

PUBLIC HEARING - HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS

June 23, 2011

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BEFORE THE MARYLAND INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION

PUBLIC HEARING - HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS

Baltimore, Maryland

Thursday, June 23, 2011

9:56 a.m.

Job No.: 1-200498

Pages 1 - 138

Reported by: Darlene S. Traficante, RPR, CSR, CMRS

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 2</p> <p>1 Hearing, held at the offices of: 2 3 4 MARYLAND INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION 5 200 St. Paul Place 6 Suite 2700 7 Baltimore, Maryland 21202 8 (410) 468-2000 9 10 11 Pursuant to agreement, before Darlene S. 12 Trafficante, Notary Public in and for the State of 13 Maryland. 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 4</p> <p>1 --- 2 EXHIBITS 3 (Exhibits attached to the original transcript.) 4 MIA HEARING EXHIBITS PAGE 5 1 Bulletin 11-12, 5/31/11 Premarked 6 2 5/17/11 Recommendations Premarked 7 3 5/18/11 Recommendations Premarked 8 4 6/1/11 Haglund written comments Premarked 9 5 6/2/11 Haglund written comments Premarked 10 6 6/16/11 MHA written comments Premarked 11 7 PowerPoint hard copy 11 12 8 MedChi letter 78 13 9 PowerPoint hard copy 86 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 3</p> <p>1 APPEARANCES 2 FOR THE MARYLAND INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION: 3 THERESE M. GOLDSMITH, COMMISSIONER 4 BETH SAMMIS, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER 5 DENNIS YU, CHIEF ACTUARY 6 JOY HATCHETTE, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER, 7 CONSUMER EDUCATION & ADVOCACY 8 9 FOR OLIVER WYMAN: 10 KAREN BENDER, FCA, ASA, MAAA 11 TAMMY P. TOMCZYK, FSA, MAAA 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 5</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: It got very quiet 2 so I guess that means that we are ready to begin. I 3 have just about 10:00 a.m. And want to wish everyone 4 a good morning. 5 And a welcome to this June 23rd, 2011 public 6 hearing being held by the Maryland Insurance 7 Administration. 8 Can everyone hear me by the way? I 9 understand we're not going to have mics so everyone is 10 going to need to speak up a bit. I'm seeing nods and 11 none of this (indicating) so glad to hear it. 12 So this hearing is being held pursuant to a 13 notice issued on May 31st, 2011, that notice was 14 labeled Bulletin 11-12 and has been marked as Exhibit 15 1 in this proceeding. 16 As the notice indicates, the subjects of 17 this hearing are the findings and recommendations of 18 Oliver Wyman Actuarial Consulting as set forth in two 19 reports. Those reports are entitled Recommendations 20 to the Commissioner on Information Provided to 21 Consumers, which is dated May 17th 2011, and has been 22 marked as Exhibit 2 in this proceeding. And</p>

Page 6

1 Recommendations to the Commissioner to Enhance
 2 Regulatory Review and Oversight dated May 18th, 2011
 3 which has been marked as Exhibit 3 in this proceeding.
 4 My name is Therese Goldsmith, and joining me
 5 this morning are two of my colleagues at the Maryland
 6 Insurance Administration, to my left Deputy
 7 Commissioner, Beth Sammis, and to my right Chief
 8 Actuary, Dennis Yu.
 9 Later today we will also be joined by Joy
 10 Hatchette, the Associate Commissioner heading up our
 11 Consumer Education & Advocacy unit.
 12 By way of just a little bit of background,
 13 the Maryland Insurance Administration engaged Oliver
 14 Wyman to do two things; first, to review the
 15 administration's current actuarial rate review process
 16 for commercial comprehensive medical insurance
 17 products, and to make recommendations for enhancing
 18 that process with one goal being to establish an
 19 effective rate review program under the Affordable
 20 Care Act as now defined in federal regulation.
 21 Secondly, we asked Oliver Wyman to review
 22 information currently available to consumers regarding

Page 7

1 proposed and approved premium rate increases and to
 2 make recommendations on ways in which to improve and
 3 to expand that type of information in order to enhance
 4 the transparency of the rate making process.
 5 Oliver Wyman's work was funded by a premium
 6 rate review grant which was awarded to the State of
 7 Maryland by the US Department of Health and Human
 8 Services.
 9 With respect to today's procedure, and order
 10 of events, Oliver Wyman first will present a summary
 11 of its findings and recommendations set forth in the
 12 Recommendations to the Commissioner to Enhance the
 13 Regulatory Review and Oversight, so Exhibit 3. And
 14 will answer any questions from me and my colleagues
 15 with regard to the information contained in that
 16 report.
 17 Immediately after that presentation, and any
 18 Oliver Wyman's answering any questions that we have,
 19 those of you who are here today who wish to provide
 20 comment on the subject of that report will have an
 21 opportunity to do so. We'll then repeat that
 22 procedure for the consumer information, I'll use for

Page 8

1 shorthand, report. So first the rate review report,
 2 presentation, question and answer, and followed by any
 3 public comment, followed by the consumer information
 4 report, same procedure.
 5 To date we have received written comments
 6 from two interested parties regarding the Oliver Wyman
 7 reports. First we received two written comments, one
 8 regarding the consumer information and the other
 9 regarding the rate review process from Scott D.
 10 Haglund of the Federated Life Insurance Company and
 11 those written comments have been marked Exhibits 4 and
 12 Exhibit 5 and those will be a part of the public
 13 record in this proceeding.
 14 And then also we received comments on both
 15 reports in one document from Michael B. Robbins on
 16 behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association and its
 17 members which has been marked as Exhibit 6.
 18 We will be holding the record open in this
 19 proceeding through June the 30th, 2011, for any
 20 additional written comments that anyone might wish to
 21 submit for considerations.
 22 Instructions about how to do that are

Page 9

1 included in that written notice that I referenced
 2 which is available on our website. And if you have
 3 any trouble finding that, please contact Karen Barrow
 4 who is our director of Public Affairs, her number is
 5 (410)468-2007.
 6 Are there any other housekeeping details
 7 that I'm not thinking of before we proceed?
 8 All right. Well, then I think we're ready
 9 to hear from Ms. Tammy Tomczyk and Ms. Karen Bender
 10 from Oliver Wyman.
 11 MS. BENDER: Thank you, Commissioner
 12 Goldsmith. My name is Karen Bender and I'm a
 13 consulting actuary and principal with Oliver Wyman
 14 actuarial consulting. My colleague here is Tammy
 15 Tomczyk. She's also a principal and consulting
 16 actuary with Oliver Wyman. And we were two of the
 17 three authors of both of these papers and we
 18 appreciate the opportunity to discuss these papers
 19 with you today.
 20 This is the proposed overview for today's
 21 discussion. So we segregated into several main topics
 22 of which the first one is going to be to review,

Page 10

1 discuss or review of the current processes that the
 2 administration is employing to review rates.
 3 The rate increase disclosure and review of
 4 the existing regulations and the proposed -- no longer
 5 proposed, when we started this process they were
 6 proposed. They are now final rate regulations
 7 regarding the Accountable Care Act.
 8 And methods for determining the
 9 reasonableness of rate increases, trend analysis, rate
 10 filing submission and requirements and then our
 11 recommendations.
 12 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Ms. Bender, the
 13 document that's on the screen here is a slide deck
 14 that, that we I believe and the court reporter have
 15 received in hard copy entitled Recommendations to the
 16 Commissioner to Enhance Regulatory Review and
 17 Oversight, and data today, correct?
 18 MS. BENDER: That's correct.
 19 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: So if the court
 20 reporter could mark this document as Exhibit 7,
 21 please.
 22

Page 11

1 (MIA HEARING Exhibit 7 was marked for
 2 identification and attached to the transcript.)
 3 MS. BENDER: And Tammy is going to talk
 4 about the review of the current processes.
 5 MS. TOMCZYK: Thank you, Karen.
 6 In order to make recommendations for
 7 enhancements and changes to the process, first we had
 8 to understand thoroughly what the current process was.
 9 We reviewed, we were provided and reviewed current
 10 statutes, regulations and regulatory bulletins. We
 11 also reviewed the information that's currently
 12 included in the filing requirements. Everything from
 13 information that carriers are required to submit,
 14 timing of those submissions, timing of the
 15 administration's review, as well as lost ratio
 16 demonstrations that are required to be made.
 17 Once we reviewed this information we spent
 18 two days on site with the chief actuary and another
 19 actuary on staff with the administration going through
 20 in very thorough detail the process starting from the
 21 point in time when a filing is received, all the way
 22 through to the point in time when a filing is finally

Page 12

1 approved. So all the correspondence that goes on, all
 2 the aspects of the reviews that take place. And we
 3 actually did this process three times, once for the
 4 individual market, once for the small group market and
 5 once for the large group market because the process is
 6 not identical for those three markets.
 7 We also were provided copies of recent, hard
 8 copies of recent filings and the correspondence that
 9 took place between the administration and the filing
 10 carriers. And reviewed that. And once we went
 11 through that process we, in our opinion, had a pretty
 12 good understanding of the current process that takes
 13 place today.
 14 We did review that with processes that are
 15 currently taking place in other states, based on our
 16 knowledge either working with other states, working
 17 for carriers, filing, submitting filings in other
 18 states and just our general knowledge of those
 19 processes. And there is quite a wide variation today.
 20 We set up this chart on the bottom and we described it
 21 in our report as level of rigor that takes place. So
 22 for example on the left-hand side that's labeled 1,

Page 13

1 that might be where a state would fall that either has
 2 no regulatory authority to review rates today, or very
 3 limited authority. Progressing to the other extreme
 4 where you have a state that perhaps has authority to
 5 review rates in all three market segments, individual,
 6 small group and large group, may frequently use the
 7 rate hearing, the rate hearing process, engage
 8 independent experts to perform independent
 9 calculations, and provide expert witness testimony at
 10 rate hearings.
 11 So based on all of that you can see that we
 12 place Maryland between a 3 and 4 on that scale. And
 13 that indicates that the process that's taking place
 14 today is, is quite comprehensive.
 15 So once we understood the current process
 16 our next step was to compare that to the proposed
 17 regulations that outlined the requirements of an
 18 effective rate review process as defined by HHS. And
 19 Karen is going to talk about that process in a little
 20 more detail.
 21 MS. BENDER: I should note that I think we
 22 have alluded to it before, but when we were developing

Page 14

1 these recommendations we were using what we called the
 2 draft regulations. And the day after we submitted our
 3 final reports when the final regulations came out, and
 4 so we have noted differences on the slides where
 5 pertinent, we will followup with the commissioner on
 6 noting some -- some adjustments in the report because
 7 of the final regulations. There were just some minor
 8 differences in our opinion.
 9 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: And that will be in
 10 the form of an addendum to each report, correct?
 11 MS. BENDER: This is correct, it will be in
 12 the form of an addendum.
 13 So I'm going to give a real brief overview
 14 of ACA. And this overview only pertains to the rate
 15 regulation portion that we are dealing with here.
 16 Obviously ACA is a very large bill so we're only
 17 focusing it on the rate regulation portion.
 18 Firstly, the HHS regulations apply
 19 technically only to non grandfathered policies. And
 20 non grandfathered policies, the easiest way of saying
 21 that is for practical purposes, for our purposes here
 22 they essentially are those policies that were issued

Page 15

1 after March 23rd, 2010 which was the effective date of
 2 the Accountable Care Act. There are some
 3 technicalities how you keep grandfathering and non
 4 grandfathering, but for our purposes here that's
 5 probably the easiest definition.
 6 So technically these rate regulations as
 7 promulgated by HHS, again, don't apply to all policies
 8 at the federal level.
 9 The state's definition of small group may
 10 apply until 2014 when one life groups would now be
 11 included. There are some, again, some technical
 12 differences in how to count employees, but that wasn't
 13 really the purpose of our analysis here which was to
 14 review the rate review process. Now, in 2016 the
 15 definition of small group is going to be increased to
 16 100. And that our understanding is going to be
 17 mandatory.
 18 And it's also our understanding that HHS
 19 based upon their final regulations is considering how
 20 to include fully insured associations. And so that is
 21 probably an outstanding issue as of right now.
 22 The rate regulations would apply to all --

Page 16

1 okay, I got to get this right -- rate regulations are
 2 going to take effect September 1st. If you are -- if
 3 you meaning a carrier is in a state that does not have
 4 an effective rate review program, then it is policies
 5 that are effective September 1st. If you are a
 6 carrier in a state that has an effective rate review
 7 program, it is policies filed September 1st and later.
 8 That's our interpretation.
 9 Right now the effective rate -- I would say
 10 the -- yeah, the effective rate review or the policy
 11 subject to review, filing subject to review are those
 12 that would have a 10 percent or greater increase at
 13 the September 1st trigger date.
 14 So if HHS is going to do the review, then
 15 any policies submitted for September 1st effective
 16 date would be subject to -- that have a rate increase
 17 of 10 percent or greater would be subject to this
 18 review. For states that have an effective rate review
 19 program they would need to report on their reviews of
 20 rate filings that have a 10 percent or greater
 21 proposed rate increase to HHS for rate filings
 22 submitted on or after September 1st, 2010.

Page 17

1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: And just one point
 2 of clarification is something that confused me
 3 initially when I read it in the report. When in your
 4 report you refer to an HHS mandatory review, it's my
 5 understanding that what that means is that if you are
 6 a state with an effective rate review program, not
 7 that HHS will conduct the review, but rather HHS has
 8 mandated that review be conducted.
 9 MS. BENDER: That is absolutely correct.
 10 That's our understanding.
 11 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay.
 12 MS. BENDER: I probably should submit right
 13 here now, we are actuaries, we are not lawyers. So
 14 we're not, we cannot give a legal opinion. So all of
 15 these that we are offering here is based upon our
 16 interpretation of the law.
 17 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Right. Thank you.
 18 MS. BENDER: So if there's, if ultimately a
 19 legal opinion would decide something different
 20 obviously then we would modify things as such.
 21 And we are probably going to use HHS and CMS
 22 maybe interchangeably. We'll try and stick with HHS.

Page 18

1 I think when this first started this was all under
 2 HHS.
 3 The threshold of 10 percent is for 2011.
 4 Beginning in 2012 that threshold can change and HHS
 5 can change that threshold and they can change it to
 6 vary by state, or they may not vary by state. But
 7 they will communicate July 1st what the threshold is
 8 going to be for each of the states for this
 9 September 1st effective data cap. And so thereafter
 10 each June 1st they'll communicate for the effective
 11 12-month period going forward for the following
 12 September.
 13 So what must be included in the, for rate
 14 filing subject to review. HHS has identified two
 15 types of information that must be submitted to HHS for
 16 all rate filings equal to or exceeding that trigger
 17 point. It does not matter whether you're in a state
 18 that has an effective rate review program or not.
 19 Part I and Part II must be submitted to HHS. And Part
 20 I is a prescribed form and with a prescribed Excel
 21 sheet that must be filled in with the required
 22 information.

Page 19

1 Part II is sort of what I would call a free
 2 form right now at least, where the carriers need to
 3 identify those significant factors that are prompting
 4 the rate increase, and to provide brief experience,
 5 overall experience of the policy.
 6 Now, for states that do not, for carriers
 7 operating in states that do not have an effective rate
 8 review program, Part III justification must be
 9 submitted, which is specific detailed documentation
 10 supporting any rate increase.
 11 For those states that do have an effective
 12 rate review process in place, HHS will accept, or will
 13 delegate the analysis associated under the Part III
 14 analysis to the states. And they, then the state will
 15 need to report their findings to HHS.
 16 As of right now there's no standardized
 17 template, to our knowledge, for the states reporting
 18 their results to HHS for the Part III analysis.
 19 Now, let me emphasize that Part III is again
 20 only required for those states that don't have an
 21 effective rate review program.
 22 So what does the state have to do to have an

Page 20

1 effective rate review program? And I can almost
 2 classify this as essentially, get data from the
 3 carriers, review the data from the carriers and
 4 analyze the data from the carriers to determine if the
 5 rate increase that they are requesting is and/or are
 6 supported depending upon the number of policies,
 7 policy forms that are included in the filing.
 8 So that really takes care of the first three
 9 items here.
 10 The fourth item is that a standard has to
 11 be -- you have to apply a standard. Like set forth a
 12 statute of regulation for determining whether a rate
 13 increase is reasonable. Again, now, this is at the
 14 state level to have an effective rate review program.
 15 That doesn't necessarily have to be a numerical
 16 standard but there has to be some sort of standard so
 17 that it's not viewed as capricious. And states that,
 18 states again must provide access to Part I and Part II
 19 preliminary justification through their website. This
 20 is one of the changes from the preliminary and the
 21 final, at least according to our interpretation. From
 22 the preliminary we didn't see this maybe more as maybe

Page 21

1 it might be nice, but in the final it appears to us
 2 that now the states do have to provide some sort of
 3 access to Part I and Part II. It can be just a link
 4 to the HHS website, but it's important.
 5 And again, as I indicated before, after the
 6 review is done, then the state has to submit to HHS
 7 the summary of its results and how they arrived at
 8 their opinion.
 9 I overlooked one thing under 5, not only
 10 must the states provide access to Part I and Part II,
 11 they also have to have a means of accepting public
 12 comment on them as well. So that was a change from
 13 the original.
 14 Here's some specific rate assumptions that
 15 must be reviewed. These 12 were listed in the, both
 16 the prelim-- well the final reg site, I guess there
 17 was one that was little different. So these are the
 18 12 that are listed in the final regulations. I think
 19 it's, the most important point here is where it says
 20 where applicable, which means that if you have an
 21 effective rate review program, HHS is recognizing that
 22 the states need to have flexibility when reviewing

Page 22

1 these rate filings. And has enabled them to use their
 2 judgment that maybe not all of these may be applicable
 3 for every single filing.
 4 These are the things, the 12 prescribed
 5 assumptions that could be subject for review.
 6 Now we're going to talk about considerations
 7 for determining the reasonableness of a rate increase.
 8 When we did our review we wanted to step
 9 back and say, absent any regulations, what are some of
 10 the factors that we would consider in addition to the
 11 components of trend which obviously are some of the,
 12 is the main driver of rate increases.
 13 So one of the factors obviously are loss
 14 ratio and loss ratio requirements. When we started
 15 this process Maryland had a minimum loss ratio of
 16 60 percent for individual policies and 75 percent for
 17 small group. Since that time regulations have been
 18 changed so that it's going to be 80 percent for small
 19 group and individual effective July 1st, 2011. And if
 20 I have my notation right I believe that's SB 183 that
 21 enabled that.
 22 Then there are some other questions as to

Page 23

1 how would the loss ratio be applied. Should it be
 2 applied at the form level or at the market segment
 3 level? The minimum loss ratios under the ACA apply at
 4 the market level as opposed to the form level. And
 5 then some discussion as to how credibility should be
 6 applied.
 7 We talked about administrative expenses,
 8 surplus expenses, pricing margins, and those we would,
 9 we commented on that really you want to focus on there
 10 is more of the change in levels of these components of
 11 a rate from one rate filing to another rate filing.
 12 You have the minimum loss ratios at the federal level
 13 of 80 percent for small group and individual, and
 14 85 percent for the large group. So there is sort of a
 15 safety net that carriers, if they -- they have to
 16 rebate excess premiums if they don't comply with those
 17 minimum loss ratios. So you do have that floor. But
 18 even in addition to that you still want to look at any
 19 material changes from one filing to another to assess
 20 for reasonableness.
 21 And then the last two are investment income
 22 and loss would be more pertinent probably if a company

Page 24

1 was having some surplus issues. Obviously you are
 2 also tasked with ensuring solvency for a company so
 3 you must be cognizant of the solvency standards. And
 4 a cost containment quality of improvement activities
 5 are also part of minimum loss ratio requirements as
 6 defined by NAIC and adopted by HHS. So these are all
 7 considerations that would go into determining if a
 8 rate increase was reasonable as defined by ACA.
 9 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Ms. Bender, in
 10 terms of the administrative expenses, I note that you
 11 just said and I think you said it in your report, that
 12 one focus, anyway, would be on material changes in
 13 expenses from one filing to the next. And I saw in
 14 your report where you described certain benchmarks or
 15 standards that are used in other jurisdictions to
 16 assess the reasonableness of administrative expenses.
 17 Are there any, you know, besides looking at the delta
 18 between one rate filing and the next, are there any
 19 other standards or benchmarks either that you would
 20 recommend or that you would suggest that we consider?
 21 MS. BENDER: Well, there are some public
 22 reports. Sherlock, I mean, these are some public

Page 25

1 reports that are obviously in the public domain,
 2 they're public reports. And they have done some
 3 analysis on administrative expenses for both what they
 4 call the blue plans and then for the commercial plans.
 5 And they also further segregate it between what I
 6 would call type of business, Medicare, Medicaid, I'm
 7 not sure if they have Medicare supplement right now,
 8 but at least also self funded. So that would be one
 9 source.
 10 Another source would be to look at the, some
 11 of the administrative expenses as reflected in the
 12 NAIC database for companies completing what I would
 13 call the orange blank or the health blanks. This is
 14 going to be easier now that they have to, that
 15 companies are going to be required to submit that
 16 supplemental exhibit, and please don't ask me what the
 17 exhibit number is because I don't have it on the tip
 18 of my tongue.
 19 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: You could say
 20 anything and I'd believe you.
 21 MS. BENDER: I'm sorry, I don't have it.
 22 MS. TOMCZYK: I think it's called the

Page 26

1 supplemental healthcare.
 2 MS. BENDER: That might be it.
 3 And that supplemental healthcare exhibit,
 4 that's what we're calling it right now anyway, is a
 5 new exhibit required for the purposes of determining
 6 administrative expenses for the MLR, or at least --
 7 for the allowable cost containment and quality
 8 administrations.
 9 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Right.
 10 I was thinking more in terms of the other
 11 administrative expenses category. But okay.
 12 MS. BENDER: What do you mean?
 13 MS. TOMCZYK: Operating expenses and claim
 14 processing.
 15 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: So the non quality
 16 improvement cost containment.
 17 MS. BENDER: I think though that that's in
 18 there, I think all the administrative expenses are in
 19 there. But then they also, they just had to fill that
 20 out, if I'm remembering the exhibit right.
 21 MS. TOMCZYK: If not it's certainly
 22 available, is it page 4, I can't remember, the

Page 27

1 statement of revenue and expenses that's in the
 2 statutory statement has that information. And we've
 3 actually done some studies using that data where we've
 4 developed benchmark populations or looked at a pool of
 5 carriers that are of similar size, have a similar mix
 6 of governmental, non private insurance, Medicaid,
 7 Medicare business, and within that cohort of similar
 8 carriers what kind of is the average expenses of the
 9 percent of premium and some ranges around that. So
 10 there's some good information there.
 11 MS. BENDER: And I also believe what I would
 12 call the state reports, individual state reports
 13 segregate individual. I mean, sometimes the challenge
 14 of segregating individual from small group from large
 15 group sometimes that's the challenge.
 16 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: What do you mean by
 17 state reports, what state reports?
 18 MS. BENDER: It's called state reports, it's
 19 part of the orange, again, I call it the orange blank.
 20 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay.
 21 MS. BENDER: It's the health.
 22 MS. TOMCZYK: Page 29.

Page 28

1 MS. BENDER: Page 29.
 2 MS. TOMCZYK: That one I know.
 3 MS. BENDER: Okay.
 4 And then there is also the one that has
 5 small group segregated too and that's a -- I'm not
 6 going to tell you the number of that, but we can get
 7 that to you.
 8 So there are, like I said, the Sherlock
 9 reports and then the orange blanks or the NAIC data I
 10 would think would be another good source of
 11 benchmarking.
 12 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Thank you.
 13 MS. BENDER: So next major component of any
 14 rate filing is going to be the trend analysis.
 15 Trend is generally probably 90 percent of
 16 the time the major driver of change in rates. So
 17 obviously the trend analysis is the major focus of any
 18 rate review. And also a miss of trend high or low is
 19 going to have a major impact on subsequent rate
 20 reviews as well.
 21 I.e., if you overstate the trend in one
 22 year, then the next rate review you'd expect to have

Page 29

1 less than trend rate increase. Because you've, you
 2 have essentially excess premium that one year.
 3 Conversely, if you understate the trend, the
 4 next year you can have significantly higher than trend
 5 increases. Now, sometimes trend isn't the only major
 6 driver, especially in new products, sometimes it is
 7 very, for new products it is difficult to get all the
 8 assumptions that are realized as you anticipate it
 9 originally. Probably one of the best examples of that
 10 was initially in the high deductible health plans I
 11 think carriers made some aggressive assumptions
 12 regarding the utilization savings that many of these
 13 plans were going to realize.
 14 But so, but the trend is the major
 15 component.
 16 This lists, I'm sorry, this list
 17 demonstrates that there are many drivers of trend.
 18 And which makes this analysis extremely complex.
 19 Obviously the first two, changes in provider
 20 reimbursement and changes in the number of services
 21 utilized, are generally the two that people focus on.
 22 And generally it's the changes in provider

Page 30

1 reimbursement that is the major driver. Although
 2 other things can, such as a change in the mix of
 3 services can actually make it appear that changes in
 4 provider reimbursement, either greater or less, than
 5 the underlying cost. So a mix in services can distort
 6 some of these other factors.
 7 So that's why it's extremely important when
 8 analyzing any particular rate filing, it's not just as
 9 easy as comparing, you know, maybe a cost per member
 10 per month for this year compared to a cost per member
 11 per month from the year before, and that's your trend,
 12 it's generally not quite that easy to do. So here all
 13 the drivers of trend that anyone reviewing a rate
 14 increase or rate change would need to consider and
 15 also that someone submitting a rate change should be
 16 willing to demonstrate that they have considered as
 17 well.
 18 Then you have all these other adjustments to
 19 trends, even if you've, you've considered all these
 20 others, those other factors in your emerging
 21 experience if you have large claims they can distort
 22 the trends upward and as they work their way through

Page 31

1 them they can also make it appear that trends are
 2 decreasing when in fact they aren't. You have benefit
 3 changes, you have demographic changes, all of these
 4 items here require adjustments to the emerging
 5 experience to ensure that you're not overstating the
 6 trend or that you're not understating the trend. And
 7 additional considerations which I would maybe benefit
 8 unique, if you have a high deductible health plan then
 9 the deductible, what we call deductible leveraging
 10 which in essence is just an actuarial term for
 11 recognizing that the value of a fixed dollar
 12 deductible decreases over time because of inflation.
 13 And that's what we call deductible leveraging. And
 14 then aggregate trends versus trends by types of
 15 service that there is not a universal trend between
 16 hospital inpatient, hospital outpatient, physician,
 17 X-ray, lab, pharmaceutical. So these are other
 18 considerations and you might want to look at isolating
 19 some of these trends, particularly between what I
 20 would call medical and pharmacy to get a better handle
 21 or estimate and see the true underlying trend.
 22 One of the considerations in our discussions

Page 32

1 was, is there just as you asked, Commissioner, about,
 2 are there any benchmarks out there for maybe
 3 administrative expenses, are there some benchmarks
 4 other than the emerging experience in any particular
 5 rate filing available to test trend assumptions to.
 6 And we identified two entities currently in Maryland
 7 that are tasked with gathering information pertaining
 8 to specific types of medical care. And the first one
 9 is the health service cost review commission, HSCRC,
 10 and I'll have to look at this to make sure I get the
 11 acronym right, and they are responsible for collecting
 12 data on the hospitals all payer system. Their data
 13 can identify, they can identify the data by hospital
 14 and insurer, the challenge with that particular data
 15 is that they can't really identify or segregate
 16 between insured and self funded, or market segment,
 17 i.e., the non group market or non group HMO or small
 18 group, PPO, intermediate group, they don't have that
 19 capability right now. But the advantage of this data
 20 is that it is very timely. They gather this and so
 21 this data is available 45 to 60 days after each
 22 quarter ends. So that is a real advantage of this

Page 33

1 particular data set.
 2 Now, there are some barriers to it. Right
 3 now they don't have a corresponding membership data.
 4 So you have the hospital data but you don't have the
 5 underlying membership so it's very, very difficult if
 6 not impossible to get that utilization component of
 7 trend. When we're going back on the other slide we
 8 were talking costs of providers and then utilization
 9 of services. So because we don't know the underlying
 10 membership we also can't really normalize it for the
 11 change in any demographic mix that may be occurring.
 12 This also is on an aggregate level, even if we could
 13 isolate, can isolate it for the commercial, and it's
 14 still not at that same level that would appear in any
 15 particular rate filing for any particular insurance
 16 carrier. So that is a barrier.
 17 Currently they do not have what we call
 18 professional charges, those physician charges, or they
 19 do not have any information on prescription drugs, and
 20 those are two major, major components of regs. The
 21 data set includes only Maryland hospitals, which is
 22 good, but contracts that are issued in Maryland don't

Page 34

1 limit members only seeking services in Maryland
 2 hospitals. So the carriers -- and I'm using carriers
 3 and HMOs together, I'm not going to try to segregate
 4 those two. When I say carriers I mean carriers and
 5 HMOs as one. You know, they are going to be liable
 6 for, or have to pay hospitals that are outside
 7 Maryland, either because they have their insureds who
 8 live outside of Maryland, or you have Maryland
 9 insureds who may seek services to hospitals outside of
 10 Maryland. So even if we used, even if this data had
 11 some of these other barriers overcome, you would still
 12 have the issue that they're not covering all the
 13 claims that any particular carrier would have.
 14 So as a result the use of this data would
 15 represent only the cost component to hospital, either
 16 hospital inpatient or hospital outpatient, for
 17 essentially a sub group of the total claims that may
 18 be included in any particular filing.
 19 So those are sort of the barriers associated
 20 with that particular database.
 21 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: So in terms of the
 22 primary drivers of trend that are listed on slide 12,

Page 35

1 as the HSCRC data currently exists, in your view it
 2 would provide relevant information with respect to
 3 which of these primary drivers of trend?
 4 MS. BENDER: It would provide relevant
 5 information obviously to changes in provider
 6 reimbursements for hospital services only. And it
 7 would provide I think that you could use this to
 8 assess the changes in the mix of services utilized.
 9 Changes in the mix of providers to a degree in that if
 10 services were switching among hospitals within
 11 Maryland, and between inpatient and outpatient, so it
 12 would provide maybe what I would call a subset of
 13 that. Changes in mix of providers utilized. It would
 14 provide a portion maybe of technical advances, those
 15 that take place in a hospital setting, either as an
 16 inpatient or an outpatient. It would not include
 17 those that might be taking place in only the
 18 physician's office, or on the drug side,
 19 pharmaceutical side.
 20 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: And how would it
 21 provide that, like at the procedure level?
 22 MS. BENDER: Technical advances?

