

Workers' Compensation Full Board Meeting Minutes.

Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2026
Location: 328 State Street, Schenectady, NY
Room 324
Webcast Live

Time: 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Freida D. Foster, Chair
Renee L. Delgado, Esq., Vice Chair
Robert Bergin
Peter De Jesús, Jr.
Martin M. Dilan
Steven A. Crain, Esq.
Clarissa M. Rodriguez, Esq. (Absent)
Pamela Caggianelli
Maria Matos
Gloribelle Perez, Esq.
Gina Sillitti
Samuel G. Williams
Mark Higgins (Appeared remotely per Public Officers Law §
103-a[2][c])

SECRETARY TO THE BOARD

Laura Inglis

DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL

Keith Longden, Esq.

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY

Heather Justice, Esq.

GUEST SPEAKER

Joseph Cavalcante, WCB, Ombudsman/Advocate for Injured
Workers

1 FREIDA FOSTER: Good morning and welcome,
2 everyone. Thank you for joining us. I am
3 Freida Foster, Chair of the New York State Workers'
4 Compensation Board. Today's Full Board meeting is
5 being webcast live for members of the public. It is
6 also facilitated by an American Sign Language
7 interpreter. Thank you for joining us.

8 I now have the honor of calling the 1,055th
9 meeting of the Full Board to order. Madam Secretary,
10 roll call, please.

11 LAURA INGLIS: Vice Chair Delgado.

12 RENEE DELGADO: Here.

13 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Higgins.

14 FREIDA FOSTER: We see him. Okay.

15 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Higgins is --

16 FREIDA FOSTER: We see him.

17 LAURA INGLIS: -- remote. Board Member
18 Williams.

19 SAMUEL WILLIAMS: Here.

20 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Crain.

21 STEVEN CRAIN: Here.

22 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Caggianelli.

23 PAMELA CAGGIANELLI: Here.

24 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Dilan.

1 MARTIN DILAN: Present.

2 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Perez.

3 GLORIBELLE PEREZ: Here.

4 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Bergin.

5 ROBERT BERGIN: Here.

6 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member De Jesús.

7 PETER DE JESÚS: Here.

8 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Matos.

9 MARIA MATOS: Here.

10 LAURA INGLIS: Board Member Sillitti.

11 GINA SILLITTI: Here.

12 LAURA INGLIS: Madam Chair, Board Member

13 Higgins is joining us remotely and Board Member

14 Rodriguez has requested to be absent today.

15 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. Thank

16 you very much. May I have a motion to approve the

17 absence of Board Member Rodriguez?

18 SAMUEL WILLIAMS: So moved.

19 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you. May I have a

20 second?

21 MARIA MATOS: So moved.

22 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you so much.

23 Seconded. Okay, Thank you. Is there any opposition?

24 Hearing none, all in favor?

1 ALL: Aye.

2 FREIDA FOSTER: Any opposed? I'm also a
3 yes. That motion is passed. Agenda Item 1. You've
4 all received a copy of the May 19th, 2026 meeting
5 minutes to review. Are there any questions or need
6 for discussion? All right. May I have a motion to
7 approve?

8 PAMELA CAGGIANELLI: Madam Chair, this is
9 Board Member Caggianelli, and I make a motion to
10 approve the Board meeting minutes.

11 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you. May I have a
12 second?

13 MARIA MATOS: Madam Chair, Board Member
14 Matos. I second.

15 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you. Is there any
16 opposition? Hearing none, all in favor?

17 ALL: Aye.

18 FREIDA FOSTER: Any opposed? I'm also a
19 yes. That motion is passed. Agenda Item 2. Deputy
20 General Counsel Keith Longden, good morning. You may
21 now present the Office of General Counsel's
22 Departmental Report for May.

23 KEITH LONGDEN: Thank you very much, Madam
24 Chair, Madam Vice Chair, Members of the Board. In

1 Item 2 on your agenda is a statistical analysis for
2 the month of May 2026 of the three divisions of the
3 Office of General Counsel responsible for deciding
4 cases.

5 During that month the Adjudication Division held
6 16,385 hearings, resolved 10,821 cases at hearing,
7 issued 238 Reserve Decisions, held 1,351 Pre-Hearing
8 Conferences and finalized 2,072 Section 32 Waiver
9 Agreements. Of those, 1,511 were resolved at a
10 hearing and 561 were resolved by desk decision.

