

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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ALL EMPLOYEES MEETING

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TUESDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

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The Commission met in the Two White Flint North  
Auditorium, at 10:00 a.m. EDT, David A. Wright, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

DAVID A. WRIGHT, Chairman

BRADLEY R. CROWELL, Commissioner

MATTHEW J. MARZANO, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT:

CARRIE SAFFORD, Secretary of the Commission

MARY SPENCER, Deputy General Counsel

NRC STAFF:

PATRICIA GLENN, Facilitator

MIKE KING, Acting Executive Director for Operations

ELAINE NOWACZEK-FOREMAN, Office of the Chief Information Officer

ROSS WAGNER, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

## PROCEEDINGS

10:00 a.m.

MR. KING: Good morning, everybody. I'm Mike King, the acting Executive Director for Operations for the NRC. First, I'd like to welcome you to the NRC's All Employees public meeting. So this important meeting provides an opportunity for the staff to directly engage with the Chairman and the Commissioners individually in a group forum. And for those unfamiliar, this meeting is a public meeting so, across the agency, all of our four regional offices are tying in remotely, and our Technical Training Center in Chattanooga staff, from there tying in.

And because it's a public meeting, I'd like to also welcome members of the public. We have folks including our federal and state partners that are joining us, non-government organizations, and I understand there's also some media interest, as well.

So welcome to all of you. This is an important opportunity. It's an annual meeting where we get the chance to really discuss important topics of interest. And, particularly, it's important during this unprecedented time for us as an agency.

I'd like to start by thanking the volunteers who prepared this meeting for us today. These meetings don't go off smoothly without a lot of preparation, and so thank you so much, folks from our Office of Admin, our Chief Information Officer, Office of SECY, and Office of Executive Director, for all the technical and logistic preparations in advance of this.

The format for the meeting, we'll start with the Commissioners each providing an opening statement, and then we'll

transition to question and answers. And in advance of the meeting, the staff have submitted questions that they'd like to, you know, engage the Commission on in advance, and they've kind of done a social media ranking of the questions, and we'll be using that to help inform which questions we ask.

You know, on a personal note, I've only been a short time as the acting Executive Director, but I could not be prouder of the staff across the agency and all the hard work that's gone in to responding to the very clear direction from Congress and the administration for us to reform the agency and to really focus on what matters. And I couldn't be prouder of the work that's going on every day. I get the privilege to be able to sit in on meetings across the agency, and so I get to see the hard work that's going on that the public doesn't get the opportunity to see. So today is an opportunity for the public to kind of hear some of the things going on, but I just want to personally thank the staff for what you're doing together to write the next chapter of the NRC as a gold standard, innovative, credible, responsive, and capable world leader in nuclear safety and with the urgency that America needs.

So without further delay, I'll pass the mic over to Chairman Wright. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you. Thank you so much, Mike, and I want to take a moment to thank you for your hard work, because you and I talk multiple times each day, and the senior leadership team for what they're doing and how you're trying to keep focused on what's mission critical and trying to communicate the best you can with each other to be

sure that we're doing everything we can to get 14300 done and make sure that we're following the ADVANCE Act thing, too.

So with that, good morning, everyone. Welcome to this year's All Employees meeting. I'm happy, I don't mind telling you, I'm happy to be here with you this morning. I'm kind of the new guy. Right. And whether you're joining in person or virtually, thank you for being here and engaging with us today. You know, this is one of the meetings that I do look forward to each year because it gives me a chance to hear from you and to connect with you directly to hear what's on your mind and to actually go out and shake your hands before the meeting. I really enjoy doing that.

So to kick things off this morning, I'd like to recognize Patricia Glenn, who is serving as the facilitator for today's meeting. She's very good. And so, Patricia, I'm going to thank you in advance for keeping us on track -- that's not an easy job, I know -- so that we can address as many questions as possible. Also, I want to thank Ross Wagner over there for serving as our -- another acronym for you -- our DQR, our designated question reader.

I want to acknowledge the tremendous effort each of you has made to meet this moment in our agency's history. Whether you're working on licensing advanced reactors or working on advanced fuels, streamlining environmental reviews, or modernizing our internal systems and processes, your work is making a difference. Together, we're making real progress and accomplishing truly remarkable things. And I'd like to take a moment and share just a few of the highlights with you.

You know, the NRR staff completed the NuScale US 460

standard design approval in May early and under budget. This is a huge accomplishment. NRR also set expedited review timelines for major projects, including Dow Chemical's project Long Mott, TVA's Clinch River SMR, Terra Power's Kimmerer Power Station, and the Framatone fuel facility amendment. Staff's expertise and collaboration across offices led to the approval of the construction permit for Kairos's Hermes II using a new process for mandatory hearings and a streamlined environmental review. That's huge across the agency, so thank you for that.

And technical staff across multiple offices pioneered safety and security oversight to safely restore Palisades to operating status, with Duane Arnold and the Crane Clean Energy Center making notable progress on their return to operations, as well, a first-of-a-kind activity for the NRC and for the country. You should take great pride in that.

The Regions combined have completed well over a thousand licensing actions this year to enable the safe and beneficial use of radioactive materials. So thank you, Andrea, for everybody in your division that's taken the lead in that.

Staff from the Office of Administration and Small Business and Civil Rights revamped the agency's federal acquisition regulations, earning recognition from the Office of Management and Budget for their efficient approach to this large-scale review. The Technical Training Center, can't leave them out. They installed a full-scale digital control room simulator using reconfigurable glass panel technology that can be programmed to match the layout and instrumentation of any control room being simulated. This is a prime example of innovative and versatile

technology in action.

We're making strong progress in meeting the aggressive goals of Executive Order 14300, including conducting a thorough review and revision of our regulations. This is a huge agency-wide undertaking, and I'm proud of how we're tackling it head on in a deliberate and strategic way.

These are just a few of the many things that are going on in the agency. And they're not just achievements, but they're outstanding achievements, and we should take pride in that. And we need to talk about it. We need to talk about it outside of these walls, right, because one of the things that we get knocked about is things that aren't true. We're not too big, too slow, too costly. We're not. We've made that change, and the culture here has changed. The people outside of these walls need to know that. So we can't tell that story enough, and we've been trying to. My colleagues and I have been trying to do that.

Our efforts are gaining attention, and rightfully so, as we make meaningful progress on several key fronts. But it's your work that makes the NRC shine very special. Any success that the NRC experiences and any accolades it receives is because of your effort and your abilities and your commitment to our mission.

The progress we're making is exceptional, especially during a time of significant transformation for our agency. As I said in my video recently, last week or so, when you find yourself feeling unsettled or uncertain during times of change, simply focus on what you can control, and then do it well, and it seems like you're doing just that. So thank you for your efforts.

Bringing your best is essential to our agency's continued success, especially as we take on more work and navigate in a real dynamic environment right now. This is why it's vitally important that we continue to prioritize your work-life balance, making time to recharge so we can bring our best selves to what we do each and every day.

Let's be clear. There's no question about the dedication of the NRC staff. There is no question. We know you will do what it takes to get the job done. You always have, and I believe you always will. So that, to me, is a given. However, burnout doesn't serve you. It doesn't serve your team, and it doesn't serve the mission. You can't pour from an empty cup. That's when mistakes can happen, and we are an agency that doesn't want to make mistakes at all. The expectation is not to work through weekends or push beyond your limits. We all need to take time to rest and recharge. This isn't a luxury. It's a necessity. Protecting your energy helps you show up focused, creative, and ready to lead. That's the kind of presence that drives real impact and keeps you laser-focused on our important mission.

As I've said before, the NRC workforce remains a top priority, not just for me and my colleagues, but for the senior leadership team. I want to hear from you what's on your mind. I'm eager to listen. My door is always open. You never stop learning, and I can learn from each of you each and every day. So thank you for sharing and your openness to share with me. So thank you.

As you know, the other two commissioners will speak. I'm going to turn it over to Commissioner Crowell first, and he'll be followed by

Commissioner Marzano.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for those remarks. I'm going to be a little bit more brief here because the value in these meetings is the Q&A we get to engage in with each other, and the Chairman, I don't know if I could say it much better, you know, the value proposition for this agency is in its workforce and its people, and we need to preserve that.

For a minor moment of levity, I'll just say this is my -- I just finished my third year on the Commission, but it's the first year at an All Wmployees meeting that I'm not going last, so welcome, Commissioner Marzano. You get the back clean-up. I don't know if that's a good position or a bad position these days. I'll happily be sandwiched in between the two of you for this morning.

You know, a lot of you, hopefully, were able to tune in or read about the hearing we had last week before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. So you've heard from all three of us at a high level some of the opportunities and challenges that we're all facing. I just want to reiterate that we're all in it together. As the Chairman said, we've made huge, significant change, and we are now living that change.

And as I have said before, as we embody and live that change, if we're not celebrating those successes, then we're going to be defined by either our failures, which happens sometime but they're always, you know, much less. We're always going to have less footfalls than we are successes, but no one's going to know that unless we're talking about our successes. So we need to really lean in there and talk about the change



we've made, talk about the change we're making, expectations of the future, etc.

That being said, we need to be very cautious that we're not letting artificial timelines drive or shortcut any of our important safety decisions, our security decisions, all of the important determinations that you all make in your day-to-day jobs. If you're feeling like that is happening, you need to speak up, either to your supervisor, to one of us as Commissioners, to all of us, or whomever you see fit; but please don't be quiet because, while we do appreciate the workload everyone has and keeping their head down and getting work done, we need to be eyes open in terms of the big picture and the role each of us play.