Page 36

1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Um-hum.
 2 MS. BENDER: Well, I think theoretically you
 3 could start to list some of the services provided
 4 and/or on the outpatient side some of them, and on the
 5 inpatient side, maybe the inpatient by DRGs and start
 6 drilling down in to see if there are some new -- I'm
 7 trying to think of an example, would that be like a
 8 neonatal intensive care? Or advances in cancer
 9 treatments that you would be able to track. It might
 10 not be easy but I think you might be able to glean
 11 some of that information.
 12 You would not be able to do the age of the
 13 population, I think it would be very problematic on
 14 the cost shifting side because of the unique Maryland
 15 situation where you have sort of the single payer or
 16 single, same payment for all payers. The cost
 17 shifting you don't, theoretically you don't have cost
 18 shifting on the hospital side, the cost shifting more
 19 on the physician side, you would not have that at all
 20 here.
 21 Changes in claim coding methodology you
 22 might be able to do that. That would be more of a

Page 37

1 longitudinal comparison of type services on the
 2 outpatient side and maybe on the hospital, again the
 3 hospital, either the DRG or the ICD-9 codes until
 4 ICD-10 codes come. You might be able to -- which in
 5 those codes, the DRG codes and the ICD-9 codes are
 6 essentially codes that are used on the institution
 7 side to indicate type of services -- no, type, what do
 8 I want to call it, diagnosis, heart problems, those
 9 kind of things.
 10 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: But the DRG for
 11 example, won't necessarily tell you what the treatment
 12 was or what level of technology was employed to
 13 provide the treatment or to conduct an evaluation?
 14 MS. BENDER: The only thing you could
 15 probably do is if there's a shift of DRGs from one,
 16 you know, compare one set to another and for some
 17 reason a shift to more complex DRGs.
 18 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay.
 19 MS. BENDER: You might be able to do that.
 20 You know, theoretical you might have a chance of that.
 21 Changes in morbidity I think would be very
 22 problematic to get from that. Changes in care

Page 38

1 management I think would be very, very problematic.
 2 Catastrophic claims since most of the cost of
 3 catastrophic claims are at hospital institutions that
 4 you probably could get absolute number of catastrophic
 5 claims. The problem is that you don't have the
 6 membership underlying, so, you know, if you have a
 7 larger membership you might expect a larger number of
 8 catastrophic claims. But you might be able to say,
 9 you know, X percent of our claims last year were over
 10 a hundred thousand, now Y percent are, something like
 11 that.
 12 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: But again limited
 13 to the slice that represents Maryland hospitals?
 14 MS. BENDER: Only Maryland hospitals, you're
 15 absolutely right. And not the professional charges
 16 associated with that, just this very, very small
 17 slice.
 18 You wouldn't be able to do changes in
 19 benefits and I don't think you would be able to do
 20 selection from that.
 21 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Thank you.
 22 MS. TOMCZYK: I'll just add two things to

Page 39

1 that. One, back on the DRG discussion, if the data
 2 has the revenue code on there, so within a DRG that
 3 revenue code will tell you the breakdown between, for
 4 example, drugs and radiology and how much of the claim
 5 is due to the room and board, so you could
 6 theoretically look at within a given DRG is the
 7 percentage of the claim that's made up by radiology
 8 charges changing.
 9 And the other thing I just was going to
 10 comment that some of these are almost intertwined
 11 where it's hard to distinguish in the sense that if
 12 you're starting to see more claims under a given DRG
 13 is it because the morbidity is changing? Is it
 14 because the coding is changes? Is it because the mix
 15 of services is changing?
 16 MS. BENDER: Or the aging population.
 17 MS. TOMCZYK: Exactly. Yeah.
 18 So it would be very difficult to look at the
 19 data, I think, and say this is due to this particular
 20 factor. Which makes trends analysis even more
 21 complicated.
 22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: If we accept

Page 40

1 that because of the limitations in the data, that the
 2 HSCRC can't be used in a quantitative sense as the
 3 opposite of the actuaries reviewing the rates, is it
 4 possible in your view to be able to get a report or
 5 some sort of an analysis on a quarterly basis from the
 6 HSCRC that might tell us in a qualitative sense how
 7 changes in, just for Maryland hospitals, what changes
 8 they're seeing in terms of admissions, severity of the
 9 cases, things like that so that the actuaries may be
 10 able to have a more, a different kind of dialogue with
 11 the carrier about the trends that they're seeing for
 12 that particular product as opposed to what's being
 13 seen globally at the Maryland hospitals?
 14 MS. BENDER: Sort of like a leading
 15 indicator.
 16 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Yes.
 17 MS. BENDER: You're saying that, no, we
 18 can't take this information and dump it into the rate
 19 filing and have it pop out with here's what's going to
 20 be your trend. But as a leading -- yes, I think you
 21 can. How strong it's going to be I think time will
 22 tell. And it might be one of these, like once you

Page 41

1 start tracking it you'll have a real better feel for
 2 how strong an indicator it is.
 3 Obviously we have different issues between
 4 the individual market as it currently is now, where
 5 it's medically underwritten, accept, reject, there's
 6 certain uniqueness to that particular market that as
 7 opposed to the small group market which is guarantee
 8 issue rate now, that doesn't have some of those other
 9 characteristics sort of what I would call complicating
 10 or masking, or exaggerating trend appearances of trend
 11 shall I say.
 12 CHIEF ACTUARY YU: I mean, well, in using
 13 basically hospital trends as a leading indicator, if
 14 you could -- as -- well, a couple questions come to
 15 mind. How big a portion are hospital claims roughly
 16 of total claims? And the second question is, are
 17 trends for different types of services, so hospital
 18 inpatient versus professional or prescription drugs,
 19 are they necessarily correlated?
 20 MS. BENDER: I don't have the tip of my
 21 tongue what the distribution of claims are. I can
 22 give you something that on an allowed basis drug

Page 42

1 claims are somewhere between what, 15 and 20 percent
 2 of total allowable charges. And I would say that
 3 hospital claims, inpatient and outpatient, what, 40 to
 4 50 percent, depending upon -- the network.
 5 CHIEF ACTUARY YU: Okay. I was just looking
 6 for a ballpark.
 7 MS. TOMCZYK: Yeah, I tend to have a better
 8 feel on the paid side, I usually see close to
 9 50 percent being inpatient/outpatient combined. Maybe
 10 40 percent for professional and other miscellaneous
 11 and 10 for drugs, on a paid basis.
 12 MS. BENDER: The drugs really get leverage
 13 because the coinsurance generally go to about 50
 14 percent one way or the other, I mean copays. So then
 15 you said, so that was the first part, then what was
 16 your second part, the correlation between --
 17 CHIEF ACTUARY YU: Well, to the extent that
 18 we get a general feel, we use HSCRC results as a
 19 barometer of the general feel for hospital trends.
 20 Are hospital trends necessarily correlated with other,
 21 other types of services? Transfer other types of
 22 services?

Page 43

1 MS. BENDER: Well, there obviously has been
 2 a shift between inpatient and outpatient on the
 3 hospital side going on for the last many, many years.
 4 So to the extent that you're having services take
 5 place in an outpatient setting that used to be in an
 6 inpatient setting, you could actually have a decrease
 7 in hospital inpatient charges, but I'm not -- with not
 8 the corresponding decrease in professional services to
 9 the extent. You'd have a little decrease but maybe
 10 not as much of a decrease as you would maybe for what
 11 the hospital inpatient would decrease.
 12 But we've also seen the hospital outpatient
 13 costs have been increasing rather rapidly.
 14 I would like to say generally, yes, there's
 15 going to be a correlation because I said it's a very
 16 general yes. And it would be better to track this
 17 information and to tie that, whether it's a strong
 18 correlation, I would like to think that there is going
 19 to be a relatively strong correlation in the
 20 direction, not in the absolute magnitude, but if all
 21 of a sudden hospital utilization starts to, inpatient
 22 utilization starts to increase dramatically, I would

Page 44

1 say that you can expect that your general claims
 2 trends are going to increase as well. Will they
 3 increase one for one, I can't say that.
 4 MS. TOMCZYK: I think the correlation, what
 5 correlation there is is probably tied more to the
 6 utilization. More so than the cost. I don't know how
 7 much correlation just because the cost on a per unit
 8 basis is going up in hospital necessarily means drugs,
 9 that is probably more independent. But if hospital
 10 utilization is going up and, you know, one of the
 11 causes is because the population is becoming more
 12 morbid or is aging, it's likely that the more drug
 13 claims are going to be incurred as a result.
 14 So from a utilization perspective there
 15 probably is some correlation. But again, the HSCRC
 16 data as it is today without having membership you
 17 really can't get at the utilization component, it's
 18 really the cost component.
 19 MS. BENDER: You definitely cannot get at
 20 the, like a day's per thousand or things like that.
 21 You might be able to, when you're saying just the
 22 absolute number, you would have to track that and see.

Page 45

1 As long as you're not having a huge shift in
 2 population that might be, again, just a leading
 3 indicator. But I would say you would probably have to
 4 go back and either try to reconstruct it or track it
 5 forward to see how strong a correlation that was.
 6 I must have skipped one here, huh? Did I
 7 skip one? I'm all confused here.
 8 MHCC data is the other data source that is
 9 available in Maryland. And Maryland healthcare
 10 commission maintains a statewide medical care
 11 database. Historically they only carried or only
 12 kept, captured I should say, professional and
 13 prescription drug claims. But in 2009 they began to
 14 incorporate hospital claims. And membership in 2010.
 15 So ultimately this is going to be a, what I would call
 16 a complete database that could be an independent
 17 source for emerging experience.
 18 Just for the record, it only contains payers
 19 with at least \$1,000,000 in earned premium. That does
 20 not diminish its worth materially whatsoever. So --
 21 The biggest barrier to using the MHCC data
 22 when it gets complete is really what I would call a

Page 46

1 timing issue. And that is that the data is not
 2 reported until six months after the year end, so that
 3 they can make sure that they, they've gathered all the
 4 service dates. And then it's generally not available
 5 until 10 to 12 months after the year end because once
 6 they get the data they have to, we call it scrub the
 7 data, we have to make sure that, that it's
 8 appropriate, you know, that it's clean and valid.
 9 So the first full set of utilization data
 10 that includes all types of services as well as all
 11 membership isn't going to be available until the Fall
 12 of 2012. And that is going to be for 2011?
 13 MS. TOMCZYK: Well, it would be the data
 14 representing 2010 and 2011, but to develop trends you
 15 need realistically two years of data to look at the
 16 change. So. And because the 2011 data is not
 17 reported until the Summer of 2012, and then by the
 18 time the data is validated it's going to be the Fall
 19 of 2012 before you can probably get some good trend
 20 estimates.
 21 MS. BENDER: So and then you would still
 22 need to normalize that data to make sure that it, but

Page 47

1 that can be done. I mean, that's not -- because you
 2 have the membership so you, but you want to make sure
 3 that it's normalized for changes in membership.
 4 Now, this data set only includes Maryland
 5 residents. So you have a little mismatch in that,
 6 again, the premiums that carriers are charging are
 7 for, especially in the group market, for all employees
 8 whether or not they live in Maryland. And it's very,
 9 very common that people will live in one state,
 10 especially in some of the smaller states and work in
 11 another state. So you could have people working in
 12 Maryland who are not Maryland residents. And they
 13 would not capture that data.
 14 This has potential, again, but it's the
 15 timing issue. Right now rates are being developed for
 16 2012, or it will shortly be developed for 2012, if
 17 they haven't already. Based upon 2010 experience.
 18 Whereas, that experience for 2010 will for the MHCC is
 19 not going to be available until, what, September or
 20 October of 2011 at the earliest. This is one though
 21 that if you begin to track this, there may be -- you
 22 may be able to develop some trends from this and see

Page 48

1 what the, what the lag is. Can you use this data to
 2 augment some of the information that you are seeing in
 3 the rate filings. And that's how I can best describe
 4 that. Again, it's not going to be one that you can
 5 dump in.
 6 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Augment, could you
 7 elaborate a little bit, augment in what way? To what
 8 use? I'm just wondering if the data is too stale by
 9 the time it's available to be of meaningful use.
 10 MS. BENDER: It may be challenging. What I
 11 was envisioning is, if you have a course of years, not
 12 just two or three, but over the course of years, and
 13 this data has been running, I'm just going to make up
 14 some numbers, you know, 6 percent, 7 percent,
 15 8 percent, even though you have a gap, if someone is
 16 coming in with 14 percent, maybe you would say, okay,
 17 help me. Help me understand, you know, how I'm
 18 getting from here to here. There could be a perfectly
 19 rationale justification. You're not going to be able
 20 to, like I said, take this experience in 2010 -- I
 21 suppose another way that you might be able to do it is
 22 take this experience and project it using the emerging

Page 49

1 experience, but you would be projecting it longer time
 2 periods than maybe are included in the rate filings
 3 and you might have some mismatch there.
 4 Again, I would say it's not going to be to
 5 use this in lieu of. It just isn't. The timing is
 6 going to be problematic. But if you develop enough of
 7 a history, and maybe in conjunction with -- I got to
 8 get the HSCRC data, you might be able to get some
 9 sort, since that's what I would call a leading
 10 indicator, more frequent indicator, you might be able
 11 to do some analysis to say, hey, when this says this
 12 then this, then the MHCC generally says this. You
 13 know, and -- but that's going to take sometime.
 14 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: With the idea being
 15 it might prompt further inquiry, for example?
 16 MS. BENDER: Yes.
 17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: But it would
 18 help us then, in your view, if the MHCC were to do
 19 some of this analysis to inform us as to whether or
 20 not it's worth continuing to use the HSCRC data as a
 21 leading indicator?
 22 MS. BENDER: That would, and I think that we

Page 50

1 might be jumping ahead a bit, but yeah, that's one of
 2 the things that we had recommended that the MIA and
 3 the MHCC and the HSCRC to collaborate and see what is
 4 the potential. There's lots of good data out there,
 5 is there a way of using this in the rate review
 6 process? There may be, it's not going to be a turnkey
 7 operation, would be the best way of phrasing. There
 8 may be but it's going to require some resources to
 9 investigate and maybe some resources to do some
 10 econometric analysis, actuarial analysis as predicting
 11 powers.
 12 So that takes us to rate filing submission
 13 requirements. And tammy gets to explain these.
 14 MS. TOMCZYK: Okay.
 15 So our next step we wanted to look at the
 16 different aspects of the filing requirements and
 17 whether there was a feasible or whether it could be
 18 feasible to perhaps standardize them in some capacity.
 19 There is going to be a lot more work with having an
 20 effective rate review program. And to the extent that
 21 things can be standardized or made more efficient we
 22 just wanted to look at it from that aspect. So we

Page 51

1 looked at both the requirements in terms of the data
 2 that's being submitted and the format that that data
 3 could be submitted in.
 4 So for completeness we looked at, you know,
 5 what kind of standardized templates are out there that
 6 are being used today. And probably the most common
 7 one is the one that's used in the Medicare advantage
 8 market for the bid, it's called the bid pricing tool
 9 for the bidding process that carriers participating in
 10 that market use. It's, for those who aren't aware,
 11 it's an Excel based spreadsheet, it comes with a set
 12 of instructions about that thick in terms of how you
 13 have to fill it out. And the Medicare Advantage
 14 carriers use it. It prescribes the data that has to
 15 be used and essentially the formula so all carriers
 16 are using the same formula.
 17 We talked about in our report some of the
 18 pros and cons to that template. The pros are, I
 19 guess, that it's uniform which could lead to more
 20 efficient, more efficiency. And the ability to take
 21 that data from a tool and dump it into some type of
 22 analytical tool.

Page 52

1 The cons are it's very, very different from
 2 how pricing is done in the commercial market today.
 3 It would require a lot of modification, Medicare
 4 Advantage is more of a community rated product, there
 5 is no age variation to the rates, that's not true of
 6 the commercial market. And it, it only uses one year
 7 of experience. So it's just really not conducive to
 8 being used for commercial pricing without a lot of, a
 9 lot of work. So not to jump ahead to our
 10 recommendations, but in our opinion the cons really
 11 outweigh the pros at this time.
 12 That doesn't mean that it couldn't be
 13 investigated further but certainly not something we
 14 would recommend.
 15 The other standardized type template is the
 16 preliminary justification form that Karen talked about
 17 that's going to have to be submitted for all, per the
 18 regulations, HHS regulations, for all carriers that
 19 exceed that threshold, that 10 percent in 2011. And I
 20 guess one of the pros to that is the carriers are
 21 going to have to submit it for those filings that are
 22 over the threshold and they'll become familiar with

Page 53

1 it. So, so that was the pro to that.
 2 We also did a little bit of research to see
 3 if there are other states that use a standardized
 4 template in the commercial market. And we found two,
 5 New York and Colorado, and we included them in the
 6 appendix of our report. I'm not really going to talk
 7 about those much more than that.
 8 So then we looked at the filing requirement,
 9 the filing requirements and is there any way to
 10 standardize that. Again to help promote efficiency of
 11 the work flow process that the office of the actuary,
 12 office of the chief actuary is going to conduct.
 13 So there were several states that we found
 14 that had them, these that we list here, Oregon,
 15 Washington, Minnesota and Colorado are probably those
 16 that in our opinion were more robust in their
 17 checklist as well as contained data items that we
 18 thought were most valid to, or applicable I should say
 19 to all, all reviews or all filings.
 20 So with that and other, just our general
 21 knowledge and working with carriers in other states
 22 and pricing, as actuaries, we developed a sample

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p> <p>1 checklist that we included in the appendix as well for 2 your consideration. I just want to state that that 3 checklist is not by any means intended to be 4 exhaustive or fully inclusive of all of the 5 information that should be reviewed. It's intended to 6 represent common data elements that are appropriate 7 for, or should be reviewed in every filing, but that 8 doesn't mean that on a case-by-case bases or 9 filing-by-filing basis there's not going to be the 10 need to go back to a carrier and ask for 11 clarification, more information, and probably more 12 common than not that that will have to occur. 13 So I just wanted to clarify it's not 14 intended to be an all inclusive list. 15 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: But the idea would 16 be that it would cut down hopefully on the amount of 17 time it would take given the back and forth that often 18 occurs between the office of chief actuary and the 19 carrier to try and streamline the process and get as 20 much of the information required for the review 21 submitted in the first instance as possible? 22 MS. TOMCZYK: Exactly. And as you almost</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p> <p>1 actuary signing the certification that's submitted 2 with the filing is required to comply with actuarial 3 standards of practice, ASOP-8 and so the American 4 Academy of Actuaries has recommended that these are 5 items that the actuary should include in their review 6 and analysis in preparing the filing. So that's 7 another, I guess, checklist that inherently is 8 included in that process. 9 On to our recommendations. 10 I'm going to summarize the recommendations 11 here, certainly if there are any questions feel free 12 to ask. They're outlined in quite a bit of detail in 13 the report, not only do we present our recommendations 14 but some rationale for each one as to why, why we've 15 come to form that recommendation. 16 And we've tried to classify them I guess in 17 broad categories. The first what we thought were the 18 most important in the primary subject of our work was 19 those that were going to need to be made, the changes 20 that were going to need to be made to have an 21 effective rate review program. 22 So there aren't a lot here and that probably</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p> <p>1 alluded to, it will make the process more efficient. 2 Having conducted rate filing reviews myself in other 3 states, when you do a review and ask for more 4 information from the carrier and then it kind of sits 5 there for two weeks, or three weeks, and you get the 6 information back, you almost have to refamiliarize 7 yourself with the case. So to get most of the 8 information up front would hopefully review, or 9 increase the efficiency and it would decrease 10 hopefully the need for significant followup. And 11 perhaps shorten the timeline so that there's a shorter 12 period between when the filing is submitted and when 13 the approval date actually occurs. So carriers aren't 14 having to implement the rate increase beyond the 15 proposed effective date, which in a sense means the 16 next time they file for a rate increase they missed a 17 couple months of trend and only makes the next rate 18 increase greater. So it perhaps even would stabilize 19 the rate increases to some small extent, I'm not sure 20 to what extent. 21 And then the last thing we just wanted to 22 touch on was the actuarial standards of practice. The</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p> <p>1 goes back to that first slide where we showed that 2 little first graft down at the bottom and it showed 3 that Maryland had quite, in our opinion, quite a 4 thorough review process in place today. So these are 5 really just additional requirements that are needed 6 because they're outlined in the regulations from HHS. 7 A couple of them may require a couple of regulatory 8 changes, I'm trying to remember, see if I can get this 9 right off the top of my head. 10 For example, administrative expenses, I 11 don't believe for all carriers, carriers meaning non 12 profit health service corporations, HMOs and insurance 13 companies, I don't believe you have that authority for 14 all three today and I can't remember exactly off the 15 top of my head which one, but I just bring that to 16 your attention that you may not have, and again a 17 legal question, as Karen said we're not lawyers, there 18 may be the need to have some regulatory changes. 19 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Or some legislative 20 activity. 21 MS. TOMCZYK: Legislative, I'm sorry, yes. 22 And again, I'm not sure if that needs to be done</p>

Page 58

1 through legislature or regulatory. And so I'm not
 2 going to try to address any legal issues here.
 3 The next group was around the type of
 4 review. And while the regulations only require these
 5 enhanced reviews be performed on non grandfathered
 6 filings, and those that exceed that threshold, again,
 7 10 percent, 2011, we're recommending that they be
 8 performed for all individuals/small group filings.
 9 For a couple of reasons, first it provides the same
 10 level, equity amongst all Maryland consumers.
 11 Everyone is getting that same level of scrutiny, if
 12 you will, to all the components of the rates that
 13 they're being asked to pay from the insurance
 14 companies, not, not, based strictly on the change. So
 15 there could be misestimation of trend in one year that
 16 would cause a larger rate increase the following year.
 17 And put, cause a rate increase to exceed the
 18 10 percent threshold. And to limit the review to just
 19 those that exceed the threshold, you're not really
 20 being equitable to all consumers in the sense that the
 21 real focus in my opinion at least should be what's the
 22 ultimate rate you're asking them to pay, not so much

Page 59

1 what's the change in the rate from the --
 2 MS. BENDER: And conversely like you gave,
 3 where they underestimate, if the previous year they
 4 over estimated trends, so now all of a sudden maybe
 5 they're only going to get a 4 percent increase you may
 6 still warrant maybe the 4 percent isn't reasonable.
 7 If they used an unreasonable trend. And so that was
 8 another reasoning for applying it to all filings, not
 9 just the 10 percent threshold.
 10 MS. TOMCZYK: Yeah. And again, well, the
 11 regulations address the rate increase and the reason,
 12 and they really focus on the reasonableness or
 13 unreasonableness of a rate increase, and this is my
 14 opinion, I think it really is, you know, are the rates
 15 reasonable in relation to the benefit. So that's the
 16 basis.
 17 The other thing by having one standardized
 18 process it will allow the actuaries reviewing the
 19 filings to have more efficiencies. They won't get a
 20 filing on their desk and say, okay, now I have to look
 21 at this filing and I follow this process, or this
 22 filing is under 10 percent so I follow this other

Page 60

1 process. It'll promote some efficiencies there.
 2 With respect to the large group, we
 3 recommend no changes. First of all we think the
 4 reviews you're performing in the large group market
 5 are more extensive than we typically see in many
 6 states. Many states don't even have the authority to
 7 review large group rates. And also the regulations
 8 don't apply to large groups. So we kept that to
 9 individual and small group.
 10 The loss ratio test, our recommendation is
 11 to require the test be met at the market segment level
 12 and I guess there's not, the recommendation comes from
 13 the fact that the -- the recommendation comes from the
 14 fact that both your new law that was just passed in
 15 the state, and the HHS regulations both require that
 16 it be at the marketed level.
 17 However, if the test can be met for a given
 18 filing, theoretically, theoretically if the test can
 19 be met for all filings or all products that a carrier
 20 has that comprise the market segment individually,
 21 then theoretically the market segment level test is
 22 met. So we're recommending that if, for that

Page 61

1 particular filing, taking into consideration the
 2 credibility of that filing, so if it's a filing that
 3 only covers a small number of policyholders you may
 4 not want to implement this, but taking credibility
 5 into consideration, if they can meet it or demonstrate
 6 that it will be met at the filing level then we don't
 7 really think that there's the need to require the
 8 market segment level test.
 9 The next set in relation to timing, we
 10 looked at the lead time that carriers are required to
 11 file prior to the effective date as well as the deemer
 12 periods or the time period that the administration has
 13 to conduct the reviews. And we found both that they
 14 were consistent with other states and in our opinion
 15 seemed to allow sufficient time, so we aren't
 16 recommending any changes to that, those issues.
 17 But we did notice that, I want to get this
 18 one right, insurance carriers and non profits in the
 19 individual market have different requirements for
 20 notifying consumers of their rate increases than HMOs
 21 and in the small group market. So the requirement is
 22 that they be, consumers be notified 40 days prior to

Page 62

1 the expiration of the grace period, which is 30 days,
 2 which essentially means technically they only have to
 3 notify consumers ten days before the effective date of
 4 the rate increase, which doesn't really allow a lot of
 5 time for consumers to shop if they're getting a large
 6 rate increase for other coverage. So we're
 7 recommending that you change it to be consistent with
 8 HMOs and that required in the small group market which
 9 is 45 days prior to the effective date of the rate
 10 increase.

11 With regard to filing requirements, we
 12 recommend you require all filings be submitted through
 13 SERFF. It's our understanding that SERFF has been
 14 reporting requirements that you're required to make to
 15 HHS. So again for efficiency purposes if they all
 16 come in through SERFF it's easier on your end to use
 17 that availability.

18 The rate filing checklist I already talked a
 19 little bit about, again, it's in Appendix D. And I
 20 guess I didn't touch on the fact that it would promote
 21 consistency in the data that's submitted, but again,
 22 getting as much of the data upfront will certainly

Page 63

1 hopefully reduce the time required for the review and
 2 make it more efficient and such.

3 And reduce followup.

4 And in that checklist we identify certain
 5 items that we're recommending the carriers be required
 6 to submit in Excel format. So premium membership
 7 claims information to facilitate the actuaries perhaps
 8 doing some of their own high level trend analysis or
 9 looking at the experience, as well as the carrier's
 10 trend analysis actually submitting that in Excel. So
 11 the actuaries can actually look at the formulas and
 12 form their own independent analysis on the
 13 appropriate, the appropriateness of the trend
 14 assumptions.

15 And we're also requiring, or recommending
 16 that all small group and individual filings include
 17 the Part I Preliminary, Part I Preliminary
 18 Justification Rate Summary Worksheet. Boy, that's
 19 difficult.

20 And really the driving force behind this
 21 recommendation is tied in great deal to our
 22 recommendations in the consumerism project that we'll

Page 64

1 talk about later. So to the extent that you decide to
 2 implement our recommendations there, this would, by
 3 having all carriers submit this information with all
 4 filings would facilitate the implementation of those
 5 recommendations. So we'll talk more about that when
 6 we talk about the other report later.

7 Finally, these were kind of some other
 8 recommendations that didn't really fit together in any
 9 kind of grouping or classification. We talked
 10 extensively, Karen did, about the data from HSCRC and
 11 MHCC and our recommendation there is to continue to
 12 work with them and investigate what information is
 13 available, how you might be able to use that
 14 information. Our focus was not really on taking a
 15 very deep, deep dive into that data and looking at in
 16 very detail the analytical tools, but more to make an
 17 assessment as to what data is available and should, I
 18 guess should further consideration be given to it.

19 Pricing margins and other relevant factors,
 20 other relevant factors we're defining as I guess,
 21 anything that's not part of the loss ratio component,
 22 so with the 80 percent loss ratio it's that other

Page 65

1 20 percent, admin, risk profit, we're recommending
 2 that you consider including those, those items in your
 3 review. And again, some of them may require
 4 legislative changes. And Karen talked about the
 5 reporting that you're going to have to provide to HHS
 6 for each filing that you review that falls under that
 7 subject to review category. There will be many
 8 aspects of it, to our knowledge today there isn't,
 9 there hasn't been any kind of direction or
 10 instructions or guidance provided in terms of what has
 11 to be included, and certainly if anything comes out
 12 that needs to be considered, but absent that, there
 13 are probably some common aspects of every filing that,
 14 and information that you're going to report to HHS.

