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PRESENT

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PROCEEDINGS

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, good morning. And I want to thank everyone this morning for being here, and to also say Happy New Year.

TREASURER KOPP: Happy New Year to you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Thank you. Thank you. Well, welcome to the very first Board of Public Works meeting of 2021. I hope that my colleagues, Treasurer Kopp and Comptroller Franchot, as well as the Board of Public Works staff, and everyone viewing this virtually, had a wonderful New Year and are doing well this morning.

I know that everyone is happy that 2020 is over. It was a challenging year to say the least. But as we all know, just because the calendar has flipped over doesn't mean that the challenges of the pandemic and COVID are over. And as we, you know, continue to roll in to 2021, there is some hope out there, and I'd say a lot of hope out there.

Last month, a little more than three weeks ago, the State started the distribution of vaccines to our frontline hospital workers, to nursing home residents, and we've started vaccinating first responders done at the local level. That is expanding and continues, you know, to increase daily. As the Governor announced yesterday regarding the vaccine distribution, over 98 percent of the State's vaccine

allocation has been distributed to every hospital, nursing home -- and let me just remind, the nursing homes are being handled by a contract with CVS and Walgreen's, a federal contract -- and to our local health departments, all 24 jurisdictions. And now, you know, we have reached the point that we are now, and let me just double check, over 85,991 individuals have been vaccinated as of yesterday, with 9,075 individuals in that priority 1A group, Phase 1 group, have been vaccinated.

Now there is a lot more work to be done for all of us. And we're thankful that there is a light at the end of the tunnel regarding the health and our economic recovery. It is critical that our recovery in the health of Maryland individuals, but also in the economy, and the economy of our small businesses and our small business community. Now small businesses undoubtedly will be leading the way of our economic recovery and we are doing what we can to support them by providing relief during these times of challenge. And one of the ways that we can support our small businesses, from the State that is, is through our State procurement system and our Small Business Reserve Program.

I know my colleagues on the Board have heard me state and point out where agencies, including the University System, have utilized the Small Business Reserve Program, and I have, you know, cheered them on and encouraged other agencies to utilize it to the fullest extent possible. And just to remind people,

if you're not familiar with the program, the State has the ability to reserve selected procurements for small business competition. Small businesses who are registered with the program can compete against one another to be prime contractors. They can compete for these prime contracting opportunities.

So this morning, Governor Hogan signed an executive order to enhance the Small Business Reserve Program. The order requires all executive branch procurement units under his authority to reserve all of their procurements that range between \$50,000 and \$500,000 for the Small Business Reserve Program. In other words, contracting opportunities valued at between \$50,000 and \$500,000 will be set aside for small business competition. This order incorporates existing Small Business Reserve Program exemptions, such as human services procurements and the small procurements, small procurements which typically go to small businesses anyway. And we are tasking both the Office of State Procurement and the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women-Owned Businesses to implement guidelines and policies that will ensure the efficient implementation of the program.

Now we are pointing out that while the ceiling is \$500,000 on the set aside, it is not a ceiling to the opportunities. And we are still strongly encouraging our procurement officers to consider higher dollar procurements for the Small Business Reserve Program.

So I'm especially hopeful that this offers potential to our small and minority business enterprises. As an SBR or Small Business Reserve firm, they can use this experience to enhance competition, to grow, and to give them the ability to compete for larger opportunities.

I'd like to thank Special Secretary Jimmy Rhee of the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women-Owned Business and his team, as well as the folks over at the Office of State Procurement, Department of Transportation Procurement, and all of the others who worked hard to make this enhancement possible on behalf of the small business owners and employees all across our State.

Now I just want to take a quick moment to switch gears. I also want to point out that today, January 6th, is the day that the results of the 2020 Presidential Election will be certified, and they will be certified today. I know that Governor Hogan has been vocal over the past several days about his feelings regarding a certain faction of my party attempting to reject the certification of the election results. And I'd like to echo the Governor's sentiments and say that I feel such efforts do attempt to undermine the legitimacy of our election process. And really, it's an affront and an insult to the democracy of our nation.

Now, I believe Americans have too much respect for the process and the institutions that have endured for over 250 years here, and not to mention that they have too much sense and intelligence to be hornswoggled by elementary

school displays of partisan whining. You know, this is the United States of America. It is not some sandbox playground where kindergarteners run to the teacher every time that they don't get their way in a particular game that is played. And you know, now I will say that you know, there were some that four years ago did not fully accept the 2016 election and they spouted some unproven conspiracy theories. However, they never used the type of dangerous rhetoric that we are currently hearing that is being bantered around, or even sought to overturn the results of the election by pressuring state officials. That just didn't happen.

So lastly, I want to say the important lesson from this episode is that the protections that were put in place in our constitutional republic actually worked. Every claim, legitimate and fanciful, were heard in court and were resolved. And many of those rulings against those claims were from federal judges that were either appointed by the President or former Republican Presidents.

So now I look forward to once again being able to vote for the candidate of our choosing and not simply just to vote against candidates. So with that said, I'm happy to turn it over to my counterparts for their introductory remarks. Madam Treasurer, if you'd like a few words?

TREASURER KOPP: Well said, Governor. I think I'll leave it at that.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Did you like hornswoggled?

TREASURER KOPP: I like hornswoggled. I could not agree more. I could not agree more.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Thank you. Mr. Comptroller?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I'm looking forward to Reverend Warnock coming up from Georgia, because he is a very impressive individual. And I couldn't agree with Lieutenant Governor Rutherford and Treasurer Kopp more. This whole situation in Washington has been very frustrating for the American people and for us in Maryland. And it's just unnecessary acrimony, bitterness, partisanship, gridlock. And people suffer and we need to hopefully chart a better course, which I think we are going to be on.

I'm very pleased, obviously, with the presence of the vaccines as far as the COVID emergency. This is not an issue that is going away. It is becoming worse as far as the public health situation. This is a very, very dangerous virus, and it is unfortunately mutating into more communicable forms. Yes, the vaccine is a light at the end of the tunnel. But I guess I really second the Governor if he's, or the Lieutenant Governor, if I'm right, that you are involving now the National Guard. This whole vaccination program needs to be accelerated, obviously, but

there has to be a plan. It sounds as if now that national folks have said, well, we're going to give it to the states and let them figure it out. The states say, hey, we're going to give it to the hospitals and other people, and maybe they will, maybe they won't. Now I understand there is some, you know, there are some mandates that are put in there. But I would much prefer the National Guard just be told, you guys organize it. You are the experts at getting things done. And you know, I've given up trying to figure out when I might be eligible for a vaccine. I mean, it's like trying to fill out my own tax return. It's like crazy, you know, categories here, B, 1C. I understand that it's not our fault but --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: You're the tax collector.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I just wish we would have a, well, it's as if the commander of the Army said to the troops, you guys figure it out. Okay. So anyway, I'm largely in agreement with the frustration that all of you feel. But I do think that we're entering a very dangerous part of the tunnel that we're in. Yes, there is a light at the end of it with these vaccines. But boy, the next few months are just going to be devastating as far as public health. And I hope everybody is aware of the fact that they need to redouble their, redouble their efforts to protect themselves and guard themselves and their family from this horrible disease that nobody wants to get.

I have a young staff person who right now is affected by this virus. And believe me, it is not a minor case. And so you know, protect yourselves and protect other people.

I also am very concerned, as both of you are, with the millions of Marylanders, hundreds of thousands of Marylanders, who continue to struggle to make ends meet, or are on the verge of homelessness because of the eviction threat. They are unable to put food on the table because they don't have a job and they don't have any money. And once again, everything is done at no fault of their own. These are our friends and neighbors. I see them all the time lined up shivering in the cold waiting for free food, hundreds of them. They have children at home. This is not some kind of abstraction. So I continue to strongly call for the State to provide more assistance to struggling families and small businesses. I appreciate what the Lieutenant Governor said today and I agree completely with it. But we need more, because these folks are barely able to keep their heads above water.

In one of the wealthiest states in the wealthiest country in the history of the world, with significant amounts of money in our reserves, I find it highly objectionable, to put it mildly, that there is so much suffering and struggle occurring in every community across the State.

If the current numbers hold, frankly, from yesterday, Lieutenant Governor, I know this is not a victory for your party, it's a victory for the

Democrats, I guess, but we will have a slight majority in the Senate. Which I think offers a glimmer of hope to millions of Americans across the country that at least a more robust proposal to provide relief to these Americans that are suffering right now will not just be arbitrarily held up by one person, Mitch McConnell, not to cast stones. But frankly, he has been standing in the way of progress for nine months. Okay. But we can't wait for Washington, in my humble opinion, because it is going to take weeks to sort out the chaos that is occurring today and finally get implemented and get people appointed, etcetera.

