bowed out because you did not want to attend what you
13 had perceived as a political rally.

14 Is that a fair quote?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Accurate? Okay. And I think that's consistent with what you've told us
17 today, right?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Okay. They also quoted you as saying, "It seemed like political
20 gamesmanship," and saying, "That's not something I would have participated in."

21 Is that a fair quote from you?

22 A The quote's fair. It's the context of the question.

23 Q Yeah. So what were you referring to? I know the quote has you saying it
24 in the past tense, it "seemed" like it was political gamesmanship. When was it that you
25 formed this opinion that it seemed like political gamesmanship?

1 A The reporter asked me if -- I said that -- I said what I said to you, which is I
2 thought it was a political rally and I have a full-time job and so I didn't go.

3 And she asked me, if you had known everything you know now, would you have
4 attended? And I said what I said in the quote and I stand by it. But I didn't know at the
5 time and she asked me a hypothetical question.

6 Q Sure. Okay. That's very helpful. It makes sense.

7 So let me ask you that question too. Well, actually, let me first say, at the time
8 when you did not participate in the meeting on December 14th, did you have any
9 concerns about what was to happen on the 14th?

10 A No.

11 Q Okay. So the reason why you participated was not related to your
12 concerns about it being political gamesmanship and not something that you would have
13 participated in?

14 A Right. Again, just to be clear, I thought it was a political rally. I had work.
15 I went to work.

16 Q Got it. But your characterization of it that was in The Washington Post as
17 far as political gamesmanship and not something that you would have participated in, is
18 that something that you thought at the time in 2020?

19 A No.

20 Q Okay. And when did you come to form that understanding of it?

21 A When I was asked the hypothetical question by the Washington Post
22 reporter.

23 Q Okay. And had you at that point when you got a phone call from the
24 reporter in 2022, had you learned about what occurred on the 14th in your absence in
25 Georgia?

1 A The newspaper reporter was the -- her phone call was the first I learned of it.

2 Q I see. Okay. So what did you understand at that point about what had
3 happened on the 14th?

4 A I mean, I -- to be honest with you, I hadn't -- I hadn't given it a thought since.
5 I mean, I thought they had -- I mean, we have lots of political rallies and I thought that
6 was just another one and just happened to be one of the ones I wasn't at.

7 Q Okay. So did you come to learn that the electors had signed certificates
8 certifying that they were the duly elected electors in Georgia and submitted those to
9 Federal authorities?

10 A Yes. The reporter informed me of that.

11 Q Okay. And what was generally your assessment of -- what was your
12 assessment of that occurrence?

13 A What was my assessment of that occurrence?

14 Q Did it surprise you? Did it surprise you to learn that?

15 A I mean, I had obviously heard about -- and I don't remember when I heard
16 what and if it was -- I assume it was before the Washington Post lady called me. Maybe
17 it wasn't. I mean, I had heard about this idea of these alternate electors. I can't
18 remember exactly when I learned about that versus the timeline of this phone call.

19 But I was surprised that they were calling me about it, because, obviously I didn't
20 know anything about it. So when they told me they had submitted an alternate slate, it
21 was just news to me.

22 Q Right. Okay. In The Washington Post, the quote from you continues to
23 say that, "We have a process for certifying the election. We have a process for
24 challenging the election. The challenges failed so I wouldn't have participated in
25 something that was going against all of that."

1 Is that an accurate quote from you?

2 A Yes, it is.

3 Q Okay. So tell us more. What did you mean by that?

4 A Again, the Washington Post reporter asked me a question in whatever,
5 earlier this year, whenever it was, January or February. I can't remember exactly. But
6 she was asking me a hypothetical question, knowing all the information that I know now.

7 And so it's just out of context. I mean, it wasn't December 14th or whatever
8 date in 2020. It was sometime in 2022. And so I stand by the quote. It's just that it
9 was asked a year and a half later.

