

PENNSYLVANIA GAMING CONTROL BOARD

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING

CATEGORY 1 SLOT MACHINE LICENSE
VALLEY VIEW DOWNS
CENTAUR GAMING

MAY 15, 2008, 9:03 A.M.

BEFORE:

KENNETH ZIELONIS, PRESIDING OFFICER
MARY DiGIACOMO COLINS, CHAIRMAN
RAYMOND S. ANGELI
JEFFREY W. COY
JAMES B. GINTY
KENNETH T. McCABE
SANFORD RIVERS
GARY A. SOJKA

HILLARY M. HAZLETT, REPORTER
NOTARY PUBLIC

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1 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Could I have your
2 attention, please? Could I have quiet in the room?
3 Please, quiet in the room.

4 Good morning, everyone. Welcome today. I am
5 Kenneth Zielonis, and I am the Presiding Officer for
6 this Public Input Hearing today to be conducted by the
7 Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.

8 Before we begin, please turn off all of your
9 cell phones, beepers, BlackBerries, etc., so we don't
10 disturb the speakers and other members of the audience.

11 At this time, I would like everyone to rise for
12 the Pledge of Allegiance.

13 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

14 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: As the Presiding
15 Officer, I call to order this Public Input Hearing for
16 Category 1 Applicant, Valley View Downs.

17 The date is May 15th, 2008. The time is
18 approximately 9:03 a.m., and the location is the
19 Mahoning Township Community Center. This Public Input
20 Hearing is convened by the Pennsylvania Gaming Control
21 Board pursuant to the authority found in Section 1205b
22 of the Pennsylvania Gaming Act in the Board's Regulation
23 at 58 PA Code Section 441a.6.

24 The Board members present today for this
25 hearing to my immediate right and your left is our

1 Chairman, Judge Mary DiGiacomo Colins.

2 Continuing to my right, starting your left,
3 starting at the screen is Commissioner James Ginty.

4 Next to him is Commissioner Gary Sojka.

5 Next to him is Commissioner Sanford Rivers.

6 To my immediate left and your right is
7 Commissioner Kenneth McCabe.

8 Next to him is Commissioner Jeffrey Coy.

9 Next to him is Commissioner Raymond Angeli.

10 Good morning, Commissioners.

11 The court stenographer is Hillary Hazlett, and
12 the Clerk to the Board is Mickey Kane and they are
13 seated at the table to my far left.

14 The Board and its staff would like to thank
15 Mahoning Township for making its Community Center
16 available to the Board for this Public Input Hearing and
17 the Township staff, especially Francis Poncho Exposito,
18 his cooperation, and hard work has been essential in the
19 organization and preparation and holding of this Public
20 Input Hearing today.

21 This is the second Public Input Hearing in a
22 series of four hearings of the Board designed to allow
23 the Applicants for the remaining Category 1 and the two
24 available Category 3 Slot Machine Licensees to present
25 their plans before the Board and the public.

1 These hearings will allow individual members of
2 the public, community groups, elected officials, and
3 local government representatives to express their
4 thoughts and share their concerns about the proposed
5 projects with this Board. The hearing will continue
6 until the last scheduled speaker registered has had the
7 opportunity to speak.

8 The order of the speakers today is as follows:
9 The Applicant for the Category 1 Slot Machine License,
10 Valley View Downs will make their presentation first.

11 Then we will hear from any Legislators, local
12 government representatives, community representatives,
13 and individual members of the public who have registered
14 to speak in that order.

15 If necessary, we'll take a short break at the
16 appropriate time. Valley View Downs will have 40
17 minutes to make their presentation.

18 Each Legislative official will have five
19 minutes to speak. Representatives from the local
20 communities will be given 30 minutes to speak.
21 Community group representatives may speak up to ten
22 minutes. Individual members of the public will each
23 have up to three minutes to speak.

24 For the local municipalities, we are providing
25 Lawrence County and Mahoning Township 30 minutes. Any

1 non-local representatives from those other areas will be
2 given five minutes to speak.

3 Each speaker should begin their remarks by
4 stating his or her name, your municipality and state
5 where you reside. If speaking on behalf of an entity,
6 please identify it.

7 We will have all speakers sworn in as a group
8 in a few minutes. To assist all speakers in adherence
9 to the time limits to be set, I have in front of me an
10 electronic stoplight. The light will show green,
11 yellow, and red.

12 When the light turns green, the speaker's
13 allotted time has started. When the light turns yellow,
14 for Valley View Downs only five minutes will remain in
15 their presentation. For all other speakers, 30 seconds
16 of your allotted time will remain.

17 When the yellow light comes on, speakers should
18 wrap up their comments. When the light turns red, a
19 beeping sound will begin; and you are expected to step
20 away from the microphone.

21 If your time runs out and you have comments
22 remaining, please submit them in writing to the Board.
23 I would also like to remind anyone, if you choose, that
24 you may submit written comments that may be included as
25 part of the record of this Public Input Hearing. These

1 comments may be an alternative to live testimony today
2 and may be submitted at this hearing or any of our other
3 Public Input Hearings and you can also submit them
4 through the website; www.pgcb.state.pa.us or you can
5 mail comments to us.

6 We will be accepting written comments for 60
7 days after the close of this hearing or until July 14th,
8 2008 when this evidentiary hearing for this Public Input
9 Hearing will be closed.

10 If you are a speaker today and you have written
11 notes or testimony which you will read from, when you
12 are finished with them, if you would please hand them,
13 if possible, to the court reporter, that would be
14 helpful.

15 In addition, a copy of the Code of Conduct of
16 this hearing has been made available at the front desk;
17 and I expect that all in attendance today to please
18 adhere to our Code of Conduct for this public hearing.

19 Much will be said during the hearing today and
20 we are all interested in being able to hear. So I
21 respectfully request your assistance in complying with
22 those rules as a courtesy for the speakers and the court
23 stenographer.

24 In addition, the media is present today; and
25 also, our media person, Doug Harbach, is here, if you

1 have any questions.

2 Please do not interfere with the -- we ask that
3 the media not interfere with the speakers and conduct
4 yourselves as if you were attending a formal Court
5 hearing. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

6 Now, if anyone is going to be speaking today
7 and you have registered, would you please all rise to be
8 sworn in?

9 (Speakers sworn en masse.)

10 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Thank you very much.

11 Valley View Downs, if you are ready to proceed,
12 we will begin.

13 MR. DeROSA: Madam Chairman, members of the
14 Board and members of the audience, good morning. My
15 name is Joe DeRosa. I'm the General Manager of Gaming
16 at Valley View Downs and Casino.

17 I would like to thank you everyone for being
18 here today and for their interest in Valley View Downs.
19 We are very pleased to be here this morning to present
20 information about our exciting project and specifically
21 its impact to the community.

22 I would like to begin our presentation by
23 introducing the senior management team and founder of
24 Centaur Gaming, our parent company.

25 First, Mr. Jeff Smith, Managing Director of

1 Racing; Mr. Kurt Wilson, Chief Financial Officer, and
2 Mr. John McLaughlin, President. Finally, the Chairman
3 and Chief Executive Officer of Centaur Gaming, Mr. Rod
4 Ratcliff.

5 MR. RATCLIFF: Good morning. Thank you, Joe.

6 Chairman Colins, Members of the Board, and
7 staff, ladies and gentlemen, we are very excited to have
8 the privilege to present Valley View Downs to you today.

9 As we go through this program, I'm sure you
10 will see that we have designed a world-class
11 entertainment facility.

12 First, I would like to spend a few moments
13 telling you about Centaur Gaming. They say a picture is
14 worth 1,000 words, so we have put together a brief
15 video. Thank you.

16 (Video played.)

17 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Good morning. I'm John
18 McLaughlin, President of Centaur Gaming; and I'm excited
19 to be here this morning to talk to you.

20 First, I would like to ensure the Board that we
21 understand the gravity of the gaming licensing process
22 and appreciate all of the time and resources the Board's
23 staff and investigators have devoted to our background
24 investigation, including many long nights over many
25 months.

1 Our records and activities have been completely
2 open to the investigators. We promptly responded to
3 each and every request for information.

4 Our executive team has been licensed in
5 multiple gaming jurisdictions and Centaur has been
6 licensed by four different regulatory agencies in three
7 different states.

8 We can assure you this is the most thorough and
9 extensive background investigation in our company's
10 history.

11 We are pleased to participate in this process
12 and we have two highly experienced executives, who will
13 provide the day-to-day leadership necessary to build and
14 operate a project of this magnitude.

15 I would like to introduce the General Manager
16 of Racing, Mr. Brian Elmore. Brian has been involved in
17 the pari-mutuel racing industry for over 30 years.

18 Initially, as an owner/trainer understands the
19 issues and concepts important to horsemen. Brian has
20 worked as a track official at several racetracks
21 throughout the country and served the last 13 years in
22 the Churchill Downs organization.

23 While with Churchill, Brian served as Vice
24 President of Hooiser Park and most recently as Vice
25 President and General Manager of Ellis Park in Kentucky.

1 Brian looks forward to the building and
2 development of Valley View Downs as the premiere harness
3 racing facility in the United States.

4 You have already met Mr. Joe DeRosa. As
5 General Manager of Gaming, Joe will oversee the
6 development, launch, and ongoing operations of gaming at
7 Valley View Downs.

8 He has more than 30 years experience in the
9 gaming industry in the three largest domestic markets.
10 Throughout his career, Joe has had direct responsibility
11 in financing, development, and operations of both
12 start-up projects and expansion programs.

13 Most recently, Joe was the Executive Vice
14 President of Operations at the Las Vegas Hilton and
15 General Manager of Resorts East Chicago, both owned by
16 Resorts International.

17 He has opened properties for the Trump
18 organization in Atlantic City and also in the Chicago
19 markets. We are very pleased to have Joe and Brian
20 serving in the leadership roles at Valley View Downs.

21 This slide shows two renderings of our
22 facility, which will truly be the entertainment
23 destination in the Northwest Pennsylvania and Eastern
24 Ohio markets.

25 Valley View Downs is expertly planned and

1 designed and will include 3,000 state-of-the-art slot
2 machines, the only one-mile harness racetrack in the
3 Commonwealth, and a variety of dining and entertainment
4 options.

5 You'll hear a lot more about the facility
6 during our presentation and I can assure you that both
7 the Commonwealth and Mahoning Township will be very
8 proud of this once completed.

9 This is a map of Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio,
10 which highlights our excellent demographics. One of the
11 reasons we are so excited about the site is that it
12 combines both great demographics with limited
13 competition.

14 There are 2.1 million adults within 50 miles of
15 our facility. We're the closets gaming destination to
16 Youngstown, Akron, Cleveland, and Northwest Pittsburgh
17 suburbs.

18 This slide highlights the population
19 demographics at Valley View Downs as compared to other
20 large gaming destinations.

21 At Valley View Downs, we have 6.1 million
22 adults within a 100-mile radius as compared to 6.6
23 million in Detroit, 5.4 million in Cincinnati, and 2.9
24 million in St. Louis. Once again, very strong
25 demographics.

1 Will Cummings prepared an independent marketing
2 and economic impact study, which I will summarize in the
3 next few slides. Will is a very well respected
4 economist, who has engaged in management consulting
5 since 1975 in over 40 states, provinces, and foreign
6 countries and has developed very sophisticated
7 statistical models called gravity models for use in the
8 gaming industry based on his proprietary database of
9 multiple gaming jurisdictions.

10 Based on Will's detailed gravity model, the
11 projected annual taxes and fees generated by Valley View
12 Downs is \$217 million; \$134 million is targeted largely
13 for property tax relief for the residents of
14 Pennsylvania, \$47 million will provide a direct
15 financial benefit to all harness industry participants
16 through enhanced purses and breeder development funds,
17 \$20 million will be provided to the state economic
18 development and tourism fund, and \$16 million is
19 projected for the local county fund.

20 Valley View Downs will create many job
21 opportunities for Mahoning Township and the surrounding
22 communities along with the necessary training to perform
23 these jobs.

24 1,500 construction jobs will be required to
25 build the facility; and once the project is completed,

1 another 1,000 permanent jobs will be required to operate
2 Valley View Downs as a first-class gaming and racing
3 destination.

4 In addition, Will estimates that hundreds of
5 additional jobs will be created in the community in
6 order to service the additional tourists that are
7 arriving from outside the community.

8 Will estimates in his economic impact report
9 that the jobs discussed in the last slide will generate
10 payroll and benefits of \$73 million on an annual basis.

11 Goods and services that will be purchased as a
12 result of the development and operations of Valley View
13 Downs equates to \$193 million on an annual basis for a
14 total annual impact to the local community of \$266
15 million.

16 In addition, tourism in the local community
17 will be enhanced as a result of five million people per
18 year visiting Valley View Downs.

19 We were fortunate in October of last year to
20 fly through a small hole in the clouds during the
21 beginning of a very difficult credit market and secured
22 \$995 million dollars of financing at the Centaur Gaming
23 corporate level to develop these two exciting new gaming
24 projects.

25 \$455 million of the financing is being used to

1 design and build Valley View Down, which will be one of
2 the most innovative, fully integrated racing and gaming
3 destinations in Pennsylvania.

4 I would like to turn it back now to Joe, our
5 capable General Manager.

6 MR. DeROSA: Thank you, John.

7 Now, we would like to present Valley View Downs
8 by use of our architectural renderings and show you just
9 how amazing it looks and feels.

10 This is a Category 1 License and therefore will
11 be associated with horse racing. We acknowledge and
12 appreciate the efforts of the Pennsylvania Harness
13 Racing Commission led by Chairman Wilt, Commissioner
14 Manuel, Commissioner Welch and Deputy Director Leppler.

15 To design and construct this facility from the
16 racing side, we have engaged leading experts in the
17 field.

18 Robert Parsky, a specialist in the design of
19 pari-mutuel facility's, has over 35 years experience in
20 the racing industry.

21 He has directed the design of many major
22 racetracks, including the Meadowlands, Garden State, and
23 Remington.

24 Charles E. Coon and Sons has been the leader in
25 design, construction, and maintenance of racing surfaces

1 for all breeds of horses. They have assisted over 50
2 racetracks across North America.

3 Lockett & Farley, founded in Louisville in
4 1853, specializes in the design and backstretch
5 facilities and is best know for its design of the famous
6 Churchill Downs Twin Spires.

7 The actual construction of Valley View Downs
8 will be managed by the firm of LP Ciminelli making use
9 of local companies and workers to complete the facility
10 in approximately 13 months.

11 LP Ciminelli is no stranger to constructing
12 casinos and racetracks and is no stranger to the
13 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Some projects include the
14 Meadows, Mount Airy Casino, and Wheeling Downs.

15 World-class projects call for world-class
16 architects. We have engaged just such a company. Cope
17 Linder Architects of Philadelphia has designed many
18 well-known projects such as the Borgota Casino Hotel and
19 Caesars Hotel and Casino both in Atlantic City.
20 Recently, they designed Pompano Racetrack and Casino in
21 Florida.