Here in Annapolis in the coming days and weeks and months, I think we need to do more, not less, to help our small businesses and our individuals. And I'm going to practice what I'm going to preach by announcing today, utilizing the authority of my office, I am providing immediate and temporary relief between \$1 billion and \$1.5 billion for small businesses and individuals. And we're going to do that by a proven technique that we used last year, which was extending certain tax filing and payment deadlines. Effective immediately, there will be a three-month forbearance for business tax returns and payments, and a two-month forbearance for employer withholding tax returns and payments. In addition, individuals who are self-employed and independent contractors will also have a three-month forbearance period for quarterly estimated income tax returns and payments.

Now, all business tax returns and payments that are due from January to March will be pushed back to April 15th. Similarly, employer withholding tax returns and payments that are due between February and April will be due on April 15th. I emphasize here, you're going to have to pay your tax. But we're going to give you a 90-day interest-free, penalty-free loan from the State of Maryland. This essentially is what we are talking about, a zero interest loan and economic stimulus to Maryland businesses and independent contractors that total more than \$1.5 billion. They can keep that money in their pocket. They don't have to fill out a grant application.

As we await, I hope, for more support from the federal government in the form of the \$2,000 grants, etcetera, State government can also give more from reserves and local government. At the end of this day, I will also be sending a letter to the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service to urge the federal government to provide the same forbearance period for monthly business tax returns and payments owed at the federal level, and also to take a look at the, what we did last year, which was extending all the payments from April 15th through July 15th. That proved to be budget neutral. We got all the taxes that were owed us. It was just that we gave folks 90 days to have a cushion of their own money in their own bank accounts, and it was enormously stabilizing to folks that are low wage earners and others.

So as Comptroller, I'm going to try to do everything in my power and use the bully pulpit, which I have for months, that comes along with the office, to assist struggling Maryland families and small businesses that have been battered by the pandemic. I think Marylanders across the State are pleading for us to take action. And I emphasize again, the frustration is there because of the gridlock coming out of Washington. Here in Maryland, we need to take action now to show that we are aware of the fact that there is a vaccine around the corner but it's a corner that is going to take months, unfortunately, to turn. So there is hope on the way, but in the interim we need to get money in people's pockets so that they can avoid suffering and additionally, they can use that money to lubricate the economy. Because the more money that we put in with these stimulus plans, the quicker and faster the economic recovery will be.

My staff doesn't like me to go on and on about this. But I cannot overstate the fact that people need help in the State of Maryland. And everybody that can do something, should do something. Winter is upon us. The virus is unfortunately more dangerous than ever. And the vaccine, as great as it is, it's going to take the better part of a year to get widely distributed. Thank you for letting me get that off my chest. Lieutenant Governor, I appreciate what you are saying about the chaos that we're going to see today. It's just a part of why I think

people are, in addition to the suffering, so incredibly frustrated. Thank you for letting me say an opening statement.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, thank you. And I think when it comes to the stimulus and a more robust stimulus package, I think there is plenty of blame to go around. There was a larger package on the floor that was rejected because it wasn't too large, and then there was an agreement for something smaller. So it's just the challenges of Washington. In terms --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, but Boyd, that was nine months after it should have been done. That's --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh, I agree. I agree.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- it was like --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I agree. I agree. But there was several months ago a package on the floor that was rejected that -- so, there is plenty to go all around. Okay? Because of the games that are played down in Washington. But in terms of, you know, vaccines, yes, it's going to take some time. Based on what the allocation is on the two vaccine producers that have been approved. Now, we are hopeful that there will be another vaccine available maybe in February. And then with Johnson and Johnson, and AstraZeneca's

possibly a month after that, that it can increase and we'll be able to get through the process more.

The National Guard, as you mentioned, are being deployed to a couple of the counties that have asked for some assistance in terms of their distribution. The frontline workers that are being vaccinated now, it's been over 85,000, close to 86,000, and it has expanded to all licensed healthcare providers. The next phase, I say 1A is going on now, 1B will start soon with the assisted living, K through 12 teachers and daycare providers, continuity of government, which I think you and the Treasurer would fit into that. And then anyone over, any adults over 75 years old. Which I don't think you two fit into that. I don't fit into that. But in the continuity of government, I believe you do. So it's coming.

We are asking everyone to be patient. It has only been three weeks. And we are moving forward. And I would say, I think the local health departments are doing a pretty good job in getting that out. The hospitals have a unique challenge. They have to take care of patients while they inoculate their individuals, and these are the high risk, the ICU nurses, the ICU doctors. And the protocol is that you are to observe the person who gets the vaccine for 30 to 45 minutes after the vaccine. So that means you are pulling them off of duty, you know, to get the vaccine. So they are moving through. The nursing homes, and we are putting some pressure on Walgreen's and CVS to move a little quicker than what they have been

doing so far. And that's through their federal contract, but we are putting pressure on them. So it's moving along.

I am the optimist, and thank you for the deferral for the businesses. I think that can be helpful. Like you said, last year I think it was helpful and it was neutral. We didn't lose revenue. The only challenge that, you know, I often tell people when they, you know, look at the revenue that came in last June, I said, that was 2019 earnings. You know? When, you know, we were in happy times at that point, in 2019. No one was thinking about COVID. And so we'll see as we continue. But thank you. I think that is going to be very helpful.

Mr. Secretary? John?

TREASURER KOPP: Could I just add --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh --

TREASURER KOPP: Could I just add, Governor, I agree with what you have said, and I am very interested in the Comptroller's plan. I do think with the Legislature convening a week from now that there will be the opportunity to actually examine the program and what the cost in terms of cash flow to the State's programs will be. We haven't seen all of the numbers of the impact of a year ago, so I have to go by your assumption that there was no negative impact. But let's see what --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, I'm happy to share the data.

We looked at that very carefully, Madam Treasurer.

TREASURER KOPP: Great. I'm sure you did.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And we are very convinced that, you know, whatever damage there was, was very, very marginal around the edges. And not everybody takes advantage of this.

TREASURER KOPP: Right.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: You know, this is voluntary. And you know, a lot of businesses say I'm going to go ahead and pay my taxes and send the withholding in. But a lot of them that we can't really identify really, as the Lieutenant Governor was saying, benefitted from this. But it is revenue neutral. And that I can assure you, and should be budget neutral. We are suggesting to the Legislature that they do a \$2,000 stimulus --

TREASURER KOPP: But that's a --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- from the reserves. And that's something that I think can be done. But, you know, that's up to them and up to the Governor.

TREASURER KOPP: I look forward to seeing the numbers.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah. As the fiscal experts, the two of you fiscal experts, I defer to you all on that one.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: John, John Gontrum, the Secretary's Agenda?

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Yes, good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. Happy New Year. I'm very pleased to be with you this morning at the first meeting of the 157th year of this body. We have 20 items on the Secretary's Agenda this morning and 11 reports of emergency procurement action. I'd like to highlight Item 3 with your indulgence. It's a package of proposed updates to the State Tidal Wetlands Regulations. We do have the Board's General Counsel David Bohannon and the Board's Wetlands Administrator Mr. Bill Morgante available to provide background on the proposed package of regulations and a brief overview of its contents.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I don't have any concerns about Item 3. I do have a concern about Item 4, or it's more of a question/comment with regard to the wetlands permit for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

TREASURER KOPP: Could I just ask one question about Item 3?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes, no, go ahead.

TREASURER KOPP: And that's I assume that when this is approved, it then goes to the AELR Committee --

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Precisely Madam Treasurer --

TREASURER KOPP: -- for their examination, and public input if any.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: This is the first step in proposing the regulations, that's correct. This is not the final adoption.

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you. Sorry.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: No, that's all right. This is publishing, correct? This is just publishing, as you said?

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Yes, that's correct. Publishing and sending to the Administrative Executive Legislative Review Committee of the General Assembly, that's correct.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. My concern with regard to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation one is that I understand that the money utilized to purchase the space or the headquarters for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation requires public access to the shoreline. And there has been some challenges associated with allowing public access to the shoreline. And I don't know if Secretary Haddaway-Riccio is available, but that is a concern. And I know there has been some discussions with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation on that particular issue. But that is concerning, that this was a pretty good deal for the

Chesapeake Bay Foundation. They do some good work there. But they had an obligation that I understand they are not living up to.