10 Q Sure. Okay. I understand. And so standing by the quote, does that
11 mean that you do think that there's a process for certifying the election and a process for
12 challenging it, and at that point in 2022 convening an alternate slate of electors was not
13 an appropriate part of that process?

14 Mr. Passantino. To the extent you can answer that, go ahead.

15 Mr. Isakson. So when you say convening an alternate slate in 2022, I mean, they
16 did all of that in 2020. I mean, I wasn't a part of what they did. I wasn't part of any of
17 the planning for what they did. Whether what they did was appropriate or not, I have
18 no idea.

19 BY [REDACTED]

20 Q Okay. I guess I was just trying --

21 A I wasn't part of any of that.

22 Q Yeah. Understood. I guess I was trying to understand a little bit more
23 about your -- what your statements were in the report, in the article in The Post about
24 how you said you wouldn't have participated in something that was going against all of
25 that.

1 I interpret that meaning going against the fact that the election had been certified
2 and challenges had failed to change that outcome. Is that accurate?

3 A It is. And so, again, she was asking me a hypothetical question a year and a
4 half later.

5 In fairness, I don't know when the timelines for the challenges were exhausted
6 and I don't know when it's appropriate for those -- all the -- I'm not an attorney. So
7 what was appropriate and when it was appropriate, I don't know.

8 My point was, we have a process for having an election. We have a process for
9 challenging those elections. When those challenges fail, that needs to be respected.

10 Now, what they did on December 14th or whatever, whether that was in the
11 process or not in the process, I don't know, because I wasn't a part of any of that. My
12 point was, I don't approve of anything that goes against the processes and the laws that
13 we have laid out.

14 Q Understood. Well, thank you for that explanation.

15 Did you -- I think you said earlier that you spoke with Mr. Shafer about this after
16 the time that you gave the interview to the Washington Post reporter, right?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Okay. So tell us about that conversation.

19 A I mean, he called me as soon as the article came out.

20 Q And what did he tell you or what did he say?

21 A Oh, I mean, I've known David a long time. It was a short conversation. I
22 don't remember exactly what we talked about. It was a brief conversation and then we
23 hung up. There wasn't anything special about it.

24 Q Oh, okay. Was he upset about the quotes in The Washington Post?

25 A No.

1 Q No. Okay. Did he want to provide you with any additional information or
2 an explanation for what had happened?

3 A No. I mean, we didn't really talk about it. It was more of just a personal
4 phone call.

5 Q Oh, I see. So did the topic of the meeting of the electors that occurred on
6 December 14th, 2020, did that come up in your phone call with David Shafer?

7 A I think so, very briefly, in the context of the article and, you know -- but it
8 wasn't a -- I mean, it wasn't a lengthy conversation and we didn't dwell on the topic.

9 Q Okay. Help me to understand a little bit more. Other than it coming up in
10 the conversation, what was the context? Was he conveying information to you or the
11 other way around?

12 A I think he -- well, he called me and said, "Hey, I saw the article in The Post,"
13 or something like that. I think he told me he was going up to D.C. to testify or
14 something. And then he asked me how I was doing and asked me how everything was
15 going, and we had a brief conversation about personal stuff, and then we hung up.

16 Q Okay. Did he say any more about his coming up here to see us and testify
17 about this?

18 A No. He just mentioned the trip.

19 Q Okay. Did he tell you that -- did he make any comments about the meeting
20 back on December 14th, 2020, being connected to preserving possible remedies in
21 litigation?

22 A I mean, I don't think so. I don't remember. Again, that wasn't the point
23 of the call. So I don't -- we didn't get into a lot of details like that.

24 Q Got it. But -- so is it -- did he provide you with any explanation for the
25 meeting of the electors on December 14th?

1 A No.

2 Q Okay.

3 [REDACTED] Do you have anything further on that? Okay.

4 Okay. Mr. Isakson, just a couple of other kind of wrap-up questions here.

5 Do you know how the electors came to physically meet in the capitol on the 14th?

6 Did you ever learn how they were admitted?

7 [REDACTED] We've lost your video. Can you still hear us?

