1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
2	x
3	MACH MINING, LLC, :
4	Petitioner : No. 13-1019
5	v.
6	EQUAL EMPLOYMENT :
7	OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION. :
8	x
9	Washington, D.C.
10	Tuesday, January 13, 2015
11	
12	The above-entitled matter came on for oral
13	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States
14	at 10:08 a.m.
15	APPEARANCES:
16	THOMAS C. GOLDSTEIN, ESQ., Bethesda, Md.; on behalf of
17	Petitioner.
18	NICOLE A. SAHARSKY, ESQ., Assistant to the Solicitor
19	General, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.; on
20	behalf of Respondent.
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1	CONTENTS	
2	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	PAGE
3	THOMAS C. GOLDSTEIN, ESQ.	
4	On behalf of the Petitioner	3
5	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	
6	NICOLE A. SAHARSKY, ESQ.	
7	On behalf of the Respondent	29
8	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF	
9	THOMAS C. GOLDSTEIN, ESQ.	
10	On behalf of the Petitioner	62
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

Τ	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:08 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	first this morning in Case 13-1019, Mach Mining, LLC v.
5	the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
6	Mr. Goldstein.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF THOMAS C. GOLDSTEIN
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
9	MR. GOLDSTEIN: Mr. Chief Justice, may it
10	please the Court:
11	Title VII prohibits the EEOC from suing a
12	private employer unless it first attempts to resolve the
13	claim of discrimination through conciliation. We ask
14	the Court to hold that a court may conduct a modest
15	inquiry into whether the EEOC violated that statute. If
16	it did, then the remedy generally is to require
17	conciliation, not to dismiss the suit with prejudice.
18	JUSTICE KENNEDY: At at first, I thought
19	this was an Overton Park case committed by law to agency
20	discretion. But then I couldn't find many cases in the
21	government's brief to support that, so they have a
22	different theory, and that's more their problem than
23	yours.
24	On the other hand, it seems to me that Judge
25	Hamilton in the Seventh Circuit said it's hard to

- 1 imagine more discretionary language than Congress used
- 2 here, "Shall endeavor to eliminate the unemployment
- 3 practice by informal methods of conference conciliation
- 4 and persuasion." That seems to me that those are very
- 5 difficult words for your position.
- 6 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Sure. So let me,
- 7 Mr. Justice Kennedy, divide that question into two
- 8 parts. What's the analytical framework? Is it Overton
- 9 Park? Is it an APA case? Is it an implied private
- 10 right of action case, which is what Judge Hamilton
- 11 thought, and then turn to the words of the statute and
- 12 what it means, if we were even to concede, that these
- 13 are kind of unusual words for a court to administer.
- 14 So the first is the doctrinal question. The
- 15 government agrees that Judge Hamilton got it wrong in
- 16 putting the burden on us to prove that there was an
- 17 implied private right of action. As a precondition to
- 18 suit under Title VII, everyone agrees that there doesn't
- 19 have to be a special statutory provision. We say that
- 20 this is a case, like St. Cyr, that it's a case in which
- 21 the government has to prove, because there is compelled
- 22 agency action here, the conciliation by the EEOC, that
- 23 there is clear and convincing evidence that Congress
- 24 intended to withdraw the ordinary presumption that there
- 25 is judicial review.

- 1 So then the government's view, just to put
- 2 out the third doctrinal framework, the government says,
- 3 look, we think this is kind of an ordinary statutory
- 4 construction case, and you should see whether it is that
- 5 the three provisions of the statute on which they're
- 6 relying are more consistent or less consistent with
- 7 judicial review.
- 8 We think that this is clearly a case -- we
- 9 cite Bowen, for example, in our brief. We cite a series
- 10 of cases about Congress having to give very clear
- 11 evidence of intent to pull the courts out of the job of
- 12 reviewing the agency action.
- Now, to take your point that this -- and
- Judge Hamilton's point, that is, this kind of language
- is both deferential in that it's informal, you just have
- 16 to endeavor. And this is arguably something that's a
- 17 little bit unusual for courts to undertake. So first,
- 18 doctrinally, the fact that Congress has given the courts
- 19 an unusual job is not an excuse or reason for the
- 20 Executive Branch to tell you that you cannot do the job.
- 21 That would turn Chevron on its head. Remember, the
- 22 principle of Chevron --
- 23 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, it's kind of an odd
- 24 conciliation, isn't it? This is -- EEOC is supposed to
- 25 try to settle the matter. But there is no mutual

- 1 obligation on the other side. There's no obligation at
- 2 all on the part of the employer to cooperate to do
- 3 anything.
- 4 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes, Justice Ginsburg. And
- 5 I think this has to be a point in our favor, the fact
- 6 that it is unusual. Let me tell you how unusual it is;
- 7 and that is, the EEOC is required to do this with
- 8 respect to four different statutes. The Housing and
- 9 Urban Development Department has to do it and the
- 10 Federal -- the Federal Election Commission has to do it.
- 11 So Congress has laid this out in a series of statutes
- 12 where it wanted to impose on the agency this special
- 13 obligation. Even with respect to Title VII, the private
- 14 employee doesn't have to conciliate, the attorney
- 15 general doesn't have to conciliate, the EEOC doesn't
- 16 have to conciliate if it's an urgent problem under the
- 17 statute.
- 18 But Congress thought, and this Court has
- 19 said many times, that it was especially important that
- 20 the EEOC try and resolve these cases through
- 21 conciliation. And it would be passing strange to say
- 22 that the entire design of the statute is that the EEOC
- 23 will work this out through conciliation, if it possible,
- 24 but that's the one provision of the statute that is not
- 25 enforceable.

- 1 JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, but at the same time,
- 2 Mr. Goldstein, and this really follows up on
- 3 Justice Kennedy's question, the statute makes entirely
- 4 clear that the EEOC has the prerogative to decide what
- 5 kind of offer by the employer is acceptable or not. And
- 6 there's nothing to suggest that the EEOC even has to be
- 7 reasonable in determining what sort of offer by the
- 8 employer is acceptable.
- 9 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Could I agree with the first
- 10 part, but not the second? Let me just take you to the
- 11 statute, if I might. It's in the blue brief at page 2.
- 12 And it's the block quote at the bottom. And it has a
- 13 timing provision that's kind of irrelevant. And then it
- 14 says the following: "The Commission has been" -- this
- is, "If the Commission has been unable to secure from
- 16 the respondent a conciliation agreement acceptable to
- 17 the Commission," which is the point you just made, Your
- 18 Honor, "the Commission may bring a civil action against
- 19 any respondent, not a government."
- Now, I think it's a helpful point to us that
- 21 Congress --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Let's not skip over the
- 23 time provision as irrelevant so quickly. Because it's
- 24 the 30 days -- 30 days -- EEOC can sue within 30 days of
- 25 the charge; isn't that right?

- 1 MR. GOLDSTEIN: It can if it cannot reach a
- 2 conciliation agreement. This Court has --
- 3 JUSTICE GINSBURG: So Congress couldn't
- 4 think that this was any kind of an onerous requirement
- 5 if all they have is 30 -- within 30 days they can say,
- 6 okay, we told them that -- that what -- what the
- 7 complaint is, they didn't come up with anything and so
- 8 end of conciliation.
- 9 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, Justice Ginsburg, we
- 10 just, I suppose, disagree about the substance of the
- 11 conciliation requirement is in that point. The EEOC
- 12 concedes that it cannot file the suit within 30 days or
- 13 after 30 days unless the -- it determines that there has
- 14 been a conciliation process that has failed.
- Now, what I think the helpful point for us
- 16 is that this language acceptable to the Commission is
- 17 there with respect to the substance, but not the
- 18 process. If you'd look at the procedural obligation,
- 19 which is the one we're trying to enforce here, which it
- 20 appears earlier in the page, "If the Commission
- 21 determines after such investigation that there is
- 22 reasonable cause to believe that the charge is true, the
- 23 Commission shall endeavor to eliminate" -- which is
- 24 expansive language, Justice Kennedy, to be sure -- "any
- 25 such alleged unlawful employment practice by informal

- 1 methods of conference, conciliation and persuasion."
- 2 And our point is that Congress knew how to
- 3 write into the statute something like a method of
- 4 conciliation that is acceptable to the Commission.
- 5 Also, to the extent this provision remains
- 6 vague, and it has been enforceable --
- 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Goldstein, if I
- 8 understand your argument, you're saying that there is an
- 9 obligation to conciliate, but that obligation does not
- 10 have to be pursued in good faith.
- 11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: No, Justice Scalia. We
- 12 think --
- 13 JUSTICE SCALIA: So that the -- even if the
- 14 Commission enters upon a conciliation process, you think
- 15 that the outcome of that is reviewable?
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: No, Justice Scalia. This is
- 17 the difference between substance and process. It is not
- 18 too fine a point. Let me just explain our provision --
- 19 our position. That is, as Justice Kagan indicates, the
- 20 EEOC can declare what the finish line is, but Congress
- 21 said they're going to have to go through a process.
- 22 They're going to have to run the race --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: That was my question.
- 24 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: It can declare when the

- 1 finish line is, but it can do that in bad faith.
- 2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: No. I apologize.
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: Yes. You're saying yes, it
- 4 can do that in bad faith.
- 5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: It can -- it can say we
- 6 didn't get to the finish line if it went through the
- 7 motions, yes.
- 8 JUSTICE SCALIA: And it can say that in bad
- 9 faith.
- 10 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I don't believe that's
- 11 correct, Justice Scalia. I'll give you an example of
- 12 what I mean. Can I -- can I illustrate the point?
- 13 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, is it correct or not
- 14 correct?
- 15 MR. GOLDSTEIN: It is not correct.
- 16 JUSTICE SCALIA: Because I don't understand
- 17 your argument.
- 18 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Let me give you an
- 19 illustration of my point. And that is, let's assume
- 20 that the EEOC brings a charge with respect to an
- 21 individual's claim. It says to the employer: We'll
- 22 conciliate this if you give us \$5 million. Now, \$5
- 23 million is not an amount of money that they legally
- 24 could even get in the case if they litigated it to the
- 25 teeth. Now, we think that that would be an -- not a

- 1 fair application of the statute, for them to say we
- 2 declare conciliation failed. So that's an illustration
- 3 --
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: So fair application of the
- 5 statute is reviewable, so that the proper -- I mean,
- 6 we're just quibbling over, you know, how bad it is,
- 7 that's right.
- 8 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, Justice Scalia, here's
- 9 their -- their view of judicial review is that it is
- 10 available, but it is limited to one thing, which is to
- 11 say, did we send the employer a letter that said give us
- 12 a call? Now, our point is that that's got to be an
- 13 argument in our favor, because they're conceding that
- 14 Congress did contemplate some form of judicial review.
- 15 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But it is true that you --
- 16 you do not -- I think I'm correct in this -- reach out
- 17 and try to incorporate the existing law on good faith
- 18 bargaining in the labor context or there are many
- 19 contracts which have good faith clauses and that the
- 20 courts have tremendous difficulty with that. And if you
- 21 had argued that, we would have said, oh, well, this is a
- 22 morass.
- 23 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Right. So --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: But it seems to me that
- 25 that's you're safest harbor.

1 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, Justice --2 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But you've already -- you recognized in -- in the prior exchange that there --3 4 this is nothing like bargaining. Bargaining is 5 reciprocal. Both sides have a duty to bargain in good 6 faith. 7 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. JUSTICE GINSBURG: 8 Here there is no duty at all on the part of the employer. It just says EEOC 9 10 tried to conciliate. 11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That's right. Justice 12 Ginsburg, Justice Kennedy, we are not asking you to 13 import the good faith bargaining case law and regulations from the NLRA. Our point is different; and 14 that is, it is commonplace for the courts to review this 15 16 sort of thing. There are five statutes. This statute has been enforced by 40 -- for 40 years and courts have 17 looked into notions like bargaining or whether parties 18 complied with the court's order to mediate. So this 19 20 isn't notionally something that is so unusual that 21 22 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, it's unusual 23 enough that there's a huge split among the circuits as 24 to how to define what they're reviewing. I can't find

any consistency among more than about two of them.

25

- 1 so I go back to -- I know you say you've cited cases
- 2 about the imperative of judicial review, but on the
- 3 administrative level, it's after a final action. This
- 4 is not a final action.
- 5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice Sotomayor, this is
- 6 not an APA case. This is --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Oh, well, I agree with
- 8 you. But I'm trying to find something analogous and
- 9 there isn't. But I don't know how you make something
- 10 that's designated by Congress as informal into a formal
- 11 proceeding.
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice Sotomayor, I think
- when Congress said informal methods of conference,
- 14 conciliation, and persuasion, it was contrasting
- 15 bringing a lawsuit. There's no indication in the
- 16 statutory structure or in the legislative history that
- 17 what Congress was trying to do is say to the EEOC, do
- 18 whatever you like. To the contrary, the EEOC uniquely
- 19 was constrained. Take the Department of Labor, take
- 20 any -- almost any other enforce --
- 21 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, can we take -- take
- 22 this case?
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.
- 24 JUSTICE GINSBURG: The EEOC did send a
- 25 letter saying --

- 1 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Give us a call.
- 2 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- give us a call. And
- 3 the charge here is the employer violated Title VII
- 4 because he outright refused to hire women. And there is
- 5 lots of evidence of that. There are no women working
- 6 there. They build a new facility; they don't have a
- 7 women's bathroom in it. They hire people that are
- 8 recommended to them by the current employees and the
- 9 current employees are all male and recommend all men.
- Now, what -- what was the EEOC to conciliate
- 11 about?
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, this --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Wouldn't the employer
- 14 have to come up and say something like, okay, we'll --
- we'll agree that we'll hire women?
- 16 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Okay. Justice Ginsburg, a
- 17 couple preliminary points. Just factually, we are
- 18 talking about the difference between -- the company does
- 19 have female employees. We're talking about in the mine,
- 20 which is a serious concern under Title VII, but just to
- 21 be clear.
- Now, in terms of the conciliation process,
- 23 here are the basic things that seem -- they ought to be
- 24 uncontroversial and that the EEOC over the course of the
- 25 past 40 years should have and could have used its

- 1 rulemaking authority to make clear. So the statute
- 2 requires that you're going to conference. Now, the
- 3 EEOC's position is we can say, give us a call. But what
- 4 ought -- there ought to be a rule that says if the
- 5 employer contacts you back, you are willing to
- 6 conference with them. You are willing to meet and have
- 7 a discussion.
- 8 The statute says that you have to attempt to
- 9 persuade the employer. And so that -- what that should
- 10 mean is simply that you're going to give the basics of
- 11 your demand in conciliation to the employer so it can
- 12 evaluate it.
- Justice Ginsburg, the problem is that --
- 14 JUSTICE SCALIA: Can I ask something about
- 15 this?
- 16 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: Conciliation I thought
- 18 would be conciliation between the complaining parties
- 19 and the employer.
- 20 MR. GOLDSTEIN: It's between -- sorry.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: But -- and that's wrong?
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: It is the EEOC and the
- 23 employer.
- 24 JUSTICE SCALIA: Between the EEOC and the
- 25 employer?