The workforce is my greatest concern currently. You all heard me say that at the hearing last week. Nothing has changed over the weekend on that front. It's not an apples-to-apples comparison, but I'll say that, here at the Commission, we've experienced a 40-percent attrition rate ourselves, so it's one way to look at things. But even with just three of us up here, we're going to continue to work together and get things done. And with safety and security as our North Star, good collegiality and honesty amongst the three commissioners that we currently have, we'll be able to achieve that, despite some of the challenges and stretch goals and demands that we have right now. We can do it if we stick together and are honest with each other. But we shouldn't take any shortcuts in that regard, as well.

So I look forward to all the questions we have today and being able to answer them. And I really appreciate being up here with my colleagues. And this is as good a time as any, probably the best time

possible, to have this meeting. So thank you all for being here today in the room and online participating. Commissioner Marzano.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: Thank you, and thank you both for those remarks. I think it is a little bit difficult to follow, so I appreciate that as well.

Good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining today, both the folks that are in this room and those that are online. I am happy to be here, along with my colleagues, for my first All Employees meeting, and I don't think it could be better timed. I'll try and keep these remarks short. I think the Chairman and Commissioner Crowell said their statements very well. I want to associate myself with that, but I want to get to as many questions and share first for you though and emphasize my gratitude to all of you.

The people of this agency are incredible. As I testified in Congress last week, the NRC staff has always demonstrated an exceptional level of expertise. And in these past few months, you've shown a tremendous ability to rise to the occasion. And the list of accomplishments that the Chairman has covered is evidence of that. I am so impressed with the way that you've all been able to prove resilient in the face of this dramatic change, while we embrace innovation and remain grounded and steadfast in our core mission of protecting public health and safety.

However, I fully recognize that many of you have been feeling strained by the uncertainty surrounding the very consequential decisions that must be made to carry this agency forward on top of the unprecedented external pressure. But coming to work every day,

continuing to do your jobs with integrity, you're showing what public service truly means, and I thank you for that. I see this moment, as my colleagues do, as a turning point for the NRC and our nation at a time when the agency is being asked to rapidly shift nearly all aspects of our operation to live up to our safety mission, while recognizing the benefits of the technology we regulate can deliver to society.

But I also see this moment as a once-in-a-generation opportunity where we can take part in creating the NRC of the future, an NRC that honors our foundational principles and values, but also one that looks audaciously forward to our shared vision of the future. In these past eight months since joining the Commission, one of my top priorities and, frankly, my favorite parts of the job has been meeting as many of you as possible. It's been a joy to hear about your families, your backgrounds, what brought you here, and your ideas for how we move forward. I'm always looking for opportunities to continue to connect with staff and be inspired by your stories and experience. So if we have not met yet, I look forward to crossing paths soon.

And I want to close just by saying, you know, as a former senior reactor operator and overall nuclear professional, like we all are, and I recognize and I am a firm believer in the importance of maintaining a safety-conscious work environment that allows individuals to raise differing views freely, something that I encourage amongst my own staff. So I'd like to reiterate that my office, as the other Commissioners' offices are, always have an open door. Please don't hesitate to reach out to my staff if there's something on your mind that you want to share. We all have a part to play in

shaping the future of the NRC, and it's truly an honor and a privilege to work alongside you as we take these next steps.

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Okay. So now I'll turn it over to Patricia to facilitate the question-and-answer portion of today's meeting. And, Mike, don't get too comfortable in your seat. I'm sure you're going to be --

MS. GLENN: Thank you, Chairman Wright, and thank you to our distinguished Commission and Mike for kicking us off. Let's give everyone a hand this morning.

So as Chairman Wright mentioned, it is officially time for Q&A and we are so excited to hear the questions that you have for us this morning. So to orient us on how this is going to work, as you all know, there were questions that were pre-submitted to our portal and those questions have been tallied up and the two top-voted questions are going to be read by our reader over here, Ross Wagner.

And then, from there, we'll transition to the questions in the room. As you all see, we have the aisle mics, so we ask that you use those.

And then, please, everyone, please be considerate of your peers. We want to hear from as many people as possible. So allot yourself one minute for your questions today, and, if you see me give you a friendly wave, then you'll know that you are at your time limit. So please honor that.

With that, I'm going to pass it over to Ross to read our first question. Ross.

MR. WAGNER: Thank you. Good morning. The

Commission can approve telework without the union. Other agencies, such as the FDA, allow employees to work from home two days a week. In times like this, where employees are under a lot of stress, being allowed to work from home, even if it's just two days a week, would highly boost morale and improve our mental health. Would the Commission consider allowing employees to work from home two days a week? If not, why?

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Ross, thanks for the question. You know, we have delegated to the EDO, back to his office, things regarding telework. So, Mike, I guess if you want to respond and, you know, freely, my colleagues could chime in, as well.

MR. KING: Thanks, Chairman. And thank you for the question. Obviously, telework is of keen interest across the agency. You know, as you recall, back in June, we did change our telework policy, consistent with administration direction and executive orders. And since that time, our Chief Human Capital Officer has, you know, maintained close contact with all the federal agencies through regular meetings, where we compare and contrast our current, you know, footprint on telework across the agencies.

And so we're consistent in comparing ourselves with other agencies. And the specific example highlighted, there are some examples where agencies, for pockets where they have experienced significant challenges with hiring and retention, have had to resort to, you know, offering exceptions to telework. And that's a similar approach to what we've been taking. Where we're in a situation where we have to take those sorts of actions, we are doing it.

But, in general, we're adhering to the executive order position in telework. But we are using the tools available to us, and I would encourage you across the board, and I know many of you are doing this because we routinely report to Congress and the administration our use of telework and the flexibilities associated with it, you know, use a telework bank that's available to you. You know, we provided that to give you some additional flexibility. I think we're the only agency that offered that up, so that 160 hours a year, use that to your benefit. Each year, that gets renewed and the other aspects that we have with flexibilities with your work schedule. Continue to use those, as well.

And we'll continue to assess and evaluate our telework footprint and adjust as necessary. Thanks.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: Thank you for that, Mike.

And I'll just speak from personal experience. You know, having that kind of flexibility, especially a young parent -- I just want to relate to folks out there and I'm going to use that. I think it's important that we continue to look at that policy, understand what's going to work for people, what gives everybody the most flexibility here.

And so, you know, the policy is what it is right now. But I don't think that that precludes us from looking at it again and re-evaluating and, you know, talking to our partners and the administration about how we implement something that works better for us, given our mission, the importance of the work you do.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: And I'll add to this. It doesn't mean all three of us are going to have to answer every question, but

I think on this one it's important that you hear from all of us. As the Chairman said, this decision has been delegated back to the EDO. So from my perspective, in principle, I support the telework. I support telework, a reasonable balance, though. I think the two days a week gets close to that balance and is consistent with other agencies that have similar very high and important goals like the NRC. So I would like to see us get back to that point sometime soon, but I'm going to leave it to the EDO to decide when the right time at the agency is to make that turn back to a little bit more telework flexibility. If the EDO would like the insights and opinions of the Commission about when and how to do so, always happy to provide that, but I do think we need to be moving back in that direction for a whole variety of reasons.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: One thing that we just need to be aware of, we've got a lot of new people coming onboard and we're going to have a lot more new people coming on board. And we have to be sure that those people can be mentored properly and, really, the best way to mentor is in person. So we're going to have to be aware of that and what that need is, but I fully trust the EDO and the senior staff to make the right calls on that.

But I think it's important that we recognize that not only is the agency changing the way we do business and for the NRC of the future, but our workforce is changing dynamically, as well.

MS. GLENN: Thank you for those responses. Ross, if you would read our second question, please.

MR. WAGNER: Sure. The staff quality of work life has taken a substantial hit between significant budget cuts; loss of personnel for

various reasons; cuts to staff support, i.e. EAP and security. The NRC mantra continues to be to focus on your work and focus on what you can control. You, as the Commission, have the ability to set policy and make budget decisions to have a direct impact on our quality of work life. What are some of the ideas you're exploring to return some of the flexibilities and benefits needed to improve retention and recruitment?

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you for the question. So, you know, again, we're changing. You know, we've had to reduce some of our services to manage our expenditures. That's an obvious thing. Budgets are real. However, we do strive to maintain services that, you know, such as some of the employee assistance programs, the fitness center, so we can assist employees in managing stress, for example, and their quality of life.

We also worked hard to bring food back into the agency. You know, one of the things that, you know, food options, that's a difficult thing. If you're a food business out there, you've got to have bodies and you've got to have bodies not just in the building but bodies who actually go buy the food. And early on, we were hearing numbers like 8 percent of the people were buying food at those places, which is hardly enough for a business to break even, you know, especially if you're trying to get, you know, hot food options and things like that.

So I know that admin is really trying to move forward in here in this part because, personally, I loved it when we had the cafeteria, but the cafeteria wasn't making money either. And so that's a balance that we have to strike, and we're aware of it. Also, I think Mike mentioned earlier



the telework bank, as well.

So we're going to continue to look at more options to keep the NRC at, I guess, stress-free as we can make it and opportunities and options. So with that, do you want to say --

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: I think there's a number of things that we're looking at, but I think one of the items I'd like to kind of go back to is what's within our control. I think that the Commission has a span of control here, but, you know, there's a general push to be tighter with budgets, et cetera. And so we are having to make difficult decisions, as well.

But that doesn't mean that we, as an agency, can't be responsive to needs and do what is within our control. And so what I'd encourage folks to do is continue to communicate those items, those things, that really are meaningful to you. They can make a real difference in terms of, you know, your day to day here.

The Chairman mentioned that, you know, we've managed to look at things, like the fitness center and other things. But we want to know what are those high-value items for you to improve the balance that we're trying to strike in this moment where we are a little bit pressed in having to make difficult decisions.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Let me just add a little extra that is consistent and additional to what my colleagues have said here.

We've got to keep in mind that budget realities are ultimately, you know, beyond our control for ultimate approval. You know, the administration and Congress ultimately have to approve those things.