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Well, good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. For the record, Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Governor, you are correct that the Holly Beach property was acquired with both federal and State funding involved. That federal funding is land and water conservation funds, and the State funding of course is Program Open Space. So both do include a requirement for public access once land is purchased using those public funds.

In the spring of 2019 I did meet with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to discuss some of the concerns around public access and we offered our department as a resource to help with anything that they may need to advance that goal. And I would just say that I am also glad to see that they have this item before us to make some improvements to the property. It is a very environmentally and ecologically important property. So I'm glad to see that they are making these improvements to the shoreline.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: All right. Well, so hopefully you can, you know, reinstitute those discussions with them to allow for the access to comply with the requirements of their funding. That is something that we should not be allowing to happen, that if you get State money for specific

purposes and the federal money that you at least, you know, hold up your end of the bargain. And that is this access. I understand that they had planned to do something like this, this shoreline improvement, for a period of time, but had not I guess had the ability to get it done. And so now this opportunity comes up. Is that your understanding, too? That they were planning to do this, but finally we're getting that done?

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Yes. Yes. That's correct.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: All right.

TREASURER KOPP: Madam Secretary, could I say I had not heard this concern about public access until now, and I wonder if you or the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, which is a great organization, could just send us a couple of paragraphs clarifying what the public access understanding is.

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Sure. We would be happy to do that.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I guess we could notify the, unless you want to send a letter directly to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation asking them for their --

TREASURER KOPP: -- this question and --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. All right.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Lieutenant Governor, I have a comment about Item 10.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: This is really to compliment you and the Governor and the agency on granting and approving a \$400,000 loan through the Department of Housing and Community Development's Neighborhood Business Development Program. Who are they giving this money to? Or we, the taxpayers. It's going to a group called Sandtown Furniture Company.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Right.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: To help finance their relocation and renovation to a much larger facility in the Carroll - Camden Industrial Area of Baltimore City. It's named after the neighborhood, the Baltimore neighborhood Sandtown. And it's owned by James Battaglia and Will Phillips. They started -- who are they? Two people, they started in 2010 when Will started to use old beams from demolished homes in Baltimore to make furniture, old beams that were being thrown in the dump. Sandtown takes beams and planks dating as far back as colonial times, turns them into tables, chairs, desks, credenzas, and other furnishings a homeowner or business might want.

I love this agenda. I love this program. I'm delighted that this company is going to be helped, because they are going to quadruple their multimillion dollar business with the purchase and renovation of a building built in 1900 using this loan. And I just admire innovators and entrepreneurs like James

and Will. They are some of the unsung heroes of Baltimore City. They are investing in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. They are creating jobs and opportunities. They are putting more money in the City's coffers. And I want to salute both of them for investing their time, energy, taking big risks, financial risks. I want to thank obviously the Governor for awarding this well-deserved grant.

And there is a big article in the *Post*, which is how I discovered this, a couple of days ago. At the end of it, they talk about Will Phillips, who was the founder, walking away from a career at Under Armour. He had been there 13 years. He was an executive. He was making a very comfortable salary. And what did he do? He wanted to go full blast on this furniture start up. And he was asked by the reporter at the end, well, what is your long term strategy, other than doubling their business and employees, etcetera. He said, our long term strategic plan, we want to under promise and over deliver. We want to be humble and we want to be hungry. And I just thought that was, that's a great mantra for us politicians, I think, Lieutenant Governor.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yep.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Under promise and over deliver. That would be a, not a bad mantra for some of us in politics. And I salute obviously these entrepreneurs. They are successful. They are going to double, triple, they are

going to employ lots of people. They are taking something that is being, as I said, disposed of and they are turning it into something valuable. And hats off to them.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah.

TREASURER KOPP: And doing it in an energy efficient, environmentally clean way.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Sustainable, I think is what you were reaching for.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, yes, particularly when you talk about reuse, reuse of --

TREASURER KOPP: Right.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- materials. So no, it's a very good story. Manufacturing in Baltimore in the Carroll Industrial Area, so they needed the space to expand. It's already an industrial area. It can, you know, it's a very good story. And that's what Neighborhood BusinessWorks is set up to do and to help with. There are still some things internally that we are working on to be more efficient with Neighborhood BusinessWorks. We can, you know, get through the process a little quicker and have been working with the Secretary on that directly. But it is a very good program and I'm glad that they were able to do this award here for the Sandtown Furniture.

I'm just going to mention Item 12. And this is Morgan State's Health and Human Services Center, Phase 2, the commissioning of the building to make sure that they meet the LEED standards for this building. I don't know if you have been up to Morgan recently. This is part of their, and I think they, I think there is someone from Morgan available, John.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Ms. Kim McCalla --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: -- is representing the University this morning.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: And Kim, correct me if I'm wrong, you all call this part of the campus, south campus, right next to the business school and the future development site, and the redevelopment, I should say, of the Northwood Commons community, it used to be Northwood Commons Shopping Center, I think it's going to be called Northwood Commons now. And so it is great for the school, but also for the community in terms of the development that's going on. Is Kim available?

MS. MCCALLA: Yes. Yes, Kim is here. And yes, we are very excited about this project. And it's the last anchor for the south entrance into campus off of Hillen Road. So we are very excited. And again, trying to under promise and over achieve in our LEED. And we work to get Silver and strive for

Gold. And we usually get very close to that. So we're very excited about the project.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Very good.

TREASURER KOPP: That's great.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well thank you --

TREASURER KOPP: Yeah, we've got to go beyond Silver in this State if we're going to meet our goals. I'm glad to hear Morgan is in the lead.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Good. Well, thank you.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Governor, I had a question on these emergency reports from Department of Human Services --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- A5 to A9. I don't know whether Mr. James or someone else is here, Secretary James.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Deputy Secretary Gregory James, Ms. Michelle Farr, and Ms. Erica Sweeney are representing the Department of Human Services this morning.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Great. So I applaud the efforts of the department to make sure these six Maryland youth are put in emergency residential childcare services in Maryland. That's a big improvement. I'm

delighted. But I'm concerned about the comments I read in the briefing document because it's unclear when we're going to have long term contracts here. And it's not just that the reports are severely delayed for reporting purposes. It's my understanding, and I quote from the briefing document, there was a breakdown in communication between the local Departments of Social Services and the State Department of Human Services which has resulted in delays in the approval, and completion and approval of the sole source agreements. So, I guess, Secretary James, we have had a lot of talk about youth placements out of state. I'm delighted these are in-state. But are you telling me that we are still making them a top priority to make sure that their care is overseen and that we have, you know, the proper kind of long term contract in place?

MR. JAMES: Good morning, Governor, Mr. Comptroller, Madam Treasurer. Yes, Comptroller Franchot, the care of these youth is obviously remains our top priority. The issue that we had on these contracts was frankly, it was less about the notification from the local department to central, but more in terms of within our Social Services Administration. The program side, the individuals actually engaged in the placements, getting the information over to the contract team in a timely manner. We have made some changes in our internal structure, moved some folks around to try and address that and make sure that this does not occur again in the future. The long-term contracts for these providers I believe I

have signed off and those are approved, and should be coming before this Board within the next Board meeting or so.

So we have struggled with some of our procurement activities as a result of COVID as well as some key staff being out with unexpected medical challenges. And we have been working very diligently to try and address that and correct that. So I apologize. You will see some of these late items. Unfortunately, once we kind of missed the window for timely performance, the amount of work required for us to correct it frequently makes things even further delayed. And I want to personally extend my apologies to the Board and to the State for the very late nature of these items coming to you. We're working very hard to correct that. But I accept full responsibility. And again, I extend my apologies.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, I appreciate that. We just - it sounds as if you are on top of it. We just can't afford to drop the ball on these placements because, you know, the kids are obviously -- well, I assume you are checking on the care that they are receiving. And making sure that the facilities are performing correctly as we go through this kind of period of confusion here.

MR. JAMES: Yes, sir. Absolutely. The monitoring of these programs continues. Our social workers, even during the most, during our most restrictive period of operation they were performing virtual check-ins with all of our kids. They have now resumed in-face meetings with appropriate social

distancing and protective equipment. But we continue to closely monitor our youth and ensure that they are receiving appropriate care and that the programs are providing the services for which we contract.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you, Governor. Yep.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Thank you. Any additional questions on the Secretary's Agenda?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Move approval, if appropriate.

TREASURER KOPP: Second.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. All right. We're all in favor. Thank you, John. Department of Natural Resources.