22 They have taken the vision of Mr. Ratcliff and
23 the Centaur team and created a masterfully integrated
24 facility.

25 The property's floor plan is designed to keep

1 the majority of our restaurants and entertainment
2 options on the second level, where patrons can enjoy a
3 panoramic view of the action but still be separate.

4 We have taken special care to design this
5 facility to make convenient circulation for any guests
6 under the age of 21 while still restricting them from
7 the gaming floor. In other words, there is no need for
8 minors to cross the casino floor.

9 Today, we have with us Mr. Steve Henkleman of
10 Cope Linder Architects. Steve has earned his bachelor
11 and master's of architecture degrees from Princeton
12 University and has been responsible for dozens of
13 projects including many hospitality and gaming
14 facilities. He will now take us through the project.

15 MR. HENKLEMAN: Thank you, Joe.

16 Good morning. It's my distinct pleasure to
17 give you a tour through the exciting plans we have for
18 Valley View Downs and Casino.

19 The site as you see in the slide is located
20 just a few miles north of here and is bounded on the
21 northeast by Route 422, to the east by Route 551, and
22 along the north side by Baird Road.

23 The 250-acre site is divided into three main
24 areas. Our feature component is the Commonwealth's
25 first one-mile harness track located in the center of

1 the site.

2 Circling the west side of the track is a
3 state-of-the-art backstretch facility housing the barns,
4 paddock, administrative, and other support facilities
5 for racing.

6 The balance of this site is devoted to our
7 customer experience. It houses our featured
8 270,000-square-foot casino and grandstand entertainment
9 facility designed for integrated expansion of any of the
10 program facilities offered.

11 Surrounding and supporting the facility, we
12 have accommodated over 6,000 parking spaces easily
13 accessed from 422 and 551 along four-laned, tree-lined
14 boulevards entering the site.

15 Unique to this building and other racinos, we
16 have two public fronts to the building. The slide shows
17 the southern front, which is what our arriving patrons
18 will see.

19 It features to the right of the slide our grand
20 five-lane port cochere leading into the central atrium
21 and accommodating customers of all ages.

22 To the west end or to the left of the slide is
23 a second major entrance to the facility taking patrons
24 from parking directly onto the casino floor.

25 These two entrances flank a center feature area

1 unique to many of the casino areas because we're
2 allowing a view into the casino for arriving patrons.

3 What our arriving patrons will experience is a
4 view of the bar, casino beyond, and the excitement that
5 lies ahead for them when they enter the facility.

6 We have taken special concern with our port
7 cochere designed. They are two towers, stone clad with
8 soft luminars at the top signaling the main entrance.
9 These are tall enough to announce the entrance for all
10 those arriving along the entry boulevard and parking
11 field, which is necessary to bring the scale of these
12 entrances down for a patron who has left the car and
13 walking into the facility.

14 As this rendering shows natural materials of
15 stone and wood, we have brought that scale down so it is
16 a comfortable, well-lit entrance experience for those
17 patrons.

18 Our second front is the track-side front. We
19 have broken away from the tradition of a large, glass
20 enclosed grandstand area and created a series of smaller
21 pavilions more in scale with the nature of the use and
22 human scale for our patrons.

23 In this slide to the left, the pavilion houses
24 our grandstand seating and behind it race book area.
25 The center pavilion is our track-side dining and buffet

1 with the officials' area above.

2 You catch a glimpse on the right part of the
3 side of the unique sports club and seating area of that
4 pavilion, which also faces onto the track.

5 Our spacious apron features outdoor seating so
6 that the customers who like to be closer to the action
7 on warm afternoons and evenings can sit out and watch
8 the races and enjoy the evening hours.

9 Next to that, we have a raised terrace dining
10 area, so that the patrons at the apron can have a casual
11 meal, sit under colorful umbrella-clad tables and enjoy
12 the races and the relaxation there.

13 As the plan shows, this is the casino and track
14 level plan. We have organized the layout around the
15 central two-story atrium. This atrium welcomes all
16 patrons arriving at the port cochere and gives a clear
17 and open access and view to the track upon entering the
18 facility.

19 As the customers looks up from the two stories,
20 there is a clear indication and invitation to all of the
21 amenities offered on the upper level.

22 Turning to the left and just a few steps away
23 is our 3,000 slot machine casino floor. As you can see
24 from this plan, we have divided our floor up to provide
25 convenient access around and through the casino floor,

1 providing dedicated wide walkways.

2 Our patron is never far from these walkways and
3 has easy access to all of the amenities offered on the
4 floor.

5 Running down through the middle of the casino
6 floor, we have a wide avenue, which will house our
7 electronic gaming machines and is connected on the north
8 side or upper part of this slide to our exciting sports
9 club concept.

10 At the south end or the bottom of that avenue
11 on the slide is our feature bar. It will not be a
12 gaming area, but an area to step a couple of steps up
13 from the casino floor to relax and have a drink in a
14 lounge setting, and it features a few private booth
15 areas with their own video screens.

16 The cage area is located on the north side of
17 the casino floor providing easy access for anyone on the
18 floor, and to the back of that, immediately accessible,
19 is the Gaming Control Board offices and the State Police
20 offices.

21 This location affords both agencies easy and
22 direct access to both the cage and the floor and an
23 oversight of the route to the armored car. It also
24 provides easy access from the dedicated parking for both
25 agencies on the west end of the building.

1 In addition to the exterior terrace dining area
2 I mentioned earlier, inside, we have a casual food court
3 area overlooking the casino floor and directly
4 accessible to those in the atrium. It's open to all
5 customers and guests of the facility.

6 Our second floor is organized along a grand
7 balcony walkway, which overlooks the atrium and the
8 double-height casino floor, easily accessed to two
9 locations by escalators, stairs, and elevators.

10 At the east end or the right of this slide, our
11 pavilion features the grandstand and 200-seat race book
12 area with many individual screens and three large
13 projection screens to show live video production of
14 races across the country and around the world.

15 Moving along the walkway and overlooking the
16 casino, the next pavilion experienced by our customer is
17 the 250-seat trackside dining and buffet area.

18 The trackside portion of this steps down and
19 there is an outdoor balcony so that the guests seated
20 there can watch the live races and overlook the finish
21 line.

22 It's open on the walkway sides so the patrons
23 walking along get a clear view. We hope the smell and,
24 for me, the excitement of a dessert island along there
25 will entice our guests to step in.

1 At the far end of the walkway on the left side
2 of the slide is our well-appointed fine dining
3 restaurant with a display kitchen, small bar area, and
4 private dining facilities.

5 In addition and overlooking the track is our
6 group room and meeting room space, also served by a
7 balcony allowing customers there to step out and watch
8 the live races as the sulkies come down the final
9 stretch.

10 The feature of our second floor is at the top
11 end at the escalators and stairs by the casino. That is
12 our concept for a sports club.

13 During live racing, the front section of this
14 facing the track terrace is down and there is
15 comfortable club seating for our racing patrons with
16 beverage and food service and easy access down to the
17 track.

18 During meals, lunch and dinner, the space is
19 transformed into a sports-oriented, casual restaurant,
20 which transforms in the evenings to a sports lounge and
21 club area highlighted by myriad of video screens, a
22 serpentine bar, and a small raised seating area, which
23 will do double duty as the stage area.

24 This gives you an idea of the floor plan. We
25 want to give you a sense of the feel of the space. This

1 first view is of the entry lobby, the two-story lobby
2 and it shows the causal elegance of the space and the
3 materials chosen with the marble floor and the natural
4 woods used throughout.

5 It represents clearly the easy access to the
6 upper levels where the various amenities exist. To the
7 left, you can see the access and entrance into the
8 gaming floor.

9 Our second view is from the casino floor itself
10 showing the excitement of the double-high casino space
11 and more importantly the integration of that casino
12 space with the activities on the upper level.

13 On the left side of the slide, you can see the
14 escalators, which lead up to the sports club. To the
15 right of that along the walkway, our buffet, and you
16 catch a glimpse even at the far end of the second floor,
17 the video screens of the race book, which are visible
18 from the casino floor.

19 This ends our brief tour. I hope it has raised
20 your anticipation and excitement for the facility to the
21 level of ours, as we anxiously await the realization of
22 Valley View Downs in Pennsylvania and Mahoning Township.
23 Thank you.

24 MR. DeROSA: Thank you, Steve.

25 Planning a project of this magnitude requires

1 attention to hundreds of details by many experts. The
2 planning process is not unique to gaming facilities but
3 it is common to any major development.

4 I would now like to introduce Mr. Rich Zeigler,
5 Director of Development to discuss the planning process
6 on these important issues.

7 A professional engineer, Rich is a graduate of
8 Virginia Tech. Rich has been working on major
9 development projects in the Northeast United States for
10 nearly 20 years.

11 MR. ZEIGLER: Thank you, Joe.

12 I have been personally involved in Valley View
13 Downs for the past five years where I have been managing
14 the due diligence and facility design process.

15 As you can imagine, we have spent a significant
16 amount of time with the design and regulatory approvals.
17 We selected Michael Baker as our engineer to guide us
18 through the land development process based on their
19 diverse and extensive experience. They are a local firm
20 that has the resources to tackle almost any challenge.

21 I'd like to review with you two aspects of the
22 land development design; the traffic study and public
23 utility infrastructure.

24 Traffic is generally one of the largest
25 concerns of any development. It's a concern that we

1 share with the community.

2 Traffic planning is a three-step process of
3 evaluating the site access, preparing a traffic impact
4 study, and then completing road construction plans for
5 improvements that will allow traffic to flow
6 efficiently.

7 Valley View Downs will be located on Route 422,
8 12 miles east of Youngstown and three miles west of
9 Route 60. Route 80 is 12 miles to the north. The
10 Pennsylvania Turnpike is 14 miles to the south. We're
11 just about 50 miles north of Downtown Pittsburgh.

12 To determine what was needed to mitigate Valley
13 Views' traffic, we met with the Pennsylvania DOT last
14 September and had Baker perform a traffic impact study.

15 At those meetings, we discussed and agreed on
16 the volume of traffic traveling to and from the project,
17 the distribution of the traffic through the roadway
18 network, the scope of investigation, which included the
19 seven off-site intersections shown here in blue, and all
20 of the site driveways shown in orange, as well as
21 general requirements for roadway improvements.

22 The traffic impact study was submitted to
23 PennDOT last December and included an analysis of
24 roadway and intersection capacities, site distances and
25 the need for turning lanes and traffic signals.

1 Based on the study, Baker prepared construction
2 plans for Route 422 and Baird Road, which are currently
3 in the review process.

4 These plans propose reconfiguring Baird Road so
5 that it intersects with Route 422 at a right angle.
6 This will provide a safer condition and will have
7 turning lanes and a traffic signal.

8 Route 422 will also be widened to create left
9 and right turn lanes on to Baird Road. Making these
10 improvements will mitigate any traffic impact from
11 Valley View Downs.

12 As part of Baker's land development design
13 process, they also evaluated the project's
14 infrastructure needs and coordinated with utility
15 companies to determine how those needs can be met.

16 First, on sewage, Mahoning Township has been
17 working on their public sewer project for many years.
18 Their Act 537 permit was recently approved, which
19 includes service for the Valley View Downs site.

20 Design and construction of the sewage treatment
21 plant and conveyance systems are expected to be complete
22 prior to Valley View's opening.

23 We also have an agreement with PennPower to
24 bring in electric service and with the Pennsylvania
25 American Water Company, who will extend their system in

1 the area to provide us with public water.

2 Lastly, we're working with Knox Energy to
3 provide gas service for the site and surrounding areas.

4 Now, I will turn it back to Joe DeRosa to
5 discuss police and fire.

6 MR. DeROSA: Thank you, Rich.

7 The areas of police, fire, and safety require
8 initial and ongoing planning. Valley View Downs will
9 have Pennsylvania State Police present on property.

10 A list of requirements to allow the State
11 Police to provide service has been given to Valley View
12 Downs.

13 As a normal course of business, we will hire
14 approximately 100 guest safety officers to work both
15 inside and outside the office. These uniformed
16 individuals will receive extensive training including
17 emergency response and medical services. In addition,
18 we will have emergency medical technicians at all times.

19 The parking areas of the backstretch sections
20 will be well lit for security and safety and constantly
21 patrolled by roving personnel. The latest in digital
22 surveillance technology will be employed at Valley View
23 Downs. These cameras and staff will not only watch the
24 gaming action but surrounding areas as well.

25 New, modern buildings are equipped with

1 state-of-the-art detection and suppression equipment for
2 fire.

3 Valley View Downs will, of course, meet these
4 requirements in all cases and in many cases has taken
5 the direction of exceeding the code.

6 We have spoken with local officials on these
7 matters and will be meeting to develop plans and
8 coordinate exercises prior to opening.

9 Many large development projects require the
10 displacement of homes or create a shortage of adequate
11 housing when workers move into the community. We do not
12 anticipate either of these two situations.

13 However, the rural setting off of Route 422
14 will have no adverse effect on any homes or structures
15 in the vicinity.

16 The overwhelming majority of our employees will
17 be recruited and hired from the local communities. In
18 fact, we expect a very positive impact on real estate
19 evaluations in a somewhat sluggish market.

20 Likewise, because we will hire mostly local
21 residents, there will be no effect on the local school
22 systems.

23 Valley View Downs aspires to be a
24 community-oriented, inclusive corporate entity. To that
25 end, we have established a diversity plan to assure that

1 all of our business policies and practices support and
2 actively promote the central goal of equal opportunity
3 in all aspects of employment, procurement, and community
4 involvement.

5 Valley View Downs specifically seeks to achieve
6 the following objectives:

7 Diversity in our workforce and business
8 partners that reflect the communities in which we
9 operate.

10 Implementation of policies, procedures, and
11 systems that support and encourage the principles of
12 diversity in a diverse work environment.

13 Creation of a work environment that respects
14 different cultures, capabilities, genders, and ages and
15 embraces diversity as a strength.

16 Improve community relations as a result of a
17 commitment to diversity.

18 Valley View Downs is solidly committed to
19 providing responsible gaming initiatives for our
20 employees and guests.

21 These programs and initiatives will address
22 problem gambling, underage gaming, unattended children,
23 and responsible alcoholic beverage service.

24 We take positive steps to immediately address
25 these issues to avoid harm to our guests, employees, the

1 community, or business operations. The goal is to
2 assure that each visit to Valley View Downs is a quality
3 entertainment experience.

4 We will employ a long list of responsible
5 gaming initiatives; each focused on a specific goal.
6 Training will be done at the time of hiring and as an
7 ongoing program.

8 After 30 years in the gaming industry, I'm
9 fully committed to the practice of responsible gaming.
10 I have worked closely with agencies and governments to
11 constantly improve programs relating to this important
12 matter.