That being said, I'd like to see employee services commensurate with our in-office presence and need. And so those decisions need to be looked at carefully. And if you draw it back to the first question about telework, you've got to balance these things. If you're going to have more telework, then you're going to have an offset setting need in the building services.

So all that stuff needs to be looked at in a big-picture way in conjunction with each other to set the right policies. I would love to find a way to have food service come back because I think it's the water cooler, the hypothetical water cooler, that helps with culture and interactions with each other, but it may not be feasible. But we can look at other options to enhance those things, but we've got to balance it with current high-level realities and with other decisions we make internally, such as anything we do differently in telework. Thanks.

MS. GLENN: Okay. Thank you. With that, I want to open the room up to questions that are here. As I mentioned before, you have the two microphones that are before you.

I also want to welcome our more than 1,700 people that are joining us virtually through Teams and webcast. Thank you for joining us this morning.

So as you all are thinking of your questions, think hard what you would like to ask, I'm going to turn it over to Ross for our third question, please.

MR. WAGNER: Okay. This one starts with a question, and then there's some explanation afterwards. What's the plan on the

45-minute required lunch break? There is no law that forces us to take one, only the management directive and the former union CBA. Wouldn't it be better for the agency as a whole to be entitled to a lunch break but let the individual have the liberty of designating the time they take and how long?

When it comes to being at a site, especially if there is no other NRC personnel, it's difficult to take a break that is required after six hours and then find other non-work items to do to take up 45 minutes. So what is the plan on the 45-minute required lunch?

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you. Mike, I should turn that to you.

MR. KING: I've got this one. So thank you for the question. In fact, this is an area where we've been discussing frequently, and we did a little bit of outreach to some of our federal partners and happy to announce, when we're trying to strike the balance between our in-office presence and, you know, doing what we can to provide additional flexibility to the staff, we've made the decision to go ahead and reduce the 45-minutes down to 30 minutes and to eliminate the requirement of having to take that lunch period within the first six hours.

So going forward, we're empowering staff and trusting you to, you know, work with your supervisors to make the best decision on when you want to take your lunch. And you have the flexibility now to take it at any point during the day, including and up to the end of the day, if, for whatever reason, you need to work throughout the day and not eat.

So that flexibility has been extended, and we're trusting you to do the right thing there. But you'll need to work with your supervisors

there, and we're going to be providing some additional information on, practically, how to implement that very soon, so more to follow.

(Applause.)

MS. GLENN: Okay. So thank you for that question and also the response. Again, I welcome you all in the room. I'm sure someone has a question. Please utilize the microphones. And with that, I'm going to hand it over to Mike, and I'm going to challenge you, audience, to ask a question that you might have.

Ross, if you would, please, read our fourth question.

MR. WAGNER: Employees from DOGE/DOE seem to be involved in most, if not all, of the policy decisions being made at the NRC that affect current/future licensees and applicants. Are these personnel required to abide by the Prohibited Securities Rule that most NRC staff are required to follow?

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you. So the short answer, as I understand it, is it depends. And, Mary, if you have anything to say, I will, but tell me, subject to your correction here. I will tell you this: all government employees are subject to overall ethics rules and OGC is informed and in communication with each of the individuals to provide that and make sure that all ethics rules, both government-wide and specific rules associated with this at the NRC, are followed.

Is there more to that, Mary?

MS. SPENCER: Actually, there isn't a whole lot more to go on from that, but it depends on the employee's position. Some employees, if they're coming on, they may be required to file confidential

reports under 450 and some may be required to file 278s. It depends on the position. And if they are detailed to the NRC for more than 30 days, they are subject to the NRC's specific requirements, in addition to the government-wide requirements.

MS. GLENN: Okay. Thank you. Since I don't see anyone at the microphone yet, we're going to pass it over to Ross for our next question, please.

MR. WAGNER: What's the potential time frame for implementing the reorg? That's it.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Talk about a loaded question. And, Mike, I don't know if you want to chime in here, but, just so you know, the chairman's office received it, I think, August 18th; is that correct? So we're reviewing it at the moment; but, as far as a timeline, we've all got to vote at some point, right?

MR. KING: Yes. As far as the absolute timeline, it depends on the Commission for when we get started. But within the paper, what we've committed to was, basically, to take the first two months after we receive Commission direction to develop more detailed office-by-office plans all the way down through the staffing plan because the preliminary proposal to the Commission didn't have that level of detail, and it's going to take us some time to work through that.

So you'll get the opportunity when we reach that point to be able to engage the offices, to understand better what that looks like. And then, after that point, we would begin implementation. I would expect, depending on, you know, how soon the Commission takes action, that we

could feasibly begin some sort of reorganization efforts by the end of the calendar year, but one thing we're really being cautious of is to be careful with timing so that we don't interfere with all the important work we've got going on with the ADVANCE Act and the Executive Order implementation. So we'll be cautious with timing it such that we don't interfere with that.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Patty, I'm just going to add here just so folks are clear on the process. The EDO's office led the effort to come up with a reorg proposal. That proposal then goes to the Chairman's office. It is currently with the Chairman's office. The other Commission offices have not received it yet.

Once the Chairman finishes making his inputs to it, it will then come to the other Commission offices and then we can react to it. So just so folks are clear, the steps in the process at this point vis-à-vis the reorg, I know as much about it as you all do.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: Just a couple of points here. I think, you know, we received a couple of Executive Orders that told the NRC or direct the NRC, along with our federal agencies that look at our organizational structure. Even before that, my work on the ADVANCE Act and thinking about what reforms we pursue here at the NRC, structure of the organization wasn't something that was top of mind but realized they could be a tool to help enable some things.

And so I'm going to make a few general points about the reorg itself. One, what is the problem we're trying to solve? And we really want to make sure that we address that and do that, given the importance and the size and scope of this effort.

The other thing, the reorganization that the Commission puts forward will be at a very high level. And so there's much work to be done after the Commission decision comes out for you, as individuals, to help shape exactly what that looks like in your individual offices and branches, et cetera.

And so it will be an ongoing conversation. We may have a decision that comes out that may need some adjustment or something that needs to be revisited. So, you know, the decision that we make here is just the start.

And, again, I think we have, as a Commission, ever since that direction has been coming out, been discussing what kind of high-level things do we want to incorporate. And so what all that is to say is that, when we are ready together, talking amongst ourselves to arrive at what we think is going to work best here, you know, we are going to move expeditiously because we owe you that. There's been this talk of a reorg for a long time without much direction, and I recognize that us delivering this can really kind of bring some more certainty to folks.

And I appreciate the work that Mike and his team and other folks have done and just know that it's not over. We would love to also get your feedback in any way that we can. So thank you.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. With that, we're going to go to our first question in the room. We acknowledge the microphone here to my left. Please share your name, and we're ready for your question.

MS. HOOD: Hello, everyone. My name is Tanya Hood, and thank you again for the opportunity to have an All Hands. I do

appreciate the fact that our agency does this, and we stated on a couple of statements how you've gone and expressed a little bit more to Congress the work that we do, celebrating us more and some of the conversation that's already taken place regarding looking at the employees coming in to our office.

I want to also ask, in looking at the various budget cuts because it seems to be more of a stress in this environment to paying attention to the budget, how are you looking at the holistic employee? We're in an environment where, yes, we don't have what we used to with the food elements, and I heard what you stated about eight percent participating in what we currently have available. But there's also conversation and then discussions about the cutting security and also having our health center cut, as well. So we're having individuals come back into this office in the agency and looking at us holistically some of the basics, like the food, security, and our health. It does not seem like it's truly being considered. Can you expand on that?

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: First, I think that Commissioner Crowell was actually addressing that a minute ago because, you know, we've got to have a balancing act here. The money is tight, and that's going to stay that way, so that's just the way it is at the moment. We're being told, you know, through the Congress and all what our numbers are going to be, what our caps are. But if we're going to do certain things inside, like telework for example, there's got to be a tradeoff somewhere else because, if we're taking people out of the building for two days a week or even a pay period, that's going to impact things inside the building, and we have to



make some hard decisions there.

We don't like to make some of those decisions ourselves, but we really are left with no option in a way. So, you know, so we're just trying to balance, right, what is needed in the environment that we face with those amenities that we're trying to offer.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: And I'll just add, you know, in recognizing those tradeoffs, for us to make an informed decision, we need to hear from all of you about what your highest priorities are within those considerations and tradeoffs. Is it in-house services? Is it more telework? Where is everyone on that and other considerations?

I don't want us to be making these decisions in a vacuum, but they do need to be made holistically, thoughtfully, and with input that will help us arrive at the correct decision. We can't do it all.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: Yes. I think that just really highlights how important communication is in this time period. With everything that's shifting so quickly, it's how we communicate externally to folks. But how we discuss and chat internally is even more important now, especially as things are kind of changing very swiftly. So make sure that you are expressing these kind of things that really strike that better balance so we can make better informed decisions with the things we have. Thank you.

MR. KING: If you don't mind, I'd like to add a little bit to that. So the focus on culture and the impact to employees with everything that's going on and the pending reorganization, the changes we're making, additional efficiency gains that we're working through the executive orders to

potentially make. We have scheduled for October 1st a senior leadership team retreat, and one of the focus areas of that discussion, which is the office directors and deputy office directors, regional administrators across the agency, one of the focuses of that is to focus on culture and how do we ensure, as we're going ahead and making these changes, that we're gathering feedback and that we're getting a pulse from the staff on what are the impact of these changes, how could they best help us inform the right decisions as we're going along the way. So it's an important thing, and it's a relative near-term opportunity for us to take a hard look at that.

And I'm looking in the back. I see Chris Craighead here in the back. He's our culture leader for the agency. He's going to be invited to attend that meeting with the senior leadership team to help us as we facilitate that discussion. Thanks.