11 The Administrative Review Division received 882
12 applications for review, processed 888 applications
13 for an end-of-month inventory of 7,406 cases. And
14 finally, the Legal Affairs Division received 96
15 applications for Full Board Review, processed 81
16 applications for an end-of-month inventory of 257
17 cases. And that concludes my report. Thank you.

18 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. Are
19 there any questions or need for discussion? Hearing
20 none, may I have a motion to accept the Office of
21 General Counsel's Departmental Report?

22 PETER DE JESÚS: Madam Chair, Board Member
23 De Jesús. I make that motion.

24 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you. May I have a

1 second?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Madam Chair --

3 GLORIBELLE PEREZ: I second that motion.
4 Board Member Perez.

5 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you. Is there any
6 opposition? Hearing none, all in favor?

7 ALL: Aye.

8 FREIDA FOSTER: Any opposed? I'm also a
9 yes. That motion is passed. Agenda Item 3.
10 Associate Attorney Heather Justice will now present
11 Licensing Applications. Good morning.

12 HEATHER JUSTICE: Good morning, Madam Chair,
13 Madam Vice Chair, Board Members and colleagues. You
14 have before you the recommendations from the Assigned
15 Board Panel regarding the Licensing Applications
16 listed in Part 3 of today's agenda.

17 All of the following applications are for
18 three-year renewals. Section 50(3-b), Oryx Insurance
19 Brokerage, Inc., Qualifying Officer Dean LaClair;
20 St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES, also Qualifying Officer
21 Dean LaClair; Vision Risk Management Services,
22 Qualifying Officer Todd Jones. Under Section 50(3-d),
23 Related Risk An Alera Insurance Agency, LLC, QO
24 Todd Jones; and Zenith Insurance Company, QO

1 Daniel Falge. I present the recommendations to the
2 Board for your review.

3 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. Are
4 there any questions or need for discussion? Hearing
5 none, may I have a motion to accept the
6 recommendations of the Panel?

7 SAMUEL WILLIAMS: Madam Chair, Board Member
8 (inaudible), I move to accept.

9 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. May I
10 have a second?

11 STEVEN CRAIN: Second, Board Member Crain.

12 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. Is
13 there any opposition? Hearing none, all in favor?

14 ALL: Aye.

15 FREIDA FOSTER: Any opposed? I am also a
16 yes. That motion is passed. Agenda Item 4.
17 Keith Longden will now present the recommendations
18 concerning decisions from the Appellate Decision --
19 Division.

20 KEITH LONGDEN: Thank you, Madam Chair,
21 Madam Vice Chair, members of the Board. In Items 4A
22 through 4G on your agenda are seven decisions of the
23 Appellate Division, Third Department. It's the
24 recommendation of the Office of General Counsel that

1 all seven decisions be adopted as the decision of the
2 Board. Thank you.

3 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. May I
4 have a motion to accept the recommendations
5 (inaudible)?

6 PAMELA CAGGIANELLI: Board Member -- Madam
7 Chair, this is Pam Caggianelli and I move that we --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Accept the
9 recommendations --

10 PAMELA CAGGIANELLI: -- make -- confirm the
11 recommendations of the (inaudible).

12 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. May I
13 have a second?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Madam Chair, Board --
15 (Parties speaking simultaneously.)

16 MARTIN DILAN: Board Member Dilan, and I
17 second.

18 FREIDA FOSTER: All right. Is there any
19 opposition? Hearing none, all in favor?

20 ALL: Aye.

21 FREIDA FOSTER: Any opposed? I am also a
22 yes. That motion is passed. Agenda Item 5. There
23 are no mandatory cases to consider so we'll go move on
24 to Agenda Item 6 where I turn this portion over to

1 Vice Chair Delgado. Good morning.

2 RENEEL DELGADO: Good morning. Thank you,
3 Madam Chair. For the cases listed in Item 6 on your
4 agenda, it has been -- been recommended that Full
5 Board Review be granted. Those cases are 6A,
6 G3227097, Matter of SC Construction Group, LLC; 6B,
7 G3678647, Matter of Bronx Psychiatric Center; 6C,
8 G1309763, Matter of Bonady Garden Apartments; 6D,
9 G3452654, Matter of Zhong Wang Construction. I move
10 to refer the cases back to respective Panels for
11 further consideration.

