



State of New Jersey
CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION

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Governor

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DIANNA HOUEYOU, *Chair*
KRISTA NASH, *Commissioner*
AMELIA MAPP, *Commissioner*
CHRIS RIGGS, *Acting Executive Director*

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

NEW JERSEY
CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION

PUBLIC MEETING

THURSDAY JUNE 12, 2025

1 COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

2 DIANNA HOUENOU, Chair

3 SAM DELGADO, Vice Chair

4 KRISTA G. NASH

5 AMELIA MAPP

6 MARIA DEL CID-KOSSO

7 DANIEL SAID, Secretary

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10 ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP PRESENT:

11 CHRISTOPHER RIGGS, Acting Executive Director

12 DAVE TUASON, Chief Counsel

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1 CHAIR: All right, Good morning everyone. The time
2 is now 11:04 and I call this meeting to order.
3 Mr. Said, can you please read the notice of the
4 public meeting?

5 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman, this is a rescheduled
6 meeting of a regularly scheduled meeting of the New
7 Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission's 2025 annual
8 meeting schedule. Adequate notice of this Meeting
9 has been provided in accordance with the Senator
10 Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of
11 the rescheduled meeting was provided to the Asbury
12 Park Press, Bergen Record, Courier Post, Star
13 Ledger, and the Trenton Times on June 3, 2025. The
14 agenda and information regarding the in person
15 meeting and the ability to live stream was also
16 posted on the CRC website. The meeting time and
17 location has also been posted on the website of the
18 New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission and with
19 the Office of the Secretary of the State.

20 CHAIR: Thank you Mr. Said, can you please take roll
21 call?

22 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso.

23 MRS. MARIA DEL CID-KOSSO: Present.

24 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp.
25 Present.

1 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash.

2 MRS. KRISTA NASH. Present

3 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado.

4 VICE CHAIR: Present.

5 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou.

6 CHAIR: Present.

7 THE SECRETARY: We now have a quorum. The first
8 order of business is for the Commission to go into
9 Executive Session to discuss legal matters, and
10 litigation and investigation updates. These are
11 discussions that are not shared with the public.
12 We believe the Executive Session should take about
13 90 minutes.

14 CHAIR: Thank you. Is there a motion for us to go
15 into executive session?

16 VICE CHAIR DELGADO: Madam Chairwoman, I move the
17 Board goes into executive session.

18 COMM. MARIA DEL CID-KOSSO: I second.

19 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso. Is
20 there any discussion. All those in favor say, Aye.

21 ALL: Aye.

22 CHAIR: All those opposed say, nay. Any
23 abstentions? Motion passes. So as Mr. Said noted
24 we expect the executive session to last
25 approximately 90 minutes. We will leave the live

1 stream running during that time. You can
2 expect --so we can expect to resume the
3 public portion of this meeting let's say at
4 12:45. Thank you for your patience everyone.

5 [END FIRST PUBLIC SESSION]

6 [EXECUTIVE SESSION - OFF RECORD]

7 [SECOND PUBLIC SESSION]

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1 CHAIR: Good afternoon everyone. Thank
2 you for your patience, the time is 1:05, and we will
3 resume the public portion of this meeting. Mr. Said,
4 can you please announce the next agenda item?

5 THE SECRETARY: Next up on the -- next up
6 on the agenda is approving the minutes of both the
7 commissions open and executive sessions held on May
8 1st, 2025, and the executive session minutes from April
9 3rd, 2025. The minutes have been shared with the
10 members of the commission prior to this meeting.

11 CHAIR: Thank you. Are there -- if there
12 are no edits or changes needed, is there a motion on
13 the meeting Minutes?

14 COMM. MARIA DEL CID-KOSSO: So moved,
15 Madam Chair.

16 CHAIR: Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso moves
17 to approve the meeting minutes.

18 COMM. KRISTA G. NASH: Second.

19 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Nash.
20 Any discussion on this motion? Hearing none, all those
21 in favor of adopting the meeting minutes, say aye.

22 All: Aye.

23 CHAIR: All those opposed say nay. Any
24 abstentions? Motion passes.

25 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the

1 agenda is the chair's report.

2 CHAIR: Well, good afternoon everyone.
3 I'll start off with, some pretty important information,
4 well significant developments for the commission.
5 Today is sadly the last board meeting for two of our
6 commissioners our Vice Chair Sam Delgado and
7 Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, having been with the
8 commission since its inception in April of 2021, both
9 commissioners have contributed greatly to not just the
10 substantive work that we have done at the commission,
11 but also to the community that we've built internally.
12 So I wanna recognize both of you and, really give you
13 thanks and flowers for all of the work that you've
14 done.

15 Vice Chair Sam Delgado, you have been a
16 staunch advocate for businesses in the cannabis
17 industry, and one thing that we at the commission know
18 very well about Sam, is that he always has a story to
19 tell. And, I call them Sam's stories and I love Sam's
20 story time but, they always reveal something new about
21 you. So am really grateful to, to have heard your time
22 about riding the new New York City subway, as an
23 8-year-old alone, across the Bronx, meeting James Earl
24 Jones and your time overseas as a Marine. Your stories
25 bring, fun and levity to our daily life at the

1 commission, and they will be greatly missed.

2 Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, your advocacy
3 for the medical patients and veterans and, diversity
4 and inclusion, and both of you have actually been,
5 regular consistent advocates for inclusion of our
6 military family and our military community in the
7 cannabis industry, both on the medical side and the
8 adult youth side and, you know, you brought our first
9 CRC baby and you also bring like a really radiant
10 presence to the commission. So we'll miss you -- I'll
11 miss you greatly, miss seeing your smile and your, your
12 calming presence.

13 And I know I don't make it easy -- I
14 haven't made it easy for both of you at times but, the
15 blood sweat and tears that you each have poured into
16 this work really has helped shape New Jersey's cannabis
17 industry. And so I'm grateful to you two the memories
18 that we've created together as a board and all the work
19 that we've done for our new Jerseyans, both for
20 business owners, consumers, and patients alike and so I
21 wish you well on your next adventures even though
22 you'll be leaving us in the dust but, you will always
23 have, a home for you here at the Cannabis Regulatory
24 Commission.

25 So thank you for all the work that you two

1 have, have done and before I give the floor over to, to
2 you two for remarks, I wanna open it up to, my other
3 commissioners to say any, any words.

4 COMM. NASH: Sure. Thank you Madam Chair.
5 So I'm very sad. I will be very candid. When you work
6 so closely together, as we have over four years, you
7 become friends with each other and I consider
8 Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso and Commissioner Vice Chair
9 Sam Delgado to be dear friends, and this won't be
10 goodbye.

11 Business wise, Sam and I have gone back
12 and forth on me in terms of or my -- the initiatives
13 that I support, whether it's batch sizes or labor, and
14 the impacted costs on cannabis businesses, and Sam
15 being the business person he is would keep me in check
16 at times and we'd have really productive discussions
17 and I value his expertise and knowledge in that area.

18 As for Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso, she is
19 a strong patient advocate. She is a policy expert, and
20 we've had some very deep discussions on, on the
21 medicinal program and she's drawn from her past
22 experience, and I too value that greatly. There's
23 really not much more I can -- that I can say, except I
24 will miss their presence in the office tremendously.
25 And I wish you both all the best.

1 VICE CHAIR: Thank you.

2 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Thank you.

3 COMM. AMELIA MAPP: Okay. So I am new to
4 the group, but my joining the group, I felt really
5 welcomed by all of you. Sam is the one who comes and
6 knocks on my door, "Hey, girl, what are you doing?"

7 (Laughter)

8 COMM. MAPP: (Inaudible). You know, I
9 wanna thank you both. You have been that integral part
10 who laid the strong foundation that the CRC now sits
11 on, and that I have joined, and you will be missed.
12 But as you take on your life -- your new life
13 adventures, I wish you the best. And for those people
14 who will eventually join us on this board, I want them
15 to join us and continue the building blocks that you
16 guys have laid so that we have something to function
17 on, and so that the CRC can be the best that it is
18 intended to be.

19 And thank you guys for pouring into me.
20 The -- the -- the -- you know, the little bit of time
21 that you have had to pour into me. I'm sure I will ask
22 questions of Sam while he still sits here. But I wanna
23 wish you the best in your future endeavors. Thank you.

24 CHAIR: Thank you. And so then I'll give
25 the floor to -- we'll start with Commissioner Del

1 Cid-Kosso and then we'll end -- we'll have the
2 honorable vice chair have the last word.

3 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Well, thank you Madam
4 Chair, and thank you for those kind words from all of
5 you. I'm really going to miss you know, sitting here
6 listening to our, our -- our advocates and -- and the
7 audience. You guys hold -- hold us accountable. And
8 that's a great thing because this is how we get the
9 work done working together.

10 But first and foremost, I -- I -- I'm just
11 -- I have to say that I am very privileged to have
12 served in this position. And I like to thank Governor
13 Phil Murphy for entrusting me with the honor of serving
14 the people of New Jersey.

15 I'm glad that I was able to share the
16 responsibilities with all of you, starting with your
17 leadership, Madam Chair, Vice Chair Delgado,
18 Commissioner Nash, Commissioner Mapp, and former
19 Commissioner Barker. Your dedication, collaboration,
20 and integrity have inspired me every day and I've been
21 very fortunate to learn from each of you both
22 personally and professionally. So I do live here with
23 lifelong friendships and thank you for that.

24 Establishing a brand new agency was no
25 small task, and I think we can all agree on that. And

1 laying the foundation of this commission would not have
2 been possible without the -- without the dedication and
3 hard work of our staff who consistently rose to every
4 challenge with commitment and resilience. This team is
5 the driving force behind making the CRC an emerging
6 national model for building an inclusive cannabis
7 marketplace from the ground, an accomplishment that we
8 should all be proud of.

9 I wanna thank Acting Executive Director
10 Riggs for his leadership, and for stepping up when we
11 needed you the most. Thank you.

12 To our patient, stakeholders, legislative
13 partners, and community leaders, thank you for your
14 continued engagement, your honest dialogue, and your
15 shared commitment. Your input, advocacy and
16 partnership have been vital to our collective success
17 -- success.

18 While I'm stepping away from this role,
19 I'm not stepping away from public service. I look
20 forward to continuing to serve in a new capacity,
21 carrying with me the lessons, experiences, and
22 relationships built through my time here. So this
23 isn't a goodbye, it is simply a see you later.

24 Finally, I leave this role with gratitude,
25 with pride in what we've accomplished together and with

1 optimism for what lies ahead. Thank you, Madam Chair.

2 CHAIR: Thank you, commissioner.

3 COMM. CID-KOSSO: And I promise you that I
4 wasn't gonna cry today.

5 (Laughter)

6 CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner Del
7 Cid-Kosso. And Vice Chair Delgado?

8 VICE CHAIR: Well, thank you, Chairwoman
9 Houenou. And I'm glad you mentioned memories because
10 memories and shared experiences are forms of
11 relationships, and I think we -- all four of us have
12 established good relationships. So thank you.

13 So I submitted my resignation -- I'm --
14 I'm leaving in the year early. I submitted my
15 resignation back in March because I have -- yeah,
16 future plans. And I -- I wanted to get out. I wanted
17 to leave a little early in -- in order to accomplish
18 some -- some of those plans that I -- that I had in
19 mind.

20 So today marks the -- my final meeting as
21 vice chair and commissioner of the New Jersey
22 Regulatory -- Cannabis Regulatory Commission. I -- I
23 -- I had a lot -- you know, there was a lot in my mind.
24 There was a lot I wanted to say, but I -- I promise you
25 Chairwoman Houenou, I won't take too much time.

1 I think it's been an extraordinary honor
2 to serve alongside such dedicated public servants as
3 yourself and the rest of the commission. Be part of
4 building something from the ground up, something that
5 will impact lives and communities and also our state's
6 economic economy for years to come.

7 When I joined the commission, I broke with
8 -- made the experience of 50 years of work in the
9 military, in business and as and in community
10 volunteerism. I tried to apply all these lessons in --
11 in this commission and service to the people in New
12 Jersey.

13 As I've told Chairwoman Houenou many
14 times, I've seen this movie before. Yes. Yes,
15 absolutely. Together we've tackled tough issues.
16 We've navigated uncharted waters, and we worked to
17 build a regulatory framework rooted in equity, public
18 health, and economic opportunity. However, I leave
19 with a word of caution, and that is you cannot regulate
20 every human interaction. I think you've heard me say
21 that before. Well-Meaning government efforts, if not
22 reviewed, tested, and debated, can carry unintended
23 consequences. I think you've heard me say that before.
24 It stifles -- could stifle innovation and ultimately
25 disempowered the very people they aim to protect.

1 Overburdening regulation disproportionately favors
2 large companies and can -- they -- who can absorb
3 compliance costs, bureaucratic delays, creating an
4 uneven playing field.

5 I saw this over and over again in the
6 amount of time it took licensed applicants to get off
7 the ground and open. I see it now in the attempt to
8 increase the social equity excise fee to \$30. So our
9 job as regulators is not to control every corner of the
10 market, but to create clear their rules.

11 (Silence)

12 Ex-Director Jeff Brown, who's not here, he
13 needs to be recognized, and also our former Chief of
14 staff, Kelly Anderson, Director of Compliance, Paul
15 Urbish, our Acting Executive Director, Chris Riggs,
16 who's there, Director of Licensing, Megan Tagliaferri.
17 Our Director of -- of Communication, I know she's not
18 here, but Christina, if you can give her my regards,
19 Toni-Anne Blake. Our Director of Diversity and
20 Inclusion, Wesley McWhite. Our Chief Counsel, who's
21 Dave, Dave Tuason. Our current Chief of staff, Dorian
22 Stanley. And someone that gets not enough recognition
23 in my -- not -- I feel not enough recognition, that's
24 our Director of Labor. I don't know if he's here, Bill
25 Wallace. So I want to thank all of you, the entire

1 staff and please Acting Executive Director, give my
2 regards to the entire staff, I've mentioned them.

3 And also the stakeholders, I wanna thank
4 you all for your collaboration and your -- and your
5 challenge and your commitment. I think I leave proud
6 -- I'm -- I'm leaving, proud of the work we've done and
7 confident in the Commission's continued success.

8 Chairwoman Houenou, thank you for this opportunity. If
9 I talked a little bit too much, my last (inaudible).

10 (Laughter)

11 CHAIR: Oh, good. Thank you so much,
12 Honorable Vice Chair Delgado.

13 VICE CHAIR: Yeah.

14 CHAIR: And -- and Commissioner Del
15 Cid-Kosso. I wanna give them the -- their flowers.
16 One more -- one last time throw a round of applause for
17 the work that you've done.