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Hi, good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. Again, for the record, Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. We have ten items on our Real Property Agenda today for which we are seeking approval and I'm happy to answer any questions that you may have. And Governor, I just wanted to thank you quickly for participating in our First Day hike at the start of the new year. I'm glad that a little rain didn't keep us down and we were able to get out on the trails. So thank you very much.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah, a little rain and cold but it was still enjoyable. Particularly seeing all the deer out there at

Patapsco. It was very nice. I will say, though, I think with all the hills and the rocky, muddy surfaces, I was a little tired when I got home. Usually I'm not tired. I was a little tired, you know, with the hills and rocks and mud. But it was still very enjoyable. Thank you.

I just want to point out Item 2-A, Program Open Space, \$4.4 million, over \$4.4 million to a number of recreational facilities, rec center development, and just expansion of recreational opportunities in Baltimore City. I think that's going to be very helpful to, you know, an urban environment that doesn't have a lot of recreational facilities. Just seeing it's good that the City, and where we can help at the State level is increasing the utilization of Open Space money for these park and recreation facilities.

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Well, thank you, Governor. These are really great projects and we're very pleased to partner with Baltimore City on this. And we completely agree. It's really important to have walkable open space and green space near every community. And these provide some really good opportunities for youth and adults to get outside and get some recreation, play sports, and be together in community centers. So thank you for highlighting that.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Right. And another note on a couple of these items, I think particularly the Madison Square and Herring Run, as well as Parkview, I think that they are related to the 21st Century

School Construction Program in that these older schools were no longer needed so they are being torn down and rec centers are going to be created in those locations. So very well done and I'm glad that that is happening. And as you said, very beneficial to the City and the City residents.

Okay. Any other questions or comments on the Department of Natural Resources?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Move approval, if appropriate.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

TREASURER KOPP: Second.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Second? Okay.

Madam Secretary, thank you. And see you at the next park.

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Thank you very much.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Thank you.
University System.

MR. HICKEY: Good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. Tom Hickey representing University System of Maryland. We have three items on the Agenda today for your consideration and we're happy to answer any questions you may have.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Tom --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Move approval, just to put a motion out there.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: We have a motion. We can't let him off that easy.

(Laughter.)

MR. HICKEY: Happy New Year.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Happy New Year to you. Okay --

MR. HICKEY: Thank you very much.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- we have the approvals there.

MR. HICKEY: Thank you very much.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: All right. Take care. Thank you. Department of Transportation.

MR. SLATER: Good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. For the record, my name is Greg Slater, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation. The Maryland Department of Transportation is presenting 14 items for your consideration today and we're happy to answer any questions.

Quick side note, sir, related to your remarks on small businesses. You know, we've developed a great program here at MDOT. In 2020 alone we awarded \$154 million to small businesses, and only \$20 million of that was part of the Reserve Program, where the \$134 million was part of competitive procurements with an even playing field where our small businesses were able to compete with the big firms and ended up winning those procurements. So we're really proud of that program.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Very good. I have noticed.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Governor, I have a question about Item 9-AE.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Well, I guess it's not about that item but since we have the Secretary here I wanted to ask him about the I495 and I270 P3 Program. This could be the largest P3 in the country and I just wanted to ask Secretary Slater, who I obviously have a lot of respect for but there is some concern over in the Washington area among citizens about transparency. And I just want to get a little clarification here.

It's my understanding the final RFP for this enormous project was issued to proposers late Friday afternoon on December 18th with a pre-development

work due date of 2:00 p.m. on December 23rd and the financial proposals due January 8th. Obviously, we have short-listed teams that have been reviewing with the agency and have been working on the draft RFP since July. But the problem is, most of the citizens aren't aware of all that. So they just saw a very quick turnaround right during the holidays and they got up in arms over it a little bit, Mr. Secretary. And I'm sure that was not your intent. I just want to hear from you that you're going to continue to have local input and transparency with activists and advocates and local leaders in Montgomery and Prince George's. As I said, it's going to be the largest P3 project in the country. And this release during the Christmas holiday and the short number of business days to talk about the technical portion or return the technical portion. Anyway, they, if you could just comment on the reasoning for the quick turnaround process and what you are doing to make sure that people realize this is all on the level.

MR. SLATER: (Indiscernible).

TREASURER KOPP: Comptroller --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes, I'm sorry, Madam Treasurer?

TREASURER KOPP: As you do that, I think it would be helpful if you would take yourself back to the last meeting of the Board of Public Works on this and tell us how things progressed since then.

MR. SLATER: Sure. Absolutely. And so let me first tell you that over the last few weeks, I have really kind of sat down with the team and we are thinking about new and different ways to communicate and what's important to not only our citizens but our members in the General Assembly. I have reached out to a few of the members individually and said what's important to you, and what's the best way for us to get you that information? That timeline in particular, there is a little bit of a misconception there. You know, but understandably because this solicitation is not a traditional one that people are used to. So it's utilizing this progressive approach that is designed to have benefits and this competitive dialogue with the private sector, but also to ensure that partnership where we can harness that innovation and continue that collaboration.

So because this is a progressive approach, it has gotten multiple approvals with the Board, as you noted, Madam Treasurer. But also has multiple instances with our private sector partners where they look at submissions. So the process started back when we shortlisted the phase one teams in July. And so since that time, all the proposers have been actively participating in these collaborative reviews of multiple drafts of the RFP through these series of meetings and touch points. But to your point sir, the public doesn't have the benefit of that kind of six-month process. So it was really over that six-month period that they were working on their proposals and their final submittals even on the minor changes.

But this process allowed us to talk through changes in the draft RFP with this feedback loop with the individual teams and then kind of going back as you adjust and getting feedback along the way, even ones that are kind of minor in nature. You know, so we were individually hearing thoughts and ideas on innovative design concepts, minimizing impacts, improving operations and safety, better ways to manage the risks overall, efficient ways to kind of get this out there. So it allowed the teams to start preparing their proposals from the short list that was announced. And so the final RFP was issued on December 18th but that was an end result of a six-month process that started with the shortlist process. The timeline in July was really the start.

So it's important to note that the RFP is on the street today, Madam Treasurer, kind of related back to the original proposal with the Board, is for the selection of a private sector partner to work collaboratively with all of the stakeholders in the pre-development process. So they will work through just this current phase, which is American Legion Bridge and 270. That includes working with everyone, across our local governments, our stakeholders, our elected officials, our utility companies, interest groups, business community, property owners. And then only after this significant collaborative effort, a build alternative is selected. And we thought that we would be back to the Board for that final

approval of construction. So, you know, MDOT would seek that first section after that.

So, you know, with this procurement we'll be back to the Board to say this is the partner we've selected to help us work collaboratively with the community, then we would come back later on for that final approval. And so this is a little bit different than a project like the Purple Line, for instance, where you post an RFP and then have the proposers develop submissions without that collaboration that we feel is critical when looking for that long term partner. So in a project like the Purple Line, you essentially put something out for the private sector to respond to, then they develop a proposal and submit, and then as things arise in the final development phases after the selection, if things change you end up with claims and change orders and extra costs and things like that. So this process is designed for us to bring a private sector partner on, have them with us as we're working with the community and finding the right partner, and then once all of that is worked out through, you know, things like in ped connections or working in integration with the transit system, then you understand all those known costs and then you come back to the Board with the final cost and you minimize the risk to the State and you ensure the ability to have a good partner through that configured partnership. I hope that helps.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Well, you know, I think your intent is laudable. The problem of course is that the impression that was received just because of the dates, etcetera, got mixed up. I'm comfortable with what you just said. I think you might think about putting it on an 8 ½ by 11 piece of paper -

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MR. SLATER: Sure.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- and letting people understand that there are going to be many bites of the apple at this. I'm particularly interested in having another piece of paper that says, these are the lessons learned from the P3 on the Purple Line that we hope will not be a problem should this project move forward. Lessons learned, headaches avoided. And you know, I think what you are saying, since I'm a general supporter of this concept that this P3 is talking about, I can be comfortable with it. But there are a lot of people in Montgomery County that are very opposed. And I think something in writing from you might be helpful along the lines of what you just said, although I defer to the Treasurer. She lives in Bethesda where there is a lot of angst over the Purple Line right now. So --

MR. SLATER: Absolutely, sir. And I will continue to try really hard to engage the community. No matter how they feel about this project, it's important that we are out there and we listen to them and get feedback from them

and continue to work with them to try and craft the best solution for each section, because each section is very different.