15 And we've given some ideas or our thoughts on what
 16 that information might be that HHS is looking for.

17 But to the extent that it can be standardized, again,
 18 going back to standardization and making it efficient,
 19 there's going to be a lot of additional work and that
 20 kind of leads into the, I won't skip over the
 21 pre-approved trends, but just touching on the next one
 22 on staffing needs, there's just going to be an

Page 66

1 increase in the volume of the workload so anything
 2 that can be done to make the process more efficient is
 3 a plus.
 4 The pre-approved trend factors, our
 5 understanding is today that carriers are allowed to
 6 file for a trend factor that they can use to increment
 7 rates on a monthly basis for a period of 12 months.
 8 At which point when the 12th month arrives the rates
 9 are essentially locked in until additional rates are
 10 filed, an additional rate filing is submitted to
 11 support increasing rates further than that point. And
 12 we're recommending you continue that process, one,
 13 hopefully absent that you may see an increase in the
 14 volume of rate increases. And with the consideration
 15 that in coming up with that pre-approved trend factor
 16 you may want to consider limiting it to that threshold
 17 that's used to determine whether a rate increase is
 18 deemed subject to review. So if that's 10 percent
 19 again for 2011, you may not want to approve a rating
 20 -- I'm sorry, a pre-approved trend factor that exceeds
 21 that amount because I'm not really sure how that would
 22 play in with causing a rate increase to exceed

Page 67

1 10 percent at that point isn't being reviewed. So if
 2 a carrier thinks their trends are higher than
 3 10 percent well then maybe you require them to file
 4 more than once a year. But put a cap on the
 5 pre-approved.
 6 As far as staffing I mentioned that there is
 7 probably, or there will be, if all of these, again, it
 8 will be dependent on which of our recommendations
 9 ultimately are implemented, but if they were to all be
 10 implemented there would be a significant increase in
 11 the filings that are reviewed, the reviews themselves
 12 would become more detailed, someone would have to work
 13 with HSCRC and MHCC to investigate how their data
 14 could be used. The reporting that has to occur to
 15 HHS. So all of that will increase the workload and
 16 the need for staff.
 17 And we went through and we kind of thought
 18 that just what we have here, and this is independent
 19 from the other report, because as we'll see later
 20 there will be independent, or additional staffing
 21 needs required there, but just for what falls under
 22 the scope of the rate review, we thought that would be

Page 68

1 equivalent to one additional actuary and one
 2 additional actuarial student.
 3 And finally our last recommendation was to
 4 give consideration to developing a procedures manual.
 5 Once you decide on what the new process will be, to
 6 document it, it will promote consistency amongst
 7 different reviewers, especially if the staff grows and
 8 you have more people performing the reviews.
 9 Efficiency and then training new staff, they'll have
 10 something that they can at least refer to on a regular
 11 basis until they get fully trained and implemented.
 12 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Are you envisioning
 13 the actuarial student performing the role of an
 14 analyst? I thought I had seen an actuary and an
 15 analyst somewhere in your report?
 16 MS. TOMCZYK: I don't recall if we used
 17 actuarial analyst, but I tend to think of an actuarial
 18 student or an actuarial analyst as someone who perhaps
 19 doesn't have their credentials so they haven't
 20 obtained the associateship in the business light of
 21 the actuaries. Not really being a person who is
 22 making a final decision on a rate filing. But maybe

Page 69

1 doing some of the work, for example, in putting
 2 together the reporting to, that gets submitted to HHS.
 3 They can certainly do that under the guidance of the
 4 chief actuary and with peer review. So taking some of
 5 the, I don't know how to say it, the tasks that
 6 require less experience. Because there will be a lot
 7 of them, just in the reporting requirements and the
 8 consumer disclosure, some of -- some of that student,
 9 actuarial student or actuarial analyst position, I
 10 don't know that this, implementing these
 11 recommendations would fully require a person full-time
 12 -- it may. But they could also work to fulfill some
 13 of the additional tasks that are going to be required
 14 under the other report.
 15 MS. BENDER: And certainly an analyst can
 16 support the actuary by doing certain portions of the
 17 review, such as ensuring consistency in the data
 18 between this particular filing and analogous data
 19 points or time periods in previous filings. Those
 20 kind of analysis to sort of identify certain issues
 21 for the actuary that's going to be performing the
 22 review. But we do not recommend that final decision

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p> <p>1 be made by a non qualified actuary. 2 MS. TOMCZYK: Yeah. 3 And another example might be if the 4 checklist were recommending as implemented the 5 actuarial student with some training could perhaps go 6 through an initial high level review of the filing and 7 kind of go down the checklist and make the actuary 8 aware, the actuary who is actually going to perform, 9 be responsible for performing the review and forming 10 the opinion, make them aware of which items aren't 11 there and initially before, if there's a significant 12 amount of missing information, before the actuary even 13 starts reviewing it correspond with the company and 14 say, hey, you have eight things on this list that you 15 haven't provided, we're not even going to review it 16 until you provide this information. 17 MS. BENDER: Was it somehow lost in 18 transmission, or something, you know, I mean, stranger 19 things have happened? 20 MS. TOMCZYK: So there are probably skills 21 that are beyond what an administrative type person 22 could do. But there are a lot of functions that could</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p> <p>1 I haven't asked yet. And that relates to the 2 administration's review of trend analysis. You had 3 set out in your report on page 71 three options. And 4 in your recommendations you chose what appeared to me 5 anyway to be the least robust of the three options, in 6 terms of the review that occurs at the Maryland 7 Insurance Administration. And as I read the report it 8 appeared to me that at least part of the thinking 9 there was just based on the realities of staffing 10 levels at the Maryland Insurance Administration and I 11 wanted to confirm whether that was, whether that was 12 the case? 13 MS. TOMCZYK: That was. But I will add in 14 terms of robustness, if the, in the checklist one of 15 our recommendations is to require the analysis be 16 provided in Excel format. So the analysis or the 17 review in that third option could be a little more 18 robust as opposed to having paper copies or a PDF that 19 shows the calculations, but you can't really dig into 20 the formulas and calculations. So, but you're 21 correct, the primary reason for that recommendation 22 was staffing. If staffing were not an issue we would</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p> <p>1 be performed by a student or an analyst that's not yet 2 credentialed. 3 MS. BENDER: And part of the wild card too 4 is this, you know, the trend benchmarks and work with 5 HSCRC and MHCC, that's going to require someone with 6 some experience. You know, and depending upon the 7 resources that are going to be required to support 8 that effort, that has to be at what I would say an 9 actuarial -- not analyst level. They might be able to 10 do some of the preliminary analysis, pulling the data 11 or something like that but, you know, trying to get 12 correlations or something like that, probably would 13 have to be, somebody at a more senior level. 14 So again -- 15 MS. TOMCZYK: I guess we'll open it up to 16 any additional questions that you have. 17 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Do you have much? 18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: No. 19 CHIEF ACTUARY YU: No. 20 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: I have just one, 21 I'm sensitive to wanting to give the court reporter a 22 break but I have just one I think additional question</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p> <p>1 have selected item 1. 2 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: All right. Thank 3 you. If no one else has any questions, I want to 4 thank you for what I think was a very thorough and 5 helpful report. And presentation here today. 6 For those of you who are here today, the 7 slide deck is, if it's not already available it will 8 be sometime today on our website there will be a link 9 to it so if you're interested in having a hard copy of 10 the slide deck, both this one and the consumer 11 information slide deck. 12 CHIEF ACTUARY YU: It's already posted. 13 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay. So it is now 14 available on our website. 15 Why don't we take about ten minutes and then 16 we will come back and hear first from these folks who 17 have signed up in advance to provide comments here 18 today. If there are additional people who are present 19 who have not signed up, we're happy to hear from you 20 as well if you'd like to provide some testimony at 21 today's hearing. And once we've done that we'll see 22 where we are and either break for lunch or move on to</p>

Page 74

1 the consumer information report.
 2 (Whereupon, there was a recess in the
 3 proceedings.)
 4 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: My break turned
 5 into 20 minutes. I understand there's been some
 6 confusion in terms of access to the restroom but I'm
 7 told there is no card swiping necessary, so the doors
 8 are open and you need not worry about getting some
 9 kind of pass to get in. If that hasn't become
 10 apparent already.
 11 In terms of public comment, we have three
 12 people who have signed up in advance to provide public
 13 comment and we're taking those as I understand it on a
 14 first come first served basis. And the first of those
 15 was Michael Robbins on behalf of the Maryland Hospital
 16 Association.
 17 MR. ROBBINS: Good morning. I'm Mike
 18 Robbins, I'm senior vice president with the Maryland
 19 Hospital Association. I thank you for the opportunity
 20 to briefly comment since you have received my written
 21 comments already and they are part of the record.
 22 We obviously spent a lot of time working

Page 75

1 with the HSCRC and believe there is a wealth of
 2 information that is publicly available, available to
 3 the commission, to the insurance administration for
 4 reviewing at least the hospital trend portion or at
 5 least the Maryland hospital trend portion of the
 6 premium rate requests that are before the insurance
 7 administration.
 8 We would just support the consultants
 9 recommendations that you continue to look for ways to
 10 work with that information, both with the MHCC as well
 11 as the HSCRC. We believe that there is some
 12 inconsistency between some of the premium trends we've
 13 been seeing over the last few years and at least the
 14 hospital portion of the medical trend where we've been
 15 seeing very significantly single, low digit, single
 16 declines in single digit trends in at least the
 17 hospital trend for the Maryland hospitals. And again,
 18 that's the total trend, there's a lot of information
 19 that you need beyond that. But we would just
 20 encourage and support those recommendations to
 21 continue to work with the HSCRC, and the MHCC on
 22 getting additional information to help your process.

Page 76

1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Thank you,
 2 Mr. Robbins.
 3 Are there any questions for Mr. Robbins?
 4 Thank you very much for being here. We
 5 appreciate it.
 6 MR. ROBBINS: Thank you.
 7 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Next we have
 8 Mr. Gene Ransom of MedChi.
 9 MR. RANSOM: Good morning.
 10 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Good morning.
 11 MR. RANSOM: My comments are brief and for
 12 economy if it's okay I'll just make my comments for
 13 both reports right now unless there is any objection
 14 to that.
 15 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: I think that would
 16 be fine.
 17 MR. RANSOM: Okay.
 18 First and foremost I want to commend the
 19 insurance commission administration for using the
 20 opportunity to use these federal grants to provide
 21 these two reports which I think are very helpful for
 22 the citizens of Maryland. And I also want to commend

Page 77

1 you and applaud you for encouraging public
 2 participation and public comment throughout this
 3 regulatory process.
 4 Our comments are mostly strongly supportive
 5 of the second report which you're about to hear,
 6 specifically we think the idea of the website adding
 7 the health insurance rate under the consumer tabs, the
 8 consumer friendly summary of the rate filings,
 9 creating the brochures and somehow figuring out a way
 10 possibly to do the automated e-mails would be very
 11 positive for our membership and for the patients they
 12 serve in Maryland so they have a better understanding
 13 of the process. I'm not going to read my entire
 14 written testimony but I'm going to ask it be
 15 submitted, and I've turned in copies to staff as part
 16 of this hearing.
 17 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Do you have a copy
 18 for the court reporter, sir?
 19 MR. RANSOM: Yeah. Sure.
 20 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: If we could mark
 21 that as, that would be 8.
 22

Page 78

1 (MIA HEARING Exhibit 8 was marked for
 2 identification and attached to the transcript.)
 3 MR. RANSOM: Thank you very much.
 4 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Thank you, sir.
 5 And then Ms. Kimberly Robinson of the League
 6 of Life and Health Insurers of Maryland.
 7 MS. ROBINSON: Good morning, Commissioner
 8 Goldsmith, and MIA staff.
 9 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Good morning.
 10 MS. ROBINSON: I'm Kimberly Robinson,
 11 Executive Director, of the League of Life and Health
 12 Insurers of Maryland, and thank you for the
 13 opportunity to comment today on the Oliver Wyman
 14 reports.
 15 We appreciate the work that the MIA has done
 16 in this area, a very thorough review that you've
 17 commissioned in order to understand where Maryland
 18 stands for the rate review process. As we've heard in
 19 the presentation it's clear by the report Maryland
 20 currently has a very rigorous rate review process in
 21 place and it's to Maryland's credit that in order to
 22 meet the HHS guidelines there's very little that

Page 79

1 actually has to be added in. I'm going to make my
 2 comments a little bit brief today, we're probably
 3 going to submit these to you in writing before the
 4 June 30th closing deadline but there are a couple of
 5 things I'd just like to highlight for you today in
 6 terms of our response to the recommendations contained
 7 in the Wyman report.
 8 As an over arching principle, the members of
 9 the Legal Life and Health Insurers of Maryland who
 10 represent a good chunk of Maryland's health market,
 11 both individual, small group and large group with very
 12 levels of market share believe that it's important
 13 that rate review remain a very technical and objective
 14 financial and actuarial process conducted by qualified
 15 actuaries because we feel that taking into account
 16 projected claims, expenses, and risk changes will
 17 allow that review to be the greatest consumer
 18 protection that you're going to be able to provide to
 19 Marylanders in our marketplace. And any
 20 recommendation that the MIA accepts we believe should
 21 be aimed at this consumer protection goal and you
 22 should keep an eye on making sure it does not have the

Page 80

1 unintended consequence of reducing the efficiency or
 2 increasing the administrative burden upon carriers and
 3 therefore the cost of the process of filing here in
 4 the State of Maryland.
 5 Most importantly we think that this first
 6 step for Maryland should be to be consistent with and
 7 not go beyond the requirements of HHS' final rule as
 8 it was published May 23rd, 2011. And therefore focus
 9 specifically on those changes necessary to meet those
 10 requirements put forth by HHS. To that end there are
 11 some recommendations contained in the report that do
 12 in fact exceed the final rule as published by HHS.
 13 And just to very briefly highlight what some of those
 14 recommendations are and why they do cause us some
 15 concern, they would include the recommendation that
 16 the preliminary justification summary Part 1 be filed
 17 for all rate filings, not just those that meet the
 18 10 percent threshold. As well as the recommendation
 19 that the enhanced review be performed for both
 20 grandfathered and non grandfathered policies in the
 21 individual and small group market.
 22 While I know it was described as being

Page 81

1 recommended to achieve some type of equity amongst
 2 Marylanders I look at it this way. The reason why we
 3 think Maryland should start at the point of what is
 4 required by the final rule is simply this. This is a
 5 new process for both the state and for carriers who
 6 are doing business across the country. HHS has set
 7 the 10 percent threshold and limited the review with
 8 regard to grandfathered versus non grandfathered plans
 9 after their own very thorough process and
 10 consideration of comments from interested parties. To
 11 go beyond that right now might just be a little
 12 premature in terms of our experience both for the
 13 administration and your actuarial staff who is getting
 14 their hands around what these new requirements are
 15 going to be and what the enhanced review is going to
 16 require, but also for the companies who are trying to
 17 accommodate new requirements on a 50 state basis. To
 18 give ourselves this first year as HHS is determining
 19 whether first of all, their threshold is even
 20 appropriate, might be a good time for us all to learn
 21 what it is we're doing and how it is we're going to do
 22 it before Maryland decides to go beyond what the

Page 82

1 federal government has also prescribed. And so it is
 2 our recommendation that Maryland follow certainly what
 3 is in the HHS rule but be very thoughtful about
 4 whether or not to go beyond that point.
 5 A couple of other points just very quickly,
 6 while we understand the recommendation to collaborate
 7 with HSCRC and MHCC, of course we heard also what the
 8 limitations of that data may be so we understand and
 9 would encourage that to be a thoughtful process as
 10 well and one that you take your time with to
 11 understand the utility of the information in front of
 12 you.
 13 Another point was the suggestion that you
 14 alter your authority to allow the law to follow more
 15 closely the law for non profit health service plans
 16 when it comes to the consideration of any other
 17 relevant factor within and outside of the state.
 18 Looking from a national carrier perspective
 19 as opposed to companies who are currently subject to
 20 that portion of Maryland rate review law, many of
 21 those companies are not writing on a national basis.
 22 So I think for this segment of the industry trying to

Page 83

1 understand what that within and without, outside of
 2 the state would actually translate into is a slightly
 3 different consideration, is that our experience
 4 outside of the state what you'd be looking at how a
 5 plan is performing on a nationwide basis, are we
 6 looking at national trends and thresholds, for
 7 instance, medical CPI, that are tied to regional or
 8 national experience, particularly where some of those
 9 national trends are concerned, it is something that's
 10 discussed in the preamble to the HHS final rule. It
 11 was something that they cautioned taking into
 12 consideration and so trying to better understand how
 13 that type of a provision would be applied to plans who
 14 are operating on a national basis and what the
 15 consequence of that is is something that is certainly
 16 of concern to my members as well.
 17 Lastly, there are the 12 factors that are
 18 enumerated within the HHS rule and in the Oliver Wyman
 19 report, the consultants did their best to try to
 20 explain what they believe HHS means by each of those
 21 12 factors. The reality is HHS has not provided any
 22 guidance about what any one of those 12 factors

Page 84

1 actually means to a rate review process. So they do
 2 not go on in the final rule to explain what they mean
 3 by over, underestimation of medical trend in previous
 4 years and how that should be considered in an
 5 actuarial review. We would also ask that the MIA,
 6 particularly to the over and under estimation of
 7 medical trend to the reserve needs, and to the other
 8 administrative cost bullets under that list to be very
 9 thoughtful about how those things would be applied.
 10 For instance, over under estimation of medical trend
 11 while may having some impact as a company needs to
 12 adjust their rates as they're going forward based on
 13 the fact that actual versus expected experience did
 14 not previously match up, we're also still, need to be
 15 sensitive to what the anticipated trend is going
 16 forward. So that historical look has some relevance
 17 but to be careful not to overweight the need to
 18 correct what is believed to be an over estimation from
 19 the past as we're also trying to deal with projected
 20 trends going forward.
 21 So that it does not have the unintended
 22 consequence of harming a rate that's being approved

Page 85

1 going forward.
 2 And so, the need to review what each of
 3 those bullets is going to mean for Maryland is
 4 something that we would be interested in further
 5 development and better understanding of how Maryland
 6 would look at each of those things as you are
 7 reviewing a rate.
 8 And actually my very last comment is to the
 9 MLR issues, we appreciate in the Wyman report that
 10 they do acknowledge that the federal guidance for MLR
 11 is tied to market level and not product or individual
 12 filing. We support the MIA's change in the law most
 13 recently to follow that federal rule. And to focus on
 14 the MLR at market segment. We think that that is
 15 appropriate and important and was well considered by
 16 HHS as they developed their rule and believe that that
 17 is the appropriate way to deal with the MLR issues as
 18 they're discussed in the report.
 19 With that I will submit the rest of the
 20 comments in writing and answer any questions that you
 21 may have.
 22 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Any questions for

Page 86

1 Ms. Robinson?
 2 Thank you very much for being here. We
 3 appreciate your comments.
 4 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you.
 5 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Is there anyone
 6 else who is here who wanted to provide comments
 7 regarding the rate review process report?
 8 Okay.
 9 I'm good to go since we just took a break,
 10 if others agree I think we ought to move on to the
 11 consumer information report.
 12 Why don't we go off the record for a few
 13 minutes.
 14 (Whereupon, there was a discussion off the
 15 record.)
 16 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: We're back on the
 17 record. And we're looking at a document now that I
 18 believe we should mark as Exhibit 9, Recommendations
 19 to the Commissioner on Information Provided to
 20 Consumers, that's slide deck.
 21 (MIA HEARING Exhibit 9 was marked for
 22 identification and attached to the transcript.)

Page 87

1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Whenever you're
 2 ready.
 3 MS. TOMCZYK: All right. This first slide
 4 just provides an overview again of our presentation.
 5 We've segmented the presentation into three areas,
 6 first the background research we conducted, some
 7 consumer focus groups that were conducted and then
 8 finally our recommendations.
 9 So I'm going to start out with the
 10 background research. And as we all know, a little
 11 over a year ago the Affordable Care Act was past and
 12 when we hear about it we hear about accessibility and
 13 affordability but there is this component to it that
 14 deals with consumerism and transparent making the rate
 15 making process and rate review process more
 16 transparent to consumers. So there are a few aspects
 17 that I put up there, we put up there that specifically
 18 deal with this. The first that carriers have to
 19 submit justification, consumer friendly justification
 20 for the rate increases that exceed the threshold. And
 21 again, I'll keep referring to that as the 10 percent,
 22 or I forget the term Karen was using for it, trigger

Page 88

1 level.
 2 And the second is that the information has
 3 to be posted on HHS' website as well as the carrier's
 4 website. If the state has an effective rate review
 5 program in place, the state is also required to post
 6 the information on there, or make the information
 7 accessible on their website.
 8 And then as part of the final regulations
 9 that weren't included in the draft regulations is the
 10 requirement that an effective rate review program
 11 allow or provide a mechanism to allow for public
 12 comment on the rate review program.
 13 So given the objective that we were tasked
 14 with providing recommendations to the commissioner on
 15 information to be provided to consumers and the most
 16 efficient and effective manner in which that
 17 information should be provided, our first step was to
 18 look at what information is out there today. And we
 19 looked at both the Maryland Insurance Administration's
 20 website as well as brochures and other print
 21 information that was made available to us. And our
 22 understanding is that these brochures are provided at

Page 89

1 a vast number of outreach events that occur, as well
 2 as placed in various public places such as the library
 3 or the Motor Vehicle Administration.
 4 In reviewing this there were a couple of
 5 themes that we found in terms of the information that
 6 is available and the information that's not typically
 7 available today. The information that's available are
 8 general tips on purchasing insurance, how to file a
 9 complaint, how to appeal if you've had a denied claim.
 10 A listing of carriers that are licensed in the state
 11 to help consumers avoid purchasing a policy from what
 12 might potentially be a fraudulent insurer. Complaints
 13 that have been filed.
 14 The information that we really didn't find
 15 much available today is information on the rate filing
 16 process, and review process as well as just general
 17 information on the rate development at a consumer
 18 friendly level, and actually I should say even at a
 19 more technical level I don't think we really found any
 20 of that information available today.
 21 So for example, Maryland does not provide
 22 online access to rate filings as several other states

Page 90

1 do. They don't have a process to notify consumers
 2 when a carrier has filed a rate increase with the
 3 administration. They don't provide any information on
 4 the process that's used to review those rates or how
 5 the rates are developed.
 6 This is probably hard to see up there, but
 7 as the commissioner mentioned, the presentation is
 8 available online, this chart is also included in our
 9 report. So we compared this information that's
 10 available and not available in Maryland today to some
 11 other states. And the other states were somewhat
 12 random, but we did select Oregon and Connecticut and
 13 Rhode Island specifically because to our knowledge
 14 those are states that in our experience have been
 15 historically more active and engaged in the consumer
 16 transparency aspect.
 17 So if you look at the first column for
 18 Maryland, all those, all those first six or eight rows
 19 that don't have Xs in them are legally the items from
 20 the bottom half of this previous report, so the
 21 information on rate making and rate filing process,
 22 the items on the bottom are the ones that are

Page 91

1 available today. So you can see while some other
 2 states have Xs in those top areas, there are a fair
 3 number of states that aren't providing this type of
 4 information.
 5 However, we expect that with the passage of
 6 the Affordable Care Act and the increased focus on
 7 transparency that the top half of that chart will
 8 begin to be filled out a little bit more over the next
 9 year or two. And we know that other states are
 10 starting to look at this.
 11 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Are you aware of
 12 any information regarding, for example, in Oregon,
 13 Oregon allows consumers to post comments on rate
 14 filings and allows consumers to subscribe to e-mails
 15 updates on rate filings. Do you have any information
 16 about the uptake, the extent to which consumers in
 17 Oregon have taken advantage of those opportunities?
 18 MS. BENDER: I don't think there's any
 19 statistics in the public domain right now regarding
 20 these kind of uptakes. I'm not even sure if there is
 21 any information in the public domain regarding,
 22 frequency, what we should call frequency of hits to

Page 92

1 the, to a website regarding a rate filing. Now, I'm
 2 just not aware of any. I suspect that these things
 3 may become more available as more states are
 4 introducing this as to find out maybe which are the
 5 most efficient ways and the best ways of
 6 communicating. But I personally am not aware.
 7 Are you Tammy?
 8 MS. TOMCZYK: No, and just to clarify our
 9 research was really limited to going out to these
 10 sites and looking at them. That said I will say that
 11 Oregon for example, I personally did pull up many rate
 12 filings and for the most part everyone had at least
 13 one or two comments that were posted. So, and again,
 14 this is just in my small sample set, I didn't see a
 15 lot where there wasn't any comment being posted. But
 16 that may not be, that may not hold overall.
 17 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay.
 18 Thank you.
 19 MS. TOMCZYK: So then we looked at either
 20 recent, recent regulatory action, either laws that
 21 have been passed or those that were currently being
 22 debated in several states and I'm not going to go

Page 93

1 through each one, California, Connecticut, Nevada and
 2 there's a couple more on this next slide. What I will
 3 say is there were really two underlying themes again
 4 to those, there was a move towards posting rate
 5 filings or the desire to post rate filings online and
 6 to accept comment from the public, whether it be
 7 through a rate hearing or just a bulletin board, there
 8 is a little variety in that there. But those are
 9 really the two themes that we were seeing in this
 10 pending or recently passed legislation.
 11 So after we performed our background
 12 research to get an idea of what kind of information is
 13 made available to consumers today, both in the State
 14 of Maryland and in other states, we developed some
 15 preliminary recommendations. But we wanted to
 16 validate them. So we engaged a firm to help, assist
 17 us with conducting some consumer focus groups and
 18 Karen, I'll turn it over to her, she's going to talk a
 19 little bit about the content of those.
 20 Oh, I'm sorry, that's still me, isn't it?
 21 SPEAKER 2: You're not going to get off so
 22 easy.

Page 94

1 MS. TOMCZYK: So the purpose of them was
 2 really to initially just understand or gather a
 3 general awareness of Maryland consumers, or
 4 information on the general awareness of whether
 5 consumers were aware of the administration, if they
 6 were what was their idea of the administration's role.
 7 What type of information they felt should be made
 8 available to consumers and in what format.
 9 So as I mentioned before I tried to hand it
 10 over to Karen quickly, we conducted the focus groups,
 11 we conducted five and there's no magic number to five
 12 other than probably the primary driver was the budget
 13 we had available to us.
 14 We separated them between consumers and
 15 small employers, again, those were the, those are the
 16 subject of the new rate review regulations. In
 17 conjunction with the administration staff we developed
 18 a screener, a call screener that the research used to
 19 recruit individuals and small employers. And they're
 20 in the appendix but I'll just highlight some of the
 21 key aspects. For example, we asked them to screen out
 22 individuals over 65, they tend to primarily for the

Page 95

1 most part be on Medicare and we really wanted to focus
 2 on individuals and small employers that are purchasing
 3 comprehensive coverage.
 4 We excluded individuals on Medicaid. We did
 5 require that it be limited to Maryland residents. And
 6 we also excluded state and federal employees.
 7 Within the three consumer groups we, one of
 8 the three we included or targeted individuals where
 9 English is not their primary language. The primary
 10 reason being most if not all of this communication is
 11 going to be in print form so we wanted to be cognizant
 12 if there were any special needs that that particular
 13 demographic needed to address or needed to be taken
 14 into consideration when developing these materials.
 15 And then for the two small employer groups
 16 we limited them to employers with 2 to 50 employees,
 17 again, to mirror the regulations.
 18 And both the individual and the consumer,
 19 individual consumers and the small group employers, we
 20 didn't require that they had insurance coverage today,
 21 but we did ask that they had insurance coverage at
 22 some point in the last five years. So with the recent

Page 96

1 economic conditions, there were perhaps a fair number
 2 of people and we saw this in our results that had
 3 insurance coverage but no longer could afford it and
 4 had recently lost or just dropped their individual
 5 policy because they couldn't afford it. So we wanted
 6 to make sure we included those folks in to get their
 7 perspective.
 8 So this next grouping of slides I'm going to
 9 go through relatively quickly not dwell on each one
 10 too much but if you have questions please ask.
 11 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Maybe before I
 12 could, excuse me for interrupting you.
 13 MS. TOMCZYK: Sure.
 14 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Before we get to
 15 the composition of the focus groups, how did you go
 16 about identifying potential focus group participants
 17 to begin with?
 18 MS. TOMCZYK: Meaning to contact them?
 19 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Yes.
 20 MS. TOMCZYK: As opposed to did we take a
 21 phone book and start calling them?
 22 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Exactly.

Page 97

1 MS. TOMCZYK: We didn't do that ourselves,
 2 as I mentioned, we hired a research firm in Bethesda,
 3 Maryland.
 4 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Do you know how
 5 they went about doing it?
 6 MS. TOMCZYK: They have a database that they
 7 use that they contacted. The information that was
 8 shared with us is that many of these are people who
 9 have actively participated in focus groups before. We
 10 did have in one of our focus groups not to get too
 11 much into the details of participant, one participant
 12 who didn't really participate a lot and we asked them
 13 afterwards how they handled that and they do go back
 14 after the fact is my understanding and if they have
 15 participants that aren't actively participating they
 16 will remove them from their database.
 17 So --
 18 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: What's the name of
 19 the consultant?
 20 MS. TOMCZYK: Schugoll, S-C-H, I believe
 21 it's, S-C-H-U-G-O-L-L [sic] Research.
 22 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: So they have a

Page 98

1 database of people who have in the past participated
 2 in focus groups so they began with their database?
 3 MS. TOMCZYK: Yes. And I don't know but I
 4 could call them and followup with you in terms of how
 5 people get added to that database, whether they've
 6 contacted them saying that I'm interesting in it. But
 7 many of them, they did indicate that many of the
 8 people who participated participate on a regular
 9 basis.
 10 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Are they paid for
 11 their participation?
 12 MS. TOMCZYK: They are.
 13 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: In your report on
 14 page 20 there's a statement that the call screen had
 15 specifically asked potential participants whether they
 16 were interested in knowing more about how insurance
 17 rates are developed. And if the participant said, no,
 18 I'm really not interested in knowing more about that,
 19 then they were not included in the focus group;
 20 correct.
 21 MS. TOMCZYK: That's correct.
 22 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: So this is a, this

Page 99

1 is a group that has, A, is inclined to participate in
 2 focus groups. And, B, is kind of self selected in
 3 terms of their interest in learning more about the
 4 insurance rate making process?
 5 MS. TOMCZYK: That's correct.
 6 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay.
 7 MS. TOMCZYK: I mean, from our perspective
 8 it didn't make sense to have a room of people who
 9 weren't interested and then there was no discussion
 10 and the cost associated with the research probably
 11 not, would not be very beneficial.
 12 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Understood.
 13 And then just one other question about the
 14 group composition, there had been a statement in the
 15 report about avoiding involving anyone involved in the
 16 medical community or healthcare related industry out
 17 of a concern that input from people who had a
 18 relationship with the healthcare industry might skew
 19 the results. But in Appendix C to this report it
 20 appeared to me that one individual was employed --
 21 well, here, let me say exactly what it is -- we have
 22 one individual participant employed by a medical

Page 100

1 association. And then on the small employer's side of
 2 the 14 participants, one physician management
 3 practice, one physician's office and one physical
 4 therapy practice.
 5 So my question is, is there a concern about
 6 any skewing of the input provided by focus group
 7 participants as a result of their relationship with
 8 the medical committee?
 9 MS. TOMCZYK: On the individual side, just
 10 to separate the two, our call screener did ask that
 11 question, the questions you were just referencing. I
 12 think the one that slipped through is perhaps one that
 13 we didn't do the call screening, we relied on the
 14 firm. I think that one just in retrospect probably we
 15 would have liked to have screened out. But one out
 16 of, I believe there were roughly 30, somewhere between
 17 25 and 30, on the individual side, we didn't think
 18 that was a terrible concern.
 19 On the small group side that question was
 20 not included in the call screen. So there was not a
 21 question around that.
 22 I think the --

Page 101

1 MS. BENDER: There was a question for the
 2 insurance industry, we did have them, is your company
 3 currently affiliated with the insurance industry on
 4 the small group side?
 5 MS. TOMCZYK: Yeah. The small group that
 6 was focused on the insurance industry, the individuals
 7 we asked both about the healthcare and the insurance
 8 industry, so the three that you mentioned on small
 9 group fell into healthcare I think. So they probably
 10 answered no to are you associated with the insurance
 11 industry. But they did --
 12 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: And was there a
 13 reason for that inconsistency in the screening as
 14 between individual and small group?
 15 MS. TOMCZYK: I don't think. I think
 16 honestly it was perhaps just oversight in the
 17 question.
 18 But to answer your question about concern
 19 about the bias, in sitting through all of the focus
 20 groups and observing, I didn't, I didn't observe
 21 anything in my opinion that I thought said, we need to
 22 throw these results out.