18 So turning now to some more cannabis
19 related items. The most -- the month of June marks the
20 celebration and remembrance of two very important
21 historical moments. Next week we celebrate Juneteenth,
22 the time when the last enslaved people were informed of
23 their emancipation. But as we celebrate the
24 restoration of enslaved people's freedom, we must also
25 remember the ways in which the legal system was

1 weaponized against black people after slavery. And
2 this includes the national political efforts that
3 explicitly targeted black communities for substance
4 use, cannabis among them.

5 Here in New Jersey, passed
6 disproportionate arrests for marijuana possession, left
7 black communities facing disproportionate collateral
8 consequences stemming from those arrests. And while
9 New Jersey's 2020 ballot question to legalize cannabis
10 undoubtedly changed how black people could engage with
11 cannabis a bit more freely, it must be underscored that
12 justice for black communities isn't just about making
13 changes to the criminal justice system. Across the
14 country, Black Voices insisted that cannabis
15 legalization be paired with economic, health and social
16 justice for black communities. I am proud that the
17 policies implemented by the Cannabis Regulatory
18 Commission have advanced those efforts.

19 We prioritize people with prior marijuana
20 and we continue to use our platform to tackle the
21 lingering stigma of safe and responsible cannabis use.
22 The commission will continue to do its part to advance
23 equity for black people, and indeed for everyone in the
24 cannabis industry.

25 June is also Pride Month, so happy pride.

1 And we must also equally recognize the intersection of
2 cannabis legalization and LGBTQ plus issues that goes
3 back decades.

4 The LGBTQ plus community in particular
5 helped availability of medicinal cannabis for patients
6 facing serious health conditions. Decades ago, many in
7 the LGBTQ+ community turned to cannabis for relief from
8 serious medical conditions, notably, HIV and AIDS.
9 Facing unique headwinds in mainstream society, their
10 gender or sexual identity, HIV or aids positive status,
11 as well as being a cannabis user, individuals in this
12 community played leading roles in the national
13 recognition of the medicinal benefits of cannabis. As
14 a result, the federal government recognized the
15 beneficial medical use of cannabis when it approved two
16 drugs for treating symptoms of HIV and AIDS in 1992 and
17 2016. And New Jersey included HIV and AIDS as
18 qualifying medical conditions at the outset of
19 establishing its medicinal cannabis program.

20 Even years later, black people, LGBTQ+
21 individuals and cannabis users still face negative
22 stigmas in many parts of America, including here in New
23 Jersey. But I wanna take this time to thank all three
24 of these communities for their commitment and their
25 courage and activism in fighting for a fairer and more

1 open world, one rich in beauty, color, culture, and
2 flair. That concludes my Chair's report for today.

3 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the
4 agenda is the Executive Director's Report.

5 CHAIR: Director Riggs, the floor is
6 yours.

7 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Very
8 tough act to follow. I agree with all of those
9 sentiments that Chair Houenou just raised. And I'd be
10 remiss if I didn't thank Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso and
11 Commissioner Delgado for their service.

12 You know, the movie in my head shows us
13 building a plane while flying it. There were five you,
14 maybe five staff members in the beginning when I served
15 as Chief Counsel, and we got this thing up and running,
16 and now we're flying that plane, and it couldn't have
17 been done without you guys. So really appreciate the
18 wisdom, the knowledge, you know, the conversations that
19 we've had. I'll never forget them. And I -- I view
20 you both as friends, and please don't be strangers.
21 And I wish you all the best in the future.

22 And now I will get into a bunch of data
23 today. We're gonna be doing our quarterly reporting
24 data. So bear with me. Usually our Office of
25 Diversity and Inclusion, Director McWhite handles this

1 portion, but I will handle it today and report out to
2 the best of my ability. It won't be as good as
3 Wesley's report.

4 (Laughter)

5 Today, the first slide is an update on
6 dispensary openings. We have new recreational
7 dispensaries opening every day. We have a list of them
8 up there. We can leave the slide up for a second, but
9 we have close to 250 medicinal and recreational
10 dispensaries open in all the 21 counties in New Jersey.

11 Our licensing update, total license is
12 approved as of May 22nd, 2025. A little less than 3000
13 applications have been submitted to our office of
14 licensing. 2300 of those applications have been
15 approved by this board. There are 76 applications that
16 are under review in our office of licensing and 54
17 applications under review in the Office of Compliance
18 and Investigations.

19 I did another licensing update on total
20 recreational licenses approved. So our adult-use
21 licenses a little over 1600 conditionals, 444
22 conditional annual conversions, 257 annuals, 83
23 expanded alternative treatment centers for a grand
24 total of 355 total operating licenses and permits in
25 the cannabis industry. And if you look at the

1 conditionals, they're basically annual licenses. So we
2 have upwards, you know, to 700 licenses that have the
3 municipal approval that could open. So the cannabis
4 industry is looking very good. Up today, applications
5 up for consideration. We have four conditional to
6 annual conversions, we have nine annual licenses and 10
7 annual license renewals.

8 And we always talk about the patients. So
9 our current patient enrollment numbers, as of May 15th,
10 2025, were a little over 60,000 patients in the
11 medicinal program, a little over 4,000 caregivers and
12 1500 doctors.

13 Now for the sales and pricing update. So
14 here we have medicinal and recreational sales put out
15 through quarter two of 2024 to quarter one of 2025.
16 You know, medicinal sales are starting to flatten out
17 at -- at about 16 million in -- in sales in quarter one
18 of 2025, that they're starting to flatten out. We're
19 starting to see less of a reduction in our patient
20 numbers. So we do anticipate those sales flattening
21 out.

22 You see that in quarter one, our
23 recreational sales are a little lighter, but that's
24 expected. That's the seasonality of -- of buying.
25 They're a little lighter than they were in Q4. Q4 is a

1 big -- big quarter with the holidays and things like
2 that.

3 These are adult-use sales by month. We
4 went all the way back to March of 2024 to show that in
5 March in 2025, there was 22 percent market growth. The
6 interesting thing there is, in March of '24, we had 110
7 retail establishments where cannabis was available.
8 And in March of 2025, we now have 230 roughly retail
9 establishments that are available, but we still saw 22
10 percent market growth.

11 Adult-use bud and flower pricing per gram
12 we're under \$10. In March of 2024, we were over 11,
13 almost \$12, and now we're under 10. You know, it's a
14 decrease of about two -- \$2.43 per gram in the
15 adult-use market.

16 Medicinal cannabis bud and flower pricing
17 didn't reduce as much. You know, it was a little over
18 \$10 in March of 2024, but it is under \$9. So it is --
19 it's -- it's \$8.96 per gram, which is about \$1.34
20 decrease in pricing over a year.

21 Here's our sales use mixed by product
22 category. And just so everybody knows, this -- this
23 report, you know, will be available. We'll have it
24 online. Everybody will be able to see this, especially
25 the quarterly data report. These slides will be made

1 available after the public meeting. But, you know, not
2 much of a change in our -- on our sales use mix. We're
3 still seeing bud and flower and pre-rolls dominate the
4 market. They have about 51 percent share of the market
5 and product type, and -- and that continues to be
6 consistent.

7 And now we'll get into the quarterly data
8 report. And I'm gonna do my best to act like Director
9 McWhite. So the quarter -- the quarterly data report
10 today encompasses quarter one of 2025, and the full
11 report will be made available online with all the other
12 reports on our website underneath that resource tab.
13 So if we could go to the next slide, please. And we're
14 gonna first go with Awardee Application Data.

15 So this is diversely owned businesses and
16 social equity business awardees. There've been a total
17 of 604 annual license awarded to these categories.
18 Now, it -- it's a -- it's good to note that social
19 equity businesses can also be diversely owned
20 businesses. So there is some crossover, there is some
21 overlap, but the one thing to note is that we have
22 awarded an additional 41 license -- 41 annual licenses
23 in quarter one of 2025, which is increasing our SEB
24 annual license awardees by 11, and increasing our
25 diversely owned businesses by 30. So we did see an

1 increase.

2 For social equity status, awards by social
3 equity status, these licenses social equity businesses
4 have passed marijuana convictions or economically
5 disadvantaged areas. And we've increased our number of
6 awarded SEBs by 19, with an increase of eight
7 additional approved annuals, and three additional
8 conversion to annuals and eight conditionals in this
9 social equity status.

10 Next slide, please. This slide shows
11 majority ownership awardees with prior marijuana
12 convictions. So we were able to break down the data to
13 show people that were harmed by past marijuana
14 criminalization, and we were able to look at that data.
15 What we've awarded is an additional 13 licenses in this
16 area with prior marijuana convictions, with an
17 additional six annuals, three conversions, and four
18 conditionals. This is the largest increase in social
19 equitable awards issued to individuals with prior
20 marijuana convictions. So this would be the largest
21 increased quarter over quarter for folks that fall into
22 that category.

23 Now, quarterly data benchmarks. The first
24 slide's gonna be micro businesses. The benchmark there
25 that is in law is 25 percent of our licenses have to be

1 awarded to micro businesses. We are at 35 percent of
2 our licenses that are awarded. So we are a plus 10
3 percent on our benchmark for micro businesses. So
4 small businesses are getting to market, and there's
5 more data to support that later in this presentation.

6 Next slide. Same thing here for
7 diversely-owned benchmark data; minority-owned, there's
8 about 1,089. It's 48 percent of our licenses that
9 benchmark's 15 percent. So we're plus 33 percent in
10 that benchmark. And then women or disabled
11 veteran-owned businesses, a little less than a
12 thousand, which is 44 percent of our licenses with
13 another 15 percent benchmark plus 29 percent.

14 This is a comparison that Wesley gave to
15 me. It's -- it's an update from ODI with
16 diversely-owned comparisons in marijuana business
17 ownership. So the yellow is the national average for
18 marijuana business or cannabis businesses.
19 Minority-owned businesses, we have about 48 percent,
20 and the national average is 19 percent in cannabis
21 businesses. And then you see, for the women-owned
22 businesses, we have a 41 percent, and the national
23 average is 16 percent.

24 Standalone, operational adult-use
25 businesses that are licensed under the CREAMM Act. So

1 these are all the businesses that are licensed under
2 the CREAMM Act. You'll see since -- since quarter four
3 of 2024, we've seen an additional 14 cultivators, 10
4 manufacturers, 17 retailers, two new delivery licenses,
5 and one additional testing lab that have become
6 operational and opened up their doors. That's an
7 additional 44 businesses who have opened in the first
8 two quarters of this year. So businesses are starting
9 to open up.

10 This slide gives a breakdown of race and
11 ethnicity for our standalone businesses that were
12 issued a license under adult-use regulations under the
13 CREAMM Act. You'll see the breakdown there. A
14 majority of our operational businesses identify as
15 white, however, in addition, nine Black businesses
16 have opened their doors and an additional nine Hispanic
17 or Latino businesses have opened their doors in this
18 last quarter.

19 That was our largest quarter to quarter
20 increase in operational Black and Hispanic-owned
21 businesses. So really, congratulations to all of them.
22 And -- and I'm glad to see that those numbers are going
23 up.

24 Sales for open business by type. And this
25 is a -- this is something that -- this is some data

1 that is new for us. This is a repeat of the slide
2 about adult-use sales by month from March of 24 to
3 March 25, just to set the table to show there was a 22
4 percent increase in sales -- sales figures and dollar
5 sales over that -- that time. And you're gonna see in
6 the next couple slides how we broke it down.

7 So this is the --- this is similar
8 breakdown of March of 2024 -- March of 2025, but we're
9 talking about social equity businesses alone. So in
10 March of 2024, they only did \$5 million -- \$5.6 million
11 in sales. In March of 2025, they did \$9 million in
12 sales, which -- which represents a 61 percent increase
13 in market share for social equity businesses.

14 The total sales by month; again, this is
15 for economically disadvantaged areas. So these would
16 be social equity businesses, economically disadvantaged
17 areas. This is a big increase. We saw one and a half
18 million, 1.5 million in March of 2024 in dollar sales.
19 And then in March of 2025, we saw 3.7 million. So
20 that's 145 percent increase, which shows me that the
21 priority review and folks getting their -- their
22 applications in and being reviewed and opening up just
23 under our adult-use regulations, that stuff's working.
24 So we are getting these priority applications up and
25 operational.

1 This is for small businesses; so micro
2 businesses which is the category. In March of 2024, it
3 was 3.2 million. In five, it was over 8 million in
4 sales for these small micro businesses, which is
5 another 143 percent increase in -- you know, they're
6 getting the market and they're grabbing their share of
7 the market. So it's good to see.

8 These are -- this is the same slide with
9 diversely-owned businesses. You have in March of 2024,
10 you have \$18 million in sales. And then in March of
11 2025, \$38 million in sales, which is 109 percent
12 increase.

13 And minority-owned businesses, same thing
14 here with -- in March of 2024, 9.6 million. And then
15 in March of 2025, 21.5 million, which is 123 percent,
16 increase in sales for these minority-owned businesses.

17 And then this is the one we broke down on
18 criminal histories. So these are -- these are folks,
19 you know, ownership, where they've had some kind of
20 involvement with past marijuana criminalization. And
21 they had a criminal history. In March of 2024, we had
22 \$2.7 million in sales attributed to that cohort. And
23 then in March of 2025, \$5.2 million, which is a 95
24 percent increase in dollars sales over that time
25 period.

1 And here we have one for women-owned
2 businesses. Women-owned businesses had 13.3 million in
3 dollar sales in March of 2024. And in March of 2025,
4 27.8 million in -- in sales, 108 percent increase in in
5 dollar sales for that type of business.

6 And that completes my quarterly data
7 report. Again, as a reminder, there will be more data
8 available as part of this report. We will make it
9 available on our website. My comms director would not
10 like me to tell you that it's available now, but it
11 will be available soon. So please check our website
12 and we will make that available as soon as we can.

13 CHAIR: Policies and our industry reflects
14 what we -- our efforts.

15 DIR. RIGGS: Yeah.

16 CHAIR: I think this is something that
17 also, I believe that in the past it may have been a
18 former Commissioner Barker who had been interested in
19 -- in seeing this kind of information. So I'm glad
20 we're able to make it a available -- publicly
21 available. So thank you for -- for that, Director
22 Riggs. And -- and -- and in abstention of Director of
23 Business and --

24 DIR. RIGGS: McWhite -- thank Director
25 McWhite and Director of Data, Len Terranova for pulling

1 all those data pieces together. I think --

2 CHAIR: Exactly.

3 DIR. RIGGS: -- it shows that all of us --
4 you -- including you five, are doing really good work.
5 So thank you.

6 CHAIR: Absolutely. Thank you very much.

7 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the
8 agenda are Consideration of Committee Reports.