12 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you, Madam Vice Chair.
13 Is there a second?

14 SAMUEL WILLIAMS: Board Member Williams. I
15 second that motion.

16 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you very much. Does
17 anyone need to be recused from these -- any of these
18 cases? Seeing none, all those in favor?

19 ALL: Aye.

20 FREIDA FOSTER: Any opposed? I am also a
21 yes. That motion is passed. Is there other business
22 to consider?

23 All right. Agenda Item 8. We have a guest
24 speaker this morning. Joseph Cavalcante, who is our

1 ombudsman and advocate for injured workers. He works
2 to preserve the health and sanctity of the New York
3 Workers' Compensation system.

4 Prior to this position, he was a Board
5 spokesperson interacting with all types of media and
6 journalists in some prominent situations. He has
7 written many of our agency publications and many
8 statements for executives and governors. He also
9 created and managed several national awareness and
10 media campaigns to register responders for their World
11 Trade Center service.

12 Mr. Cavalcante's primary skills are as a writer
13 and a teacher. In addition to his writing for
14 government and corporations, his work has appeared in
15 dozens of outlets, including mainstream and trade
16 publications and technical, educational and academic
17 sources.

18 Highlights of his professional experience include
19 teaching as a college instructor and positions in
20 health insurance, the software industry and
21 (inaudible). For five years he has also freelanced,
22 which is what we now call an independent contractor.
23 He holds an MA in literature and litary -- litary --
24 literary theory, sorry, from the State University of

1 New York at Albany. And we are very happy you are
2 here, Mr. Cavalcante.

3 JOSEPH CAVALCANTE: Why thank you, Chair
4 Foster. It's a pleasure. And so good morning. Good
5 morning, Vice Chair, and my friends on the Board and
6 colleagues and everyone out there in web world. I'm
7 going to follow in the footsteps of my brother
8 advocate and provide to you an analysis of the
9 performance and activities of the Office of the
10 Advocate for Injured Workers over the course of fiscal
11 year '25/'26 or April '25 to March '26. Which one do
12 I hit? Hey.

13 LAURA INGLIS: Oh, you got it. Okay.

14 JOSEPH CAVALCANTE: You would think I've
15 only done this. Okay. So if you'd like to know what
16 the general responsibilities of the office are, well,
17 we can go around this beautiful square. On top left,
18 we help workers with the more difficult and complex
19 claims.

20 Now, when we help the workers, I'd just like to
21 make clear from the start, yes, the office is named
22 advocate, but we don't advocate in the same way that
23 say an attorney does. Because this system is so
24 legal-centric, I have to make that clear. We don't go

1 to hearings, we don't argue, we don't do legal work,
2 nor do we have to to do our job. Because what we
3 focus on are instead what I like to call performance
4 issues. The parties in the system sometimes have a
5 performance issue and then we can help move things
6 along.

7 We are involved in fatality claims. We're
8 involved at the start of fatality claims. Because if
9 a worker should die on the job, it's going to make the
10 news. Our friends in the Public Info Office
11 frequently send us news clips saying, this worker died
12 today, you know, and it's being reported by Channel 2.
13 So what we do is we work with our colleagues in
14 enforcement, the investigators, they will get us the
15 surviving family information and we'll send out a
16 fatality packet. So we do that promptly. We actually
17 help the workers file the claim based on that action.
18 So we're involved before there's a claim.

19 And, also, I am the agency liaison to the World
20 Trade Center community. I will speak more about that
21 probably later, but -- no, I'm going to say it now.
22 It's 25 years. These people still need our help.
23 It's 25 years, and not a week goes by that I don't
24 speak to someone who was there, and I do mean that

1 literally. Every week I speak to someone who was
2 either there or was who impacted in the aftermath.
3 They still need our help and there's a deadline coming
4 up to file the World -- WTC-12 form. Okay. That's --
5 9/11/26 is that deadline. Just letting everyone know.
6 This is what I do.

