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PRESENT

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PROCEEDINGS

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, good morning, everyone. It's a pleasure to once again join the Treasurer, Treasurer Kopp and Comptroller Franchot in leading the Board of Public Works as our State continues to make progress in our efforts to end the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before I give a little bit of an update on that, I just want to say, and actually extend a thank you publicly, to the Governor and First Lady Yumi Hogan for going out to Howard County to meet with the Asian community activist leadership and business community and really show a united front against the racism that that community is facing and has been facing for a couple of years now and as well as, you know, personal slights that people have dealt with and really not talked about. And so I really want to commend them for bringing, you know, State attention to that. This terrible situation that is going on throughout our country. There was an event on Lunar New Year in Howard County where a number of businesses, Asian businesses, were looted and damaged. And we just really need to make sure this comes to a halt and condemn it on every front. And so I just wanted to publicly thank the Governor for taking that stance, and of course the First Lady Yumi Hogan.

With regard to the COVID vaccine process, we first started to administer them here in Maryland on December 14th. As of February 19th, we hit

the one million vaccine milestone, that's 67 days after the first shots were administered. And thanks to increased supply and more avenues for folks to get vaccines, we went from one million to two million shots in arms in 27 days. These milestones and the pace at which we have reached them has been made possible by, first of all, increased vaccine production and our expanding our infrastructure for distribution of these vaccines, which we are continuing to do, and the willingness of Marylanders to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their loved ones so that we can get back to normal.

As of Monday, nearly one in five (indiscernible) people have received at least one dose of the COVID vaccine, which includes the Johnson and Johnson single dose. More than 800,000 people are considered fully vaccinated in the State. And currently, we have six vaccine sites operating in Baltimore City, Allegany County, Charles, Prince George's County and Wicomico Counties, and the Governor announced six additional sites will be coming online in the coming weeks, and the month starts next week. So in the coming weeks there will be six additional sites in our large jurisdictions of Montgomery, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel, Frederick, Howard, and Harford Counties. These sites are going to be able to vaccinate hundreds of people every day and will help drive our vaccine rate higher and get more people protected against the virus.

The Vaccine Equity Task Force, which my office has been involved with directly, continues to work to bring vaccines directly into the communities where there have been challenges accessing the vaccine. The task force has facilitated partnerships between the State, local health partners, and community-based organizations, like houses of worship. And last week, the task force launched a mobile vaccine clinic to provide vaccines and vaccinations in areas that are sometimes hard to reach. Those clinics allow for greater flexibility in serving the community. And you know, these missions have been able to be accomplished by the diligence and great support and logistic skills of the National Guard, our citizen soldiers, all Marylanders, who are working hard to protect our citizens.

So as of today, or no, today is Wednesday, as of yesterday, Tuesday, Maryland moved to Phase 2A in our vaccination plan, which makes all Marylanders over the age of 60 eligible for vaccines. For those of you who are still waiting for a vaccine to become available to you, hope is on the horizon. There are plans to vaccinate eligible individuals in the coming weeks. As of March 30th, we are looking to vaccinate Marylanders 16 and older who have underlying health conditions or disabilities and continuing to open that up to more and more Marylanders and with the objective by April 27th opening it up to the general public. These plans, of course, are dependent upon supply being produced by

Moderna, Johnson and Johnson, and Pfizer, as well as the allocation that we are receiving from the federal government.

President Biden has described this task of getting the vaccines into people's arms as, you know, "the most difficult logistical effort the U.S. has undertaken in peacetime." This effort is difficult and has its challenges, but it is not impossible. And it is possible with the help of everyone involved. Know that we are using every tool at our disposal to accomplish this mission to protect against COVID-19. I urge everyone to get a vaccine when it is your turn and to continue to do what you can to stop the spread of the virus through wearing your mask, exercising physical distancing, and washing your hands. And with that, I will turn it over to my colleagues for their opening remarks. Madam Treasurer?

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you, Governor. I, too, want to thank the Governor and Mrs. Hogan for bringing out in the open more clearly the problems we face with discrimination, hatred, and now acting out physically against people who don't look exactly like us. That's what I think it's about. In this case, Asian Americans; in other cases, African Americans, Jewish, Catholic, anyone who somehow you think is not your equal as a real person and threatening for that reason. I think that we have to have this out in the open and brotherhood and sisterhood is not just a platitude. It's reality and it has to be brought home. And I think perhaps it's a good thing. I mean, really, as we said before, the blinders have

been ripped from our eyes about the inequity and lack of inclusion in this society. And this year, let us hope that last year and this is a turning point. But right now, that doesn't help the people whose shops were broken into, and people who were shot. So I just want you to know that. I can't believe any good thinking person does not agree with you. And I thank you for that.