9 CHAIR: Thank you. So today we have just
10 one committee report from the Permitting and Licensing
11 Committee. So for this, I will turn it over to that
12 committee chair, commissioner Del Cid-Kosso.

13 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Thank you, Madam Chair.
14 Well, my last report, here we go. First -- first thing
15 first, extension request from the months of April
16 through May, 2025, we've issued 21 conditional license
17 extensions. I do wanna remind people to submit their
18 extension request 15 days prior to the expiration date.
19 That's very critical. And I have the pleasure of
20 serving in this committee with Commissioner Nash. So
21 she's going to be taking over once I leave.

22 Second all -- second of all is I just want
23 to present some of the recommendations of the committee
24 is -- is putting forward. So this committee began to
25 explore ways to enhance the license and permit renewal

1 process I wanna say about last year. After many
2 conversations with board members and staff, the
3 committee agreed on the following. The first one is,
4 in -- in addition to the required attestation form, we
5 are gonna require that businesses submit a new entity
6 disclosure form to the CRC, the information request in
7 item seven, which is on the form that regard -- regards
8 managers, staff members, and employees will not be
9 required in this case.

10 In addition to the -- to that, the
11 attestation should be amended to remind businesses of
12 their duty to notify the commission of any changes.
13 That includes ownership changes, physical plant
14 changes, et cetera. And that failure to do so may
15 result in enforcement actions.

16 The second recommendation the committee's
17 putting forward is that our Office of Compliance and
18 Investigations reports the full compliance history of
19 the business from the past two to three years. This
20 report will contain information about serious or repeat
21 complaints received, notice of violations issued,
22 whether corrective action plans are implemented, and
23 whether the fine or penalty issued by the CRC was paid.
24 All this information is very critical so that the board
25 can make informed decisions when it comes to the

1 renewal process.

2 The third one is, as required by the
3 CREAMM Act, all cultivators must submit documentation
4 about their electrical and water usage. This data
5 could be utilized for future assessments focusing on
6 environmentally friendly business practices. The
7 committee's recommended reviewing similar documentation
8 requirements in other industries and jurisdictions
9 before developing our own.

10 And the last one, which is very critical
11 when it comes to our labor peace agreements, and I
12 wanna thank Commissioner Nash for, you know, for
13 sharing her thoughts on -- on this -- on this item.
14 Under the CREAMM Act and the Honig Act, maintaining the
15 -- an LPAs and an ongoing condition of licensure. The
16 committee is recommended -- is recommended in the CRC
17 request that as part of the renewal process, a bona
18 fide labor organization submits and attestation stating
19 whether one, it meets their criteria for being a bona
20 fide labor organization, two, it has indeed entered
21 into an LPA with the licensee, and three, that the
22 union is compliant with the -- with this end of the
23 agreement. So those are the -- the recommendations
24 with -- the committee is putting forward after having
25 several conversations with staff.

1 And again, I wanna thank the board members
2 for their input and for Chairwoman Houenou who was
3 leading these discussions with board members last year
4 when you were sitting on the committee. So thank you
5 for that.

6 CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner Del
7 Cid-Kosso. Are there any questions from the board for
8 the committee?

9 COMM. NASH: I just --

10 CHAIR: Commissioner Nash.

11 COMM. NASH: -- have a comment on the --
12 on the attestation. I believe that there was a
13 certification from both the business and the unions.
14 Is that accurate?

15 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes. So there will be
16 an attestation from both the business and the -- and
17 the licensee. I'm sorry -- yeah, the union and a
18 licensee.

19 COMM. NASH: That they are complying with
20 the labor provisions?

21 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Correct.

22 COMM. NASH: Okay.

23 COMM. CID-KOSSO: So they'll be submitting
24 those two to the CRC --

25 COMM. NASH: Thank you.

1 COMM. CID-KOSSO: -- as requested.

2 COMM. NASH: Yes.

3 CHAIR: Thank you very much for that
4 committee report and all the work that you have done on
5 the permitting and licensing committee. Okay. Mr.
6 Said?

7 THE SECRETARY: The next item on the
8 agenda are Consideration of Public Notices and
9 Publications.

10 CHAIR: For this, we'll start with the
11 2024 annual report.

12 So the audit committee is charged with developing the
13 annual report adopted by the -- the commission. It
14 combines the regulatory and operational activities
15 related to both medicinal and adult-use cannabis. So
16 I'm -- I wanna thank Director Riggs for his assistance
17 in meeting my ambitious goal of getting caught up on
18 these annual reports. We have now finally -- the board
19 has now finally adopted annual reports from all those
20 prior missing years dating back to 2018, I believe.
21 And now with this annual report, we'll be combining
22 both our main -- I'm sorry, our medicinal and our
23 annual adult-use activities into one report, annually
24 going forward.

25 So our by-law, some of the required

1 components of the annual report include information
2 about the medicinal cannabis program, the licenses that
3 have been issued, and demographic data on some of the
4 businesses, so all of the wonderful quarterly data that
5 Director McWhite and Director Riggs present on that
6 will also be included in the -- in the annual report.
7 And just a summary of some of our major activities in a
8 -- that are not so easily represented in quantitative
9 data.

10 Next slide, please. The -- so just a -- a
11 small sampling of some of the information that you will
12 actually see in the annual report. In 2024, we issued
13 a 197 new operational licenses. There were just over
14 6,000 industry employees, and our medicinal cannabis
15 program saw 67,000 active patients, and a little over
16 4,500 active caregivers.

17 When it comes to the sales, in 2024, the
18 medicinal cannabis sales totaled just under \$84 million
19 on the adult-use sale side. And the -- those sales
20 totaled to about \$1 billion. And we also included some
21 notes about our stakeholder engagement. So of those of
22 you who have been consistently engaged and staying up
23 to date with what the commission is doing, you'll
24 remember that last year we held a series of listening
25 sessions on the licensing process on packaging and

1 labeling, on patient access. And our staff also held
2 12 medicinal cannabis program registration clinics to
3 help patients and caregivers enroll in or renew their
4 enrollment in the medicinal program.

5 So that's just a -- a -- a small taste of
6 some of the stakeholder engagement that we took on last
7 year. More details are listed out in the annual
8 report, but that is a brief summation of what our 2024
9 annual report includes as presented by the audit
10 committee.

11 So if there -- are there any questions for
12 the audit committee from the board? Hearing no
13 questions, is there a motion on this matter?

14 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chairwoman, I -- I move
15 that we approve the report.

16 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Second.

17 CHAIR: Vice Chair Delgado move to approve
18 the 2024 annual report. Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso
19 second. Is there any discussion on this motion?
20 Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call
21 the vote?

22 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
23 Cid-Kosso?

24 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

1 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

3 COMM. NASH: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

5 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

7 CHAIR: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

9 CHAIR: We then have the report on the
10 Social Equity Excise Fee (SEEF) that we do every year.
11 So for this, I will turn it over to Vice Chair Delgado,
12 sits on the Public Engagement and Education Committee.

13 VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.
14 It's a pleasure to present my fourth year running of
15 the social equity excise fee report along with this
16 year's public recommendations.

17 So we can go. Who's -- who's doing the
18 slides? Let's go to slide number two. So real quickly
19 about the CRC, the commission officially launched on
20 April 12th, 2021, and has been working ever since to
21 straighten the municipal cannabis program into
22 established a new adult-use cannabis market. As of May
23 30th, 2025, 2,871 recreational cannabis applications
24 have been submitted by the public. Across all license
25 categories, 2,076 or 70 percent of the awardees are

1 diversely-owned businesses. And 741 or 25 percent of
2 the awardees are social equity business. Again, that's
3 as of May 30th.

4 Next slide. What -- what's the -- so what
5 is the social equity excise fee about? The social
6 equity excise fee is a per ounce flat rate fee assessed
7 on all cannabis cultivated and sold in New Jersey's
8 adult cannabis market. As a result of reductions in
9 the average price of cannabis, the social equity excise
10 fee rate for 2025 was voted on and as -- as of January,
11 2025, was adjusted to \$2.50 per ounce up from \$1.24 in
12 2020 -- in 2024. Again, the SEEF is collected from
13 cannabis cultivators when they sell the transfer
14 products to other licensee classes.

15 The social equity excise fees estimate to
16 generate 6,500,000 -- excuse me, \$6,500,000 in fiscal
17 year 2025. And the New Jersey CRC projects a two point
18 -- 2,500,000 -- excuse me, 2,000.50 per ounce social
19 equity excise fee will bring in roughly \$11.5 million
20 in fiscal year 2026.

21 By law, 15 percent of the generated
22 revenue, or 975,000 is required to be deposited into
23 the underage deterrence and prevention account, leaving
24 5,500,000 in the fiscal year 2025 to potentially spend
25 on recommended programs.

1 Next slide. So by statutory mandate, what
2 are we required to -- to report? So these are the --
3 these are the requirements here up on the slide. Three
4 regional public hearings are required, and
5 recommendations for funding of -- of financial
6 assistance, impact zones, educational and economic
7 opportunities, and community health. I wanna thank
8 Commissioner Nash and Commissioner Barker for anchoring
9 the -- the three regional hearings that were required
10 statutory. Thank you.

11 Public engagement process. In February,
12 2025, the commission's Public Engagement and Education
13 Committee held three virtual public hearings to solicit
14 input from New Jersey's residents on how to fund --
15 fund -- how to fund from the tax revenue, the cannabis
16 tax revenue, and which should be allocated by the
17 legislation -- legislative according to the CREAMM Act.
18 So again, the commission does not allocate, we just
19 make recommendations. Okay. 13 speakers were
20 involved, 12 written comments submitted. They were --
21 we were promoted by -- promoted the hearings through
22 all of New Jersey CRC's channels. And videos are --
23 are available on our website. So if you wanna see what
24 they looked like and what the comments were, you're
25 more than welcome to come to the website and see them

1 yourselves.

2 Public recommendations were in four
3 categories. Very quickly, these are the four ones;
4 Economic and community development, criminal justice
5 reform and reinvestment, workforce development and
6 youth services, and public health.

7 So let's go over the economic community
8 development. Public input suggested using revenues to
9 provide continuing additional access to capital for
10 diversely owned and social equity businesses. And we
11 found that year -- over year, that's been a constant
12 threat trend, additional funding through grants and
13 loans for the New Jersey Economic Development
14 Corporation Authorities, Cannabis Equity Program was
15 recommended. Also, grant funding for social equity
16 businesses is crucial to help the fledging businesses
17 break the cycle of poverty and allow those affected by
18 disparate criminal justice practices to enter the
19 industry.

20 And again, that's always been suggested in
21 the past four years, and -- and that's been really key
22 on how -- the public's been really key on how to giving
23 those grants out to those that -- that -- those members
24 of the population.

25 Participants supported funding community

1 colleges and public libraries. These institutions
2 serve communities with limited access to resources and
3 can help bring educational and support services to
4 diverse populations across the state.

5 Criminal justice reform and reinvestment.
6 Again, the trend, members of the public, stress the
7 cannabis revenue should not fund criminal law
8 enforcement and should instead support community-based
9 organizations such as Violent -- Violence Intervention
10 Initiative -- initiatives. Hearing participants
11 emphasize the need for educational, vocational support
12 for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals.
13 The programs can enhance employment opportunities,
14 reduce recidivism, and support successful community
15 reintegration.

16 Workforce development and youth services;
17 the public also expressed interest in using revenues
18 for educational support services such as scholarships,
19 vocational training, cannabis specific apprenticeship
20 programs, professional certificates, business
21 development and financial literacy programs. Many
22 commenters emphasized the need for more cannabis
23 related career education. So that was -- that was
24 something that was emphasized by the public.

25 Public feedback highlighted the importance

1 of using revenue to support afterschool and
2 out-of-school programs that offered healthy habits,
3 recreation, and safe spaces for youth. They suggested
4 use -- uses included the funding community centers and
5 faith-based facilities that serve vulnerable
6 populations.

7 Public health; commenters recommended
8 using cannabis revenues to expand healthcare services
9 and communities most impacted by cannabis prohibition
10 with a focus on building healthy infrastructure and
11 improving health outcomes. Public feedback included
12 recommendations to fund resources and education related
13 to mental health, especially in the communities harmed
14 by the War on Drugs.

15 Suggestions included funding education for
16 physicians about the Endocannabinoid System to improve
17 patient health. Participants call for investments in
18 addiction treatment harm reduction, and support
19 services for individuals struggling with addiction.
20 For both services included overdose prevention, opioid
21 therapy, and expanded addiction treatment in
22 underserved communities.

23 The current -- I just wanna go over the
24 current SEEF funding status, which is interesting. As
25 of March, 2025, according to the New Jersey Department

1 of Treasury, social equity -- equity excise fee funds
2 from fiscal 2023, 2024, and 2025 have not been
3 dispersed. The current balance in the social equity
4 excise fee fund as of March, 2025 is \$5,121,000.
5 That's what's in -- in the -- the fund as of 2025.

6 In summary, the undispersed \$5,129,000 and
7 the estimated 6.5 million to be generated in fiscal
8 2025, the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission
9 expects approximately 11,629,000 to be available from
10 SEEF for revenues in fiscal year 2026.

11 The commission recommends that these --
12 this revenue be invested in -- in grants and loans,
13 interest loans to small businesses seeking cannabis
14 licenses, particularly those owned and operated by
15 individuals from economically disadvantaged areas and
16 individuals with prior marijuana conviction.
17 The commission further recommends that the -- these
18 revenues be invested -- I already said that. The
19 Commission Regulatory Commission believes that all of
20 these areas, economic development, criminal justice
21 reform, workforce development, work -- youth services
22 and public health are key to addressing the negative
23 impact of marijuana prohibition on individuals and
24 communities. Investing in these areas can help ensure
25 a safe and equitable and inclusive cannabis industry in

1 New Jersey.

2 Because of the relatively small amount of
3 revenue generated through the social equity excise fee,
4 the commission further recommends that additional tax
5 revenue collected from the cannabis sales in fiscal
6 year 2025, be allocated in accordance with this report
7 for publicly driven priority -- priority programs.