7 Okay. The next box. Yes, I tend to represent
8 the Chair at events and also -- and the agency as
9 well. I have some cool photos of that. But another
10 thing you should be aware of is workers and other
11 parties, but mostly workers, they will write in to the
12 Chair for help with their claim. I get it. I respond
13 to it because, well, if we give the Chair an e-mail
14 from someone and a case number and their name, she's
15 now conflicted out of any appeals, so I get it.
16 However, I can say with -- with genuineness,
17 100 percent of the time the Chair does get an
18 explanation or a summary of an issue, okay, just not
19 the particular one.

20 So we also handle executive correspondence. Some
21 of our Board members might remember being in the
22 legislature and contacting the Board on behalf of a
23 constituent. We get that. If you write to the
24 Governor about Comp and you're a worker, I'm going to

1 be -- my office will be replying. We also handle
2 fraud complaints that I'll explain and ad hoc duties.
3 My office and me personally, weird unusual things just
4 find me. Those are the ad hoc duties. Frequently,
5 like, it's a one-off. It's what are we going to do
6 with this? Well, Joe will figure it out, and he does.

7 In the bottom, this is actually an ombudsman's
8 office, and that's what the intro meant when I talked
9 about protecting the health of the system. So for the
10 first time ever I'm going to read to you the law if
11 you don't mind because we don't do law except
12 Section 13-H, for anyone following along; the
13 ombudsman shall report directly to the Chair. That is
14 a feature of an ombudsman's office. If the person
15 who's watching the system can't report to some vice
16 president somewhere, you have to report to the top
17 and -- so there's no conflict.

18 The ombudsman shall act as an advocate for
19 injured workers, so that's where that comes from, by
20 accepting complaints concerning matters related to
21 Workers' Compensation, investigating them and
22 attempting to resolve them. That's an ombudsman
23 feature. That's something that I do. And at the end,
24 I bet you're interested now, I'll show you some of the

1 complaints or actually a report on the totals.

2 And the last thing in the far corner, educating
3 the public on Workers' Comp. And that's how I spend a
4 good bit of my time. That's how Anthony spends a good
5 bit of his time. It's important.

6 All right. Okay. So these are the primary
7 duties of the office. That's an errant thumb. I just
8 clicked something. Okay. So we have the customer
9 service function. I'm going to be telling you about
10 the calls and the e-mails we get. We get a lot. We
11 do the outreach. We make connections at these
12 outreach events that are valuable. I meet people who
13 then I get their card, and then two months later I'm
14 calling them and saying, can you please help me.
15 That's an important function. That's something that
16 happens. And then finally, the ombudsman function
17 that I mentioned before. Hey, sorry? About that.
18 All right. Let's see what else we do.

19 Who are we? We are seven different human beings
20 in this office, but we translate to 6.4 full-time
21 employees. FTE means full-time employee. That's
22 where that comes from. So you can see, for example,
23 in Watertown there are two of us. One of us retired
24 and came back, and we were thrilled to have her back

1 because she handles some important stuff. So that's
2 the point 4. She does two days a week.

3 And then we have someone in Syracuse, two of us
4 in Schenectady, myself and Michelle, who you see with
5 me every month. She's over there. She's our office
6 manager. Islandia, we have someone in Islandia. I
7 love that name. And then we have someone in Brooklyn
8 named Alba. Alba speaks Spanish, so Alba handles all
9 the Spanish contacts and it is such a great thing.
10 She and I did an event last month, last week, sorry,
11 when the Knicks did that big thing. We did something
12 last week that I will report to you on next year.

13 All right. So the work we did, well, the top
14 level. Our office had a minimum of 30,275 contacts
15 with the public in that fiscal year. I put all the
16 totals up here. You can see that incoming calls, we
17 had 11,000 incoming calls handled by those 6.4 people,
18 and really 4.4 are typically handling the calls.
19 Michelle is the backup. She will go on. She didn't
20 have to go on much because our staffing was great over
21 the last year. I only had to go on once in the last
22 year to take calls on the -- on the Tuesday backup. I
23 went on a day after a holiday when there were a couple
24 calls waiting. So I said, what -- what the heck, let

1 me just spend the afternoon taking calls.

2 We make outgoing calls. I'll talk about that.
3 We did 15,000 e-mails in our office mailbox. I'll
4 talk about that. And then I have the totals of the
5 exec corr, the fatalities, those contacts we made, and
6 the -- the fraud referrals that we addressed.