I do want to put in a little plug here building on what I said two weeks ago. Let me point out that the women's basketball team, Maryland's own Terps are still in it. They won the first game of the tournament. They are in today against a tough foe in Alabama. But I think they are doing wonderfully well. I wish they were regarded with and treated the same way that the men's teams are. They will be, they will be, I have no doubt about it, when all the young women who are becoming so interested now rise up. But our women, Brenda Frese, the great players, are doing terrifically well. And I hope we, I speak for all of us when I congratulate them and wish them well. It's pretty --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes.

TREASURER KOPP: exciting. And I, as you know, am no athlete. But recognize, recognize good, good strong playing when I see it.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, the talent is definitely there. And they are showing it and have been showing it for a number of years, definitely one of the powers in basketball.

TREASURER KOPP: Father of daughters, yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes.

TREASURER KOPP: Sorry.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Mr. Comptroller?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. And let me associate myself with your remarks. I thought they were excellent and obviously the remarks of the Treasurer were very eloquent. And you know, both Governor Hogan and I married up, that's for sure. Because the First Lady is just fabulous. She is elegant. She is smart. She is brave. And is saying all the right things. And I --

TREASURER KOPP: And a very good artist.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And a great artist, too, absolutely. But just a wonderful individual and I praise her for her leadership on a very, very difficult issue. And I associate myself with, Madam Treasurer and Lieutenant Governor, your remarks.

I will say on a little lighter note, I'm looking much better in the screen. That's what we do on these Zoom calls, we stare at each other and see how we look. And both Lieutenant Governor and Treasurer, I'm not sure whether you guys have got better cameras, but I have a better camera today. That's why I look

semi-normal, not like some shadowy kind of individual in the background. There I am. So thank you for, yeah, well Zoom --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: It does look brighter in your --

TREASURER KOPP: It does look good.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah. It's called, you know, another \$30 for a camera, whatever it is. But I would like to, if I could, just switching gears again, say, and I'm sure all of you share my sentiments about how appalled we were at the mass shooting only days after our, the Atlanta mass shooting we had another one. And this just serves as the latest incident of violence, and they have escalated. Apparently we had 20,000 gun deaths last year in the United States of America. And guess what? We're the only country in the world where that happens. This is a unique American flaw that we have. Twenty thousand people died from gun violence last, in 2020. So I mourn with the family and the loved ones of all of the victims in Atlanta, but particularly the ones, and in addition the ones in Colorado, I think we stand shoulder to shoulder with Asian Americans across our State and all Marylanders in rejecting hatred and white supremacy, which I think you alluded to, Madam Treasurer. That obviously is at the heart of what a lot of this violence is.

But Lieutenant Governor, my heart along with yours, I'm sure, is with the victims of Monday's shooting in Boulder, Colorado. I mourn with their families and their loved ones. Ten innocent people, including a police officer heroically responding to the attack and running into, you know, a mismatch where his little pistol, I guess, was just completely overwhelmed by the assault weapon that the perpetrator was using. And he was gunned down along with nine other innocent people at a supermarket in Boulder while simply going about their daily lives. Time and again our country experiences these tragedies with a frequency virtually unmatched in the world. Time and again, we mourn. But far too rarely do we act to prevent future tragedies. We share our grief. We call for change. But at the federal level, real change never seems to come. And at the State level, even in Maryland, long needed changes often languish or worse still are vetoed once they pass.

Addressing the scourge of gun violence requires more than thoughts and prayers. Reforms like common sense stronger background checks and licensing requirements, accountability for gun manufacturers. They are completely exempt from these war weapons that they are profiting from, completely exempt by the federal Congress from any kind of action for or responsibility or accountability. But anyway, a good place to start if we are to build communities where you don't get gunned down while shopping groceries, going to church, going