8 And finally, we want to thank you. We,
9 the commissioners, and staff look forward to working
10 with state partners to amplify the express wishes of
11 New Jerseyans and ensure that social equity investment
12 made with cease revenues will benefit those most harm
13 by the failed War on Drugs, upholding the values of the
14 New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission and reflected
15 diversity Spirit of the Garden State.

16 Again, the commission thanks all members
17 of the public who share these ideas and input, as well
18 as the governor, legislature -- and legislature for
19 considering these recommendation. And Madam
20 Chairwoman, with that, I complete my SEEF report.

21 CHAIR: Thank you, Vice Chair Delgado.
22 Are there any questions from the board for the Public
23 Engagement and Education Committee? Hearing no
24 questions from the board, is there a motion on this
25 matter? I will move to approve the Commission's 2025

1 report on the recommended uses of the social equity
2 excise fee.

3 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Second.

4 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Del
5 Cid-Kosso. Is there any discussion? Hearing no
6 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

7 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
8 Cid-Kosso?

9 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

11 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

13 COMM. NASH: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

15 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

17 CHAIR: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
19 next item up for consideration are Applications for
20 Permit or License Changes.

21 CHAIR: Thank you. For this, I will turn
22 the floor over to Director Riggs to provide a summary
23 of those applications for permit for license change
24 that have been received.

25 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. We

1 have two applications that are submitting to change
2 their capacity, their canopy, their physical plant, or
3 -- or their premises.

4 Next slide please.

5 Brighterside Canopy, LLC is a micro
6 business that is looking to add an additional grow
7 room. It will still keep them under the 2,500 square
8 foot threshold that they're required to stay under as a
9 micro business under the law. But it is a change to
10 their physical plan, and therefore it is required to be
11 submitted and approved by the board.

12 GTI New Jersey, Hackettstown is requesting
13 an increase in their cultivation tier, their canopy
14 tier, to go from tier two to tier three. They want to
15 grow between 2,500 square feet and 50,000 square feet.
16 The canopy increase that they've submitted will add
17 four additional flower rooms. That puts them right
18 over the 2,500 square foot flowering canopy space.

19 The site plans, standard operating
20 procedures were reviewed and deemed satisfactory by the
21 Office of Compliance and Investigations. I do wanna
22 note that all businesses should be aware that any
23 modification to your facility, to your existing
24 business should be submitted through your compliance
25 officer because most of them do require board approval.

1 We are requesting and recommending that
2 these two modifications be approved by the board.
3 Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
5 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
6 questions, are there -- is there a motion on this
7 matter?

8 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Madam Chair, I move that
9 we consider this resolution regarding the approval of
10 applications to modify capacity, physical plan
11 premises, or administrative office.

12 CHAIR: Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso moves
13 to approve the applications. Is there a second?

14 VICE CHAIR: I second.

15 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Delgado.
16 Is there any discussion on this motion? Hearing no
17 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

18 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
19 Cid-Kosso?

20 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

22 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

24 COMM. NASH: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

1 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

3 CHAIR: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
5 next item up for consideration are Applications for
6 Ownership Changes.

7 CHAIR: Director Riggs, the floor is
8 yours.

9 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair.
10 Under the Law and Regulations, the sale or transfer of
11 any equity in a business requires board approval.
12 Before any ownership change can take effect, it needs
13 to be presented to the board and approved by the board.

14 There are six cannabis businesses that are
15 proposing a transfer of ownership today. Sun
16 Extractions, which is a manufacturer, Union Chill
17 Cannabis, which is a dispensary, Lemon 22 LLC, which is
18 a dispensary, Mom New Jersey LLC, which is a
19 dispensary, Green Group Grows NJ LLC, a micro
20 cultivator, and Nimbus Farms Incorporated LLC, which is
21 a cultivator. All of these entities have satisfied the
22 regulatory requirements for an ownership change. Each
23 owner and individual that's required to be vetted was
24 done so by the Office of Compliance and Investigations,
25 and the office has deemed that these folks are

1 qualified to enter the AU market. Therefore, we are
2 recommending that these ownership changes be approved.
3 Thank you.

4 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
5 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
6 questions, is there a motion on this matter?

7 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chairwoman, I move that
8 we approve the request for transfers of ownership for
9 the six businesses that Acting Executive Director Riggs
10 mentioned. Outlined -- outlined.

11 COMM. NASH: I second.

12 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair Delgado,
13 seconded by Commissioner Nash. Is there any discussion
14 on this motion to approve the request? Hearing no
15 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

16 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
17 Cid-Kosso?

18 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

19 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

20 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

22 COMM. NASH: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

24 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

1 CHAIR: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
3 next item up for consideration are the Adult-use
4 Cannabis Business Conversion License Applications.

5 CHAIR: Director Riggs, the floor is
6 yours.

7 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Next
8 slide, please. And one more. Perfect.

9 We have four conditional to annual license
10 conversion applications presented to the board and
11 recommended for approval today, two cultivators, two
12 retailers. All four of these licenses have followed
13 our licensing process where priority assignment was
14 given, and we've confirmed that that application is
15 assigned to an appropriate review priority. Look at
16 diversely-owned business status, taxes if necessary,
17 residency if required, and cures are sent if necessary.
18 Prior -- that priority is then verified where we
19 confirm that the appropriate documentation is submitted
20 to support that priority. We can also send cures at
21 that time if we don't have the required documentation.

22 Next, the Office of Licensing does a
23 completeness review. We confirm that all required
24 documents are submitted, the application is complete,
25 and we confirm that the document is actually filled out

1 and all the required information has been submitted.
2 Once that's confirmed, the next step is that the
3 application is scored. These documents are reviewed to
4 ensure that the applicant submitted the information to
5 satisfy all of the requirements and regulation and the
6 notice of application acceptance.

7 At that point, it moves into our Office of
8 Compliance and Investigations for a qualification
9 review, where individuals, financial sources, and any
10 other agreements such as financial sources or
11 management service agreements are reviewed for
12 regulatory compliance. Background checks are reviewed
13 to ensure that the owners and any persons of interest
14 are qualified to enter the adult-use marketplace. And
15 the final step before recommending to the board is a
16 quality control where our license -- Office of
17 Licensing, Office of Compliance and Investigations and
18 our great legal team get together and look at the
19 application to make sure that it satisfies all the
20 regulatory requirements.

21 And then we get to the recommendation to
22 the board in the final step. All of these applications
23 have been reviewed, scored, and are now recommended to
24 you for approval. Thank you.

25 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Director

1 Riggs. Are there any questions from the board?

2 VICE CHAIR: So this is one resolution for
3 four conditionals and 10 annuals, correct?

4 CHAIR: For just the conversion.

5 DIR. RIGGS: We haven't gotten.

6 CHAIR: Just before conversion.

7 DIR. RIGGS: We'll get to them next, Vice
8 Chair.

9 VICE CHAIR: Okay.

10 CHAIR: Hearing no further questions, is
11 there a motion on this matter?

12 COMM. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to
13 approve the resolution for applications to convert from
14 conditional to annual.

15 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Second.

16 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Nash,
17 seconded by Commissioner Del Cid-Kosso. Is there any
18 discussion on this motion? Hearing no discussion, Mr.
19 Said, can you please call the vote?

20 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
21 Cid-Kosso?

22 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

24 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

1 COMM. NASH: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

3 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

5 CHAIR: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
7 next item up for consideration are The Adult-use
8 Cannabis Business Annual License Applications.

9 CHAIR: Thank you. Director Riggs, the
10 floor is yours. This is to -- this is for the direct
11 to annual license application?

12 DIR. RIGGS: Yep. This is what the vice
13 chair is looking for. These follow the exact same
14 licensing process that I just previously articulated.
15 We have nine annual licenses up today, two cultivators,
16 five manufacturers, and two retailers. All of these
17 applications have been reviewed, scored, and are
18 recommended to the board for approval. Thank you.

19 CHAIR: Thank you. Any questions from the
20 board? Hearing no questions, is there a motion on this
21 matter?

22 COMM. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to
23 approve the annual license applications presented here
24 today.

25 COMM. MAPP: I second.

1 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Nash,
2 seconded by Commissioner Mapp. Is there any discussion
3 on this motion to approve the annual license
4 applications? Hearing no discussion, Mr. Said, can you
5 please call the vote?

6 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
7 Cid-Kosso?

8 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner --
10 Commissioner Mapp?

11 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

13 COMM. NASH: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

15 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

17 CHAIR: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
19 next item up for consideration are the Adult-use
20 Cannabis Business Annual License Renewal Applications.

21 CHAIR: Director Riggs.

22 DIR. RIGGS: Thank you, Madam Chair. We
23 have 10 annual renewal applications up for approval
24 today. These applications followed our licensing
25 process. They were reviewed initially and went through

1 that process. Licenses in the adult-use space are
2 effective for one year of date of issuance, and then
3 they need to be renewed annually. All these entities
4 have provided the required documentation for renewal.
5 That documentation has been reviewed by and approved by
6 the Office of Compliance and Investigations.

7 The expanded ATCs that you see here, the
8 first two are in their first year of operations, have
9 provided the additional municipal support and approval
10 that is required. The other remaining eight have
11 provided the appropriate documentation, and therefore
12 we are recommending that these licenses be approved for
13 renewal. Thank you.

14 CHAIR: Thank you very much. Are there
15 any questions from the board? Hearing no questions, is
16 there a motion on this matter?

17 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Madam Chair, I move that
18 we approve this resolution concerning the renewal of
19 adult-use cannabis business licenses.

20 CHAIR: Moved by Commissioner Del
21 Cid-Kosso. Is there a second?

22 VICE CHAIR: I second.

23 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Delgado.
24 Is there any discussion on this motion? Hearing no
25 discussion, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

1 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
2 Cid-Kosso?

3 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

5 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

7 COMM. NASH: Yes.

8 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

9 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

11 CHAIR: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
13 next item up for consideration are Determinations of --
14 oh, Cases and Petitions? Determinations of
15 Rehabilitation.

16 CHAIR: Thank you. I'll turn it over to
17 Chief Counsel Tuason to provide summary of those
18 requests for determination of rehabilitation.

19 CHIEF COUNSEL DAVE TUASON: Thank you,
20 Madam Chair. So we -- we received three applications
21 for rehabilitation. Two were from ATC employees, one
22 from an adult-use employee. All three received notice
23 that a criminal history check revealed a disqualifying
24 conviction. All three individuals were given the
25 opportunity to challenge the accuracy of the criminal

1 history, results for a request a determination of
2 rehabilitation. They all applied for a rehab
3 application. All three met the eight factors under the
4 statutes and regs, and we recommend approval of all
5 three rehabilitation applications. Thank you.

6 CHAIR: Thank you very much, Chief Counsel
7 Tuason. Are there any questions from the board
8 regarding these three requests for determination of
9 rehabilitation?

10 COMM. CID-KOSSO: No.

11 CHAIR: All right. Hearing no questions,
12 is there a motion on this matter?

13 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chairwoman, I move that
14 we approve the requests, determination of
15 rehabilitation adult-use cannabis business employees.

16 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair Delgado. Is
17 there a second?

18 COMM. MAPP: I second.

19 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Second.

20 CHAIR: Commissioner Mapp seconds. It's
21 like an auction house.

22 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yeah, we got that.

23 (Laughter)

24 CHAIR: Is there any discussion on this
25 motion to approve the request? Hearing no discussion,

1 Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

2 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
3 Cid-Kosso?

4 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

6 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

8 COMM. NASH: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

10 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

12 CHAIR: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
14 next item up for consideration are Requests for Rule
15 Waivers.

16 CHAIR: Thank you. Chief Council Tuason,
17 I'll turn the floor over to you to present the rule
18 waiver requests received.

19 CHIEF COUNSEL TUASON: Thank you, Madam
20 Chair. Today, the board is -- will be considering two
21 separate waiver requests, and the board has the
22 authority to grant a regulatory waiver if they
23 determine that pursuant to N.J.A.C 17:30-3.7, that they
24 meet the three factors under that regulation. The
25 first is that a waiver of the regulation is necessary

1 to achieve the purposes of the CREAMM Act or the Honig
2 -- Jake Honig Act is -- excuse me, just the CREAMM Act.
3 Number two, it's necessary to provide access to
4 cannabis items to consumers. And three, does not
5 create a danger to the public health, safety, or
6 welfare.

7 So the first regulatory waiver request is
8 -- turn back to the first slide, WR0008 by Noble Valley
9 Harvest Company. They request a waiver of N.J.A.C
10 17:30-7.17(D)(5), to waive the expanded alternative
11 treatment -- treatment center certification fee for
12 medical cannabis cultivators. And with that, I'll turn
13 it back over to you, Madam Chair, for a board vote.

14 CHAIR: Thank you, Chief Counsel. Are
15 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
16 questions, is there a motion on this matter? I'll move
17 to deny the waiver request for failure to meet the
18 three criteria under Rule 3.7. Second?

19 VICE CHAIR: Second.

20 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Delgado.
21 Is there any discussion on this motion? Again, I
22 believe that the -- this waiver request -- waiver of
23 this rule is not necessary to achieve the purposes of
24 the CREAMM Act. While I do agree that it would not
25 pose a -- a risk to health or safety, it is not

1 necessary to provide access to two cannabis. And while
2 I -- though I -- while I sympathize with the requesters
3 detailed explanation and I believe we could use it as
4 food for thought for the commission, for -- for future
5 reference when evaluating its regulations. I believe
6 that we cannot impose a new fee so that we would have
7 to either waive the entire fee or not waive the entire
8 fee. And I believe denial of this waiver is warranted
9 under the -- the circumstances and according with the
10 regulations and statute.

11 Any further discussion on this matter?
12 Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Said, can you please
13 call the vote?

14 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
15 Cid-Kosso?

16 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

17 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

18 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

19 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

20 COMM. NASH: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

22 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

24 CHAIR: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

1 CHIEF COUNSEL TUASON: The next waiver
2 request is WR024. The requester was Nova Farms
3 Woodbury, LLC. They request a waiver of the
4 requirement under 17:30-16.3(B)(5), that -- that
5 requires that cannabis packaging include a barcode in
6 lieu of a barcode. The entity requests to use a QR
7 code. With that, I'll turn it back over to you, Madam
8 Chair.

9 CHAIR: Thank you, Chief Counsel. Are
10 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
11 questions, is there a motion on this matter?

12 VICE CHAIR: Madam Chairwoman, I moved
13 that we deny the request.

14 CHAIR: Vice Chair Delgado, could you
15 speak into the microphone, please?

16 VICE CHAIR: Oh, excuse me. I thought I
17 left already.

18 (Laughter)

19 VICE CHAIR: Yes, Madam Chairwoman, I move
20 we deny the waiver requested by Fernway Garden State,
21 LLC.

22 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Second.