7 Okay. This is a nice colorful pie chart,
8 because, A, I love nice colorful pie charts. Thank
9 you, Anthony. And, two, this shows the volume of our
10 inquiries. This is not time. So you can see at the
11 bottom, the e-mail is half of all of our inquiries.
12 That's all by volume. But in the right corner, the
13 incoming calls, they are by far the most time, the
14 most effort, everything else, because a phone call's
15 going to be longer than an e-mail.

16 Okay. So let's now show you what -- by month or
17 by year, you know, break it down a little bit for you.
18 What are we doing? Okay. We're taking an average of
19 937 calls a month into the office. Now, we broke it
20 down by month so you can see the fluctuations. Thank
21 you to the Public Info Office for helping me make this
22 look all -- if it looks spiffy, it's -- it's their
23 doing.

24 But I would like to call out to you, you see

1 October? That was almost the high -- the high mark,
2 1,045. Okay. So we had 1,045 calls in October. I
3 joined the office in October of 2018. We had a
4 retirement a few months ago, so now I'm the longest
5 tenured member of the office. October 2018, you know
6 how many calls we took then? We took 890 in that
7 month. So, okay, it's less than 1,045, so we're up.
8 You see December, 885? In December of 2018 we took
9 551 calls. This year we took 885. So, yeah, our
10 volume is up. Our volume began exploding during the
11 pandemic and then has continued. So this is giving us
12 an average of 937 a month. We are able to meet it
13 because we have enough staff.

14 Outgoing calls. This is now us, the reps,
15 everybody except me, making outgoing calls to try and
16 move a claim forward. So you can see we're doing an
17 average of 209 a month. So we have the incoming, but
18 now you've called us and your bill is not getting paid
19 and you're in collections. And so now we're calling
20 the collection agency and saying, take this out of
21 collections, it's Comp, you're not allowed to do this.
22 And then they take it out. Okay. Things like that.
23 We're calling insurance companies saying, why aren't
24 you paying this? You're supposed to be paying. Okay.

1 So we do that 209 times a month on average. It's
2 nothing terribly remarkable except March was our
3 biggest volume. You'll see that across.

4 Incoming e-mails. Okay. This is one I'm
5 personally interested in because Michelle and I handle
6 the e-mails. I stepped back a little so Michelle's
7 doing more of them. Thank you, Michelle. But look at
8 the e-mail volume. We're doing 1,315 a month.
9 This -- that's incoming that we have to read and we
10 have to figure out do they need anything. Sometimes
11 they don't. Sometimes we're being copied. Attorneys
12 have figured out if they -- no. I'm not going to tell
13 you that. I know I'm (inaudible) that for. But we
14 get copied sometimes. Okay.

15 But then people just ask us for stuff too. So
16 1,315 is our average right now. Do you know what it
17 was? No, you don't, but I'll tell you. In October of
18 2018, 150. No, I'm not kidding, 150. You know what
19 it was in December of 2018 when we closed 1,555?
20 December, 99. I remember those days.

21 So the e-mail volume totally exploded. This
22 happened in the pandemic. This happened in the
23 pandemic when almost every office at the agency was
24 closed to the phones except ours. We were open

1 because we could take calls, so we did. So people
2 started shifting to e-mail. And then this is the
3 pandemic, it's building. Then I start doing these
4 webinars, I'll talk about, where I start telling
5 people, do you have a problem? Why don't you contact
6 us? They took me seriously.

7 And then I think that also we have some success.
8 People were writing and we started helping, so they
9 wrote again. And we have about ten law firms that
10 just contact us all day, every day. I'm not
11 begrudging it. I'm just letting you know that the
12 volume does build on itself because it's a public
13 campaign.

14 Okay. October, what happened in October? I
15 can't tell you what happened in October. It's an
16 anomaly. I double checked that number when I filed
17 it. I double checked it last week. It was just an
18 anomaly.

19 Executive corr. Okay. So electeds are
20 contacting us saying, would you please help this
21 constituent? If you write to the Governor, we're
22 getting it. Okay. So we're doing about 20 of these a
23 month on average. That's one a workday. These are a
24 priority.