Page 102

1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay.
 2 MS. BENDER: There's considerable
 3 consistency in the small employers as we'll get to
 4 later. So I would, I wouldn't be as worried about
 5 that. Like I said, we had the one that must have
 6 slipped through on the individual side. So that
 7 wouldn't be enough to skew any results.
 8 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: And on the small
 9 group you didn't see any trends towards people
 10 affiliated with the healthcare industry responding one
 11 way and others responding another way?
 12 MS. BENDER: No, we did not.
 13 MS. TOMCZYK: And I at least tried to pay
 14 particular attention. The research firm that
 15 recruited the individuals did not track that on, they
 16 provided us a spreadsheet daily with the recruiting
 17 efforts and they tracked some of the other
 18 information, like the employer group size, but some of
 19 those characteristics that are shown in that chart in
 20 the exhibit were actually gathered through the focus
 21 group itself. That's why you'll see when we start
 22 getting through some of the questions about what, who

Page 103

1 the insurance carrier is and there's a fair number in
 2 the unknown column, sometimes in the spirit of keeping
 3 the conversation and the dialogue going the moderator
 4 used judgment and keeping people engaged and they
 5 didn't always answer that question. And some people
 6 just truly didn't know. Primarily I would presume the
 7 individuals who had coverage through their employer
 8 they just, that was kind of interesting.
 9 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Thank you.
 10 MS. BENDER: We probably should submit that
 11 Shugoll is a professional market research firm that
 12 specializes in doing focus groups for a broad range of
 13 industries. The individual that, or individuals that
 14 helped us did focus in the insurance field
 15 specifically. And then we --
 16 MS. TOMCZYK: And healthcare.
 17 MS. BENDER: And healthcare, you're right.
 18 And we also, the facilitator was a
 19 professional facilitator to ensure that there was no
 20 domination of a particular person and to try to make
 21 sure that everyone was engaged.
 22 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Okay. Thank you.

Page 104

1 MS. TOMCZYK: So just quickly through these
 2 next slides, we, once we gathered or recruited our
 3 target population we wanted to make sure that we
 4 didn't have any significant concerns about skewness
 5 and one of the items you just alluded to. So we tried
 6 to compare for different demographic breakdowns or
 7 cross sections how the demographics and the make up of
 8 our focus group sample compared with the Maryland
 9 population in general to ensure it was at least
 10 somewhat representative in that respect. So this
 11 first one is gender, I don't think we could get a
 12 better match on gender.
 13 The next one is by age. You will notice
 14 that our focus groups had a slightly younger
 15 population. We suspect that was due at least in part
 16 to the exclusion of the federal and state employees,
 17 in our experience they tend to have an older average
 18 age than the population in general. And by taking out
 19 the population that has an older average age you're by
 20 default left with a somewhat younger population. But
 21 there was a mix and it lined up reasonably well so we
 22 weren't terribly concerned about that.

Page 105

1 The next one is by ethnicity. Again, you'll
 2 see there's a little bit of a skewing towards the
 3 Hispanic population. And we show it separately for
 4 the consumers and the English second language
 5 consumers and that's what's driving that over
 6 representation by the Hispanic population was out
 7 desire to have one focus group combined entirely of
 8 individuals where English was their second language.
 9 We did not give specific benchmarks or targets in
 10 terms of different ethnicities within that group. We
 11 asked to have a broad cross section, but it wasn't
 12 like we said, we want 20 percent African-American,
 13 20 percent Asian. So it just fell out.
 14 I think within the English second language
 15 consumers and between the English second language
 16 consumers and the other consumer groups we didn't
 17 observe anything that was significantly different that
 18 I thought was really worth warranting significant
 19 comment.
 20 The next one is the distribution by where
 21 consumers, how consumers obtain their insurance,
 22 either privately meaning an individual policy that

Page 106

1 that they purchase themselves, through their employer
 2 or whether they're uninsured. The Maryland population
 3 in general many more people who have insurance get it
 4 through their insurer than purchase it directly. But
 5 we did target a 50/50 mix. We wanted to get a little
 6 more perspective from the people who are actually
 7 paying the entire cost out of their own pocket.
 8 They're the ones who, well I guess I'll just say that
 9 we tried to focus a little bit more on them.

10 They may be more sensitive to rate increases
 11 than those who are receiving it, the coverage through
 12 their employer where perhaps their employer is paying
 13 80 percent of it. They're still going to absorb the
 14 rate increase but not to the same level. So that
 15 skewness I guess was intended.

16 The next one is by the carrier for those who
 17 did have insurance. Our source, it's showing up in
 18 yellow so you can't read it there, unfortunately. But
 19 the source that we had broke the current Maryland
 20 insurance market between Aetna, CareFirst, Kaiser,
 21 United and then all other. So that's why there is
 22 nothing in that last row for guardian because they

Page 107

1 fell in the all other so we didn't have a true apples
 2 to apples comparison. But in general CareFirst is the
 3 dominant carrier, it was the most prevalent carrier in
 4 our sample. And likewise for the unknown we didn't
 5 have any information because it was unknown.

6 So in general the distribution is relatively
 7 consistent with the population in general.

8 These last two slides we couldn't locate any
 9 comparable Maryland specific information to compare
 10 to. This one is by group size amongst the small
 11 employers. It does show that there is a reasonable
 12 distribution. We didn't get all two to ten employers
 13 or all employer groups that were closer to 50. So
 14 there was a broad cross section.

15 And then the last one is by, again, amongst
 16 the small employers we asked each of the
 17 representatives from the small employers to indicate
 18 what percentage of the premium they contribute toward
 19 their employees' health care.

20 A And again a broad range, ranging from
 21 50 percent of the premium to the entire premium, to a
 22 flat defined contribution dollar so again a nice broad

Page 108

1 cross section. But again, we didn't have any
 2 comparable benchmarks to compare them to. So for
 3 these last two we're really just trying to ensure we
 4 had a cross section.

5 So now I'm going to turn it over to Karen to
 6 talk a little bit more about the topics that we
 7 discussed with the focus groups.

8 MS. BENDER: Again, one of the goals of
 9 having focus groups was essentially to establish what
 10 I would call a baseline of understanding of what the
 11 understanding is in the general public of the
 12 administration, the administration's role, the
 13 knowledge of rate making in general. What are the
 14 sources that consumers are currently using to get
 15 their information. And what are the sources that the
 16 consumers believe would be the most effective way and
 17 efficient way of getting information pertaining to
 18 rates and pertaining to rate increases. And
 19 information regarding rate making in general.

20 Actually it was a very interesting process.
 21 I will say. Getting feedback from the consumers was
 22 very enlightening.

Page 109

1 One of the things that we learned is that
 2 the administration is not well-known to consumers in
 3 spite of what I would call tremendous outreach
 4 efforts. If we asked -- we put MIA up on the board
 5 and no one got the right acronym, let's just put it
 6 that way, you know.

7 A couple of -- step back.

8 The small employers were more cognizant that
 9 there was either, they might call it a commission, or
 10 the commissioner of insurance as opposed to
 11 definitely, you know, the administration, but they
 12 were more cognizant that the entity existed and that
 13 the entity had a role in the rate making process. But
 14 on the individual, what we refer to as the consumer
 15 groups there really was not a lot of awareness of the
 16 resources that are currently made available to the
 17 consumers through the administration.

18 The other thing that we discovered is small
 19 employers rely tremendously on their brokers. And as
 20 we go through some of the succeeding slides, they
 21 would often say, well, yeah, I think this information
 22 should be made available, I'm not going to look at it,

Page 110

1 but I want my broker to look at it. Because I have a
 2 business to run and anything to do with insurance I
 3 hand over to my broker, that's what I'm paying him to
 4 do. So that was rather enlightening as well.
 5 And for individuals almost everyone agreed
 6 that the internet is the best way and most efficient
 7 way to post information. And that, that the most
 8 effective way for the administration to communicate
 9 pertaining to issues regarding rate filings,
 10 especially time sensitive information. And that the
 11 internet should be the primary source.
 12 Quite frankly we had some mixed reactions on
 13 how the information would be used. We asked them,
 14 would you really look at it? It was less heartening
 15 shall we say. We had probably, most of the
 16 individuals said they probably wouldn't look at it.
 17 And that they were not sure if they would really
 18 access this information or not. But again, the
 19 employers wanted their brokers to have access to the
 20 information.
 21 But generally we discovered that employers
 22 and consumers both, that they were not aware of how

Page 111

1 rates are developed, how rates are reviewed, or the
 2 administration's role in the review process currently
 3 or obviously then any enhanced reforms.
 4 Now we're going to go to our
 5 recommendations. And one of the first things that we
 6 would recommend is that the administration develop a
 7 separate area dedicated to health insurance rates.
 8 And I should probably say health insurance rate
 9 filings would probably be a better technical term
 10 there.
 11 So that consumers have access to this
 12 information.
 13 And now I think that the final regs require
 14 that at least for those rate filings that are over
 15 10 percent or more that somewhere on the
 16 administration's website at least there has to be a
 17 link or something to HHS website so that consumers can
 18 get that information.
 19 We also recommend that the non confidential
 20 portions of the rate filings be included on this
 21 administration website. We are not making any
 22 recommendation as to what should or should not be

Page 112

1 considered non confidential, that's really what I
 2 would consider a legal issue. And not an actuarial
 3 issue.
 4 We would recommend posting the consumer,
 5 what we call the consumer friendly summary of rate
 6 filings, and obviously, again, you have to post the
 7 Part I one for the rate increases that trigger the
 8 threshold. In our other report we're recommending
 9 that all carriers file this particular form for all
 10 rate filings, we would then suggest that that form be
 11 made available on the website.
 12 Notification of an approved premium rate
 13 increase, the first point is consistent with the
 14 recommendations that we made in the previous report
 15 regarding just getting consistency across all types of
 16 carriers regarding the advanced notice. And then also
 17 that we post a consumer, what we call consumer
 18 friendly summary of the administration's decisions on
 19 its website for each filing review. Again, for the
 20 filings that are 10 percent or more right now, the
 21 administration is going to have to post their, or
 22 report to HHS the results of their analysis. We just

Page 113

1 extended this to say, post the results of your
 2 analysis for all rate filings.
 3 And then we would say that we would, we
 4 would urge the administration to research the IT costs
 5 associated with enabling consumers to subscribe to
 6 receive automated e-mails, now consistent with what
 7 Tammy was referring to in the previous slides that
 8 that is available in some states. We have no idea as
 9 to the cost associated with that. And that might be,
 10 you're really going to have to do a cost benefit
 11 analysis of that. Especially in light of at least the
 12 consumer feedback that we got, maybe something else
 13 would be to maybe broaden that consumer research to
 14 see if this is something that consumers would use.
 15 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Broaden in terms of
 16 additional focus groups, increase the number of
 17 people --
 18 MS. BENDER: Either additional focus groups,
 19 other surveys. This is not exactly my area of
 20 expertise, how to do that kind, but, yes -- especially
 21 if the IT costs are great. Now if the IT costs, I
 22 don't know anything about IT, if it's just flipping a

Page 114

1 switch or something so, you know, it's not very
 2 expensive, well, then it might not, the cost of doing
 3 the additional research might not warrant. But if the
 4 cost to do it are significant then before I would
 5 commit those kind of resources you definitely want to
 6 see something consumers are going to use. You know,
 7 if they're not going to use it then put those
 8 resources somewhere else where that would better serve
 9 the consumers.

10 MS. TOMCZYK: I'll just say we did receive
 11 comments from the consumers, they were very, many
 12 times they would preface their responses to questions
 13 with, well, if it's cost benefit, they were cognizant
 14 of adding all these resources would mean potentially
 15 more tax dollars that they're paying, so they wanted
 16 to make sure if people are going to be asked to pay,
 17 or if tax dollars are going to be used to provide this
 18 information that it's actually going to be beneficial.

19 MS. BENDER: Yeah, we were very pleased,
 20 shall I say, with the financial acumen, would that be
 21 the right word, of the consumers regarding the stuff
 22 is going to cost money so they really want to have a

Page 115

1 cost benefit. And they would even make some comments
 2 about the whole transparency process that if it's
 3 going to add to my premiums I don't really want it
 4 unless it's going to somehow save on my premiums.
 5 Which I was excited, I was pleasantly surprised on
 6 that.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: But it's also
 8 possible that, that individual consumers may not be
 9 interested but groups representing consumers might
 10 find it of interest and obviously in a focus group you
 11 are not making an assessment of that, correct?

12 MS. BENDER: Absolutely. And the brokers,
 13 and again, it was also universal for the small
 14 employers, they are relying on their brokers and they
 15 want their brokers to have access to this information.
 16 That was universal. I can't remember a single one
 17 that said that they would not --

18 MS. TOMCZYK: But that begs the point that
 19 maybe perhaps with some, you know, the next cycle of
 20 funding from the grants if the state applies for it,
 21 there are other stakeholder groups that we didn't
 22 include, we included individuals and small groups, but

Page 116

1 there are brokers, there are consumer advocacy groups,
 2 there may be other stakeholders that you might
 3 consider gaining their opinions.

4 MS. BENDER: The next recommendations are
 5 regarding consumer input into the rate review process.

6 Again, the final regulations may provide
 7 that there has to be the ability for consumers to
 8 respond or comment on the rate increase. They don't
 9 say how. You know, they can be what, an address or
 10 something, or a telephone -- or a call center or
 11 something, but there is going to have to be some sort
 12 of mechanism for receiving public comments. Again, we
 13 would maybe urge the state to investigate the cost of
 14 developing an electronic bulletin board which some
 15 states have, or allows people to comment on specific
 16 rate filings. Or to post comments on electronic
 17 bulletin boards. Obviously there's some cost with
 18 that, you have to be, someone has to screen some of
 19 these comments to make sure that there aren't obscene
 20 words or something like that, you know, so there is a
 21 cost to doing that. Someone is going to have to
 22 maintain it.

Page 117

1 Like I said, this probably had a mixed
 2 reaction with the consumer groups and as Tammy said
 3 they were very cognizant of the costs of maintaining
 4 this. So like something that has to be taken into
 5 consideration.

6 There's, we identified a need for general
 7 information on rate making and rate review. We
 8 developed some general educational materials of what
 9 we call frequently asked questions related to the rate
 10 making process. These are included in Appendix F
 11 through I of the report as examples.

12 Appendices F and G were actually tested on
 13 the focus groups and were revised based upon input
 14 from those focus groups trying to enable to make these
 15 what we would call consumer friendly, these are
 16 difficult subjects to try to make, to translate some
 17 of these concepts into what we would call consumer
 18 friendly papers.

19 So these would be things that could be
 20 posted to the administration's website. These are
 21 types of materials that are not time sensitive. They
 22 are sort of what I call the background information,

Page 118

1 how a rate is developed, you know, what is the
 2 process. So they would need to -- they wouldn't have
 3 to be updated often, they might have to be updated
 4 periodically for changes.
 5 MS. TOMCZYK: I was just going to say
 6 they're not specific to a rate filing.
 7 MS. BENDER: Right.
 8 MS. TOMCZYK: They're more general.
 9 MS. BENDER: Very, very, very general.
 10 MS. TOMCZYK: Rate making, rate review type.
 11 MS. BENDER: As opposed to a specific rate
 12 filing which obviously is very time sensitive.
 13 We would say to continue to include the
 14 brochures in places at the locations frequented by
 15 consumers and distributed at outreach appearances.
 16 But we would also urge maybe the administration to
 17 reassess some of the current outreach programs.
 18 We were provided all the outreach programs
 19 that are being done right now, I mean, the
 20 administration is devoting a tremendous amount of
 21 resources in outreach programs. And it must be rather
 22 discouraging that at least based upon our focus groups

Page 119

1 they have not been as effective as one would hope to
 2 be.
 3 Also, again, to assess the available IT
 4 resources to determine if increased needs can be met
 5 with the current staff, and what we're talking about
 6 is current staff in both places. What I would call
 7 the consumer support division as well as the actuarial
 8 division. Because there's positives and negatives
 9 about increasing consumer transparency. When you
 10 increase consumer transparency you can also expect to
 11 increase consumer questions. And so there's probably
 12 going to be more questions regarding maybe rate making
 13 in general, but probably specifically related, or more
 14 specifically related to a particular rate filing as
 15 that process works its way through. Or why is my
 16 rate, I got a rate increase, why is my rate different
 17 from what the rate increase that was put out on the
 18 website, and there's lots, that's one of the papers,
 19 it's in one of these exhibits that we did is why is my
 20 rate increase different than what was published. But,
 21 you know, I would suspect that there are going to be
 22 lots more questions.

Page 120

1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: What was published
 2 meaning the average rate increase? Why is an
 3 individual insured's rate increase greater than the --
 4 MS. BENDER: Absolutely, yeah, the average
 5 rate increase, absolutely.
 6 And then just assess the additional staffing
 7 needs to support consumer transparency as well.
 8 And that was the conclusions for, or that
 9 concludes our presentation for the consumer
 10 transparencies portion of our paper. Of the papers.
 11 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Any questions?
 12 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HATCHETTE: Question
 13 for you. On your Appendix I you sort of developed the
 14 format of FAQs to basically put static information.
 15 Oregon sort of has three different approaches, it has
 16 FAQs sort of a list that goes into a lot of detail and
 17 then something that's very visual for the consumer.
 18 Based on your information that you received from the
 19 focus group, do you think one is better than the
 20 other? Or do you need some type, maybe all three to
 21 reach different types of consumers?
 22 MS. BENDER: That's a good question.

Page 121

1 MS. TOMCZYK: It's interesting. I'll bring
 2 up another observation that we had that might provide
 3 some information, it's not going to directly answer
 4 your question.
 5 We had three different pieces of
 6 information, print information that we presented, or
 7 had the moderator present to the focus groups to
 8 comment on. And one of them was a sample of this rate
 9 filing decision summary, the summary that the actuary,
 10 the actuaries would develop which would be posted out
 11 explaining the process they went through and how they
 12 came to their decision.
 13 We had one that was more narrative. And one
 14 that was more numerical with tables and charts. And
 15 we presented both of them to the focus groups. And we
 16 mixed it up, some saw the narrative first, and then
 17 the one that had table data and table format second.
 18 And other groups saw them in the reverse order and
 19 every single time the one that was shown second was
 20 the one that they stated was more, more efficient and
 21 understandable. Our suspicion is part of that was due
 22 to the fact that they were shown the first one, there

Page 122

1 was some discussion and when they were looking at the
 2 second one they already had some idea of the content
 3 in it. So somewhat biased perhaps.
 4 But I guess I just share that with you and I
 5 know, Joy, you were at some of these and observed
 6 this, but there probably is to some extent a different
 7 desire in how to communicate to different individuals.
 8 But again, I don't know that we can directly answer
 9 your question specifically.
 10 MS. BENDER: I know that some people don't
 11 really want to read a lot on any website. So to the
 12 extent that some of this can be converted into a more
 13 visual, quite frankly, actuaries probably are not the
 14 best profession to do that. You know, I'll admit
 15 my own failing -- I'm really good at numbers, but this
 16 probably is stretching. So I would definitely say
 17 that might be something that you would want to
 18 consider, that is something that we did see, and I
 19 think that's, you know, some people like the pie
 20 graphs better than the other things.
 21 The problem is this particular one that you
 22 refer to, how the administration reviews requests for

Page 123

1 rate increases, boy, this is just not the most
 2 interesting, I don't think it's going to make the top
 3 ten no matter what we do here, it's pretty dry. It's
 4 important, but -- so anything you can do to make it
 5 lively God bless you. I think it will, you know, it's
 6 three pages, it's probably at the limit, absolutely at
 7 the limit. And this is not based upon my experience
 8 as an actuary outside because I do not proclaim to be,
 9 the actuarial profession is just not really our, you
 10 know, maybe our expertise as far as the limitations
 11 and things. I'm just speaking for myself a lot of
 12 times. And the input though that we got back from the
 13 focus groups. We could tell that there really was
 14 sort of a, a limit as to concentration shall we say
 15 for these topics. And, you know, for people who
 16 aren't in the business, they have real lives and they
 17 have real jobs, and this is, this jargon is very
 18 specific to, you know, rate reviews, it's almost like
 19 a foreign language. And so it's not easy stuff. To
 20 do. So I think that that might be something you want,
 21 like I said, anything, different colors, I don't know,
 22 get a graphic artist or something, I don't know,

Page 124

1 anything that you can do to make it more palatable.
 2 MS. TOMCZYK: And we did in Appendix E which
 3 is that rate filing decision, this again was the one
 4 where they saw the two versions, one first and one
 5 second, and I neglected to say that at the very end
 6 they did comment that there were positive features to
 7 both. So our revised recommendation is really a
 8 merger of the two. And on page 71, and unfortunately
 9 we don't have it on that computer, we show in
 10 numerical format a table of a breakdown of the rate
 11 increase between, or the rate between claim, cost,
 12 profit and administration, administrative expenses and
 13 then a pie chart too. So this was designed such that
 14 if that Part I preliminary justification worksheet is
 15 obtained for all filings, feasibly with -- you could
 16 design a tool such that that could be the input and it
 17 could develop this, a majority of this. There's still
 18 going to be the portion that's unique to the filing in
 19 terms of the actuary's decision on the outcome.
 20 But it would populate both that table and
 21 this pie chart. So if you're a visual person you can
 22 see the pie chart that shows that roughly

Page 125

1 three-quarters of the pie chart is blue and that's the
 2 claim costs. Or if you're a numbers person you can
 3 look at the table. So we're trying to, without making
 4 it too long and too complex accommodate both types of
 5 people.
 6 MS. BENDER: Also, that HHS Form I feeds
 7 into, they have a, call it software, Excel sheets.
 8 MS. TOMCZYK: I don't know too much about
 9 it. We've seen an example what the output was.
 10 MS. BENDER: It's as exciting as you can
 11 probably make this stuff be. You know. I don't know
 12 if there's going to be, if you could use it for the
 13 non, or if it -- I don't know exactly how that's going
 14 to feed in. But that might be something too to
 15 consider, maybe we could ask the HHS brethren if
 16 they'd be willing to share that for the under
 17 10 percent as well. But, yeah, this is -- this is
 18 tough stuff. And anything you can do to make it, like
 19 you say, more consumer friendly visually, anything
 20 else would certainly facilitate I think getting
 21 consumers more engaged.
 22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: Maybe just this

Page 126

1 one last question because since Joy brought up Oregon,
 2 when you looked at the websites of the different
 3 states, not ours, did you think that Oregon had the
 4 best website? You know, the best feature on their
 5 website dedicated to rates? Or did you think
 6 Connecticut's was -- I mean, where would you -- look
 7 for inspiration.
 8 MS. TOMCZYK: In my opinion, because -- I
 9 was the one who kind of went out trying to see what I
 10 could find. There are different aspects. Some sites
 11 were better in the sense that I could find the
 12 information very easily. Others I dug and dug and I
 13 was just about to the point where I was about to give
 14 up and I found a link and it's like oh, here's a
 15 description of the rate review process buried deep in.
 16 So some were better than others in terms of how easy
 17 it was to find the information. Some were better than
 18 others in terms of the type of information and the
 19 amount of information. But Oregon I guess if I had to
 20 pick one and only one, that probably would be one of
 21 the ones that I would pick. But I guess, again, I
 22 don't mean to say that there weren't aspects of their

Page 127

1 website that I thought another state might have done
 2 different so there are pros and cons to all of them.
 3 MS. BENDER: I'm just going to make a
 4 general statement for all states and I think it's
 5 going to be a real challenge for them to maybe make
 6 the website for this particular rate filings more
 7 consumer friendly or easier to find. It's just not,
 8 you know, the information on the website -- it's not
 9 any one particular state. Up until this point in time
 10 as that one graphic showed, states weren't putting
 11 them out there. So they didn't have to worry about
 12 how consumers found them because they weren't being
 13 posted. Now that they're going to be posted, you
 14 know, maybe all states are going to have to look and
 15 see how friendly are their websites. How easy is it
 16 to navigate the websites. And they may have to assess
 17 those needs as well. I'm not saying yours is good,
 18 bad or indifferent. I'm just saying, and it's not
 19 Maryland versus anyone else's. I think Allstate's are
 20 sort of similar to that. Just when you think you
 21 finally, like you say, you think you found something,
 22 nope, that's not it, or, yeah, it is but I can't get

Page 128

1 to it again type thing.
 2 MS. TOMCZYK: One thing I might recommend is
 3 that when, when you design, if you do implement the
 4 recommendation, maybe test it with some individuals.
 5 I know for myself when I'm looking for something on
 6 the internet there's kind of this limited amount of
 7 time and if I can't find it in a certain amount of
 8 time I give up. So maybe some testing to make sure
 9 that, I don't know who you would do on this test,
 10 friends, family, say, you know, go out here and see if
 11 you can find the rate increase filings and see how
 12 easy it is for people to find them. Because I think
 13 that's key.
 14 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER HATCHETTE: Before we
 15 leave this, because I know that some of the consumers
 16 also believe that we needed written material. Do you
 17 believe that the rate increase written material should
 18 be a stand alone brochure, or could it be a part of an
 19 existing health brochure?
 20 MS. BENDER: The background information I
 21 think either way. Anything to do with a specific rate
 22 filing I just, this is my own opinion, I just don't

Page 129

1 think it's a cost benefit to put it anywhere except on
 2 the website. It's too time sensitive, it's going --
 3 you know, if you put a bunch of that out there, the
 4 only thing you know is they're going to pick up the
 5 one from the previous rate filing, or something like
 6 that. So I think anything that's time sensitive
 7 really the best place, and that's what the focus group
 8 said as well. The best place is the website. Some of
 9 this other information I think you have more
 10 flexibility, website and a combination of handouts,
 11 brochures.
 12 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Any other
 13 questions? Then I thank you very much for your report
 14 and your presentation.
 15 MS. TOMCZYK: Thank you.
 16 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Again, very
 17 helpful.
 18 Mr. Robbins, do you wish to comment
 19 separately on the consumer disclosures?
 20 MR. ROBBINS: Sure.
 21 Thank you again, Mike Robbins with the
 22 Maryland Hospital Association. And I again want to

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 130</p> <p>1 support the comments and recommendations being made by 2 Wyman in this report as well. But one thing I would 3 point out as valuable the website, the use of the 4 internet can be, I think we always need to be reminded 5 that not all consumers have ready access to the 6 internet. Not just for accessing the information but 7 also providing the insurance administration with input 8 regarding decisions they're about to make on rate 9 requests. So we would suggest at least for maybe some 10 of the larger insurers, consideration of some kind of 11 more formal public process where in advance the public 12 would receive notification of those rate requests, and 13 be given the opportunity both through the internet as 14 well as through some kind of formal public hearing 15 process similar to this where they could provide the 16 insurance administration with the information they 17 need to understand the impact of those potential 18 decisions on the public. So I think we just need to 19 be reminded that not all the information can be 20 derived both from, or provided through the internet 21 for these important decisions. 22 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: I think it's always</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 132</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Was there anything 2 magic about the 3 to 5 percent? 3 MR. ROBBINS: No, I just know from my 4 experience from many years in West Virginia that was 5 the process that they used there. Generally it was 6 over 5 percent. That they did have those public 7 hearings that were held there. Not always well 8 attended, but still available to the public when 9 available. 10 Thank you. 11 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Thank you very 12 much. 13 Any questions? 14 Thank you. 15 Mr. Ransom, I know has already provided his 16 comments. 17 Ms. Robinson, did you have anything on this 18 report? 19 MS. ROBINSON: Again, Kimberly Robinson on 20 behalf of the League of Life and Health Insurers of 21 Maryland. 22 And again, my one comment is actually this.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 131</p> <p>1 dangerous to make generalizations, but I do note that 2 the average age of the focus group participant was 3 younger than the average age of the Maryland 4 residents. And certainly some older individuals are 5 very computer savvy and can use the internet as well 6 as the next person. But there may be, again, this 7 isn't based on scientific research, but anecdotally 8 that there may be certain members of the older 9 population who might not as readily turn to the 10 internet as some of the younger folks might as an 11 example of, at least in my own mind, the importance of 12 a multi modality approach to getting the word out and 13 providing an opportunity to give input. 14 MR. ROBBINS: And we've suggested in our 15 written testimony that rather than require this kind 16 of public hearing process for all insurers, we look at 17 maybe those that just have a larger share of the 18 market based on some percentage of the marketplace, 19 similar to the list I think that was shown on the 20 screen earlier, so it would not necessarily be overly 21 burdensome for the insurance administration to hold 22 that kind of form of public hearing process.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 133</p> <p>1 To the extent that the recommendations you just heard 2 regarding the public hearing, Maryland does get a 3 number of rate filings and I think even setting some 4 threshold we would spend a tremendous amount of time, 5 both your staff and the prominent carriers in our 6 state in this room having public hearings on these 7 rate filings and we do believe that may not be the 8 most efficient manner of obtaining public comment or 9 the most efficient use of your staff's time or the 10 carrier's staff's time. And that would end up having 11 an unintended economic impact for both the insurance 12 administration as well as the insurance community. 13 However, to the point of all consumers main 14 not necessarily have internet based access I do think 15 there's ways that you can address that ability to 16 comment through a means other than the internet short 17 of in fact having a public hearing. For instance, 18 we've had many instances in our state where an agency 19 will make documents available for review in paper, if 20 someone comes to the agency, they can obtain a copy, 21 they can certainly submit their comments in writing 22 and not exclusively by e-mail. That would still be</p>

Page 134

1 able to engage any part of our population who was not
 2 able to do so through internet portal without
 3 necessarily needing to do it through a public hearing
 4 and the time and resource commitment that a public
 5 hearing itself would take. So we would just suggest
 6 that while you're being thoughtful how to engage the
 7 public you're also balancing those efficiency and
 8 accessibility needs for both your staff and for the
 9 insurance community. That's it.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: And how would
 11 the consumer know?