TREASURER KOPP: Let me say to the Comptroller, that the Treasurer lives in ground zero for all of these projects. And I do think, Mr. Secretary, that a greater sense of transparency and understanding, I mean, you started negotiating with a particular set of companies seven months ago. The folks didn't know that, or didn't understand that. You have now developed, before we get the environmental impact statement, developed the RFP and put it on the street. There is a sense of momentum for a project that a lot of people who live in the area still don't understand and believe will bring problems of its own. Just the idea, Mr. Secretary, of a new bridge or a rebuilt bridge, which I believe is how it was described in the newspaper, just the picture itself is difficult to comprehend. So I think a great deal more public discussion is required.

I must say, when we get to the point where the Board of Public Works gets to the point of approving the contract in the end, there will be so much invested in it by that point, and so far down the track, it is difficult to believe it will not go forward. So I think it is very important that it be clear that you have examined all of the environmental impact, the cost impact, this question that we heard of from Park and Planning and WSSC, the impact on the pipelines, and just

a lot of questions out there. And it seemed to have been everything taking place offstage for the last half year.

MR. SLATER: I will continue to try and work on that personally as well, and try and draw, you know, I think, you know, it's, the remote environment has been somewhat challenging at times. And so I'm going to sit down with the team and kind of create some new and different ways that we can try and engage with the community. I have been trying to have some individual conversations as well with some of our local leaders, just to make sure that their feedback isn't lost and that we're hearing that along the way, and kind of making sure that I understand their perspective, and really kind of sitting down with them and able to ask questions and make sure that I'm understanding their perspective very clearly about where I think there is common ground, those types of things. But I will continue to do that. And the message has been received on that, not only by this Board but by the community as well.

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you.

MR. SLATER: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you also.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Any additional questions on Transportation?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Move approval.

TREASURER KOPP: Second.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Department of General Services.

MR. CHURCHILL: Happy New Year, and good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. For the record, I'm Ellington Churchill, Secretary for the Maryland Department of General Services. Today we are presenting 29 items for your consideration. Item 3-CGL has been revised with the correct project total amount for the National Aquarium. And in acknowledgment of the executive order concerning small businesses that was announced earlier, I'd like to highlight, take a moment to highlight that DGS is noting five recommended awardees for small businesses on our Agenda, and an additional three which are MBE businesses for the Board's approval today. We have representatives available to answer any questions you may have at this time.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I did notice the utilization of small and minority businesses, so I did see that. I just, I'm going to point out just a couple of the CGLs. 1-CGL, Bainbridge Development Corp., a very good project that was a long time coming. The old Naval Training Center up in Cecil County and trying to bring some development to that area and utilization of that property that is there. And it even required some communications with the

former Secretary of the Navy to get them to do the environmental cleanup. As you can imagine, you know, military facilities that were there before the Clean Water Act and environmental protection, that there's all kinds of stuff that they put in the ground. And so they are working. Fortunately, the federal government through the Department of the Navy is doing a lot of the remediation work up there. So I just wanted to point that out.

Also the Franklin Square in 2-CGL. I have been out there to see the new surgery center tower that they are putting in place. It's, you know, a wonderful hospital and of course needed in this time that we have a health emergency taking place. And so I just wanted to point that out.

I could go on, but I will, you know, defer to the Treasurer and the Comptroller if they have any questions about items on the Agenda.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I just wanted to reinforce, Mr. Secretary, your comment about the National Aquarium, the \$5 million grant to them. I mean, they desperately needed that for the infrastructure improvement. I applaud that by the Governor and you.

And then the \$1.5 million grant that's in Item 5 to the Round House Theatre in Bethesda, thank you. You know, that also. I mean, both of these places, I've been to many, many times in my role as Comptroller, I guess. And I know

how treasured they are by citizens and visitors to the State. They have obviously been hammered by COVID because of the difficulty of getting people to come.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And I just wanted to thank those institutions for their partnership with the State. I want to thank the State, and obviously local officials like former Congresswoman Morella and current Treasurer Kopp, who are huge advocates of these wonderful not-for-profits. This is like water on a desert for them, to get this money. So thank you.

MR. CHURCHILL: Absolutely. And I also believe if you wanted to hear from any of them, we do have someone from the Aquarium, Ryan Fredriksson of Government Affairs, if you wanted to hear any more about the Aquarium.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I don't need that, Lieutenant Governor. I appreciate Ryan. I've been up there a number of times. I've looked at all of the windows that need to be replaced, and it's a much needed project. And it's a fabulous magnet for people to come, all over the country to come to the National Aquarium. So.

MR. CHURCHILL: Excellent.

TREASURER KOPP: I would also like to thank the folks from the Aquarium for taking the time to brief us on the project. It's a great project for a

great institution. I join with the Comptroller on both those great cultural institutions, being the Aquarium and Round House Theatre, which is one of the bright examples of good planning and public-private partnership.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, and it is a gem. Hopefully, we'll have more, get back to more live entertainment and particularly theater, which is always wonderful, you know, live theater is wonderful.

TREASURER KOPP: And you are absolutely right, Comptroller, that Congresswoman Morella was a great, great inspiration for this wonderful organization. And still is a great inspiration.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I do have a question on 17-MOD Juvenile Services. And it really has to do with the fact that it's a six-month extension, but the six-month extension is equivalent to a full year contract that was in place before. Is that because there is additional services being put in this but they doubled the price?

MR. CHURCHILL: Thank you, Governor. We do have Joseph Cleary, Chief of Staff for DJS Juvenile Services available to speak.

MR. CLEARY: Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Governor, and hello, Treasurer Kopp and Comptroller Franchot. This is Jay Cleary, Chief of Staff at Department of Juvenile Services here on behalf of Secretary Sam Abed.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Mm-hmm.

MR. CLEARY: To answer your question, Mr. Governor, what has changed with this particular contract, you are right, in the services. This contract was originally done pre-COVID, before the pandemic hit. And this is a community-based offender treatment service, where they do community-based, you know, therapy sessions with these youth in our system. Prior to COVID they were able to do group therapy sessions along with individual. Once COVID hit, due to social distancing and infection control measures, they had to move to exclusively individual therapy sessions. So whereas before you would have a group of, you know, four or five youth, now they were having to have individual therapy sessions with each of the youth, which increased the time and resources that they needed to provide this very critical treatment service. So that is why, you know, so for that particular modification, why that amount has increased and for that six-month period.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. All right. It just, you know, it just stood out. Thank you.

I do want to ask about 19-IT-MOD. This is an IDIQ type of contract, multiple award. And just the fact that the contract amount jumps, but I guess the modification, it doesn't really change? You are just adding contractors? And maybe that's something that you can answer on that.

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes. Actually, I would ask Mark Riesett, our Acting Procurement Director, to address that.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

MR. RIESETT: Good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. You are correct, Governor. All we are doing is adding contractors to the available contractor list on this particular contract vehicle.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. All right. Just when I see numbers go up a lot, I just, I get a little concerned. Are there any other questions with regard to General Services?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes. Item 22, please. This is -- what? 22-MOD, task force order 1.2.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

MR. CHURCHILL: Okay. 1.2 from MSDE, we have Christy Shockley, the Assistant State Superintendent, along with Amalie Brandenburg and Steve Hicks.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Great. Well, I have a long-standing concern about single bid contracts, because obviously everyone that brings them says that this is a great deal for the taxpayers because they are getting, you know, low prices or something. But we don't really know because there wasn't any single bid, there wasn't any second bid, it was just one bid. And it's a \$31.5

million contract. So if all the renewable options are exercised. So and it's concerning payment processing and management of cases for childcare customers and the childcare scholarship program. So it's obviously an important item. The thing that caught my eye is that there are 388 master contractors on the master contract and apparently only one of the 388 is bidding. What happened to the other 387? Why aren't some of them bidding? Apparently the incumbent did not bid and sent over 100 questions to the procurement office. And so why didn't the department open this contract up to a wider marketplace instead of procuring, A, through a master contract, but most importantly, why are we faced with just one bid for a \$31.5 million contract?

MS. BRANDENBURG: Hi, this is Amalie Brandenburg, for the record. Good afternoon, Lieutenant Governor Rutherford, Madam Treasurer Kopp, and Mr. Comptroller Franchot. I am Amalie Brandenburg. I am the Deputy of Finance for MSDE. And you are correct, this contract is for case management and payment processing system that supports our childcare subsidy program. Childcare subsidy authorization and provider payment is a very specialized field and it is governed by extensive federal and State regulations. This program supports our eligible working families by providing financial assistance with childcare costs.