1 The fatality contacts. This is within normal
2 bounds, excluding a pandemic or 9/11. This is
3 representative of a typical year. That's not 317
4 individual people who perished. Those are the
5 contacts because we do do second contacts. If we send
6 out a packet, we don't get a response in 60 days,
7 you're getting another one.

8 If a complaint is made to the Board Inspector
9 General and it's not prosecutable, they're not
10 referring it somewhere, if they're sending it to the
11 agency checkout, it goes to General Counsel and it
12 comes to us. Okay. So then we check it out. We have
13 to do something with it. We read it, we look at it.
14 It's almost always a worker complaining about not
15 getting paid. That is what almost all of these, not
16 all, almost all of them are. So what we have to do is
17 check it out and see is something wrong here or is
18 this just how the system functions. We close about 15
19 on average per month. We are current with this.
20 Okay. We don't have a backlog with those.

21 Formal complaints and assistance. Okay. So I
22 mentioned the ombudsman accepting complaints and so
23 forth. Here is a summary of the complaints I filed as
24 ombudsman. And a lot of them were filed with someone

1 in this room who I can't say enough good -- good
2 things about. Okay. Some stuff works.

3 Regarding payor behavior. Yeah, I did file
4 six -- six complaints. I wrote it, and I filed it
5 with Licensing if it was about a TPA or General
6 Counsel otherwise. And it's usually a third-party
7 administrator. They're usually not following the
8 rules. 21-a is the most common reason; 21-a you pay
9 without prejudice. Everyone -- that used to be much
10 more of a problem. We made an announcement, problems
11 have steadily diminished. The payors kind of get it.
12 It's -- it's not so typical these days to have a
13 problem. But, like, if we -- if we bring it to your
14 attention and you're an adjustor, and then we bring it
15 again and then you just don't want to follow the rule
16 that was announced, you're going to get a complaint.

17 I wrote nine complaints regarding IME and
18 provider behavior. Yes, IMEs are still a thing. And
19 the most common complaint was the fabrication of
20 results. Usually -- not -- I can't say usually. We
21 often get a video. We often get a video that does not
22 show any readings or measurements taken, and then a
23 report that says three measurements were taken. So
24 that's going to go to the Professional Conduct

1 Committee. And then, you know, I'm out of it at that
2 point. But they take it over and they investigate it.

3 And then finally, the bottom one. This is an
4 interesting one. I'm sure you don't know that we do
5 this, but I do work with my friends in General Counsel
6 on instances when payors miss two hearings. Anyone
7 can miss one hearing, okay. Sorry. That happens. If
8 a payor misses two hearings, probably they don't know
9 about the claim.

10 So we do have this process in place where the
11 judge tells the senior judge who tells General
12 Counsel, particular people in -- in the office, some
13 of whom are here, and me. And so General Counsel
14 will -- will summarize everything and write this great
15 letter illustrating here's what happened, here are the
16 penalties you're sitting with right now, here's the
17 next hearing date. And then I take that and I make an
18 actual verbal contact usually or an e-mail contact
19 with, like, a director or a vice president at the
20 payor whose name I've gotten because we've done this
21 for so many years now; 100 percent of the time they're
22 at the next hearing. And they're always happy I'm
23 contacting because the penalties are going to stop.
24 Because now they've got to tell somebody, get to that

1 hearing. So we -- we did that 40 times over that
2 fiscal year. That is something we do that actually
3 works. And it's kind of fun to get that success.

4 Public education. Okay. This is the other side.
5 What we do, I do these two monthly webinars with
6 the -- the Public Info Office. The person who assists
7 me always gets promoted. Did you ever notice that?
8 It's true. So we do the 101, which is an intro, and
9 we had a thousand attendees last year. And then we
10 also do a 202 now, a deeper dive, and that's more
11 detailed and longer. I sometimes lose my breath doing
12 that one.

13 And so just to show you, we do have this thing
14 where we reached at least 1,800 people last year. And
15 it's simple, it's quick, it's free and we get
16 statewide. Okay. Like, if you go somewhere, you
17 might get 50 people in a room but they tend to live in
18 that area. If you get 50 people statewide, you kind
19 of have a different impact. Okay. So this is going
20 to continue. We have -- we've done it since June of
21 2020.