12 MS. ROBINSON: Well, I think that's going to
 13 be the question even if you do a public hearing.
 14 There's still going to have to be some way to
 15 communicate that broadly. So whatever mechanism that
 16 you would envision to announce a public hearing would
 17 be perhaps the same method that you would use to
 18 announce that there was a filing available for review.
 19 The federal government does it when they do the review
 20 of regulations, they often do that process by paper,
 21 they also do it now electronically. But there are
 22 places in our state where we routinely announce things

Page 135

1 in print. The balance has to be between the
 2 timeliness of the comments which I do believe is part
 3 of why the consultants had even recommended the
 4 internet as the appropriate place because it does
 5 allow things to move a little bit more quickly to let
 6 the filings get through their process efficiently so
 7 things are not delayed. Anytime you're taking it
 8 offline you're going to slow that down some. But the
 9 Maryland Register, Hearing Scheduler, there are plenty
 10 of other places where things can be announced without
 11 necessarily the need for a hearing.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: If I remember,
 13 I can't remember if it was in the focus groups that
 14 Oliver Wyman did, or something that some of the other
 15 consumer groups or focus groups that I looked at for
 16 different projects, maybe even HHS, I can't remember,
 17 but there was some discussion about the carriers being
 18 required to provide a notice to consumers that they
 19 have filed a rate increase. So I don't think it's
 20 fair to ask you today because you haven't had time to
 21 talk to your companies, but maybe it's a thing to get
 22 back to us about at some point in time about whether

Page 136

1 or not the carriers see it as being, you know, to what
 2 extent they would see it as being a reasonable
 3 approach for them to post something on their internet
 4 site, or to give a notice to their, to the broker
 5 community, for example, that they have filed a rate
 6 increase with the Maryland Insurance Administration
 7 and have obtained information.

8 MS. ROBINSON: I'd be more than happy to
 9 inquire with our membership and include a response in
 10 our comments by the end of next week. I do think part
 11 of that answer will be driven again by whether that
 12 communication could happen electronically as opposed
 13 to whether or not it's happening in paper. For
 14 instance, if you're doing in a group marketing to a
 15 broker who can then access electronically, it's
 16 different than mailing a copy to every insured on your
 17 books so those are the kind of things we'll take into
 18 consideration.

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SAMMIS: But I do think
 20 the companies even on the individual side are
 21 beginning to collect e-mail addresses.

22 MS. ROBINSON: And again, because you can do

Page 137

1 it electronically.

2 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Right.

3 MS. ROBINSON: Rather than by paper and
 4 mailing, you know, postage has come into the costs
 5 these days.

6 COMMISSIONER GOLDSMITH: Anything else?
 7 Thank you very much, Ms. Robinson, for your
 8 comments.

9 Anyone else who is here who hasn't signed up
 10 but would like to comment on the consumer information
 11 aspect of the reports?

12 Well then I believe that concludes our
 13 proceeding. I want to thank everyone for your input,
 14 both here today and in writing.

15 And we will consider it all as a part of the
 16 record in this proceeding in coming to our conclusions
 17 about moving forward.

18 Thank you. Thank you for coming.
 19 (Whereupon, the hearing concluded at 1:00
 20 o'clock p.m.)
 21
 22

1 CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER - NOTARY PUBLIC

2 I, DARLENE S. TRAFICANTE, Registered
3 Professional Reporter, Certified Shorthand Reporter
4 and Notary Public, the officer before whom the
5 foregoing public hearing was taken, do hereby certify
6 that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct
7 record of the testimony given; that said testimony was
8 taken by me stenographically and thereafter reduced to
9 typewriting under my supervision; and that I am
10 neither counsel for or related to, nor employed by any
11 of the parties to this case and have no interest,
12 financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
14 hand and affixed my notarial seal this 23rd day of
15 June 2011.

16 My commission expires:
17 July 25, 2011

18 _____
19 _____

20 NOTARY PUBLIC IN AND FOR THE
21 STATE OF MARYLAND

22

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ability 51:20 116:7 133:15	actuarial 5:18 6:15 9:14 31:10 50:10 55:22 56:2 68:2,13 68:17,17,18 69:9,9 70:5 71:9 79:14 81:13 84:5 112:2 119:7 123:9	113:4 118:16,20 122:22 124:12 130:7 130:16 131:21 133:12 136:6	ahead 50:1 52:9 aimed 79:21 allow 59:18 61:15 62:4 79:17 82:14 88:11,11 135:5
able 36:9,10,12,22 37:4,19 38:8,18,19 40:4,10 44:21 47:22 48:19,21 49:8,10 64:13 71:9 79:18 134:1,2	actuaries 17:13 40:3,9 53:22 56:4 59:18 63:7,11 68:21 79:15 121:10 122:13	administrations 26:8 administration's 6:15 11:15 72:2 88:19 94:6 108:12 111:2,16 112:18 117:20	allowable 26:7 42:2 allowed 41:22 66:5 allows 91:13,14 116:15 Allstate's 127:19 alluded 13:22 55:1 104:5
absent 22:9 65:12 66:13	actuary 3:5 6:8 9:13 9:16 11:18,19 41:12 42:5,17 53:11,12 54:18 56:1,5 68:1,14 69:4,16,21 70:1,7,8 70:12 71:19 73:12 121:9 123:8	administrative 23:7 24:10,16 25:3,11 26:6,11,18 32:3 57:10 70:21 80:2 84:8 124:12	alter 82:14 American 56:3 amount 54:16 66:21 70:12 118:20 126:19 128:6,7 133:4
absolute 38:4 43:20 44:22	actuary's 124:19	admissions 40:8	analogous 69:18
absolutely 17:9 38:15 115:12 120:4,5 123:6	acumen 114:20	admit 122:14	analysis 10:9 15:13 19:13,14,18 25:3 28:14,17 29:18 39:20 40:5 49:11,19 50:10 50:10 56:6 63:8,10 63:12 69:20 71:10 72:2,15,16 112:22 113:2,11
absorb 106:13	add 38:22 72:13 115:3	adopted 24:6	analyst 68:14,15,17,18 69:9,15 71:1,9
ACA 14:14,16 23:3 24:8	added 79:1 98:5	advance 73:17 74:12 130:11	analytical 51:22 64:16
Academy 56:4	addendum 14:10,12	advanced 112:16	analyze 20:4
accept 19:12 39:22 41:5 93:6	adding 77:6 114:14	advances 35:14,22 36:8	analyzing 30:8
accepting 21:11	addition 22:10 23:18	advantage 32:19,22 51:7,13 52:4 91:17	and/or 20:5 36:4
accepts 79:20	additional 8:20 31:7 57:5 65:19 66:9,10 67:20 68:1,2 69:13 71:16,22 73:18 75:22 113:16,18 114:3 120:6	advocacy 3:7 6:11 116:1	anecdotally 131:7
access 20:18 21:3,10 74:6 89:22 110:18,19 111:11 115:15 130:5 133:14 136:15	address 58:2 59:11 95:13 116:9 133:15	Aetna 106:20	announce 134:16,18 134:22
accessibility 87:12 134:8	addresses 136:21	Affairs 9:4	announced 135:10
accessible 88:7	adjust 84:12	affiliated 101:3 102:10	answer 7:14 8:2 85:20 101:18 103:5 121:3 122:8 136:11
accessing 130:6	adjustments 14:6 30:18 31:4	affixed 138:14	answered 101:10
accommodate 81:17 125:4	admin 65:1	afford 96:3,5	answering 7:18
account 79:15	administration 1:4 2:4 3:2 5:7 6:6,13 10:2 11:19 12:9 61:12 72:7,10 75:3,7 76:19 81:13 89:3 90:3 94:5 94:17 108:12 109:2 109:11,17 110:8 111:6,21 112:21	affordability 87:13	anticipated 29:8 84:15
Accountable 10:7 15:2		Affordable 6:19 87:11 91:6	Anytime 135:7
achieve 81:1		African-American 105:12	anyway 24:12 26:4 72:5
acknowledge 85:10		age 36:12 52:5 104:13 104:18,19 131:2,3	apparent 74:10
acronym 32:11 109:5		agency 133:18,20	
Act 6:20 10:7 15:2 87:11 91:6		aggregate 31:14 33:12	
action 92:20		aggressive 29:11	
active 90:15		aging 39:16 44:12	
actively 97:9,15		ago 87:11	
activities 24:4		agree 86:10	
activity 57:20		agreed 110:5	
actual 84:13		agreement 2:12	

<p>appeal 89:9 appear 30:3 31:1 33:14 appearances 41:10 118:15 appeared 72:4,8 99:20 appears 21:1 Appendices 117:12 appendix 53:6 54:1 62:19 94:20 99:19 117:10 120:13 124:2 applaud 77:1 apples 107:1,2 applicable 21:20 22:2 53:18 applied 23:1,2,6 83:13 84:9 applies 115:20 apply 14:18 15:7,10,22 20:11 23:3 60:8 applying 59:8 appreciate 9:18 76:5 78:15 85:9 86:3 approach 131:12 136:3 approaches 120:15 appropriate 46:8 54:6 63:13 81:20 85:15,17 135:4 appropriateness 63:13 approval 55:13 approve 66:19 approved 7:1 12:1 84:22 112:12 arching 79:8 area 78:16 111:7 113:19 areas 87:5 91:2 aren't 31:2 51:10 55:13 56:22 61:15 70:10 91:3 97:15 116:19 123:16 arrived 21:7 arrives 66:8 artist 123:22 ASA 3:10</p>	<p>Asian 105:13 asked 6:21 32:1 58:13 72:1 94:21 97:12 98:15 101:7 105:11 107:16 109:4 110:13 114:16 117:9 asking 58:22 ASOP-8 56:3 aspect 50:22 90:16 137:11 aspects 12:2 50:16 65:8,13 87:16 94:21 126:10,22 assess 23:19 24:16 35:8 119:3 120:6 127:16 assessment 64:17 115:11 assist 93:16 Associate 3:6 6:10 120:12 128:14 associated 19:13 34:19 38:16 99:10 101:10 113:5,9 associateship 68:20 association 8:16 74:16 74:19 100:1 129:22 associations 15:20 assumptions 21:14 22:5 29:8,11 32:5 63:14 attached 4:3 11:2 78:2 86:22 attended 132:8 attention 57:16 102:14 augment 48:2,6,7 authority 13:2,3,4 57:13 60:6 82:14 authors 9:17 automated 77:10 113:6 availability 62:17 available 6:22 9:2 26:22 32:5,21 45:9 46:4,11 47:19 48:9 64:13,17 73:7,14</p>	<p>75:2,2 88:21 89:6,7,7 89:15,20 90:8,10,10 91:1 92:3 93:13 94:8 94:13 109:16,22 112:11 113:8 119:3 132:8,9 133:19 134:18 average 27:8 104:17 104:19 120:2,4 131:2 131:3 avoid 89:11 avoiding 99:15 awarded 7:6 aware 51:10 70:8,10 91:11 92:2,6 94:5 110:22 awareness 94:3,4 109:15 a.m 1:13 5:3</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">B</p> <hr/> <p>B 4:2 8:15 99:2 back 22:9 33:7 39:1 45:4 54:10,17 55:6 57:1 65:18 73:16 86:16 97:13 109:7 123:12 135:22 background 6:12 87:6 87:10 93:11 117:22 128:20 bad 127:18 balance 135:1 balancing 134:7 ballpark 42:6 Baltimore 1:11 2:7 barometer 42:19 barrier 33:16 45:21 barriers 33:2 34:11,19 Barrow 9:3 based 12:15 13:11 15:19 17:15 47:17 51:11 58:14 72:9 84:12 117:13 118:22 120:18 123:7 131:7 131:18 133:14 baseline 108:10 bases 54:8</p>	<p>basically 41:13 120:14 basis 40:5 41:22 42:11 44:8 54:9 59:16 66:7 68:11 74:14 81:17 82:21 83:5,14 98:9 becoming 44:11 began 45:13 98:2 beginning 18:4 136:21 begs 115:18 behalf 8:16 74:15 132:20 believe 10:14 22:20 25:20 27:11 57:11,13 75:1,11 79:12,20 83:20 85:16 86:18 97:20 100:16 108:16 128:16,17 133:7 135:2 137:12 believed 84:18 benchmark 27:4 benchmarking 28:11 benchmarks 24:14,19 32:2,3 71:4 105:9 108:2 Bender 3:10 9:9,11,12 10:12,18 11:3 13:21 14:11 17:9,12,18 24:9,21 25:21 26:2 26:12,17 27:11,18,21 28:1,3,13 35:4,22 36:2 37:14,19 38:14 39:16 40:14,17 41:20 42:12 43:1 44:19 46:21 48:10 49:16,22 59:2 69:15 70:17 71:3 91:18 101:1 102:2,12 103:10,17 108:8 113:18 114:19 115:12 116:4 118:7,9 118:11 120:4,22 122:10 125:6,10 127:3 128:20 beneficial 99:11 114:18 benefit 31:2,7 59:15 113:10 114:13 115:1</p>
--	---	--	---

<p>129:1 benefits 38:19 best 29:9 48:3 50:7 83:19 92:5 110:6 122:14 126:4,4 129:7 129:8 Beth 3:4 6:7 Bethesda 97:2 better 31:20 41:1 42:7 43:16 77:12 83:12 85:5 104:12 111:9 114:8 120:19 122:20 126:11,16,17 beyond 55:14 70:21 75:19 80:7 81:11,22 82:4 bias 101:19 biased 122:3 bid 51:8,8 bidding 51:9 big 41:15 biggest 45:21 bill 14:16 bit 5:10 6:12 48:7 50:1 53:2 56:12 62:19 79:2 91:8 93:19 105:2 106:9 108:6 135:5 blank 25:13 27:19 blanks 25:13 28:9 bless 123:5 blue 25:4 125:1 board 39:5 93:7 109:4 116:14 boards 116:17 book 96:21 books 136:17 bottom 12:20 57:2 90:20,22 boy 63:18 123:1 break 71:22 73:22 74:4 86:9 breakdown 39:3 124:10 breakdowns 104:6 brethren 125:15</p>	<p>brief 14:13 19:4 76:11 79:2 briefly 74:20 80:13 bring 57:15 121:1 broad 56:17 103:12 105:11 107:14,20,22 broaden 113:13,15 broadly 134:15 brochure 128:18,19 brochures 77:9 88:20 88:22 118:14 129:11 broke 106:19 broker 110:1,3 136:4 136:15 brokers 109:19 110:19 115:12,14,15 116:1 brought 126:1 budget 94:12 bulletin 4:5 5:14 93:7 116:14,17 bulletins 11:10 bullets 84:8 85:3 bunch 129:3 burden 80:2 burdensome 131:21 buried 126:15 business 25:6 27:7 68:20 81:6 110:2 123:16</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <hr/> <p>C 3:1 99:19 calculations 13:9 72:19,20 California 93:1 call 19:1 25:4,6,13 27:12,19 31:9,13,20 33:17 35:12 37:8 41:9 45:15,22 46:6 49:9 91:22 94:18 98:4,14 100:10,13,20 108:10 109:3,9 112:5 112:17 116:10 117:9 117:15,17,22 119:6 125:7 called 14:1 25:22 27:18 51:8</p>	<p>calling 26:4 96:21 cancer 36:8 can't 26:22 32:15 33:10 40:2,18 44:3 44:17 57:14 72:19 106:18 115:16 127:22 128:7 135:13 135:16 cap 18:9 67:4 capability 32:19 capacity 50:18 capricious 20:17 capture 47:13 captured 45:12 card 71:3 74:7 care 6:20 10:7 15:2 20:8 32:8 36:8 37:22 45:10 87:11 91:6 107:19 CareFirst 106:20 107:2 careful 84:17 carried 45:11 carrier 16:3,6 33:16 34:13 40:11 54:10,19 55:4 60:19 67:2 82:18 90:2 103:1 106:16 107:3,3 carriers 11:13 12:10 12:17 19:2,6 20:3,3,4 23:15 27:5,8 29:11 34:2,2,4,4 47:6 51:9 51:14,15 52:18,20 53:21 55:13 57:11,11 61:10,18 63:5 64:3 66:5 80:2 81:5 87:18 89:10 112:9,16 133:5 135:17 136:1 carrier's 63:9 88:3 133:10 case 55:7 72:12 138:11 cases 40:9 case-by-case 54:8 catastrophic 38:2,3,4 38:8 categories 56:17</p>	<p>category 26:11 65:7 cause 58:16,17 80:14 causes 44:11 causing 66:22 cautioned 83:11 center 116:10 certain 24:14 41:6 63:4 69:16,20 128:7 131:8 certainly 26:21 52:13 56:11 62:22 65:11 69:3,15 82:2 83:15 125:20 131:4 133:21 CERTIFICATE 138:1 certification 56:1 Certified 138:3 certify 138:5 challenge 27:13,15 32:14 127:5 challenging 48:10 chance 37:20 change 18:4,5,5 21:12 23:10 28:16 30:2,14 30:15 33:11 46:16 58:14 59:1 62:7 85:12 changed 22:18 changes 11:7 20:20 23:19 24:12 29:19,20 29:22 30:3 31:3,3 35:5,8,9,13 36:21 37:21,22 38:18 39:14 40:7,7 47:3 56:19 57:8,18 60:3 61:16 65:4 79:16 80:9 118:4 changing 39:8,13,15 characteristics 41:9 102:19 charges 33:18,18 38:15 39:8 42:2 43:7 charging 47:6 chart 12:20 90:8 91:7 102:19 124:13,21,22 125:1 charts 121:14</p>
---	---	--	--

<p>checklist 53:17 54:1,3 56:7 62:18 63:4 70:4 70:7 72:14 chief 3:5 6:7 11:18 41:12 42:5,17 53:12 54:18 69:4 71:19 73:12 chose 72:4 chunk 79:10 citizens 76:22 claim 26:13 36:21 39:4 39:7 89:9 124:11 125:2 claims 30:21 34:13,17 38:2,3,5,8,9 39:12 41:15,16,21 42:1,3 44:1,13 45:13,14 63:7 79:16 clarification 17:2 54:11 clarify 54:13 92:8 classification 64:9 classify 20:2 56:16 clean 46:8 clear 78:19 close 42:8 closely 82:15 closer 107:13 closing 79:4 CMRS 1:21 CMS 17:21 code 39:2,3 codes 37:3,4,5,5,5,6 coding 36:21 39:14 cognizant 24:3 95:11 109:8,12 114:13 117:3 cohort 27:7 coinsurance 42:13 collaborate 50:3 82:6 colleague 9:14 colleagues 6:5 7:14 collect 136:21 collecting 32:11 Colorado 53:5,15 colors 123:21</p>	<p>column 90:17 103:2 combination 129:10 combined 42:9 105:7 come 37:4 41:14 56:15 62:16 73:16 74:14 137:4 comes 51:11 60:12,13 65:11 82:16 133:20 coming 48:16 66:15 137:16,18 commend 76:18,22 comment 7:20 8:3 21:12 39:10 74:11,13 74:20 77:2 78:13 85:8 88:12 92:15 93:6 105:19 116:8,15 121:8 124:6 129:18 132:22 133:8,16 137:10 commented 23:9 comments 4:8,9,10 8:5 8:7,11,14,20 73:17 74:21 76:11,12 77:4 79:2 81:10 85:20 86:3,6 91:13 92:13 114:11 115:1 116:12 116:16,19 130:1 132:16 133:21 135:2 136:10 137:8 commercial 6:16 25:4 33:13 52:2,6,8 53:4 commission 32:9 45:10 75:3 76:19 109:9 138:16 commissioned 78:17 commissioner 3:3,4,6 5:1,20 6:1,7,10 7:12 9:11 10:12,16,19 14:5,9 17:1,11,17 24:9 25:19 26:9,15 27:16,20 28:12 32:1 34:21 35:20 36:1 37:10,18 38:12,21 39:22 40:16 48:6 49:14,17 54:15 57:19 68:12 71:17,18,20</p>	<p>73:2,13 74:4 76:1,7 76:10,15 77:17,20 78:4,7,9 85:22 86:5 86:16,19 87:1 88:14 90:7 91:11 92:17 96:11,14,19,22 97:4 97:18,22 98:10,13,22 99:6,12 101:12 102:1 102:8 103:9,22 109:10 113:15 115:7 120:1,11,12 125:22 128:14 129:12,16 130:22 132:1,11 134:10 135:12 136:19 137:2,6 commit 114:5 commitment 134:4 committee 100:8 common 47:9 51:6 54:6,12 65:13 communicate 18:7,10 110:8 122:7 134:15 communicating 92:6 communication 95:10 136:12 community 52:4 99:16 133:12 134:9 136:5 companies 25:12,15 57:13 58:14 81:16 82:19,21 135:21 136:20 company 8:10 23:22 24:2 70:13 84:11 101:2 comparable 107:9 108:2 compare 13:16 37:16 104:6 107:9 108:2 compared 30:10 90:9 104:8 comparing 30:9 comparison 37:1 107:2 complaint 89:9 Complaints 89:12 complete 45:16,22</p>	<p>completeness 51:4 completing 25:12 complex 29:18 37:17 125:4 complicated 39:21 complicating 41:9 comply 23:16 56:2 component 28:13 29:15 33:6 34:15 44:17,18 64:21 87:13 components 22:11 23:10 33:20 58:12 composition 96:15 99:14 comprehensive 6:16 13:14 95:3 comprise 60:20 computer 124:9 131:5 concentration 123:14 concepts 117:17 concern 80:15 83:16 99:17 100:5,18 101:18 concerned 83:9 104:22 concerns 104:4 concluded 137:19 concludes 120:9 137:12 conclusions 120:8 137:16 conditions 96:1 conductive 52:7 conduct 17:7 37:13 53:12 61:13 conducted 17:8 55:2 79:14 87:6,7 94:10 94:11 conducting 93:17 confidential 111:19 112:1 confirm 72:11 confused 17:2 45:7 confusion 74:6 conjunction 49:7 94:17 Connecticut 90:12</p>
--	---	---	--

<p>93:1 Connecticut's 126:6 cons 51:18 52:1,10 127:2 consequence 80:1 83:15 84:22 consider 22:10 24:20 30:14 65:2 66:16 112:2 116:3 122:18 125:15 137:15 considerable 102:2 consideration 54:2 61:1,5 64:18 66:14 68:4 81:10 82:16 83:3,12 95:14 117:5 130:10 136:18 considerations 8:21 22:6 24:7 31:7,18,22 considered 30:16,19 65:12 84:4 85:15 112:1 considering 15:19 consistency 62:21 68:6 69:17 102:3 112:15 consistent 61:14 62:7 80:6 107:7 112:13 113:6 consultant 97:19 consultants 75:8 83:19 135:3 consulting 5:18 9:13 9:14,15 consumer 3:7 6:11 7:22 8:3,8 69:8 73:10 74:1 77:7,8 79:17,21 86:11 87:7,19 89:17 90:15 93:17 95:7,18 105:16 109:14 112:4 112:5,17,17 113:12 113:13 116:1,5 117:2 117:15,17 119:7,9,10 119:11 120:7,9,17 125:19 127:7 129:19 134:11 135:15 137:10 consumerism 63:22</p>	<p>87:14 consumers 5:21 6:22 58:10,20 61:20,22 62:3,5 86:20 87:16 88:15 89:11 90:1 91:13,14,16 93:13 94:3,5,8,14 95:19 105:4,5,15,16,21,21 108:14,16,21 109:2 109:17 110:22 111:11,17 113:5,14 114:6,9,11,21 115:8 115:9 116:7 118:15 120:21 125:21 127:12 128:15 130:5 133:13 135:18 contact 9:3 96:18 contacted 97:7 98:6 contained 7:15 53:17 79:6 80:11 containment 24:4 26:7 26:16 contains 45:18 content 93:19 122:2 continue 64:11 66:12 75:9,21 118:13 continuing 49:20 contracts 33:22 contribute 107:18 contribution 107:22 conversation 103:3 conversely 29:3 59:2 converted 122:12 copays 42:14 copies 12:7,8 72:18 77:15 copy 4:11,13 10:15 73:9 77:17 133:20 136:16 corporations 57:12 correct 10:17,18 14:10 14:11 17:9 72:21 84:18 98:20,21 99:5 115:11 138:6 correlated 41:19 42:20 correlation 42:16</p>	<p>43:15,18,19 44:4,5,7 44:15 45:5 correlations 71:12 correspond 70:13 correspondence 12:1,8 corresponding 33:3 43:8 cost 24:4 26:7,16 30:5 30:9,10 32:9 34:15 36:14,16,17,18 38:2 44:6,7,18 80:3 84:8 99:10 106:7 113:9,10 114:2,4,13,22 115:1 116:13,17,21 124:11 129:1 costs 33:8 43:13 113:4 113:21,21 117:3 125:2 137:4 couldn't 52:12 96:5 107:8 counsel 138:10 count 15:12 country 81:6 couple 41:14 55:17 57:7,7 58:9 79:4 82:5 89:4 93:2 109:7 course 48:11,12 82:7 court 10:14,19 71:21 77:18 coverage 62:6 95:3,20 95:21 96:3 103:7 106:11 covering 34:12 covers 61:3 CPI 83:7 creating 77:9 credentialed 71:2 credentials 68:19 credibility 23:5 61:2,4 credit 78:21 cross 104:7 105:11 107:14 108:1,4 CSR 1:21 current 6:15 10:1 11:4 11:8,9 12:12 13:15 106:19 118:17 119:5</p>	<p>119:6 currently 6:22 11:11 12:15 32:6 33:17 35:1 41:4 78:20 82:19 92:21 101:3 108:14 109:16 111:2 cut 54:16 cycle 115:19</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <hr/> <p>D 8:9 62:19 daily 102:16 dangerous 131:1 Darlene 1:21 2:12 138:2 data 10:17 18:9 20:2,3 20:4 27:3 28:9 32:12 32:12,13,14,19,21 33:1,3,4,21 34:10,14 35:1 39:1,19 40:1 44:16 45:8,8,21 46:1 46:6,7,9,13,15,16,18 46:22 47:4,13 48:1,8 48:13 49:8,20 50:4 51:1,2,14,21 53:17 54:6 62:21,22 64:10 64:15,17 67:13 69:17 69:18 71:10 82:8 121:17 database 25:12 34:20 45:11,16 97:6,16 98:1,2,5 date 8:5 15:1 16:13,16 55:13,15 61:11 62:3 62:9 dated 5:21 6:2 dates 46:4 day 14:2 138:14 days 11:18 32:21 61:22 62:1,3,9 137:5 day's 44:20 deadline 79:4 deal 63:21 84:19 85:17 87:18 dealing 14:15 deals 87:14 debated 92:22</p>
---	---	---	---