13 As you can tell by now, we're very proud of
14 Valley View Downs and Casino. We're committed to the
15 positive impact that we will have on this part of
16 Western Pennsylvania.

17 We are committed to providing quality,
18 experienced leadership at both corporate levels and
19 Valley View Downs itself. Mr. Elmore and I bring over
20 60 years of combined experience to this gaming facility.

21 We have shown you a commitment to build a
22 world-class facility. Our racetrack will be a one-mile,
23 state-of-the-art harness track with quality backstretch
24 buildings and viewing options.

25 The gaming and entertainment complex will be

1 more than 270,000 square feet, just short of 6 acres.
2 It will comfortably house 3,000 slots and pari-mutuel
3 facilities in elegant finishes.

4 We have made commitments to detail such as high
5 ceilings, good air quality, and keeping minors in the
6 appropriate areas.

7 Our food and beverage amenities will range from
8 fine dining to a food court. We're committed to the
9 positive economic impact such a project will bring to
10 the area.

11 Valley View Downs is projected to have as many
12 as 5 million visitors annually, provide over \$200
13 million in taxes, and, of course, create jobs; first,
14 construction jobs and then as many as 1,000 permanent
15 jobs. These are good jobs, positions with competitive
16 wages, benefits, and career opportunities for
17 advancement.

18 Of course, this all comes with a commitment to
19 be responsible citizens, responsibility to observe
20 diversity in all aspects of our business practice.

21 We will operate all aspects of our business in
22 a safe and responsible manner. Nothing is more
23 important than to give back to the community where we
24 reside.

25 On behalf of Mr. Ratcliff, the entire Centaur

1 team, all of our future employees and guests, we thank
2 you for allowing us to be part of this dynamic process.
3 Thank you very much.

4 (Applause.)

5 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: I have been advised
6 that we have room downstairs in the basement. There's a
7 viewing monitor down there. So you are all -- in the
8 back of the room, you are welcome to participate
9 downstairs.

10 Valley View Downs, you will be provided 15
11 minutes at the end of the last private speaker to
12 address any questions.

13 Now, we will have the Legislators speak.

14 Representative Chris Sainato.

15 REPRESENTATIVE SAINATO: Thank you.

16 Members of the Board, Centaur, and guests, I
17 welcome you to the Ninth Legislative District.

18 Western Pennsylvania is a vital area. For our
19 Board members just a little background, we have gone
20 through two economic downturns. The first one was in
21 the late 70s, and the second one in the late 80s when we
22 lost many of our industrial areas. We have always
23 reeled from that over the years.

24 This project gives us an opportunity in Western
25 Pennsylvania to rebound, to become a tourist

1 destination.

2 I'm a member of the Tourism Recreational
3 Development Committee, as well as the Gaming Oversight
4 Committee in Harrisburg. I have seen what these types
5 of projects have done throughout the state.

6 This project, in my opinion, will surpass many
7 of the facilities that are there. We have a workforce
8 in Lawrence County, skilled labor trades, people that
9 just want an opportunity.

10 This is a destination resort. From my
11 experiences of working with Centaur, they are very
12 positive, committed to Western Pennsylvania. It's not
13 just for Lawrence County. It's Beaver County, Mercer
14 County, Butler County, Eastern Ohio because it's going
15 to create those opportunities for all of us to finally
16 rebound from the economic turmoil which we have seen
17 over the last 30 years. I think it's so vitally
18 important for us as a community.

19 I'm in my 14th year as a Legislator. I worked
20 ten years as a Congressional Aide. I have 24 years of
21 public service.

22 In the 24 years of public service, I have never
23 seen a community come together as it has the last four
24 years as we competed for a project in Lawrence County.

25 All levels of government, from the county to

1 our local supervisors, to the mayor, and the council in
2 New Castle, to the supervisors throughout the county and
3 through the surrounding counties to come together for a
4 project, Democrats, Republicans, we worked as a unit to
5 try to achieve success within Lawrence County and the
6 whole region because this is a regional asset.

7 When you look at what these gentlemen want to
8 do and Mr. Shick and the parameters, the jobs, the
9 construction and it's positive.

10 I think that's what this area is looking for,
11 positive, good feelings. Most of the customer base is
12 going to cover three miles from the state line,
13 Boardman, Youngstown, the Ohio market. That's what we
14 need.

15 We need to draw those people into
16 Lawrence County and put that into our community so we
17 can grow in a positive way and positive means.

18 Responsible gaming is vitally important. I
19 have discussed it with these guys. I serve as the
20 Responsible Gaming Chairman for a national organization,
21 the National Council of Legislators from Gaming States.
22 You're aware of that organization.

23 We are committed to making sure that this
24 gaming is responsible. I look forward to working any
25 way I can with Centaur, through that organization to

1 make sure that the gaming is responsible.

2 I just think that we have come a long way in
3 this process. I respect the Board because I know how
4 thorough you are. You have lived up to the standards of
5 our law, which we passed four years ago.

6 When you look at Centaur and look at what they
7 are willing to do, we have exceeded everything.
8 Destination resort, it's just not about the machines.
9 It's about people. It's about the community.

10 It's about doing the right thing because
11 sometimes gaming is controversial. We know that, but we
12 want to do it the right way, the way that has a positive
13 impact on communities. I think that is what this
14 project is all about.

15 It's been a privilege for me to participate in
16 this process for the past four years. We have ups and
17 downs and positives and negatives; but at the end, it's
18 going to be a positive.

19 The financial commitment that they're willing
20 to make of a community of this size is phenomenal and
21 the other factors that Mr. Shick and his projects that
22 are going to surround this facility is phenomenal.

23 This is something no one could have imagined
24 four years ago of how much of an investment will be in
25 this community.

1 We will have diversity. We will have all
2 levels. Our commitment is if you want a job in Western
3 Pennsylvania, you will finally have that opportunity
4 through this project and the other projects.

5 I thank you for letting me address you today.
6 I wish you enjoy your stay in Western Pennsylvania.
7 Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Thank you.
9 (Applause.)

10 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Senator Gerald
11 LaValle.

12 SENATOR LaVALLE: I always have to follow the
13 tall guys. In Beaver County, we're only about 5'10"
14 overall.

15 Madam Chairwoman, members of the Board, as a
16 member of the State Senate representing Lawrence County,
17 I want to begin by welcoming you to our area of the
18 Commonwealth.

19 In the interest of time, my prepared statement
20 will be short, but please do not allow the brevity of my
21 remarks to be taken as nothing less than overwhelming
22 support of the Valley View Downs proposal before you.

23 As all of you are well aware, we have come a
24 long way since the passage and enactment of Act 71 of
25 2004 that I was happy to support as a member of the

1 State Senate.

2 There can be no doubt that this Act, which
3 effectively legalized controlled gaming in this
4 Commonwealth has and will continue to generate valuable
5 financial resources that will be used to reduce the
6 onerous property tax burden placed on Pennsylvania
7 homeowners while at the same time attracting new
8 development and creating virtually thousands of new jobs
9 for our residents.

10 All of you seated before me are to be credited
11 for this service and your long hours devoted to the
12 challenge of building this new industry in Pennsylvania
13 from the bottom up, oftentimes under intense pressure
14 and unwarranted criticism.

15 I, for one, can understand the difficulties you
16 face throughout the process. I want to thank you for
17 your perseverance.

18 Valley View Downs will a be a state-of-the-art
19 facility in our corner of the Commonwealth that will
20 offer new jobs and business opportunities for our
21 residents and an entertainment venue not only for those
22 in the Keystone State but for several surrounding state
23 jurisdictions as well.

24 Valley View Downs will certainly become a
25 contributing partner with the Commonwealth and join a

1 number of similar facilities throughout the state that
2 will generate new dollars each and every year to be used
3 to assist our residents.

4 At the time, as a Category 1 License, Valley
5 View Downs will play a significant role in helping the
6 horse racing industry in our area and throughout the
7 state thrive like never before.

8 These benefits, however early, are indeed
9 coming to fruition as we have seen over the past year
10 and a half.

11 Let me conclude by adding that we in this area
12 of the Commonwealth are fortunate to have a proposal
13 being advanced by Centaur, a serious, experienced, and
14 highly respected firm that has passed the test of time
15 when it comes to building and operating world-class
16 gaming venues.

17 I wholeheartedly support the Valley View Downs
18 proposal as do thousands of my constituents, who eagerly
19 await the grand opening.

20 Your support in expediting the process where
21 and when possible is certainly welcomed by all. I thank
22 you, again, for your time and your service and the
23 opportunity to appear before you today. Thank you very
24 much.

25 (Appause.)

1 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Representative Jim
2 Ferruchie.

3 MR. FERRUCHIE: My name is Jim Ferruchie. I'm
4 here today representing the Office of Congressman Jason
5 Altmire from Pennsylvania's Fourth Congressional
6 District.

7 The approval of the gaming license for Centaur
8 in Lawrence County is critical to future development
9 growth in the region.

10 The Lawrence County site is an important
11 element in providing property tax relief to citizens
12 throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

13 More importantly, it will rapidly and
14 dramatically attract outside private investment to the
15 region, this region of Western Pennsylvania.

16 It will enable others to invest in mixed use
17 development in the surrounding property bringing
18 economic drivers such as hotels, restaurants, retail,
19 entertainment facilities, and residential development to
20 a degree not possible or feasible without the casino
21 serving as the anchor tenant.

22 This type of exciting development dovetails
23 with the rebirth currently underway in New Castle. New
24 Castle has seen new businesses move into its downtown
25 area, has enhanced its public squares, and improved the

1 transportation systems.

2 This progress can be sustained and accelerated
3 with the location of the casino and its accompanying
4 projects nearby.

5 I am very pleased to be here today to convey
6 Congressman Altmire's support for the numerous
7 neighborhood development initiatives and local
8 businesses that are working to improve communities
9 throughout Lawrence County and the Fourth Congressional
10 District.

11 I am confident that this casino project will be
12 a critical component to the continued growth of Lawrence
13 County in Western Pennsylvania. Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Representative Jaret
16 A. Gibbons.

17 REPRESENTATIVE GIBBONS: Thank you. I'm
18 Representative Jaret Gibbons. I represent the Tenth
19 Legislative District. I'm from Elwood City,
20 Pennsylvania here in Lawrence County and represent the
21 district that covers the majority of Lawrence County not
22 covered by Representative Sainato, as well as portions
23 of Butler and Beaver Counties.

24 I was not a member of the Legislature as my
25 colleagues were at the time the Gaming Law passed. As I

1 entered into the Legislature last year, gaming was
2 already here.

3 It's now operating in sites across the
4 Commonwealth. This year, we are finally seeing some of
5 the benefits of that statewide with the first use of the
6 property tax relief gaming monies.

7 I am glad to see that we are moving forward
8 here in Lawrence County. We are finally going to have
9 the opportunity to see a local impact here in Lawrence
10 County with Valley View Downs.

11 This is an important part of bringing economic
12 development back in Lawrence County. It is not since
13 the days of big steel that we have seen a project of
14 this magnitude and this amount of impact here in the
15 Lawrence County area.

16 On top of the economic development
17 opportunities, we're going to see a great asset for the
18 agricultural community, a major component of Lawrence
19 County with the racing facility as well as the gaming
20 facility.

21 I'm looking forward to working with Valley View
22 Downs and working with our local officials as we utilize
23 the economic development dollars that this will bring to
24 Lawrence County and projects such as the Elwood City
25 Redevelopment and other projects throughout the Tenth

1 Legislative District.

2 I'm also looking forward to the fact that we
3 will have new jobs created. As we heard earlier, over
4 1,000 jobs coming directly from the facility on top of
5 the other jobs with the related facilities.

6 I think this is going to be a very important
7 part of the continued growth of Lawrence County as we
8 move forward.

9 So, I certainly appreciate your work with the
10 Gaming Board. I appreciate the work that Valley View
11 Downs has done. I look forward to seeing the operation
12 of what appears to be a great gaming facility and a
13 great asset for our community here in Lawrence County.
14 So, thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Now, I would like to
17 have the members speaking on behalf of Mahoning
18 Township; Gilbert G. Lucarelli, Francis Exposito, Vito
19 J. Yeropoli, Gary M. Pezzuolo, if you could come
20 forward. Gentlemen, you have 30 minutes to share.

21 MR. PEZZUOLO: Thank you. Good morning. My
22 name is Gary Pezzuolo. I'm one of three supervisors for
23 Mahoning Township. I would like to welcome the Gaming
24 Board and the community members to today's hearing.

25 I'm honored to have served my community in this

1 position for the past ten years. I am equally as proud
2 to serve as I am following in my father's footsteps.

3 Four years ago when we were informed of a 50
4 percent chance that a racetrack was coming to Mahoning
5 Township, we started making plans.

6 The ideas for a sewage facility in line to
7 service to the Hillsville area were implemented.

8 With thought, with the harness license being
9 issued, we amended our plans to include the capacity to
10 adequately service the track.

11 Growing up in the Township, I witnessed the
12 many job opportunities created by the limestone industry
13 a half century ago.

14 Limestone was mined locally and delivered to
15 steel mills located in Ohio. At the time when asked
16 where they worked, most of our community members proudly
17 answered right here in Mahoning Township either in the
18 limestone quarries or in the blacktop business or on the
19 railroad.

20 Unfortunately, many of these jobs were lost in
21 the late '70s due to business relocations. As a result
22 of the closings, many of the local community members in
23 today's workforce must travel to Pittsburgh, Cleveland,
24 and Erie to seek employment.

25 As a father of three college children, I look

1 forward to new employment opportunities locally that the
2 racetrack will provide to residents of the Township. In
3 addition to providing many jobs, people who enjoy
4 gambling will no longer have to travel to West Virginia
5 or Canada.

6 On a recent trip to the West Virginia facility,
7 I was surrounded by local residents. With the new
8 casino right here in Mahoning Township, these
9 individuals who engage in recreational gambling will be
10 able to see proceeds benefiting and stimulating the
11 local economy.

12 Job opportunities and recreation are just one
13 of many benefits this area will experience as a result
14 of the racino.

15 The supervisors will continue to work with
16 Centaur to make changes in the Township as needed to
17 accommodate the track.

18 I believe the racino will benefit the
19 community, a help to the economy, hope for employment to
20 our people, and a promise for a better tomorrow. Thank
21 you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. EXPOSITO: Okay. I'm Francis Poncho
24 Exposito. I'm a supervisor of Mahoning Township. Also,
25 I'm a chairman of the Lawrence County Council of

1 Governments. I'm the second vice president of the PA
2 COG Convention. My passion, I'm the fire chief for 30
3 years in this Township.

4 One of the things I want to address is since
5 2004, since Bedford Downs came forth and we turned
6 around and I set sail with Bedford Downs trying to get
7 it into Mahoning Township and trying to get it in here
8 to Lawrence County just for the jobs and for the income
9 that it can do for this area.

10 Centaur came in with their proposal, and we
11 have had a smooth transition period where we have met
12 and we got everything going.