- 1 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Right. It is an important
- 2 point --
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: So even if the complaining
- 4 party is willing to accept \$500,000 rather than a
- 5 million, if the EEOC says a million, the EEOC is
- 6 conciliated.
- 7 MR. GOLDSTEIN: The EEOC says it's
- 8 conciliating.
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, no. Under the law,
- 10 you tell me it is conciliated.
- 11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Right. The EEOC's
- 12 position -- that is correct, yes, full stop. And this
- is a problem. The EEOC has an enormous incentive,
- 14 because it does bring about 130 cases a year, to pick
- out the cases that it wants to be very high profile. It
- 16 wants to send a message to employers. Justice Ginsburg,
- 17 you articulated they are concerned with this employer.
- 18 The difficulty for them is if they conciliate, Congress
- 19 required that that remain entirely confidential. And so
- 20 the problem is that we have an agency that has an
- 21 enormous incentive in the cases that it picks out to
- 22 bypass the mandatory process that Congress imposed.
- 23 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Goldstein, could we talk
- 24 about that confidentiality provision? Because in
- 25 addition to just the enormous discretion that this

- 1 statute gives to the EEOC, the other thing that tends to
- 2 work against you is this thing: Nothing said or done as
- 3 part of these informal endeavors can be used as evidence
- 4 in a subsequent proceeding.
- 5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.
- 6 JUSTICE KAGAN: And your entire position
- 7 would have all the stuff about this conciliation come in
- 8 as evidence in a subsequent proceeding, which is to say,
- 9 come in as evidence in the litigation of the lawsuit.
- 10 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Okay. Just to pause briefly
- on the premise that there is enormous discretion, that
- 12 is the premise of Chevron deference, not courts not
- 13 enforcing a statute.
- But to turn to the confidentiality
- 15 provision, remember that the EEOC --
- 16 JUSTICE KAGAN: I'm just saying as a matter
- 17 of fact --
- 18 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Okay.
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: -- there is discretion in
- 20 the sense that the statute clearly gives it to the EEOC
- 21 to decide what's acceptable in the end.
- 22 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Absolutely, Justice Kagan.
- 23 But that is true across a range of statutes that impose
- 24 a procedural obligation.
- Now, confidentiality. Let's start from the

- 1 point that the EEOC didn't read the statute this way
- 2 until four decades after it was enacted. And there's a
- 3 good reason for that. It read it our way. The reason
- 4 is that when Congress enacted the statute, the reference
- 5 to a "subsequent proceeding" in the text unquestionably
- 6 was the merits of the case, because the EEOC -- there
- 7 was never this fight because the EEOC didn't have that
- 8 enforcement power.
- 9 JUSTICE KAGAN: Yes. But you yourself are
- 10 making this part of the case. You're essentially saying
- 11 that the EEOC has to come in and prove that it
- 12 conciliated in good faith or whatever term you want. So
- 13 it's become now, by virtue of your own argument, part of
- 14 the case. And how is that to be part of the case and
- 15 how is all this to happen unless the informal -- what's
- 16 said and done in the informal endeavors come in.
- 17 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Okay. So "subsequent
- 18 proceeding" can be read their way or it can be read as a
- 19 reference to the merits. I concede it can be read their
- 20 way. The question we think is that clear and convincing
- 21 evidence --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I don't even understand that
- 23 distinction. You're making it a part of the merits.
- 24 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Because the subsequent
- 25 proceeding is not -- is about the merits of the

- 1 subsequent -- the substantive claim. Let me give you
- 2 three examples where we have to be right that a
- 3 collateral inquiry into the EEOC's burden or our burden
- 4 is not a subsequent proceeding. That's referred to in
- 5 the statute, that would be subject to the
- 6 confidentiality proceeding.
- 7 This Court held in Ford Motor Company that
- 8 if an employer makes an offer of back pay to the
- 9 employee, and that would include in the conciliation
- 10 process, then that cuts off their right to damages. You
- 11 can't do that unless you can say what happened in the
- 12 conciliation process.
- Number two, the statute says that you can
- 14 ask the judge for 60 days more of conciliation. It is
- implausible that a court would make that judgment
- 16 without knowing whether conciliation has been going
- 17 completely worthlessly.
- 18 Number three, what if the employer lies to
- 19 the court and says, look, we never got this conciliation
- 20 letter. And the EEOC knows that it was discussed in the
- 21 conciliation meeting. Could we really say that this
- 22 statute bars the court from enforcing a contempt
- 23 proceeding against the lawyer?
- The point of the statute is to make sure
- 25 that what happens in the conciliation process doesn't

- 1 prejudice the merits of the case. This isn't a secrecy
- 2 provision. Under this provision, the employer can
- 3 publish what happened in conciliation in the New York
- 4 Times.
- 5 JUSTICE KAGAN: I would have thought that
- 6 the point of the provision is very clear. It's the same
- 7 point as anything which says when you're involved in
- 8 settlement negotiations those stay in settlement
- 9 negotiations, and it's to protect the settle -- the
- 10 integrity of the negotiations.
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, I just gave you three
- 12 examples where I think plainly it can't be read that
- 13 broadly. We think it serves --
- 14 JUSTICE GINSBURG: You left out one person.
- 15 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.
- 16 JUSTICE GINSBURG: The complainant. As I
- 17 understand it, to break the confidentiality all the
- 18 participants have to agree. And the employer might
- 19 agree, but the employee hasn't been heard from.
- 20 MR. GOLDSTEIN: This -- this, again, I think
- 21 has to be a point in our favor. Let me just take you to
- 22 the statutory text involved. And that says that you
- 23 have to have permission of the persons concerned. Now,
- the commission is not a person. Justice Ginsburg, you
- 25 are right that the persons concerned under this statute

- 1 are the individual complainant and the employer.
- Now, the complainant is not involved in this
- 3 inquiry at all. It's about whether the EEOC responded
- 4 to our request to meet, whether it gave us an
- 5 explanation of what it is that they were demanding.
- 6 How does it make any sense that Congress
- 7 would have said that the choice whether the evidence
- 8 comes in is to the complainant, who wasn't even involved
- 9 in this part of the process. We think that our reading
- 10 of the statute, which is their reading of the statute
- 11 for the first four decades is --
- 12 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But if it is
- 13 confidential, that is plain in the statute.
- 14 MR. GOLDSTEIN: But it's not confidential in
- 15 that sense, Justice Ginsburg. Remember, the employer,
- 16 as I said, is free to tell CNN, the New York Times, and
- 17 the Washington Post everything that happened here.
- 18 JUSTICE KENNEDY: So it's your position that
- 19 the courts that have held that the proceedings are under
- 20 seal or they're secret proceedings are just irrelevant;
- 21 we don't need to be concerned with that?
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice Kennedy, there
- 23 aren't such courts. Every court --
- 24 JUSTICE KENNEDY: There are or there aren't?
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Are not. Every court -- on

- 1 the question of administrability, it's very frequent for
- 2 an agency to come to you and say, look, this would work
- 3 so much better if the courts weren't involved; we would
- 4 do a great job. And for 40 years, courts have enforced
- 5 this provision and have never understood, before a
- 6 decision in 2011, the confidentiality provision to apply
- 7 this way. And the EEOC argued that we were right.
- 8 There's no indication that the statute was
- 9 malfunctioning in some way.
- We think, respectfully, that you cannot have
- 11 agencies come in front of you and say, look, Congress
- 12 gave us a lot of discretion; that doesn't mean we should
- issue regulations. They have the authority to issue
- 14 procedural regulations that would elaborate on what
- 15 conciliation means, what -- what persuasion means. But
- 16 they've refused to do it. And then they come to you and
- 17 say, well, look, you know, it's entirely vague.
- 18 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Because they consider it
- 19 -- and I think you can't quarrel with it; this is what
- 20 Congress intended -- as a highly informal proceeding.
- 21 They don't want a -- a bunch of procedural regulations.
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: That's not quite right.
- 23 Remember, that they admit that there are firm
- 24 requirements. They have to send a letter. They can
- 25 only conciliate with respect to the claim that's in the

- 1 reasonable cause determination. We think there are
- 2 other very simple, modest things that the courts have
- 3 had no trouble enforcing --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, what about that?
- 5 That's what I -- I mean, in my mind, of course, there
- 6 should be judicial review. There is of everything just
- 7 about. But the issue is how much.
- 8 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. Now, what's
- 10 your view on that? Because as I -- we just had a case
- 11 where when an IRS official wants to subpoena some
- 12 material, all he has to do is say it's in good faith.
- 13 Ah. But there could be an unusual case where we want to
- 14 get more than that affidavit.
- 15 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: So we wrote an opinion, and
- 17 probably you've read it, and we said, well, judge, yeah,
- 18 if it's unusual and you really have some thought here
- 19 that the IRS is in bad faith, you can go a little
- 20 further. Well, that seems to me to be the kind of thing
- 21 that would apply here.
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Sure.
- 23 JUSTICE BREYER: And then -- okay. So
- 24 you're perfectly satisfied. I take it the closest to this
- 25 is the Fourth, Sixth, and Tenth Circuit, a minimal

- 1 showing of good faith, that's the end of it, but you're
- 2 never going to say never.
- 3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. Now, those courts --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: That's what your -- well,
- 5 maybe there will be agreement on this.
- 6 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I doubt it.
- 7 The -- Justice -- Justice Breyer, that is
- 8 exactly right. We think that the agency here, if it
- 9 claims the expertise and the flexibility and to know
- 10 what's going on, ought to issue further elaborating
- 11 regulations. But we think that minimum good faith does
- 12 have some very easy, simple things to know. If I'm
- 13 going to --
- 14 JUSTICE BREYER: Aha. You're going a bit
- 15 further now.
- 16 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I'm doing so to try and be
- 17 helpful. Here's what I had in my mind, Justice Breyer.
- 18 Look, if I'm going to conciliate something with you, if
- 19 we're going to work it out and I get to decide, I've got
- 20 to tell you the minimum of what I'll take. How is it
- 21 that we're supposed to work it out --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Maybe that's confidential.
- 23 I don't know. Minimal good faith? Hey, I have an
- 24 affidavit, I'm in the agency, I sign it. We called him,
- 25 he came in, we discussed the matter, I tried to persuade

1 him --2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That is --JUSTICE BREYER: -- and he's not persuaded. 3 4 Thank you very much. In the absence of some -- in the 5 absence of some showing that there is something like we 6 tried to get a bribe or something, good-bye. 7 No. Justice Breyer, that is MR. GOLDSTEIN: not -- I believe that is not what those courts have in 8 9 mind. So there's nothing confidential --10 JUSTICE BREYER: That's at the moment what I 11 have in mind. So what -- what is it --12 MR. GOLDSTEIN: All right. 13 (Laughter.) 14 JUSTICE SCALIA: I -- I think your response 15 is persuade him about what? 16 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Persuade --17 JUSTICE SCALIA: He tried to persuade him about what? If you didn't even make an offer, there was 18 nothing to -- what, persuade him not to commit suicide? 19 20 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Right. Persuade --21 JUSTICE BREYER: No, we didn't persuade him about not to commit suicide. What we did is we tried to 22 23 persuade him that our suggestion that you reinstate the 24 individual, whatever it was, is a sensible way to go.

Fine.

MR. GOLDSTEIN:

25

1 JUSTICE BREYER: And it'll be good for him 2 and good for the company. You understand. 3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: All right. Now you're 4 voting for me. 5 (Laughter.) JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Goldstein, can I --6 7 can I stop a moment? 8 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Please. 9 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: If the inquiry is about what happened --10 11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- at -- at the 12 13 hearing --14 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. At the hearing or the 15 conciliation? JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: At the conciliation. I 16 17 misspoke. 18 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Thank you. JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Okay. It seems to me, 19 20 though, that that may be what you're arguing now, but if we look at the record below, first you didn't want to 21 waive confidentiality. You then put in a set of 22 23 interrogatories that demands to know what the EEOC --24 who the EEOC contacted, how they measured their damages, 25 and a bunch of other stuff, still not waiving

- 1 confidentiality.
- 2 This new thing of yours that says if you
- 3 challenge it when I make a motion, then I can disclose
- 4 it. I think what Justice Breyer's getting to is, you
- 5 know whether someone conciliated or not. You can say
- 6 exactly what the EEOC did or didn't do or failed to do.
- 7 But instead, you want a whole discovery process attached
- 8 to this. And that's my problem here --
- 9 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Okay.
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- which is it's very
- 11 simple for you to come in and say, we called, we asked
- 12 to meet, they wouldn't meet with us.
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Here are the things that we
- 14 want and I do want to talk about what's in the record
- 15 and why --
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, no, no, no. I don't
- 17 want to know what you want. I want to know what happens
- 18 because that's the only way I can judge whether there
- 19 was good faith.
- 20 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice --
- 21 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So if you walked in and
- 22 said, I'm not going to listen to you until you give me
- 23 A, B, and C, I might say you weren't acting in good
- 24 faith.
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: Okay. Well, Justice

- 1 Sotomayor, they -- they say a court doesn't have that
- 2 power. Now, with respect to what happened in this case,
- 3 we -- the government has put us in an unbelievable bind
- 4 here, and that is, we issued these interrogatories and
- 5 then we attempted to explain to the court why we thought
- 6 the interrogatories were necessary in light of the
- 7 conciliation process, and they threatened to sanction
- 8 our counsel personally. So the record is empty for a
- 9 reason that owes entirely to them.
- I will tell you that there are cases in
- 11 which the EEOC attempts to conciliate and says we are
- 12 suing -- we're going to sue you on behalf of a class of
- 13 people, and we want some X amount of money, and it may
- 14 be an awful lot of money. And the employer will say
- 15 back, look, how many people are we talking about over
- 16 what period of time? And the EEOC's interpretation of
- 17 this provision is it could say we're not going to tell
- 18 you; we've just got a class of people and we want this
- 19 amount of money. And interrogatories like this would be
- 20 out there conceivably to illustrate to the court that we
- 21 had no way of conciliating this case. If we're -- if
- 22 it's going to say we're in an endeavor to work it out,
- 23 you've got to tell me what you want and the basics --
- 24 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So you'd have all of the
- 25 discovery and the conciliation process in 30 days.

1	MR. GOLDSTEIN: Your Honor
2	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That that's basically
3	what you want to to have.
4	MR. GOLDSTEIN: No. Congress contemplated
5	that conciliation could conclude within 30 days. It
6	doesn't remember, this case is very old because they
7	got this charge in 2008 and it was years later, even
8	before they brought the case, and the case has dragged
9	on this long because they have steadfastly infused
10	refused, in the face of eight courts of appeals'
11	rulings, no court ever indicating that the standard was
12	inadministrable, no court ever finding that an employer
13	acted in good faith in bad faith in raising this
14	objection.
15	And it has dragged on unnecessarily. We
16	want a modest inquiry that should be administrable, and
17	that the EEOC can elaborate on in its own regulations.
18	If I could reserve the remainder of my time.
19	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
20	Ms. Saharsky.
21	ORAL ARGUMENT OF NICOLE A. SAHARSKY
22	ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
23	MS. SAHARSKY: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
24	please the Court:

I think the Seventh Circuit was correct when

25

- 1 it reviewed what has been happening in the courts of
- 2 appeals and concluded that, in fact, what is happening
- 3 is not a modest inquiry and it's just not one that has a
- 4 basis in the text of the statute. And I think it's
- 5 useful to go back to the text of the statute and look --
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Ms. Saharsky, let me
- 7 just ask you a simple question. You send a letter, they
- 8 call you, and you say, don't want to talk to you, hang
- 9 up. 30 days later, you send the letter that you send
- 10 routinely that says conciliation failed. How do they
- 11 get a court to review that under your theory of the
- 12 case? Because you say the only thing the court can
- 13 review is whether conciliation was offered and whether
- 14 it ended. So here it was offered, but we're not even
- 15 talking about good faith. You just say I'm not going
- 16 to.
- 17 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes.
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: "You" meaning the
- 19 government. So how do you review that if you're a
- 20 court?
- 21 MS. SAHARSKY: You don't review it. We
- 22 think that this is a matter that is entrusted to the
- 23 agency, that is not for court review. And I --
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And what -- I'm
- 25 sorry. Continue. No, I'm sorry.

1	MS.	SAHARSKY:	That's	okav.
_	1.10 •	5/11/11/51/1	IIIac 5	Oray.

- I think that it helps to look at the
- 3 obligations that the Congress put on the commission in
- 4 the statute in two parts. There's the -- and I'll make
- 5 this brief. There's the obligation in part B, which is
- 6 the commission should endeavor to eliminate the
- 7 employment discrimination, everything is supposed to be
- 8 kept confidential. We understand that to put a good
- 9 faith obligation on the commission to try to get this
- 10 resolved. We don't think that it is judicially
- 11 reviewable because of the language that Congress used
- 12 and because by analogy, it is the type of agency action
- 13 that's committed to the agency's discretion. There's no
- 14 standards. But --
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But what if you
- 16 have -- you sent a letter that says a representative of
- 17 this office will be in contact with you to begin the
- 18 conciliation process. What if the employer says, nobody
- 19 contacted me; it never happened. Can you get judicial
- 20 review of that claim?
- 21 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, the obligation of the
- 22 agency is to say that it has been unable to secure a
- 23 conciliation agreement acceptable to the commission. So
- 24 that --
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No. Is it their

- 1 obligation to say that or is it their obligation to do
- 2 that?
- 3 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, if it is challenged, it
- 4 has to put the document into court that is the notice
- 5 that it was unable to do that.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And they say here
- 7 your document is signed by, you know, John Rowe. What
- 8 if they say, I'm sorry, it's just not true, he's lying?
- 9 We got nothing, nobody ever called us.
- 10 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, if the -- if the
- 11 document which says that the commission was unable to --
- 12 to secure an agreement acceptable to it --
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No, no, no. You're
- 14 making it too easy on yourself, I'm talking about the
- document that says, we will be in contact with you.
- 16 Right?
- 17 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: They said nobody
- 19 contacted me.
- 20 MS. SAHARSKY: I think the answer is that it
- 21 is the process by which the -- there was an attempt at
- 22 conciliation is not reviewable. We do not -- we think
- 23 that the agency --
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Is, in my case,
- 25 judicial review of that question?