MS. GLENN: Thank you for that question, for that response. We're going to transition back to the room. If you would, please unmute your microphone. You don't have to share your name, but adhere to our one minute. Thank you so much.

MR. WIDREVITZ: Hello. My name is Dan Widrevitz. So I do have one. It's true. I wanted to make a quick comment and then follow with a question.

So I'm going to start with a comment. We have a lot of thoughts about telework. I'd like to present my thoughts. When we went to one day of telework, it was a huge gain to the agency. I'm just going to say it. Everyone in the agency needs a day to sit down and concentrate. When we went to two days, I think it was still probably a gain to the agency,

to the mission, to us as individuals. Still have an awful lot of people where they have at least two days where getting to concentrate really helps.

When we went to three days, I think it was definitely a deficit to the mission. It was much harder to work. It was much harder to mentor. We didn't do it thoughtfully. We didn't have core days. You know, we left it to divisions and branch chiefs. I think it was rolled out poorly, and I hope we don't go back to three days as our default posture. Now I'm a bad person, and the people next to me might hit me for saying that. Now, there are certainly are people who benefit from having more telework. I don't want to say that's true, but I say, on average, I think three days was a bad decision.

Now, I do have a question. One of the things that we rely on here at the NRC is that depth of expertise, is high contact with our stakeholders, it's the ability where we already know most of what we know that lets us be flexible. It lets us be quick. You know, when we're doing verbal authorizations or, oh, my God, what do we actually need to know for Palisades.

So getting the question, one of the things that's happened lately is we've had an awful lot of people go to an awful lot of technical meetings, ASME code, for example, or IEEE or ASTM. It's been incredibly important. It's why we assume that all of these things in the plant are highly reliable, so we don't even model a bunch of them in PRA. Yes. Okay. I'm too fast. We used to send like 30 people to ASME code, right? Now we're talking about one. We can't do our mission if we are not in the room. Is there any span of control on this? Thanks.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: I think you're absolutely right. I think, right now, we need more visibility in the regulated community and the technical community now more than ever. I think it would be important for us to encourage as much participation as we can to facilitate that kind of exchange. Not only does it help us understand, but it helps technical folks, folks that are in the industry, et cetera, to understand what we're thinking. And again, communication is essential in this time, internal, external, so I think looking for more opportunities, encourage our leadership here to look for more ways to allow those opportunities to occur.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Yes. To add to that, we've been given the ability through the ADVANCE Act and even through the Executive Orders to reach out and communicate to, you know, I mean, obviously I'm one of these -- I don't know. Maybe it's southern; I don't know. It may be a southern thing, but I think communication and understanding, from the people who actually use it every day, it's important for us to learn from them because they know a lot more in certain areas how things work than we do on the regulated side. So we can learn from each other and we can actually craft, I think, something that's really good.

So remaining in a silo is not a good idea where this is concerned. I guess that's the point.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Let me just add here somewhat as a rhetorical question, as well, which is, if that reality is manifesting because of a shortage of bandwidth, i.e. enough staff to participate in those engagements, that's one concern. And it would be of concern to me if it is direction to staff about who can or how many should

participate. That is manageable through a different vector and needs to be highlighted as to, you know, your supervisors as to what the shortcoming is in not having more participation in those meetings so that can be resolved.

But it kind of depends on what is the driving factor there in our participation. And, Mike, feel free to jump in here.

MR. KING: Yes. First of all, I'd like to know the specifics of the example you provided. But I know we have gone recently through a fresh look at who are our members that are representing for different code committees. We've also taken a look at how we could streamline our decision-making so the outcome of the votes at the end of the day doesn't result in us starting from scratch when it comes time to endorse it.

But, you know, I know we're being much more deliberate about deciding how many people go not just to code committee meetings but to travel in general, being much more thoughtful about how many folks we send out. So I'd like to know the specifics of that particular case to understand better if there is a gap there or not, but I would not be surprised if we made the decision not to send 20 people to a code committee meeting.

Thanks. We don't have to get the specifics here. Just come by. Thanks.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. Thank you for the question and for the responses. We're going to go to the next question in the room. If you would share your question, please.

MS. D'AGOSTINO: Is this on?

MS. GLENN: Yes. You should see a green light on top.  
A green circle.

MS. D'AGOSTINO: There we go. Can you hear me?

MS. GLENN: We can.

MS. D'AGOSTINO: Okay. Good morning, everybody. I'm Amy D'Agostino. I work in NRR. And just to kind of give you a background, by my education, I'm an organizational psychologist. And I heard quite a few times the answer to several questions about how the staff feels about telework and different amenities. The answer was let us know what you want.

But the other thing that I see from an organizational perspective is our ability to give that input has been stripped away. Our union rights have been stripped away from us. The FEVS has been canceled. Our ability to speak as a staff is quite limited. And I was just wondering if the Commission, the EDO, is thinking about with those traditional ways that we speak as a staff to our leadership are gone at this point, maybe to return, maybe not to return, how are we going to get that feedback to you as one voice? Because, right now, I don't see the mechanisms for it, so I'd love to hear your thoughts on if you have plans for how we might do that going forward. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. KING: Sure. No, thank you for the question. No, and this is one of the key topics of discussion for the senior leadership team retreat. We definitely want to ensure that we compensate for the fact that, you know, some of those mechanisms aren't there today, and so how can we best leverage the culture leaders across the agency to be our eyes and ears beyond what each individual office is doing in terms of, for example, I

know the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation had regular ET chats with the staff. It's a good challenge. Maybe we need to reconsider the frequency with which we're doing those types of meetings because it's a free exchange of information with staff, so they can share what's on their minds and what challenges they're seeing.

But I do think, at the agency level, we need to look at a way to be more deliberate about how we collect that information. And that's the topic we're going to talk about at the retreat.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Information is power, right? It gives you ability to make good decisions. And if we're not getting the information the way we should, you know, especially in today's environment that we're having to make trade-offs. Again, this is one of those things, if something is being stripped away, to use your words, then we have to find an alternative way to get that same information.

One great thing about my colleagues in our office, in the Chair's office, is our people are available, open, and willing to welcome you in, right? We're responsive. If you want to come one-on-one, you know, we will take the time to hear you. So, you know, at least we do have that right now. And then the EDO is open, you know, you got your "Ask the EDO" kind of portal. Those are areas that are available right now. You could use it a bit differently maybe, but there are good ways to get there, so I appreciate that you all are going to talk about that.

MS. GLENN: Okay. With that, we're going to go to the next question in the room on my right. Please share your question.

MS. MAUPIN. Hi. I'm Cardelia Maupin. First off, I want

to thank the Chairman for reaffirming that he supports work-life balance. With some of the comments that were made by the new OG general counsel, I was quite worried. And I've also decided that if it's going to be, it's up to me. And I think each one of us should take that on.

And the reason why I came down, because there's been a lot of discussion on proper work-life balance. So I'll ask the question, and then I'll give you the answer. Do you know how many NRC employees have died or potentially died on-site trying to get work done?

MS. GLENN: Ms. Cardelia, could you ask your question, please?

MS. MAUPIN: I did. Do you know how many people --

MS. GLENN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

MS. MAUPIN: Let me give the answer, if you wouldn't mind. I know of actually, like, three. And this is important. You might not see it as important, but, when we're cutting health, you know, the health facility, when we're talking about work-life balance, when we're talking about increased stress, this is important. You might not think so, but it is important.

We've had at least three people that I'm aware of who have died or potentially died straight from trying to get the work done. A lot of us are A people, A plus plus. We are going to get it done.

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

MS. MAUPIN: Like I said, so there's three, Charlie Willis, Michael Williamson, and the person who died had a heart attack in doing the Yucca Mountain project. Those things are important.



MS. GLENN: Okay. Thank you so much. And I do want to acknowledge the meaning behind your question, and we definitely appreciate that. While doing that, I also want to make sure that we're fair and equal to everyone and that we adhere to our one-minute rule. That's for everyone, so I want to make sure that that's expressed. But thank you so much for sharing that.

Okay. All right. We're going to go back over to our next question. If you would, please make sure your microphone is unmuted and share your question. We're ready for you.

MS. LONDON: Can you hear me?

MS. GLENN: We can.

MS. LONDON: Okay. Thanks. Lisa London. Thank you all for having this, as we normally do. And thanks for your hard work and everyone's hard work.

I just was watching virtually, working on a document, and decided to march my butt down here because I heard something that was of concern to me, and that was about the health center. I just wanted to bring something to your attention. Not too long ago, maybe six weeks, I had a health issue arise. I had to go down to the health center. I lost about an hour and a half of my day. At the end of the day, that was only an hour and a half. If there was no health center, there is no question I would have had to go home. I would have lost eight hours of my day. Excuse me, nine hours. I'm in CWS.

So that's not the first time that's happened. That's actually happened for me a number of times. I understand that you all have

budgeting decisions to make. Right now, all of my work is 14300, which I don't have nine hours to spare. I don't. I don't think many people that are working on 14300 have hours to spare. So if you're going to cut the health center, okay, that's what you're going to do. But understand I'm going to go home next time because that's what I'll have to do. So that's a comment for you all to think about. I'm going to go back to working on my document.

(Applause.)

MS. GLENN: Thank you. All right. With that, we'll go back to the room for your question.

PARTICIPANT: Just to kind of keep piling on. So one of the services that we didn't completely lose but was reduced is the EAP. I've taken advantage of it in the past. I know other people have. It's very useful. And we still took advantage of it while we were teleworking. Now that we're here all the time, with the added stress, I don't know why the services were reduced. I don't know if they're ever going to be returned. But taking advantage of in-person service is a lot more beneficial than just talking with somebody on the phone.