23 CHAIR: Moved by Vice Chair Delgado, who
24 is still here, at least for the time being. Seconded
25 by commissioner Del Cid-Kosso. Is there any discussion

1 on this motion to deny? I believe that this as
2 articulated by -- by staff, the -- the concern here is
3 one of our ability to make sure that the information
4 that is required by law and by regulation to be
5 included on the packages would be impeded or limited if
6 a QR code were to be used instead of a barcode.

7 I believe our regulations do allow for
8 business licensees to have a QR code on the packages in
9 addition to the required barcode, but not instead of.
10 And so because the -- of the concern around our ability
11 to enforce the -- the required packaging labeling
12 requirements, I am supportive of denial of this
13 particular request and invite the licensee to add their
14 QR code in addition to the barcode rather than instead
15 of.

16 Any further discussion on this motion?
17 Hearing none, Mr. Said, can you please call the vote?

18 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
19 Cid-Kosso?

20 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

22 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

24 COMM. NASH: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

1 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

3 CHAIR: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes. The
5 next item up for consideration are Notices of
6 Enforcement Actions.

7 CHAIR: Chief Counsel -- I'm sorry.
8 Director Riggs, the floor is yours.

9 DIR. RIGGS: Yeah, we're -- we're trying
10 to confuse you.

11 (Laughter)

12 DIR. RIGGS: We have four enforcement
13 actions, so I'll -- I'll -- I'll give a brief summary
14 of them and then when the first voting item comes up,
15 I'll -- I'll go deeper into them.

16 Columbia Care Investigation 02-25 is
17 basically failure to adhere to labor related regulatory
18 and statutory requirements. We have Prolific Growhouse
19 Investigation 04-25 which is failure to adhere -- to
20 adhere to its standard operating procedures, as well as
21 multiple regulatory and statutory violations.

22 Next slide, please. Baked by the River
23 Investigation 205-24, failure to -- to adhere to the
24 adult-use regulations related to sampling. And Aunt
25 Mary's Investigation 30-25, failure to adhere to the

1 adult-use regulations regarding expiration dates.

2 Next slide. So this is investigation
3 02-25, which is Columbia Care Notice of Violation.
4 Notice of violation was issued to Columbia Care for
5 labor relations issues. They had management in a room
6 when there was ratification vote. The CREAMM Act
7 requires, and our regulations require that a good faith
8 effort is made to enter into a collective bargaining
9 agreement. These allegations seem to be not in good
10 faith, and therefore we are recommending that an
11 enforcement action be taken against Columbia Care.

12 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
13 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
14 questions, is there a motion on this matter as it
15 relates to Columbia Care and I -- INV0225?

16 COMM. NASH: Madam Chair?

17 CHAIR: Yes, Commissioner Nash.

18 COMM. NASH: Can I provide some background
19 and then make the motion?

20 CHAIR: Sure.

21 COMM. NASH: Okay. UFC -- UFCW conducted
22 a card check at Columbia Care's Violent Facility and
23 had a majority representation of workers who wish to be
24 represented by the union.

25 The NLRB ruled that certain classes of the

1 employees were exempt from the NLRB or the NLRA, the
2 National Labor Relations Act, and thus the union had a
3 majority representation. I'm sorry, let me repeat
4 that. The NLRB rule that certain classes of the
5 employees were exempt from the NLRA and thus the union
6 had a majority representation.

7 New Jersey law allows for workers who are
8 not covered under the NLRA to still be represented by a
9 union. As a reminder, the workers in question are not
10 covered by the NLRB, and therefore the commission
11 retains authority under Labor laws for workers who do
12 not fall under the NLRA.

13 Columbia Care interfered at a ratification
14 meeting by having a representative of a management --
15 of management at -- present at the meeting. N.J.S.A
16 24:6(I)-7.2(E), that's the medical statute, and N.J --
17 N.J.S.A 24:6(I)-36(C) state that failure to demonstrate
18 good faith efforts to enter into CBA within 200 days of
19 opening of a licensed cannabis business shall result in
20 the suspension or revocation of the business's license.
21 As such, I move to impose an order of two day
22 suspension of Columbia Cares Park Avenue cultivation
23 licenses, including AU and medical for violation of
24 N.J.S.A 24:6(I)-7.2(E) and N.J.S.A 24:6(I)-36(C).

25 If Columbia Care can demonstrate its

1 progress toward a ratification vote without
2 interference, the order can be lifted. Any future
3 action pertaining to this matter can be delegated to
4 the chair and vice chair. They will have joint
5 authority to take any future action.

6 Madam Chair, I see the floor to you. A
7 motion -- should I make the motion?

8 CHAIR: I believe you did.

9 COMM. NASH: Okay. All right. Okay.

10 CHAIR: So Commissioner Nash has moved to
11 impose -- to issue a propose order of a two day
12 suspension. Is there a second? I will second the
13 motion. Is there any discussion on this motion?

14 VICE CHAIR: Yeah, I have a question.

15 CHAIR: Vice Chair Delgado, please use --
16 speak into the microphone.

17 VICE CHAIR: Thank you.

18 CHAIR: At the request of our wonderful IT
19 staff.

20 VICE CHAIR: Yeah, I have a question,
21 Madam Chairwoman. Is this a 72 hour? When you say two
22 day suspension, is -- when does that take effect?

23 CHAIR: So under our regulations --

24 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

25 CHAIR: -- under our Adult-use

1 Regulations, Rule 20.8, and Medical Rule -- Medical
2 Regulations 13.8, after an -- a notice of proposed
3 suspension -- sorry, the -- after issuing a notice of a
4 proposed order of suspension, a business -- a licensee,
5 here, Columbia Care, would have 72 hours to rectify the
6 situation, provide evidence to the commission of that
7 they have corrected the violation. If after 72 hours
8 no correction has been made, then the suspension would
9 go into effect immediately. But that 72 hour clock
10 does not start until the licensee -- until the notice
11 of the proposed order of suspension is actually sent
12 out.

13 VICE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. Because I
14 didn't -- I didn't hear that.

15 CHAIR: That's all right. All right.

16 VICE CHAIR: But no -- okay. Thank you
17 for explaining that. Thank you.

18 CHAIR: Thank you.

19 VICE CHAIR: For clarifying that.

20 CHAIR: Certainly. So as I noted, there
21 are two regulations here that are involved in that
22 pertain to the proposed order of suspension. It --
23 now, the business would have the ability to get out
24 from the -- from under the -- the danger of this two
25 day suspension if they provide required information

1 within 72 hours.

2 I believe the scope -- the details on the scope of the
3 suspension as articulated by Commissioner Nash, shall
4 be -- should be included in the notice of the proposed
5 suspension. Ms. -- Commissioner Nash has already
6 articulated that this would apply to the cultivation,
7 adult-use, cultivation, and medical cultivation permits
8 only. This would not affect any dispensary operations.
9 This would not affect any manufacturing operations
10 conducted by Columbia Care.

11 And I believe -- I agree with Commissioner
12 Nash, believe that the record clearly demonstrates
13 evidence of bad faith in the collective bargaining
14 negotiations. I understand that the -- the parties are
15 working to close the existing gap very, very quickly.
16 And so I am hopeful that the -- the delayed nature of
17 this suspension order will give them the time that they
18 need to -- to close that gap and actually demonstrate
19 that they are working towards a scheduled date on which
20 their employees will be able to vote on a -- on an
21 agreement whether to reject or accept an agreement.

22 And I -- I have no doubt that the vice
23 chair and I will be able to exercise our responsibility
24 to take any action whether to -- to lift or otherwise
25 -- lift the order of suspension or other -- or

1 otherwise. I have no -- no doubt about our ability to
2 do that in a timely manner to make sure that should
3 Columbia Care comply with their requirements and
4 correct these issues, that there will be no
5 continuation -- no concerns around disruption of
6 operations.

7 Vice Chair Delgado?

8 VICE CHAIR: The action that those -- the
9 actions of demonstration will be articulated in the
10 notice?

11 CHAIR: Yes. The details of what is -- is
12 required -- would be required, should be articulated in
13 the notice of the proposed suspension. At present --
14 right now, I can say that it would be to demonstrate
15 that the -- that Columbia Care has reached, like
16 undefines a date on which their employees who are not
17 subject to the NLRA would be able to make a decision on
18 whether to reject or -- or accept and adopt collective
19 bargaining agreement. And I want that vote to happen
20 without interference or the presence of management in a
21 way that would intimidate or reasonably be perceived as
22 intimidating or coercive by their employees.

23 VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

24 CHAIR: You are most certainly welcome,
25 Vice Chair.

1 Any further discussion on this motion to impose the two
2 day suspension? Hearing no further discussion, Mr.
3 Said, can you please call the vote?

4 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
5 Cid-Kosso?

6 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Abstain.

7 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

8 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

10 COMM. NASH: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

12 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

14 CHAIR: Yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

16 CHAIR: So thank you. So we now have the
17 next notice of violation which is the prolific
18 Growhouse?

19 DIR. RIGGS: Prolific Growhouse. Correct.

20 CHAIR: Director Riggs, the floor is
21 yours.

22 DIR. RIGGS: Next. Is that the right
23 investigation number prolific? 04-25, correct. That's
24 -- that's Prolific Growhouse. So 04-25 Investigation
25 Control Number is Prolific Growhouse.

1 During a site visit on January 10th, 2025
2 by our compliance staff, there were six violations
3 discovered. Prolific was using a -- a room for
4 manufacturing extracts that was created after their
5 final inspection was conducted. And after their
6 manufacturing license was issued, there was no
7 inspection of that area, and it was a modification of
8 their facility that should have been approved by the
9 board prior to using it. This new room didn't have
10 cameras, security cameras as required by regulations,
11 so we had no insight into what was going on in that
12 room.

13 The main entrance to their facility which
14 is not -- you know, which is a manufacturing facility
15 and a grow, the -- the front entry was unlocked and it
16 was easy access for our compliance officers when they
17 arrived to both the grow area and the manufacturing
18 area.

19 Packaged cannabis was being stored in the
20 hallway with easy access into the building and not
21 secure as required by the regulations. Every plant in
22 the cultivation room that exceeded six inches in
23 height, but was not tagged by metric tags, which is
24 required under our regulations. And there was an
25 employee working at the location that did not have a

1 badge, that individual had applied to work was issued a
2 letter showing that they had a disqualifying
3 conviction. Prolific was informed of this individual,
4 was unable to work, was not qualified to work, but that
5 individual continued to work and did not have a badge.
6 And those are the facts.

7 We are recommending an enforcement action
8 against Prolific based upon these violations. Thank
9 you.

10 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
11 there any questions from the board for Director Riggs?
12 Hearing no questions, is there a motion on this matter?

13 COMM. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to impose
14 a \$6,000 penalty for the six violations.

15 CHAIR: Is there a second? I will second
16 the motion to impose a \$6,000 penalty. Is there any
17 discussion on this motion? For me, I -- I think there
18 are a -- a few things here that are relevant to my
19 support for the \$6,000 penalty.

20 First and foremost as it relates to the
21 unauthorized employee, in the past, the Commission has
22 imposed a penalty that amounted to approximately a
23 \$2,000 fine for each employee that was without a badge.
24 In that case, the licensee did self-report and took
25 action to -- to correct the issues.

1 Here, we have the opposite situation where
2 the employer was notified of the unauthorized employee
3 and failed to address or correct the problem. And so
4 for that, I think there is a -- I think that warrants
5 an increased fine for the failure to register the
6 employee.

7 I think the storage -- so for me, I
8 believe \$3,000 would be appropriate for the
9 unregistered employees. I believe a \$500 fine would be
10 appropriate for the -- the failures with respect to
11 storage of cannabis.

12 Their failure to -- to apply for a
13 facility modification as required, it -- it warrants a
14 \$1,000 fine. Failure to have security cameras in that
15 room that was unauthorized would be warranted -- I'm
16 sorry, would warrant a -- an additional \$500 fine, and
17 failure to properly tag all their plants with metric
18 tags, I believe, warrants a \$1,000 fine.

19 And for me, that's how I would break down
20 the -- the \$6,000 total fine against Prolific Growhouse
21 in this instance.

22 Is there any further discussion on this
23 motion? Hearing none, Mr. Said, can you please call
24 the vote?

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del

1 Cid-Kosso?

2 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

3 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

4 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

6 COMM. NASH: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

8 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

10 CHAIR: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

12 DIR. RIGGS: The next enforcement action
13 before the board is Baked by the River, 205-24. These
14 were sampling violations. There was an off-site event
15 sponsored by Baked by the River and other cannabis
16 businesses.

17 Baked by the River ordered cannabis from
18 other vendors, made extremely discounted purchases to
19 bring that cannabis to the event and hand out for
20 business and promotional purposes, which is a
21 regulatory and statutory violation, and therefore, we
22 are recommending an enforcement action.

23 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
24 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
25 questions, is there a motion on this matter as it

1 relates to Baked by the River?

2 Any motion on this matter as it relates to
3 Baked by the River? I will move to impose a penalty of
4 \$2,000 for the violations noted. Here, the business
5 does admit, by their own admission, participants at
6 this event were given the option to sample cannabis
7 products, and products were optionally gifted in small
8 quantities for sampling.

9 The business does assert that a prior
10 event was held and in -- in similar fashion, and the
11 Commission did not raise any objections to that event.
12 However, there is a significant distinction between two
13 events.

14 In that earlier event, there was no
15 sampling done on site. Participants -- as indicated by
16 the business in that earlier event, the consumers were
17 actually brought to the dispensary and conducted their
18 purchases there and then went back to the -- the site
19 of the -- the event.

20 Here, we have the business owners and
21 managers buying cannabis and then taking that to the --
22 the event for -- for distribution or sampling. And so
23 while I understand and sympathize with the desire to
24 provide a mechanism for sampling products by
25 businesses, I think this is something that the

1 Commission can look at in the future, however, as it
2 presently stands, our regulations do -- are clear and
3 the law is also -- states that no -- no sampling or
4 gifting of products for non-promotional business
5 purposes is permitted.

6 And so while I believe the Commission can
7 look for -- look to do -- maybe to revisit issues in
8 the future related to this, to find some pathway, I
9 believe that we do not have that pathway available to
10 us right now. And so I believe that the -- the fine
11 here is warranted and is reasonable in accordance with
12 the law and the regulations.