to school, attending a concert -- remember the concert that was being attended out in Las Vegas?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yep.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: You know, a good place to start would be holding gun manufacturers open to liability for the products that they are producing. We have made significant progress in Maryland. I'm not, you know, back in 1989, let's see, that was 32 years ago, I introduced the first assault weapon ban bill in the Legislature. I didn't succeed. But ultimately it did, and that is the law of the land right now, that you can't buy an assault weapon in Maryland and it's illegal to possess an assault weapon in Maryland, fyi. I think some of the old ones may have been grandfathered, but essentially it's illegal. It's illegal to go to Pennsylvania and buy an assault weapon and bring it back to Maryland. So I hope, you know, people recognize that we have made some progress. But as I said, currently as we speak in Maryland we have 24,000 permits granted to Marylanders who can carry loaded weapons, pistols, either concealed or frankly open on their hip. Twenty-four thousand people have been given permits to do that. Now, I'm not suggesting that is the focus. But do we check those folks, you know, from time to time to make sure they aren't in some kind of mental health distress? I don't know. But --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah, we actually have the red flag law.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Well, good. That's good. Because, you know, the big lie here, we had the big lie that the election was stolen, the big lie here is that people want to take your guns away. We don't want to take your guns away. We just want common sense protections so that people that are mentally unhinged don't get immediate access to assault weapons --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah. Absolutely.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- massacres that we read about. And apparently, there have been 115 mass murders in the last, recent past. I mean, it's not like this is just single events. They happen over and over and over again. So I think we all need, that more can be done. I applaud what is happening in Congress and I hope that they pass the common sense background checks that President Biden -- and he also passed an assault weapon ban back in the day that has been repealed. And that should be put back into place.

On a slightly happier note, Lieutenant Governor, I would be remiss if I didn't extend my sincerest congratulations and well wishes to my invaluable Assistant Comptroller and Board of Public Works Liaison Anne Klase and her husband Blake on the arrival of their second child, a healthy, happy, beautiful baby girl last Thursday. Anne has been a tremendous asset to the agency during her ten

years of dedicated service. And we look forward to her return after some much deserved family time. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. I know you and the Treasurer are huge advocates of happy families. And so congrats to Anne Klase.

TREASURER KOPP: Yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Great. Congratulations to her.

TREASURER KOPP: That's exciting. That's very exciting.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Oh, yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: And lack of sleep for a little while. So.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes.

TREASURER KOPP: Oh well.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Speaking of lack of sleep, Secretary's Agenda, John Gontrum?

(Laughter.)

SECRETARY GONTRUM: That's very true, Governor. Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller, there are nine items on the Secretary's Agenda this morning and there are 15 reports of emergency procurement actions. I am happy to assist with answering any questions.

TREASURER KOPP: John -- Governor, could I just take a moment to mention Item 3, the PAARs report. John, I understand that all of the procurement agency activities reports are now being posted on our BPW website thanks to your action, and I appreciate that very much. Sometimes these slip through because we don't have to approve each one. But this is the way that transparency works and that sunshine can be shown upon all of the transactions, even those we don't actually have to vote to report, are out there in the open. And thank you for doing that.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: You're welcome, Madam Treasurer. Thank you for the recommendation. Thank you for the plug for the Board's website. So if anyone goes to the Board of Public Works website, bpw.maryland.gov, you will see on the left-hand side of the page there is now a dedicated procurement agency activity report page on the website, PAAR, which you can easily navigate to, again, on the left-hand portion of the website. We're happy to do it, Madam Treasurer. Thank you for the recommendation.

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah, thank you. That's extremely helpful. And also, you know, point out, which has been pointed out in previous Board meetings, the agencies are catching up on their PAARs and the PAAR report now is also an attempt at catching up on some of the past due

PAAR reports that have -- I guess at best we'll say they fell through the cracks and with some of the procurement transition that they didn't get in on time. And so the agencies are going back and correcting that now. So we appreciate their efforts and I think they have learned from their mistakes. Okay.

TREASURER KOPP: Could I just, could I point out two items that I think are really worthy of note? One is Item 5, the Department of Housing, Brookmeadow Apartments. New apartments being put up to be occupied by households at or below 60 percent of income, but unlike many of these projects that we do, this is going to be close to the cutting edge of energy conservation and moving into the 21st Century, including, you'll notice on Item 7, solar panels on the community buildings. And I'm really very proud to see that that's the way the State is going and think that everybody should know it. And push, of course, to do even more. But Secretary Holt and your department, I thank you very much.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes. You know, there is a lot more concentration on long term benefits of the new construction. And I just have to point out that former Delegate Morhaim was a big advocate for looking at the long term operational costs of, you know, the green buildings and, you know, so he, he, you know, was a big advocate for that. And I just want to give him a shout out. So hopefully he's not listening, because he'll text me about that. So I --

TREASURER KOPP: Also, Item 7, Governor, the DNR Coastal Resiliency Program.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes.