- 1 MS. SAHARSKY: No. 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Nobody contacted me; they've got a letter saying they'll contact me, nobody 3 4 ever contacted me. MS. SAHARSKY: No, but we do not think that 5 there are any situations in which that will arise. 6 7 There are not situations in which that has arisen and that is not the argument that --8 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: That's just assuming 10 you're always right. MS. SAHARSKY: That's --11 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I mean, I don't understand why you can't have a court at least say, 13 14 okay, there's a direct conflict. You say you're 15 supposed to --
- MS. SAHARSKY: Right, okay.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- consume -- and he
- 18 says it never got off the ground, and you can have --
- 19 MS. SAHARSKY: Right.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- Mr. Rowe file an
- 21 affidavit and he can file an affidavit and --
- 22 JUSTICE BREYER: You know, this is a -- this
- 23 is Hornbook law, I thought, use it till this point. But
- 24 everything is reviewable. Now, that isn't quite true,
- but if you want to apply for a visa at a foreign embassy

- 1 abroad, at our embassy is not reviewable. Okay, and
- 2 maybe there's a military thing, but even the -- even
- 3 the -- even the things like the Panama Canal toll, where
- 4 they said it wasn't reviewable, Davis says it should
- 5 have been.
- And the answer to your problem is it's not
- 7 -- it's not reviewable, the three cases or so where we
- 8 said it wasn't. The answer is the agency has broad
- 9 discretion, and because they have such broad discretion,
- 10 the court can review it, but unless it's very unusual,
- 11 they have to decide for the agency.
- Now, eight circuits have roughly followed
- 13 that; three, more detailed than others. And I haven't
- 14 found anything in your brief that says in the last 40
- 15 years, the EEOC has, as a result, found its functioning
- 16 seriously hampered. And -- and so why -- what's --
- 17 that's why I'm -- I'm wondering.
- 18 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, a couple of points. First
- 19 of all, I'm afraid that I may have misunderstood the
- 20 Chief Justice's question. If there was no attempt at
- 21 conciliation at all, then, you know, these letters would
- 22 not exist and we think that that potentially would be a
- 23 problem, but that --
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You're saying if the
- 25 agency -- the agency couldn't possibly have violated the

- 1 law? They wouldn't say we have attempted to -- we will
- 2 contact you, and then not contacted you?
- 3 MS. SAHARSKY: I agree that that would be a
- 4 problem, but that is not what Petitioner is arguing for.
- 5 He has not identified case --
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No, it's not a
- 7 question of what he's arguing for, it's a question of
- 8 what you are arguing for. You are arguing that there is
- 9 no judicial review, full stop. And I'm trying to pose a
- 10 question where it seems to me that it would be utterly
- 11 unreasonable for you to say you don't get judicial
- 12 review of that basic question.
- I am very troubled by the idea that the
- 14 government can do something and we can't even look at
- 15 whether they've complied with the law. I'm not terribly
- 16 troubled by the idea that the scope of our judicial
- 17 review is limited. And I just wanted you to tell me
- 18 which it is, is it that there's no authority for a court
- 19 to review government action alleged to be in violation
- 20 of law, or is it that the scope of judicial review for
- 21 various reasons is sharply circumscribed?
- MS. SAHARSKY: It's the second one, and I'm
- 23 sorry if I misunderstood your question earlier. The
- 24 scope of judicial review depends on the condition that
- 25 the court -- that Congress put in for the commission to

- 1 meet, and that is in subsection (f)(1) of this -- this
- 2 provision, which is that there has to be -- the
- 3 commission unable to obtain an agreement acceptable to
- 4 it.
- 5 What Petitioner seeks judicial review of is
- 6 the process behind it and puts in place these factors
- 7 for reviewing the process behind it. And Justice
- 8 Breyer --
- 9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What -- what can
- 10 you tell us about what the proper function of the court
- is in a case like the Chief Justice put? They said
- there was no attempt to conciliate and when we attempted
- 13 to conciliate, they -- they wouldn't answer our calls.
- Now, it -- it seems to me as I read your
- 15 brief that you did indicate that there was some very
- 16 bare bones requirements that the agency had -- had to
- 17 meet and it could be reviewed. I can't find any -- any
- 18 other context where the court has essentially declined
- 19 to review a statutory precondition to -- to suit at all.
- 20 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, what we're saying,
- 21 Justice Kennedy, is that if it were controverted, if the
- 22 other side said that there was not conciliation at
- 23 all -- which is not what this side is saying, they are
- 24 just saying it wasn't enough effort -- but if there was
- 25 none at all, that we would put in place the letters that

- 1 showed that we conciliated. Those would -- the agency's
- 2 activities, its day-to-day workings, would be entitled
- 3 to a presumption of regularity and it would take really
- 4 something extraordinary to look behind that.
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But that's the
- 6 difference --
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What's
- 8 extraordinary -- what's extraordinary is that counsel
- 9 for the other side files an affidavit saying it never
- 10 happened, I know you've got this letter, but we normally
- 11 don't take the government's say-so when it comes to a
- 12 dispute about whether -- whether something happened.
- MS. SAHARSKY: Right.
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So he can say --
- 15 say, okay, here's the affidavit, we never got it. We
- 16 checked our mailroom --
- 17 MS. SAHARSKY: Right.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Nothing ever came
- in. We checked our phone logs, nobody ever called.
- 20 MS. SAHARSKY: Right. And I'm telling you
- 21 that if it were a situation of it nothing never
- 22 happened, that that could be a situation in which the
- 23 court would put in place a stay to permit conciliation
- 24 efforts. But that's not the argument that --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, let's go back to the

- 1 language you quoted. The commission is unable to obtain
- 2 an agreement acceptable to it. To obtain an -- do you
- 3 acknowledge that it is obliged to try to obtain an
- 4 agreement acceptable to it --
- 5 MS. SAHARSKY: Acceptable to it, yes.
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: Yes. Now, is it possible
- 7 that you are trying to obtain an agreement acceptable to
- 8 you when you do not tell the other side what that might
- 9 be?
- 10 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, I think that --
- 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: You just say, you know --
- 12 MS. SAHARSKY: I think that there's a real
- 13 difference between what the EEOC is doing in its
- 14 day-to-day activities and court review of the EEOC
- 15 activities. The EEOC has in place procedures and it has
- 16 training in order to go through all of these steps in
- 17 conciliation, but what we're talking about is the
- 18 problems that have been caused by this after-the-fact
- 19 second-guessing by courts,
- 20 JUSTICE SCALIA: You have to make me an
- 21 offer. That's not -- that's not difficult to find out.
- 22 Did you make an offer or not.
- 23 MS. SAHARSKY: Right. But that just leads
- the courts into questions about how much detail was in
- 25 the offer and is it sufficient and if the --

- 1 JUSTICE SCALIA: No, not necessarily. I
- 2 mean, you could --
- MS. SAHARSKY: Well, that's what has
- 4 happened in the --
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: -- draw a line somewhere,
- 6 but -- but if the other side says the EEOC never made me
- 7 an offer, I had no idea -- no notion of what I had to
- 8 agree to.
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: But that is not what's
- 10 happening and that is not the argument that they're
- 11 making, is that --
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: So that's what -- that's
- 13 where we are. I'm trying to -- what I'd like you to do,
- 14 I'm going to get you to focus on just what you want to
- 15 say, that the framework in which I'm putting it is of
- 16 course there is review, but of course at the same time,
- 17 there is very broad discretion given to the EEOC. So
- 18 courts do not intervene; be careful, it's an unusual
- 19 case.
- Now, that's what you want.
- Now, I want to know how to say that. And
- 22 the case that comes to me the closest was the case that
- 23 we had with the IRS where, in fact, of course the IRS
- 24 says, we're in good faith. And the court says, that's
- 25 just fine, unless of course there is an unusual

- 1 situation.
- Now, one can write those words. In that
- 3 kind of opinion, I've noticed it works best if you also
- 4 give an example through the use of the case.
- 5 Now, that's where I am. And since I think
- 6 that's what you want -- something like that is what you
- 7 want to argue, I'm asking you for help how to write
- 8 that.
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: Right. And what I'm saying
- 10 is that there is -- the way not to write that is by
- 11 relying on a good-faith standard, because I think you
- 12 have a misimpression about the courts of appeals, and
- 13 how it has been working in the courts of appeals, which
- 14 is some of the courts have adopted a good-faith
- 15 standard, but they are putting very onerous requirements
- 16 on the EEOC in terms of looking at --
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: We don't have adopt a
- 18 good -- we don't have to adopt a good-faith standard.
- 19 We -- we could simply say that if you are really trying
- 20 to conciliate, there are a few things that you got to
- 21 do. And one of them is to make an offer. Is that
- 22 difficult to figure out?
- 23 MS. SAHARSKY: There are several problems
- 24 with that. The first of all is that the statute says
- 25 that the process is supposed to be informal and this is

- 1 adding a level of formality to it. The second thing is
- 2 that --
- 3 JUSTICE KENNEDY: We're looking -- we're
- 4 looking for a safety net, we said, please, tell us
- 5 what the minimum rule is. You don't -- you have not
- 6 articulated a minimum rule. All you say is I can't
- 7 think of one.
- 8 MS. SAHARSKY: No, I'm saying that --
- 9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: And that doesn't answer
- 10 Justice Breyer's question, and our general question, how
- 11 do you want us to write what you want to hold in this
- 12 case?
- MS. SAHARSKY: What I'd like the Court --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: All I hear is no review,
- 15 period, good-bye.
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Now, I don't want to
- 17 hear we sent letters. I -- I'm positing the
- 18 hypothetical: You sent letters, but when they called
- 19 you said, we're going to trial. You didn't make -- no
- 20 discussion whatsoever. You sent the letter, they called
- 21 and said, let's sit down, and you -- and the government
- 22 says, no. Okay?
- 23 Tell me how we -- how we write a decision
- 24 that avoid -- that addresses that kind of case.
- 25 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, we do think that the

- 1 decision that the Court should write should focus on
- 2 what the obligation is that's on the EEOC, the
- 3 particular text that Congress enacted. And the
- 4 obligation that's on the EEOC is that before it can sue,
- 5 it has to have been unable to secure from the respondent
- 6 a conciliation agreement acceptable to the commission.
- 7 So if that's --
- 8 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Fine, then what is the
- 9 Court supposed to do to determine whether that
- 10 obligation is met? So far, I think your answer is
- 11 nothing.
- 12 MS. SAHARSKY: I think what the Court is
- 13 supposed to do is if it's controverted, look at the
- 14 letters indicating that there was an effort that was
- 15 made by the EEOC and, as a general matter, not look
- 16 behind those. I mean, there was --
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So trust you?
- 18 MS. SAHARSKY: -- a year-long process --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Just trust you?
- 20 MS. SAHARSKY: Well --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The other side is
- 22 challenging with whatever evidence it has. Maybe it's
- 23 voluminous -- affidavits, records -- and you say, trust
- 24 us. Here's a letter saying we did it. That's the end
- 25 of the case.

- 1 MS. SAHARSKY: There's significant
- 2 incentives that operate on agencies even when there's
- 3 not judicial review. In this case, for example, the
- 4 EEOC has substantial resource that don't allow it to
- 5 sue --
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But there are
- 7 incentives on most people to tell the truth most of the
- 8 time, but that doesn't mean that's the end of it.
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: There is also review by the
- 10 President and by Congress, Congressional committees.
- 11 There are actually reports that are required every year
- 12 to Congress in the statute itself.
- 13 JUSTICE SCALIA: Ms. Saharsky, I don't even
- 14 agree with you about the incentives. I think, as the
- 15 other side points out, there is considerable incentive
- on the EEOC to fail in conciliation so that it can bring
- 17 a big-deal lawsuit and get a lot of press and put a lot
- 18 of pressure on this employer and on other employers.
- 19 There are real incentives to have conciliation fail.
- 20 MS. SAHARSKY: I don't think that that's
- 21 true in most cases; and even in high-profile cases where
- 22 the EEOC may believe that there's a very serious,
- 23 substantial claim of employment discrimination, it is
- 24 always easier to come to an agreement then to have to go
- 25 through the burdens of litigation.

- 1 The EEOC finds reasonable cause in
- 2 approximately 3500 charges every year. It only has the
- 3 resources to litigate in about 130 of them. That's as
- 4 of 2013. So there are --
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Alright. I know what your
- 6 position is, but assume ours is just the hypothetical.
- 7 It doesn't mean you've lost, but ours is that we have to
- 8 give some teeth to judicial review greater than what
- 9 you're suggesting.
- Justice Kennedy asked you once. I'm asking
- 11 you -- or I asked you once before, he's asked again, and
- 12 I'm asking again.
- MS. SAHARSKY: Right. And that's --
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Give us -- give us what
- 15 you don't want.
- 16 MS. SAHARSKY: Right. And the reason --
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Give us a way to write
- 18 it that gives you the least -- the less intrusion -- the
- 19 least intrusion but more than what you want to do.
- 20 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes. And to be frank, the
- 21 reason that this is a struggle is because the courts of
- 22 appeals, even those that have tried to put a minimum
- 23 good faith standard in place, have seen these standards
- 24 spiral out of control and lead to significant collateral
- 25 litigation.

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- 2 that you're looking for, Justice Sotomayor, and I will
- 3 do my best to provide that guidance; but I'm telling you
- 4 that even in the three circuits that have tried to use a
- 5 minimal good-faith standard, they have been scrutinizing
- 6 everything that the EEOC has been doing, all of the
- 7 letters back and forth.
- 8 You've gotten into situations where you're
- 9 even deposing EEOC investigators in district courts, and
- 10 that's one thing that -- if I could just back up,
- 11 because I think this is a really important point, is
- 12 that there are four various, serious problems that this
- 13 has led to in the district courts and in the courts of
- 14 appeals.
- We're talking about mini trials on a
- 16 collateral issue that's not the merits of the
- 17 discrimination but on this question of whether the EEOC
- 18 tried hard enough, and it is not the case that the EEOC
- 19 is failing to conciliate. The EEOC is attempting
- 20 conciliation in these cases. Petitioner can't identify
- 21 cases in which it has not conciliated at all. What
- they're saying is that we didn't try hard enough, and
- 23 that requires these mini trials.
- The second very serious problem with all the
- 25 standards the courts of appeals have adopted is that

- 1 they have to make up standards that appear nowhere in
- 2 the statute, and they have struggled. These five
- 3 guidelines that Petitioner now proposes appeared for the
- 4 first time in their Supreme Court brief. These are not
- 5 the standards they were urging to the district court.
- 6 And they're not --
- 7 JUSTICE BREYER: What about that analogy
- 8 with that IRS case?
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: I think that is a good
- 10 analogy because the Court recognized that it would not
- 11 be appropriate to second-guess --
- JUSTICE BREYER: So could we copy that, you
- 13 know, copy that, making appropriate changes, and
- 14 say, look, Judge, you have to see -- you have their
- 15 affidavit. As long as you think that affidavit really
- 16 was the bottom line, we did conciliate it unless you
- 17 have good reason to think that isn't so. That's the end
- 18 of it, unless there is evidence of an abuse of process
- 19 that we'll allow you to go further because conciliation,
- 20 mediation is really a matter that Congress intended to
- 21 leave up to the agency.
- 22 And even what sounds minimal, minimal, at
- 23 least the agency has to make an offer. Maybe they
- 24 don't. Maybe the best way to conciliate it is you sit
- 25 there and say, well, you know, that can be in some

- 1 circumstance.
- 2 So you -- you -- what about some? Is that
- 3 not possible?
- 4 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes. I take your point,
- 5 Justice Breyer. I think there are some modifications
- 6 that I would make to it, but I think --
- 7 JUSTICE BREYER: What?
- 8 MS. SAHARSKY: -- towards the end of your
- 9 question, you actually raise a really important
- 10 ancillary point, which is that the process of trying to
- 11 come to a negotiation and conclusion with someone often
- 12 requires an element of strategy, that you might wait for
- 13 them to make the first offer or you might find someone
- 14 who says, we're never going to come to an agreement on
- 15 this. And that's happened in some cases; and, yet,
- 16 those folks still come into court and say, The EEOC
- 17 didn't try hard enough. Well, you told us you were
- 18 never going to come to an agreement.
- 19 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, what has been going
- 20 on, in fact, in these cases now with some courts having
- just general good faith, others having a three factor
- 22 test?
- 23 You raised a problem here that the EEOC was
- 24 hit with a bunch of interrogatories.
- 25 Has that been going on?