13 Is there any further discussion on this
14 motion?

15 VICE CHAIR: I'm going to second -- I'm
16 going to second --

17 CHAIR: Sorry. My apologies.

18 VICE CHAIR: Okay.

19 CHAIR: I don't believe we had a second.
20 I -- I explained --

21 VICE CHAIR: Okay.

22 CHAIR: -- the \$2,000 penalty.

23 VICE CHAIR: Yeah.

24 CHAIR: Did I -- do we have a second?

25 VICE CHAIR: Yeah, I'm going to second.

1 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Delgado.

2 VICE CHAIR: Yeah. But I wanna -- I wanna
3 say -- if I can be allowed to make a comment.

4 CHAIR: Yes, please.

5 VICE CHAIR: I agree with you. I think as
6 we -- as -- as the Commission -- I won't be here, but
7 as the Commission goes forward --

8 DIR. RIGGS: Thanks for reminding.

9 VICE CHAIR: No, seriously. As the
10 Commission goes forward, you -- and amending its rules
11 and regulations, you definitely need to look at that
12 and make it clearer.

13 In the meantime, I think maybe the
14 communication department could elevate that -- that
15 issue on the website, maybe using a -- a video, Q&A
16 video, so that it's more attainable -- it's easily
17 attainable for businesses to understand what the rule
18 is -- what the current rule is, that way they'll
19 (inaudible).

20 DIR. RIGGS: We're gonna make sure we take
21 you up on that recommendation, Vice Chair.

22 VICE CHAIR: I'll be -- I'll be calling in
23 on that. Take care.

24 CHAIR: Thank you, Vice --

25 VICE CHAIR: And that's -- that's my --

1 those are my notes.

2 CHAIR: Thank you, Vice Chair Delgado. Is
3 there any further discussion?

4 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Just a brief comment. I
5 agree --

6 CHAIR: Yes, Commissioner Del --

7 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Thank you. I agree with
8 Vice Chair Delgado. I think education, especially for
9 events like 420 and other ones that happen throughout
10 the year, I think education -- educating our licensees
11 is very important so that we make sure that this
12 doesn't happen again in the future.

13 And again, it's \$5,000, you know, next
14 time it could be -- I'm sorry, \$2,000. Next time it
15 could be other -- like, maybe a more severe violation,
16 and, you know, we want to make sure that you guys are
17 following the regulations, but also communicating with
18 the CRC and making sure, you know, when in doubt,
19 definitely reach out to us.

20 Again, education is really critical when
21 it comes to events like these.

22 CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner Del Cid.
23 Any further discussion?

24 VICE CHAIR: Yeah. I just want to say
25 that, you know, I take no great pleasure in fining any

1 of the businesses. I mean, this marketplace is -- it's
2 -- it's a difficult marketplace, and there's no
3 pleasure in this Commission fining any business. I'm
4 sure you all agree.

5 COMM. NASH: I agree with that as well,
6 Vice Chair.

7 VICE CHAIR: Yeah.

8 CHAIR: Well said. Well said. And yes, I
9 certainly agree, we don't -- we take no pleasure in --
10 in fining businesses, but it is important for our
11 enforcement and to make sure that businesses are held
12 to account.

13 If there's no further discussion, Mr.
14 Said, can you please call the vote?

15 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
16 Cid-Kosso?

17 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

19 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

20 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

21 COMM. NASH: Yes.

22 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

23 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

24 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

25 CHAIR: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

2 DIR. RIGGS: The next enforcement action
3 before the Commission is Aunt Mary's, Investigation
4 30-25. There was an NOV issued for products being sold
5 to employees for sampling purposes. Although they were
6 sold, there was a vape cart and some edibles that had
7 expired.

8 Our regulations are clear that you cannot
9 sell expired product to anyone, including your
10 employees. Therefore, that is a violation and we are
11 recommending an enforcement action. Thank you, Madam
12 Chair.

13 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. Are
14 there any questions from the board? Hearing no
15 questions from the board, is there a motion on this
16 matter?

17 COMM. NASH: Madam Chair, I move to impose
18 a \$5,000 sanction against Aunt Mary's dispensary. That
19 is based on previous similar sanction.

20 CHAIR: Commissioner Nash moves to impose
21 a \$5,000 sanction. Is there a second?

22 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Second.

23 CHAIR: Seconded by Commissioner Del
24 Cid-Kosso. Is there any discussion on this motion?

25 VICE CHAIR: Is that what we imposed in

1 the past, \$5,000?

2 CHAIR: For (inaudible), yes. So --

3 VICE CHAIR: I just wanna -- I just wanna
4 make sure.

5 CHAIR: Yes. In the past, we did have a
6 -- an NOV issued to Leaf Haus for gifting expired
7 products and record keeping, and in that instance, a
8 fine of \$5,000 was imposed.

9 VICE CHAIR: Was Aunt Mary also guilty of
10 -- of poor record keeping, or is it just -- was it just
11 expired products? It sounds like there's two --

12 CHAIR: The records --

13 VICE CHAIR: It sounds like there's two
14 violations in there, record keeping --

15 DIR. RIGGS: The -- the notice of
16 violation to Aunt Mary's was issued for selling expired
17 product.

18 VICE CHAIR: Just one?

19 DIR. RIGGS: Two.

20 VICE CHAIR: Two?

21 DIR. RIGGS: Two products.

22 VICE CHAIR: Okay. No, what I'm saying,
23 in the past, the record --

24 DIR. RIGGS: Yes, that was the only issue.

25 VICE CHAIR: -- poor record keeping and

1 expired product.

2 DIR. RIGGS: We did not cite them for poor
3 record keeping. We only cited them for selling expired
4 product.

5 VICE CHAIR: So it's -- it's really just
6 one violation, it's not two? We imposed \$5,000 for two
7 violations, poor record keeping and expired product.

8 CHAIR: That's correct.

9 VICE CHAIR: Aunt Mary -- no, not -- for
10 that previous --

11 CHAIR: For Leaf Haus, yes.

12 VICE CHAIR: Yeah, for Leaf Haus. For
13 Aunt Mary, they just have one violation for two
14 products, and it's just for expired product.

15 CHAIR: Correct.

16 VICE CHAIR: For me, it's just one
17 violation, not two.

18 CHAIR: Yes.

19 VICE CHAIR: Okay. So we're giving them
20 the same fine that we gave --

21 CHAIR: Leaf Haus.

22 VICE CHAIR: Leaf Haus. Thank you.

23 CHAIR: That is the motion that was
24 proposed and seconded. That's the motion that is on
25 the floor now. If you'd like to --

1 VICE CHAIR: To counter?

2 CHAIR: -- amend?

3 VICE CHAIR: Yeah, I'd like to amend --

4 CHAIR: If you'd like to try to amend?

5 VICE CHAIR: Yeah, I'd like to amend it to
6 \$2,500.

7 CHAIR: All right. Could you speak into
8 the microphone?

9 VICE CHAIR: Yes, I would like to amend it
10 to \$2,500.

11 CHAIR: So Vice Chair Delgado moves to
12 amend the underlying motion such that it imposes a
13 penalty of \$2,500?

14 VICE CHAIR: Yes, that's my motion.

15 CHAIR: So we have a motion to amend the
16 underlying motion. Is there a second on the attempt to
17 amend the underlying motion such that the penalty
18 imposed would be \$2,500 instead of \$5,000?

19 COMM. MAPP: I second that amended motion
20 so that we can be consistent in our fines.

21 CHAIR: Commissioner Mapp seconds the
22 motion to amend the underlying motion. So on this
23 motion to amend the underlying motion to impose a
24 penalty of \$2,500, Mr. Said, can you please call the
25 vote? I'm sorry, before we do that, I'm so sorry, is

1 there any discussion on this motion to amend the
2 underlying motion?

3 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes, just a brief
4 comment.

5 CHAIR: Commissioner Del Cid.

6 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Thank you. So this is
7 the second time that we see that a business has sold
8 expired products, and when we hosted our roundtables
9 with the Permitting and Licensing Committee, I remember
10 businesses expressing the need for extending the shelf
11 life of products in -- in dispensaries, and the
12 committee made a recommendation that the Packaging and
13 Labeling Committee looks into that.

14 So I just wanted to flag that
15 conversation. And, you know, we're starting to see
16 more and more of these same issues, so I want to make
17 sure that the -- the public's comments are taken into
18 account and the work that that committee is going to be
19 doing moving forward.

20 CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner Del Cid.
21 Is there any further discussion on this motion to amend
22 the underlying motion so that it -- it would impose a
23 penalty of \$2,500 instead of \$5,000?

24 Hearing no further discussion on this
25 motion to amend the underlying motion, Mr. Said, can

1 you please call the vote?

2 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
3 Cid-Kosso?

4 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

5 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

6 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

7 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

8 COMM. NASH: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

10 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

12 CHAIR: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

14 CHAIR: All right. So now we go to -- we
15 now have a -- a main motion, that is to impose a
16 penalty of \$2,500 that is on the floor before us.

17 Is there any discussion on this motion?

18 Hearing none, then, Mr. Said, on the motion to impose a
19 penalty of \$2,500, can you please call the vote?

20 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Del
21 Cid-Kosso?

22 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Mapp?

24 COMM. MAPP: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Commissioner Nash?

1 COMM. NASH: Yes.

2 THE SECRETARY: Vice Chair Delgado?

3 VICE CHAIR: Yes.

4 THE SECRETARY: Chairwoman Houenou?

5 CHAIR: Yes.

6 THE SECRETARY: The motion passes.

7 The next item on the agenda, we have the
8 open public comment period.

9 CHAIR: Okay. As we open the floor for
10 our public comment period, as I do every board meeting,
11 I invite members of the public to submit their comments
12 in writing. You can do it during or after this board
13 meeting. The deadline for submitting written comments
14 to the Commission is 5 o'clock p.m. tomorrow, Friday,
15 June 13th.

16 Go to our -- you can submit those written
17 comments by going to our website,
18 nj.gov/cannabis/meetings. Written comments will be
19 shared with the Commission members and they will be
20 made public.

21 Mr. Said will call on our registered
22 speakers. We're going to start with the -- first with
23 those individuals who are in person and then we'll turn
24 to those joining us by phone. Speakers will be limited
25 to three minutes.

1 We have our clock here which will count
2 down your time. When it is your turn to speak, for
3 those who are in person, we invite you to come down. I
4 believe the microphone is already turned on, so all
5 you'll have to do is just begin your comments. The
6 microphone, yes, is now turned on. Thank you.

7 Make sure to state your name clearly,
8 because we have a stenographer who is transcribing our
9 meeting and we want to make sure we have -- we captures
10 -- capture people's names correctly.

11 So with that, Mr. Said, can you please
12 call on our first speakers?

13 THE SECRETARY: The first person -- excuse
14 me. Thank you, Chairwoman. As a reminder, public
15 speakers during this afternoon's public comment period
16 will be limited to three minutes. Please be respectful
17 and concise during your comments.

18 The first person registered to speak in
19 person is Carlos Almanzar, if you're in the room.
20 Okay. The next person is Lisa Grega.

21 MS. LISA GREGA: Thank you. Good
22 afternoon, commissioners. My name is Lisa Grega and I
23 am founder and CEO of Noble Valley Harvest Company. We
24 are a medical cultivator and was awarded the only Tier
25 1, 5,000 square foot canopy license in the state from

1 the 2019 licensing round.

2 We've recently become operational in March
3 of this year after six years since beginning the
4 process. I'm speaking to you today to shed some light
5 on the current medical program issues and specifically,
6 fee issues that affect the sustainability of this
7 program.

8 When looking at the medical versus adult
9 use programs, there are some clear imbalances which
10 favor adult use. To start, there are now less than
11 60,000 patients from the 130,000 peak, generating less
12 than one-tenth of the revenue as on the adult use side,
13 with two-thirds of registered doctors not accepting new
14 patients.

15 Additionally, out of 250 operating
16 dispensaries, only 55 can sell medical products, with
17 patients limited to three ounces per month compared to
18 adult use, which essentially has no limit. The point
19 of these statistics is there is no incentive for
20 medical operators nor patients other than sales and
21 SEEF tax relief.

22 Patients are getting their medicine on the
23 adult use side without the hassle of limited ATC
24 locations, limited allotments, limited medical menus,
25 and limited doctors. The program needs incentives with

1 examples such as medical patient home grow, removing
2 patient purchase limits, and decreasing or eradicating
3 patient and medical operator fees.

4 Specific to fees, our opinion is that a
5 medical license shouldn't be more expensive than adult
6 use when we are providing for patients. For Noble
7 Valley, our annual license fee is \$20,000, which is
8 double the \$10,000 fee for the comparable adult use
9 license tier.

10 Also, we as a 5,000 square foot medical
11 cultivator have to pay the same \$400,000 ATC expansion
12 fee as a 20,000 to 30,000 square foot license type or
13 the larger MSOs. We currently have four employees and
14 less than 2,500 square feet of operational canopy. We
15 are a micro grow in the eyes of adult use.

16 The reality we all have to face is that
17 there is no medical program without patients and no
18 patients if they have no medical operators. Lack of
19 new operators and lack of meaningful reforms are
20 driving patients away, especially when the medical
21 program is viewed as an inconvenience.

22 We need to change, or for Noble Valley and
23 its employees, we will be out of business. If
24 enrollment further drops and we can't sell all of our
25 product to patients, we are out of business. If we

1 can't raise \$400,000 due to limited medical patient
2 sales, we are out of business.

3 The reality we are facing is that we could
4 lose a small woman-owned startup cultivator while
5 multi-state operators are the successful ones, a direct
6 contradiction to the values of this Commission. Please
7 consider removing or decreasing these expansion fees
8 and creating incentives in favor of patients and
9 medical operators.

10 And for the record, I had sent back on
11 February 28th, 2024, a letter to Commissioner Jeff
12 Brown at the time, requesting just a simple discussion
13 of these fees and how we might propose to reduce them,
14 and while this is the first time I'm even hearing of
15 this turning into a formal waiver request, you know,
16 15, 16 months later. Thank you.

17 THE SECRETARY: The next person on the
18 list is Smrita Choubey.

19 MS. SMRITA CHOUBEY: Hello. My name is
20 Smrita Choubey. I'm the founder of Veda Warrior.
21 Thank you to the CRC, members of the Commission,
22 Chairman Houenou, for the opportunity to speak today.

23 Veda Warrior is an Ayurveda-inspired
24 cannabis company. We operate under a brand licensing
25 agreement with Columbia Care, and we are on a mission

1 to create education around the ancient history of
2 cannabis, specifically as it is linked to Ayurveda,
3 which is the sister science of yoga and comes from
4 ancient India.