TREASURER KOPP: This is a major program. We're going forward strongly with replacing a hardened old school shoreline with a living shoreline with regenerative stormwater management capacity and climate resistance. So slowly, we are moving to incorporate recognition and addressing both the impact and the exacerbation of climate change in this whole range of departmental proposals. And I'm just very proud that that is the way Maryland is going and thank the Secretary.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: If you get a chance, there are a couple of very good examples of this living shoreline both in Havre de Grace as well as -- I have to, I'm losing it now -- Assateague State Park, there is some shoreline, living shoreline resilience projects that are in operation that are doing very well. And it would be worthwhile taking a look if you get a chance to get to Havre de Grace, the Town of Havre de Grace.

TREASURER KOPP: That would be great. When everything is back to normal and we have school trips and things, I hope the focus will be on how Maryland is addressing this potential crisis, this crisis, potential catastrophe, but addressing it sharply and cost effectively. Good.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Go ahead, Mr. Comptroller.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: No, I'm happy to defer to you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: No, no. I'm going to mention a couple of the emergency contracts that have gotten some attention of late. But if you had something before we get to the emergencies?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: No. I'm more than happy to defer to you, and I do have some comments and questions.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. I'm going to mention A5. It's a Department of Health procurement. The bid went to Ernst and Young. There were two bidders, Ernst and Young and Alvarez and Marsal. There were four bidders, or four entities that were actually contacted for this emergency procurement. So there was some confusion, I think, particularly in the media and maybe some in the Legislature, with regard to the difference between emergency procurements, sole source, single bids, and in this case it was an emergency procurement but they did reach out to four different firms that could provide the type of services and received responses from two of them and selected Ernst and Young.

Now, I just want to, you know, clear up a few things that, you know, if you do a quick overview of the Code of Maryland Regulations or COMAR, which

I have right here for anyone to see and it's actually turned to emergency procurements. You know, an emergency procurement is under COMAR limited to procurements of the type and items and quantity of items necessary to avoid or mitigate serious damage to public health, safety, and welfare. And the procurement officer has the authority to use this type of procurement method with the approval of the agency head. So it would be the departmental head, in this case maybe the Secretary of Health, to pursue a solicitation that is not using the competitive process, either through the bid process or a request for proposals. So you know, the whole point of the emergency procurement, and the Board has seen many, on many occasions, and have reviewed and approved emergency procurements for things such as sewer backups, mold remediation, burst pipes, failed HVAC systems in many of our State facilities. We see that regularly, that pops up. And those procurements, again, were authorized by the agency head. And you know, so when you have situations where a bridge is washed out or a roadway is washed out or a branch or a tree falls on the roof of a building, you've got to get it repaired. And you often don't have time to do a full solicitation when you have to get these items taken care of.

You know, we now are facing an unprecedented health emergency. And this is something that, you know, is governed by the same procurement or COMAR regulations as would be with our typical facilities emergencies. And you

know, it has been stated, and I don't recall the exact wording that the President had stated with regard to this, you know, unprecedented situation that we're in, but basically it's the largest peacetime deployment in U.S. history and really world history with regard to the vaccine rollout. And nearly every aspect of the State's COVID-19 response at the Department of Health has been, you know, utilizing the skills and expertise of our State workforce, from testing to hospital patient surge planning to equipment procurement, contact tracing, and vaccine distribution. But, you know, given the speed, scale, and the sheer breadth of the supply chain management and planning and logistics needs for vaccine distribution, it has made it abundantly clear that we needed outside help to make sure that we are able to roll these vaccines out in an efficient manner. And we needed outside contractors who possess the competency and the capabilities that are not readily available in State government.

So as I mentioned, we solicited four different firms. Two of those firms responded and Ernst and Young has been able to bring particular skills and experience to State government, to our State government, you know, particularly in terms of accounting and logistical expertise that is not necessarily available, you know, in our work force, from supply chain management, forensic accounting, on the strategic vaccine deployment, as well as helping us benchmark our processes and improve the analysis and support. And they are doing similar work throughout

the country. I mean, virtually every state in the union is using one of the large system integrators to help them with this deployment of vaccines. Large states like New York and California are using system integrators. Ernst and Young is working in many states, including Michigan, and Arizona, Georgia, North Carolina, as well as internationally, to do this. And so far, you know, they have returned value in terms of the ability to roll these vaccines out.