- 1 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes. The EEOC is really
- 2 faced with -- you know, is really between a rock and a
- 3 hard place. It does its best to conciliate and it never
- 4 knows whether some court is going to find it to be
- 5 insufficient later. The EEOC is attempting to maintain
- 6 the confidentiality of these proceedings. When
- 7 employers are in conciliation, of course they want it to
- 8 be confidential, but then when this gets to court, they
- 9 say, oh, we don't care about confidentiality anymore.
- 10 Let's all put it before the court, but the problem is
- 11 that has effects for later cases. Once employers know
- 12 and the commission knows that this is all going to come
- 13 out and what Petitioner proposes, it really destroys the
- 14 -- the conciliation process. It's really a bedrock --
- 15 JUSTICE SCALIA: Do you disagree that they
- 16 can publish it in the New York Times if they want?
- 17 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, partially, the -- the
- 18 confidentiality provision has two portions to it. The
- 19 first says that the EEOC can't make public what
- 20 happened.
- 21 JUSTICE SCALIA: Right.
- 22 MS. SAHARSKY: So that does not apply to
- employers.
- 24 JUSTICE SCALIA: Right.
- MS. SAHARSKY: But the second part says that

- 1 it can't be used as evidence in a court proceeding --
- 2 JUSTICE SCALIA: Because that isn't
- 3 credible.
- 4 MS. SAHARSKY: -- and that does apply.
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's not publishing it in
- 6 the New York Times, is it?
- 7 MS. SAHARSKY: Right, but I think in most of
- 8 these cases, the employers have not wanted this
- 9 information while they've been in conciliation to become
- 10 public because they would --
- 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: That only cuts your own
- 12 argument. I mean, you're -- you're worrying about
- 13 their -- their publishing it, and then you say they have
- 14 no incentive to publish it. But if they want it
- 15 published, they can publish it in the New York Times.
- 16 They don't have to bring a lawsuit to do it.
- 17 MS. SAHARSKY: Right, but what they can't do
- 18 is use the evidence in court. And we think that when
- 19 you look at the statute and the text that Congress
- 20 enacted, it reflects a recognition that what Congress
- 21 was defining, an informal endeavor to settle a case, is
- 22 the kind of thing that shouldn't be public and that
- 23 shouldn't be the subject of court proceedings.
- 24 JUSTICE SCALIA: You say that, but it didn't
- 25 say that it shouldn't be public. They said it shouldn't

- 1 be use in court proceedings. That's quite different
- 2 from saying it shouldn't be public.
- 3 MS. SAHARSKY: Fine, and I'll focus on the
- 4 fact --
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: So why do you say the
- 6 opposite?
- 7 MS. SAHARSKY: I'm sorry. I spoke with a
- 8 shorthand, that it can't be made public by the
- 9 commission; but you're right, it also can't be used in
- 10 court proceedings. And that's really a bar on the type
- of far-reaching judicial review that is sought in this
- 12 case.
- I mean, Petitioner's view essentially
- 14 destroys the benefits of informal settlement processes
- 15 because the benefits of them are that they can be
- 16 informal, that they can be cheap, that they can be
- 17 quick, and that they stay confidential.
- 18 Now, nothing's going to stay confidential.
- 19 Employers don't have an incentive to conciliate, and
- 20 that courts have to expend this massive effort on
- 21 something -- and I think this is an important point --
- that's really ancillary to the main event.
- 23 What this statute is about, Title VII, is
- 24 eliminating employment discrimination; and it has a
- 25 number of steps that the agency goes through in order to

- 1 get that to happen.
- 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You said a moment
- 3 ago that employees have no incentive to conciliate.
- 4 Why is that?
- 5 MS. SAHARSKY: I think that when employers
- 6 know that they have a potential defense that would get
- 7 the lawsuit dismissed on the merits, they start to treat
- 8 the conciliation as an opportunity --
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You're kind of
- 10 assuming bad faith on their part.
- 11 MS. SAHARSKY: I'm not assuming --
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We're supposed to
- 13 assume complete good faith on the Government's part and
- 14 bad faith on this employer's part.
- 15 MS. SAHARSKY: That's not true. I direct
- 16 the Court to Footnote 13 in our brief, which is where
- 17 lawyers for these employers are directing them to treat
- 18 the conciliation effort as one to set up a defense for
- 19 trial.
- 20 So I'm not suggesting that there is just
- 21 necessarily bad faith. What I'm saying to the Court is
- 22 that this is happening, the results of what has happened
- 23 in the courts of appeals, trying to come up with these
- 24 standards is that there's been a real problem with folks
- 25 not using conciliation to try to come to an agreement,

- 1 the manipulation by employers. That was footnote 13 of
- 2 our brief.
- 3 There is also a large number of cases that
- 4 show how often this is being raised and the kind of --
- 5 that's in another footnote, the kind of real
- 6 resources --
- 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: All this stuff is in
- 8 footnotes.
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: What?
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: All this stuff is in
- 11 footnotes, that's where all the important stuff is.
- 12 JUSTICE KAGAN: It's a rule of S.G. brief
- 13 writing, right?
- MS. SAHARSKY: Well, you would know.
- 15 JUSTICE KAGAN: Exactly. It does -- I mean,
- 16 here are two preconditions to endeavoring to conciliate
- 17 a claim, right? One is we actually told them what we
- 18 were objecting to, and the second is we talked.
- 19 So could we just have the EEOC come in with
- 20 an affidavit saying, we told them what we were objecting
- 21 to and we talked and it didn't work?
- MS. SAHARSKY: Yes. Although, for your
- 23 second point, just to -- not to be too picky about it,
- 24 but sometimes these communications happen over letter
- 25 and email, so it might not be talking.

1	JUSTICE	KAGAN:	Okay.	Talked or

- 2 MS. SAHARSKY: Communicated.
- 3 JUSTICE KAGAN: -- communicated.
- 4 MS. SAHARSKY: Right. I also would want to
- 5 point out to the Court, though, in terms of the
- 6 notice of what --
- 7 JUSTICE KAGAN: But you would not object to
- 8 that; is that right?
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, not that the EEOC would
- 10 have to -- couldn't produce that kind of information.
- 11 The problem is really the looking behind it and the
- 12 Court second-quessing --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: No, no, no. But then, yes,
- 14 to the extent --
- MS. SAHARSKY: There wasn't enough
- 16 information.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: -- that -- so this goes back
- 18 to the Chief Justice's first question.
- To the extent that somebody comes in and
- 20 says either they never told me what this case was
- 21 about -- that is, they never told me what the claim
- 22 was -- or they never communicated with me, that that
- 23 would be a fair thing to review that doesn't get into
- 24 your sort of spiraling out of control, what -- you know,
- 25 how hard did you try, and what positions did you take --

1 MS. SAHARSKY: Right, I mean --2 JUSTICE KAGAN: But just we told them what the claim is, and we talked about the claim. 3 4 MS. SAHARSKY: Right. And two points to 5 make about that. The first is, I think there is a 6 concern about the spiralling out of control. You didn't tell us enough; that's essentially what Petitioner is 7 saying in this case. We want more information, we want 8 9 more information, et cetera. So I put that on the 10 table. 11 But the second point, and this goes to the 12 first thing you suggested, is that the commission is 13 required to make a reasonable cause determination, and 14 that does provide notice to the employer about what has 15 been found through the investigation. So in this case 16 it said: We have determined that -- that there is 17 reasonable cause to support that in your -- in your mining facilities, you have failed to hire a class of 18 women for mining -- for mining jobs, and that's what the 19 20 problem was. So I think to some extent what you're 21 saying in terms of identifying the problem already 22 happens through the reasonable cause determination. 2.3 And one point, if I could, I would just like 24 to make sure that the Court gets is in terms of the --25 the real problems with trying to come up with a standard

- 1 and the problems that the courts of appeals have seen.
- 2 I mentioned the mini-trials that are collateral to the
- 3 main event, the fact that the Court has to make up
- 4 standards. You know, I can see the difficulties with
- 5 making up standards just from our discussion today. But
- 6 then there's also needing to jury rig the
- 7 confidentiality provisions. They do say not to use in
- 8 court and that's what Petitioner is talking about, is
- 9 really a full court review of everything said and done
- 10 during conciliation. And if the Court has any doubt
- 11 about what that is, I would point the Court to the
- 12 footnotes again and the discussion in our brief that
- 13 talks about, even when a court said it's just good faith
- 14 review, those courts disagreed about what does that mean
- and what do we have to do, et cetera, et cetera.
- And if the Court today announced five
- 17 factors or something like that, the Court would no doubt
- 18 be faced with future cases about, what does this factor
- 19 mean and what does this factor mean, and whatever else.
- 20 That's -- I mean, aside from the fact that the standard
- 21 is completely made up.
- 22 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's the world. That's
- 23 the world. There's always litigation over -- over
- 24 stuff. I mean, you -- you want to be exempt from any
- 25 litigation over whether a particular standard has been

- 1 met or not?
- 2 MS. SAHARSKY: I think the problem --
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's extraordinary. That
- 4 does not exist in this world.
- 5 MS. SAHARSKY: What I think is
- 6 extraordinary, Justice Scalia, is reading something into
- 7 a statute that doesn't exist, which is -- there are no
- 8 standards in the statute.
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's fine. And if you
- 10 don't like that, if you're worried -- number one, this
- 11 Court could set forth standards one, two, three, four,
- 12 five; you have to do this, this, this, this, and this. I
- 13 would prefer not to do that. And if you leave it to the
- 14 lower courts to do it, each lower court is going to have
- 15 a different -- a different set of things.
- But the remedy for that is -- is at your
- 17 hands. As the other side said, you could issue rules
- 18 which say, this is an informal process, but what it
- 19 consists of is, number one, we give you notice of what
- 20 the -- what the offense is; we sit down with you to
- 21 discuss settlement of that; number three, we make
- 22 apparent to you what our offer is for settling the
- 23 matter, and whatever other rudiments of conciliation the
- 24 agency believes in.
- What's wrong with that?

- 1 MS. SAHARSKY: Well, the -- the agency has
- 2 not done that because it needs flexibility in these
- 3 processes and because it doesn't believe that this is
- 4 judicially reviewable. I think the idea about putting
- 5 regulations in place assumes that there is going to be --
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: So if we tell you it's --
- 7 it's judicially reviewable -- suppose we just decide
- 8 it's judicially reviewable and remand for the agency to
- 9 issue rules?
- 10 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes, then the agency would do
- 11 that. But the agency hasn't done it up to this point
- 12 because what it does instead of setting out regulations,
- 13 because it doesn't believe that this gives a private
- 14 right to -- to employers to enforce, is it has its own
- training procedures about good ways to do conciliation
- 16 and the steps to be taken.
- 17 JUSTICE BREYER: I -- I'm not a conciliator
- 18 or a mediator, but those I know who are might be able to
- 19 create such rules. On the other hand, they might not.
- 20 It might be that conciliation is a process that in part
- 21 is intuitive. So to require the agency to set forth
- 22 rules of consideration is to invite judicial review of
- 23 compliance with those rules.
- 24 MS. SAHARSKY: I think that's --
- 25 JUSTICE BREYER: And that is, I think, your

- 1 point. And I don't think it's a minor point. I think
- 2 it's rather important. If the conciliation process is
- 3 actually to work, let it go.
- 4 MS. SAHARSKY: I think you're right, that to
- 5 a significant extent the conciliation is more an art
- 6 than a science. It depends on the facts of the case and
- 7 it depends on the relationship with an employer. If the
- 8 employer said, we're never going to come to an
- 9 agreement, that would change how much information the
- 10 conciliation, the -- how far along the conciliation
- 11 might go or how many offers the commission might make.
- 12 JUSTICE SCALIA: But I thought Justice
- 13 Breyer said you have to make the phone call if your
- 14 letter says it's going to make the phone call. I
- 15 thought Justice Breyer believed that there are some
- 16 rudiments.
- 17 MS. SAHARSKY: I think that --
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: We're just talking about
- 19 what the rudiments are.
- 20 JUSTICE BREYER: They're called
- 21 conciliation -- what are the three words? Conference,
- 22 conciliation --
- 23 MS. SAHARSKY: Conference, conciliation, and
- 24 persuasion.
- 25 JUSTICE BREYER: And persuasion.

- 1 MS. SAHARSKY: I think -- I think it's
- 2 helpful to focus back on that language that Congress put
- 3 in place, because we think that it did not intend and
- 4 did not show any intention to put any kind of specific
- 5 requirements like that on the commission. It said
- 6 endeavor to eliminate the employment discrimination. I
- 7 think --
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Why does it -- in
- 9 terms of additionally saying, yes, we called them, how
- 10 can you conciliate -- this question has been asked; I
- 11 don't know that we've gotten an answer -- without
- 12 telling them what you want? I want -- we think there's
- 13 a class; we think it's this many; we think their damages
- 14 claims are, you know, 15 million. What do you think
- 15 about that?
- You don't have to -- then that's the end of
- 17 it. You don't have to say, we'll take ten, or anything
- 18 else. They need to know at least what you want.
- MS. SAHARSKY: Well, two thoughts about
- 20 that. Three thoughts.
- 21 First, the reasonable cause determination
- 22 gives them notice about what the discrimination --
- 23 alleged discrimination is.
- Two, the commission does as a general rule
- 25 provide this information about what it is interested in

- 1 getting.
- 2 Third, though, there are tactics in
- 3 conciliations where one side might wait for the other
- 4 side to make an offer, et cetera, et cetera. And it's
- 5 really that kind of second-guessing that we think is a
- 6 serious problem.
- 7 One thing that I think is useful is to step
- 8 back and look at what would happen under our view of the
- 9 world as opposed to Petitioner's view of the world.
- 10 Under our view of the world, we believe that the EEOC is
- 11 conciliating and has significant incentives to
- 12 conciliate. But if we're wrong about that, the worst
- 13 case is a trial about the employment discrimination on
- 14 the merits, that we actually move on to the main event
- 15 and answer the question, which is -- that the EEOC has
- 16 been investigating: Was there discrimination here? And
- 17 we typically see that as a good thing in our American
- 18 society.
- But what is the downside of Petitioner's
- 20 position is really this long -- mini-trials that are
- 21 collateral to the merits that happen to have -- that
- 22 have to happen and are happening in a majority of cases.
- 23 They take up significant court resources, and they're
- 24 not supposed to happen because of the confidentiality
- 25 requirements.

- 1 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You want to go --
- 2 you want to go to -- Congress wanted you to try to
- 3 conciliate.
- 4 MS. SAHARSKY: Yes.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So to say that it's
- 6 a good thing to get to the merits it seems to me is not
- 7 -- doesn't take account of what Congress said, which is,
- 8 before you go to the merits, try to conciliate.
- 9 MS. SAHARSKY: What I'm trying to say, Mr.
- 10 Chief Justice, is that the point of Title VII is to stop
- 11 employment discrimination, and that's what we're trying
- 12 to do.
- And so getting to the main event, which is,
- 14 has there been employment discrimination, as opposed to
- 15 giving employers this private right that Congress never
- 16 intended, we do think is a good thing. We think that
- 17 this has gone too far in the courts of appeals, it's not
- 18 what Congress intended, it's led to significant
- 19 consequences for the courts and for the agency, and it's
- 20 hurting conciliation.
- 21 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, we'll just say --
- 22 I'm going to say one more time, I think there's
- 23 substantial merit to your position that the courts have
- 24 gone too far. But you have given us no midway, no -- no
- 25 alternative.