13 As I will address, as fire chief, we will do
14 everything that we need to do possible to supply the
15 fire and the EMS service we need to do for there.

16 As Gary was saying about the mining jobs that
17 we lost in the town, I want to say we have thousands and
18 thousands of acres that have been stripped of coal,
19 limestone to go from cities to steel mills to making
20 power.

21 We finally have an opportunity to make good in
22 some of the stripped land that we have. I think it's a
23 good opportunity for this area.

24 I welcome and I hope you make a good decision,
25 the, right decision, and a fast decision. So, thank you

1 very much.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. YEROPOLI: Hi. Ladies and gentlemen,
4 members of the Gaming Board, and my esteemed colleagues,
5 I welcome you to Mahoning Township. I have been a
6 supervisor for seven years and a lifelong resident of
7 Mahoning Township.

8 Like my father, who was a supervisor before me,
9 my heart is with the people. Never in my wildest dreams
10 would I believe Mahoning Township would host the
11 opportunity for a racetrack and a casino. The economic
12 impact on this community is unlimited. We need the
13 jobs. Do the right thing and award Centaur the gaming
14 license in which I pledge my full support. Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. LUCARELLI: Good morning. Welcome to
17 Mahoning Township, the residents, our governmental
18 officials, and any other individuals from other
19 communities and also the media.

20 My name is Gilbert Lucarelli. I have been the
21 Treasurer here since 1994. I am also a resident. I
22 look at the awarding of this license to Centaur as a
23 financial opportunity for our Township.

24 Right now, we are involved in the construction
25 of a sewer line and a sewer plant. The revenues from

1 the casino will help us to finance that project, will
2 allow us to employ at least permanently 1,000 people.

3 We can also update our infrastructure,
4 specifically roads. We can also reduce our property
5 taxes, that's as the Township property taxes to the
6 residents of this Township.

7 I support the awarding of this license. I
8 think it's time that we put an end to the application
9 and the licensing process because I think it's been
10 going on since 2003.

11 The sooner that happens, the sooner we remove
12 all doubt as to the construction and the completion of
13 this project.

14 We are in the process now of completing our
15 financial responsibility as far as paying for the sewer
16 system.

17 We look forward to a quick decision on the
18 Board's part as far as awarding this license to Centaur.
19 Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: We're going to go a
22 little bit out of order to make my job a little easier.
23 We're going to have Lawrence County go next.

24 Daniel J. Vogler, Steve Craig, and Richard
25 DeBlasio. Again, gentlemen, you have 30 minutes to

1 share.

2 MR. CRAIG: Good morning, Madam Chairman and
3 fellow members of the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.
4 My name is Steve Craig. I'm the Chairman of the Board
5 of the Lawrence County Commissioners.

6 With me today are my fellow Commissioners, Rick
7 DeBlasio, and Dan Vogler both of whom will speak in just
8 a moment. Each of us will be very brief in our
9 comments.

10 It's my distinct pleasure to welcome you to
11 Lawrence County on behalf of my fellow Commissioners and
12 all of the citizens of Lawrence County.

13 You may have picked up on the excitement in
14 this room. It's spreading and contagious. Personally,
15 I'm floating on air. I can't believe I'm here today and
16 I can't believe you're here. We're excited about it.

17 We're excited to see all of you here and we're
18 excited about the future of our community. Lawrence
19 County is 100 percent behind the granting of a license
20 to Centaur.

21 The team from Centaur working here in Lawrence
22 County has listened and understood our rules and
23 regulations related to land development and has
24 responded quickly and professionally. We feel the
25 location of the Centaur facility in Lawrence County

1 guarantees its success.

2 So let me give you a very brief geographic
3 orientation on the strategic location you are in here
4 today in Mahoning Township.

5 Behind me less than two miles away is the state
6 of Ohio; and make no mistake, the citizens of Mahoning
7 and Trumbull and Columbiana County are excited and ready
8 for this facility to open also. We welcome them across
9 the state line into Mahoning Township, Pennsylvania.

10 Just to our north is Mercer County. In a few
11 minutes, you're going to hear from Brian Beader, who is
12 the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners from Mercer
13 County.

14 To our south is Beaver County. Joe Spanik, a
15 County Commissioner is going to be here also or is here
16 today to speak about their support for the facility.

17 Directly to our east is Butler County. They
18 are our friends. They have been very supportive of this
19 process also.

20 I just wanted to let you know, we are united
21 not just as a county but as a region behind this
22 proposal. It is not just Lawrence County.

23 Finally, we have been preparing for this moment
24 for five years. We're ready to begin the construction
25 phase. When I mean we're ready, there's a whole crowd

1 of union guys out there that want to go to work today.

2 I urge you, beg you, and implore you to issue
3 Centaur a gaming license as soon as possible. My pledge
4 to all of you is that Lawrence County will make you
5 proud, and we'll make the Commonwealth truckloads of
6 money. Thank you very much.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. VOGLER: Good morning, ladies and
9 gentlemen. I also want to welcome you to the best
10 county in Pennsylvania.

11 I would like to add to what my colleague,
12 Commissioner Craig had to say that the Lawrence County
13 Commissioners are united in our support of Centaur's
14 application for the gaming license.

15 The economic impact of the proposed casino and
16 racetrack particularly when coupled with the anticipated
17 ancillary development which will result will be very
18 significant not only for Lawrence County but also for
19 Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio.

20 As I'm sure you're all aware and it's been
21 already touched upon this morning, this region continues
22 to face economic challenges which resulted from the many
23 industry closings and downsizings that occurred in the
24 late '70s and early '80s.

25 While many smaller diversified businesses have

1 replaced the large, heavy manufacturing industries of
2 yesteryear, our unemployment rate continues to
3 consistently run higher than the state and national
4 averages.

5 The anticipated 1,500 construction jobs along
6 with the projected 1,000 permanent positions that will
7 result from the casino and racetrack will serve as a
8 much needed economic boost for our region.

9 My two colleagues and I have worked closely
10 with the Mahoning Township supervisors, especially on
11 issues pertaining to needed infrastructure enhancements.
12 We have also established a strong working relationship
13 with Butler County Community College, which is currently
14 expanding its presence in Lawrence County and is
15 constructing a new facility in neighboring Union
16 Township.

17 Finally, we are excited with the proposed
18 developments that Carmen Shick is planning for the
19 property adjacent to the casino site.

20 Let me close by saying that an overwhelming
21 majority of the citizens in this county and in this
22 region are in support of the development of the casino
23 and racetrack.

24 Accordingly, I join Commissioners Craig and
25 DeBlasio in asking your Board to give a thorough but

1 expeditious review of Centaur's application and that the
2 license be granted in order that our community can
3 ultimately reap the economic benefits that will result
4 from this project. Thank you very much.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. DeBLASIO: Good morning. I know we have
7 quite a bit of time left. Believe me, I won't use up
8 all of the 30 minutes. I'm going to move us all along
9 as fast as I can here.

10 My name is Richard DeBlasio, lifelong resident
11 of Lawrence County. I'm a resident of the City of New
12 Castle and a County Commissioner, which I am very proud
13 to be and also working with two fine gentlemen.

14 Madam Chair and Honorable Members of the
15 Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, good morning. I echo
16 my fellow Commissioners Craig and Vogler, welcome to
17 Lawrence County. It is truly an honor to be with you
18 here today.

19 Our region represents people who approach
20 progress with a very cooperative attitude. Evidence of
21 this cooperation can be seen from the very beginning of
22 our relationship with Centaur and the proposed
23 development in Mahoning Township.

24 Elected officials and their representatives
25 from the Federal Government, State Government, county,

1 and the City of New Castle, as well as the Council of
2 Government, which represent the local municipalities of
3 Lawrence County who are here today represent that core
4 of cooperation.

5 We have all worked hard and worked together to
6 overcome obstacles and move forward not only in the
7 Centaur initiative but in many progressive plans to
8 improve our region.

9 Along with the local officials, a tremendous
10 working relationship has been built with elected
11 officials from Mercer County, Butler County, Beaver
12 County, and Eastern Ohio, some who you will hear from
13 today.

14 We all work as a team to help promote the
15 region and the Centaur project is a driving force in our
16 economic revitalization efforts.

17 Examples of our cooperation include the
18 allocation of \$7 million in Act 108 funds to aid in the
19 expansion of the Mahoning Township sewage plant.

20 Along with this, the Lawrence County Planning
21 Commission and the Lawrence County Conservation District
22 continually identify and resolve issues in a timely
23 manner to keep the Centaur project on track.

24 The elected officials cannot work alone,
25 however. We have been very fortunate in our support

1 from local organizations such as the Lawrence County
2 Economic Development Corporation, the Chambers of
3 Commerce of Lawrence County, Elwood City, and New
4 Wilmington, the Building Association of Lawrence County,
5 the Downtown Business Association of New Castle, the
6 Beaver, Lawrence Farm Bureau, Organized Labor, Tourism
7 Promotion Agency, just to name a few.

8 These organizations have been onboard and
9 supportive of efforts from the infancy stages of this
10 project, and we anticipate a continued level of support
11 from a number of regional organizations.

12 Officials of the Lawrence County Government,
13 Mahoning Township Government, and Lawrence County
14 Economic Development recently met with representatives
15 from the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Catholic Churches in
16 Lawrence County.

17 As a group, we presented information related to
18 the project and the impact we anticipate in population
19 and economic development to the church leaders.

20 The churches in the area have shown a positive
21 interest in these efforts and see the possible growth in
22 population as a dynamic force that will have an impact
23 on their presence in the region.

24 Along with the diverse group of organizations
25 and elected officials, we have also seen tremendous

1 support from the local education community.

2 Our county school superintendents meet each
3 month. They see this opportunity for a growth as a
4 positive influence on the school districts as a source
5 of revenue for schools, as well as a possible population
6 increase, which will have an impact on enrollment in
7 their various schools.

8 I can stand here all day and give examples of
9 the many levels of cooperation that we are experiencing.
10 However, I believe you can make that assessment on your
11 own by the number of elected officials and the people
12 that you see here today and the genuine excitement that
13 we all share for the people that we represent.

14 Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio is a
15 dynamic region. We are populated by people that have
16 withstood very difficult times with the economic decline
17 of the '70s, late '70s and '80s.

18 But our people have stood together to maintain
19 the area during some of those very difficult and
20 challenging times.

21 This project has been a true sign of hope after
22 a long and challenging wait for an upswing in economic
23 growth.

24 People are excited. They are optimistic and
25 resilient. We have proven to ourselves that together we

1 can all prevail.

2 As I mentioned earlier, cooperation has been
3 and will be the core of this project. Together, we will
4 see this project and many others come and provide
5 continued growth to one of the most dynamic regions in
6 America.

7 Now, I join with my fellow Commissioners in
8 support of the Centaur project. I thank you for your
9 consideration. Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Anton J. Leppler of
12 the State Harness Racing Commission.

13 I remind now these local officials, you have
14 five minutes.

15 MR. LEPPLER: Good morning, Chairman Colins,
16 Board members, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Anton
17 J. Leppler. I am currently Deputy Director of Racing
18 for the Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission.

19 I bring greetings to you and your fellow Board
20 members from Chairman Roy Wilt, Commissioner Manuel, and
21 Commissioner Welch.

22 In the interest of time, I will keep my remarks
23 brief. On behalf of the Pennsylvania Harness Racing
24 Commission, I'm here today to provide you with a brief
25 summary regarding the Harness Racing Commission's due

1 diligence background investigation and subsequent
2 awarding of the last remaining harness horse license
3 with pari-mutuel wagering to Valley View Downs.

4 For the record, I have submitted a written,
5 detailed procedural history of the Valley View Downs
6 matter for your review and consideration.

7 Based upon the July 2nd, 2007 Supreme Court
8 decision, the Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission
9 permitted Valley View Downs to submit an amended
10 application for the Lawrence County site.

11 After an extensive due diligence background
12 investigation of the amended application, the
13 Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission on September 7th,
14 2007 issued Valley View Downs a harness horse license to
15 conduct pari-mutuel wagering.

16 I am submitting into the record the findings
17 of fact, conclusions of law, and reason for
18 determination on the Valley View Downs matter.

19 Over the past four years, our respective office
20 have worked cooperatively on investigative matters. I
21 pledge on behalf of the Chairman and his fellow
22 Commissioners to continue to provide whatever
23 documentation information and support you deem necessary
24 and appropriate. Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

1 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: James B. Morris,
2 Northwest Lawrence County Regional Police Department.

3 MR. MORRIS: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you.
4 I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak
5 this morning. It's always tough to follow the
6 professional politicians, but I will give it a shot.

7 I'm James Morris, Chief of Police of the
8 Northwest Lawrence County Regional Police Department.
9 We cover 56 square miles that involves Pulaski, Mahoning
10 Townships here in Lawrence County. It's the northwest
11 corner of the county and hence the name.

12 The Valley View facility is going to sit
13 squarely in the middle of 56 square miles that we cover.
14 The long-term planning that you have heard detailed by
15 several people has been mirrored by the Township
16 supervisors of Pulaski and Mahoning Townships in order
17 to provide sufficient law enforcement services for the
18 area around the facility.

19 Back in October of 2004, after several years of
20 planning, we became a natural regional police
21 department.

22 It's my job as Chief of Police and our job as
23 the law enforcement entity to serve the people in the
24 community. We feel Centaur is a member of the
25 community. We look forward to serving them. We look

1 forward to growing as a police department and providing
2 the adequate police services necessary for everything to
3 run smoothly. I thank you very much.

4 (Applause.)

5 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Donald Dougherty,
6 Mahoning Township Planning Commission.

7 MR. DOUGHERTY: I want to welcome you here as a
8 Board to Mahoning Township and also on behalf of the
9 Planning Commission, I would like to thank Centaur for
10 the cooperation.

11 Any time we have asked for anything to be done,
12 they have done it. We look forward to working with them
13 into the future.

14 We would like this to move as quickly as
15 possible. Just to let you know, Centaur does just about
16 anything we ask them.

17 If we have something that doesn't meet the
18 requirements, they will work with us to make adjustments
19 to whatever we can to meet those requirements.

20 As soon as we can, we will be grateful to move
21 along and award this license to Centaur. Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Anthony G.
24 Mastrangelo from the City of New Castle.

25 MR. MASTRANGELO: Good morning. Ladies and

1 gentlemen. My name is Anthony Mastrangelo. I live at
2 125 East Lancaster Avenue, New Castle, Pennsylvania.

3 As Mayor of the City of New Castle and on
4 behalf of the citizens, we support Valley View Downs
5 application for a Category 1 Slot Machine License for
6 the facility to be located in Mahoning Township,
7 Lawrence County.

8 New Castle is an optimal third class city with
9 a population of 25,000. It is the largest city in
10 Lawrence County and the seat of Lawrence County
11 Government.