I mentioned that it was 67 days before we were able to reach one million vaccines being placed in people's arms, and it has been just 27 days since then that we went to two million shots in arms. There is no doubt we wouldn't have been able to reach that level of operation as quickly if we didn't have the expertise of the outside, you know, company or contractor, such as Ernst and Young, to be able to do this.

You know, I'm not downplaying our State employees. We have a wonderful, you know, work force. But we don't have the capacity to be able to take on such a large deployment that is a once in a lifetime, you know, hopefully it's once in a hundred and ten year process, of having to have something of this nature and roll out such a large deployment in a peak time effort. And you know, it makes sense that you bring in the expertise for when you need them, and then the contract expires when you don't need them.

And there are plenty of checks and balances already in the system with regard to emergency contracts. And I would ask the Legislature to take a look at COMAR. There is a balance that is struck between, you know, the transparency that is in place and making sure that we get the projects done when they need to be done. You know, the first step, of course, is they are entered into eMaryland Marketplace Advantage. Then the contracts are brought here to the Board of Public Works, I would say one of the most, if not the most, transparent body within Maryland State government, for discussion and review in public with a written and video transcript provided. And, you know, some of the proposals that have been coming out of the Legislature, I don't think they really understand the procurement process. I don't think they realize how impractical it is to notify the Legislature on every emergency procurement or even to require the Chief Procurement Officer to approve every emergency contract. You know, many of these emergencies occur after business hours, you know. So the Chief Procurement Officer has to approve to get, you know, this water pipe fixed at a facility? It's just not a practical way to go about it.

So I would hope that, you know, the policy makers would take the time to understand many of the operational challenges the State agencies must confront when trying to serve the people of the State in an effective and an efficient manner.

You know, I'm just going to take a little bit more time in this what appears to be a lecture to just point out that this year will mark 20 years since the attacks of 9/11. I was an appointee at the U.S. General Services Administration on that day. The building that I was sitting in, headquarters on L Street N.W., actually shook with the impact of the plane striking the Pentagon. I saw the agency procurement officers procure office space, telephone services, furniture and equipment for a thousand displaced Pentagon workers in a little more than one week. You know, Congress didn't ask, you know, who they were leasing space from or what contract method they were using to procure this equipment for these displaced workers, or you know, what procurement method they were using to get vehicles to the Secret Service in New York or space for FEMA in New York and other equipment. They did come back and may have come back and asked a lot of questions after the emergency had passed, which is part of their oversight, you know, authority and responsibility. But not in the middle of the crisis. You know, it's as if, you know, Eisenhower was asked by Congress, you know, just prior to the D-Day invasion, or during the D-Day invasion, you know, how did they procure those boats, the Higgins boats that took the troops to shore. You know, there is a time and place for reviewing the process and I think Legislative Services has started reviews and they will be doing reviews, I'm quite sure. But I think when there are questions about the procurement process, questions about emergency procurement,

they don't have to take my word on it or even try to interpret COMAR on their own. They can talk to the professionals at the Board of Public Works. You know, they are not partisan. They are careerists that are at the Board of Public Works and they can talk to them. They can talk to the Chief Procurement Officer who, you know, has been in procurement for many, many years, you know, to ask to explain the process.

So I just think that there is a lot of confusion out there that gets caught up sometimes into political debates and partisanship. But I think we need to be very careful when we start, you know, really getting and delving into the process that has worked for many, many years. So that's my soap box. And I'll --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Well, I've been on plenty of soap boxes in my life, too. So that's no problem for me, no complaint from me. But Lieutenant Governor, I did want to bring up an issue that I think is, you know, important.

We're looking at between A5 and A15, 11 emergency contract awards from the Department of Health and they are for various services related to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I'm basically appalled that nine of the 11 awards submitted by MDH today are late. I'm not talking about a couple of days late. I'm talking about weeks and months late, some back from August. And they are required by COMAR within 45 days of signing off on these contracts to

report them to the Board of Public Works. And nine out of the 11 -- now, obviously, the excuse is, well, we were busy. Devastating public health crisis that our State is facing. But that doesn't absolve them, or any agency frankly, of their responsibilities to return and at least inform the Board of Public Works. And obviously everybody wants to be sensitive to rolling things out and making sure that things, the trains run on time. But we also have a responsibility to be stewards of the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. And I would argue that especially during an emergency we have an even greater responsibility to ensure that we are careful of expending taxpayer dollars and ensure that the funds are directed to programs that are the most effective.