1	MS. SAHARSKY: Well
2	JUSTICE KENNEDY: Other than to say, no
3	judicial review. And I think that's a serious it's a
4	serious suggestion to make.
5	MS. SAHARSKY: I think that there are some
6	options that Justice Kagan laid out, along with Justice
7	Breyer, in terms of some minimal requirements for the
8	agency. But the point that I would just like to make
9	clear to the Court is that they're nothing like what's
10	happening in the court of appeals. And some of those
11	courts of appeals start at the same place where some
12	members of the Court are today, which just which is,
13	let's just ask for a minimal level of good faith review,
14	and it is nonetheless the case that it has devolved into
15	really searching review that can't be justified on the
16	statute's text.
17	Thank you.
18	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
19	Ms. Saharsky.
20	Mr. Goldstein, you have 4 minutes remaining.
21	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF THOMAS C. GOLDSTEIN
22	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
23	MR. GOLDSTEIN: Thank you.
24	I'm going to work on the assumption that the
25	Court is going to find that there needs to be some

Court is going to find that there needs to be some

- 1 judicial review. Then the Court is going to face the
- 2 following question: Should it announce the rudiments,
- 3 or should it simply reverse the court of appeals?
- 4 Because all the court of appeals said is that there is
- 5 no judicial review after the letter. The ordinary
- 6 practice of the Court would be decide what the court of
- 7 appeals did, and you've been assured by the agency that
- 8 if you do do that the agency will promulgate the
- 9 rudiments, and so there's a good reason to do that.
- 10 But you have been interested in what the
- 11 rudiments would be. Here's what they are. They're
- 12 taken directly from the cases and from the statute. The
- 13 first obligation is to conference. We think the
- 14 rudiment of conference is you tell the employer: Get in
- 15 touch. If you want to conciliate, the employer says, I
- 16 want to talk. You are willing to talk, if it's by
- 17 letter, if it's by phone, if it's in person. That's the
- 18 rudiment of conferencing.
- 19 Conciliation. If we're going to endeavor to
- 20 resolve this by conciliation, I have to tell you what
- 21 the minimum will be. The reasonable cause determination
- 22 doesn't say that. It says, we're going to sue you; it
- 23 doesn't say what it would take to resolve the case. So
- 24 I've got to tell you what it would be at a minimum, and
- 25 that has to be --

- 1 JUSTICE KAGAN: Wait, wait, wait. Do
- 2 you want them to put their minimum offer on the table?
- 3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: No, no, no.
- 4 JUSTICE KAGAN: That's a necessary part of
- 5 conciliation?
- 6 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice Kagan, not their
- 7 minimum, the following: That is, if I'm the
- 8 employer and I say, I want to talk, here's my offer, the
- 9 EEOC can't steadfastly refuse to say what would be an
- 10 acceptable conciliation, their -- their absolute last
- 11 best offer. If that's their position, then they have no
- 12 intention to conciliate.
- 13 JUSTICE KENNEDY: That's just good faith
- 14 bargaining. Then all you're doing is referring us to a
- body of law in both labor and contracts for good faith
- 16 bargaining.
- 17 MR. GOLDSTEIN: The only --
- 18 JUSTICE KENNEDY: And that is a morass.
- 19 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice Kennedy, I'm giving
- 20 some -- a few basic things.
- I will say about that that is the
- 22 statutory scheme that Congress enacted in the NLRA, and
- 23 the board has issued regulations about that.
- 24 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Now, we just started with
- 25 a tremendous difference.

- 1 A mutual obligation to bargain and the
- 2 subjects of bargaining are well-known. You're can
- 3 bargain about wages. You can bargain about hours, about
- 4 working conditions. This is quite different.
- 5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice Ginsburg, could I
- 6 just briefly get out the rudiments, because I think
- 7 there's been significant interest in that. The offer
- 8 that they say, what will be acceptable to us, has to be
- 9 something they could legally get. That is to say it's a
- 10 claim that's in the reasonable cause determination and
- it's something that they could get in court.
- 12 And persuasion is just to provide the basics
- of where that comes from. You can't expect the employer
- or the employer's insurer to say, okay, I'll give you a
- 15 million dollars, if the EEOC won't even say where -- the
- 16 basics of where the million dollars came from. That is
- 17 to say, we've got about 20 employees; we think that
- 18 their damages are roughly \$50,000.
- 19 This is not an intrusive inquiry into the
- 20 details of --
- 21 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Why is it satisfactory --
- 22 JUSTICE KAGAN: That is intrusive. I mean,
- 23 you're doing your best job of proving Ms. Saharsky's
- 24 point here, because you're saying they have to put all
- 25 the reasons on the table, they have to say why it is

- 1 that they're asking for what it is that they're asking
- 2 for, they have to say, you know, what they would be --
- 3 the only -- the last thing that they would find
- 4 acceptable.
- 5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Justice Kagan --
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: In the context, just
- 7 to -- where we're not supposed to look at any of that
- 8 stuff at all?
- 9 MR. GOLDSTEIN: We disagree with that,
- 10 obviously, Mr. Chief Justice. I am trying to illustrate
- 11 for the Court that, despite the rhetoric of the EEOC,
- 12 this is a statute that has been administered for 4
- 13 decades --
- 14 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Do you have any other
- 15 rudiments? Because you're running out of time.
- MR. GOLDSTEIN: No, I don't have any other
- 17 rudiments. Those are all my rudiments. But I think the
- 18 better course here is: They say they have training and
- 19 guidelines. They say they know how to do this. But the
- 20 game here is for them to say, but we don't want to --
- 21 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Shouldn't the game be on
- 22 you? They come in and say, we conciliated. Shouldn't
- 23 you have to waive confidentiality and set forth
- 24 circumstances? I'm going back to Justice Breyer's point
- 25 about the IRS case, because there we required the party

1 saying that something --2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- was in bad faith --3 4 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- or didn't happen --6 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes, yes, yes, yes. 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- to set forth the circumstances. All right? But you didn't do that here. 8 9 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, Justice Sotomayor, what happened is, we've stated an affirmative defense, 10 11 and they moved to dismiss as a matter of law on the 12 ground that the statute was unenforceable. The case 13 never went anywhere. We never had an opportunity to do 14 any of those things. We think that there is a presumption of 15 16 regularity, but it's called the presumption of regularity because then you can disprove it. We don't 17 assume that agencies follow the law. We don't have a --18 administrative law gets upended if you announce a rule 19 20 that says, this is a broad statute that gives a lot of -- the agency a lot of flexibility; we won't enforce it. 21 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel. 2.3 The case is submitted. 24 (Whereupon, at 11:09 a.m., the case in the 25 above-entitled matter was submitted.)

	afraid 24:10	42:10 59:11 60:15	51.10.11	20.22 62.22
A	afraid 34:19 afterthefact 38:18		51:10,11	29:22 62:22 believe 8:22 10:10
able 57:18		anymore 48:9 apa 4:9 13:6	assumption 62:24 assured 63:7	25:8 43:22 57:3
aboveentitled 1:12	agencies 22:11 43:2 67:18	apa 4.9 13.0 apologize 10:2	attached 27:7	57:13 60:10
67:25		1 0		
abroad 34:1	agency 3:19 4:22	apparent 56:22	attempt 15:8 32:21 34:20 36:12	believed 58:15
absence 25:4,5	5:12 6:12 16:20	appeals 29:10 30:2		believes 56:24
absolute 64:10	22:2 24:8,24	40:12,13 44:22	attempted 28:5	benefits 50:14,15
absolutely 17:22	30:23 31:12,22	45:14,25 51:23	35:1 36:12	best 40:3 45:3
abuse 46:18	32:23 34:8,11,25	55:1 61:17 62:10	attempting 45:19	46:24 48:3 64:11
accept 16:4	34:25 36:16 46:21	62:11 63:3,4,7	48:5	65:23
acceptable 7:5,8,16	46:23 50:25 56:24	appear 46:1	attempts 3:12	bethesda 1:16
8:16 9:4 17:21	57:1,8,10,11,21	appearances 1:15	28:11	better 22:3 66:18
31:23 32:12 36:3	61:19 62:8 63:7,8	appeared 46:3	attorney 6:14	bigdeal 43:17
38:2,4,5,7 42:6	67:21	appears 8:20	authority 15:1	bind 28:3
64:10 65:8 66:4	agencys 31:13 37:1	application 11:1,4	22:13 35:18	bit 5:17 24:14
account 61:7	ago 51:3 agree 7:9 13:7	apply 22:6 23:21 33:25 48:22 49:4	available 11:10 avoid 41:24	block 7:12 blue 7:11
acknowledge 38:3	14:15 20:18,19		awful 28:14	board 64:23
acted 29:13	35:3 39:8 43:14	appropriate 46:11 46:13	awiui 20.14	body 64:15
acting 27:23	agreement 7:16 8:2	approximately	B	bones 36:16
action 4:10,17,22	24:5 31:23 32:12	44:2	b 27:23 31:5	bottom 7:12 46:16
5:12 7:18 13:3,4	36:3 38:2,4,7 42:6	arent 21:23,24	back 13:1 15:5 19:8	bowen 5:9
31:12 35:19	43:24 47:14,18	arguably 5:16	28:15 30:5 37:25	branch 5:20
activities 37:2	51:25 58:9	arguably 3.10 argue 40:7	45:7,10 53:17	break 20:17
38:14,15	agrees 4:15,18	argued 11:21 22:7	59:2 60:8 66:24	breyer 23:4,9,16,23
adding 41:1	ah 23:13	arguing 26:20 35:4	bad 10:1,4,8 11:6	24:4,7,14,17,22
addition 16:25	aha 24:14	35:7,8,8	23:19 29:13 51:10	25:3,7,10,21 26:1
additionally 59:9	alleged 8:25 35:19	argument 1:13 2:2	51:14,21 67:3	33:22 36:8 39:12
addresses 41:24	59:23	2:5,8 3:3,7 9:8	bar 50:10	46:7,12 47:5,7
administer 4:13	allow 43:4 46:19	10:17 11:13 18:13	bare 36:16	57:17,25 58:13,15
administered 66:12	alright 44:5	29:21 33:8 37:24	bargain 12:5 65:1,3	58:20,25 62:7
administrability 22:1	alternative 61:25	39:10 49:12 62:21	65:3	breyers 27:4 41:10
administrable	american 60:17	arisen 33:7	bargaining 11:18	66:24
29:16	amount 10:23	art 58:5	12:4,4,13,18	bribe 25:6
administrative	28:13,19	articulated 16:17	64:14,16 65:2	brief 3:21 5:9 7:11
13:3 67:19	analogous 13:8	41:6	bars 19:22	31:5 34:14 36:15
admit 22:23	analogy 31:12 46:7	aside 55:20	basic 14:23 35:12	46:4 51:16 52:2
adopt 40:17,18	46:10	asked 27:11 44:10	64:20	52:12 55:12
adopted 40:14	analytical 4:8	44:11,11 59:10	basically 29:2	briefly 17:10 65:6
45:25	ancillary 47:10	asking 12:12 40:7	basics 15:10 28:23	bring 7:18 16:14
affidavit 23:14	50:22	44:10,12 66:1,1	65:12,16	43:16 49:16
24:24 33:21,21	announce 63:2	assistant 1:18	basis 30:4	bringing 13:15
37:9,15 46:15,15	67:19	assume 10:19 44:6	bathroom 14:7	brings 10:20
52:20	announced 55:16	51:13 67:18	bedrock 48:14	broad 34:8,9 39:17
affidavits 42:23	answer 32:20 34:6	assumes 57:5	behalf 1:16,20 2:4	67:20
affirmative 67:10	34:8 36:13 41:9	assuming 33:9	2:7,10 3:8 28:12	broadly 20:13

brought 29:8	34:7 43:21,21	claim 3:13 10:21	19:7 26:2	32:22 34:21 36:22
build 14:6	45:20,21 47:15,20	19:1 22:25 31:20	compelled 4:21	37:23 38:17 42:6
bunch 22:21 26:25	48:11 49:8 52:3	43:23 52:17 53:21	complainant 20:16	43:16,19 45:20
47:24	55:18 60:22 63:12	54:3,3 65:10	21:1,2,8	46:19 48:7,14
burden 4:16 19:3,3	cause 8:22 23:1	claims 24:9 59:14	complaining 15:18	49:9 51:8,18,25
burdens 43:25	44:1 54:13,17,22	class 28:12,18	16:3	55:10 56:23 57:15
bypass 16:22	59:21 63:21 65:10	54:18 59:13	complaint 8:7	57:20 58:2,5,10
	caused 38:18	clauses 11:19	complete 51:13	58:10,21,22,23
C	cetera 54:9 55:15	clear 4:23 5:10 7:4	completely 19:17	61:20 63:19,20
c 1:9,16,19 2:1,3,9	55:15 60:4,4	14:21 15:1 18:20	55:21	64:5,10
3:1,7 27:23 62:21	challenge 27:3	20:6 62:9	compliance 57:23	conciliations 60:3
call 11:12 14:1,2	challenged 32:3	clearly 5:8 17:20	complied 12:19	conciliator 57:17
15:3 30:8 58:13	challenging 42:22	closest 23:24 39:22	35:15	conclude 29:5
58:14	change 58:9	cnn 21:16	concede 4:12 18:19	concluded 30:2
called 24:24 27:11	changes 46:13	collateral 19:3	concedes 8:12	conclusion 47:11
32:9 37:19 41:18	charge 7:25 8:22	44:24 45:16 55:2	conceding 11:13	condition 35:24
41:20 58:20 59:9	10:20 14:3 29:7	60:21	conceivably 28:20	conditions 65:4
67:16	charges 44:2	come 8:7 14:14	concern 14:20 54:6	conduct 3:14
calls 36:13	cheap 50:16	17:7,9 18:11,16	concerned 16:17	conference 4:3 9:1
canal 34:3	checked 37:16,19	22:2,11,16 27:11	20:23,25 21:21	13:13 15:2,6
cant 12:24 19:11	chevron 5:21,22	43:24 47:11,14,16	conciliate 6:14,15	58:21,23 63:13,14
20:12 22:19 33:13	17:12	47:18 48:12 51:23	6:16 9:9 10:22	conferencing 63:18
35:14 36:17 41:6	chief 3:3,9 29:19,23	51:25 52:19 54:25	12:10 14:10 16:18	confidential 16:19
45:20 48:19 49:1	30:24 31:15,25	58:8 66:22	22:25 24:18 28:11	21:13,14 24:22
49:17 50:8,9	32:6,13,18,24	comes 21:8 37:11	36:12,13 40:20	25:9 31:8 48:8
62:15 64:9 65:13 care 48:9	33:2,9,12,17,20	39:22 53:19 65:13	45:19 46:16,24	50:17,18
careful 39:18	34:20,24 35:6	commission 1:7 3:5	48:3 50:19 51:3	confidentiality
case 3:4,19 4:9,10	36:11 37:7,14,18	6:10 7:14,15,17	52:16 59:10 60:12	16:24 17:14,25
4:20,20 5:4,8	42:17,19,21 43:6	7:18 8:16,20,23	61:3,8 63:15	19:6 20:17 22:6
10:24 12:13 13:6	51:2,9,12 52:7,10	9:4,14 20:24 31:3	64:12	26:22 27:1 48:6,9
13:22 18:6,10,14	53:18 59:8 61:1,5	31:6,9,23 32:11	conciliated 16:6,10	48:18 55:7 60:24
18:14 20:1 23:10	61:10 62:18 66:6	35:25 36:3 38:1	18:12 27:5 37:1	66:23
23:13 28:2,21	66:10 67:22	42:6 48:12 50:9	45:21 66:22	conflict 33:14
29:6,8,8 30:12	choice 21:7 circuit 3:25 23:25	54:12 58:11 59:5 59:24	conciliating 16:8 28:21 60:11	congress 4:1,23 5:10,18 6:11,18
32:24 35:5 36:11	29:25	commit 25:19,22	conciliation 3:13	7:21 8:3 9:2,20
39:19,22,22 40:4	circuits 12:23	committed 3:19	3:17 4:3,22 5:24	11:14 13:10,13,17
41:12,24 42:25	34:12 45:4	31:13	6:21,23 7:16 8:2,8	16:18,22 18:4
43:3 45:18 46:8	circumscribed	committees 43:10	8:11,14 9:1,4,14	21:6 22:11,20
49:21 50:12 53:20	35:21	committees 43.10	11:2 13:14 14:22	29:4 31:3,11
54:8,15 58:6	circumstance 47:1	12:15	15:11,17,18 17:7	35:25 42:3 43:10
60:13 62:14 63:23	circumstances	communicated	19:9,12,14,16,19	43:12 46:20 49:19
66:25 67:12,23,24	66:24 67:8	53:2,3,22	19:21,25 20:3	49:20 59:2 61:2,7
cases 3:20 5:10	cite 5:9,9	communications	22:15 26:15,16	61:15,18 64:22
6:20 13:1 16:14	cited 13:1	52:24	28:7,25 29:5	congressional
16:15,21 28:10	civil 7:18	company 14:18	30:10,13 31:18,23	43:10
		r y v	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
L	•	•	•	•