So when we bid this back in 2015, we had two respondents. We didn't anticipate -- there is a very small group of contractors who are eligible to perform this work. And so we didn't anticipate a large response pool back.

TREASURER KOPP: Amalie, why is there such a small group?
What is so --

MS. BRANDENBURG: It is governed by extensive federal and State regulations. It is really a niche market. You are providing the authorization provider payment for our childcare subsidy program. Does that help? Christy, did you want to jump in with anything additional?

MS. SHOCKLEY: Good morning, Madam Treasurer, Lieutenant Governor, Comptroller. For the record, I'm Christy Shockley, Assistant State Superintendent at the Maryland State Department of Education. Happy New Year to you all.

So in 2016, the federal government, the Office of Children and Families, had reauthorized the Childcare Development Grant such that the changes to the provision of services would protect the health and safety of children in childcare and parents in making informed decisions for childcare support services throughout the nation. And also we wanted to ensure that there is a high quality of care for low income children. So what we see now is an increased amount of scrutiny by the federal government to ensure that the health and safety of children

while in childcare services is maintained. Also, we see that there is an increased focus on monitoring and reporting for those services as well.

So there is a limited number of, we believe, companies that can provide this service. The recommended awardee, Deloitte, is one of the world's largest providers of professional services and has expertise in providing these services for Pennsylvania and Colorado.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Can I ask a question, Madam Treasurer? Why didn't Deloitte, I understand the incumbent that did not end up bidding, I guess, for some reason -- I'd love to hear from them if they have an explanation for that. But apparently they asked 122 questions of the agency about this RFP. And did Deloitte have any questions that they asked? Let me ask that of whoever handled the procurement? Were there any questions submitted by the winning bidder?

MS. SHOCKLEY: There were no questions submitted by the winning bidder, Comptroller.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I think we have someone from Conduent that had signed up to speak, and maybe the question is why they didn't bid.

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Governor. I believe a Ms. Kim Newsom Bridges with Conduent may be on the line.

MS. BRIDGES: Yes. Good afternoon, Mr. Comptroller, Mr. Governor, and Madam Treasurer. We would like to share some information about why we chose not to bid. We have been a partner for MSDE in providing these services for the last five-plus years. We believe we have done a great job for the citizens of Maryland. We have actually helped MSDE recently pass a legislative audit and a federal audit. And we were very excited to and prepared to provide a response to this RFP. When it was released in September, we immediately had several concerns with respect to what was included in the RFP. And if time will permit, I will share a few of those concerns with you.

First of all, there was a requirement that the vendor provide approval for informal providers. So just to share with you, an informal provider is somebody who may be a neighbor or a relative who wants to provide care for the children in their home and the family needs the childcare scholarship. So approving, being the required entity to approve an informal provider puts whomever is doing that work at risk. The State, however, has sovereign immunity should something happen and a child get hurt in someone's home or something like that. That's one of the questions, or actually a couple of the questions that we asked of our 122, were related to this issue. We asked for the opportunity to gather all the information required for the approval process and to submit that to the department so they would

make the final approval because they are covered under sovereign immunity, and that request was not granted through the question and answer process.

We also asked about a requirement that we would have to do in-home investigations for the same process. We were told that because of the pandemic we could do virtual in-home investigations, which creates another concern in that are you going to trust the in-home provider to be showing us everything they needed to be showing us in their home so that we would have the capability to make this approval. And eventually we would expect that we would have to go back into the home, which also then has a risk associated with it with going to in-home and again, we wouldn't have the sovereign immunity.

There were several other additions to --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Could I interrupt? Let me interrupt for a minute.

MS. BRIDGES: Sure.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: How exactly is that different from the last five years when you have had the contract? Did you do --

MS. BRIDGES: This was a -- we did not do this work. This was an add on. There was a person that was contracted by the State individually to perform these services and we believe the State wanted to go a different route. And again, we were more than willing to gather information. We did not want to do the in-

home inspections and we did not want to have the final responsibility as the approver of such.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Got it. So the State basically did the work that you were, you have been talking about, or at least assumed responsibility and was protected by sovereign immunity from liability. I can see that. Okay. And what did the State say? Did they get back to you?

MS. BRIDGES: Basically, their response to our questions during the procurement process was that we would be required to be the approver and to follow the guidelines outlined by MSDE in the process.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. You don't need to go through all of your questions. What is it that, why didn't you bid at the end of the process with even some of the caveats we're talking about?

MS. BRIDGES: We did not bid at the end of the process, and let me tell you that it was a very difficult decision for us. Because coming into the procurement, we had identified many new services that we wanted to bring to the citizens of Maryland who were in need of childcare scholarships, as well as the provider agencies. And so we were very much prepared to provide a better service than we are even providing now. The issue was, was that many components and many additions in the scope of work that were related to our 122 questions increased our potential for liability, and primarily in the quality arena increased the

number of staff that we would have to have to provide these services by more than twofold. Which of course would increase the cost to the State of Maryland. And we knew under the time period that we're in right now, that that was probably not something that we could or should be proposing. We asked for relief in our 122 questions. And it makes us wonder whether or not there was an understanding of what was really being required in this proposal since there were no questions asked by the other, the chosen provider, as well as, you know, no real increase in cost from what we've got right now. We asked the questions. This was a task order RFP. Our understanding of a task order RFP is that we don't have the opportunity to negotiate after award. And that we also do not have the opportunity to provide a non-compliant bid. We provided the department and the leadership in the department a seven-page document outlining many of our concerns as to why we chose to not bid.

We believe that we have been a very effective partner with MSDE over the years. Most recently during the pandemic we changed all of our operations to be able to get payments out to childcare providers who were providing childcare for essential workers. And you know, we have done what the provider has asked us to do over the years.

There were several open-ended components that we asked in the question and answer process to try to get those closed. Those were not closed. The

SOA requirements that we are currently under were made even more stringent and a higher financial penalty risk for us or a requirement to add more and more staff to ensure that we didn't fall under these issues. So all of those things put together led us to make the very difficult decision to not bid and to share the information as to why we chose not to bid.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. That is very helpful to me. Governor, I'm not going to extend this a long time. I don't like single bid contracts. You can't tell me what the market price is for this contract and you can't really assure the State I think at this point that this is a contract that actually can be performed given the fact that, you know, there was no competition, A, and B, there are these questions about sovereign immunity and liability, etcetera. I don't have anything against Deloitte. They are a famous international company. But I do have concerns about the process here and I hope -- well, I could defer this if you wanted to but I am frankly going to vote against it. Because I just don't think -- well, let me ask the famous question the Treasurer asks from time to time. What bad things would happen if we rebid this contract and, you know, assured the taxpayers that there were at least two bids so we know that there was some competition?

MS. BRANDENBURG: This is Amalie again. And I just want to reiterate that Deloitte was not given or did not have an advantage over any other offer. In fact, the current solicitation was basically the prior solicitation with a few

changes to address federal requirements, quality assurance, and to clearly define the expectations. We did not negotiate with Deloitte with the final contract and Deloitte absolutely will be fulfilling all of the tasks in the original scope of work without modification. That --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: How can you possibly say that given the fact that sovereign immunity is being removed because of your requested changes and they didn't ask any questions about it --

MS. BRANDENBURG: (Indiscernible).

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- maybe they are not even aware of it.

MS. BRANDENBURG: They are a leader in the industry and they have successfully implemented and been supportive in this role in both Pennsylvania and Colorado. But I do want to bring Steven Hicks on. He can share with you some of the concerns and why this is so critical that we move forward with this.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. Well, he had better have a good case because this is a botched procurement. Thank you. This is not the way we should be doing business in the State. I'm sorry to get upset. But you know, if you've got a pool of 388 master contractors and you get one bid, and you have other people outside of the master contractor list where you could solicit two bids. And

then you come to us, I guess you are going to come and say that this is critical. Well, no. Thank you very much. It's something that at some point, you know, you've got to put your foot down around something. And this is not right. And but go ahead. I'm sure the explanation is going to be that it's of critical importance, it needs to be approved at warp speed.

MR. HICKS: Good afternoon, Comptroller Franchot and Lieutenant Governor Rutherford and Treasurer Kopp and Secretary Churchill. Thank you so much for this opportunity. I am Steven Hicks. I'm the Assistant State Superintendent for the Division of Early Childhood.

Previously in 2015, when this contract was put out it was for master contractors because of the highly specialized tasks that need to be done. Not only is it technical, it requires a lot of staff to provide this service of processing invoices, and also answering questions from parents and providers. There is a huge help desk component to this service.