8 Mr. Isakson. Sorry about that. We're clearly having technical issues over here.

9 Mr. Passantino. We're still spinning all around the room here.

10 [REDACTED] It's trying to find you.

11 Mr. Passantino. Okay. Sorry if you get seasick. It's my fault.

12 [REDACTED]. There we go. We're good.

13 Mr. Isakson. I don't know what that was. Apologies.

14 [REDACTED]. Oh, no worries at all.

15 BY [REDACTED]:

16 Q So my question was, did you ever come to learn how the electors were
17 admitted and met inside the capitol on December 14th?

18 A No.

19 Q Okay. Did you ever come to learn how a replacement for you was -- how
20 the campaign found a replacement for you as an elector?

21 A No.

22 Q Okay. And did you ever come to learn whether they got that replacement
23 kind of authorized by the Governor, as required by Georgia law?

24 A No.

25 Q Did you ever see the certificates that the Trump-Pence electors submitted to

1 the authorities following the December 14th, 2020, meeting?

2 A I was sent a few pages by the Washington Post reporter. I'm not sure if
3 that's what you're referring to, but that's how I knew I wasn't on the list. I think that's
4 what you're talking about, but I don't know if it was a certificate or not. It was just like a
5 list of names.

6 Q Sure. Okay.

7 A It looked a lot like what you put on the screen earlier.

8 Q Yes. That's probably right. And I can pull it back up here really quickly.

9 Did you ever receive a copy of it or come to learn of it from any source other than
10 the Washington Post reporter?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay. Let me just pull it up real quick.

13 Okay. There we go.

14 So this is exhibit 3 again. Can you see that document, Mr. Isakson?

15 A Absolutely.

16 Q Okay. Great. So this is -- it's titled memo here. It looks like it's written
17 from David Shafer as chairman of the Georgia Republican Party and chairman of the
18 Electoral College of Georgia, and addressed to the President of the Senate, the Archivist
19 of the United States, the Georgia secretary of state, and the chief judge for the Northern
20 District of Georgia, U.S. District Court.

21 Have you seen this document before?

22 A This may be what the Washington Post reporter sent me. I can't be 100
23 percent certain, but it looks like it.

24 Q Okay. Thanks. And did you receive it from Mr. Shafer or any other source
25 other than the reporter?

1 A No.

2 Q Okay. This is the certificate on page 2.

3 A Yeah, this is what -- yeah, this is what -- this is what she sent me.

4 Q Okay. Great.

5 A I remember that list with the -- looking -- I remember the list looking like
6 that.

7 Q All right. Let me zoom in a little bit here. Okay. Great.

8 So it has the list on the bottom, but at the top, the first kind of paragraph here
9 under the title "Certificate of the Votes of the 2020 Electors from Georgia" --

10 A Right.

11 Q -- the first paragraph begins, "We, the undersigned, being the duly elected
12 and qualified Electors for President and Vice President...do hereby certify the following."

13 What's your assessment of that use of that language, "the duly elected and
14 qualified electors"?

15 Mr. Passantino. Are you asking for his legal opinion? What are you asking for?

16 Do you understand?

17 I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interject, but --

18 [REDACTED] That's fine.

19 Mr. Passantino. -- I don't understand the context of that question.

20 [REDACTED] Yeah, that's fair, Mr. Passantino.

21 BY [REDACTED]

22 Q When you received this for the first time from the reporter from The
23 Washington Post, Mr. Isakson, did you read this paragraph?

24 A Probably briefly. I really just looked at the list.

25 Q What did you think when you read this first paragraph briefly, where it says,

1 "being the duly elected and qualified Electors"?

2 A I don't know that I specifically read that paragraph or put much thought into
3 it.

4 Q Okay. Did you have any concerns about it?

5 A I mean, I was concerned that a Washington Post reporter was calling me
6 about something I had no knowledge of. So that was where my concern was.