12 We are approximately four to five minutes from
13 the site of the racetrack and the casino. We welcome
14 the potential 1,000 employees and their families who
15 work and live in our area. It is an excellent place to
16 raise a family, only ten and fifteen minutes to work.

17 New Castle is very family oriented and has an
18 excellent school system and first-rate health system.
19 We have men and woman who are going to be trained to
20 work at the casino and racetrack in addition to the
21 potential motels and hotels. They're hard working
22 individuals willing to take on new responsibilities at
23 all levels.

24 We are proud to be located in an area where the
25 one-mile track will bring the very best to compete in a

1 first-class casino second to none.

2 The City of New Castle will offer whatever
3 assistance is necessary to make everyone welcome. The
4 office of the Mayor is open to all officials of Valley
5 View Downs and other potential developers to assist them
6 in their efforts to make this area first-class.

7 Once again, the City of New Castle strongly
8 supports the application for a Category 1 Slot Machine
9 License by Valley View Downs and hopes it can be acted
10 upon as soon as possible. I thank you very much.

11 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Chet Orelli, City of
12 New Castle.

13 MR. ORELLI: Good morning. My name is Chet
14 Orelli, Jr. I'm a resident of the City of New Castle,
15 New Castle City Councilmen and a Vice Chairman of the
16 Lawrence County COG, as well as legislative assistant to
17 Representative Gibbons.

18 As you can see, I wear many hats. Today, I'm
19 here representing New Castle City Council and to read a
20 resolution passed for the record.

21 Resolution 2008-066.

22 Whereas, Valley View Downs has submitted an
23 application to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board for
24 a Category 1 Slot Machine License to be located in
25 Mahoning Township, Lawrence County, Pennsylvania.

1 And whereas, the Pennsylvania Gaming Control
2 Board will hold a public hearing on said application on
3 May 15th, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the Mahoning Township
4 Community Center, 4538 State Street, Hillsville,
5 Pennsylvania.

6 And whereas, Valley View Downs will bring
7 economic growth to Lawrence County and all
8 municipalities located within, including the City of New
9 Castle.

10 And whereas, it would be in the best interest
11 of the City of New Castle to support application of
12 Valley View Downs for a Category 1 Slot Machine License.

13 Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Council
14 of the City of New Castle, Pennsylvania that the Council
15 of the City of New Castle, Pennsylvania fully supports
16 the application of Valley View Downs for a Category 1
17 Slot Machine License to be located in Mahoning Township,
18 Lawrence County, Pennsylvania.

19 This was approved the 8th day of May, 2008 with
20 a vote of five to zero, certified the 9th day of May,
21 2008. Thank you very much.

22 (Applause.)

23 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Robert T. Callen,
24 Lawrence County Regional Council of Government.

25 MR. CALLEN: Good morning. My name is Robert

1 Callen. I serve as the Executive Director of the
2 Lawrence County Regional Council of Governments, COG for
3 short.

4 This organization since 1999 has 25 local
5 governments within Lawrence County as dues-paying
6 members, inclusive of the County of Lawrence, with a
7 combined population of 94,000.

8 Each local government has at least two of its
9 elected officials serving on the COG Board of Directors.
10 On April 2nd of this year, the Board of Directors
11 authorized and resolved that I present testimony at this
12 public input meeting on behalf of its member
13 governments.

14 The COG through its elected leadership has been
15 since 2004 at the forefront for advocating a harness
16 racetrack facility with the Pennsylvania Harness Racing
17 Commission and has worked in partnership with Centaur
18 Gaming since it was granted a license to proceed with
19 the track facility here in Mahoning Township.

20 Today, representing the Board leadership and
21 the many elected officials that comprise the 25 local
22 governments, I offer the COG's position supporting and
23 advocating that a Category 1 Slot Machine Operator
24 License be granted to Valley View Downs by this
25 Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board.

1 This facility as planned would be constructed
2 here in Mahoning Township and located adjacent to the
3 one-mile harness racetrack and its accompanying
4 grandstand facility heretofore authorized by the
5 Pennsylvania Harness Racing Commission.

6 As I understand it, the Pennsylvania Racehorse
7 Development and Gaming Act of 2004, as amended
8 throughout, the years authorizes the Pennsylvania Gaming
9 Control Board among its many powers to oversee the
10 operations of slot machine facilities within the
11 Commonwealth in addition to granting licenses to slot
12 machine operators. Ergo, the ultimate purpose of this
13 Public Input Hearing today.

14 Our reasons, although varied, are relatively
15 simple. Once a license is granted to Valley View Downs
16 and after construction is completed and the facility
17 fully operational, we foresee the following community
18 benefits resulting from your approval of the license of
19 Valley View Downs.

20 Number 1, approximately 16 million annually
21 infused into Lawrence County generated from the 34
22 percent daily gross terminal revenues from the Valley
23 View Downs facility.

24 Nearly \$6 million in annual, local real estate
25 taxes further supporting local government services on

1 county, school district, and municipal levels.

2 An estimated 1,600 construction and 1,000
3 permanent jobs with a combined payroll of 42 million a
4 year. This estimate alone is a boost to not only the
5 Lawrence County community but also to the immediate
6 region inclusive of Beaver and Mercer County
7 communities.

8 Of the quarterly revenue ultimately distributed
9 to Lawrence County by the Commonwealth from the annual
10 \$16 million as first mentioned, it is anticipated that
11 most will be used for needed economic development
12 projects and plans yet to be realized except for the
13 funds to implement them.

14 As a footnote to this item, the Board needs to
15 be aware that the COG through my office has recently
16 established an economic development circuit rider
17 initiative whereby assistance is provided to
18 municipalities for the proper planning of public
19 infrastructure that will ultimately support private
20 investment into development sites and areas within
21 Lawrence County.

22 This is an intergovernmental initiative that
23 can only be effectual through a Council of Governments'
24 mechanism with local elected official involvement.

25 It is important for the Board to know about

1 this during its evaluation of Valley View Downs' license
2 application in that local government commitment is
3 evident, via legislative, revitalization grants from our
4 local legislators and its own resources at present to
5 prepare for hopeful and eventual private development
6 investments in this county.

7 Certainly, any earmarked revenues generated by
8 Valley View Downs slot machine facility will greatly
9 enhance and accelerate other job-generating
10 opportunities and their resulting income investments
11 within our communities.

12 Number 5, to challenge our recently built
13 Lawrence County branch of the Butler County Community
14 College a few miles down this road to produce curricula
15 supportive of the hospitality and entertainment
16 industry, thereby assuring the educational
17 infrastructure is in place to train and retrain facility
18 employees as technology changes and new challenges are
19 faced.

20 Number 6 and lastly, that a facility in the far
21 western part of Pennsylvania adjacent to Ohio does its
22 part in contributing to property tax reduction for all
23 Pennsylvanians. Thank you very much.

24 (Applause.)

25 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Brian Beader, Mercer

1 County Commissioners.

2 MR. BEADER: Good morning, Madam Chair, Board.
3 I want to thank the Board for the opportunity to provide
4 testimony here today.

5 My name is Brian Beader. I am Chairman of the
6 Mercer County Board of Commissioners. I am here today
7 to speak in support of Valley View Downs. I am sure
8 everything has been said or will be said; however, not
9 everybody has said it. So, I will continue with the
10 full-court press.

11 When gaming legislation was introduced in the
12 State of Pennsylvania, I was a proponent and a
13 supporter.

14 Last year, our previous Board of Mercer County
15 Commissioners unanimously supported Valley View Downs.
16 I am pleased to announce the current Board with the
17 addition of Commissioner Lechner and Commissioner Ammann
18 and myself are, once again, unanimous in supporting
19 Valley View Downs.

20 Through our local Workforce Investment Board,
21 which covers Mercer and Lawrence Counties, we
22 continually analyze those industries within our
23 jurisdiction which compromise significant segments of
24 our workforce. One of those industries is the building
25 trades.

1 I am pleased to announce and also say thank you
2 to Centaur for guaranteeing and making a commitment to
3 utilize 100 percent local, skilled building trades
4 craftsmen for this construction project that they are
5 about to embark upon.

6 Another industry that is very important to
7 Mercer County is agriculture. As a matter of fact,
8 agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Mercer County. We
9 believe we have a sufficient amount of farms to provide
10 the necessary resources for a harness racetrack of this
11 size.

12 If you look at this project from a pure
13 business sense for the State of Pennsylvania, we have a
14 track with a gaming license in Erie and below
15 Pittsburgh.

16 Here we sit right in the middle along
17 Interstate 80, right at the end of the future
18 destination of Interstate 376 and just 10 to 15 minutes
19 away from a population base outside of the State of
20 Pennsylvania, the Mahoning Valley, and Ohio.

21 For the reasons I just mentioned, job creation,
22 tourism, and the impact on the agricultural community,
23 we believe that Valley View Downs with a gaming license
24 has a potential for great success in our region.

25 As you can see, we are united; and we strongly

1 ask for a favorable decision.

2 (Applause.)

3 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Mayor James

4 Ludiciani of the Village of Lowellville, Ohio.

5 Okay. We'll move on to the community groups
6 now.

7 Linda D. Nitch and Robert Delsignore. I

8 understand you'll be sharing ten minutes.

9 MS. NITCH: Yes. We'll be brief. Good
10 morning, everyone. Welcome to Lawrence county. I'm
11 Linda Nitch. I'm the Executive Director of the Lawrence
12 County Economic Development Corporation.

13 This corporation has been in existence for over
14 50 years with the mission of increasing the
15 competitiveness and the productivity of businesses
16 located here in Lawrence County to maintain the local
17 jobs that are here and hopefully create new ones.

18 The development of Valley View Downs with its
19 1,500 construction jobs and the estimated permanent
20 staff of 1,000 full-time and part-time jobs represents
21 the largest economic development project in recent
22 times.

23 The 45 members of the Lawrence County's
24 Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors
25 support the issuing of the gaming license to Centaur for

1 this new endeavor.

2 I would like to take you back to the beginning
3 of this decade when Lawrence County embarked on a new
4 road to prosperity.

5 The first phase was the creation of Millennium
6 Technology Park, a 500-acre high technology park that is
7 within 4 miles of Valley View Downs.

8 This park is targeted for advanced
9 manufacturing, such as food processing, pharmaceutical
10 production, and electronic manufacturing.

11 Pad-ready sites are nearly completed and the
12 first building has been constructed. With Valley View
13 Downs in such close proximity, there's an opportunity to
14 partner with Centaur as well as with Carmen Shick and
15 other developers for the extension of utilities that
16 will benefit the projects.

17 This will be an excellent example of the
18 mirroring of private investment with the public
19 investment.

20 Also, during this time, there is a rebirth of
21 the downtown of New Castle with the injection of over
22 \$10 million of state funding for improvements of the
23 infrastructure.

24 Recently, Elwood City has embarked upon a
25 revitalization program targeted to the community's

1 commercial corridor.

2 I see the second phase to this road to
3 prosperity with the development of Valley View Downs and
4 the other proposed developments.

5 The casino and horse track will bring added
6 dimension to the community. There is already a great
7 interest of individuals looking to purchase farms to
8 house their horses.

9 Additionally, the county has right now a year's
10 supply of homes available for sale for future employees
11 of Valley View Downs.

12 With an average cost of \$89,000 for a home,
13 this county offers current and new residents a value in
14 housing.

15 I have always been taught in economic
16 development, it is in the import of fresh dollars in the
17 community that builds its economy. This casino is
18 expected to import \$240 million from outside the state.

19 The spinoff of additional involvement and
20 investment is already occurring east of the site in
21 Union Township and numerous other commercial projects
22 are being investigated.

23 The final phase of this road to prosperity will
24 arrive after the casino is up and running. Strategic
25 planning that Lawrence County will be receiving from the

1 local revenue sharing has begun.

2 The county is, of course, respectful of your
3 need to fully investigate this project; and we are
4 hopeful that after today's hearing, you will be
5 confident that issuing the gaming license to Centaur for
6 this development will be in the best interest of the
7 County of Lawrence and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 and a prompt decision will be greatly appreciated.
9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. DELSIGNORE: Good morning, Madam Chairwoman
12 and Board members. I appreciate the opportunity to
13 speak here today. I thank you all for visiting our
14 community.

15 Robert Delsignore is my name. I like the way
16 you said it better. It sounds more original. I might
17 change it.

18 My job as president of economic development, I
19 have a passion to try to create jobs. I think about
20 this all of the time. I have been in the community all
21 of my life, been in business here all of my life. I'm
22 retired at this time.

23 I would tell you that what I see that alarmed
24 me more than anything else. We talk about our seniors.
25 The State of Pennsylvania is No. 3 or No. 4 in higher

1 education, universities, colleges. We're 47 -- 47th in
2 exporting these educated young people.

3 So we educate them in Pennsylvania, and they go
4 everywhere else to get their jobs. That has to stop and
5 the only way we can do that is to create viable jobs in
6 the communities close to us so they have an ability to
7 find adequate work that can provide for their families.

8 The seniors, the money that they're going to
9 receive for the tax rebates is going to be wonderful.
10 There's no question about it; but greater than that is
11 if they could have their children and their
12 grandchildren around them, that would be worth much more
13 than all of the money we're talking.

14 The only way that can happen is to have jobs.
15 We have the labor force. We have tradespeople that have
16 to go out of the area to work because there is not
17 enough here.

18 Our median income is lower than most of the
19 counties in the state and absolutely lower than the --
20 all of the states in the US, yet, we have everything to
21 offer and we need this opportunity.

22 This will be the catalyst, Centaur, the Shick
23 family the Teback family will make the change and you
24 members can be that body that makes it happen for all of
25 us, especially the seniors. Thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: James Downs.

3 MR. DOWNS: Good morning, Madam Chair,
4 representatives from the Board, and guests from Centaur
5 and politicians way too numerous to mention.

6 You have been welcomed to the Commonwealth of
7 Pennsylvania and a beautiful Commonwealth it is, I think
8 the most beautiful corner of the Commonwealth. Welcome
9 to Mahoning Township.

10 I would like to take this opportunity at least
11 for now to welcome you to Christ the King Parish, which
12 is where you are.

13 I have been a priest of the Diocese of
14 Pittsburgh for 38 years; and for 33 years of those, I
15 have been lucky enough to serve the Catholic community,
16 specifically here in Lawrence County.

17 I am here to speak in a little bit of a
18 different kind of angle to this. First of all, I
19 certainly recognize with any reasonable citizen the
20 economic value of welcoming this enterprise, wonderful
21 enterprise into our community.

22 As we all know, there are always with things
23 like this other issues, ancillary but important and one
24 of them, frankly, is shall we call it a moral issue for
25 want of a better term.

1 I am here to assure you from my 33 years of
2 living and working in this county and certainly
3 ecumenically, not just with the Catholic churches and
4 the Catholic folk but with other christian parishes and
5 even with non-Christian religions, there is not in this
6 county any kind of a hue and cry to burn down the
7 racetrack.