22 Public education webinar by request. Did you
23 know that if you want a webinar for your group, I'll
24 make one for you? I will give it the course name of

1 Workers' Comp 333 because I have a folder that says
2 Workers' Comp 333, and there they all are and it helps
3 me differentiate.

4 I will make one specific to you and your group.
5 The secret is I -- I'm using a lot of stuff from two
6 different ones or some other ones, but I'll make you
7 your own slides. And plenty of people in the last
8 year asked for this. I do government agencies all the
9 time. I'm very close with the Department of Labor and
10 I train various bureaus there all the time and unions
11 and advocacy, Trade Center responders.

12 Interestingly, I did one for a mental health
13 practice, a national mental health practice, that
14 bought a big New York State mental health practice.
15 Okay. So now they come and they say, okay, we don't
16 need the MDO stuff, like how to bill and all that, but
17 we need to understand what the heck Comp is in
18 New York State. I can explain that.

19 And then this was one of my favorites. An
20 insurance company based in Arizona is getting into the
21 New York market. They were smart enough to put their
22 people on the initial webinar and then contacted me
23 and said, can you explain to our people what Comp is
24 in New York State? Sure I can. So that was awesome.

1 You know, I explained the rules and everything else.
2 That was fantastic. Explaining to a -- an insurance
3 company how to do Comp in New York State, that's one
4 of my favorite things. That's right up there with ice
5 cream.

6 Okay. So I do also go out in public. I -- I
7 gave you a couple of photos there. Some highlights.
8 Yes, definitely some -- some unions and worker groups
9 and 9/11 groups, absolutely. The New York Association
10 of Towns. That's that bottom right picture. I've
11 gone to their show in New York City over President's
12 Day weekend for the last 15 years. Okay. It's all
13 the towns in New York. It's a big deal. It's a great
14 place to meet the Governor, the attorney general, the
15 federal senators. They always speak on Tuesday
16 morning there.

17 So I did a session for them at their financial
18 conference in the spring in Saratoga about system
19 data. I essentially reported to them a lot of the
20 data that I reported to this Board in November of '24.
21 Some of you folks weren't here at that time. If you
22 want me to do it again and update it, just tell Freida
23 or me. So I did that for them. And then they said,
24 let's do something at the big conference on

1 President's Day.

2 So we made a CLE about the new mental health law,
3 the one that just passed. The fellow on the right
4 there is the executive director of -- the payor of the
5 Comp Alliance. That's Michael Kenneally. He's an
6 attorney. So he did all the legal stuff. All I had
7 to do was report system data that we had and explain
8 why the law was helpful, you know, because supervisors
9 in Upstate towns, they don't know about the MTA and
10 all that. Okay. So that was a great success. And
11 then I did a CLE for the Injured Workers' Bar as well
12 last September in Saratoga again. If you want -- if
13 you do something in Saratoga, I'm there. And so that
14 one was on system data. I reported system data.

15 I also represent the Board at different events.
16 Here's a -- a slice of some of the places I was able
17 to go. You see on the upper left in red. Anthony and
18 I met this really cool lady at the Governor's Mansion
19 for Italian American Heritage. Yes, I've met some --
20 some people who I definitely have worked with from
21 there.

22 I got to represent the Board at an event
23 commemorating the signing of the Fashion Worker
24 Protections Law. That's why all those models were

1 nice enough to stand with me. In all seriousness
2 though, I have to tell you, they told their stories at
3 the podium. I cannot believe we needed a law to
4 prevent what they were saying was happening to them.

5 On the right I'm standing with Joe Canovas at the
6 AFL-CIO. And did you know that the Attorney General
7 Letitia James has a great sense of humor, because she
8 photobombed us. She just jumped right in. And on the
9 bottom there, the Chair and Executive Director and I
10 went to an event commemorating scholarships for the
11 children of workers who were killed on the job. I'm
12 going to explain that in a second, because that was
13 really important for something that's coming.

14 I'm standing there next with John Feal, who is
15 the most successful advocate in New York today.
16 He's -- he and the people he works with are the reason
17 why World Trade Center responders are actually getting
18 benefits, like The Zadroga Act and the healthcare and
19 the Comp fund. He's the reason, with everybody he
20 works with also.