So if you want to comment, I'd appreciate it, but that's one service that I would appreciate. If we were looking at managing, balancing something, it's one person. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you for that comment because I happen to agree with you about some of this, you know, because of my own personal medical history over life. And I know, within the agency, that people have used it and do use it. But this, again, is one of these things that we need to hear, and I appreciate your comment. And it is

something that we will talk about. Mike.

MR. KING: Yes. So it's clear. I mean, it's stress. Everybody feels it, right? But I wanted to shed a little bit of light on what was behind some of the decisions. It was not a quick decision on the health center. You know, when the Executive Orders came out and had us take a hard look at our contracts across the board and where we were spending our resources, every contract at the agency -- I mean, if you ask Admin everything got held up, we look at everything, we took a hard look. And with regards to the health center, we looked at the usage across the agency. And even before COVID, when we were all in the office, the level of usage did not warrant the amount of resources we were spending there.

And we didn't completely eliminate the medical services. Some of those services are available, but it's not going to be the way it was before, right? You can't just go downstairs, to the point made earlier.

So there was a recognition that it's going to cause folks, some folks to have to go offsite to get, but you have health benefits to be able to cover that. But some services will continue, like we're going to offer the immunizations like we did before through the contract, but the contract has been reduced. But the amount of effort or the amount of resources we were expending on it did not warrant the very limited usage that it was getting.

I just want you to know that there was a lot of thoughtful deliberation on each and every contract across the agency, in particular areas where it impacted the staff. But that doesn't mean we can't take a fresh look with everybody coming back to the office. And if we feel like we

need to change course on any of these, we can do that. Thanks.

MS. GLENN: Yes. We're going to go to our next question in the room.

PARTICIPANT: Good morning, Commissioners and the Chairman. I have one question. I have been with the NRC about 27 years, and I'm a big fan of the nuclear industry, even though I'm a regulator. One thing I have noticed is that, over the last half a century or 25 years, the nuclear industry has had a great safety performance, which earned them tremendous bipartisan support. The public support is over 60 percent, and that's a hundred operating plants.

Here's my question. I see a lot of new players making requests of the agency, the safety agency, that, in my view, are not necessarily of the best interest of the nuclear enterprise. I can give examples, but this is on the forum. I know some of the nuclear industry, the people who operate nuclear plants have some concerns. And I'm just asking whether, my question is whether you are aware of such concerns and how you are confronting that because I don't want anything to happen. We have a hundred great plants, and we have more new builds, and we don't want that to get tarnished because of unreasonable requests and how this agency may respond to those.

Oh, by the way, with the health, I did not know that we were canceling that. I'm alive because of the health center. It's only one life. I can give you details later, but I'm so big fan of the health center we had.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Right. On the health center thing real quick, I totally agree that, if it's one person, it's the biggest issue, right? And I get it, I really do. Mike is right about the balance. And if it's not utilized -- although it's important to those people who do, I get it, it's 100-percent important. So that's one of the things that we have to make really hard decisions as a result of.

As far as the question that you just asked, do you want to make a comment on that real quick?

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: Yes. I think, you know, players that don't understand nuclear safety, what it means, there is a learning opportunity here. And I think that, you know, as those discussions are happening, as you're getting requests, it's a two-way street. It is us communicating those standards, what our standards are for safety, et cetera.

I think many of these new players are bringing also designs that, you know, offer different features that are either inherent safety, passive safety, et cetera. And I think, in the grand scheme of things, they have to do their homework. They have to prove that those safety features meet the case that they're presenting. And, you know, as an individual, as somebody in this agency, you have to make the decision and move forward based on what our standards are. But that does not preclude us from being better communicators about expectations, about standards, et cetera.

So, you know, in terms of the nuclear enterprise, yes, as a former nuclear engineer, someone who has committed, you know, their life to this technology as well, we want to see it succeed. And I think that,

again, speaks to the role of the NRC and why we are so important in this moment because that 60 percent doesn't happen without a safety record that the industry currently has. So thank you.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: I appreciate the question, and I may be oversimplifying it a little bit in my response here, but this is how I see it. At some level, I think we're overthinking this dynamic a little bit. You know, at one level, it can be as simple as neither side of the equation should be having to make guesses or assumptions. You, as the NRC staff, shouldn't have to make guesses or assumptions about what an applicant or external entity that you're engaging with wants or needs or is missing. And applicants shouldn't have to guess at what is needed on their end. We can be clear to them about what is necessary for you to make your safety or security decision.

And, you know, there's a basic element of just clear two-way communication here so that everyone, you know, can make reasoned decisions and do it in a timely way. But if you find yourself having to guess or assume, then there's a problem. That's how I see it.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Yes. I totally agree with what Commissioner Crowell just said. You know, we've been given, through the ADVANCE Act, right, we were asked to take a look at what we do as an agency and rewrite our mission statement. And one of the things that we were asked and have been challenged to do is to enable the safe use of nuclear technologies and radioactive materials, and that's what we do. You know, safety is always going to be the North Star. It's going to be the strike zone over home plate you've heard me say over and over again. That is no

change. That's the same today, and it'll be the same tomorrow.

If you find yourself being asked to do something or you feel like you're being asked to compromise something, you got to speak up. You got to go to your supervisor. You got to go to the EDO. You got to come to us. I mean, there are a number of places that you can go. Do not hesitate.

And we're, as Commissioners, we're going to make the right decision. That's what we're going to do. That's our job. We're going to make the right decision, and we're going stand behind it. So I encourage you, if you think you've got an issue, come to us.

MS. GLENN: All right. We'll go to my right for the next question.

MR. TSENG: Hi. My name is Ian Tseng. So I just want to give a little bit of boots-on-the-ground feedback, I guess, on us trying to strike this balance right now of achieving safety but doing so efficiently.

So one of the things I want to say first is that, all of the people I've worked with for the last 15 years or so at this agency, everyone's always been focused quite a bit actually on efficiency, right, and, certainly, very much on safety. But we've always been having that discussion about how do we do this efficiently. It's never like we've been saying, hey, let's just do this wastefully.

Okay. So the thing that I'm having now is, in trying to strike this balance, and I hear everybody's unanimous feedback of, hey, we're trying to do a balancing act right now, and I think that that is tremendously important. We should be asking questions about certain

things that we should be doing differently. What I'm seeing a lot of right now is where that type of questioning is actually a serious impediment to efficiency.

So an example here a moment ago, right. Dan asked a good question, right. We had a good discussion about sending how many people to code meetings, for instance, right? Just use that as an example. In the end, we will have a lot of discussions and we'll end up in the right place, right; but it takes a long time and a lot of discussions and that's not actually good for efficiency.

Just the same when it comes to hiring. If we make a judgment that we need to hire, you're right, we can still hire if it's a critical position, but it takes a lot of bandwidth to make that decision, right? And, right now, we don't have a lot of bandwidth left. And so I just want to hear your opinions on that.

In general, I just want to make sure that we are trusting the right people and that we're leveraging the trust efficiently. Thanks.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: You know, 14300 is what is on everyone's mind as the big thing that's happening here. We have detailees over here from DOE who are here to help. And if you feel like there's a problem, you need to, again, speak out. But the goal is to -- they're trying to help us implement that Executive Order and get it done in a timely way. But guess what else? We're helping DOE. I mean, we've been working with DOE for years on sharing people, sharing ideas, sharing thoughts, but it's a hair different today because it appears that, with the microreactor program, it



looks like it's kind of a mini Oppenheimer moment, right. They're trying to get some of these things done at Idaho and around the country. We're helping. We're going to send people to DOE to help them do reviews. So it's not just DOE sending people over here. We're actually helping DOE, and I think that's a great news story for the NRC. And it's, again, another story that we have to get out there.

So, I mean, safety is safety is safety. Right. We're not going to compromise on that. DOE and the NRC and even DoD, we're going to align on safety and on what is required. And I think that's why it's important that we're involved on the front end of this so that we can build that safety case and help those applicants or vendors, whatever potential applicants to us get from the Idaho test part to commercial deployment because they're not going to be the same, but there's a way to get there and being involved early allows us to do that.

It's a new dynamic, but I think we're going to maneuver it very well. You know, you all already are.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: I think, coming to the agency, observing it as a Hill staffer, et cetera, you're right. There's a lot of process around the decision-making, and it seems that we're in a moment that requires us to get to a decision faster, but then we have to look at what will enable that. I think there are going to be novel issues that we encounter with these, you know, to the point that was made here with these new designs and everything.

So, you know, those types of things, those things that are new and novel that may kind of change our approach or make us look at the

technology different because the technology is so different may require a little bit more of that, but there's definitely places where we need to make decisions quicker right on it. And it starts also with us up here. We owe the staff for all the incredible work that you do more timely decisions, so you can see the fruits of your labor kind of make their way through the agency and out to our regulated community.

So, you know, I'll leave it here with a commitment that we need to be reaching decisions on the things that you produce, as well. Thank you.

MS. GLENN: Oh, go ahead, Mike. Mike has something.

MR. KING: Yes. I was just going to say it's a good point. You know, I think, you know -- and I'll give you an example of how we've learned along the way. Obviously, we're in a very dynamic time right now where we're challenging status quo in so many different areas. And so that, inherently, is inefficient, to your point. I mean, we're asking, well, why can't you, why can't you; and we spend a lot of time doing those sorts of things and we find the right sweet point.

My hope is that, once we've gone through the rulemaking process and we've done a lot of the things that the Executive Orders, then a lot of that storming and norming and inefficiencies surrounding that will be behind us. But we've also learned along the way even some of the additional controls we've had to implement for our hiring exemption process today, we started off very restrictive and we had multiple layers of approval. And so, since that time, we recognized, based on feedback from folks who needed to get people in the seats quicker, that we needed to streamline that.