As Amalie has shared, this is a very highly specialized kind of opportunity for any contractor. The 388 master contractors which you mentioned were given the solicitation because we wanted to cast a wide net. It's not necessarily a skill they may have to fulfill this --

TREASURER KOPP: Could I interrupt for a moment, just to ask you --

MR. HICKS: Sure.

TREASURER KOPP: -- in the master contract, the 300, the master contract, what is that master contract? Is it for all accountants? Or what is it?

MR. HICKS: Christy, is that something you can define for them?

MS. SHOCKLEY: Sure. Absolutely. Again, for the record, Christy Shockley. So what we, the 388 were all of the contractors under Functional Area 9 in the statewide master contract list.

TREASURER KOPP: What is Functional Area 9 in English?

MS. SHOCKLEY: Consulting and technical services.

TREASURER KOPP: So it's all, I'm sorry, all technical -- no, that can't be.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Consulting and --

MS. SHOCKLEY: Consulting services.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Consulting and technical services.

TREASURER KOPP: All consultants and -- oh, okay.

MS. SHOCKLEY: And technical services. Correct. So the, I guess the scenario that I would present is when it was presented to me very eloquently in understanding this. Right? So if we asked for a contract to paint, there would be many people that could paint a home. But if we asked for a contract to paint a

teacup, how many contractors could successfully paint a teacup? And that's the difference. It's not just painting. It's a specialized component of childcare subsidy and management. (Indiscernible).

TREASURER KOPP: (Indiscernible).

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay --

MS. SHOCKLEY: -- I'm sorry.

TREASURER KOPP: But could I, I'm sorry, Comptroller. I asked a question about ten minutes ago and I'm still trying to absorb it. What is so specialized? What is it about this contract?

MR. HICKS: This is Steven Hicks again. There are a number of federal requirements that must be met. And it's not just the technical capabilities of processing all of the invoices through your data system and connecting with our early childhood data system. But it's also providing customer service for providers and parents. We have 40,000 children being served through Maryland through the scholarship program or vouchers in the childcare subsidy program. Many of those parents and the 3,500 providers have questions in any given invoice period.

I also wanted to let you know that the bid that we did receive from Deloitte that was presented today is a little bit over what the winning bid for Conduent in 2015. So I do think that it's a good bid for Maryland and for the use of these public dollars.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I have a follow up question to that, Madam Treasurer, if you -- I don't mean to interrupt. But --

TREASURER KOPP: No, go ahead.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. So this is a specialized issue. That's why we have one bid, is I think what you are saying. But you are telling me the awardee that we're supposed to give a \$31.5 million green light to didn't have any questions? Because this is a different proposal than what the incumbent situation was. You added on requirements. And nobody had a question about it from Deloitte?

MR. HICKS: I can't speak -- this is Steven Hicks again. I can't speak for Deloitte as to why they didn't have any questions. I could hypothesize that they do this work in many other states, so they fully understand the requirements of the federal law, including the reauthorization that occurred a couple of years ago. And they do understand what the job is and how to complete those requirements and ensure that we don't have any audit findings.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. So we have, I have a list of eight companies that do this for other states and have experience in this, and they were all in on the, you know, informal conferences. Why didn't we get any bids from them? IC Software, Bithgroup, GCOM Software, Conduent is I guess the incumbent, Control Tech, Computer Consultants International, Business Integra,

Insurgior (phonetic), all of whom are highly specialized vendors in this space. Why were there, why wasn't there one additional bid?

MS. SHOCKLEY: We received two no bid response forms from those companies outside of Conduent. The one vendor cited that they didn't have the resources to deploy in order to fulfill the obligations of the contract. And the other didn't give a response as to why they weren't going to provide a bid.

I would note for the Board that the incumbent could have proposed a, submitted a bid and cited exceptions, but chose not to do so.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, I'm just, what -- let me go back to my original question. What bad things would happen if we voted this down? And please, don't try to embellish it. Just give me the straight scoop here. Because I'm going to probably vote no and I'd like to get a second vote if anybody is in approval. But you know, I don't want to do it if all of a sudden a catastrophe is presented to us. So tell us what bad, should there be a second vote and this contract turned down, what bad things would happen and how could they be avoided so that we --

MS. SHOCKLEY: I'll just start with one issue that is readily apparent from a business perspective and a financial perspective. Should the Board vote no to this contract award, we are essentially giving a contract award to Conduent. Because we would have -- the incumbent. Because we would have to

extend their current contract to allow time for a new procurement effort. So essentially, by voting no we agree to, if Conduent would be on board, and it sounds like they would be, how passionate they are about participating and continuing business with MSDE, we would be essentially giving them a \$6 million contract for a year. So that's at the onset. But --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: (Indiscernible) We do that all the time.

MS. SHOCKLEY: Correct. We do. But then we face the protest from Deloitte as well. (Indiscernible) --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: (Indiscernible).

MS. SHOCKLEY: -- rabbit hole.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: But I don't know. I don't want to drag this on, Lieutenant Governor and Madam Treasurer. I value your time. But I'm pretty concerned about this and I would hope at least we could maybe defer it until the next Board meeting so that people can think about it a little bit.

MR. HICKS: I would also add, this is Steven Hicks again, that the transition time is very narrow right now between the contracts, awarding this and the other. And so it's imperative that this transition happens soon so that there is not a disruption in service. We also know that if that was extended and Conduent wanted to extend for the length of time that it would take to do a new competition

with no guarantee that there might be other applicants, we don't necessarily have the assurance that our, the additional requirements that we put in the contract, in the, sorry, the RFP would be met. And those are in place in order to meet federal requirements and also have a positive outcome in our audit that we are about to start with the Legislature.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

TREASURER KOPP: But could I ask one question, just following up? Because I, well first of all, the answer to the Comptroller's question about a two-week deferral? I didn't hear that specifically. Does that or does that not do significant harm?

MS. SHOCKLEY: The two-week deferral would not do significant harm, no, ma'am.

TREASURER KOPP: All right. And as I understand it, though, I mean, Conduent didn't bid.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Right.

TREASURER KOPP: They could have bid, and they didn't bid. And they didn't bid because of the State's liability provisions, I believe, which are issues in many contracts and companies do not bid because of that. But Deloitte did. Do you have any question that Deloitte understood the liability provisions the State requires?

MS. SHOCKLEY: We can say with some measure of certainty, given the history and experience with Deloitte, that they were fully aware of the components of the RFP and fully intend to comply, and don't have any issues with the legal liability.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I mean, they are a big company. And as our contract law says that they are responsible to understand what's in the bid. So.

TREASURER KOPP: Right.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, no, I can see that. I would like to ask a question. Did you have any problems with the incumbent's performance over the last five years?

MR. HICKEY: This is Steven Hicks again. Could I ask that our branch chief Renee Williams have her mic (microphone) opened so that she could comment on that? She's the project manager working with Conduent over the last five years.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you.

MS. WILLIAMS: Good morning, Lieutenant Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. No, we have not had any issues with Conduent's services over the past four years of services. I would like to go back and answer a couple of questions that Mr. Comptroller asked.

I think the answer to your question in reference to why did Deloitte not ask any questions or why did several other vendors not potentially ask questions may be because when we answered the 122 questions that were presented by Conduent, those questions were made public. So if any vendor had the same question, they would not have to ask the same question because those answers were made public.

In reference to the question do we believe that Deloitte understood the proposal, we had I think seven people that reviewed the proposals that were submitted and all seven individuals agreed that this agency had the reputation of working with lead agencies similar to Maryland in order to provide those services. So we clearly understood by their responses in the proposal that they understood in reference to what they were bidding on.

In reference to the sovereignty, the only thing we were asking the current vendor to do is to take on responsibilities that vendors should take on when they are paid a contract at the magnitude and amount of this contract. It's work that is done and they would not have been placed under any type of liability by completing virtual inspections. Right now, Maryland has one contract employee, one, that completes these virtual inspections. Our current contractor has 80 employees on their staff.

The questions that were asked by Conduent were basically questions to get more clarity in reference to what we were asking for in the proposal, but I also believe that the questions that we were asked, I believe that the solicitation was formatted in a way for Maryland to meet all federal and State regulations and also to make the contractor or the offeror responsible for completing all case management and provider payment services.

If this contract is not awarded today, the very essence of what Mr. Comptroller was talking about at the beginning of our, of this session, would be in jeopardy. Mr. Comptroller stated that Maryland should look out for small businesses. What this contract does is it pays small businesses. The very essential workers that have kept Maryland afloat during the COVID-19 crisis are the childcare providers. So what this contract does is it pays providers millions of dollars each month, every two weeks.