<p>decide 17:19 64:1 68:5 decides 81:22 decision 68:22 69:22 121:9,12 124:3,19 decisions 112:18 130:8 130:18,21 deck 10:13 73:7,10,11 86:20 declines 75:16 decrease 43:6,8,9,10 43:11 55:9 decreases 31:12 decreasing 31:2 dedicated 111:7 126:5 deductible 29:10 31:8 31:9,9,12,13 deemed 66:18 deemer 61:11 deep 64:15,15 126:15 default 104:20 defined 6:20 13:18 24:6,8 107:22 defining 64:20 definitely 44:19 109:11 114:5 122:16 definition 15:5,9,15 degree 35:9 delayed 135:7 delegate 19:13 delta 24:17 demographic 31:3 33:11 95:13 104:6 demographics 104:7 demonstrate 30:16 61:5 demonstrates 29:17 demonstrations 11:16 denied 89:9 Dennis 3:5 6:8 Department 7:7 dependent 67:8 depending 20:6 42:4 71:6 Deputy 3:4 6:6 39:22 49:17 71:18 115:7 125:22 134:10</p>	<p>135:12 136:19 derived 130:20 describe 48:3 described 12:20 24:14 80:22 description 126:15 design 124:16 128:3 designed 124:13 desire 93:5 105:7 122:7 desk 59:20 detail 11:20 13:20 56:12 64:16 120:16 detailed 19:9 67:12 details 9:6 97:11 determine 20:4 66:17 119:4 determining 10:8 20:12 22:7 24:7 26:5 81:18 develop 46:14 47:22 49:6 111:6 121:10 124:17 developed 27:4 47:15 47:16 53:22 85:16 90:5 93:14 94:17 98:17 111:1 117:8 118:1 120:13 developing 13:22 68:4 95:14 116:14 development 85:5 89:17 devoting 118:20 diagnosis 37:8 dialogue 40:10 103:3 didn't 20:22 62:20 64:8 89:14 92:14 95:20 97:1,12 99:8 100:13,17 101:20,20 102:9 103:5,6 104:4 105:16 107:1,4,12 108:1 115:21 127:11 differences 14:4,8 15:12 different 17:19 21:17 40:10 41:3,17 50:16</p>	<p>52:1 61:19 68:7 83:3 104:6 105:10,17 119:16,20 120:15,21 121:5 122:6,7 123:21 126:2,10 127:2 135:16 136:16 difficult 29:7 33:5 39:18 63:19 117:16 dig 72:19 digit 75:15,16 diminish 45:20 direction 43:20 65:9 directly 106:4 121:3 122:8 director 9:4 78:11 disclosure 10:3 69:8 disclosures 129:19 discouraging 118:22 discovered 109:18 110:21 discuss 9:18 10:1 discussed 83:10 85:18 108:7 discussion 9:21 23:5 39:1 86:14 99:9 122:1 135:17 discussions 31:22 distinguish 39:11 distort 30:5,21 distributed 118:15 distribution 41:21 105:20 107:6,12 dive 64:15 division 119:7,8 document 8:15 10:13 10:20 68:6 86:17 documentation 19:9 documents 133:19 doesn't 20:15 41:8 52:12 54:8 62:4 68:19 doing 63:8 69:1,16 81:6,21 97:5 103:12 114:2 116:21 136:14 dollar 31:11 107:22 dollars 114:15,17</p>	<p>domain 25:1 91:19,21 dominant 107:3 domination 103:20 don't 15:7 19:20 23:16 25:16,17,21 32:18 33:3,4,9,22 36:17,17 38:5,19 41:20 44:6 57:11,13 60:6,8 61:6 68:16 69:5,10 73:15 86:12 89:19 90:1,3 90:19 91:18 98:3 101:15 104:11 113:22 115:3 116:8 122:8,10 123:2,21,22 124:9 125:8,11,13 126:22 128:9,22 135:19 doors 74:7 draft 14:2 88:9 dramatically 43:22 DRG 37:3,5,10 39:1,2 39:6,12 DRGs 36:5 37:15,17 drilling 36:6 driven 136:11 driver 22:12 28:16 29:6 30:1 94:12 drivers 29:17 30:13 34:22 35:3 driving 63:20 105:5 dropped 96:4 drug 35:18 41:22 44:12 45:13 drugs 33:19 39:4 41:18 42:11,12 44:8 dry 123:3 due 39:5,19 104:15 121:21 dug 126:12,12 dump 40:18 48:5 51:21 dwell 96:9</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <hr/> <p>E 3:1,1 4:2 124:2 earlier 131:20 earliest 47:20</p>
---	--	--	--

<p>earned 45:19 easier 25:14 62:16 127:7 easiest 14:20 15:5 easily 126:12 easy 30:9,12 36:10 93:22 123:19 126:16 127:15 128:12 econometric 50:10 economic 96:1 133:11 economy 76:12 Education 3:7 6:11 educational 117:8 effect 16:2 effective 6:19 13:18 15:1 16:4,5,6,9,10,15 16:18 17:6 18:9,10 18:18 19:7,11,21 20:1,14 21:21 22:19 50:20 55:15 56:21 61:11 62:3,9 88:4,10 88:16 108:16 110:8 119:1 efficiencies 59:19 60:1 efficiency 51:20 53:10 55:9 62:15 68:9 80:1 134:7 efficient 50:21 51:20 55:1 63:2 65:18 66:2 88:16 92:5 108:17 110:6 121:20 133:8,9 efficiently 135:6 effort 71:8 efforts 102:17 109:4 eight 70:14 90:18 either 12:16 13:1 24:19 30:4 34:7,15 35:15 37:3 45:4 73:22 92:19,20 105:22 109:9 113:18 128:21 elaborate 48:7 electronic 116:14,16 electronically 134:21 136:12,15 137:1 elements 54:6</p>	<p>else's 127:19 emerging 30:20 31:4 32:4 45:17 48:22 emphasize 19:19 employed 37:12 99:20 99:22 138:10 employees 15:12 47:7 95:6,16 104:16 107:19 employer 95:15 102:18 103:7 106:1 106:12,12 107:13 employers 94:15,19 95:2,16,19 102:3 107:11,12,16,17 109:8,19 110:19,21 115:14 employer's 100:1 employing 10:2 enable 117:14 enabled 22:1,21 enabling 113:5 encourage 75:20 82:9 encouraging 77:1 ends 32:22 engage 13:7 134:1,6 engaged 6:13 90:15 93:16 103:4,21 125:21 English 95:9 105:4,8 105:14,15 enhance 6:1 7:3,12 10:16 enhanced 58:5 80:19 81:15 111:3 enhancements 11:7 enhancing 6:17 enlightening 108:22 110:4 ensure 31:5 103:19 104:9 108:3 ensuring 24:2 69:17 entire 77:13 106:7 107:21 entirely 105:7 entities 32:6</p>	<p>entitled 5:19 10:15 entity 109:12,13 enumerated 83:18 envision 134:16 envisioning 48:11 68:12 equal 18:16 equitable 58:20 equity 58:10 81:1 equivalent 68:1 especially 29:6 47:7,10 68:7 110:10 113:11 113:20 essence 31:10 essentially 14:22 20:2 29:2 34:17 37:6 51:15 62:2 66:9 108:9 establish 6:18 108:9 estimate 31:21 estimated 59:4 estimates 46:20 estimation 84:6,10,18 ethnicities 105:10 ethnicity 105:1 evaluation 37:13 events 7:10 89:1 exactly 39:17 54:22 57:14 96:22 99:21 113:19 125:13 exaggerating 41:10 example 12:22 36:7 37:11 39:4 49:15 57:10 69:1 70:3 89:21 91:12 92:11 94:21 125:9 131:11 136:5 examples 29:9 117:11 exceed 52:19 58:6,17 58:19 66:22 80:12 87:20 exceeding 18:16 exceeds 66:20 Excel 18:20 51:11 63:6 63:10 72:16 125:7 excess 23:16 29:2</p>	<p>excited 115:5 exciting 125:10 excluded 95:4,6 exclusion 104:16 exclusively 133:22 excuse 96:12 Executive 78:11 exhaustive 54:4 exhibit 5:14,22 6:3 7:13 8:12,17 10:20 11:1 25:16,17 26:3,5 26:20 78:1 86:18,21 102:20 exhibits 4:3,4 8:11 119:19 existed 109:12 existing 10:4 128:19 exists 35:1 expand 7:3 expect 28:22 38:7 44:1 91:5 119:10 expected 84:13 expenses 23:7,8 24:10 24:13,16 25:3,11 26:6,11,13,18 27:1,8 32:3 57:10 79:16 124:12 expensive 114:2 experience 19:4,5 30:21 31:5 32:4 45:17 47:17,18 48:20 48:22 49:1 52:7 63:9 69:6 71:6 81:12 83:3 83:8 84:13 90:14 104:17 123:7 132:4 expert 13:9 expertise 113:20 123:10 experts 13:8 expiration 62:1 expires 138:16 explain 50:13 83:20 84:2 explaining 121:11 extended 113:1 extensive 60:5</p>
--	--	---	---

<p>extensively 64:10 extent 42:17 43:4,9 50:20 55:19,20 64:1 65:17 91:16 122:6,12 133:1 136:2 extreme 13:3 extremely 29:18 30:7 eye 79:22 e-mail 133:22 136:21 e-mails 77:10 91:14 113:6</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">F</p> <p>F 117:10,12 facilitate 63:7 64:4 125:20 facilitator 103:18,19 fact 31:2 60:13,14 62:20 80:12 84:13 97:14 121:22 133:17 factor 39:20 66:6,15 66:20 82:17 factors 19:3 22:10,13 30:6,20 64:19,20 66:4 83:17,21,22 failing 122:15 fair 91:2 96:1 103:1 135:20 fall 13:1 46:11,18 falls 65:6 67:21 familiar 52:22 family 128:10 FAQs 120:14,16 far 67:6 123:10 FCA 3:10 feasible 50:17,18 feasibly 124:15 feature 126:4 features 124:6 federal 6:20 15:8 23:12 76:20 82:1 85:10,13 95:6 104:16 134:19 Federated 8:10 feed 125:14 feedback 108:21 113:12</p>	<p>feeds 125:6 feel 41:1 42:8,18,19 56:11 79:15 fell 101:9 105:13 107:1 felt 94:7 field 103:14 figuring 77:9 file 55:16 61:11 66:6 67:3 89:8 112:9 filed 16:7 66:10 80:16 89:13 90:2 135:19 136:5 filing 10:10 11:12,21 11:22 12:9,17 16:11 18:14 20:7 22:3 23:11,11,19 24:13,18 28:14 30:8 32:5 33:15 34:18 40:19 50:12,16 53:8,9 54:7 55:2,12 56:2,6 59:20 59:21,22 60:18 61:1 61:2,2,6 62:11,18 65:6,13 66:10 68:22 69:18 70:6 80:3 85:12 89:15 90:21 92:1 112:19 118:6,12 119:14 121:9 124:3 124:18 128:22 129:5 134:18 filings 12:8,17 16:20 16:21 18:16 22:1 48:3 49:2 52:21 53:19 58:6,8 59:8,19 60:19 62:12 63:16 64:4 67:11 69:19 77:8 80:17 89:22 91:14,15 92:12 93:5 93:5 110:9 111:9,14 111:20 112:6,10,20 113:2 116:16 124:15 127:6 128:11 133:3,7 135:6 filing-by-filing 54:9 fill 26:19 51:13 filled 18:21 91:8 final 10:6 14:3,3,7</p>	<p>15:19 20:21 21:1,16 21:18 68:22 69:22 80:7,12 81:4 83:10 84:2 88:8 111:13 116:6 finally 11:22 64:7 68:3 87:8 127:21 financial 79:14 114:20 138:12 find 89:14 92:4 115:10 126:10,11,17 127:7 128:7,11,12 finding 9:3 findings 5:17 7:11 19:15 fine 76:16 firm 93:16 97:2 100:14 102:14 103:11 first 6:14 7:10 8:1,7 9:22 11:7 18:1 20:8 29:19 32:8 42:15 46:9 54:21 56:17 57:1,2 58:9 60:3 73:16 74:14,14,14 76:18 80:5 81:18,19 87:3,6,18 88:17 90:17,18 104:11 111:5 112:13 121:16 121:22 124:4 Firstly 14:18 fit 64:8 five 94:11,11 95:22 fixed 31:11 flat 107:22 flexibility 21:22 129:10 flipping 113:22 floor 23:17 flow 53:11 focus 23:9 24:12 28:17 29:21 58:21 59:12 64:14 80:8 85:13 87:7 91:6 93:17 94:10 95:1 96:15,16 97:9,10 98:2,19 99:2 100:6 101:19 102:20</p>	<p>103:12,14 104:8,14 105:7 106:9 108:7,9 113:16,18 115:10 117:13,14 118:22 120:19 121:7,15 123:13 129:7 131:2 135:13,15 focused 101:6 focusing 14:17 folks 73:16 96:6 131:10 follow 59:21,22 82:2 82:14 85:13 followed 8:2,3 following 18:11 58:16 followup 14:5 55:10 63:3 98:4 force 63:20 foregoing 138:5,6 foreign 123:19 foremost 76:18 forget 87:22 form 14:10,12 18:20 19:2 23:2,4 52:16 56:15 63:12 95:11 112:9,10 125:6 131:22 formal 130:11,14 format 51:2 63:6 72:16 94:8 120:14 121:17 124:10 forming 70:9 forms 20:7 formula 51:15,16 formulas 63:11 72:20 forth 5:18 7:11 20:11 54:17 80:10 forward 18:11 45:5 84:12,16,20 85:1 137:17 found 53:4,13 61:13 89:5,19 126:14 127:12,21 fourth 20:10 frankly 110:12 122:13 fraudulent 89:12</p>
--	---	--	--

<p>free 19:1 56:11 frequency 91:22,22 frequent 49:10 frequented 118:14 frequently 13:6 117:9 friendly 77:8 87:19 89:18 112:5,18 117:15,18 125:19 127:7,15 friends 128:10 front 55:8 82:11 FSA 3:11 fulfill 69:12 full 46:9 fully 15:20 54:4 68:11 69:11 full-time 69:11 functions 70:22 funded 7:5 25:8 32:16 funding 115:20 further 25:5 49:15 52:13 64:18 66:11 85:4</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">G</p> <hr/> <p>G 117:12 gaining 116:3 gap 48:15 gather 32:20 94:2 gathered 46:3 102:20 104:2 gathering 32:7 gender 104:11,12 Gene 76:8 general 12:18 42:18,19 43:16 44:1 53:20 89:8,16 94:3,4 104:9 104:18 106:3 107:2,6 107:7 108:11,13,19 117:6,8 118:8,9 119:13 127:4 generalizations 131:1 generally 28:15 29:21 29:22 30:12 42:13 43:14 46:4 49:12 110:21 132:5 getting 48:18 58:11</p>	<p>62:5,22 74:8 75:22 81:13 102:22 108:17 108:21 112:15 125:20 131:12 give 14:13 17:14 41:22 68:4 71:21 81:18 105:9 126:13 128:8 131:13 136:4 given 39:6,12 54:17 60:17 64:18 65:15 88:13 130:13 138:7 glad 5:11 glean 36:10 globally 40:13 go 24:7 42:13 45:4 54:10 70:5,7 80:7 81:11,22 82:4 84:2 86:9,12 92:22 96:9 96:15 97:13 109:20 111:4 128:10 goal 6:18 79:21 goals 108:8 God 123:5 goes 12:1 57:1 120:16 going 5:9,10 9:22 11:3 11:19 13:19 14:13 15:15,16 16:2,14 17:21 18:8,11 22:6 22:18 25:14,15 28:6 28:14,19 29:13 33:7 34:3,5 39:9 40:19,21 43:3,15,18 44:2,8,10 44:13 45:15 46:11,12 46:18 47:19 48:4,13 48:19 49:4,6,13 50:6 50:8,19 52:17,21 53:6,12 54:9 56:10 56:19,20 58:2 59:5 65:5,14,18,19,22 69:13,21 70:8,15 71:5,7 77:13,14 79:1 79:3,18 81:15,15,21 84:12,15,20 85:1,3 87:9 92:9,22 93:18 93:21 95:11 96:8 103:3 106:13 108:5</p>	<p>109:22 111:4 112:21 113:10 114:6,7,16,17 114:18,22 115:3,4 116:11,21 118:5 119:12,21 121:3 123:2 124:18 125:12 125:13 127:3,5,13,14 129:2,4 134:12,14 135:8 Goldsmith 3:3 5:1 6:4 9:12 10:12,19 14:9 17:1,11,17 24:9 25:19 26:9,15 27:16 27:20 28:12 34:21 35:20 36:1 37:10,18 38:12,21 40:16 48:6 49:14 54:15 57:19 68:12 71:17,20 73:2 73:13 74:4 76:1,7,10 76:15 77:17,20 78:4 78:8,9 85:22 86:5,16 87:1 91:11 92:17 96:11,14,19,22 97:4 97:18,22 98:10,13,22 99:6,12 101:12 102:1 102:8 103:9,22 113:15 120:1,11 129:12,16 130:22 132:1,11 137:2,6 good 5:4 12:12 27:10 28:10 33:22 46:19 50:4 74:17 76:9,10 78:7,9 79:10 81:20 86:9 120:22 122:15 127:17 government 82:1 134:19 governmental 27:6 grace 62:1 graft 57:2 grandfathered 14:19 14:20 58:5 80:20,20 81:8,8 grandfathering 15:3,4 grant 7:6 grants 76:20 115:20</p>	<p>graphic 123:22 127:10 graphs 122:20 great 63:21 113:21 greater 16:12,17,20 30:4 55:18 120:3 greatest 79:17 group 12:4,5 13:6,6 15:9,15 22:17,19 23:13,14 27:14,15 28:5 32:17,17,18,18 34:17 41:7 47:7 58:3 58:8 60:2,4,7,9 61:21 62:8 63:16 79:11,11 80:21 95:19 96:16 98:19 99:1,14 100:6 100:19 101:4,5,9,14 102:9,18,21 104:8 105:7,10 107:10 115:10 120:19 129:7 131:2 136:14 grouping 64:9 96:8 groups 15:10 60:8 87:7 93:17 94:10 95:7,15 96:15 97:9 97:10 98:2 99:2 101:20 103:12 104:14 105:16 107:13 108:7,9 109:15 113:16,18 115:9,21,22 116:1 117:2,13,14 118:22 121:7,15,18 123:13 135:13,15,15 grows 68:7 guarantee 41:7 guardian 106:22 guess 5:2 21:16 51:19 52:20 56:7,16 60:12 62:20 64:18,20 71:15 106:8,15 122:4 126:19,21 guidance 65:10 69:3 83:22 85:10 guidelines 78:22</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">H</p> <hr/> <p>H 4:2</p>
---	---	---	--

<p>Haglund 4:8,9 8:10 half 90:20 91:7 hand 94:9 110:3 138:14 handle 31:20 handled 97:13 handouts 129:10 hands 81:14 happen 136:12 happened 70:19 happening 136:13 happy 73:19 136:8 hard 4:11,13 10:15 12:7 39:11 73:9 90:6 harming 84:22 hasn't 65:9 74:9 137:9 Hatchette 3:6 6:10 120:12 128:14 haven't 47:17 68:19 70:15 72:1 135:20 head 57:9,15 heading 6:10 health 1:10 7:7 25:13 27:21 29:10 31:8 32:9 57:12 77:7 78:6 78:11 79:9,10 82:15 107:19 111:7,8 128:19 132:20 healthcare 26:1,3 45:9 99:16,18 101:7,9 102:10 103:16,17 hear 5:8,11 9:9 73:16 73:19 77:5 87:12,12 heard 78:18 82:7 133:1 hearing 1:10 2:1 4:4 5:6,12,17 11:1 13:7,7 73:21 77:16 78:1 86:21 93:7 130:14 131:16,22 133:2,17 134:3,5,13,16 135:9 135:11 137:19 138:5 hearings 13:10 132:7 133:6 heart 37:8 heartening 110:14</p>	<p>held 2:1 5:6,12 132:7 help 48:17,17 49:18 53:10 75:22 89:11 93:16 helped 103:14 helpful 73:5 76:21 129:17 hereunto 138:13 here's 21:14 40:19 126:14 hey 49:11 70:14 HHS 13:18 14:18 15:7 15:18 16:14,21 17:4 17:7,7,21,22 18:2,4 18:14,15,19 19:12,15 19:18 21:4,6,21 24:6 52:18 57:6 60:15 62:15 65:5,14,16 67:15 69:2 78:22 80:7,10,12 81:6,18 82:3 83:10,18,20,21 85:16 88:3 111:17 112:22 125:6,15 135:16 high 28:18 29:10 31:8 63:8 70:6 higher 29:4 67:2 highlight 79:5 80:13 94:20 hired 97:2 Hispanic 105:3,6 historical 84:16 historically 45:11 90:15 history 49:7 hits 91:22 HMO 32:17 HMOs 34:3,5 57:12 61:20 62:8 hold 92:16 131:21 holding 8:18 honestly 101:16 hope 119:1 hopefully 54:16 55:8 55:10 63:1 66:13 hospital 8:16 31:16,16</p>	<p>32:13 33:4 34:15,16 34:16 35:6,15 36:18 37:2,3 38:3 41:13,15 41:17 42:3,19,20 43:3,7,11,12,21 44:8 44:9 45:14 74:15,19 75:4,5,14,17 129:22 hospitals 32:12 33:21 34:2,6,9 35:10 38:13 38:14 40:7,13 75:17 housekeeping 9:6 HSCRC 32:9 35:1 40:2,6 42:18 44:15 49:8,20 50:3 64:10 67:13 71:5 75:1,11 75:21 82:7 huge 45:1 huh 45:6 Human 7:7 hundred 38:10</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <hr/> <p>ICD-10 37:4 ICD-9 37:3,5 idea 49:14 54:15 77:6 93:12 94:6 113:8 122:2 ideas 65:15 identical 12:6 identification 11:2 78:2 86:22 identified 18:14 32:6 117:6 identify 19:3 32:13,13 32:15 63:4 69:20 identifying 96:16 II 18:19 19:1 20:18 21:3,10 III 19:8,13,18,19 Immediately 7:17 impact 28:19 84:11 130:17 133:11 implement 55:14 61:4 64:2 128:3 implementation 64:4 implemented 67:9,10 68:11 70:4</p>	<p>implementing 69:10 importance 131:11 important 21:4,19 30:7 56:18 79:12 85:15 123:4 130:21 importantly 80:5 impossible 33:6 improve 7:2 improvement 24:4 26:16 inclined 99:1 include 15:20 35:16 56:5 63:16 80:15 115:22 118:13 136:9 included 9:1 11:12 15:11 18:13 20:7 34:18 49:2 53:5 54:1 56:8 65:11 88:9 90:8 95:8 96:6 98:19 100:20 111:20 115:22 117:10 includes 33:21 46:10 47:4 including 65:2 inclusive 54:4,14 income 23:21 inconsistency 75:12 101:13 incorporate 45:14 increase 10:3 16:12,16 16:21 19:4,10 20:5 20:13 22:7 24:8 29:1 30:14 43:22 44:2,3 55:9,14,16,18 58:16 58:17 59:5,11,13 62:4,6,10 66:1,13,17 66:22 67:10,15 90:2 106:14 112:13 113:16 116:8 119:10 119:11,16,17,20 120:2,3,5 124:11 128:11,17 135:19 136:6 increased 15:15 91:6 119:4 increases 7:1 10:9</p>
--	--	--	---

<p>22:12 29:5 55:19 61:20 66:14 87:20 106:10 108:18 112:7 123:1 increasing 43:13 66:11 80:2 119:9 increment 66:6 incurred 44:13 independent 13:8,8 44:9 45:16 63:12 67:18,20 indicate 37:7 98:7 107:17 indicated 21:5 indicates 5:16 13:13 indicating 5:11 indicator 40:15 41:2 41:13 45:3 49:10,10 49:21 indifferent 127:18 individual 12:4 13:5 22:16,19 23:13 27:12 27:13,14 41:4 60:9 61:19 63:16 79:11 80:21 85:11 95:18,19 96:4 99:20,22 100:9 100:17 101:14 102:6 103:13 105:22 109:14 115:8 120:3 136:20 individually 60:20 individuals 94:19,22 95:2,4,8 101:6 102:15 103:7,13 105:8 110:5,16 115:22 122:7 128:4 131:4 individuals/small 58:8 industries 103:13 industry 82:22 99:16 99:18 101:2,3,6,8,11 102:10 inflation 31:12 inform 49:19 information 5:20 6:22 7:3,15,22 8:3,8 11:11</p>	<p>11:13,17 18:15,22 27:2,10 32:7 33:19 35:2,5 36:11 40:18 43:17 48:2 54:5,11 54:20 55:4,6,8 63:7 64:3,12,14 65:14,16 70:12,16 73:11 74:1 75:2,10,18,22 82:11 86:11,19 88:2,6,6,15 88:17,18,21 89:5,6,7 89:14,15,17,20 90:3 90:9,21 91:4,12,15 91:21 93:12 94:4,7 97:7 102:18 107:5,9 108:15,17,19 109:21 110:7,10,13,18,20 111:12,18 114:18 115:15 117:7,22 120:14,18 121:3,6,6 126:12,17,18,19 127:8 128:20 129:9 130:6,16,19 136:7 137:10 inherently 56:7 initial 70:6 initially 17:3 29:10 70:11 94:2 inpatient 31:16 34:16 35:11,16 36:5,5 41:18 42:3 43:2,6,7 43:11,21 inpatient/outpatient 42:9 input 99:17 100:6 116:5 117:13 123:12 124:16 130:7 131:13 137:13 inquire 136:9 inquiry 49:15 inspiration 126:7 instance 54:21 83:7 84:10 133:17 136:14 instances 133:18 institution 37:6 institutions 38:3 instructions 8:22</p>	<p>51:12 65:10 insurance 1:4,10 2:4 3:2 5:6 6:6,13,16 8:10 27:6 33:15 57:12 58:13 61:18 72:7,10 75:3,6 76:19 77:7 88:19 89:8 95:20,21 96:3 98:16 99:4 101:2,3,6,7,10 103:1,14 105:21 106:3,17,20 109:10 110:2 111:7,8 130:7 130:16 131:21 133:11,12 134:9 136:6 insured 15:20 32:16 136:16 insureds 34:7,9 insured's 120:3 insurer 32:14 89:12 106:4 insurers 78:6,12 79:9 130:10 131:16 132:20 intended 54:3,5,14 106:15 intensive 36:8 interchangeably 17:22 interest 99:3 115:10 138:11 interested 8:6 73:9 81:10 85:4 98:16,18 99:9 115:9 interesting 98:6 103:8 108:20 121:1 123:2 intermediate 32:18 internet 110:6,11 128:6 130:4,6,13,20 131:5,10 133:14,16 134:2 135:4 136:3 interpretation 16:8 17:16 20:21 interrupting 96:12 intertwined 39:10 introducing 92:4 investigate 50:9 64:12</p>	<p>67:13 116:13 investigated 52:13 investment 23:21 involved 99:15 involving 99:15 Island 90:13 isn't 29:5 46:11 49:5 59:6 65:8 67:1 93:20 131:7 isolate 33:13,13 isolating 31:18 issue 15:21 34:12 41:8 46:1 47:15 72:22 112:2,3 issued 5:13 14:22 33:22 issues 24:1 41:3 58:2 61:16 69:20 85:9,17 110:9 item 20:10 73:1 items 20:9 31:4 53:17 56:5 63:5 65:2 70:10 90:19,22 104:5 It'll 60:1 it's 15:18 17:4 20:17 21:4,19 22:18 25:22 26:21 27:18,18,21 29:22 30:7,8,12 33:5 33:13 39:11 40:21 41:5 43:15,17 44:12 44:17 46:4,7,8,18 47:3,8,14 48:4,9 49:4 49:20 50:6,8 51:8,10 51:11,19 52:1,7 54:5 54:13 61:2 62:13,16 62:19 64:22 73:7,12 76:12 78:19,21 79:12 97:21 106:17 113:22 114:1,13,18 115:2,4 115:7 119:19 121:1,3 123:2,3,3,5,6,18,19 125:10 126:14 127:4 127:7,8,18 129:1,2,2 130:22 135:19,21 136:13,15 I'd 25:20 79:5 136:8</p>
---	---	---	--

<p>I'll 7:22 32:10 38:22 76:12 87:21 93:18 94:20 106:8 114:10 121:1 122:14 I'm 5:10 9:7,12 14:13 25:6,21 26:20 28:5 29:16 34:2,3 36:6 43:7 45:7 48:8,13,17 53:6 55:19 56:10 57:8,21,22 58:1 66:20,21 71:21 74:6 74:17,18 77:13,14 78:10 79:1 86:9 87:9 91:20 92:1,22 93:20 96:8 98:6,18 108:5 109:22 110:3 122:15 123:11 127:3,17,18 128:5 I've 77:15 i.e 28:21 32:17</p>	<p>108:5 keep 15:3 79:22 87:21 keeping 103:2,4 kept 45:12 60:8 key 94:21 128:13 Kimberly 78:5,10 132:19 kind 27:8 37:9 40:10 51:5 55:4 64:7,9 65:9 65:20 67:17 69:20 70:7 74:9 91:20 93:12 99:2 103:8 113:20 114:5 126:9 128:6 130:10,14 131:15,22 136:17 know 24:17 28:2 30:9 33:9 34:5 37:16,20 38:6,9 44:6,10 46:8 48:14,17 49:13 51:4 59:14 69:5,10 70:18 71:4,6,11 80:22 87:10 91:9 97:4 98:3 103:6 109:6,11 113:22 114:1,6 115:19 116:9,20 118:1 119:21 122:5,8 122:10,14,19 123:5 123:10,15,18,21,22 125:8,11,11,13 126:4 127:8,14 128:5,9,10 128:15 129:3,4 132:3 132:15 134:11 136:1 137:4 knowing 98:16,18 knowledge 12:16,18 19:17 53:21 65:8 90:13 108:13</p>	<p>larger 38:7,7 58:16 130:10 131:17 Lastly 83:17 law 17:16 60:14 82:14 82:15,20 85:12 laws 92:20 lawyers 17:13 57:17 lead 51:19 61:10 leading 40:14,20 41:13 45:2 49:9,21 leads 65:20 League 78:5,11 132:20 learn 81:20 learned 109:1 learning 99:3 leave 128:15 left 6:6 104:20 left-hand 12:22 legal 17:14,19 57:17 58:2 79:9 112:2 legally 90:19 legislation 93:10 legislative 57:19,21 65:4 legislature 58:1 letter 4:12 let's 109:5 level 12:21 15:8 20:14 23:2,3,4,4,12 33:12 33:14 35:21 37:12 58:10,11 60:11,16,21 61:6,8 63:8 70:6 71:9 71:13 85:11 88:1 89:18,19 106:14 levels 23:10 72:10 79:12 leverage 42:12 leveraging 31:9,13 liable 34:5 library 89:2 licensed 89:10 lieu 49:5 life 8:10 15:10 78:6,11 79:9 132:20 light 68:20 113:11 liked 100:15</p>	<p>likewise 107:4 limit 34:1 58:18 123:6 123:7,14 limitations 40:1 82:8 123:10 limited 13:3 38:12 81:7 92:9 95:5,16 128:6 limiting 66:16 lined 104:21 link 21:3 73:8 111:17 126:14 list 29:16 36:3 53:14 54:14 70:14 84:8 120:16 131:19 listed 21:15,18 34:22 listing 89:10 lists 29:16 little 6:12 13:19 21:17 43:9 47:5 48:7 53:2 57:2 62:19 72:17 78:22 79:2 81:11 87:10 91:8 93:8,19 105:2 106:5,9 108:6 135:5 live 34:8 47:8,9 lively 123:5 lives 123:16 locate 107:8 locations 118:14 locked 66:9 long 45:1 125:4 longer 10:4 49:1 96:3 longitudinal 37:1 look 23:18 25:10 31:18 32:10 39:6,18 46:15 50:15,22 59:20 63:11 75:9 81:2 84:16 85:6 88:18 90:17 91:10 109:22 110:1,14,16 125:3 126:6 127:14 131:16 looked 27:4 51:1,4 53:8 61:10 88:19 92:19 126:2 135:15 looking 24:17 42:5</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">J</p> <p>jargon 123:17 Job 1:19 jobs 123:17 joined 6:9 joining 6:4 Joy 3:6 6:9 122:5 126:1 judgment 22:2 103:4 July 18:7 22:19 138:17 jump 52:9 jumping 50:1 June 1:12 5:5 8:19 18:10 79:4 138:15 jurisdictions 24:15 justification 19:8 20:19 48:19 52:16 63:18 80:16 87:19,19 124:14</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">L</p> <p>lab 31:17 labeled 5:14 12:22 lag 48:1 language 95:9 105:4,8 105:14,15 123:19 large 12:5 13:6 14:16 23:14 27:14 30:21 60:2,4,7,8 62:5 79:11</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">K</p> <p>Kaiser 106:20 Karen 3:10 9:3,9,12 11:5 13:19 52:16 57:17 64:10 65:4 87:22 93:18 94:10</p>			