5 So education is really at the heart of our
6 mission, and being -- having the opportunity to speak
7 to our consumers and patients alike to raise awareness
8 around the history of cannabis is critical to our
9 mission.

10 Vice Chair Delgado, I loved what you said
11 earlier, which is that we cannot regulate every aspect
12 of human interaction, and it is really important to
13 create safe and legal ways for us to have these
14 educational events.

15 So in that line, I just wanted to express
16 that there is a tremendous need for a greater amount of
17 clarity and guidelines around how safe educational
18 events can be hosted. Specifically, I was very
19 dismayed to see the recent enforcement action against
20 Baked by the River.

21 Veda Warriors infused cooking oils are
22 sold at Baked by the River. I personally know the
23 operators and they are kind-hearted, good people who
24 are genuinely doing everything in their power to follow
25 the rules and do things compliantly, so we would really

1 appreciate just further focus on providing that -- that
2 clarity.

3 I also wanted to provide two other -- just
4 raise awareness to two other concerns. Again, Vice
5 Chair Delgado, I loved what you said earlier that for
6 large corporations, it's pretty easy to absorb
7 compliance costs. It's really no skin off their back.

8 For small business, woman-owned operators
9 like Veda Warrior, big shifts in compliance and testing
10 standards can result in really big costs. For example,
11 the recent changes in how samples are taken for testing
12 cost Veda Warrior three weeks of revenue. We only
13 launched in December. We really cannot afford to lose
14 almost a month of revenue.

15 These -- I just wanted to raise awareness
16 around the fact that these -- these type of changes
17 create outsized impact on the small business operators,
18 women, and minority-owned operators that this system is
19 really trying to support.

20 So I'd really appreciate the opportunity
21 for further roundtable discussions in a -- in a more
22 private setting where we're able to speak candidly,
23 that's not part of public testimony, in order to
24 further advance this.

25 Finally, I wanted to raise awareness to

1 the fact that several years into the launch of the New
2 Jersey Adult Use Program, we still have virtually no
3 farm-grown cannabis businesses.

4 I have a cultivation license myself.
5 We're still at the conversion stage and haven't been
6 able to convert it yet, and I just want to raise
7 awareness around the fact that most farm-based
8 operations were stymied at the municipal level.

9 So I would just like to raise awareness
10 around that fact and really ask the question of why,
11 and seek support from the CRC. Thank you so much for
12 the opportunity to comment today.

13 VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Smrita.

14 THE SECRETARY: The next person on the
15 list is Jesse Marie Villars.

16 MS. JESSE MARIE VILLARS: Good afternoon.
17 Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. I'm
18 Jesse Marie Villars. (Inaudible) corporate
19 prioritization and monopolization that we're seeing in
20 the cannabis industry here in New Jersey, and
21 unfortunately, how the actions of the NJCRC are pushing
22 us in that direction.

23 Let's take Lambertville, for example.
24 We're a town that won't allow a Starbucks to open for
25 the sake of letting locally-owned independent coffee

1 shops to survive. My business is the only
2 locally-owned microbusiness that was approved in my
3 hometown.

4 We applied for the microbusiness class
5 because the NJCRC committed to prioritizing
6 microbusinesses. Instead of being prioritized, the
7 NJCRC lost our application and didn't respond for
8 months. Instead, directors from the NJCRC went out of
9 their way to meet regularly with the larger business in
10 my town, Union Chill, to help them open quickly and
11 benefit from first-to-market advantage.

12 A first-to-market advantage, they then
13 used to sell out their business to TerrAscend, a sale
14 that was just approved by the NJCRC today, allowing the
15 fifth largest cannabis corporation in the United States
16 to take over a fourth licensed business in New Jersey
17 beyond the limit of what was originally put in place to
18 prevent monopolization in this industry.

19 So my small business community in
20 Lambertville was just sold out by the NJCRC. As a
21 small business cannabis dispensary, that's terrifying.
22 Union Chill is the same business whose consultant
23 reported my business to the NJCRC. My business has not
24 received a single complaint from anyone in
25 Lambertville. Not a single resident, business, or

1 local official has complained.

2 It was the corporate competitor that
3 reported my small business, and instead of meeting with
4 me and giving my small business the same time and
5 treatment that the NJCRC gave to Union Chill, instead
6 of working with us and responding to my multiple
7 attempts for outreach and communication and supporting
8 us, the NJCRC chose to punish us with a violation
9 instead.

10 My business is getting entirely different
11 treatment from the large corporations that are doing
12 the same type of events across the state. I watch MSOs
13 host events in my hometown, but my business can't
14 because we get penalized for doing the same. So
15 instead of a locally-owned business hosting local
16 events, you're letting MSOs take over the local
17 cannabis community events in my hometown.

18 I'm not saying these events should be shut
19 down. I do not want to see other businesses penalized,
20 as I said in my last statement to the NJCRC. What I am
21 concerned about is the blatantly unfair treatment I'm
22 seeing.

23 My small business is losing partnerships
24 and marketing opportunities that we've set up through
25 these event collaborations and large corporations are

1 now profiting from the opportunities that I started in
2 my local community. That's what's happening in
3 Lambertville, but it's just a small example of the
4 larger problem happening statewide.

5 Recent changes have allowed MSOs to take
6 up to 30 percent of many licenses as they want,
7 depending on the agreement that 30 percent can
8 inevitably mean the MSO financially and thus
9 functionally taking over the business operations, which
10 is something I'm seeing across the state.

11 The fact that the NJCRC is allowing this
12 at the same time that you're taking away the ability of
13 microbusinesses to vertically integrate, you're killing
14 the dreams of small independent entrepreneurs across
15 the state like myself, once again, giving competitive
16 advantage to larger licensed corporations that can have
17 as many license types as they want.

18 So I ask for fair treatment, I ask for
19 better communication, I ask to be part of the
20 conversation. I ask you to let microbusinesses to
21 vertically integrate and stop supporting MSO
22 monopolization in the Garden State.

23 COMM. NASH: Excuse me, Madam Chair, I
24 know we don't normally respond to public comment, but
25 there is the risk of inaccurate information spreading

1 like wildfire, and I don't recall approving any
2 ownership change to TerrAscend today.

3 CHAIR: Okay.

4 VICE CHAIR: It's true.

5 COMM. NASH: No, we didn't.

6 CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner Nash. Let
7 us look into that. We'll proceed with our public
8 comment period, and we'll give our staff an opportunity
9 to look into the -- the facts so that we can maybe
10 clarify or correct the record after the public comment
11 period ends.

12 COMM. NASH: Thank you.

13 CHAIR: Thank you.

14 THE SECRETARY: The next person on the
15 list is Thomas Norcia. The next person on the list is
16 James Jones. The next person on the list is Ihab Abu
17 Hassan.

18 The next person on the list is Reginald
19 Green.

20 MR. REGINALD GREEN: Good afternoon,
21 Commissioners. My name is Reginald Green. I
22 respectfully appreciate the opportunity to speak with
23 you today.

24 As of today, I've been waiting exactly one
25 year to be reinstated for employment in the New Jersey

1 cannabis industry. One year. Not because I've done
2 anything wrong during that time, but because of the
3 delays of the rehabilitation determination process.

4 This delay has real impact on my life.
5 I've missed out on job opportunities, income, and the
6 chance to contribute on an industry that's supposed to
7 stand for growth, equity, and second chances.

8 I'm here today to ask a simple question.
9 Why does this process take so long and why must
10 individuals as myself wait for a full Commission
11 meeting to move forward, even when the case of
12 rehabilitation is clear cut? If there's clear evidence
13 of rehabilitation, then I believe qualified staff
14 should have the authority to make the call without
15 weeks, months, or a year of unnecessary delay.

16 This isn't just about policy. It's a
17 human issue. People are trying to turn their lives
18 around, they're doing the right thing, but they is
19 being held back by red tape, not their past, but by a
20 broken process.

21 The New Jersey cannabis laws were designed
22 to correct the harms of the past, but people are still
23 being sidelined indefinitely and we're missing the
24 spirit of the law. I'm not blaming or finger pointing,
25 I'm calling for change. My story matters. It really

1 does. This is my lived experience, and I need the CRC
2 Board of Commissioners to hear and understand the real
3 human impact in my life.

4 So today, I'm asking the New Jersey CRC
5 Board of Commissioners to consider procedure reforms
6 that will allow for faster, fairer decisions so that
7 people like me aren't left in limbo a year just trying
8 to get back to work.

9 And trust me, the -- the rehabilitation
10 determination process is a phenomenal opportunity, and
11 I'm humbled and absolutely grateful. However, I'd like
12 to see the CRC Commission empower qualified staff by
13 granting them the authority to approve rehabilitation
14 determination and straightforward cases, especially
15 when there's no criminal activity, positive community
16 involvement, and a clear track record for decades.

17 That will keep things moving fairly and
18 avoid unnecessary delays. I would like to thank the
19 Commission today for your time and your commitment to
20 building a just and equitable New Jersey cannabis
21 industry. I've stayed hopeful because I believe in
22 what this industry represents.

23 Thanks to Mr. Glenn Walker, Mr. Wesley
24 McWhite III, our union rep, Mike Burry, and a special
25 thanks to Chirali Patel (ph), the attorney for Blaze

1 Responsibility. Thank you.

2 THE SECRETARY: The next person on the
3 list is Lerone Jones of Mister Jones.

4 MR. LERONE JONES: My name is Lerone
5 Jones. I wanna first thank the Commission for the
6 opportunity to sit here and address you all today.

7 I am the founder and managing partner of
8 Mister Jones Dispensary. I've been in cannabis for the
9 last 15 years of my life, born and raised in Paterson,
10 New Jersey, and arrested for the plant three times.

11 I just want to start off and say the
12 moment I graduated college, I ran a very successful
13 college cannabis operation there. The moment I
14 graduated, my goal was to be the youngest minority
15 operator in the country. We set out to do that here in
16 New Jersey. I formed my first company, sat through
17 countless meetings with, you know, the Black Caucus,
18 and we helped shape legislation with M4M.

19 Since that time, Governor Christie shot
20 that down, but Governor Murphy picked it back up. I
21 was living in East Orange at the time, so I applied to
22 East Orange. After paying \$8,000 for my property for
23 16 months, we came up a vote short.

24 However, in the midst of applying in East
25 Orange, I decided to take the -- the legal route to

1 make sure I had that on my resume to ensure that I had
2 an advantage over the others who just had money. So I
3 was lucky enough to land a job at Ascend in Montclair.
4 I ran that dispensary for over a year, built valuable
5 relationships, and helped build out their social equity
6 framework.

7 After not receiving my approval in East
8 Orange, they told me they would amend the ordinance. I
9 took a job at Amazon driving trucks, weighing --
10 banking on my faith rather than sight. And my wife was
11 pregnant with my son. He's now 15 months. I remember
12 the day like it was yesterday.

13 I got a call from Ascend. The state
14 provided a new opportunity with this bill, and I took
15 this opportunity for my son. After -- I took the
16 opportunity. We did everything we needed to do, I have
17 a staff, we fully built out.

18 I will welcome you to come walk my
19 facility, but I just want the Commission -- I just want
20 the Commission to know I'm looking forward to working
21 closely with you, answering any questions you may have
22 and getting our doors open.

23 I have a two and a half million dollar
24 loan in my name that's accruing interest while I'm not
25 being able to generate. I have staff on payroll that

1 I'm paying, and no one's -- we can't do anything.

2 Again, it's -- everyone is in training. I'm okay with
3 the training. That's okay.

4 I approved them to start training, but we
5 have to understand there are people open in this state.
6 We get it. But if you walk around to a lot of the
7 people that look like us that are open, they're gonna
8 tell you they're not doing well. There's two things.
9 There's either a lack of capital or there's also just a
10 lack of actual operational experience in this -- in
11 this industry. I bring both to the table.

12 I have many people. My family, we ran a
13 Golden Corral franchise. I opened three buffets in
14 upstate New York. We sold those off. I came right
15 back to cannabis. I just want to back up and say I had
16 that same mind set against, you know, multi-state
17 operators. However, the person -- the partner that I'm
18 partnering with has demonstrated success in not only
19 New Jersey, but multiple markets.

20 This opportunity is not just to get our
21 doors open, but to keep our doors open, and I will get
22 to three dispensaries by 2030, and I just want to let
23 you guys know who I am. I'm Lerone Jones, and I thank
24 you, thank you, thank you all for this time today.

25 And actually, as I was speaking, Reginald

1 was also a part of the expungement programs that Ascend
2 also put together. So thank you all, and I pray that
3 you see the work we're doing. Thank you.

4 THE SECRETARY: The next person on the
5 list is Andrea Raible.

6 MS. ANDREA RAIBLE: Hi. Hello. My name
7 is Andrea Raible. You're probably all pretty familiar
8 with me as I've been here for about a year and a half
9 testifying on different patient issues and different
10 safety concerns in the market, trying to figure out
11 ways that we can rebuild our medical program, which
12 seems to be dwindling painfully.

13 We hear it from across the industry that
14 there's no incentive for medical providers or patients.
15 We hear across the industry that the small businesses
16 are struggling while these larger businesses capture
17 more and more market share. We see the problems on the
18 ground level, that we have dirty medicine on shelves.
19 We see this problem across the nation.

20 New Jersey isn't alone. I'm not trying to
21 tear us down here, but it's a reality that we need to
22 face because there are situations where consumers,
23 dispensaries, and cultivators are agreeing that a
24 product was contaminated to the point that it needed to
25 be destroyed, but the CRC is the one saying that

1 product and that test process was okay.

2 I'm confused. I'm confused at how small
3 independent businesses are getting \$2,000 fines but
4 large labs out of compliance on hundreds and hundreds
5 and hundreds of tests are getting a \$10,000 fine. And
6 like we said, to small businesses, these actions are
7 massive, but to large multi-state operators, the cost
8 of business is cheaper than running those tests.

9 Months ago, we put out the Safe Leaf
10 secret shopper results that showed up to 30 percent --
11 about 28 percent of the pre-rolls that we retested
12 failed for microbials. We -- you guys did make a call
13 to us and had asked us about the brands, and we said we
14 really need you to investigate your labs across the
15 board. You have hundreds of dispensaries, hundreds of
16 cultivators, you know, when you add up all the other
17 license types, but you have less than 10 lab licenses
18 that need to be investigated.