And so I think, as we learn more, we're trying to get smarter and streamline things to the point we got to move quick and make decisions quicker. This is a massive rulemaking. The EO 14300, it's a look at all of our regulations across the board. There's no way we could do that without being really thoughtful about how we could streamline our rulemaking process.

And so one of the things we're doing is looking at how can we streamline the concurrence process. And so what you'll see there is different, and we've communicated it's different. It's not everybody that's normally concurring on everything that we see as part of rulemaking. And that's a deliberate decision to try to streamline things but striking a balance for how we ensure that different views are still heard along the way and effectively dispositioned.

So we're trying to strike that balance. It's a completely valid point. Thanks.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. We're ready for the next question.

PARTICIPANT: Good morning. In light of the recent Executive Orders and the DOGE staffers at the agency and the President's firing of former Commissioner Hanson, I'd like to ask for your perspectives on the independence of our agency and what that currently means in practice.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: So we are an independent safety regulator. That is not going to change. I'm going to make the right decision based on what comes before me, and I'm willing to stand on that, regardless

of outside influence or, you know, what could happen and things like that. I mean, safety is the North Star. Safety is what it's about.

But let me address independence for a second. We are an executive agency. We're based in the executive branch. We, from a day-to-day activity of the agency, as far as administrative running and stuff like that, Congress approves our budget. So we're not independent. You know, Congress passes laws on how we are supposed to operate. We're not an independent person there. We're not immune from it. We have to be, you know, they have a say in some of that stuff.

What they are not getting involved in and what we're going -- is our ability to make a safety finding and to inspect and do what we have to do day-to-day in the plants and in the fuel facilities and everywhere else where our inspectors have to do important work. So we're going, from that point, we are independent as a safety regulator, and we must maintain that because we are the gold standard, not just here, but around the world. And so that's important, and everybody knows it. And so far, from what we've seen, nobody's infringed on that at all.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: I will just add that I agree with what the Chairman had to say. The heart of the essence of independence at the NRC is that we're making decisions that have integrity and can be substantiated. And if that's starting to change, then that essence of independence is called into question. And the only way we're going to know that that's changing is to hear about it from you all.

I mean, I'm going to just take this opportunity here to spice up the meeting a little bit, which will help apply to any questions we have

going forward. But, you know, I'm sitting here reflecting a little bit and thinking about the, you know, the top three submitted questions today, telework, employee services, 45-minute lunch break. Those are manageable problems. I was relieved that those were some of the top questions because what I'm not hearing is my branch or office or whatever, you know, subgroup you're part of doesn't have the requisite expertise to do their job, doesn't have enough bandwidth in terms of number of staff to do their job, is being moved around so often that it's undermining their ability to do their job and meet our safety and security thresholds.

Now, it's possible that folks are reluctant to stand up in a meeting like this and say that, which I appreciate, but if you feel that way, you need to come and take advantage of the open-door policy of the Commission, or talking to your supervisors, whichever you feel most comfortable with. But, if I'm wrong about, you know, looking at it this way, we need to hear about it because we can't guess. So please let us know.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: I'll just say, I associate myself, and I appreciate the distinction that the Chairman made, you know, between being an independent agency in the federal family versus, you know, the core of the decisions that we make and the independence free from undue political bias or influence, and that basically reflects the objective safety analysis of the decision that you're making, and that is core. It's been that way since the beginning of the industry and will remain that way.

And I think what we're hearing, to the other point, about communication here is a need for that formal mechanism to get us, you know, that reflects concerns that could be raised related just to, you know,

work-life balance, et cetera, but also, again, I'm going to go back to safety conscious work environment. We need that now. Thank you.

MS. GLENN: Thank you for the question and the responses. We're ready for your question on my right.

PARTICIPANT: Good morning. Good afternoon almost. At the risk of making myself known, I see that I'm on the screen, and Sabrina knows who I am. Mike knows who I am also, so it doesn't really matter. So I'm sorry to sound like a broken record, but this comment, suggestion, it's on telework. And I was encouraged by the Commissioner's suggestion that the policy maybe should be revisited. I think that, you know, being that there was a question, it was the first question with the most votes. It was telework. That was my question.

So, you know, a lot of people are leaving the agency, and you see one common thread that everybody's leaving. One of the reasons they put is telework. You know, we're not offered telework. We only have this, you know, the 160 hours, and, you know, I wanted to point out also that, you know, as we continue evaluating, you know, it's not just FDA, but it's also other federal agencies, DOE, PTO, Patent and Trademark Office, other office branches are offering, you know, at least a minimum two days, which I would say it would increase our, improve our mental health, you know, reduce our stress. And I think that most people in this agency, most staff, it's one of those topics that is on the top of our minds, and I would encourage the senior leadership in this meeting that they're going to have on October 1st to really go back and say, okay, you know, is 160 enough? Well, don't take away from it, right? I mean, that's not what I'm trying to say, but, I

mean, can we do better in terms of the policy to improve retention, you know, staff retention, people's mental health, and reduce stress? Because this is really a small win that this agency can give, and it will really, really be a first step in gaining the trust of our senior leadership, which I can assure you, from the last FEVS survey, the senior leadership trust was one of the areas that was lacking. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. GLENN: All right. Thank you. We're going to go to the next question in the room.

MS. OLMSTEAD: Hi. I'm Joan Olmstead, and this is the first time I heard about the possibility of having the health unit cut. So I came down, I was working upstairs, and I came down because I'm another person that feels like I owe a lot of my life to the health unit and the response.

I was in a briefing up on the 17th floor. I was having some health issues, had a routine exam, and I had the doctor call me, having come out of the office in the meeting, and said, sit down, you need to call an ambulance, and don't move, because I had a blood clot.

So the health unit was great. They came up, they sat with me until the ambulance came, and, you know, I'm okay. But the other thing is I had a number of surgeries, and I went down to the health unit a lot when I was in the office, when I was transitioning back to full time. Having a place to, you know, I could rest, I could lay down for a half hour during my lunch break, and that helped ease me coming back into the office.

So I'm very concerned, if you're cutting the health unit,

what's going to happen for people that use it, like me, or what happens when people have an emergency?

MS. GLENN: Thank you. Is there a response?

MS. JERNELL: I was going to say I think general practice should be we should call 911 as a first measure always.

MS. GLENN: Okay. Thank you for that reminder. I do want to acknowledge we're getting a flavor of questions that are very personal and passionate to everyone, and I appreciate you all being willing to be open and share your thoughts and transparent and also for giving me the grace to move us through this one minute so that we can keep going. So I just want to thank everyone for that. Let's give ourselves a quick hand for just abiding by the rules and working together. Good teamwork, everyone.

All right. So we're going to go over to my right with your question, please.

PARTICIPANT: Can you hear me? So I first want to start just with a comment that, in relation to the amount of work that we do and the amount of bandwidth that we have, your major concern about us not being able to meet the mission, as you can probably tell from the amount of medical episodes and focus on services here at the NRC, it's very important to us that we can accomplish this mission while reducing the burning at both ends. We will get the job done, no matter what it takes, and we are very good at it. We don't always shout, yell, scream when we are burning the candle at both ends, especially as we've recently seen these hiring freezes. They keep coming closer, so there's nobody screaming because it's about to



end, and then it gets extended. And then it gets closer, and then it gets extended, so it doesn't feel useful.

So I think that all of us can agree that hiring is in all of our best interests. All of us are keeping our head down. All of us are working to the greatest extent. People talking about telework, they care about the flexibility, but they care about the amount of attentiveness they can give.

So my question is just what can we do more for hiring to support those offices that need support the most?

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: I'll take a pit, and you, Mike, follow up here.

MR. KING: Yes. And I've talked about this a little bit at the EDO town hall -- was that last week or the week before? You know, obviously we are under the hiring freeze, but we have the ability to hire in areas where we feel like we need to. It's called the hiring exceptions, and we've done that in some targeted areas.

But what I shared at the EDO town hall is still true today, right? We have to be thoughtful about where we hire and how much we hire because we don't want to artificially put ourselves in a position where we would have to do some sort of forced reductions, right, because we over hired, and we didn't account for the impact of the reorganization and any decisions we need to make there, and the potential efficiency gains which we're working on, which some of them are very significant improvements and streamlining for our processes, which translates to FTE, right? And so we are being very cautious about where we hire today.

Now, but one thing we talk about in the senior leadership

team, and all the office directors across the agencies know this, we have to be thoughtful about hiring, but that doesn't mean we can't hire. If you need somebody in a particular area, you need to raise your hand, and office directors have been doing that.

So if you're a staff member and you're seeing where you're being challenged to meet your mission because you're burning the candle on both ends AND the middle, please talk to your branch chief, make sure your branch chief knows it, talk to your division director. We've got to identify where those areas are, and we're trying to be proactive about that, as well, by analyzing the staffing plans on our own, looking where the areas are really reduced in staffing, but it's possible we could be missing something. So please, it's a good point, don't be quiet about it. Let us know where you're challenged.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Let me just add a clarification on that. What Mike said is accurate, and it does not just apply to the folks working on new and advanced reactors. It applies to all of you. If there's a shortcoming from a staffing perspective, either in number or in expertise in whatever area you sit in this agency, and it is going to undermine your ability, your collective ability, to arrive at answers, either ones that have integrity or on a reasonable time frame, you need to speak up.

One of the blessings of this agency is exactly what the gentleman earlier said is we get the job done. We all work hard. I've worked in a lot of agencies at the state and federal level during my time. I've never been at an agency that has a more dedicated, hardworking

workforce than the NRC. You all are, and this is a compliment, gluttons for punishment. You love the work so much, you'll do it to make sure it gets done no matter what. That doesn't mean it has to come at the expense of your voice or your health, so please speak up. So thank you.