21 And then finally, did you know that a lot of
22 years I go with somebody from General Counsel to
23 Albany Law to recruit interns. I do. I'm standing
24 with Lisa Michelle, who's awesome, and somebody from

1 Albany Law.

2 Okay. I have some other responsibilities. I'm
3 on the Albany Occupational Health Clinic Advisory
4 Board. Gover -- I was going to say Governor Tacci.
5 Dr. Tacci and I had a lot to do because that place
6 closed and reopened because the sponsorship was lost.
7 I'm on the Governor's Child Labor Task Force. I'm on
8 a national ombud subcommittee with Anthony.

9 Did you know there are ombuds all across this --
10 the country? There are. And I ask them for help,
11 they ask me for help. It's very ---it's a very good
12 relationship. And I also train Board staff internally
13 on our systems. I think I trained with a lot of --
14 remember the class of, what are we in, guys, '25?
15 Hang on. Yeah.

16 And finally, what am I going to do? What are
17 we going to do? Well, we're going to continue the
18 Foster Doctrine. Every Chair has -- has her own
19 specialties, her own skills. Our present Chair has
20 this -- has this great skill where she can bring
21 agencies together and get them to work together to
22 achieve something. That's the Foster Doctrine. She
23 doesn't know about this, but -- well, she knows what
24 she does.

1 So she goes to one of the gubernatorial meetings
2 with the commissioners and she meets Dr. John King,
3 the chancellor of the SUNY system, and they say, how
4 can we work together? Guess what? We figured it out.
5 Did you know that last July the Governor launched this
6 thing that says, if you want to go to college for free
7 in the great State of New York and you don't have an
8 associate's degree, you can. And the requirements are
9 you don't have an associate's, you live in New York
10 State and you're between 25 and 55.

11 So all the SUNYs and the CUNYs, they have these
12 different programs that you can take for free. They
13 tend to be vocationally focused, like information
14 technology, construction management. Who has a bigger
15 pool of potential students who need college possibly
16 than we do? We talked in October. By January we had
17 created the path. It was that quick and easy with
18 minimal investment from us. We are getting workers
19 who could fit this profile over to SUNY and CUNY.
20 They take the workers by the hand and enroll them.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So great.

22 JOSEPH CAVALCANTE: It is. I'm really proud
23 of this one. I'm -- our office is going to continue
24 handling the volume of inquiries if they keep going

1 up. If you want a contribution to Board policy or
2 understanding the systems, I'm right here.

3 And then finally, the last thing I'd like to tell
4 you. You've been waiting for me to talk about AI,
5 haven't you? Okay. So we get all these e-mails. The
6 workers have figured out that they can use a large
7 language model, so-called artificial intelligence, to
8 write their e-mail to us. We get at least one a day
9 that -- that fits that criteria and you can see it.
10 I -- I just know them.

11 On the one hand, Americans are not terribly
12 literate. I hate to say it, but it's true. However,
13 these e-mails are the best ones we get. The spelling
14 is correct, the syntax is correct, the rhetoric is
15 correct. I get numbered lists, I get bulleted lists.
16 I understand everything crystal clear.

17 On the other hand, sometimes they make legal
18 arguments, which we don't need because we don't do
19 legal. And sometimes they quote laws that don't even
20 pertain to our system. And sometimes they -- they
21 look at a FROI and the SROI and they make this
22 magnificent legal argument that I can tell, well, no,
23 that's not what that's -- anyway. So we are getting
24 these AI letters. They're fine. If I had to choose

1 between them and -- and the wall of text, I'd rather
2 have the AI letter. So there is that too.

3 There's my contact info if anyone needs it.
4 Thank you, everyone, for listening and participating.

5 FREIDA FOSTER: (Inaudible). May I have a
6 motion to adjourn?

7 MARIA MATOS: Board Member Matos. I move to
8 adjourn.

9 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you. May I have a
10 second?

11 PAMELA CAGGIANELLI: Board Member
12 Caggianelli, and I second it.

13 FREIDA FOSTER: Thank you. Any opposition?
14 Hearing none, all in favor?

15 ALL: Aye.

16 FREIDA FOSTER: Any opposed? Motion passed.
17 Thank you very much.

18 WHEREUPON, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.

19
20
21
22
23
24