7 Q Okay. Being a sort of a nominated Trump-Pence elector in 2020, if you had
8 attended the meeting on the 14th, would you have had any concerns about signing a
9 document that said that you were the duly elected and qualified electors for President?

10 A I'm sorry. You're going to have to ask me the question again.

11 Mr. Passantino. She's asking you a hypothetical. If you had seen this, would
12 you have concerns, I think is the question. Don't let me characterize it, but that was my
13 understanding. It was a hypothetical question.

14 [REDACTED]. Yeah.

15 Mr. Passantino. What you thought your response might have been if you had
16 seen it at the time.

17 Mr. Isakson. I mean, I don't know how to answer that. I mean, it's a year and a
18 half later.

19 I mean, I don't know how to answer that question.

20 BY [REDACTED]:

21 Q Okay. Did you receive these documents from the reporter before or after
22 you gave the interview?

23 A Oh, before. I mean, she called me and I didn't have any idea what she was
24 talking about, and I said I certainly couldn't comment on something I didn't know about.
25 And so she said, "Well, let me send you what we have." And so she sent it over to me

1 and asked me if we could talk a couple days later.

2 Q Got it. Okay. Helpful.

3 So after you had a chance to look at the document and then when you gave the
4 interview to The Washington Post, you said that you wouldn't have participated in
5 something that would go against the certification of the election, as we talked about
6 earlier.

7 And I want to ask you if the fact that the language here is used that the
8 Trump-Pence electors were the duly elected and qualified electors in Georgia was a part
9 of why you wouldn't have participated.

10 A Well, so knowing everything that I know now, sitting here in April 25th of
11 2022, I would have had great concerns.

12 Q Why is that?

13 A Well, because all the challenges have been exhausted and it's obviously -- I
14 mean, it's -- all the challenges have been exhausted and this wouldn't have been
15 appropriate.

16 Q Okay.

17 [REDACTED] Anything to follow up on that?

18 [REDACTED] No.

19 [REDACTED] Okay.

20 BY [REDACTED]:

21 Q Mr. Isakson, were you aware of any conversations in Georgia with members
22 of the State legislative leadership regarding a special session?

23 A It was in the news. Yes, I heard about it. Yes.

24 Q So going back to this time period, post-election through inauguration, other
25 than what you read in the news, were you involved in any communications with members

1 of the State legislature or legislative leadership regarding a special session related to the
2 outcome of the election?

3 A No.

4 Q Okay. And did you have any understanding of the connection between the
5 potential meeting of the Trump-Pence electors on December 14th and those calls for a
6 special session in Georgia?

7 A No.

8 Q Okay.

9 [REDACTED] Anything else?

10 [REDACTED]: I think I know the answer, Mr. Isakson, but I want to just make
11 sure we ask it just in case.

12 We're aware in other States some of the Republican Party electors received
13 outreach from other Republican Party electors from other States in connection with this
14 December 14th meeting.

15 Do you remember receiving any outreach from anyone from any other States
16 about what was happening on December 14th?

17 Mr. Isakson. No.

18 [REDACTED]. And the same question, did you ever receive any legal memos
19 related to the meeting on December 14th, either from members of the other electors or
20 campaigns or other -- from other States?

21 Mr. Isakson. No.

22 [REDACTED]. Okay.

23 Okay. I think that's all we have for you today, Mr. Isakson. Thank you very
24 much for being here.

25 Mr. Isakson. Absolutely. Thank you for your time. Nice meeting all of you all.

1 Mr. Passantino. I guess once we're off the record, I just had a question for you.

2 [REDACTED]. Okay. Yes, unless there's anything you want to address on the
3 record, I think we can go off now. Thank you again, Mr. Isakson.

4 Mr. Isakson. Sure.

5 [REDACTED]. Okay. We're off the record now.

6 [Whereupon, at 11:08 a.m., the interview was concluded.]

1 Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

2

3

4 I have read the foregoing ____ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the
5 answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

6

7

8

9

10 Witness Name

11

12

13

14 Date

15