			I	I
consequences	48:7 66:18	daytoday 37:2	45:22 47:17 49:24	doctrinally 5:18
61:19	court 1:1,13 3:10	38:14	52:21 54:6 67:5,8	document 32:4,7
consider 22:18	3:14,14 4:13 6:18	decades 18:2 21:11	difference 9:17	32:11,15
considerable 43:15	8:2 19:7,15,19,22	66:13	14:18 37:6 38:13	doesnt 4:18 6:14,15
consideration	21:23,25 28:1,5	decide 7:4 17:21	64:25	6:15 19:25 22:12
57:22	28:20 29:11,12,24	24:19 34:11 57:7	different 3:22 6:8	28:1 29:6 41:9
consistency 12:25	30:11,12,20,23	63:6	12:14 50:1 56:15	43:8 44:7 53:23
consistent 5:6,6	32:4 33:13 34:10	decision 22:6 41:23	56:15 65:4	56:7 57:3,13 61:7
consists 56:19	35:18,25 36:10,18	42:1	difficult 4:5 38:21	63:22,23
constrained 13:19	37:23 38:14 39:24	declare 9:20,25	40:22	doing 24:16 38:13
construction 5:4	41:13 42:1,9,12	11:2	difficulties 55:4	45:6 64:14 65:23
consume 33:17	46:4,5,10 47:16	declined 36:18	difficulty 11:20	dollars 65:15,16
contact 31:17 32:15	48:4,8,10 49:1,18	defense 51:6,18	16:18	dont 10:10,16 13:9
33:3 35:2	49:23 50:1,10	67:10	direct 33:14 51:15	14:6 18:22 21:21
contacted 26:24	51:16,21 53:5,12	deference 17:12	directing 51:17	22:21 24:23 27:16
31:19 32:19 33:2	54:24 55:3,8,9,10	deferential 5:15	directly 63:12	30:8,21 31:10
33:4 35:2	55:11,13,16,17	define 12:24	disagree 8:10 48:15	33:12 35:11 37:11
contacts 15:5	56:11,14 60:23	defining 49:21	66:9	40:17,18 41:5,16
contemplate 11:14	62:9,10,12,25	demand 15:11	disagreed 55:14	43:4,13,20 44:15
contemplated 29:4	63:1,3,4,6,6 65:11	demanding 21:5	disclose 27:3	45:1 46:24 48:9
contempt 19:22	66:11	demands 26:23	discovery 27:7	49:16 50:19 56:10
context 11:18 36:18	courts 5:11,17,18	department 1:19	28:25	58:1 59:11,16,17
66:6	11:20 12:15,17,19	6:9 13:19	discretion 3:20	66:16,20 67:17,18
continue 30:25	17:12 21:19,23	depends 35:24 58:6	16:25 17:11,19	doubt 24:6 55:10
contracts 11:19	22:3,4 23:2 24:3	58:7	22:12 31:13 34:9	55:17
64:15	25:8 29:10 30:1	deposing 45:9	34:9 39:17	downside 60:19
contrary 13:18	38:19,24 39:18	design 6:22	discretionary 4:1	dragged 29:8,15
contrasting 13:14	40:12,13,14 44:21	designated 13:10	discrimination	draw 39:5
control 44:24 53:24	45:9,13,13,25	despite 66:11	3:13 31:7 43:23	duty 12:5,8
54:6	47:20 50:20 51:23	destroys 48:13	45:17 50:24 59:6	E
controverted 36:21	55:1,14 56:14	50:14	59:22,23 60:13,16	
42:13	61:17,19,23 62:11	detail 38:24	61:11,14	e 2:1 3:1,1
convincing 4:23	create 57:19	detailed 34:13	discuss 56:21	earlier 8:20 35:23
18:20	credible 49:3	details 65:20	discussed 19:20	easier 43:24
cooperate 6:2	current 14:8,9	determination 23:1	24:25	easy 24:12 32:14
copy 46:12,13	cuts 19:10 49:11	54:13,22 59:21	discussion 15:7	eeoc 3:11,15 4:22
correct 10:11,13,14	cyr 4:20	63:21 65:10	41:20 55:5,12	5:24 6:7,15,20,22
10:15 11:16 16:12	D	determine 42:9	dismiss 3:17 67:11	7:4,6,24 8:11 9:20
29:25		determined 54:16	dismissed 51:7	10:20 12:9 13:17
couldnt 3:20 8:3	d 1:9,19 3:1	determines 8:13,21	disprove 67:17	13:18,24 14:10,24
34:25 53:10	damages 19:10 26:24 59:13 65:18	determining 7:7	dispute 37:12	15:22,24 16:5,5,7
counsel 28:8 29:19		development 6:9	distinction 18:23	16:13 17:1,15,20
37:8 67:22	davis 34:4	devolved 62:14	district 45:9,13	18:1,6,7,11 19:20
couple 14:17 34:18	days 7:24,24,24 8:5	didnt 8:7 10:6 18:1	46:5	21:3 22:7 26:23
course 14:24 23:5	8:12,13 19:14	18:7 25:18,21	divide 4:7	26:24 27:6 28:11
39:16,16,23,25	28:25 29:5 30:9	26:21 27:6 41:19	doctrinal 4:14 5:2	29:17 34:15 38:13
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>

38:14,15 39:6,17	3:5 8:25 31:7	example 5:9 10:11	44:23 47:21 51:10	52:5
40:16 42:2,4,15	43:23 50:24 59:6	40:4 43:3	51:13,14,21 55:13	footnotes 52:8,11
43:4,16,22 44:1	60:13 61:11,14	examples 19:2	62:13 64:13,15	55:12
45:6,9,17,18,19	empty 28:8	20:12	67:3	ford 19:7
47:16,23 48:1,5	enacted 18:2,4 42:3	exchange 12:3	far 42:10 58:10	foreign 33:25
48:19 52:19 53:9	49:20 64:22	excuse 5:19	61:17,24	form 11:14
60:10,15 64:9	endeavor 4:2 5:16	executive 5:20	farreaching 50:11	formal 13:10
65:15 66:11	8:23 28:22 31:6	exempt 55:24	favor 6:5 11:13	formality 41:1
eeocs 15:3 16:11	49:21 59:6 63:19	exist 34:22 56:4,7	20:21	forth 45:7 56:11
19:3 28:16	endeavoring 52:16	existing 11:17	federal 6:10,10	57:21 66:23 67:7
effects 48:11	endeavors 17:3	expansive 8:24	female 14:19	found 34:14,15
effort 36:24 42:14	18:16	expect 65:13	fight 18:7	54:15
45:1 50:20 51:18	ended 30:14	expend 50:20	figure 40:22	four 6:8 18:2 21:11
efforts 37:24	enforce 8:19 13:20	expertise 24:9	file 8:12 33:20,21	45:12 56:11
eight 29:10 34:12	57:14 67:21	explain 9:18 28:5	files 37:9	fourth 23:25
either 53:20	enforceable 6:25	explanation 21:5	final 13:3,4	framework 4:8 5:2
elaborate 22:14	9:6	extent 9:5 53:14,19	find 3:20 12:24	39:15
29:17	enforced 12:17	54:20 58:5	13:8 36:17 38:21	frank 44:20
elaborating 24:10	22:4	extraordinary 37:4	47:13 48:4 62:25	free 21:16
election 6:10	enforcement 18:8	37:8,8 56:3,6	66:3	frequent 22:1
element 47:12	enforcing 17:13		finding 29:12	front 22:11
eliminate 4:2 8:23	19:22 23:3	<u>F</u>	finds 44:1	full 16:12 35:9 55:9
31:6 59:6	enormous 16:13,21	f36:1	fine 9:18 25:25	function 36:10
eliminating 50:24	16:25 17:11	face 29:10 63:1	39:25 42:8 50:3	functioning 34:15
email 52:25	enters 9:14	faced 48:2 55:18	56:9	further 23:20 24:10
embassy 33:25 34:1	entire 6:22 17:6	facilities 54:18	finish 9:20 10:1,6	24:15 46:19
employee 6:14 19:9	entirely 7:3 16:19	facility 14:6	firm 22:23	future 55:18
20:19	22:17 28:9	fact 5:18 6:5 17:17 30:2 39:23 47:20	first 3:4,12,18 4:14	G
employees 14:8,9	entitled 37:2		5:17 7:9 21:11	
14:19 51:3 65:17	entrusted 30:22	50:4 55:3,20 factor 47:21 55:18	26:21 34:18 40:24	g 3:1 52:12 game 66:20,21
employer 3:12 6:2	equal 1:6 3:5	55:19	46:4 47:13 48:19	general 1:19 6:15
7:5,8 10:21 11:11	especially 6:19	factors 36:6 55:17	53:18 54:5,12	41:10 42:15 47:21
12:9 14:3,13 15:5	esq 1:16,18 2:3,6,9	facts 58:6	59:21 63:13	59:24
15:9,11,19,23,25	essentially 18:10	factually 14:17	five 12:16 46:2	generally 3:16
16:17 19:8,18	36:18 50:13 54:7	fail 43:16,19	55:16 56:12	getting 27:4 60:1
20:2,18 21:1,15	et 54:9 55:15,15	failed 8:14 11:2	flexibility 24:9 57:2	61:13
28:14 29:12 31:18	60:4,4	27:6 30:10 54:18	67:21	ginsburg 5:23 6:4
43:18 54:14 58:7	evaluate 15:12	failing 45:19	focus 39:14 42:1	7:22 8:3,9 12:2,8
58:8 63:14,15	event 50:22 55:3	fair 11:1,4 53:23	50:3 59:2	12:12 13:21,24
64:8 65:13	60:14 61:13	faith 9:10 10:1,4,9	folks 47:16 51:24	14:2,13,16 15:13
employers 16:16	evidence 4:23 5:11	11:17,19 12:6,13	follow 67:18 followed 34:12	16:16 20:14,16,24
43:18 48:7,11,23	14:5 17:3,8,9 18:21 21:7 42:22	18:12 23:12,19		21:12,15 22:18
49:8 50:19 51:5		24:1,11,23 27:19	following 7:14 63:2 64:7	47:19 64:24 65:5
51:14,17 52:1 57:14 61:15 65:14	46:18 49:1,18 exactly 24:8 27:6	27:24 29:13,13	64: 7 follows 7:2	65:21
	52:15	30:15 31:9 39:24	footnote 51:16 52:1	give 5:10 10:11,18
employment 1:6	34.13	00.1001.707.21	100011000 31.10 32.1	5
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	l	I

	i	1	1	1
10:22 11:11 14:1	64:19 65:5 66:5,9	67:10	57:4	indication 13:15
14:2 15:3,10 19:1	66:16 67:2,4,6,9	happening 30:1,2	identified 35:5	22:8
27:22 40:4 44:8	good 9:10 11:17,19	39:10 51:22 60:22	identify 45:20	individual 21:1
44:14,14,17 56:19	12:5,13 18:3,12	62:10	identifying 54:21	25:24
65:14	23:12 24:1,11,23	happens 19:25	ill 10:11 24:20 31:4	individuals 10:21
given 5:18 39:17	26:1,2 27:19,23	27:17 54:22	50:3 65:14	informal 4:3 5:15
61:24	29:13 30:15 31:8	harbor 11:25	illustrate 10:12	8:25 13:10,13
gives 17:1,20 44:18	39:24 40:18 44:23	hard 3:25 45:18,22	28:20 66:10	17:3 18:15,16
57:13 59:22 67:20	46:9,17 47:21	47:17 48:3 53:25	illustration 10:19	22:20 40:25 49:21
giving 61:15 64:19	51:13 55:13 57:15	hasnt 20:19 57:11	11:2	50:14,16 56:18
go 9:21 13:1 23:19	60:17 61:6,16	havent 34:13	im 11:16 13:8	information 49:9
25:24 30:5 37:25	62:13 63:9 64:13	head 5:21	17:16 24:12,16,18	53:10,16 54:8,9
38:16 43:24 46:19	64:15	hear 3:3 41:14,17	24:24 27:22 30:15	58:9 59:25
58:3,11 61:1,2,8	goodbye 25:6 41:15	heard 20:19	30:24,25 32:8,14	infused 29:9
goes 50:25 53:17	goodfaith 40:11,14	hearing 26:13,14	34:17,17,19 35:9	inquiry 3:15 19:3
54:11	40:18 45:5	held 19:7 21:19	35:15,22 37:20	21:3 26:9 29:16
going 9:21,22 15:2	gotten 45:8 59:11	help 40:7	39:13,14,15 40:7	30:3 65:19
15:10 19:16 24:2	government 4:15	helpful 7:20 8:15	40:9 41:8,17	insufficient 48:5
24:10,13,14,18,19	4:21 5:2 7:19	24:17 59:2	44:10,12 45:3	insurer 65:14
27:22 28:12,17,22	28:3 30:19 35:14	helps 31:2	50:7 51:11,20,21	integrity 20:10
30:15 39:14 41:19	35:19 41:21	heres 11:8 24:17	57:17 61:9,22	intend 59:3
47:14,18,19,25	governments 3:21	37:15 42:24 63:11	62:24 64:7,19	intended 4:24
48:4,12 50:18	5:1 37:11 51:13	64:8	66:24	22:20 46:20 61:16
56:14 57:5 58:8	great 22:4	hes 25:3 32:8 35:7	imagine 4:1	61:18
58:14 61:22 62:24	greater 44:8	44:11	imperative 13:2	intent 5:11
62:25 63:1,19,22	ground 33:18 67:12	hey 24:23	implausible 19:15	intention 59:4
66:24	guidance 45:3	high 16:15	implied 4:9,17	64:12
goldstein 1:16 2:3,9	guidelines 46:3	highly 22:20	import 12:13	interest 65:7
3:6,7,9 4:6 6:4	66:19	highprofile 43:21	important 6:19	interested 59:25
7:2,9 8:1,9 9:7,11		hire 14:4,7,15	16:1 45:11 47:9	63:10
9:16,24 10:2,5,10	<u>H</u>	54:18	50:21 52:11 58:2	interpretation
10:15,18 11:8,23	hamilton 3:25 4:10	history 13:16	impose 6:12 17:23	28:16
12:1,7,11 13:5,12	4:15	hit 47:24	imposed 16:22	interrogatories
13:23 14:1,12,16	hamiltons 5:14	hold 3:14 41:11	inadministrable	26:23 28:4,6,19
15:16,20,22 16:1	hampered 34:16	honor 7:18 29:1	29:12	47:24
16:7,11,23 17:5	hand 3:24 57:19	hornbook 33:23	incentive 16:13,21	intervene 39:18
17:10,18,22 18:17	hands 56:17	hours 65:3	43:15 49:14 50:19	intrusion 44:18,19
18:24 20:11,15,20	hang 30:8	housing 6:8	51:3	intrusive 65:19,22
21:14,22,25 22:22	happen 18:15 51:1	huge 12:23	incentives 43:2,7	intuitive 57:21
23:8,15,22 24:3,6	52:24 60:8,21,22	hurting 61:20	43:14,19 60:11	investigating 60:16
24:16 25:2,7,12	60:24 67:5	hypothetical 41:18	include 19:9	investigation 8:21
25:16,20,25 26:3	happened 19:11	44:6	incorporate 11:17	54:15
26:6,8,11,14,18	20:3 21:17 26:10	т	indicate 36:15	investigators 45:9
27:9,13,20,25	28:2 31:19 37:10	<u>I</u>	indicates 9:19	invite 57:22
29:1,4 62:20,21	37:12,22 39:4	id 39:13 41:13	indicating 29:11	involved 20:7,22
62:23 64:3,6,17	47:15 48:20 51:22	idea 35:13,16 39:7	42:14	21:2,8 22:3