8 As a believing community, and believe me when I
9 tell you that we are a believing and a practicing faith
10 community here in Lawrence County of many and diverse
11 religious experiences and expressions, the overwhelming
12 majority of the people in this county will welcome this
13 on every level including their faith level.

14 I don't know now how many are going to pray to
15 God to win, but I can assure them they cannot bother
16 because I haven't hit the lottery yet.

17 But I would also like to say, though, those
18 people if any of them are here today, that first of all,
19 there is no morality attached to gambling anymore than
20 there is morality attached to eating ice cream. It is
21 specially a human act. It is an adult human act.

22 I believe and I think most of us are in
23 agreement that adults have to be responsible for their
24 own decisions in life. It is not up to the church or
25 the government or any other institution to come into my

1 life, into my house, and tell me what is best for me.

2 Frankly, it raises my hat.

3 I think those of us especially those of us who
4 are really proud to be Americans have that kind of
5 experience and sense.

6 I can stand before you today and say that I am
7 very proud to tell you that I am a grateful recovering
8 alcoholic.

9 With the help of God and a lot of good people,
10 I have not had a drink for over ten years; but I can
11 also assure you that that did not happen to me because
12 all of the bars closed.

13 Now, I must admit that there were a couple of
14 them that I thought might.

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. DOWNS: The fact is they didn't and some
17 other poor sap is sitting on the chair that used to have
18 my name on it. God bless him or her.

19 It is our responsibility as adults to make
20 decisions. I can assure you that, as I say, most people
21 in this community, I speak to the Board, are not opposed
22 to this venture on any kind of moral or religious
23 grounds at all.

24 I hope I can speak to us all and encourage us
25 to recognize that this is, in fact, a good thing that is

1 coming to us.

2 It is not going to create a gambling problem in
3 a region that frankly is a very heavy gambling region.
4 So more than a lot of places in this nation and even in
5 Pennsylvania, folks around here are savvy when it comes
6 to gambling.

7 We're not babes in the wood. Every mom and pop
8 in every supermarket has lottery machines in it. We are
9 surrounded by bingo. We even have off-track betting in
10 Union Township that has been there for years. This is
11 not new or news to the folks in Lawrence County,
12 certainly not Mahoning Township, I can assure you that.

13 The fact is that putting a racetrack, putting a
14 casino will not create one compulsive gambler any more
15 than opening up a bar will make one more alcoholic in
16 the community, any more than opening a donut shop or an
17 ice cream store or a bakery is going to create one more
18 diabetic or opening a restaurant is going to make one
19 more compulsive overeater suddenly appear like magic.

20 These are all issues and facts that as human
21 beings we face in our lives. Everybody has to deal with
22 something. I don't know why. Wait until you die. Ask
23 God and maybe he'll tell you.

24 The fact is that when there are people who
25 discover problems, our obligations, and here I am

1 speaking for the church as one and all, our obligation
2 is to reach out a helping hand to those folks.

3 I can assure you that the parishes of Lawrence
4 County deaneries will be available and so will their
5 facilities for anyone who struggles with any kind of
6 struggle or any kind of an addiction including gambling.
7 There are facilities in the county that have been there
8 for years to help these people.

9 In terms of religious experience and the
10 religious expression of Lawrence County, Mahoning
11 Township, I would like to assure the Board there will
12 be, as I say, no hue and cry, no one is going to be
13 lynched, no one is going to be burned in effigy.

14 On behalf of the religious community, welcome
15 one and all and welcome in wonderful project. Thank
16 you.

17 (Applause.)

18 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: We will now take a
19 short five-minute break.

20 (Break.)

21 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Ladies and
22 gentlemen, please take your seats. We'll get started
23 again. We'll continue to the community groups. Will
24 JoAnn McBride please come to the podium.

25 Ladies and gentlemen, please be seated. We're

1 now going to reopen the record.

2 Go ahead.

3 MS. McBRIDE: Good morning. My name is JoAnn
4 McBride. Members of the Gaming Board, ladies and
5 gentlemen, as the official/unofficial, self-proclaimed
6 cheerleader for Lawrence County, welcome.

7 In preparing my remarks today, I tried not to
8 duplicate what other people have said. So, I went to
9 the one statement that has guided the path of the
10 Lawrence County Tourist Promotion Agency for nearly 18
11 years, our mission, which simply states that the
12 Lawrence County Tourist Promotion Agency will encourage,
13 support, and advise on issues concerning tourism-related
14 economic development growth suitable for the best
15 interests of the area by providing a positive atmosphere
16 through education, promotion, and cooperation.

17 I'm going to break apart that statement this
18 morning. Tourism-related economic growth. This casino
19 would provide the catalyst for other tourism-related
20 attractions throughout the region.

21 The sky is the limit and creativity is the key
22 to unlocking the many other attractions that can be
23 developed.

24 Suitable for the best interests of the area,
25 this casino would bring new visitors to the area who may

1 not otherwise venture into Lawrence County. This
2 community has so much to offer in the way of history and
3 culture.

4 We have the third largest Old Order Amish
5 community in the United States. Two replicas of the
6 Statue of Liberty, one in New Castle and one in Elwood
7 City. There are only six across the Commonwealth and we
8 have two of them.

9 We have a Native American heritage through a
10 small borough named Wampum. Plus, New Castle is known
11 nationally as a fireworks capital of America. All of
12 these will compliment the existence of the casino.

13 Providing a positive atmosphere through
14 education, promotion, and cooperation. Education, one
15 of our main objectives, and this has been developed by
16 the Board of Directors, is developing training modules
17 for various segments of the hospitality industry so that
18 any new visitor will feel welcome and their questions
19 will be answered.

20 Promotion, that is what we do best, whether it
21 is publishing informational literature, advertising, or
22 public relation efforts, we will work to ensure that the
23 word gets out not only about the casino but also about
24 any new attractions developed with the casino.

25 Cooperation, our goal is to form a partnership,

1 not only with Centaur Corporation but with the other
2 developers in ensuring that our mutual goals are all
3 met.

4 You can be assured that the Lawrence County
5 Tourist Promotion Agency will use its many resources,
6 locally, regionally, and throughout Pennsylvania to make
7 sure that a casino established in this community will be
8 successful.

9 In closing, I had the opportunity to speak to
10 the Pennsylvania Gaming Commission several years ago and
11 I told them that if we would get a gaming license, I
12 would do a happy dance. I'm telling you the same thing.
13 We get this casino license, I'm doing the happy dance.

14 Mr. DeRosa, I'm looking forward to a great
15 fireworks display at the opening of the casino. Thank
16 you.

17 (Applause.)

18 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: David C. Copper.

19 MR. COPPER: Good morning and welcome to
20 Lawrence County, again. My name is David Copper. I'm
21 the President of Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce.
22 I'm here to speak on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce.

23 The Chamber would like to go on the record as
24 fully supporting and endorsing the Valley View Downs
25 casino project here in Lawrence County and recommend to

1 the Gaming Commission that the gaming license for the
2 slot machines be granted.

3 I'm not going to reiterate all of the reasons
4 why there is such a potential for economic development
5 for Lawrence County with this project. I think they
6 have already been clearly articulated.

7 The Chamber is extremely excited about this
8 project and offers its full support and hope that you
9 would favorably grant it. Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Now, moving to the
11 individuals. John J. Bongivengo. I'm reminding,
12 individuals have three minutes.

13 MR. BONGIVENGO: My name is John Bongivengo
14 listed as an individual speaker, but I'm also the
15 Lawrence County District Attorney. I expect you to say
16 my name right if you're going to get out of the county.

17 Early in January, I argued before 12 men and
18 women of a jury to put an individual to death. Now, I'm
19 standing before you arguing to give this county life.
20 That is what everybody is here for.

21 That is essentially what Valley View has done
22 for us is breathed new life into this county. It's
23 obvious from the economic development that is going to
24 happen.

25 As District Attorney, I'm not going to stand

1 here and say that I'm naive that there is not going to
2 be problems associated with an influx of money and
3 people into the area, but the economic benefits clearly
4 outweigh any problems.

5 My office is completely dedicated to anything
6 that Centaur wants legal and anything that Mr. Shick
7 wants to help out this county.

8 The telltale sign in that presentation was the
9 map. I have been District Attorney for three years, and
10 I have always asked why Lawrence County and surrounding
11 areas has a severe drug problem. That is because drug
12 dealers have figured out that they have access to every
13 major highway in every major city within the surrounding
14 area and Centaur has figured that out as well.

15 It is time to put it to use for a good purpose
16 and build this community back up to what it once was,
17 and I thank you for your time.

18 (Applause.)

19 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Ron Battoni.

20 MR. BATTONI: Good morning, Chairman Colins,
21 members of the Gaming Board. My name is Ron Battoni. I
22 am the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Harness
23 Horsemen's Association or PHHA. Before lending our
24 support to the project, PHHA evaluates the proposal by
25 asking three key questions: Will it aid in the

1 development of the sport, will it be positive for our
2 members, and will it be good for harness racing fans. I
3 am pleased to say that Valley View Downs meets all
4 three.

5 First, Valley View Downs will aid in the
6 development of Pennsylvania standardbred racing because
7 it will provide a brand new, state-of-the-art track
8 within close proximity to a number of populated areas.

9 Also, for our horsemen and women, Valley View
10 Downs will provide a new option that compliments the
11 Meadows, the existing harness track in Western PA.

12 Though the two tracks are only 60 miles apart,
13 it is unlikely that the harness racing programs will be
14 in direct competition.

15 In fact, as we have seen in the eastern part of
16 the state separated by 120 miles, the two tracks that
17 exist today have worked together and co-exist.

18 Finally, Valley View Downs is great for fans.
19 The developer, Centaur Gaming, is highly experienced in
20 the creation and management of harness racing. Thanks
21 to their successful involvement with Hoosier Park in
22 Indiana.

23 The PHHA has been in communication with Valley
24 View Downs and their CEO of racing, Jeff Smith, and have
25 developed the highest level of confidence and trust in

1 their ability to make Valley View Downs a premiere
2 racing and gaming destination.

3 When you factor in the additional benefits of
4 slot machines, it becomes clear that Valley View Downs
5 has all of the necessary elements to help take harness
6 racing to a new level of competitiveness in the west and
7 continue raising the profile of Pennsylvania harness
8 racing on a national scene.

9 Therefore, we believe that Valley View Downs
10 will be overwhelming, positive for the sport, as well as
11 Pennsylvania harness racing and the agriculture
12 industries.

13 This combined with Centaur's demonstrated
14 ability to manage a successful harness racing venue and
15 to change and to adapt will be great for the city and
16 the community. I thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Rocky Medure.

19 I remind the individuals, please provide your
20 municipality and your address.

21 MR. MEDURE: My name is Rocky Medure. I'm a
22 resident of the City of New Castle. My address is 417
23 Jennys Lane, New Castle, Pennsylvania.

24 I'm here to speak on behalf of Centaur and all
25 of the residents of the county. I wear two hats today.

1 One is as a businessman. I graduated from Duquesne
2 University a few years back and came back to town to
3 help my father run our construction company.

4 On the other hand, I speak as a young man who
5 came back to an area where there was little. Moving
6 from Pittsburgh where there was so much to do and so
7 many things going on and coming to an area where things
8 have sort of faltered or fallen off for a long time and
9 people haven't had great opportunities, it was
10 disheartening.

11 Looking around, there wasn't much to do. There
12 was not much to be hopeful about. This has changed
13 greatly. There is so much hope associated with this
14 project and so much hope associated with the future of
15 what the town could be and both from a business
16 standpoint, I implore you but from a personal standpoint
17 as a young man who will one day be raising a family here
18 in town and would prefer for them to have good
19 education, things to do, clean safe places to hang out,
20 and a real future for the town, that possibility is in
21 your hands.

22 I cannot add to or articulate any further what
23 everybody has said very accurately before me. I hope
24 that you make the smart decision and the right decision
25 in granting them a license. Thank you very much for

1 your time.

2 (Applause.)

3 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Frank Telesz.

4 MR. TELESZ: Madam Chair, Board, my name is
5 Frank E. Telesz, Jr., 1421 State Route 956, Volant, PA.
6 As stated, my name is Frank Telesz. I'm a proud third
7 generation of Lawrence County.

8 I'm very proud also to say that I have been
9 raised on and still live on an active, family-operating
10 dairy farm.

11 With that work ethic, with my hands and skills
12 growing up, led me to an easy transition on to the
13 building trades.

14 I'm a Journeyman electrician by trade from the
15 IBEW LU 712 and here today to speak on behalf of the
16 Lawrence County Building and Construction Trades.

17 This year in May of 2008 marks 55 years of the
18 Lawrence County Building and Construction Trades. I
19 have heard today that this hearing is called input or
20 impact. I prefer to call this hearing impact this
21 morning.

22 Why? Because the facility of Valley View Downs
23 will impact the lives of over 800 building and
24 construction men and women in Lawrence County.

25 It will be a great feeling to know that every

1 building trades member that sets foot on this site does
2 have hospitalization, does have a pension, and we will
3 make a respectful living wage.

4 There are many thanks that need to go to a lot
5 of people in this room. First, we have to thank the
6 Governor and the Legislators for their vision of the
7 gaming in Pennsylvania.

8 Second, we need to thank the Shick family for
9 putting Lawrence County on the map.

10 And third, Centaur, thank you very much for
11 what you are doing for the county. Centaur has agreed
12 with the Building Trades to do the project 100 percent
13 Building Trades.

14 In turn, the Building Trades will give their
15 guarantee that the project will be built on time and
16 under budget.

17 I assure the PA Gaming Control Board that
18 Valley View Downs is the right choice. Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Bob Galazia.

21 MR. GALAZIA: My name is Bob Galazia. I am
22 nothing more than a 50-year resident of Mahoning
23 Township. I'll take another direction with this thing.

24 We here are Western Pennsylvania. We are not
25 Pittsburgh. Although Pittsburgh is located in Western

1 Pennsylvania, they are not us.

2 Taking this into account, I want you to, if you
3 would, please, look at the State of Pennsylvania putting
4 money into two stadiums in Pittsburgh, an arena that is
5 now in the process, and about to put some money into
6 mass transit, none of which will do Western Pennsylvania
7 much good except that Pennsylvania will be paying there.

8 In this project, private money, no state money,
9 so all that you people can do when you go back to
10 Harrisburg with a feather in your cap and say, we didn't
11 spend any money. The state didn't spend a dime; private
12 funds.

13 The only thing that can happen to us is this
14 money is going to come from Western Pennsylvania to
15 Harrisburg. Please don't let us be that part of the
16 state that no one seems to know about. Remember, we are
17 Western Pennsylvania. Thank you very much.

18 (Applause.)

19 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Edward McCready.

20 MR. McCREADY: Top of the morning to you. I
21 want to welcome each and everyone of you to our fine end
22 of the state. I would like to thank you for allowing me
23 to voice my support for Valley View Downs.