MS. GLENN: Okay. With that, we'll go to my left. Thank you.

MS. ELLIS: Hi. I'm Twana. We appreciate this forum and the ability to be able to speak out in public. I don't have a question, I just have a statement. I'd like to reiterate some of the things that the staff has been through and lost. For those of us who've been here more than 19 or 20 years, we lost White Flint. We lost Eatzi's. We've lost friends and family due to COVID. We lost our five-day work week culture. We were all used to working five days in the office. And now we've lost the ability to work from home. Not only are we stressed. I hear a lot we're stressed, we're stressed, we're stressed, but I believe, collectively, we are grieving and we've met our mission while going through the stages of it.

So if, as Commissioner Crowell said, our top issues are manageable, then meet us and help us, and let's manage them. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. GLENN: Okay. Thank you so much. We'll go to my right with your question, please.

MS. PERES: Yes. My name is Camille Peres, and I'm in NRR. So I also have a comment, an observation really, and I'm newer within the last couple of years. And there was something that was said

about independence. And I think that one of the things that is very sort of underlying all of this, you were commenting about the things that are very manageable, and one of the things that's underlying all of this that we can't really talk about is this fear of losing that political independence that we were, and nobody can do anything about that, talk about it, but it is always there.

And so I think when the leadership is talking and doing their getaway and all of that, I think being aware that that is always there when we're doing our work, when we're doing all of this. And so all of these things are important. And that day off that you gave us a while ago, oh, my God, that was a big deal. And so I just think that that is important to not forget, that that's this underlying energy that we're always all expending. So for whatever that's worth. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. GLENN: Thank you. As we continue to ask questions, for anyone that's new that's joined the room, please remember to remove your badge because we are broadcasting publicly. So please remember to keep your badges out of sight.

And for that, with that, we'll go over to my left with your question.

PARTICIPANT: Okay. I have a comment about a concern about the proposed rulemaking activities that are ongoing, and it's more kind of a comment and a question. One thing I want to emphasize is that it is your decision, it is the Commission's decision, to proceed with proposed rulemaking, not the staff's. So in order for you to make your

decision, you need all the information. You need facts. The facts are the Executive Orders is one set of facts, but the current rule and the basis for the current rule is an equally as important set of facts.

And so you have to weigh what carries more weight: does the basis for the current rule carry more weight than the Executive Order? And in that case, you wouldn't want to proceed. And if you say, if you just say the executive weight carries more weight, you would proceed with a rule.

But the key is, it's not the staff's decision, it's your decision. And for you to perform that decision, you need all the facts, you need all the information, and you need to understand the entire basis for the current rule. And that's all I want to say.

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: I think we get that. I do think we get that.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. We'll take the question to my right.

MS. WILLIAMS: Good morning. My name is Danielle Williams. I'm not sure if anybody mentioned anything about parking for, like, new employees, but that has been a concern because, right now, we have to either take public transportation or pay to park, which takes ability away from having a schedule that kind of works for the individual.

So I was wondering is there something that's going to be done by that? About that I meant.

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Mike, you or admin?

MR. KING: Yes. So we recognize there's a shortage of parking, particularly with everybody coming back to the office. So we took the previous agreement that was in place with NTEU and followed that same prioritization guidance with how we prioritize who had access to parking. We recognize it's just a fact of life. We don't have enough parking spots. And using that prioritization scheme, there's going to be some folks and likely newer folks who don't have access to parking. And, unfortunately, that's just a practical fact of life of our current circumstances.

Anything beyond that?

MS. JERNELL: I'll just add that admin regularly reviews the parking usage and, in fact, in the coming weeks, we're prepared to do another review. And as we determine that there is parking availability, we contact the employees on the waiting list immediately and inform them whether or not they can start parking. So it is something, unfortunately, we have what we have, but we do continuously review as much as possible.

MS. WILLIAMS: Can I just state one thing? But it's also creating a financial burden on employees, new employees, because we have to pay for parking or have to drive to a metro station in order to catch the metro if you want to utilize the free thing.

MS. GLENN: Okay. Thank you so much. We appreciate that. And, everyone, just one question, please, so that we can get to, make sure that we can honor as many voices as possible. We're at just a time check. We're at 11:34, and so we do have time for additional questions. And if we don't have any balance of anyone that has a question at the microphone or on the list, then we'll circle back for seconds. But for

now, just one question, please.

We'll go over to my left. Please share your question.

MS. REGNER: Thank you. Lisa Regner. I appreciate this --

MS. GLENN: Would you check your microphone for me?

MS. REGNER: Got it. Can you hear me?

MS. GLENN: We can.

MS. REGNER: Okay. Great. I did want to thank you for this open forum. I also do feel strongly, I want to put a plug in for the fitness center. That is a huge benefit. I'm really thankful that you did keep that in the budget because it's critical to my mental health. And I would encourage anybody that's struggling to use the fitness center.

I'm also a manager. And so I did want to thank Commissioner Crowell for his challenge. And I will tell you I am very concerned about two aspects. The first one is it was a challenge to try to hire. I'm a technical branch chief currently, structural and materials reviewers. It was very challenging even before the restrictions to hire these critical skills, and I am very concerned about hiring in this area going forward. I do have one person in one critical skill, one deep. And I am taking actions to try to alleviate that, share that knowledge.

But I will say my comment more has to do with also the concern about the stress going forward and staff hesitating to bring safety concerns forward. And that's a focus for me. I'd appreciate you commenting on that. But with the stresses of schedule and the performance metrics that are tied to schedule that are coming, I'm concerned about making sure that

we do remain focused on safety rather than schedule. Thank you.

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

(Applause.)

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: I think I have to put a plug in for the tools that the ADVANCE Act has given us here. And I think, you know, as individual managers, et cetera, look at the policy and find opportunities to bring those technical folks in. So I'll say that. Thank you.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. We'll take the question on my right. Oh, go ahead, Mike. I'm sorry.

MR. KING: Yes. Thank you for the point on the concern about schedule pressure, potentially, you know, reducing someone's willingness to raise safety issues. Just for your awareness, you know, I mentioned the EO 14300 rulemaking. We're at the stage where we're starting to really get to the point where we're starting concurrence on some of those things. And so what we asked everybody working on those rules to do is proactively outreach and say "Is there anybody involved with this have concerns about where we're at"? So don't just wait for them to come forward. Go ahead and get in front and ask and solicit just to make sure that we're not missing something.

And so that's one way we can kind of compensate and make sure folks feel comfortable raising concerns. And the strength of the agency is the fact that we openly address those concerns and we make objective decisions. We document our basis behind those decisions. So it's important that we get those regardless of how fast we're trying to move. So thanks.



COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Patricia, I'm sorry to do this. I just going to have to add some emphasis there. Hopefully, most of you got to watch the hearing last week. If you didn't see it live, then you watched it afterwards or read about it. Any of you who are, you know, reluctant or, you know, even fearful to raise concerns related to safety or the ability to do your job, you know, last week, I stuck my neck out there in front of a congressional hearing and I'm still here today. So I encourage you all to speak up on these points and don't be intimidated. Don't be afraid. I understand the vectors for doing so are different and have changed, but the Commission still exists and we all still maintain the most liberal open door policy you come up with. So I don't think any of us have ever turned anyone away. So if you have no other vector than that, you can always come talk to the three of us. So please keep that in mind. Thank you.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. We'll go to the question in the room on my right.

MS. SANCHEZ: Yes. My name is Sheryl Sanchez, and I will keep this brief, but if any of you all would like to have further discussions with it about, please reach out to me.

So since I am still involved with NTEU, I have a unique perspective on the attrition, and Commissioner Crowell did express concern about attrition. The people that are retiring that come to me before they retire, the majority of them indicate they are leaving before they want it. They are retiring before they wanted to. I am also aware of dozens of employees that are just trying to find a way to endure until they reach their minimum retirement age.

We also have people that I'm aware of, and this is even more troubling, we'll be losing 115 at the end of September, probably way more than that at the end of the year -- beginning of next year attrition. But, lately, what's been more troubling is I've been aware of people that are leaving to not go anywhere. A young man with two engineering degrees, one of them nuclear, who's only been here six years, left, is going to hang out with his toddler because his wife makes enough money that they can live. So it is much worse than you all think.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. So a quick time check. I don't see anyone at the microphones right now, so I'm going to pass it over to Ross to read our next question. And then, if time, we'll circle back to the room.

MR. WAGNER: Earlier this year, President Trump took the unprecedented step of firing then Commissioner Christopher Hanson, presumably because Hanson opposed some of the administration's policies. Do you believe that the Commissioners ought to be able to act in a way that is unfavorable to the president's policy objectives without fear of being removed? If not, how do you think Commissioners should respond if presidential priorities run counter to public health and safety?

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Yes. Thank you for the question. Again, back to the hearing last week. If you had any doubt where we stood as Commissioners, I mean, I'll tell you what I said. You know, outside factors don't matter. I'm going to make the right decision as a Commissioner here, and I'm going to stand by it. And that's just the way

that is, you know, that we are safety regulators. That is, again, that's who we have been, that's who we're going to be going forward, too. So I don't think it's going to matter to me.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: I'll echo that statement, as well. You know, I think we have to look at the reality of the situation that we're in here, but understand that, again, when it comes to our independence and the decisions that, you know, I personally make or we make as a commission, free of undue bias or influence. And we will always maintain that as long as we are here.

MS. GLENN: All right. Thank you so much for the question and the response. We'll take the next question in the room on my right.

PARTICIPANT: Yes. This is really two quick comments. One, you mentioned bringing things to your attention. I think people are bringing things to your attention. So I think it's en masse, or there's the same topic over and over again, so I think we don't need to cover that, but I just want to highlight that we are bringing it to your attention. This is a forum and that was the point of it, and so let's highlight that.