irrelevant 7:13,23	16:3,9,16,23 17:6	17:22 18:9,22	67:11,18,19	looking 40:16 41:3
21:20	17:16,19,22 18:9	20:5 52:12,15	lawsuit 13:15 17:9	41:4 45:2 53:11
irs 23:11,19 39:23	18:22 20:5,14,16	53:1,3,7,13,17	43:17 49:16 51:7	lost 44:7
39:23 46:8 66:25	20:24 21:12,15,18	54:2 62:6 64:1,4,6	lawyer 19:23	lot 22:12 28:14
isnt 5:24 7:25 12:20	21:22,24 22:18	65:22 66:5	lawyers 51:17	43:17,17 67:20,21
13:9 20:1 33:24	23:4,9,16,23 24:4	kennedy 3:18 4:7	lead 44:24	lots 14:5
46:17 49:2	24:7,7,14,17,22	8:24 11:15,24	leads 38:23	lower 56:14,14
issue 22:13,13 23:7	25:3,7,10,14,17	12:12 21:18,22,24	leave 46:21 56:13	lying 32:8
24:10 45:16 56:17	25:21 26:1,6,9,12	36:9,21 37:5 41:3	led 45:13 61:18	lying 52.0
57:9	26:16,19 27:4,10	41:9,14 42:8	left 20:14	M
issued 28:4 64:23	27:16,20,21,25	44:10 61:21 62:2	legally 10:23 65:9	m 1:14 3:2 67:24
itll 26:1	28:24 29:2,19,23	64:13,18,19 66:14	legislative 13:16	mach 1:3 3:4
ive 24:19 40:3	30:6,18,24 31:15	kennedys 7:3	letter 11:11 13:25	mailroom 37:16
63:24	31:25 32:6,13,18	kept 31:8	19:20 22:24 30:7	main 50:22 55:3
03.24	32:24 33:2,9,12	kind 4:13 5:3,14,23	30:9 31:16 33:3	60:14 61:13
J	33:17,20,22 34:24	7:5,13 8:4 23:20	37:10 41:20 42:24	maintain 48:5
january 1:10	35:6 36:7,9,11,21	40:3 41:24 49:22	52:24 58:14 63:5	majority 60:22
job 5:11,19,20 22:4	37:5,7,14,18,25	51:9 52:4,5 53:10	63:17	making 18:10,23
65:23	38:6,11,20 39:1,5	59:4 60:5	letters 34:21 36:25	32:14 39:11 46:13
jobs 54:19	39:12 40:17 41:3	knew 9:2	41:17,18 42:14	55:5
john 32:7	41:9,10,14,16	know 11:6 13:1,9	45:7	male 14:9
judge 3:24 4:10,15	42:8,17,19,21	22:17 24:9,12,23	level 13:3 41:1	malfunctioning
5:14 19:14 23:17	43:6,13 44:5,10	26:23 27:5,17,17	62:13	22:9
27:18 46:14	44:14,17 45:2	32:7 33:22 34:21	lies 19:18	mandatory 16:22
judgment 19:15	46:7,12 47:5,7,19	37:10 38:11 39:21	light 28:6	manipulation 52:1
judicial 4:25 5:7	48:15,21,24 49:2	44:5 46:13,25	limited 11:10 35:17	massive 50:20
11:9,14 13:2 23:6	49:5,11,24 50:5	48:2,11 51:6	line 9:20 10:1,6	material 23:12
31:19 32:25 35:9	51:2,9,12 52:7,10	52:14 53:24 55:4	39:5 46:16	matter 1:12 5:25
35:11,16,20,24	52:12,15 53:1,3,7	57:18 59:11,14,18	listen 27:22	17:16 24:25 30:22
36:5 43:3 44:8	53:13,17 54:2	66:2,19	litigate 44:3	42:15 46:20 56:23
50:11 57:22 62:3	55:22 56:3,6,9	knowing 19:16	litigated 10:24	67:11,25
63:1,5	57:6,17,25 58:12	knows 19:20 48:4	litigation 17:9	md 1:16
judicially 31:10	58:12,15,18,20,25	48:12	43:25 44:25 55:23	mean 10:12 11:5
57:4,7,8	59:8 61:1,5,10,21		55:25	15:10 22:12 23:5
jury 55:6	62:2,6,6,18 64:1,4	L	little 5:17 23:19	33:12 39:2 42:16
justice 1:19 3:3,9	64:6,13,18,19,24	labor 11:18 13:19	llc 1:3 3:4	43:8 44:7 45:1
3:18 4:7 5:23 6:4	65:5,21,22 66:5,6	64:15	logs 37:19	49:12 50:13 52:15
7:1,3,22 8:3,9,24	66:10,14,21,24	laid 6:11 62:6	long 29:9 46:15	54:1 55:14,19,19
9:7,11,13,16,19	67:3,5,7,9,22	language 4:1 5:14	60:20	55:20,24 65:22
9:23,25 10:3,8,11	justices 34:20	8:16,24 31:11	look 5:3 8:18 19:19	meaning 30:18
10:13,16 11:4,8	53:18	38:1 59:2	22:2,11,17 24:18	means 4:12 22:15
11:15,24 12:1,2,8	justified 62:15	large 52:3	26:21 28:15 30:5	22:15
12:11,12,22 13:5		laughter 25:13 26:5	31:2 35:14 37:4	measured 26:24
13:7,12,21,24	K	law 3:19 11:17	42:13,15 46:14	mediate 12:19
14:2,13,16 15:13	kagan 7:1 9:19	12:13 16:9 33:23	49:19 60:8 66:7	mediation 46:20
15:14,17,21,24	16:23 17:6,16,19	35:1,15,20 64:15	looked 12:18	mediator 57:18

meet 15:6 21:4	51:2	50:25 52:3 56:10	options 62:6	25:19,20,21,23
27:12,12 36:1,17	money 10:23 28:13	56:19,21	oral 1:12 2:2,5 3:7	persuaded 25:3
meeting 19:21	28:14,19		29:21	persuasion 4:4 9:1
members 62:12	morass 11:22 64:18	0	order 12:19 38:16	13:14 22:15 58:24
men 14:9	morning 3:4	o 2:1 3:1	50:25	58:25 65:12
mentioned 55:2	motion 27:3	object 53:7	ordinary 4:24 5:3	petitioner 1:4,17
merit 61:23	motions 10:7	objecting 52:18,20	63:5	2:4,10 3:8 35:4
merits 18:6,19,23	motor 19:7	objection 29:14	ought 14:23 15:4,4	36:5 45:20 46:3
18:25 20:1 45:16	move 60:14	obligation 6:1,1,13	24:10	48:13 54:7 55:8
51:7 60:14,21	moved 67:11	8:18 9:9,9 17:24	outcome 9:15	petitioners 50:13
61:6,8	mutual 5:25 65:1	31:5,9,21 32:1,1	outright 14:4	60:9,19 62:22
message 16:16		42:2,4,10 63:13	overton 3:19 4:8	phone 37:19 58:13
met 42:10 56:1	N	65:1	owes 28:9	58:14 63:17
method 9:3	n 2:1,1 3:1	obligations 31:3		pick 16:14
methods 4:3 9:1	necessarily 39:1	obliged 38:3	P	picks 16:21
13:13	51:21	obtain 36:3 38:1,2	p 3:1	picky 52:23
midway 61:24	necessary 28:6 64:4	38:3,7	page 2:2 7:11 8:20	place 36:6,25 37:23
military 34:2	need 21:21 59:18	obviously 66:10	panama 34:3	38:15 44:23 48:3
million 10:22,23	needing 55:6	odd 5:23	park 3:19 4:9	57:5 59:3 62:11
16:5,5 59:14	needs 57:2 62:25	offense 56:20	part 6:2 7:10 12:9	plain 21:13
65:15,16	negotiation 47:11	offer 7:5,7 19:8	17:3 18:10,13,14	plainly 20:12
mind 23:5 24:17	negotiations 20:8,9	25:18 38:21,22,25	18:23 21:9 31:5	please 3:10 26:8
25:9,11	20:10	39:7 40:21 46:23	48:25 51:10,13,14	29:24 41:4
mine 14:19	net 41:4	47:13 56:22 60:4	57:20 64:4	point 5:13,14 6:5
mini 45:15,23	never 18:7 19:19	64:2,8,11 65:7	partially 48:17	7:17,20 8:11,15
minimal 23:25	22:5 24:2,2 31:19	offered 30:13,14	participants 20:18	9:2,18 10:12,19
24:23 45:5 46:22	33:18 37:9,15,21	offers 58:11	particular 42:3	11:12 12:14 16:2
46:22 62:7,13	39:6 47:14,18	office 31:17	55:25	18:1 19:24 20:6,7
minimum 24:11,20	48:3 53:20,21,22	official 23:11	parties 12:18 15:18	20:21 33:23 45:11
41:5,6 44:22	58:8 61:15 67:13	oh 11:21 13:7 48:9	parts 4:8 31:4	47:4,10 50:21
63:21,24 64:2,7	67:13	okay 8:6 14:14,16	party 16:4 66:25	52:23 53:5 54:11
mining 1:3 3:4	new 14:6 20:3	17:10,18 18:17	passing 6:21	54:23 55:11 57:11
54:18,19,19	21:16 27:2 48:16	23:23 26:19 27:9	pause 17:10	58:1,1 61:10 62:8
minitrials 55:2	49:6,15	27:25 31:1 33:14	pay 19:8	65:24 66:24
60:20	nicole 1:18 2:6	33:16 34:1 37:15	people 14:7 28:13	points 14:17 34:18
minor 58:1	29:21	41:22 53:1 65:14	28:15,18 43:7	43:15 54:4
minutes 62:20	nlra 12:14 64:22	old 29:6	perfectly 23:24	portions 48:18
misimpression	normally 37:10	once 44:10,11	period 28:16 41:15	pose 35:9
40:12	nothings 50:18	48:11	permission 20:23	positing 41:17
misspoke 26:17	notice 32:4 53:6	onerous 8:4 40:15	permit 37:23	position 4:5 9:19
misunderstood	54:14 56:19 59:22	operate 43:2	person 20:14,24	15:3 16:12 17:6
34:19 35:23	noticed 40:3 notion 39:7	opinion 23:16 40:3	63:17 personally 28:8	21:18 44:6 60:20
modest 3:14 23:2	notion 39.7 notionally 12:20	opportunity 1:7 3:5 51:8 67:13	personally 28.8 persons 20:23,25	61:23 64:11
29:16 30:3	notionally 12.20 notions 12:18	opposed 60:9 61:14	persuade 15:9	positions 53:25
modifications 47:5	number 19:13,18	opposite 50:6	24:25 25:15,16,17	possible 6:23 38:6
moment 25:10 26:7	19.13,10	opposite 50.0	27.23 23.13,10,17	47:3
	l	l	l	l

magaibly 24:25	mma a a g g 0 · 1 / 1 0		63:21 65:10	wa aninamanta
possibly 34:25 post 21:17	process 8:14,18 9:14,17,21 14:22	Q	reasons 35:21	requirements 22:24 36:16 40:15
potential 51:6	16:22 19:10,12,25	quarrel 22:19	65:25	59:5 60:25 62:7
potential 31.0 potentially 34:22	21:9 27:7 28:7,25	question 4:7,14 7:3	rebuttal 2:8 62:21	requires 15:2 45:23
- v	,	9:23 18:20 22:1		47:12
power 18:8 28:2	31:18 32:21 36:6	30:7 32:25 34:20	reciprocal 12:5	47:12 reserve 29:18
practice 4:3 8:25	36:7 40:25 42:18	35:7,7,10,12,23	recognition 49:20	
63:6	46:18 47:10 48:14	41:10,10 45:17	recognized 12:3	resolve 3:12 6:20
precondition 4:17	56:18 57:20 58:2	47:9 53:18 59:10	46:10	63:20,23
36:19	processes 50:14	60:15 63:2	recommend 14:9	resolved 31:10
preconditions	57:3	questions 38:24	recommended 14:8	resource 43:4
52:16	produce 53:10	quibbling 11:6	record 26:21 27:14	resources 44:3 52:6
prefer 56:13	profile 16:15	quick 50:17	28:8	60:23
prejudice 3:17 20:1	prohibits 3:11	quickly 7:23	records 42:23	respect 6:8,13 8:17
preliminary 14:17	promulgate 63:8	quite 22:22 33:24	reference 18:4,19	10:20 22:25 28:2
premise 17:11,12	proper 11:5 36:10	50:1 65:4	referred 19:4	respectfully 22:10
prerogative 7:4	proposes 46:3	quote 7:12	referring 64:14	responded 21:3
president 43:10	48:13	quoted 38:1	reflects 49:20	respondent 1:20
press 43:17	protect 20:9		refuse 64:9	2:7 7:16,19 29:22
pressure 43:18	prove 4:16,21	R	refused 14:4 22:16	42:5
presumption 4:24	18:11	r 3:1	29:10	response 25:14
37:3 67:15,16	provide 45:3 54:14	race 9:22	regularity 37:3	result 34:15
principle 5:22	59:25 65:12	raise 47:9	67:16,17	results 51:22
prior 12:3	proving 65:23	raised 47:23 52:4	regulations 12:14	reverse 63:3
private 3:12 4:9,17	provision 4:19 6:24	raising 29:13	22:13,14,21 24:11	review 4:25 5:7
6:13 57:13 61:15	7:13,23 9:5,18	range 17:23	29:17 57:5,12	11:9,14 12:15
probably 23:17	16:24 17:15 20:2	reach 8:1 11:16	64:23	13:2 23:6 30:11
problem 3:22 6:16	20:2,6 22:5,6	read 18:1,3,18,18	reinstate 25:23	30:13,19,21,23
15:13 16:13,20	28:17 36:2 48:18	18:19 20:12 23:17	relationship 58:7	31:20 32:25 34:10
27:8 34:6,23 35:4	provisions 5:5 55:7	36:14	relying 5:6 40:11	35:9,12,17,19,20
45:24 47:23 48:10	public 48:19 49:10	reading 21:9,10	remain 16:19	35:24 36:5,19
51:24 53:11 54:20	49:22,25 50:2,8	56:6	remainder 29:18	38:14 39:16 41:14
54:21 56:2 60:6	publish 20:3 48:16	real 38:12 43:19	remaining 62:20	43:3,9 44:8 50:11
problems 38:18	49:14,15	51:24 52:5 54:25	remains 9:5	53:23 55:9,14
40:23 45:12 54:25	published 49:15	really 7:2 19:21	remand 57:8	57:22 62:3,13,15
55:1	publishing 49:5,13	23:18 37:3 40:19	remedy 3:16 56:16	63:1,5
procedural 8:18	pull 5:11	45:11 46:15,20	remember 5:21	reviewable 9:15
17:24 22:14,21	pursued 9:10	47:9 48:1,2,13,14	17:15 21:15 22:23	11:5 31:11 32:22
procedures 38:15	put 5:1 26:22 28:3	50:10,22 53:11	29:6	33:24 34:1,4,7
57:15	31:3,8 32:4 35:25	55:9 60:5,20	reports 43:11	57:4,7,8
proceeding 13:11	36:11,25 37:23	62:15	representative	reviewed 30:1
17:4,8 18:5,18,25	43:17 44:22 48:10	reason 5:19 18:3,3	31:16	36:17
19:4,6,23 22:20	54:9 59:2,4 64:2	28:9 44:16,21	request 21:4	reviewing 5:12
49:1	65:24	46:17 63:9	require 3:16 57:21	12:24 36:7
proceedings 21:19	puts 36:6	reasonable 7:7 8:22	required 6:7 16:19	rhetoric 66:11
21:20 48:6 49:23	putting 4:16 39:15	23:1 44:1 54:13	43:11 54:13 66:25	rig 55:6
50:1,10	40:15 57:4	54:17,22 59:21	requirement 8:4,11	right 4:10,17 7:25