The contract ends on April 30th. There is supposed to be a four-month transition. The reason we have very limited offerors putting in solicitations is because it is a very specialized program and not only requires an IT solution, a manual process, customer service, but it also has, the vendor has to have the ability to put all those federal and State pieces together. A four-month transition, for a person who has worked in this field for 22 years, in my opinion, is too small. A vendor coming in and taking on this magnitude of work needs to have at least a six-

month transition period. So if this is not awarded today, based upon the principles in which we have put forth to follow the procurement process in the manner in which it was entitled to give everyone a fair opportunity to apply for the process, I think that not only are we doing a disservice to small business owners which are basically female, we're doing a disservice to 13,000 parents, 20,000 children. There will be disruptions --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much. I think, you know, I don't see any reason to defer this for two weeks. I don't think anyone's mind is going to change. But we can vote for this item separately.

TREASURER KOPP: I was just reminded --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Let me come back. Because I would like to speak to Deloitte, for example, and find out what from them they are concerning. So I would like to move that we defer this for three weeks, until the next meeting. And I think that's perfectly appropriate given the testimony that we have heard today.

MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Comptroller, Madam Treasurer.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I'm suggesting that it not be approved and defer it for three weeks so that I can talk to Deloitte and find out what

their explanation is for the situation. But I'm also, you know, obviously dependent upon my colleagues.

TREASURER KOPP: Governor, I would support your motion to separate out this item. Having listened to all the testimony, and recognizing that Conduent did not compete, chose not to compete, and understanding that the very large proportion, overwhelming of the consultants did not fall in the category in fact that was appropriate for this contract, I am prepared to support this.

I recognize the Comptroller's concern about Deloitte and its responsibilities. But I think Deloitte can manage it.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. So we have a second. We're going to vote on 21, or 22 1.2 separately. Are there any other questions on the General Services Agenda?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Hang on one second. Thank you. Just for a minute. Yeah. Item 24, please.

MR. CHURCHILL: Item 24 concerning HVAC, a maintenance service contract. Mark Riesett, Acting Director of Procurement for the Office of State Procurement.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Right. The question is why are there so many multiple extensions? This is the fourth extension in less than six months. What's going on?

MR. RIESETT: So good afternoon, again, Governor, Madam Treasurer, and Mr. Comptroller. This procurement is currently on the street and we just need time to finalize and award it. So this contract extension will take us to completion on the new solicitation.

MR. CHURCHILL: Mr. Comptroller?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes.

MR. CHURCHILL: I believe that, again, we were trying to, we're trying to align issuance of contracts to be a greater package. And so the extension allows us to have more time to go ahead and move the procurement through.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: So this is the last one? Hopefully?

MR. RIESETT: Yes, sir.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. I'm happy to move forward.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: All right. Let's, I'm going to vote on the 22-IT 1.2 first. Do we have a motion to approve 22-IT 1.2? Madam Treasurer?

TREASURER KOPP: I would so move. I have listened to the debate and shared the concern of the Comptroller going in. But I don't think postponing it so there are only three months instead of what the expert thinks should be six months, three months transition is not long enough.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: All right. Okay. I second that. And I understand the Comptroller's concern. I, too, am concerned about single bids. But I think in this particular case, Conduent decided not to bid. The State had been basically picking up that responsibility of paying the private providers and it has just been one person doing that, so it made sense to put it into the contract. And Conduent decided they didn't want to participate. And to come back now and argue about it, that's not, there is nothing to say that a rebid contract is not going to have that provision in there. And they will make a corporate decision, which it sounds like it was done. This is the former Xerox unit so they are not, you know, small time players. But someone at headquarters said, no, we don't want to do this. So that was the decision that was made.

So I know we're not all in favor. We have two supporting, and Mr. Comptroller, I'll let you go on the record.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, no, I'm going to vote no because I have a, you know, longstanding concern about single bid contracts. I think it's impossible to state, you know, that this is a good deal for the taxpayers because there are two bids. And you know, we could run the government with single bid contracts. All we have to do is go back and negotiate with the incumbent and make sure the incumbent is doing its job, and we wouldn't need to go through the procurement process, would we? We could just have extensions on into the

future. And that's the problem with single bid contracts. They are very convenient to our wonderful bureaucracies. And we would see tons of them, but for this Board saying no, we don't like them. Because you can't guarantee that the taxpayers are actually getting the best market deal.

On the issue that the incumbent was doing a bad job, no, the incumbent, according to the testimony was not doing a bad job. They were doing a perfectly decent job. They just --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: No one raised that as an issue. I don't think anyone raised that as an issue. That wasn't an issue.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, I raised it as an issue because I'm asking for a three-week extension. And you are being, I am being confronted with this, well, if we don't vote on this now all of a sudden something will happen down the road which is detrimental. No. We could easily actually extend it for a whole year and do a proper bid where we would get two bids, Lieutenant Governor. For example, ISSI Software, Bithgroup, GCOM Software, Control Tech, Computer Consultants International, Business Integra, Surgitor -- there are tons of companies that are in this space, a highly specialized type of space.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah but --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Here they are. There is no reason

--

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- those companies decided not to bid. There is no guarantee --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Come on. It's absurd.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Well just put your, you've voiced your concern --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I mean, it just --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- any other questions. You have voiced no on that item, two to one, that item is going to pass. If there is any other --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you. I think I will vote my own vote, if I can. And I vote no. And I find the posturing here to be just absurd and you know, it's just --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: (Indiscernible).

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- that's okay, if you guys are in support of single bids --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- obviously brought this before us. So I'm not going to go into that. But are there any other concerns about the DGS Agenda?

TREASURER KOPP: Could I just clarify my position? Which is that --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you, Madam Treasurer.

TREASURER KOPP: -- yeah, I don't like single bids either. But -

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah, you said that.

TREASURER KOPP: -- the incumbent chose not to bid. So to keep the contract with them seems to me in fact very bad practice. It was an open contract. The master contract was competitively bid. And I do believe that most of the companies in that master contract, the IT companies, particularly the software companies, do not have the combination of skills that was, that is being required under the State and federal regulations. That is, both the IT capacity to get the checks out and also the capacity to oversee, inspect, and work with these childcare --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay, Madam Treasurer. I completely see your point of view --

TREASURER KOPP: -- maybe it shouldn't have been combined. But it is combined and that's -- I'm just explaining --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. Let me just --

TREASURER KOPP: -- why I'm voting --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- and I appreciate that. I respect both of you very much. But I'm not suggesting that the incumbent get the contract. I'm just suggesting that there is no problem with the current incumbent, so extending this for six months and coming back with a bid where there are two competitive bids is entirely doable if the procurement folks that are in charge of this actually made it a top priority. And I'm not suggesting that all 388 members of the master contract are eligible. I just read you eight companies that do this as their main course of business. So couldn't we delay this for six months since there is no question that the incumbent, there is some kind of six-month or transition period anyway, and come back and approve for a \$31.5 million contract something that has two bids.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, I think we already voted on that. And so my question again, are there any other questions on the DGS Agenda? Do we have a motion to approve the remaining items on the DGS Agenda?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Move approval.

TREASURER KOPP: Second.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Well, thank you. We're done for the day. I hope 2021 is a far better year than 2020 was. To everyone's health and happiness, we'll continue. Thank you very much.

TREASURER KOPP: Let's just hope the next week is as calm and rational as this meeting has been.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Could I just conclude by wishing everyone a Happy New Year also. But right in my thoughts are my neighbor, Congressman Jamie Raskin.

TREASURER KOPP: Yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh, yes.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I walk by his house every day on a walk that I take. And my heart goes out to his family and everyone in the community. Because it's just a tragedy that they are experiencing.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Right. Right. No, I agree with you. I sent him a note and I know he won't -- I sent it through the mail. I did the traditional approach, so he probably won't get it for a little while. But I also, you know, sent my sympathies, but also commended he and his wife for being willing to share their son's, you know, challenge with depression. By doing so, they can be helping countless others to seek help, to talk to people, and countless others who, reminding us to talk to our friends and stay in contact. That when we ask a person, how are you doing? And they say, okay. We need to sometimes, no, really, how are you doing? Not just, how are you doing? Okay. And you keep

walking. So I thank him for that and, you know, sympathies go out to the family.

It is a tragedy.

TREASURER KOPP: Absolutely.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Well, thank
you.

(Whereupon, at 12:12 p.m., the meeting was concluded.)