<p>63:9 64:15 65:16 82:18 83:4,6 86:17 92:10 122:1 128:5 loss 22:13,14,15 23:1,3 23:12,17,22 24:5 60:10 64:21,22 lost 11:15 70:17 96:4 lot 50:19 52:3,8,9 56:22 62:4 65:19 69:6 70:22 74:22 75:18 92:15 97:12 109:15 120:16 122:11 123:11 lots 50:4 119:18,22 low 28:18 75:15 lunch 73:22</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">M</p> <hr/> <p>M 3:3 MAAA 3:10,11 magic 94:11 132:2 magnitude 43:20 mailing 136:16 137:4 main 9:21 22:12 133:13 maintain 116:22 maintaining 117:3 maintains 45:10 major 28:13,16,17,19 29:5,14 30:1 33:20 33:20 majority 124:17 making 7:4 65:18 68:22 79:22 87:14,15 90:21 99:4 108:13,19 109:13 111:21 115:11 117:7,10 118:10 119:12 125:3 management 38:1 100:2 mandated 17:8 mandatory 15:17 17:4 manner 88:16 133:8 manual 68:4 March 15:1 margins 23:8 64:19 mark 10:20 77:20</p>	<p>86:18 marked 5:14,22 6:3 8:11,17 11:1 78:1 86:21 market 12:4,4,5 13:5 23:2,4 32:16,17 41:4 41:6,7 47:7 51:8,10 52:2,6 53:4 60:4,11 60:20,21 61:8,19,21 62:8 79:10,12 80:21 85:11,14 103:11 106:20 131:18 marketed 60:16 marketing 136:14 marketplace 79:19 131:18 markets 12:6 Maryland 1:4,11 2:4,7 2:14 3:2 5:6 6:5,13 7:7 8:16 13:12 22:15 32:6 33:21,22 34:1,7 34:8,8,10 35:11 36:14 38:13,14 40:7 40:13 45:9,9 47:4,8 47:12,12 57:3 58:10 72:6,10 74:15,18 75:5,17 76:22 77:12 78:6,12,17,19 79:9 80:4,6 81:3,22 82:2 82:20 85:3,5 88:19 89:21 90:10,18 93:14 94:3 95:5 97:3 104:8 106:2,19 107:9 127:19 129:22 131:3 132:21 133:2 135:9 136:6 138:21 Marylanders 79:19 81:2 Maryland's 78:21 79:10 masking 41:10 match 84:14 104:12 material 23:19 24:12 128:16,17 materially 45:20 materials 95:14 117:8</p>	<p>117:21 matter 18:17 123:3 may 5:13,21 6:2 13:6 15:9 18:6 22:2 33:11 34:9,17 40:9 47:21 47:22 48:10 50:6,8 57:7,16,18 59:5 61:3 65:3 66:13,16,19 69:12 80:8 82:8 84:11 85:21 92:3,16 92:16 106:10 115:8 116:2,6 127:16 131:6 131:8 133:7 mean 24:22 26:12 27:13,16 34:4 41:12 42:14 47:1 52:12 54:8 70:18 84:2 85:3 99:7 114:14 118:19 126:6,22 meaning 16:3 57:11 96:18 105:22 120:2 meaningful 48:9 means 5:2 17:5 21:11 21:20 44:8 54:3 55:15 62:2 83:20 84:1 133:16 mechanism 88:11 116:12 134:15 MedChi 4:12 76:8 Medicaid 25:6 27:6 95:4 medical 6:16 31:20 32:8 45:10 75:14 83:7 84:3,7,10 99:16 99:22 100:8 medically 41:5 Medicare 25:6,7 27:7 51:7,13 52:3 95:1 meet 61:5 78:22 80:9 80:17 member 30:9,10 members 8:17 34:1 79:8 83:16 131:8 membership 33:3,5,10 38:6,7 44:16 45:14 46:11 47:2,3 63:6</p>	<p>77:11 136:9 mentioned 67:6 90:7 94:9 97:2 101:8 merger 124:8 met 60:11,17,19,22 61:6 119:4 method 134:17 methodology 36:21 methods 10:8 MHA 4:10 MHCC 45:8,21 47:18 49:12,18 50:3 64:11 67:13 71:5 75:10,21 82:7 MIA 4:4 11:1 50:2 78:1,8,15 79:20 84:5 86:21 109:4 MIA's 85:12 Michael 8:15 74:15 mics 5:9 Mike 74:17 129:21 mind 41:15 131:11 minimum 22:15 23:3 23:12,17 24:5 Minnesota 53:15 minor 14:7 minutes 73:15 74:5 86:13 mirror 95:17 miscellaneous 42:10 misestimation 58:15 mismatch 47:5 49:3 missed 55:16 missing 70:12 mix 27:5 30:2,5 33:11 35:8,9,13 39:14 104:21 106:5 mixed 110:12 117:1 121:16 MLR 26:6 85:9,10,14 85:17 modality 131:12 moderator 103:3 121:7 modification 52:3 modify 17:20</p>
---	--	--	---

<p>money 114:22 month 30:10,11 66:8 monthly 66:7 months 46:2,5 55:17 66:7 morbid 44:12 morbidity 37:21 39:13 morning 5:4 6:5 74:17 76:9,10 78:7,9 Motor 89:3 move 73:22 86:10 93:4 135:5 moving 137:17 multi 131:12</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <hr/> <p>N 3:1 NAIC 24:6 25:12 28:9 name 6:4 9:12 97:18 narrative 121:13,16 national 82:18,21 83:6 83:8,9,14 nationwide 83:5 navigate 127:16 necessarily 20:15 37:11 41:19 42:20 44:8 131:20 133:14 134:3 135:11 necessary 74:7 80:9 need 5:10 16:19 19:2 19:15 21:22 30:14 46:15,22 54:10 55:10 56:19,20 57:18 61:7 67:16 74:8 75:19 84:14,17 85:2 101:21 117:6 118:2 120:20 130:4,17,18 135:11 needed 57:5 95:13,13 128:16 needing 134:3 needs 57:22 65:12,22 67:21 84:7,11 95:12 119:4 120:7 127:17 134:8 negatives 119:8 neglected 124:5 neither 138:10</p>	<p>neonatal 36:8 net 23:15 network 42:4 Nevada 93:1 new 26:5 29:6,7 36:6 53:5 60:14 68:5,9 81:5,14,17 94:16 nice 21:1 107:22 nods 5:10 non 14:19,20 15:3 26:15 27:6 32:17,17 57:11 58:5 61:18 70:1 80:20 81:8 82:15 111:19 112:1 125:13 nope 127:22 normalize 33:10 46:22 normalized 47:3 notarial 138:14 Notary 2:13 138:1,4 138:20 notation 22:20 note 13:21 24:10 131:1 noted 14:4 notice 5:13,13,16 9:1 61:17 104:13 112:16 135:18 136:4 notification 112:12 130:12 notified 61:22 notify 62:3 90:1 notifying 61:20 noting 14:6 number 9:4 20:6 25:17 28:6 29:20 38:4,7 44:22 61:3 89:1 91:3 94:11 96:1 103:1 113:16 133:3 numbers 48:14 122:15 125:2 numerical 20:15 121:14 124:10</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">O</p> <hr/> <p>objection 76:13 objective 79:13 88:13 obscene 116:19</p>	<p>observation 121:2 observe 101:20 105:17 observed 122:5 observing 101:20 obtain 105:21 133:20 obtained 68:20 124:15 136:7 obtaining 133:8 obviously 14:16 17:20 22:11,13 24:1 25:1 28:17 29:19 35:5 41:3 43:1 74:22 111:3 112:6 115:10 116:17 118:12 occur 54:12 67:14 89:1 occurring 33:11 occurs 54:18 55:13 72:6 October 47:20 offering 17:15 office 35:18 53:11,12 54:18 100:3 officer 138:4 offices 2:1 offline 135:8 oh 93:20 126:14 okay 16:1 17:11 26:11 27:20 28:3 37:18 42:5 48:16 50:14 59:20 73:13 76:12,17 86:8 92:17 99:6 102:1 103:22 older 104:17,19 131:4 131:8 Oliver 3:9 5:18 6:13 6:21 7:5,10,18 8:6 9:10,13,16 78:13 83:18 135:14 once 11:17 12:3,4,5,10 13:15 40:22 46:5 67:4 68:5 73:21 104:2 ones 90:22 106:8 126:21 online 89:22 90:8 93:5 open 8:18 71:15 74:8</p>	<p>operating 19:7 26:13 83:14 operation 50:7 opinion 12:11 14:8 17:14,19 21:8 52:10 53:16 57:3 58:21 59:14 61:14 70:10 101:21 126:8 128:22 opinions 116:3 opportunities 91:17 opportunity 7:21 9:18 74:19 76:20 78:13 130:13 131:13 opposed 23:4 40:12 41:7 72:18 82:19 96:20 109:10 118:11 136:12 opposite 40:3 option 72:17 options 72:3,5 orange 25:13 27:19,19 28:9 order 7:3,9 11:6 78:17 78:21 121:18 Oregon 53:14 90:12 91:12,13,17 92:11 120:15 126:1,3,19 original 4:3 21:13 originally 29:9 ought 86:10 outcome 124:19 138:12 outlined 13:17 56:12 57:6 outpatient 31:16 34:16 35:11,16 36:4 37:2 42:3 43:2,5,12 output 125:9 outreach 89:1 109:3 118:15,17,18,21 outside 34:6,8,9 82:17 83:1,4 123:8 outstanding 15:21 outweigh 52:11 overall 19:5 92:16 overcome 34:11</p>
---	--	--	---

<p>overlooked 21:9 overly 131:20 oversight 6:2 7:13 10:17 101:16 overstate 28:21 overstating 31:5 overview 9:20 14:13 14:14 87:4 overweight 84:17 o'clock 137:20</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <hr/> <p>P 3:1,1,11 page 4:4 26:22 27:22 28:1 72:3 98:14 124:8 pages 1:20 123:6 paid 42:8,11 98:10 palatable 124:1 paper 72:18 120:10 133:19 134:20 136:13 137:3 papers 9:17,18 117:18 119:18 120:10 part 8:12 18:19,19,19 19:1,8,13,18,19 20:18,18 21:3,3,10 21:10 24:5 27:19 42:15,16 63:17,17 64:21 71:3 72:8 74:21 77:15 80:16 88:8 92:12 95:1 104:15 112:7 121:21 124:14 128:18 134:1 135:2 136:10 137:15 participant 97:11,11 98:17 99:22 131:2 participants 96:16 97:15 98:15 100:2,7 participate 97:12 98:8 99:1 participated 97:9 98:1 98:8 participating 51:9 97:15 participation 77:2 98:11</p>	<p>particular 30:8 32:4 32:14 33:1,15,15 34:13,18,20 39:19 40:12 41:6 61:1 69:18 95:12 102:14 103:20 112:9 119:14 122:21 127:6,9 particularly 31:19 83:8 84:6 parties 8:6 81:10 138:11 pass 74:9 passage 91:5 passed 60:14 92:21 93:10 patients 77:11 Paul 2:5 pay 34:6 58:13,22 102:13 114:16 payer 32:12 36:15 payers 36:16 45:18 paying 106:7,12 110:3 114:15 payment 36:16 PDF 72:18 peer 69:4 pending 93:10 people 29:21 47:9,11 68:8 73:18 74:12 96:2 97:8 98:1,5,8 99:8,17 102:9 103:4 103:5 106:3,6 113:17 114:16 116:15 122:10,19 123:15 125:5 128:12 percent 16:12,17,20 18:3 22:16,16,18 23:13,14 27:9 28:15 38:9,10 42:1,4,9,10 42:14 48:14,14,15,16 52:19 58:7,18 59:5,6 59:9,22 64:22 65:1 66:18 67:1,3 80:18 81:7 87:21 105:12,13 106:13 107:21 111:15 112:20</p>	<p>125:17 132:2,6 percentage 39:7 107:18 131:18 perfectly 48:18 perform 13:8 70:8 performed 58:5,8 71:1 80:19 93:11 performing 60:4 68:8 68:13 69:21 70:9 83:5 period 18:11 55:12 61:12 62:1 66:7 periodically 118:4 periods 49:2 61:12 69:19 person 68:21 69:11 70:21 103:20 124:21 125:2 131:6 personally 92:6,11 perspective 44:14 82:18 96:7 99:7 106:6 pertaining 32:7 108:17,18 110:9 pertains 14:14 pertinent 14:5 23:22 pharmaceutical 31:17 35:19 pharmacy 31:20 phone 96:21 phrasing 50:7 physical 100:3 physician 31:16 33:18 36:19 100:2 physician's 35:18 100:3 pick 126:20,21 129:4 pie 122:19 124:13,21 124:22 125:1 pieces 121:5 place 2:5 12:2,9,13,15 12:21 13:12,13 19:12 35:15,17 43:5 57:4 78:21 88:5 129:7,8 135:4 placed 89:2</p>	<p>places 89:2 118:14 119:6 134:22 135:10 plan 31:8 83:5 plans 25:4,4 29:10,13 81:8 82:15 83:13 play 66:22 pleasantly 115:5 please 9:3 10:21 25:16 96:10 pleased 114:19 plenty 135:9 plus 66:3 pocket 106:7 point 11:21,22 17:1 18:17 21:19 66:8,11 67:1 81:3 82:4,13 95:22 112:13 115:18 126:13 127:9 130:3 133:13 135:22 points 69:19 82:5 policies 14:19,20,22 15:7 16:4,7,15 20:6 22:16 80:20 policy 16:10 19:5 20:7 89:11 96:5 105:22 policyholders 61:3 pool 27:4 pop 40:19 populate 124:20 population 36:13 39:16 44:11 45:2 104:3,9,15,18,19,20 105:3,6 106:2 107:7 131:9 134:1 populations 27:4 portal 134:2 portion 14:15,17 35:14 41:15 75:4,5,14 82:20 120:10 124:18 portions 69:16 111:20 position 69:9 positive 77:11 124:6 positives 119:8 possible 40:4 54:21 115:8 possibly 77:10</p>
--	---	---	---

<p>post 88:5 91:13 93:5 110:7 112:6,17,21 113:1 116:16 136:3 postage 137:4 posted 73:12 88:3 92:13,15 117:20 121:10 127:13,13 posting 93:4 112:4 potential 47:14 50:4 96:16 98:15 130:17 potentially 89:12 114:14 PowerPoint 4:11,13 powers 50:11 PPO 32:18 practical 14:21 practice 55:22 56:3 100:3,4 preamble 83:10 predicting 50:10 preface 114:12 prelim 21:16 preliminary 20:19,20 20:22 52:16 63:17,17 71:10 80:16 93:15 124:14 Premarked 4:5,6,7,8,9 4:10 premature 81:12 premium 7:1,5 27:9 29:2 45:19 63:6 75:6 75:12 107:18,21,21 112:12 premiums 1:10 23:16 47:6 115:3,4 preparing 56:6 prescribed 18:20,20 22:4 82:1 prescribes 51:14 prescription 33:19 41:18 45:13 present 7:10 56:13 73:18 121:7 presentation 7:17 8:2 73:5 78:19 87:4,5 90:7 120:9 129:14</p>	<p>presented 121:6,15 president 74:18 presume 103:6 pretty 12:11 123:3 prevalent 107:3 previous 59:3 69:19 84:3 90:20 112:14 113:7 129:5 previously 84:14 pre-approved 65:21 66:4,15,20 67:5 pricing 23:8 51:8 52:2 52:8 53:22 64:19 primarily 94:22 103:6 primary 34:22 35:3 56:18 72:21 94:12 95:9,9 110:11 principal 9:13,15 principle 79:8 print 88:20 95:11 121:6 135:1 prior 61:11,22 62:9 private 27:6 privately 105:22 pro 53:1 probably 15:5,21 17:12,21 23:22 28:15 29:9 37:15 38:4 44:5 44:9,15 45:3 46:19 51:6 53:15 54:11 56:22 65:13 67:7 70:20 71:12 79:2 90:6 94:12 99:10 100:14 101:9 103:10 110:15,16 111:8,9 117:1 119:11,13 122:6,13,16 123:6 125:11 126:20 problem 38:5 122:21 problematic 36:13 37:22 38:1 49:6 problems 37:8 procedure 7:9,22 8:4 35:21 procedures 68:4 proceed 9:7</p>	<p>proceeding 5:15,22 6:3 8:13,19 137:13 137:16 proceedings 74:3 process 6:15,18 7:4 8:9 10:5 11:7,8,20 12:3,5 12:11,12 13:7,13,15 13:18,19 15:14 19:12 22:15 50:6 51:9 53:11 54:19 55:1 56:8 57:4 59:18,21 60:1 66:2,12 68:5 75:22 77:3,13 78:18 78:20 79:14 80:3 81:5,9 82:9 84:1 86:7 87:15,15 89:16,16 90:1,4,21 99:4 108:20 109:13 111:2 115:2 116:5 117:10 118:2 119:15 121:11 126:15 130:11,15 131:16,22 132:5 134:20 135:6 processes 10:1 11:4 12:14,19 processing 26:14 proclaim 123:8 product 40:12 52:4 85:11 products 6:17 29:6,7 60:19 profession 122:14 123:9 professional 33:18 38:15 41:18 42:10 43:8 45:12 103:11,19 138:3 profit 57:12 65:1 82:15 124:12 profits 61:18 program 6:19 16:4,7 16:19 17:6 18:18 19:8,21 20:1,14 21:21 50:20 56:21 88:5,10,12 programs 118:17,18</p>	<p>118:21 Progressing 13:3 project 48:22 63:22 projected 79:16 84:19 projecting 49:1 projects 135:16 prominent 133:5 promote 53:10 60:1 62:20 68:6 prompt 49:15 prompting 19:3 promulgated 15:7 proposed 7:1 9:20 10:4,5,6 13:16 16:21 55:15 pros 51:18,18 52:11,20 127:2 protection 79:18,21 provide 7:19 13:9 19:4 20:18 21:2,10 35:2,4 35:7,12,14,21 37:13 65:5 70:16 73:17,20 74:12 76:20 79:18 86:6 88:11 89:21 90:3 114:17 116:6 121:2 130:15 135:18 provided 5:20 11:9 12:7 36:3 65:10 70:15 72:16 83:21 86:19 88:15,17,22 100:6 102:16 118:18 130:20 132:15 provider 29:19,22 30:4 35:5 providers 33:8 35:9,13 provides 58:9 87:4 providing 88:14 91:3 130:7 131:13 provision 83:13 public 1:10 2:13 5:5 8:3,12 9:4 21:11 24:21,22 25:1,2 74:11,12 77:1,2 88:11 89:2 91:19,21 93:6 108:11 116:12 130:11,11,14,18</p>
--	---	---	---

<p>131:16,22 132:6,8 133:2,6,8,17 134:3,4 134:7,13,16 138:1,4 138:5,20 publicly 75:2 published 80:8,12 119:20 120:1 pull 92:11 pulling 71:10 purchase 106:1,4 purchasing 89:8,11 95:2 purpose 15:13 94:1 purposes 14:21,21 15:4 26:5 62:15 pursuant 2:12 5:12 put 58:17 67:4 80:10 87:17,17 109:4,5 114:7 119:17 120:14 129:1,3 putting 69:1 127:10 p.m 137:20</p>	<p>quite 12:19 13:14 30:12 56:12 57:3,3 110:12 122:13</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">R</p> <hr/> <p>R 3:1 radiology 39:4,7 random 90:12 range 103:12 107:20 ranges 27:9 ranging 107:20 Ransom 76:8,9,11,17 77:19 78:3 132:15 rapidly 43:13 rate 6:15,19 7:1,4,6 8:1,9 10:3,6,9,9 13:7 13:7,10,18 14:14,17 15:6,14,22 16:1,4,6,9 16:10,16,18,20,21,21 17:6 18:13,16,18 19:4,7,10,12,21 20:1 20:5,12,14 21:14,21 22:1,7,12 23:11,11 23:11 24:8,18 28:14 28:18,19,22 29:1 30:8,13,14,15 32:5 33:15 40:18 41:8 48:3 49:2 50:5,12,20 55:2,14,16,17,19 56:21 58:16,17,22 59:1,11,13 61:20 62:4,6,9,18 63:18 66:10,14,17,22 67:22 68:22 75:6 77:7,8 78:18,20 79:13 80:17 82:20 84:1,22 85:7 86:7 87:14,15,20 88:4,10,12 89:15,17 89:22 90:2,21,21 91:13,15 92:1,11 93:4,5,7 94:16 99:4 106:10,14 108:13,18 108:19 109:13 110:9 111:8,14,20 112:5,7 112:10,12 113:2 116:5,8,16 117:7,7,9 118:1,6,10,10,11</p>	<p>119:12,14,16,16,16 119:17,20 120:2,3,5 121:8 123:1,18 124:3 124:10,11 126:15 127:6 128:11,17,21 129:5 130:8,12 133:3 133:7 135:19 136:5 rated 52:4 rates 10:2 13:2,5 28:16 40:3 47:15 52:5 58:12 59:14 60:7 66:7,8,9,11 84:12 90:4,5 98:17 108:18 111:1,1,7 126:5 rating 66:19 ratio 11:15 22:14,14 22:15 23:1 24:5 60:10 64:21,22 rationale 48:19 56:14 ratios 23:3,12,17 reach 120:21 reaction 117:2 reactions 110:12 read 17:3 72:7 77:13 106:18 122:11 readily 131:9 ready 5:2 9:8 87:2 130:5 real 14:13 32:22 41:1 58:21 123:16,17 127:5 realistically 46:15 realities 72:9 reality 83:21 realize 29:13 realized 29:8 really 15:13 20:8 23:9 32:15 33:10 42:12 44:17,18 45:22 52:7 52:10 53:6 57:5 58:19 59:12,14 61:7 62:4 63:20 64:8,14 66:21 68:21 72:19 89:14,19 92:9 93:3,9 94:2 95:1 97:12 98:18 105:18 108:3</p>	<p>109:15 110:14,17 112:1 113:10 114:22 115:3 122:11,15 123:9,13 124:7 129:7 reason 37:17 59:11 72:21 81:2 95:10 101:13 reasonable 20:13 24:8 59:6,15 107:11 136:2 reasonableness 10:9 22:7 23:20 24:16 59:12 reasonably 104:21 reasoning 59:8 reasons 58:9 reassess 118:17 rebate 23:16 recall 68:16 receive 113:6 114:10 130:12 received 8:5,7,14 10:15 11:21 74:20 120:18 receiving 106:11 116:12 recess 74:2 recognizing 21:21 31:11 recommend 24:20 52:14 60:3 62:12 69:22 111:6,19 112:4 128:2 recommendation 56:15 60:10,12,13 63:21 64:11 68:3 72:21 79:20 80:15,18 82:2,6 111:22 124:7 128:4 recommendations 4:6 4:7 5:17,19 6:1,17 7:2,11,12 10:11,15 11:6 14:1 52:10 56:9 56:10,13 63:22 64:2 64:5,8 67:8 69:11 72:4,15 75:9,20 79:6 80:11,14 86:18 87:8</p>
<hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Q</p> <hr/> <p>qualified 70:1 79:14 qualitative 40:6 quality 24:4 26:7,15 quantitative 40:2 quarter 32:22 quarterly 40:5 question 8:2 41:16 57:17 71:22 99:13 100:5,11,19,21 101:1 101:17,18 103:5 120:12,22 121:4 122:9 126:1 134:13 questions 7:14,18 22:22 41:14 56:11 71:16 73:3 76:3 85:20,22 96:10 100:11 102:22 114:12 117:9 119:11 119:12,22 120:11 129:13 132:13 quickly 82:5 94:10 96:9 104:1 135:5 quiet 5:1</p>			

<p>88:14 93:15 111:5 112:14 116:4 130:1 133:1 recommended 50:2 56:4 81:1 135:3 recommending 58:7 60:22 61:16 62:7 63:5,15 65:1 66:12 70:4 112:8 reconstruct 45:4 record 8:13,18 45:18 74:21 86:12,15,17 137:16 138:7 recruit 94:19 recruited 102:15 104:2 recruiting 102:16 reduce 63:1,3 reduced 138:8 reducing 80:1 refamiliarize 55:6 refer 17:4 68:10 109:14 122:22 referenced 9:1 referencing 100:11 referring 87:21 113:7 reflected 25:11 reforms 111:3 reg 21:16 regard 7:15 62:11 81:8 regarding 6:22 8:6,8,9 10:7 29:12 86:7 91:12,19,21 92:1 108:19 110:9 112:15 112:16 114:21 116:5 119:12 130:8 133:2 regional 83:7 Register 135:9 Registered 138:2 regs 33:20 111:13 regular 68:10 98:8 regulation 6:20 14:15 14:17 20:12 regulations 10:4,6 11:10 13:17 14:2,3,7 14:18 15:6,19,22 16:1 21:18 22:9,17</p>	<p>52:18,18 57:6 58:4 59:11 60:7,15 88:8,9 94:16 95:17 116:6 134:20 regulatory 6:2 7:13 10:16 11:10 13:2 57:7,18 58:1 77:3 92:20 reimbursement 29:20 30:1,4 reimbursements 35:6 reject 41:5 related 99:16 117:9 119:13,14 138:10 relates 72:1 relation 59:15 61:9 relationship 99:18 100:7 relatively 43:19 96:9 107:6 relevance 84:16 relevant 35:2,4 64:19 64:20 82:17 relied 100:13 rely 109:19 relying 115:14 remain 79:13 remember 26:22 57:8 57:14 115:16 135:12 135:13,16 remembering 26:20 reminded 130:4,19 remove 97:16 repeat 7:21 report 7:16,20 8:1,1,4 12:21 14:6,10 16:19 17:3,4 19:15 24:11 24:14 40:4 51:17 53:6 56:13 64:6 65:14 67:19 68:15 69:14 72:3,7 73:5 74:1 77:5 78:19 79:7 80:11 83:19 85:9,18 86:7,11 90:9,20 98:13 99:15,19 112:8 112:14,22 117:11</p>	<p>129:13 130:2 132:18 reported 1:21 46:2,17 reporter 10:14,20 71:21 77:18 138:1,3 138:3 reporting 19:17 62:14 65:5 67:14 69:2,7 reports 5:19,19 8:7,15 14:3 24:22 25:1,2 27:12,12,17,17,18 28:9 76:13,21 78:14 137:11 represent 34:15 54:6 79:10 representation 105:6 representative 104:10 representatives 107:17 representing 46:14 115:9 represents 38:13 requesting 20:5 requests 75:6 122:22 130:9,12 require 31:4 50:8 52:3 57:7 58:4 60:11,15 61:7 62:12 65:3 67:3 69:6,11 71:5 72:15 81:16 95:5,20 111:13 131:15 required 11:13,16 18:21 19:20 25:15 26:5 54:20 56:2 61:10 62:8,14 63:1,5 67:21 69:13 71:7 81:4 88:5 135:18 requirement 53:8 61:21 88:10 requirements 10:10 11:12 13:17 22:14 24:5 50:13,16 51:1 53:9 57:5 61:19 62:11,14 69:7 80:7 80:10 81:14,17 requiring 63:15 research 53:2 87:6,10</p>	<p>92:9 93:12 94:18 97:2,21 99:10 102:14 103:11 113:4,13 114:3 131:7 reserve 84:7 residents 47:5,12 95:5 131:4 resource 134:4 resources 50:8,9 71:7 109:16 114:5,8,14 118:21 119:4 respect 7:9 35:2 60:2 104:10 respond 116:8 responding 102:10,11 response 79:6 136:9 responses 114:12 responsible 32:11 70:9 rest 85:19 restroom 74:6 result 34:14 44:13 100:7 results 19:18 21:7 42:18 96:2 99:19 101:22 102:7 112:22 113:1 retrospect 100:14 revenue 27:1 39:2,3 reverse 121:18 review 6:2,14,15,19,21 7:6,13 8:1,9 9:22 10:1,2,3,16 11:4,15 12:14 13:2,5,18 15:14,14 16:4,6,10 16:11,11,14,18,18 17:4,6,7,8 18:14,18 19:8,12,21 20:1,3,14 21:6,21 22:5,8 28:18 28:22 32:9 50:5,20 54:20 55:3,8 56:5,21 57:4 58:4,18 60:7 63:1 65:3,6,7 66:18 67:22 69:4,17,22 70:6,9,15 72:2,6,17 78:16,18,20 79:13,17 80:19 81:7,15 82:20</p>
---	--	---	---