11:7,23 12:11	saharsky 1:18 2:6	9:23,25 10:3,8,11	setting 57:12	13:5,7,12 26:6,9
16:1,11 19:2,10	29:20,21,23 30:6	10:13,16 11:4,8	settle 5:25 20:9	26:12,16,19 27:10
20:25 22:7,22	30:17,21 31:1,21	15:14,17,21,24	49:21	27:16,21 28:1,24
23:9 24:8 25:12	32:3,10,17,20	16:3,9 25:14,17	settlement 20:8,8	29:2 30:6,18
25:20 26:3 32:16	33:1,5,11,16,19	37:25 38:6,11,20	50:14 56:21	41:16 44:5,14,17
33:10,16,19 37:13	34:18 35:3,22	39:1,5 40:17	settling 56:22	45:2 66:21 67:3,5
37:17,20 38:23	36:20 37:13,17,20	43:13 48:15,21,24	seventh 3:25 29:25	67:7,9
40:9 44:13,16	38:5,10,12,23	49:2,5,11,24 50:5	sharply 35:21	sought 50:11
48:21,24 49:7,17	39:3,9 40:9,23	55:22 56:3,6,9	sharpty 33.21 shorthand 50:8	sounds 46:22
50:9 52:13,17	41:8,13,25 42:12	57:6 58:12,18	shouldnt 49:22,23	special 4:19 6:12
53:4,8 54:1,4	42:18,20 43:1,9	scheme 64:22	49:25,25 50:2	specific 59:4
57:14 58:4 61:15	43:13,20 44:13,16	science 58:6	66:21,22	spiral 44:24
67:8	44:20 46:9 47:4,8		show 52:4 59:4	_
roberts 3:3 29:19	48:1,17,22,25	scope 35:16,20,24		spiraling 53:24
	, , ,	scrutinizing 45:5	showed 37:1	spiralling 54:6
30:24 31:15,25	49:4,7,17 50:3,7	seal 21:20	showing 24:1 25:5	split 12:23
32:6,13,18,24	51:5,11,15 52:9	searching 62:15	side 6:1 36:22,23	spoke 50:7
33:2,9,12,17,20	52:14,22 53:2,4,9	second 7:10 35:22	37:9 38:8 39:6	st 4:20
34:24 35:6 37:7	53:15 54:1,4 56:2	41:1 45:24 48:25	42:21 43:15 56:17	standard 29:11
37:14,18 42:17,19	56:5 57:1,10,24	52:18,23 54:11	60:3,4	40:11,15,18 44:23
42:21 43:6 51:2,9	58:4,17,23 59:1	secondguess 46:11	sides 12:5	45:5 54:25 55:20
51:12 52:7,10	59:19 61:4,9 62:1	secondguessing	sign 24:24	55:25
59:8 61:1,5 62:18	62:5,19	38:19 53:12 60:5	signed 32:7	standards 31:14
66:6 67:22	saharskys 65:23	secrecy 20:1	significant 43:1	44:23 45:25 46:1
rock 48:2	sanction 28:7	secret 21:20	44:24 58:5 60:11	46:5 51:24 55:4,5
roughly 34:12	satisfactory 65:21	secure 7:15 31:22	60:23 61:18 65:7	56:8,11
65:18	satisfied 23:24	32:12 42:5	simple 23:2 24:12	start 17:25 51:7
65:18 routinely 30:10	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7	start 17:25 51:7 62:11
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11 run 9:22	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14 39:6,24,24 40:24	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6 62:3,4	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19 sorry 15:20 30:25	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7 56:8 63:12 66:12
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11 run 9:22 running 66:15	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14 39:6,24,24 40:24 41:22 47:14 48:19	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6 62:3,4 seriously 34:16	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19 sorry 15:20 30:25 30:25 32:8 35:23	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7 56:8 63:12 66:12 67:12,20
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11 run 9:22 running 66:15 S	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14 39:6,24,24 40:24 41:22 47:14 48:19 48:25 53:20 58:14	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6 62:3,4 seriously 34:16 serves 20:13	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19 sorry 15:20 30:25 30:25 32:8 35:23 50:7	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7 56:8 63:12 66:12 67:12,20 statutes 6:8,11
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11 run 9:22 running 66:15 \$ \$ 2:1 3:1 52:12 56:9	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14 39:6,24,24 40:24 41:22 47:14 48:19 48:25 53:20 58:14 63:15,22 67:20	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6 62:3,4 seriously 34:16	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19 sorry 15:20 30:25 30:25 32:8 35:23 50:7 sort 7:7 12:16	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7 56:8 63:12 66:12 67:12,20
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11 run 9:22 running 66:15 S s 2:1 3:1 52:12 56:9 safest 11:25	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14 39:6,24,24 40:24 41:22 47:14 48:19 48:25 53:20 58:14	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6 62:3,4 seriously 34:16 serves 20:13	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19 sorry 15:20 30:25 30:25 32:8 35:23 50:7	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7 56:8 63:12 66:12 67:12,20 statutes 6:8,11
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11 run 9:22 running 66:15 \$ \$ 2:1 3:1 52:12 56:9	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14 39:6,24,24 40:24 41:22 47:14 48:19 48:25 53:20 58:14 63:15,22 67:20	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6 62:3,4 seriously 34:16 serves 20:13 set 26:22 51:18	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19 sorry 15:20 30:25 30:25 32:8 35:23 50:7 sort 7:7 12:16	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7 56:8 63:12 66:12 67:12,20 statutes 6:8,11 12:16 17:23 62:16
65:18 routinely 30:10 rowe 32:7 33:20 rudiment 63:14,18 rudiments 56:23 58:16,19 63:2,9 63:11 65:6 66:15 66:17,17 rule 15:4 41:5,6 52:12 59:24 67:19 rulemaking 15:1 rules 56:17 57:9,19 57:22,23 rulings 29:11 run 9:22 running 66:15 S s 2:1 3:1 52:12 56:9 safest 11:25	satisfied 23:24 saying 9:8 10:3 13:25 17:16 18:10 33:3 34:24 36:20 36:23,24 37:9 40:9 41:8 42:24 45:22 50:2 51:21 52:20 54:8,21 59:9 65:24 67:1 says 5:2 7:14 10:21 12:9 15:4,8 16:5,7 19:13,19 20:7,22 27:2 28:11 30:10 31:16,18 32:11,15 33:18 34:4,14 39:6,24,24 40:24 41:22 47:14 48:19 48:25 53:20 58:14 63:15,22 67:20 sayso 37:11	32:12 42:5 see 5:4 46:14 55:4 60:17 seeks 36:5 seen 44:23 55:1 send 11:11 13:24 16:16 22:24 30:7 30:9,9 sense 17:20 21:6,15 sensible 25:24 sent 31:16 41:17,18 41:20 series 5:9 6:11 serious 14:20 43:22 45:12,24 60:6 62:3,4 seriously 34:16 serves 20:13 set 26:22 51:18 56:11,15 57:21	simple 23:2 24:12 27:11 30:7 simply 15:10 40:19 63:3 sit 41:21 46:24 56:20 situation 37:21,22 40:1 situations 33:6,7 45:8 sixth 23:25 skip 7:22 society 60:18 solicitor 1:18 somebody 53:19 sorry 15:20 30:25 30:25 32:8 35:23 50:7 sort 7:7 12:16 53:24	start 17:25 51:7 62:11 started 64:24 stated 67:10 states 1:1,13 statute 3:15 4:11 5:5 6:17,22,24 7:3 7:11 9:3 11:1,5 12:16 15:1,8 17:1 17:13,20 18:1,4 19:5,13,22,24 20:25 21:10,10,13 22:8 30:4,5 31:4 40:24 43:12 46:2 49:19 50:23 56:7 56:8 63:12 66:12 67:12,20 statutes 6:8,11 12:16 17:23 62:16 statutory 4:19 5:3

				. 1
64:22	24:21 31:7 33:15	terribly 35:15	thing 11:10 12:16	till 33:23
stay 20:8 37:23	40:25 42:9,13	test 47:22	17:1,2 23:20 27:2	time 7:1,23 28:16
50:17,18	51:12 60:24 66:7	text 18:5 20:22	30:12 34:2 41:1	29:18 39:16 43:8
steadfastly 29:9	supreme 1:1,13	30:4,5 42:3 49:19	45:10 49:22 53:23	46:4 61:22 66:15
64:9	46:4	62:16	54:12 60:7,17	times 6:19 20:4
step 60:7	sure 4:6 8:24 19:24	thank 25:4 26:18	61:6,16 66:3	21:16 48:16 49:6
steps 38:16 50:25	23:22 54:24	29:19 62:17,18,23	things 14:23 23:2	49:15
57:16		67:22	24:12 27:13 34:3	timing 7:13
stop 16:12 26:7	T	thats 3:22 5:16	40:20 56:15 64:20	title 3:11 4:18 6:13
35:9 61:10	t 2:1,1	6:24 7:13 10:10	67:14	14:3,20 50:23
strange 6:21	table 54:10 64:2	11:2,7,12,25	think 5:3,8 6:5 7:20	61:10
strategy 47:12	65:25	12:11 13:10 15:21	8:4,15 9:12,14	today 55:5,16
structure 13:16	tactics 60:2	19:4 22:22,25	10:25 11:16 13:12	62:12
struggle 44:21	take 5:13 7:10	23:5 24:1,4,22	18:20 20:12,13,20	told 8:6 47:17
struggled 46:2	13:19,19,21,21	25:10 27:8,18	21:9 22:10,19	52:17,20 53:20,21
stuff 17:7 26:25	20:21 23:24 24:20	29:2 31:1,13 33:9	23:1 24:8,11	54:2
52:7,10,11 55:24	37:3,11 47:4	33:11 34:17 37:5	25:14 27:4 29:25	toll 34:3
66:8	53:25 59:17 60:23	37:24 38:21,21	30:4,22 31:2,10	touch 63:15
subject 19:5 49:23	61:7 63:23	39:3,12,12,20,24	32:20,22 33:5	training 38:16
subjects 65:2	taken 57:16 63:12	40:5,6 42:2,4,7,24	34:22 38:10,12	57:15 66:18
submitted 67:23,25	talk 16:23 27:14	43:8,20 44:3,13	40:5,11 41:7,25	treat 51:7,17
subpoena 23:11	30:8 63:16,16	45:10,16 46:17	42:10,12 43:14,20	tremendous 11:20
subsection 36:1	64:8	47:15 49:5 50:1	45:11 46:9,15,17	64:25
subsequent 17:4,8	talked 52:18,21	50:10,22 51:15	47:5,6 49:7,18	trial 41:19 51:19
18:5,17,24 19:1,4	53:1 54:3	52:5,11 54:7,19	50:21 51:5 54:5	60:13
substance 8:10,17	talking 14:18,19	55:8,20,22,22	54:20 56:2,5 57:4	trials 45:15,23
9:17	28:15 30:15 32:14	56:3 57:24 59:16	57:24,25 58:1,1,4	tried 12:10 24:25
substantial 43:4,23	38:17 45:15 52:25	61:11 62:3 63:17	58:17 59:1,1,3,7	25:6,17,22 44:22
61:23	55:8 58:18	64:4,11,13 65:10	59:12,13,13,14	45:4,18
substantive 19:1	talks 55:13	theory 3:22 30:11	60:5,7 61:16,16	trouble 23:3
sue 7:24 28:12 42:4	teeth 10:25 44:8	theres 6:1 7:6	61:22 62:3,5	troubled 35:13,16
43:5 63:22	tell 5:20 6:6 16:10	12:23 13:15 18:2	63:13 65:6,17	true 8:22 11:15
sufficient 38:25	21:16 24:20 28:10	22:8 25:9 31:4,5	66:17 67:15	17:23 32:8 33:24
suggest 7:6	28:17,23 35:17	31:13 33:14 34:2	third 5:2 60:2	43:21 51:15
suggested 54:12	36:10 38:8 41:4	35:18 38:12 43:1	thomas 1:16 2:3,9	trust 42:17,19,23
suggesting 44:9	41:23 43:7 54:7	43:2,22 51:24	3:7 62:21	truth 43:7
51:20	57:6 63:14,20,24	55:6,23 59:12	thought 3:18 4:11	try 5:25 6:20 11:17
suggestion 25:23	telling 37:20 45:3	61:22 63:9 65:7	6:18 15:17 20:5	24:16 31:9 38:3
62:4	59:12	theyll 33:3	23:18 28:5 33:23	45:22 47:17 51:25
suicide 25:19,22	ten 59:17	theyre 5:5 9:21,22	58:12,15	53:25 61:2,8
suing 3:11 28:12	tends 17:1	11:13 12:24 21:20	thoughts 59:19,20	trying 8:19 13:8,17
suit 3:17 4:18 8:12	tenth 23:25	39:10 45:22 58:20	threatened 28:7	35:9 38:7 39:13
36:19	term 18:12	60:23 62:9 63:11	three 5:5 19:2,18	40:19 47:10 51:23
support 3:21 54:17	terms 14:22 40:16	66:1,1	20:11 34:7,13	54:25 61:9,11
suppose 8:10 57:7	53:5 54:21,24	theyve 22:16 33:3	45:4 47:21 56:11	66:10
supposed 5:24	59:9 62:7	35:15 49:9	56:21 58:21 59:20	tuesday 1:10

turn 4:11 5:21	$\overline{\mathbf{V}}$	22:7,9 25:24	wrote 23:16	2 7:11
17:14	v 1:5 3:4	27:18 28:21 40:10		20 65:17
two 4:7 12:25 19:13		44:17 46:24	X	2008 29:7
31:4 48:18 52:16	vague 9:6 22:17	ways 57:15	x 1:2,8 28:13	2011 22:6
54:4 56:11 59:19	various 35:21	wellknown 65:2		2013 44:4
59:24	45:12	went 10:6 67:13	Y	2015 1:10
type 31:12 50:10	view 5:1 11:9 23:10	weve 28:18 59:11	yeah 23:17	29 2:7
typically 60:17	50:13 60:8,9,10	65:17 67:10	year 16:14 43:11	2) 2.1
typicany 00.17	vii 3:11 4:18 6:13	whats 4:8 17:21	44:2	3
U	14:3,20 50:23	18:15 23:9 24:10	yearlong 42:18	32:4
unable 7:15 31:22	61:10	27:14 34:16 37:7	years 12:17 14:25	30 7:24,24,24 8:5,5
32:5,11 36:3 38:1	violated 3:15 14:3	37:8 39:9 56:25	22:4 29:7 34:15	8:12,13 28:25
42:5	34:25	62:9	york 20:3 21:16	29:5 30:9
unbelievable 28:3	violation 35:19	whatsoever 41:20	48:16 49:6,15	3500 44:2
uncontroversial	virtue 18:13		youd 8:18 28:24	5500 11.2
14:24	visa 33:25	willing 15:5,6 16:4	youre 9:8 10:3	4
understand 9:8	voluminous 42:23	63:16	11:25 15:2,10	4 62:20 66:12
10:16 18:22 20:17	voting 26:4	withdraw 4:24	18:10,23 20:7	40 12:17,17 14:25
26:2 31:8 33:13	W	women 14:4,5,15	23:24 24:1,14	22:4 34:14
45:1		54:19	26:3,20 30:19	
understood 22:5	wages 65:3	womens 14:7	32:13 33:10,14	5
undertake 5:17	wait 47:12 60:3	wondering 34:17	34:24 44:9 45:2,8	5 10:22,22
unemployment 4:2	64:1,1,1,1	wont 65:15 67:21	49:12,12 50:9	50 65:18
unenforceable	waive 26:22 66:23	words 4:5,11,13	51:9 54:20 56:10	500 16:4
67:12	waiving 26:25	40:2 58:21	58:4 64:14 65:2	
uniquely 13:18	walked 27:21	work 6:23 17:2	65:23,24 66:15	6
united 1:1,13	want 18:12 22:21	22:2 24:19,21	youve 12:2 13:1	60 19:14
united 1.1,13 unlawful 8:25	23:13 26:21 27:7	28:22 52:21 58:3	23:17 28:23 37:10	62 2:10
	27:14,14,17,17,17	62:24	44:7 45:8 63:7	
unnecessarily	28:13,18,23 29:3	working 14:5 40:13	44.7 43.0 03.7	7
29:15	29:16 30:8 33:25	65:4	$\overline{\mathbf{Z}}$	8
unquestionably	39:14,20,21 40:6	workings 37:2		<u> </u>
18:5	40:7 41:11,11,16	works 40:3	0	9
unreasonable	44:15,19 48:7,16	world 55:22,23	000 16:4 65:18	
35:11	49:14 53:4 54:8,8	56:4 60:9,9,10	08 1:14 3:2	
unusual 4:13 5:17	55:24 59:12,12,18	worried 56:10	09 67:24	
5:19 6:6,6 12:20	61:1,2 63:15,16	worrying 49:12		
12:22 23:13,18	64:2,8 66:20	worst 60:12	1	
34:10 39:18,25	wanted 6:12 35:17	worthlessly 19:17	1 36:1	
upended 67:19	49:8 61:2	wouldnt 14:13	10 1:14 3:2	
urban 6:9	wants 16:15,16	27:12 35:1 36:13	11 67:24	
urgent 6:16	23:11	write 9:3 40:2,7,10	13 1:10 51:16 52:1	
urging 46:5	washington 1:9,19	41:11,23 42:1	130 16:14 44:3	
use 33:23 40:4 45:4	21:17	44:17	131019 1:4 3:4	
49:18 50:1 55:7	wasnt 21:8 34:4,8	writing 52:13	15 59:14	
useful 30:5 60:7	36:24 53:15	wrong 4:15 15:21		
utterly 35:10	way 18:1,3,18,20	56:25 60:12	2	