24 As you have heard from numerous speakers before
25 me, Valley View Downs will contribute greatly to the

1 economic revitalization of Lawrence County and
2 surrounding communities.

3 The Valley View Downs location and track length
4 will make it very attractive to breeders from nearby
5 states.

6 This convenience allows for interstate traffic
7 and trade and could allow for an even stronger
8 partnership from horse breeders from our neighboring
9 state.

10 The increased demand for agricultural products
11 will not only help our farmers but sustain farms
12 benefits in our communities as well.

13 Once farmland is converted to other uses, it is
14 permanently lost. I heard someplace they call it the
15 good book. They quit making earth a long time ago.

16 Valley View Downs will help preserve farmland
17 and maintain our healthy and diverse system. Our
18 agricultural industry will benefit from having this
19 tremendous asset in our community.

20 During the racing season, the horses will be
21 consuming at least 700 bails of hay, nearly 2,000 pounds
22 of grain, and using between 4 and 500 bails of straw
23 each week, thus giving us, the local producers
24 opportunities to provide our product to the horse
25 breeders.

1 These numbers do not include all of the local,
2 small farms and facilities that will be used to breed,
3 raise, and train these horses when they are not on the
4 track itself.

5 Let's not forget about the veterinary services
6 and the tax enterprises, which will be needed to supply
7 this growing equine industry.

8 Much beyond that, Valley View Downs will be
9 giving farming families what has been long overdue;
10 revenue and the confidence in a future.

11 I believe it's everyone's dream in this room to
12 turn that empty field into a piece of land that will
13 give back to the community. Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Samuel Shilling.

16 MR. SHILLING: Good morning. My name is Sam
17 Shilling. I reside now 15 miles north of here in
18 Mercer, Mercer County. I am the regional manager for
19 the Carpenters Union in 15 northwestern counties here in
20 Pennsylvania, including Lawrence County.

21 I am also a proud delegate of the Lawrence
22 County Building and Construction Trades Council, which
23 represents 15 trade unions throughout our nation and
24 North America.

25 When I was younger, I attended the Highland

1 Avenue Grade School right here in New Castle in the late
2 '50s and early '60s.

3 I remember my dad taking me downtown to a
4 bustling city of then 50,000 people, not the 25,000.
5 You could buy anything here. The streets were full of
6 people. It was vibrant. It's a wonderful community, as
7 it still is.

8 This project, we, as a Building Trades believe
9 will bring this vibrance back to New Castle and the
10 surrounding regions, many counties in many areas close
11 to here as we have all heard about this morning.

12 With Mr. Ratcliff's handshake and commitment to
13 build this racetrack and a casino with 100 percent of
14 our local affiliated Building Trades craftsmen, their
15 commitment to family-sustaining jobs will begin right
16 out of the gate. No pun intended there.

17 With all of these positives this project will
18 bring to our region, we would urge a quick and decisive
19 approval of this gaming license to benefit all of the
20 hard working citizens of the area. Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Leo Golba.

23 MR. GOLBA: Good morning. My name is Leo
24 Golba. I reside at 3305 South Parkside Drive, New
25 Castle, Pennsylvania. Please no questions about the

1 hair until after.

2 I'm a local developer. I have been in business
3 for 20 years. I worked construction ten years prior to
4 that. So, I have been building and developing for 30
5 years now.

6 I also served on the Lawrence County Economic
7 Development Corporation Board as Marketing Chair.
8 Economic development is a passion of mine.

9 I returned Monday from a three-week trip to
10 China to bring some of the jobs that we lost to that
11 country back here to the US and it was very successful.

12 But the reason I'm here today is I base my
13 business on integrity. I have five kids and I teach
14 them that integrity is the foundation to everything.
15 Integrity is doing the right thing when nobody is
16 looking. That's my definition of it.

17 I have had the pleasure of getting to know the
18 members of Centaur, some of them personally, and sat in
19 the room with them when nobody was looking. I am
20 willing to put my reputation on the line to tell you
21 that they are everything when it comes to integrity.

22 We welcome them to the area. It's exciting,
23 and it's something that is very much needed as everybody
24 else has mentioned. Obviously, we have the community
25 support here. You have heard it from everybody. That's

1 a no-brainer.

2 But, you know, why is it important for this
3 area? This area is so family oriented and being a
4 father of five children and my oldest son 26-years-old
5 has just moved to Florida to find a job. It's difficult
6 because there is nothing here.

7 Part of my passion about economic development
8 is to change that, to be able to keep our children here,
9 to keep our families together, because it is a small
10 town and it is so important to us to be able to do that.

11 This is the beginning. This is the beginning
12 of something that is going to allow us to keep our
13 families together, to create jobs, and the money that is
14 turned over to the county from the gaming funds to be
15 reinvested in economic development will just keep
16 turning more jobs and more jobs.

17 I respect your integrity. I respect your
18 knowledge and your professionalism. I don't have to beg
19 you for the license. I'm just here to tell you, we do
20 appreciate Centaur. We know they'll do a great job.

21 (Applause.)

22 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: James Simpson.

23 MR. SIMPSON: Good morning, Madam Chairman and
24 members of the Board. I am Jim Simpson. I live at 51
25 High Rock Road, Hanover, Pennsylvania.

1 I'm President and CEO of Hanover Shoe Farms,
2 the largest standardbred breeding farm in the world. I
3 can assure you that everyone in the harness racing
4 community, not just Pennsylvania, is very much in
5 support of this project.

6 The fact that it's going to be a mile track
7 permits the opportunity for international racing events.
8 Horses would come from all over the world to race here.

9 The fact that Jeff Smith is making this mile
10 track, we have talked about it several times, it opens
11 the possibility of the Hambiltonian coming to
12 Pennsylvania, which would be just an amazing event.
13 It's our equivalent to the Kentucky Derby. It is a
14 great event. We would be proud to have it here. Thank
15 you very much.

16 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Joe Spanik.

17 MR. SPANIK: Good morning, Madam Chair, Gaming
18 Board. My name is Joe Spanik. I live at 3339 Broadhead
19 Road, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania.

20 I'm here as an individual but also as a Beaver
21 County Commissioner. On here on behalf of the Board of
22 County Commissioners, Chairman Tony Amadao, Commissioner
23 Charlie Camp, and I also want to extend our retired
24 Commission Dan Donatello, who sends his wishes and
25 supports this project 110 percent.

1 As you well know, we are very much aware of
2 Valley View Downs and Centaur, what you folks are about.
3 You are a first-class operation.

4 As you heard here, there are going to be many
5 economic opportunities. It's not just going to be
6 Lawrence County and Mahoning Township. This is an
7 economic development project that is going to be far
8 reaching as part of our counterparts, Commissioner Craig
9 and Commissioner Beader from Lawrence and Mercer County
10 but also Butler County, that as County Commissioners,
11 elected officials, once the site is selected, we work
12 closely together to make sure that every opportunity --
13 that they have the opportunity to get those projects.

14 I can assure you that we are 110 percent behind
15 this project. Not only is it going to be 1,000 or 1,500
16 construction jobs, just to let you know it's not that
17 these folks just don't live in Lawrence County.

18 When we talk about the Beaver, Lawrence, and
19 the Mercer Counties, these folks live in this region. I
20 can tell you when I got up this morning at 7:00 to get
21 on the road at 8:00, less than an hour, I was here at
22 this location. So as far as travel is concerned that is
23 not an issue.

24 When we talk about this region, we have many
25 opportunities throughout this region that a lot of our

1 construction workers go to.

2 In all honesty, this will be a closer project
3 for all of them. We talk about the 1,000 permanent
4 jobs. This is also another opportunity also for Beaver
5 County residents.

6 I speak on behalf of 180,000 residents who are
7 just waiting, waiting for this project to open up. As
8 you well known, this project has been on the table for
9 many, many years.

10 I remember the comments from the Racing
11 Commissioner Leppler indicating this last year and the
12 Supreme Court decision, we're well aware of Centaur and
13 Valley View Downs because unfortunately, it was two
14 sites selected in Western Pennsylvania. There was a
15 reason why this Western Pennsylvania site was selected
16 when we talk about it as the last location of that
17 harness racing.

18 The reason why is because it's in close
19 proximity to all of the different I-80, I-76 and also
20 376. It's important that we continue this. We're very
21 well aware of Valley View Downs to make some happen.

22 Without the cooperation of Centaur and the
23 Shick family, this project will never come to fruition
24 because there was that possibility that it would have
25 went down the tubes.

1 I give them credit of working together. All we
2 got to do is tell you, the Gaming Board, that you can
3 see what is out there and we need to get you moving
4 forward on this as quickly as possible. God bless every
5 one of you and make the right decision.

6 (Applause.)

7 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Shawn Mason.

8 MR. MASON: Good morning. My name is Shawn
9 Mason. I'm vice president of a local printing company.
10 I'm here in support of Valley View Downs.

11 As a business vice president, my priority is my
12 employees at work. You know, I want to make sure they
13 are working. I see an opportunity here for them, for
14 us, for our community to grow as a whole.

15 We welcome the opportunity of economic growth
16 in this area. You know, the casino will generate jobs,
17 new business development. It will allow businesses like
18 us to grow and offer our goods and services.

19 I can go on and on about what the benefits are
20 of this, of you granting this license. I think the main
21 thing what you're witnessing today is people, the people
22 from Valley View Downs, the state and local officials,
23 businesses and individuals like myself, we have a strong
24 desire to succeed and with your support of granting this
25 license, success will happen. That's it. Thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Mrs. Margaret Link.

3 MS. LINK: Hello. My name is Margaret Link. I
4 live on Palmer Road in Edinburg, Pennsylvania, Mahoning
5 Township.

6 I don't speak to people too often. Hello,
7 everybody. I don't know anybody here. I would like to
8 say a few words about the possibility of a casino here.

9 My husband and I travel a lot. We go to
10 several casinos. We spend quite a bit of money at
11 casinos. I think it would be a worthwhile cause to have
12 the slots here. The money just flies out of here to
13 Canada, New York, Virginia, Erie, Pennsylvania,
14 Mountaineer Park in Virginia, West Virginia.

15 I think the impact would be pretty well-taken
16 as far as the elderly gambling here in town instead of
17 taking buses to Atlantic City; and, of course, they will
18 probably still go there and take flights to Virginia and
19 Vegas; but as far as jobs, the job impact would be well
20 tolerated.

21 The Careerlink here is very advisable as far as
22 the jobs that are not here. I recently went down to
23 apply for a job, and I would have to drive to
24 Pittsburgh. I'm a tax coordinator, and I do taxes.

25 I also work with several vets in the area and

1 the jobs are just not here. People, like my husband,
2 drive to Midland every day, 48 miles one way, every day.

3 We live like -- we're going to be a mile away
4 from the racetrack. My brother works in Cranberry,
5 which is 40 miles one way. It is a big impact as far as
6 there are no jobs here.

7 People are hurting here for employment. I'm
8 sure, you know, even the understaffing jobs as far as
9 minimum wage, minimum wage has gone up. Minimum wage
10 would be to some people a God's blessing. The
11 waitresses here make \$2.87 an hour plus tips. If they
12 are lucky they may make \$5 on an average day and a good
13 day \$72 an hour for their wage. Their wages are taxed
14 again by 8 percent. The job market would be highly
15 tolerated, thank you, Mr. DeRosa, as far as upper class
16 management jobs.

17 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Thank you,
18 Mrs. Link.

19 MS. LINK: You're welcome. Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: James Carna.

22 MR. CARNA: Madam Chairman, members, I'm Jim
23 Carna. I'm a former resident of Mahoning Township, a
24 lifelong resident of Lawrence County.

25 I'm also a business owner in Lawrence County,

1 and I am for the Valley View Downs racetrack and casino.

2 Excuse me for any redundancy that you may hear.

3 I think we are all aware that the casino will
4 bring an enormous amount of both short term construction
5 jobs, as well as many long term positions in the casino.
6 There will also be many ancillary projects created
7 because of the track and casino.

8 I am also proud to see that the Route 422
9 corridor will finally realize its full potential. With
10 the increased tax base, we will be able to continually
11 grow our infrastructure, which will attract businesses
12 to 422, Millenium and other business parks.

13 We must also take into account the
14 entrepreneurs that will strike out without the
15 hesitation they once had due to the Valley View Downs
16 project.

17 We will see both corporations and individuals
18 from our own backyards take advantage of this.
19 Starbucks, for example, who does extensive demographic
20 studies will be constructing a coffee shop in Union
21 Township. This speaks volumes for the magnitude and
22 scope of this project in terms of other corporations
23 looking favorably on Lawrence County.

24 I feel that Valley View Downs will be the spark
25 that will ignite a much needed growth spurt in Lawrence

1 County. Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: John Magliocca.

4 MR. MAGLIOCCA: You pronounced my last name
5 right. That is pretty good. It actually took me to
6 eighth grade to learn how to spell it.

7 I thank you guys for hearing us, you know,
8 today. Just some of the things I want to go over here
9 first. First of all, my name is John Magliocca. I
10 reside in North Beaver Township.

11 I actually own a mortgage company. Everyone
12 knows, you know, what has happened in the mortgage
13 industry here lately. I actually get to work with a lot
14 of different individuals. I get all different walks of
15 life, you know, coming into my business here.

16 I will tell you one of the things that I have
17 experienced, you know, in this area here is, you know,
18 the income, okay, is just not there for people, you
19 know, to live in the townships the way that they want to
20 live.

21 So we have people living in less, you know,
22 desirable neighborhoods. This area has just not
23 experienced, you know, a good work history over the
24 years since the steel mills have went down. Nothing has
25 ever come back.

1 We're really looking forward to this. Everyone
2 pretty much said it all today. I'm not going to stand
3 up here and take a lot of time. I actually wrote a
4 speech. I said I'm going to shoot from the hip.
5 Everyone said it already.

6 But I'm really looking forward, you know, to
7 the casino coming in; and I just think that it would be
8 an added benefit. It's going to add jobs and do a lot
9 for the community.

10 I just hope that you guys, you know, see it the
11 way that most of the people see it here. I thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Ed Stevens.

14 MR. STEVENS: Hello. Thank you for letting me
15 speak. My name is Ed Stevens. My address is 175 Old
16 Colony Drive, New Castle. Our shop address is 189
17 Palmer Road, Mahoning Township. We'll be a neighbor of
18 the casino.

19 We are a third generation union signatory
20 masonry contracting company. We can't tell you how
21 excited we are to have a major building project going on
22 next door.

23 I just wanted to say thank you to you folks for
24 considering this process and all of your work. Thank
25 you to Centaur for investing in Lawrence County and

1 thanks -- a whole lot of thanks to the local government,
2 Chris Sainato, and the Mahoning Township Supervisors and
3 all of the other folks who have made this happen.

4 I think just from my perspective, not a
5 politician, a local resident and a local business owner,
6 this is a win/win for everybody. This will do
7 everything everyone said it will. It will bring in much
8 needed jobs.