<p>84:1,5 85:2 86:7 87:15 88:4,10,12 89:16 90:4 94:16 111:2 112:19 116:5 117:7 118:10 126:15 133:19 134:18,19 reviewed 11:9,9,11,17 12:10 21:15 54:5,7 67:1,11 111:1 reviewers 68:7 reviewing 21:22 30:13 40:3 59:18 70:13 75:4 85:7 89:4 reviews 12:2 16:19 28:20 53:19 55:2 58:5 60:4 61:13 67:11 68:8 122:22 123:18 revised 117:13 124:7 Rhode 90:13 right 6:7 9:8 15:21 16:1,9 17:12,17 19:2 19:16 22:20 25:7 26:4,9,20 32:11,19 33:2 38:15 47:15 57:9 61:18 73:2 76:13 81:11 87:3 91:19 103:17 109:5 112:20 114:21 118:7 118:19 137:2 rigor 12:21 rigorous 78:20 risk 65:1 79:16 Robbins 8:15 74:15,17 74:18 76:2,3,6 129:18,20,21 131:14 132:3 Robinson 78:5,7,10,10 86:1,4 132:17,19,19 134:12 136:8,22 137:3,7 robust 53:16 72:5,18 robustness 72:14 role 68:13 94:6 108:12 109:13 111:2 room 39:5 99:8 133:6</p>	<p>roughly 41:15 100:16 124:22 routinely 134:22 row 106:22 rows 90:18 RPR 1:21 rule 80:7,12 81:4 82:3 83:10,18 84:2 85:13 85:16 run 110:2 running 48:13</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">S</p> <hr/> <p>S 1:21 2:12 3:1 4:2 138:2 safety 23:15 Sammis 3:4 6:7 39:22 49:17 71:18 115:7 125:22 134:10 135:12 136:19 sample 53:22 92:14 104:8 107:4 121:8 save 115:4 savings 29:12 savvy 131:5 saw 24:13 96:2 121:16 121:18 124:4 saying 14:20 40:17 44:21 98:6 127:17,18 says 21:19 49:11,12 SB 22:20 scale 13:12 Scheduler 135:9 Schugoll 97:20 scientific 131:7 scope 67:22 Scott 8:9 screen 10:13 94:21 98:14 100:20 116:18 131:20 screened 100:15 screeener 94:18,18 100:10 screening 100:13 101:13 scrub 46:6 scrutiny 58:11</p>	<p>seal 138:14 second 41:16 42:16 77:5 88:2 105:4,8,14 105:15 121:17,19 122:2 124:5 Secondly 6:21 section 105:11 107:14 108:1,4 sections 104:7 see 13:11 20:22 31:21 36:6 39:12 42:8 44:22 45:5 47:22 50:3 53:2 57:8 60:5 66:13 67:19 73:21 90:6 91:1 92:14 102:9,21 105:2 113:14 114:6 122:18 124:22 126:9 127:15 128:10,11 136:1,2 seeing 5:10 40:8,11 48:2 75:13,15 93:9 seek 34:9 seeking 34:1 seen 40:13 43:12 68:14 125:9 segment 23:2 32:16 60:11,20,21 61:8 82:22 85:14 segmented 87:5 segments 13:5 segregate 25:5 27:13 32:15 34:3 segregated 9:21 28:5 segregating 27:14 select 90:12 selected 73:1 99:2 selection 38:20 self 25:8 32:16 99:2 senior 71:13 74:18 sense 39:11 40:2,6 55:15 58:20 99:8 126:11 sensitive 71:21 84:15 106:10 110:10 117:21 118:12 129:2 129:6</p>	<p>separate 100:10 111:7 separated 94:14 separately 105:3 129:19 September 16:2,5,7,13 16:15,22 18:9,12 47:19 SERFF 62:13,13,16 serve 77:12 114:8 served 74:14 service 31:15 32:9 46:4 57:12 82:15 services 7:8 29:20 30:3 30:5 33:9 34:1,9 35:6 35:8,10 36:3 37:1,7 39:15 41:17 42:21,22 43:4,8 46:10 set 5:18 7:11 12:20 20:11 33:1,21 37:16 46:9 47:4 51:11 61:9 72:3 81:6 92:14 138:13 setting 35:15 43:5,6 133:3 severity 40:8 share 79:12 122:4 125:16 131:17 shared 97:8 sheet 18:21 sheets 125:7 Sherlock 24:22 28:8 she's 9:15 93:18 shift 37:15,17 43:2 45:1 shifting 36:14,17,18 36:18 shop 62:5 short 133:16 shorten 55:11 shorter 55:11 shorthand 8:1 138:1,3 shortly 47:16 show 105:3 107:11 124:9 showed 57:1,2 127:10 showing 106:17</p>
---	---	---	---

<p>shown 102:19 121:19 121:22 131:19 shows 72:19 124:22 Shugoll 103:11 sic 97:21 side 12:22 35:18,19 36:4,5,14,18,19 37:2 37:7 42:8 43:3 100:1 100:9,17,19 101:4 102:6 136:20 signed 73:17,19 74:12 137:9 significant 19:3 55:10 67:10 70:11 104:4 105:18 114:4 significantly 29:4 75:15 105:17 signing 56:1 similar 27:5,5,7 127:20 130:15 131:19 simply 81:4 single 22:3 36:15,16 75:15,15,16 115:16 121:19 sir 77:18 78:4 site 11:18 21:16 136:4 sites 92:10 126:10 sits 55:4 sitting 101:19 situation 36:15 six 46:2 90:18 size 27:5 102:18 107:10 skew 99:18 102:7 skewing 100:6 105:2 skewness 104:4 106:15 skills 70:20 skip 45:7 65:20 skipped 45:6 slice 38:13,17 slide 10:13 33:7 34:22 57:1 73:7,10,11 86:20 87:3 93:2 slides 14:4 96:8 104:2 107:8 109:20 113:7</p>	<p>slightly 83:2 104:14 slipped 100:12 102:6 slow 135:8 small 12:4 13:6 15:9 15:15 22:17,18 23:13 27:14 28:5 32:17 38:16 41:7 55:19 60:9 61:3,21 62:8 63:16 79:11 80:21 92:14 94:15,19 95:2 95:15,19 100:1,19 101:4,5,8,14 102:3,8 107:10,16,17 109:8 109:18 115:13,22 smaller 47:10 software 125:7 solvency 24:2,3 somebody 71:13 someway 134:14 somewhat 90:11 104:10,20 122:3 sorry 25:21 29:16 57:21 66:20 93:20 sort 19:1 20:16 21:2 23:14 34:19 36:15 40:5,14 41:9 49:9 69:20 116:11 117:22 120:13,15,16 123:14 127:20 source 25:9,10 28:10 45:8,17 106:17,19 110:11 sources 108:14,15 speak 5:10 SPEAKER 93:21 speaking 123:11 special 95:12 specializes 103:12 specific 19:9 21:14 32:8 105:9 107:9 116:15 118:6,11 123:18 128:21 specifically 77:6 80:9 87:17 90:13 98:15 103:15 119:13,14 122:9</p>	<p>spend 133:4 spent 11:17 74:22 spirit 103:2 spite 109:3 spreadsheet 51:11 102:16 St 2:5 stabilize 55:18 staff 11:19 67:16 68:7 68:9 77:15 78:8 81:13 94:17 119:5,6 133:5 134:8 staffing 65:22 67:6,20 72:9,22,22 120:6 staff's 133:9,10 stakeholder 115:21 stakeholders 116:2 stale 48:8 stand 128:18 standard 20:10,11,16 20:16 standardization 65:18 standardize 50:18 53:10 standardized 19:16 50:21 51:5 52:15 53:3 59:17 65:17 standards 24:3,15,19 55:22 56:3 stands 78:18 start 36:3,5 41:1 81:3 87:9 96:21 102:21 started 10:5 18:1 22:14 starting 11:20 39:12 91:10 starts 43:21,22 70:13 state 2:13 7:6 13:1,4 16:3,6 17:6 18:6,6,17 19:14,22 20:14 21:6 27:12,12,17,17,18 47:9,11 54:2 60:15 80:4 81:5,17 82:17 83:2,4 88:4,5 89:10 93:13 95:6 104:16 115:20 116:13 127:1</p>	<p>127:9 133:6,18 134:22 138:21 stated 121:20 statement 27:1,2 98:14 99:14 127:4 states 12:15,16,18 16:18 18:8 19:6,7,11 19:14,17,20 20:17,18 21:2,10,22 47:10 53:3,13,21 55:3 60:6 60:6 61:14 89:22 90:11,11,14 91:2,3,9 92:3,22 93:14 113:8 116:15 126:3 127:4 127:10,14 statewide 45:10 state's 15:9 static 120:14 statistics 91:19 statute 20:12 statutes 11:10 statutory 27:2 stenographically 138:8 step 13:16 22:8 50:15 80:6 88:17 109:7 stick 17:22 stranger 70:18 streamline 54:19 stretching 122:16 strictly 58:14 strong 40:21 41:2 43:17,19 45:5 strongly 77:4 student 68:2,13,18 69:8,9 70:5 71:1 studies 27:3 stuff 114:21 123:19 125:11,18 sub 34:17 subject 7:20 16:11,11 16:16,17 18:14 22:5 56:18 65:7 66:18 82:19 94:16 subjects 5:16 117:16 submission 10:10</p>
--	--	---	---

<p>50:12 submissions 11:14 submit 8:21 11:13 17:12 21:6 25:15 52:21 63:6 64:3 79:3 85:19 87:19 103:10 133:21 submitted 14:2 16:15 16:22 18:15,19 19:9 51:2,3 52:17 54:21 55:12 56:1 62:12,21 66:10 69:2 77:15 submitting 12:17 30:15 63:10 subscribe 91:14 113:5 subsequent 28:19 subset 35:12 succeeding 109:20 sudden 43:21 59:4 sufficient 61:15 suggest 24:20 112:10 130:9 134:5 suggested 131:14 suggestion 82:13 Suite 2:6 summarize 56:10 summary 7:10 21:7 63:18 77:8 80:16 112:5,18 121:9,9 Summer 46:17 supervision 138:9 supplement 25:7 supplemental 25:16 26:1,3 support 66:11 69:16 71:7 75:8,20 85:12 119:7 120:7 130:1 supported 20:6 supporting 19:10 supportive 77:4 suppose 48:21 sure 25:7 32:10 46:3,7 46:22 47:2 55:19 57:22 66:21 77:19 79:22 91:20 96:6,13 103:21 104:3 110:17</p>	<p>114:16 116:19 128:8 129:20 surplus 23:8 24:1 surprised 115:5 surveys 113:19 suspect 92:2 104:15 119:21 suspicion 121:21 swiping 74:7 switch 114:1 switching 35:10 system 32:12 S-C-H 97:20 S-C-H-U-G-O-L-L 97:21</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <hr/> <p>T 4:2 table 121:17,17 124:10 124:20 125:3 tables 121:14 tabs 77:7 take 12:2 16:2 35:15 40:18 43:4 48:20,22 49:13 51:20 54:17 73:15 82:10 96:20 134:5 136:17 taken 91:17 95:13 117:4 138:5,8 takes 12:12,21 20:8 50:12 talk 11:3 13:19 22:6 53:6 64:1,5,6 93:18 108:6 135:21 talked 23:7 51:17 52:16 62:18 64:9 65:4 talking 33:8 119:5 tammy 3:11 9:9,14 11:3 50:13 92:7 113:7 117:2 target 104:3 106:5 targeted 95:8 targets 105:9 tasked 24:2 32:7 88:13 tasks 69:5,13 tax 114:15,17</p>	<p>technical 15:11 35:14 35:22 79:13 89:19 111:9 technicalities 15:3 technically 14:19 15:6 62:2 technology 37:12 telephone 116:10 tell 28:6 37:11 39:3 40:6,22 123:13 template 19:17 51:18 52:15 53:4 templates 51:5 ten 62:3 73:15 107:12 123:3 tend 42:7 68:17 94:22 104:17 term 31:10 87:22 111:9 terms 24:10 26:10 34:21 40:8 51:1,12 65:10 72:6,14 74:6 74:11 79:6 81:12 89:5 98:4 99:3 105:10 113:15 124:19 126:16,18 terrible 100:18 terribly 104:22 test 32:5 60:10,11,17 60:18,21 61:8 128:4 128:9 tested 117:12 testimony 13:9 73:20 77:14 131:15 138:7,7 testing 128:8 thank 9:11 11:5 17:17 28:12 38:21 73:2,4 74:19 76:1,4,6 78:3,4 78:12 86:2,4 92:18 103:9,22 129:13,15 129:21 132:10,11,14 137:7,13,18,18 that's 10:13,18 11:11 12:22 13:13 15:4 16:8 17:10 22:20 26:4,17 27:1,15 28:5</p>	<p>30:7,11 31:13 39:7 47:1 48:3 49:9,13 50:1 51:2,7 52:5,17 56:1,6 59:15 62:21 63:18 64:21 66:17,18 69:21 71:1,5 75:18 83:9 84:22 86:20 89:6,7 90:4,9 93:20 98:21 99:5 102:21 105:5 106:21 110:3 112:1 119:18 120:17 120:22 122:19 124:18 125:1,13 127:22 128:13 129:6 129:7 134:9,12 themes 89:5 93:3,9 theoretical 37:20 theoretically 36:2,17 39:6 60:18,18,21 therapy 100:4 Theresa 3:3 6:4 there's 17:18 19:16 27:10 37:15 41:5 43:14 50:4 54:9 55:11 60:12 61:7 65:19,22 70:11 74:5 75:18 78:22 91:18 93:2 94:11 98:14 102:2 103:1 105:2 116:17 117:6 119:8 119:11,18 124:17 125:12 128:6 133:15 134:14 they'd 125:16 they'll 18:10 52:22 68:9 they're 25:2 34:12 40:8,11 56:12 57:6 58:13 59:5 62:5 84:12 85:18 94:19 106:2,8,13 114:7,15 118:6,8 127:13 129:4 130:8 they've 46:3 98:5 thick 51:12 thing 21:9 37:14 39:9</p>
---	--	--	--

<p>55:21 59:17 109:18 128:1,2 129:4 130:2 135:21</p> <p>things 6:14 17:20 22:4 30:2 37:9 38:22 40:9 44:20 50:2,21 70:14 70:19 79:5 84:9 85:6 92:2 109:1 111:5 117:19 122:20 123:11 134:22 135:5 135:7,10 136:17</p> <p>think 9:8 13:21 18:1 21:18 24:11 25:22 26:17,18 28:10 29:11 35:7 36:2,7,10,13 37:21 38:1,19 39:19 40:20,21 43:18 44:4 49:22 59:14 60:3 61:7 68:17 71:22 73:4 76:15,21 77:6 80:5 81:3 82:22 85:14 86:10 89:19 91:18 100:12,14,17 100:22 101:9,15,15 104:11 105:14 109:21 111:13 120:19 122:19 123:2 123:5,20 125:20 126:3,5 127:4,19,20 127:21 128:12,21 129:1,6,9 130:4,18 130:22 131:19 133:3 133:14 134:12 135:19 136:10,19</p> <p>thinking 9:7 26:10 72:8</p> <p>thinks 67:2</p> <p>third 72:17</p> <p>thorough 11:20 57:4 73:4 78:16 81:9</p> <p>thoroughly 11:8</p> <p>thought 53:18 56:17 67:17,22 68:14 101:21 105:18 127:1</p> <p>thoughtful 82:3,9 84:9 134:6</p>	<p>thoughts 65:15</p> <p>thousand 38:10 44:20</p> <p>three 9:17 12:3,6 13:5 20:8 48:12 55:5 57:14 72:3,5 74:11 87:5 95:7,8 101:8 120:15,20 121:5 123:6</p> <p>three-quarters 125:1</p> <p>threshold 18:3,4,5,7 52:19,22 58:6,18,19 59:9 66:16 80:18 81:7,19 87:20 112:8 133:4</p> <p>thresholds 83:6</p> <p>throw 101:22</p> <p>Thursday 1:12</p> <p>tie 43:17</p> <p>tied 44:5 63:21 83:7 85:11</p> <p>time 11:21,22 22:17 28:16 31:12 40:21 46:18 48:9 49:1 52:11 54:17 55:16 61:10,12,15 62:5 63:1 69:19 74:22 81:20 82:10 110:10 117:21 118:12 121:19 127:9 128:7,8 129:2,6 133:4,9,10 134:4 135:20,22</p> <p>timeline 55:11</p> <p>timeliness 135:2</p> <p>timely 32:20</p> <p>times 12:3 114:12 123:12</p> <p>timing 11:14,14 46:1 47:15 49:5 61:9</p> <p>tip 25:17 41:20</p> <p>tips 89:8</p> <p>today 6:9 7:19 9:19 10:17 12:13,19 13:2 13:14 44:16 51:6 52:2 57:4,14 65:8 66:5 73:5,6,8,18 78:13 79:2,5 88:18</p>	<p>89:7,15,20 90:10 91:1 93:13 95:20 135:20 137:14</p> <p>today's 7:9 9:20 73:21</p> <p>told 74:7</p> <p>Tomczyk 3:11 9:9,15 11:5 25:22 26:13,21 27:22 28:2 38:22 39:17 42:7 44:4 46:13 50:14 54:22 57:21 59:10 68:16 70:2,20 71:15 72:13 87:3 92:8,19 94:1 96:13,18,20 97:1,6 97:20 98:3,12,21 99:5,7 100:9 101:5 101:15 102:13 103:16 104:1 114:10 115:18 118:5,8,10 121:1 124:2 125:8 126:8 128:2 129:15</p> <p>tongue 25:18 41:21</p> <p>tool 51:8,21,22 124:16</p> <p>tools 64:16</p> <p>top 57:9,15 91:2,7 123:2</p> <p>topics 9:21 108:6 123:15</p> <p>total 34:17 41:16 42:2 75:18</p> <p>touch 55:22 62:20</p> <p>touching 65:21</p> <p>tough 125:18</p> <p>track 36:9 43:16 44:22 45:4 47:21 102:15</p> <p>tracked 102:17</p> <p>tracking 41:1</p> <p>Traficante 1:21 2:13 138:2</p> <p>trained 68:11</p> <p>training 68:9 70:5</p> <p>transcript 4:3 11:2 78:2 86:22 138:6</p> <p>Transfer 42:21</p> <p>translate 83:2 117:16</p> <p>transmission 70:18</p>	<p>transparencies 120:10</p> <p>transparency 7:4 90:16 91:7 115:2 119:9,10 120:7</p> <p>transparent 87:14,16</p> <p>treatment 37:11,13</p> <p>treatments 36:9</p> <p>tremendous 109:3 118:20 133:4</p> <p>tremendously 109:19</p> <p>trend 10:9 22:11 28:14 28:15,17,18,21 29:1 29:3,4,5,14,17 30:11 30:13 31:6,6,15,21 32:5 33:7 34:22 35:3 40:20 41:10,10 46:19 55:17 58:15 59:7 63:8,10,13 66:4,6,15 66:20 71:4 72:2 75:4 75:5,14,17,18 84:3,7 84:10,15</p> <p>trends 30:19,22 31:1 31:14,14,19 39:20 40:11 41:13,17 42:19 42:20 44:2 46:14 47:22 59:4 65:21 67:2 75:12,16 83:6,9 84:20 102:9</p> <p>tried 56:16 94:9 102:13 104:5 106:9</p> <p>trigger 16:13 18:16 87:22 112:7</p> <p>trouble 9:3</p> <p>true 31:21 52:5 107:1 138:6</p> <p>truly 103:6</p> <p>try 17:22 34:3 45:4 54:19 58:2 83:19 103:20 117:16</p> <p>trying 36:7 57:8 71:11 81:16 82:22 83:12 84:19 108:3 117:14 125:3 126:9</p> <p>turn 93:18 108:5 131:9</p> <p>turned 74:4 77:15</p> <p>turnkey 50:6</p>
--	---	--	--

<p>two 5:18 6:5,14 8:6,7 9:16 11:18 18:14 23:21 29:19,21 32:6 33:20 34:4 38:22 46:15 48:12 53:4 55:5 76:21 91:9 92:13 93:3,9 95:15 100:10 107:8,12 108:3 124:4,8 type 7:3 25:6 37:1,7,7 51:21 52:15 58:3 70:21 81:1 83:13 91:3 94:7 118:10 120:20 126:18 128:1 types 18:15 31:14 32:8 41:17 42:21,21 46:10 112:15 117:21 120:21 125:4 typewriting 138:9 typically 60:5 89:6</p>	<p>124:8 uniform 51:19 uninsured 106:2 unintended 80:1 84:21 133:11 unique 31:8 36:14 124:18 uniqueness 41:6 unit 6:11 44:7 United 106:21 universal 31:15 115:13,16 unknown 103:2 107:4 107:5 unreasonable 59:7 unreasonableness 59:13 updated 118:3,3 updates 91:15 upfront 62:22 uptake 91:16 uptakes 91:20 upward 30:22 urge 113:4 116:13 118:16 use 7:22 13:6 17:21 22:1 34:14 35:7 42:18 48:1,8,9 49:5 49:20 51:10,14 53:3 62:16 64:13 66:6 76:20 97:7 113:14 114:6,7 125:12 130:3 131:5 133:9 134:17 uses 52:6 usually 42:8 utility 82:11 utilization 29:12 33:6 33:8 43:21,22 44:6 44:10,14,17 46:9 utilized 29:21 35:8,13</p>	<p>variation 12:19 52:5 variety 93:8 various 89:2 vary 18:6,6 vast 89:1 Vehicle 89:3 versions 124:4 versus 31:14 41:18 81:8 84:13 127:19 vice 74:18 view 35:1 40:4 49:18 viewed 20:17 Virginia 132:4 visual 120:17 122:13 124:21 visually 125:19 volume 66:1,14</p>	<p>wealth 75:1 website 9:2 20:19 21:4 73:8,14 77:6 88:3,4,7 88:20 92:1 111:16,17 111:21 112:11,19 117:20 119:18 122:11 126:4,5 127:1 127:6,8 129:2,8,10 130:3 websites 126:2 127:15 127:16 week 136:10 weeks 55:5,5 welcome 5:5 well-known 109:2 went 12:10 67:17 97:5 121:11 126:9 weren't 88:9 99:9 104:22 126:22 127:10,12 West 132:4 we'll 7:21 17:22 63:22 64:5 67:19 71:15 73:21 102:3 136:17 we're 5:9 9:8 14:16 17:14 22:6 26:4 33:7 57:17 58:7 60:22 62:6 63:5,15 64:20 65:1 66:12 70:15 73:19 74:13 79:2 81:21,21 84:14,19 86:16,17 108:3 111:4 112:8 119:5 125:3 we've 27:2,3 43:12 56:14,16 65:15 73:21 75:12,14 78:18 87:5 125:9 131:14 133:18 whatsoever 45:20 what's 40:12,19 58:21 59:1 97:18 105:5 WHEREOF 138:13 wide 12:19 wild 71:3 willing 30:16 125:16 wish 5:3 7:19 8:20 129:18</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">U</p> <p>ultimate 58:22 ultimately 17:18 45:15 67:9 Um-hum 36:1 underestimate 59:3 underestimation 84:3 underlying 30:5 31:21 33:5,9 38:6 93:3 understand 5:9 11:8 48:17 74:5,13 78:17 82:6,8,11 83:1,12 94:2 130:17 understandable 121:21 understanding 12:12 15:16,18 17:5,10 62:13 66:5 77:12 85:5 88:22 97:14 108:10,11 understate 29:3 understating 31:6 understood 13:15 99:12 underwritten 41:5 unfortunately 106:18</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <p>valid 46:8 53:18 validate 93:16 validated 46:18 valuable 130:3 value 31:11</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">W</p> <p>want 5:3 23:9,18 31:18 37:8 47:2 54:2 61:4 61:17 66:16,19 73:3 76:18,22 105:12 110:1 114:5,22 115:3 115:15 122:11,17 123:20 129:22 137:13 wanted 22:8 50:15,22 54:13 55:21 72:11 86:6 93:15 95:1,11 96:5 104:3 106:5 110:19 114:15 wanting 71:21 warrant 59:6 114:3 warranting 105:18 Washington 53:15 wasn't 15:12 92:15 105:11 way 5:8 6:12 11:21 14:20 30:22 42:14 48:7,21 50:5,7 53:9 77:9 81:2 85:17 102:11,11 108:16,17 109:6 110:6,7,8 119:15 128:21 ways 7:2 75:9 92:5,5 133:15</p>	<p>we're 5:9 9:8 14:16 17:14 22:6 26:4 33:7 57:17 58:7 60:22 62:6 63:5,15 64:20 65:1 66:12 70:15 73:19 74:13 79:2 81:21,21 84:14,19 86:16,17 108:3 111:4 112:8 119:5 125:3 we've 27:2,3 43:12 56:14,16 65:15 73:21 75:12,14 78:18 87:5 125:9 131:14 133:18 whatsoever 45:20 what's 40:12,19 58:21 59:1 97:18 105:5 WHEREOF 138:13 wide 12:19 wild 71:3 willing 30:16 125:16 wish 5:3 7:19 8:20 129:18</p>

<p>witness 13:9 138:13 wondering 48:8 won't 37:11 59:19 65:20 word 114:21 131:12 words 116:20 work 7:5 30:22 47:10 50:19 52:9 53:11 56:18 64:12 65:19 67:12 69:1,12 71:4 75:10,21 78:15 working 12:16,16 47:11 53:21 74:22 workload 66:1 67:15 works 119:15 worksheet 63:18 124:14 worried 102:4 worry 74:8 127:11 worth 45:20 49:20 105:18 wouldn't 38:18 102:4 102:7 110:16 118:2 writing 79:3 82:21 85:20 133:21 137:14 written 4:8,9,10 8:5,7 8:11,20 9:1 74:20 77:14 128:16,17 131:15 Wyman 3:9 5:18 6:14 6:21 7:10 8:6 9:10,13 9:16 78:13 79:7 83:18 85:9 130:2 135:14 Wyman's 7:5,18</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <hr/> <p>X 4:2 38:9 Xs 90:19 91:2 X-ray 31:17</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Y</p> <hr/> <p>Y 38:10 yeah 16:10 39:17 42:7 50:1 59:10 70:2 77:19 101:5 109:21 114:19 120:4 125:17</p>	<p>127:22 year 28:22 29:2,4 30:10,11 38:9 46:2,5 52:6 58:15,16 59:3 67:4 81:18 87:11 91:9 years 43:3 46:15 48:11 48:12 75:13 84:4 95:22 132:4 yellow 106:18 York 53:5 younger 104:14,20 131:3,10 you'd 28:22 43:9 73:20 83:4 you'll 41:1 102:21 105:1 you're 18:17 31:5,6 38:14 39:12 40:17 43:4 44:21 45:1 48:19 58:19,22 60:4 62:14 65:5,14 72:20 73:9 77:5 79:18 87:1 93:21 103:17 104:19 113:10 124:21 125:2 134:6,7 135:7,8 136:14 you've 29:1 30:19,19 78:16 89:9 Yu 3:5 6:8 41:12 42:5 42:17 71:19 73:12</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">\$</p> <hr/> <p>\$1,000,000 45:19</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <hr/> <p>1 1:20 4:5 5:15 12:22 73:1 80:16 1st 16:2,5,7,13,15,22 18:7,9,10 22:19 1-200498 1:19 1:00 137:19 10 16:12,17,20 18:3 42:11 46:5 52:19 58:7,18 59:9,22 66:18 67:1,3 80:18 81:7 87:21 111:15</p>	<p>112:20 125:17 10:00 5:3 100 15:16 11 4:11 11-12 4:5 5:14 12 21:15,18 22:4 34:22 46:5 66:7 83:17,21 83:22 12th 66:8 12-month 18:11 138 1:20 14 48:16 100:2 15 42:1 17th 5:21 18th 6:2 183 22:20</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <hr/> <p>2 4:6 5:22 93:21 95:16 20 42:1 65:1 74:5 98:14 105:12,13 200 2:5 2009 45:13 2010 15:1 16:22 45:14 46:14 47:17,18 48:20 2011 1:12 5:5,13,21 6:2 8:19 18:3 22:19 46:12,14,16 47:20 52:19 58:7 66:19 80:8 138:15,17 2012 18:4 46:12,17,19 47:16,16 2014 15:10 2016 15:14 21202 2:7 23 1:12 23rd 5:5 15:1 80:8 138:14 25 100:17 138:17 2700 2:6 29 27:22 28:1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <hr/> <p>3 4:7 6:3 7:13 13:12 132:2 30 62:1 100:16,17 30th 8:19 79:4</p>	<p>31st 5:13</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <hr/> <p>4 4:8 8:11 13:12 26:22 59:5,6 40 42:3,10 61:22 410 2:8 410)468-2007 9:5 45 32:21 62:9 468-2000 2:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <hr/> <p>5 4:9 8:12 21:9 132:2,6 5/17/11 4:6 5/18/11 4:7 5/31/11 4:5 50 42:4,9,13 81:17 95:16 107:13,21 50/50 106:5</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <hr/> <p>6 4:10 8:17 48:14 6/1/11 4:8 6/16/11 4:10 6/2/11 4:9 60 22:16 32:21 65 94:22</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <hr/> <p>7 4:11 10:20 11:1 48:14 71 72:3 124:8 75 22:16 78 4:12</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <hr/> <p>8 4:12 48:15 77:21 78:1 80 22:18 23:13 64:22 106:13 85 23:14 86 4:13</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <hr/> <p>9 4:13 86:18,21 9:56 1:13 90 28:15</p>
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