The second thing is, and I'm going to shoot myself in the foot here, I don't know what the policy, how it works in terms of parking, but, in order to help out my other colleagues, I get here pretty late because I've got to drop my kid off at school and P4 in Two White Flint, empty. It's always empty. I can park right in front of the door. So I don't know how often this is frequently, like, looked into, but if people are leaving, it's almost a one-to-one that you can say, hey, this person, a senior person, 18 years,

20 years, whatever they've been here, they've probably had a parking spot. So maybe, and maybe it's only one person actually doing that kind of work, but maybe look into it more that we can help our fellow colleagues that are struggling to, you know, they have to pay for parking. So thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Patricia, I'm going to just jump on this one just because. I know there wasn't a real question there. I hear you. You all may not know this, but, as Commissioners, we make less than most of you in this room. We've been under a pay freeze for 13 years. I'm not independently wealthy. My wife was a government employee until recently because she took the DRP because she wasn't able to stay at her agency longer than that.

Because I am a commissioner and I have a parking spot, I don't get the metro subsidy, but I take the metro more often than not, so I pay for that out of my own pocket. It sucks. I agree with you. We're not going to be able to solve the problem for all of us, but maybe we can get creative and think about like a small pool of parking spots that is awarded on a lottery basis for new employees. Just, you know, something. But we're not going to be able to solve it all, but maybe we can get a little bit creative to break open the opportunity a little bit.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. Ross, if you would read our next question, please.

MR. WAGNER: At the time of writing, I am aware of more than one NRC team that DOGE detailees from DOE attempted to give

orders to or to direct the work of. If this happens to staff, what is the appropriate response?

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: We've mentioned several times, if you sense, if you feel that that could be happening, you've got to bring it to your supervisor's attention, your branch chief's attention, to Mike King's attention, to our attention. Don't sit on it. We need to we need to know. We need to hear. And, quite honestly, we have heard from time to time. Right. And everything that we've heard has been investigated and dealt with so far.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. We'll take the question on my right.

PARTICIPANT: Hi. Good morning. So in the spirit of bringing things to your attention, the cuts to the security contract affecting the entrance and exit for staff have had real impacts on the daycare and the daycare families who've been walking to school, but then also the traffic flow at drop off and pick up. There's just so many more cars now that people aren't using the Pike exit. And that really wasn't communicated very effectively.

So going forward, when there are changes that are like that, you know, the request is to have better communication. And maybe, you know, I don't know what the options are for having flow through the garage or something like that, but it's been a really big impact to the families that use the daycare.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you so much. Quite honestly, just to be fully transparent, I learned about this at 6:30 this morning

and I came to the office and talked to Mike. And, Mike, you may have some update on what's going on?

MR. KING: Yes. No update yet, but I also learned with the Chairman this morning, as well, so thanks for bringing the issue up. I'm not sure to what extent we anticipated the impact to, you know, having to bring folks through the building or not. I suspect this may be something we just didn't think all the way through, but it's a tremendous point of, for these changes, we got to really be probably do a better job of pre-communicating in advance so folks can plan ahead a little bit.

So we'll work to do that. And I see Eleni is reaching out here.

MS. JERNELL: We actually had a couple of network announcements that have been going out, but we have been working really hard. And I take what you said to heart in terms of our communications. Sometimes, these are very complicated issues to communicate, so we've been trying very hard to review these and make sure that we can get the messages across. So I commit that we will continue to do that as much as we can.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: And I do hate to be kind of vague here, but I was told before we got to the meeting today that there is something in the works, that this is being -- they have a plan they're looking at, so stay tuned on that.

MS. JERNELL: Yes. We have been working with CFO, and we're also working with the Federal Protective Service to try to reinstitute as much service as we can. It just takes time to undo changes

that we had to put in place.

MS. GLENN: Thank you. So quick time check, we're at 11:48. The question-and-answer period is supposed to end at 11:50, so I'm going to do the call for the last question. And I'm going to invite anyone that we were not able to get to today to take the Commission up on their offer. They mentioned a couple times about the open door. Mike has also mentioned or maybe the chairman mentioned about Ask EDO.

So we have opportunities to continue the conversation beyond today. And, again, I want to thank everyone for your patience and your passion with your questions. And with that, we'll hand it over to the last question in the room.

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Patricia, just because we have two people standing up, can we just try and do both of those folks?

MS. GLENN: I love it when they give us that ability. Awesome. So you just heard it. We're going to take the last two questions in the room and thank you for that opportunity.

MS. LAMB: This is great. Hi. Taylor Lamb. I think most of you know me actually. I make myself known. In an unusual state, I am a little nervous, so pardon me, but I wanted to help round out the meeting with some mission-related, a mission-related question. Specifically with the Executive Order 14300, tons of mission-critical work, and a lot of extracurriculars for the staff trying to support other organizations. And then there's also briefings left and right, and there seems to be still a little bit of micromanagement. Maybe that's an understatement.

I want to know how the Commission intends on supporting

the staff to be able to accomplish all of this, especially with declining resources. Some of us are definitely a little burnt out, and maybe that's, you know, particularly my fault for signing up for too much. But, yes, how does the Commission plan to support and maybe expound upon your previous answers? Thank you.

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MARZANO: I think, you know, one of the things that we did in this effort is to look at, you know, what is the priority right now? And we're going to have to make some decisions, and that's not a set-in-stone kind of thing. I think this, throughout this process, we're going to have to really triage exactly what is the most mission-critical. But I'll go back to what I said earlier is that we owe you responses in a more timely manner, so we're reflecting the efforts and time in which you're taking in our decision-making and our process.

So I think, again, I think the thing I want to say is that we owe you better decisions, quicker decisions. And, you know, I'm going to take the opportunity to call on my staff for being so effective and, you know, so important in this moment, as we move forward. So that communication, et cetera, is how I think that we can help manage this.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Yes. Taylor, I know you'll work, and you'll overwork, and then you go home and do Farm to Taylor, too, so I get it, I understand. But don't burn yourself out. Seriously, the agency cannot, we can't get the mission done if you feel like you're being overworked on things. You need to speak up because we are trying to find ways to help balance that out. And Mike's doing a good job and his team to



keep us abreast of the changes that are going because 14300 is massive. It is massive, and we're on a timetable to meet the deadlines that we're supposed to meet.

So, again, to Commissioner Marzano's point, we've got to talk to each other and we need to know what's going on with you in your area. And if we can address and help, we're going to do something to do that. That's who we are and what we do, right, Mike?

COMMISSIONER CROWELL: Just so there's no mystery, I agree with both of my colleagues, and this is obviously one forum for sorting these things out. But we can't rely on a once-a-year forum for doing this. There needs to be other opportunities built in, and ad hoc opportunities, as well. There's nothing worse than being up on the 18th floor and trying to make a decision in a vacuum. Opportunities like this help immensely for making key decisions, particularly budget ones. So thank you for that.

MS. GLENN: Thank you for the question and the responses. With that, we'll go to our last question in the room.

MS. TORRES: Paulette Torres. Thank you for providing this forum to the staff. This question has been addressed already by EDO under their EDO, Ask EDO platform, but I will be interested in knowing the Commission perspective.

The DPR introduced in January proves to be successful. Does the Commission plan to offer a second round of DPR and VERAS tied to the fiscal year '26 budget in the upcoming agency reorganization? Thank you.

MS. GLENN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Yes. So this is all tied to the reorg. You know, we have to make that decision first to see how the agency is going to be put together. And then you've got to, you know, from a high level, and then staff is going to have a couple of months or so to kind of put bodies into that to kind of see where we're going to position our people to go where the work is at.

There are no plans right now to do any kind of involuntary reduction in force at all, and we've stood by that from the beginning. And, you know, but we have to see what comes out of the reorg now to see just how people are going to sit.

Look, we're not done losing people. I mean, I hate that we're losing people, but we're going to lose more because of the dynamics out there right now. You've got companies right here in Gaithersburg offering 500 jobs, you know, that are attractive to some of our people, who I can't blame them. You know, I mean, they're making more money. They're doing, you know, they can make those decisions.

What we have to do through the reorg is get through -- I used, I think, this in the hearing the other day. To me, it's kind of like when I went through cancer, okay, when I was told I had colon cancer. I had to make a lot of decisions like that, a lot of them. But the whole purpose of that was so that I could go through what I had to go through and come out on the other side. We're going through that right now, and we're going to go through that for a period longer. But thanks to how the reorg is going to work, we're going to come out pretty much whole. It kind of seems that way. And if there is a delta that we need to hire, we've got the ability to do

that, as well. It was given to us in the Executive Order. We have the power through the ADVANCE Act. We've got the tools in the toolbox to handle that.

So it's a little premature for us to kind of look at what our final FTE is going to be or anything like that, but I can tell you there is no, there is no, no, desire to look at an involuntary reduction in force.

MS. GLENN: All right. So with that, we are going to conclude Q&A. Before I hand it over to Chairman Wright for his closing remarks, please just give yourselves a hand for your questions today. Also, thanks to all of the pre-submitted questions and all of the votes that came in. Thank you for the grace and space to facilitate and abide by the one minute.

And I'm going to turn it over to Chairman Wright for closing remarks.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT: Thank you, Patricia. And thank you so much for how you handled the meeting. You're really good at it. Ross, thank you, as well, for the questions. To the staff, thank you for your honest and transparent and forthright answers.

Thank you so much to you in the room and online for the questions that you submitted and the questions that you asked us. We've done our best, as Commissioners up here, to answer them as openly and honestly as we can with the information that we have right now.

I want to thank my two colleagues here who we work very closely together. We're going to continue to do that and thank them for their answers and for their willingness to actually do this job, you know. Thank

you so much.

And with that, I'm going to close the meeting.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record  
at 11:57 a.m.)