19 We heard that there was new testing
20 guidance, that there is an investigation with the
21 Department of Health, but all we've seen so far is that
22 those testing guidance, that new regulation was
23 rescinded. All I know is the CRC was -- seemed
24 enthusiastic about addressing safety.

25 You can see my last public comment was

1 applauding the fact we finally got to hear from
2 Director Urbish and come in and understand a little bit
3 more about what goes on behind the scenes, but the
4 assembly was able to host a committee hearing before
5 anyone at the CRC was able to have a meeting with me,
6 and I've been asking for a year and a half.

7 But even when you said, after the Safe
8 Leaf reports came out, that we would be more in touch,
9 the only thing that's happened is you rescinded the
10 testing guidance. We're back to a hundred pound batch
11 size.

12 That's not representative, that's not
13 fair, and it's hurting our small cultivators who might
14 not even grow a hundred pounds at a time. Why is
15 everything consistently prioritized over public safety?
16 At what point is enough enough?

17 At what point do we have to take
18 responsibility for the other parts of your code of
19 ethics that say it's your duty to keep us safe, that
20 say it's your duty to speak up, if you can't? I'm out
21 here trying to fight for legislative changes that can
22 give us the kind of resources we need to keep this
23 market safe, but we can't do it without you.

24 Clearly, you can issue enforcement
25 actions. My question isn't your capability, it's your

1 priorities. My question is, you made us a lot of
2 promises and you sold out patients and plenty of
3 individual motions, like the hundred-pound batch size.
4 We had a ten-pound batch size. It was a single motion
5 one day that changed that as a temporary order to a
6 hundred pounds, years and years ago.

7 It was over a year ago that there was a
8 motion on batch size in this very room, and it was
9 delayed because director -- or former director, I'm
10 sorry, at the time had said we were going to have the
11 testing guidance soon. It's been over a year and it's
12 been rescinded.

13 What is soon? When is soon enough? And
14 can we make a motion today to fix things? Sorry for
15 running long. Thank you for your time.

16 THE SECRETARY: I'm going to move on to
17 the virtual speakers. Give me one second to -- the
18 first person on the list, Edward Lefty Grimes, if
19 you're in the room, please raise your hand.

20 The next person on the list is Spencer
21 Belz, if you're in the room. All right. I see you,
22 Spencer. Just give me one second. Just bear with us.

23 MR. SPENCER BELZ: Can you guys hear me?

24 THE SECRETARY: All right. Spencer?
25 Spencer Belz?

1 MR. BELZ: Is it still echoing or am I
2 good?

3 THE SECRETARY: (Inaudible).

4 MR. BELZ: All right. Thank you,
5 everybody. My name is Spencer Belz. Thank you for the
6 opportunity to speak today. I'm a board member with
7 the New Jersey CannaBusiness Association and also the
8 chairperson of their retail and marketing committee.

9 My focus with the NJCBA is to support the
10 growth and development of licensed operators while
11 acting as a collective voice for their issues and
12 concerns. But I'm here today to speak about the
13 insufficient communication and the passive pace
14 surrounding approvals of legal consumption areas and
15 dispensaries.

16 Consumption areas or lounges are a new
17 addition to the Jersey market, an addition that
18 supports safe and regulated consumption, builds on the
19 community and culture of surrounding cannabis, offers a
20 new potential revenue stream for the dispensaries, and
21 creates new experiences and engagements for all within
22 the market.

23 It is easily understood the amount of work
24 that goes into developing new aspects of the market,
25 drafting regulations, and approving these applications,

1 but we also need to highlight the difficulties and
2 frustrations for operators to not receive consistent
3 and clear communication on expanding a big portion of
4 their business into uncharted territory.

5 The Commission has received at least six
6 submissions from the April 2nd round of applications,
7 which is a great sign that the interest and demand
8 exists for lounges, but now we are in June.

9 In over two months since the first
10 applications were received, these dispensaries have
11 received no communication or follow-up from the
12 licensing department or the Commission on approvals,
13 next steps, inspections, checklists, or truly any form
14 of insight at all outside of the potential cure
15 letters.

16 They were left off the May and now June
17 agendas without any reasoning or understanding as of
18 what comes next in this process or what may cause a
19 slower pace for approvals. There's a few issues at
20 hand with this stagnation and the lack of
21 communication.

22 First, most dispensary monitors have no
23 insight to offer, many stating that they themselves
24 haven't received any word on the application process or
25 timeline.

1 Second, after investing tens of thousands
2 of dollars into their lounges in construction fees,
3 utilities, and application fees, these rooms sit
4 collecting dust. Many dispensaries built lounges into
5 their business models and still cannot fully execute
6 their operation to the fullest. They have no idea when
7 they're going to be able to recoup on their
8 investments.

9 Third, almost all of these operators will
10 need to hire additional staff for their lounges. Even
11 with the -- with the provisional badging process,
12 dispensaries will either bring staff in too early and
13 bleed on labor costs or wait for the last minute
14 guidance and rush to hire.

15 Number 4, 4th of July is a significant
16 summer holiday that offers massive opportunities for
17 driving revenue. Without lounges being approved and
18 open, these operators are now missing another chance to
19 recoup on their investments and drive tax revenues for
20 their municipalities and the state itself.

21 Five, most importantly, it is upsetting to
22 see that we are not getting the support that operators
23 need throughout this process, specifically those that
24 are taking a huge risk on their businesses. These
25 dispensaries are making history in New Jersey. They're

1 not only doing something new, but they're building
2 environments to focus on safe consumption and areas to
3 educate, explore, advocate, and immerse into cannabis.

4 So the NJCBA would like to request from
5 the Commission to immediately reach out to these
6 operators with an updated timeline on the approval
7 process of their applications and an inspection
8 checklist so they can prepare their lounges for a
9 seamless approval process, and Number 2, we're
10 requesting a special virtual meeting next week or as
11 early as possible to approve these dispensary operators
12 for their consumption areas.

13 That would need to be immediately followed
14 up by scheduling inspections to get these lounges as
15 soon as possible. We look forward to the continued
16 growth and expansion of the strongest cannabis market
17 on the East Coast.

18 We appreciate all the Commission has done
19 and continues to do for our individual and collective
20 needs. Thank you all for your time.

21 THE SECRETARY: All right. Edward, I see
22 you. Just give me one second. Edward, the floor is
23 yours.

24 MR. EDWARD LEFTY GRIMES: Good afternoon.
25 This is Edward Lefty Grimes with sativacross.org,

1 501C3.

2 I want to echo everything Andrea said
3 before. She's absolutely right. So I'm not even gonna
4 go over that again. I will say that Baked by the River
5 should have gotten a waiver on their fine. They're a
6 small business. They're trying very hard to comply,
7 and the rules are very vague.

8 You're trying to teach us how to sesh.
9 I've been smoking weed for 45 years. I've been buying
10 weed, seshing for years. Now, all of a sudden, you
11 come along with your rules on how to sesh. No dab
12 bars, no food. Like, seriously? Like, what are you
13 trying to do? We know how to do these things.

14 Waive that fine. That's absolutely
15 ridiculous, hurting small businesses like that, people
16 that are trying hard to comply. There's problems with
17 testing. I'm not even -- Andrea hit on all those
18 points. But I will say that Sativa Cross did their own
19 secret shopper.

20 We got weed off the street, some regs that
21 we've been smoking all our life, from Jersey City, off
22 -- in the hood of Jersey City, off the street, \$50 to
23 \$100 a zip. It tested better than some of the cannabis
24 in New Jersey for over \$400 an ounce. So we need to do
25 better as an industry.

1 I want this industry to do better and
2 thrive. I want the small businesses to thrive. But
3 when you have deals like that, how do you compete with
4 that? It's safer than -- than the dispensary weed.
5 Come on. I got sick from some moldy weed a few weeks
6 ago from a grower in New Jersey, and there's been a few
7 of those issues.

8 I would like to have a moment of silence
9 for Wayne Burrini who passed away last week. He was an
10 activist in New Jersey at the State House for many,
11 many years.

12 (Moment of Silence)

13 "They shall grow not old, as we that are
14 left grow old. Age shall not worry them, nor the years
15 condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the
16 morning, we will remember them." Thank you.

17 THE SECRETARY: The next person on the
18 list is Lindsey Shaw. If you're in the room, please
19 raise your hand. Lindsey Shaw? Last four of the
20 telephone is 4434.

21 I would also like to remind you that if
22 you're using -- if you're on Zoom and you're calling
23 in, it's star nine to raise your hand and star six to
24 unmute.

25 All right. Next person is Hrishikesh

1 Vimadalal. Hrishikesh Vimadalal, if you're in the
2 room, please raise your hand. The next person is
3 Stanley Philippe. If you're in the room, please raise
4 your hand. Stanley Philippe, 5913.

5 The next person is Csongor Fulai. Csongor
6 Fulai. Last four is 4139.

7 The next person is Racheed Long. If
8 you're in the room, please raise your hand. Racheed
9 Long. Last four is 2995.

10 The next person is Daisy Sepulveda. If
11 you're in the room, please raise your hand. Daisy
12 Sepulveda, 5468.

13 The next person is Sherman James. If
14 you're in the room, please raise your hand. Sherman
15 James. Last four is 3201.

16 The next person is John Wise. If you're
17 in the room, please raise your hand. John Wise. Last
18 four is 0810.

19 Okay. The next person is Lisa Hamlett.
20 If you're in the room, please raise your hand. Lisa
21 Hamlett. Last four is 2664.

22 The next person is Nancy Vitello. If
23 you're in the room, please raise your hand. Nancy
24 Vitello. Last four is 4675.

25 The next person is Glen Rada. If you're

1 in the room, please raise your hand. Glen Rada. Last
2 four is 6514. Okay.

3 Next person is Karen Mccroy. Last four is
4 6526. Karen Mccroy, if you're in the room, please
5 raise your hand.

6 The next person is Mahim Gupta. If you're
7 in the room, please raise your hand. Last four for
8 Mahim Gupta is 2090.

9 That's it for the list. I'm just going to
10 go over one more time. For in-person, Carlos Almanzar,
11 if you're in the room. Next person is Thomas Norcia.
12 James Jones? Ihab Abu Hassan?

13 And then now for the calling-in speakers.
14 Lindsey Shaw? Hrishikesh Vimadalal? Okay. Stanley
15 Philippe? Csongor Fulai? Daisy Sepulveda? Sherman
16 James? John Wise? Lisa Hamlett? Nancy Vitello? Glen
17 Rada? Karen Mccroy? Mahim Gupta?

18 Chairwoman Houenou, this will conclude the
19 registered speakers we have for today's public meeting.

20 CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Said. Thank you to
21 all those individuals who spoke both in person and
22 virtually to share your ideas, your experiences, and
23 your -- your insight.

24 I do want to give an opportunity to
25 Commissioner Riggs to correct --

1 DIR. RIGGS: Yeah.

2 CHAIR: -- or clarify the record. Oh,
3 sorry, Director Riggs, Director Riggs to clarify or
4 correct the record with respect to a couple of things,
5 one being TerrAscend --

6 DIR. RIGGS: Yeah.

7 CHAIR: -- and, well, the Commission's
8 actions today with respect to TerrAscend.

9 DIR. RIGGS: Absolutely. So the
10 Commission is certainly aware of TerrAscend's request
11 to buy in to Union Chill Cannabis. However, the
12 ownership change that was approved today by the
13 Commission was simply redistributing the ownership
14 percentage that was owned by the individual that
15 tragically passed away, through existing ownership.
16 Nothing with TerrAscend was approved today by the
17 board.

18 Also, microbusinesses are permitted to
19 vertically integrate. There was an issue that was
20 being addressed legally. We had those conversations
21 and we've come to the conclusion that they have the
22 ability to vertically integrate.

23 So both of those issues are what I would
24 like to address. Thank you.

25 CHAIR: Thank you, Director Riggs. I also

1 want to make just a very brief comment. When it comes
2 to business decisions versus the regulatory timelines,
3 we understand that businesses are very eager to get up
4 and running, submit their applications, get responses
5 to those applications, so that they can actually open
6 their doors to the public and, you know, exercise their
7 dreams.

8 We at the Commission, we sympathize and we
9 empathize with that. Some -- some folks at the
10 Commission are very familiar with what it takes to open
11 and run a small business, thinking of you, Vice Chair,
12 and your prior experience as a business owner.

13 And so it is not lost on us at the
14 Commission the -- the heart that you bring to your
15 work, nor is it lost on us the urgency that you feel
16 for getting your businesses up and running.

17 The Commission is required to do its due
18 diligence in reviewing and processing the applications
19 we receive, and we do know that some businesses are --
20 within their -- their own judgment, are deciding to go
21 ahead and build out their facilities or -- or otherwise
22 prepare to launch their operations while the
23 application is pending.

24 So we are aware that that is happening.
25 It is not required. Businesses can submit an

1 application without doing construction work. We
2 understand the -- the physical -- I'm sorry, the
3 financial investment that is entailed when businesses
4 do decide to move their proper operation -- their
5 business operations along before getting licensed by
6 the Commission.

7 But I do want to call -- to call attention
8 to the fact that, yes, we understand the urgency that
9 business owners are feeling, much of it rooted in the
10 statutory requirements of regulations. And also, there
11 is urgency in the fact that these are your lives,
12 right?

13 These are your lives, your -- your
14 well-being, your economic, health, your ability to
15 provide for yourself and your family. And so the
16 Commission is working as quickly as it can to get
17 through the applications it has, and we hope to -- to
18 give you response.

19 Anybody who is still waiting on responses
20 to an application, we do hope to get to you soon. Make
21 sure that you are -- please make sure that you are
22 checking your spam folders, checking your voicemail,
23 checking your e-mail. There are a number of businesses
24 that haven't responded to Commission -- to outreach
25 from the Commission to cure any deficiencies, so make

1 sure that you are keeping tabs on -- on communication
2 from us.

3 So with that, that concludes the business
4 that we have before us today, and so I move that we
5 adjourn. Is there a second?

6 VICE CHAIR: I second.

7 CHAIR: Seconded by Vice Chair Delgado.
8 Thank you. Is there any discussion on this motion to
9 adjourn?

10 Hearing no discussion, all those in favor
11 of adjourning, say aye.

12 COMM. NASH: Aye.

13 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Aye.

14 COMM. CID-KOSSO: Aye.

15 CHAIR: All those opposed, say nay. Any
16 abstentions? The motion passes.

17 The time is 3:34, and we are adjourned.

18 Have a great afternoon, everyone. Thank you.

19 (Meeting concluded)

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