9 We employ people; bricklayers, laborers,
10 operators in the surrounding counties. This will help
11 our work naturally. It will certainly help all of the
12 folks that we employ from the surrounding counties. We
13 also would like to say thanks to the other folks
14 involved, like the Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
15 and the other developers here present who we have had
16 the pleasure to work for.

17 I think everybody is pulling the same way and I
18 think we haven't seen this since we have been in
19 business, and we are a third generation company.

20 My dad's day and my grandfather's are not the
21 same as my brother and I face. I'm hoping to be a part
22 of it naturally. I'm hoping to be able to bid on it and
23 a lot of Mr. Shick's properties that he'll develop.

24 We appreciate your consideration, and we look
25 forward to good things for this area. Thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: Carmen Shick.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. SHICK: Madam Chairwoman, distinguished
5 members of the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, my
6 name is Carmen Wayne Shick. I reside at 3454 Tuscarora
7 Drive, New Castle, Pennsylvania.

8 I am a lifelong resident of Lawrence County and
9 the former president of Bedford Downs. Some of you may
10 know me through our somewhat contentious competition
11 with Centaur for the last remaining harness license.

12 I had long hoped to come before this Board as
13 an applicant. However, I am delighted nonetheless to be
14 here to support this project in Lawrence County.

15 This area has long suffered for many decades
16 now with declining jobs and opportunity, not to mention
17 a decrease in population.

18 Through our own work, it became obvious that
19 this site is not only beautiful but logistically perfect
20 to maximize the benefit to the Commonwealth, as well as
21 the horse racing industry.

22 Together with the state-of-the-art, one-mile
23 track positions this facility promises to be the
24 premiere harness racing forum for the entire country, if
25 not all of North America.

1 We will not only be able to court the very best
2 of harness racing but may even be able to secure the
3 Hambiltonian some day soon.

4 This facility in its close proximity to Ohio
5 and Millenium Technology Park has the potential to spark
6 a much needed renaissance of the local area and once
7 again establish a firm economic base from which to grow
8 this community.

9 No longer will our sons and daughters have to
10 leave this area to secure a job with which to raise
11 their new families. They will be able to find ample
12 opportunity here locally.

13 We will no longer have to export our youth, our
14 most valuable commodity. This is time -- it is true
15 that at one time, we were fierce competitors of Centaur.

16 However, we knew the importance of this project
17 to this community. In the days since the issuance of
18 the last harness license, I have come to respect Rod
19 Ratcliff as a man who is good to his word, in my
20 opinion, the most valuable asset a man or woman can
21 possess.

22 For this reason and the aforementioned economic
23 benefits, I stand here today without reservation in
24 support of this racino and the many benefits it will
25 provide.

1 Additionally, thanks to the generosity of the
2 New Castle News, I would like to present to the members
3 seven copies of the pictorial history of the City of the
4 New Castle. They say a picture is worth 1,000 words so
5 1,000 pictures are worth a million.

6 I offer this unique and diverse history of the
7 City of New Castle, our county seat to the members for
8 their consideration in support of this applicant.

9 I thank you for your time and consideration in
10 this great endeavor for our community.

11 (Applause.)

12 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: I believe the Mayor
13 of Lowellville, Ohio is here. Mayor, would you please
14 come forward? Mayor, you have five minutes.

15 MR. LUDICIANI: Thank you, Gaming Commission
16 Board. Being from Ohio, we're 50 percent Browns and 50
17 percent Steeler fans.

18 COMMISSIONER RIVERS: Which side is the Steeler
19 side?

20 MR. LUDICIANI: That's right. What better way
21 to get those Browns money than to put this casino here
22 in Mahoning Township?

23 In all seriousness, everyone has spoken. We're
24 the village of Lowellville, right across the line, three
25 miles from this particular building.

1 I did just come from Mahoning County
2 Commissioners meeting and was nine miles from Downtown
3 Youngstown. The impact this is going to have on
4 Mahoning Township and our little villages and the towns
5 in Ohio is just unbelievable.

6 We went through the steel mills. We went
7 through the negativism. There's a lot of positive going
8 around in this end of the state, Northeast Ohio, Western
9 Pennsylvania.

10 I personally work in both. I'm a sales rep. I
11 travel to Pittsburgh. You have done a great job on your
12 Pittsburgh, Washington, PA, Erie, PA. I travel all of
13 them.

14 This is the missing piece of that puzzle for
15 Western Pennsylvania, Northeast Ohio. The jobs will be
16 unbelievable, both for permanent jobs and construction
17 jobs.

18 You guys, we really appreciate your
19 consideration on this project. The people in Northeast
20 Ohio and Western Pennsylvania, this is the place to put
21 this casino and racino. We're 100 percent for it and
22 appreciate anything you can do for this area. Thank
23 you.

24 (Applause.)

25 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: I want to thank you

1 all for your cooperation today. We are not finished
2 today, but I am going to close this Public Input
3 Hearing. It is now concluded and I am turning the
4 microphone over to our Madam Chairman Judge Colins.

5 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: I would like to,
6 for the record, at this point indicate that counsel for
7 the Applicant, Valley View has information which he has
8 stated he wants to provide to the Board.

9 While this is not specifically public input
10 information, I believe it's appropriate for counsel to
11 be able to put his statement on the record and testimony
12 from a witness regarding, I believe, certain matters
13 having to do with the financing of this project. All of
14 this is relevant to our licensing process.

15 So, Mr. King, you can proceed.

16 MR. KING: Thank you, Judge Colins, members of
17 the Board. I am Adrian King from the Ballard Spahr law
18 firm. Also, seated to my right is Phil Bayt from the
19 Ice Miller firm, which is Centaur's corporate counsel.

20 We did want to present some additional
21 information with respect to Centaur's financing package.
22 You did hear some information about the cost of this
23 project and how we're going to fund it is the subject of
24 this discussion.

25 There are certain deadlines that are part of

1 the funding agreement that we would like to bring to
2 your attention.

3 Also, available and here today to speak is
4 Mr. John Toronto from Credit Suisse. You also know that
5 Kurt Wilson, the CFO from Centaur is here.

6 I think to begin the best place to start would
7 be to have Mr. Toronto address you. We do have some
8 slides that we would present and work from. These are
9 also from your booklet.

10 We were going to present this information in
11 our presentation, but we decided to hold it until last.
12 It's about Page 14 or 15 in your booklet. So, I think
13 the way to start this presentation would be to ask
14 Mr. Toronto to take the podium.

15 MR. TORONTO: Good morning, Madam Chair and
16 other members of the Board. My name is John Toronto. I
17 am appearing on behalf of Centaur.

18 Credit Suisse is the agent for the lender and
19 we appear in that capacity. I wanted to cover really a
20 few high level items under the credit that might be of
21 use to you in making the decision.

22 The slide sort of speaks for itself, but I'll
23 go through the points. The first point, most
24 importantly is secured credit documents with a deadline
25 of July 15th, 2008 for the final and unappealable

1 licensing as a Category 1 Licensee under Section 1315
2 and 1325.

3 Second of all, clearly, to commence the running
4 of that 30-day period, the license must be issued by
5 June 15th, 2008.

6 It's clear in the credit agreements, both the
7 first lien and second lien credit agreements, that
8 failure to achieve licensure on that timetable is the
9 event of default of secured credit documents.

10 The likelihood of the extension or waiver or
11 the company to go to the lenders and ask for an
12 extension need they do that is unclear given the
13 challenging markets. Thank you.

14 MR. KING: Judge, at this point, we will be
15 happy to answer any questions.

16 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: I'll have a few
17 questions and then I'll ask any of the Board just
18 regarding this issue.

19 The financing agreement and the loan documents,
20 when were they negotiated and executed?

21 MR. TORONTO: They were negotiated last October
22 2007. They really started before that and we closed the
23 deal at that time. So basically, through last summer
24 and fall.

25 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: At the time they

1 were negotiated and executed they were not subject to
2 Gaming Board approval at that time; is that correct?

3 MR. TORONTO: Lou and Phil can advise. I don't
4 believe they were submitted. I don't know what level
5 official was required.

6 MR. KING: They would not have been subject to
7 Gaming Board approval at that time. In fact, they were
8 probably just immediately before we would have submitted
9 our license.

10 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: Okay. So they were
11 executed, this deadline was imposed by the lender prior
12 to the application.

13 MR. KING: That is correct, Judge.

14 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: Thank you.

15 Any other questions?

16 COMMISSIONER McCABE: I have a couple because I
17 don't like -- I'm feeling somebody is trying to put our
18 back against the wall with this.

19 Centaur has the -- had a racing license, a
20 harness racing license and did the financing go into
21 building the racetrack, so they could have already
22 started construction if they wanted to because they
23 already have an approved license for the racetrack,
24 correct?

25 MR. TORONTO: The credit supports both the

1 Indiana and Pennsylvania properties. I can let Kurt
2 answer any questions about construction and timetable
3 considerations.

4 COMMISSIONER McCABE: But does the financing
5 depend on the gaming license or the harness license,
6 because they already have a harness license and if they
7 don't get the gaming license, they can still run the
8 racetrack and build the facility?

9 MR. TORONTO: The financing is contingent upon
10 a number of conditions all of which are clearly set
11 forth in the credit agreement. Each of them stands on
12 its own as an independent condition precedent.

13 So the Category 1 Slots License is its own CP,
14 the failure of which to achieve on the timetable set
15 forth in the credit agreement is going to be an event of
16 default.

17 MR. WILSON: I'm Kurt Wilson. It is a
18 combination. This facility is a fully integrated racing
19 and gaming facility.

20 The contingent precedent that John mentioned is
21 necessary for us to release the funding that was secured
22 last October to go forward with the project, that is
23 really difficult to separate the two as you can see from
24 the report. It is one integrated project.

25 COMMISSIONER McCABE: The other thing I want to

1 put on the record. To my understanding, we had
2 difficulty getting a lot of information early on for
3 some of the applicants which has now delayed our
4 capabilities of doing a thorough background
5 investigation. Is the lending institute aware of all of
6 that?

7 MR. TORONTO: I'm not aware of any delays in
8 getting into the credit documentation. I can let the
9 company talk about any delays in documents.

10 MR. KING: Yes. Mr. McCabe, we acknowledge and
11 I take full responsibility as regulatory counsel that
12 there were delays in getting application materials to
13 the Board in the fashion that we would have liked.

14 We did identify that issue earlier this year
15 that we had not probably done the best job that we
16 should have to make the Board and the staff aware of
17 this contingency and the funding agreement.

18 We had a meeting in February with staff. We
19 brought this to their attention. We apologize for that
20 delay. And since then, we have done everything in our
21 power to work as quickly as possible to get our
22 application fully complete.

23 That was done just around February, I believe
24 or maybe early March. Since then, I can assure you that
25 we have done everything in our ability to respond to

1 increase inquiries from staff as quickly as possible and
2 will continue to do so but we acknowledge that issue.

3 MR. WILSON: As an add to that, I think we
4 became aware roughly in February of some inadequacies
5 and since then have been fully cooperative, I believe,
6 in every respect in making our operations transparent to
7 the investigators.

8 We have seen, I think, as it has been mentioned
9 previously, very thorough, very complete investigation
10 of our principals, our operations, and activities for
11 the history of the company.

12 I would like to thank the Commission for the
13 resources to people and everything that has been brought
14 to bear on this issue. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: All right. I
16 wanted to give you the opportunity to provide that
17 information to us and be assured that our process
18 continues and our commitment is to thoroughness,
19 completeness, and to the licensing of this entity and
20 compliance with all of the regulations and the
21 provisions of the laws of Pennsylvania. So thank you
22 very much.

23 Yes, sir?

24 MR. KING: Judge, if I can do two things. One
25 which is just to formally move our presentation

1 materials into the record.

2 Secondly, just to confirm that once this
3 proceeding is complete, I know you'll be moving into a
4 regular meeting of the Board and I just wanted to
5 confirm that the witnesses that have attended today
6 could be excused if they do need to move on.

7 HEARING OFFICER ZIELONIS: I think we're going
8 to break for lunch and the -- yes, Commissioner Angeli?

9 COMMISSIONER ANGELI: The question on the --
10 this goes --the date that you set for your default, was
11 that a date that you set -- is that a technical default?

12 Did you set that because of the licensure or
13 did the funding that you packaged to this go away on
14 that day? Or it's an arbitrary deal?

15 MR. TORONTO: It's not arbitrary. That's a
16 very important question. Frankly, I'm glad that you
17 asked it.

18 When things like that get negotiated, the
19 lender and the borrowers balance the borrowers'
20 developmental schedule and needs and draws timed against
21 the lender's need for security and that date was the
22 date seen as best protecting everyone's interest.

23 It was seen as achievable especially given the
24 market at the time. It is the result of a reason for
25 negotiation. We didn't see it as an arbitrary deadline.

1 MR. BAYT: That was a very long and hard fought
2 part of the negotiations. The borrower, Centaur,
3 certainly sought a longer time frame.

4 The lenders sought a much shorter time frame
5 and as a result of the compromise and negotiations, we
6 ended up with that date.

7 The person who has the gold makes the rules. I
8 think we all understand that. As a result, that was the
9 date that was set into the documents.

10 MR. WILSON: I have been in the financial
11 services industry for approximately 25 years. This is
12 the most difficult credit market I have ever seen in my
13 life.

14 I would say that I feel very fortunate that we
15 have fully funded this project, and we are looking
16 forward to an opportunity to use it. I think that if we
17 can make ourselves available in every way to meet the
18 needs of this Commission to make that possible, I think
19 good things can happen.

20 MR. ANGELI: Thank you.

21 MR. KING: Judge, I really don't want to
22 belabor the proceeding; but Mr. DeRosa did ask if he
23 could make some very brief concluding remarks,
24 especially in light of the great support that we
25 received today and we want to acknowledge that

1 publically, if you would allow us to do so.

2 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: Yes.

3 MR. DeROSA: Thank you, Madam Chairman and
4 members of the Board. All of the local dignitaries that
5 showed up today for the support, all of the residents
6 that came out today and took time out of the day, and I
7 know the travel arrangements you folks had to make, I
8 certainly want to thank you for that.

9 We surely understand the licensing process and
10 appreciate it and respect that process and commit that
11 we will move forward as hard as we possibly can.

12 We have heard a lot today about hope and jobs
13 and things changing; and the folks behind us, I just
14 want to thank you so much for your support and we at
15 Centaur, Mr. Ratcliff, the entire team are just as
16 committed to this project and the long-term growth and
17 prosperity of Western Pennsylvania. Thank you very
18 much.

19 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 CHAIRMAN DiGIACOMO COLINS: We'll adjourn now
22 until we open our public meeting at 1:00.

23 (The hearing concluded at 12:12 p.m.)

24

25

1 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
2 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes
3 taken by me on the within proceedings and that this is a
4 correct transcript of the same.

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Hillary M. Hazlett, Reporter
Notary Public

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