For example, Item A9, I think Assistant Secretary Ye is here. I'm not sure whether the Secretary of Health is. Is he, is the Secretary of Health on the --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: No, I think we have Webster, Webster Ye I think is on the line for that. Or at least --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: If I could ask Mr. Ye a couple of questions?

MR. YE: Good morning, sir. Go ahead.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes. First of all, where is the Health Secretary?

MR. YE: Mr. Comptroller, good morning, Madam Treasurer, Governor, Webster Ye, Assistant Secretary of Health. The answer to your question, sir, is he is busy right now with the vaccine distribution effort. He is currently trying to get next week's vaccine allocation prepared and out.

TREASURER KOPP: The Acting Secretary.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Really? The Acting Secretary. But really? That's what you are saying?

MR. YE: Yes, sir. He is currently in a meeting. He is working with our team based on --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay --

MR. YE: -- they are taking the vaccine distribution data from the federal government and we're trying to plan next week's allocation, sir.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. Well, he might be interested. This is a \$34 million request, A9. And so my first question is, this is all about a telephone answering service, what is the average wait time before a caller is connected with someone to assist them?

MR. YE: It depends on the time, sir. But generally speaking the average is about three minutes right now. Just to give you some statistics, today we are about to hit about a million calls since the call center opened on February 15th. We've booked as of today, this morning at 9:00 a.m., we have booked almost

180,000 pre-registrations, and prior to pre-registrations we booked about just shy of 40,000 appointments.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And you are saying that the wait time is three minutes?

MR. YE: Yes, sir. That's the average. It obviously depends on exactly when you are calling. But the hours are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days a week.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. And you mentioned the number, how many people have actually I guess fully taken advantage of the statewide pre-registration system? You mentioned numbers. Could you give those to me again?

MR. YE: Yes, just shy of 180,000 individuals have successfully completed pre-registration, and 40,000 appointments, just shy of 40,000 appointments prior to the launch of pre-registration. And we have handled almost a million calls as of today.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. And once they register through GoVAX, is DMI and their staff ultimately responsible for scheduling appointments?

MR. YE: It's a combined effort, sir --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- average --

MR. YE: -- it's a combined effort between MDH staff, the specific mass vax site staff, and DMI.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And what outreach does DMI perform to pre-registrants to schedule the vaccine appointment?

MR. YE: Well, right now we are, depending on the sites, we are working with individual counties to get their pre-registration lists. We are working through them. We are trying to reach out through texts, calls. You know, for example, at Six Flags we are working with Prince George's County Health Department. We have done several rounds of reach-outs to Prince George's County residents and seniors. We have focused on pre-registrants for the Shore, Southern Maryland, Baltimore City and Baltimore County, etcetera. And this Thursday, we are opening up the Hagerstown site, sir.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Excellent. So with respect to the GoVAX portal, who is responsible for the development, maintenance, and operation? Is it DMI or the State? How much does it cost?

MR. YE: The buck stops with the State, sir. But with the specific pre-registration websites, we have enlisted the technical assistance of E&Y to help us with the technical development.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. E&Y is what?

MR. YE: Ernst and Young, sir.

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COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: That's an accounting firm, Ernst and Young, right?

MR. YE: They are an accounting and services firm, sir.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah, those --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- oh, many different --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- just accounting firm. You utilize them at your operation.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: That's just what I say, then.

MR. YE: And Mr. Comptroller, for your information you should know that EY helped California with their pre-registration system and ours is very closely, a close cousin of that system, for example. And unlike D.C., our pre-registration system is up and it's running and it's working.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. But I notice it's somehow integrated with Maryland OneStop, which is our statewide licensing portal. Is that, what's the connection there?

MR. YE: Yes, sir. It's a very close, again, we are working with our Department of Information Technology partners. And the OneStop is the backbone, if you will, for the pre-registration system.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And so why is the GoVAX portal just mass vaccination sites? Why don't they collaborate with us on local health

departments, pharmacies, scheduling portals for clinics? A genuine one-stop shop, so to speak.

MR. YE: Mr. Comptroller, we're working with local health departments. The Governor just yesterday announced six additional sites, as the Lieutenant Governor mentioned at the beginning of the Board of Public Works. And we're working with local health departments. It's a bit of a complicated process. At the beginning, many of our vaccine providers told us that for various reasons, including HIPAA and also controlling their own scheduling systems, that they preferred having their own systems. So we worked up a system that works for the State mass vax sites and we're offering that to the local health departments now. And as time goes on, we hope to extend it further.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. How many staff has DMI provided to support the call center to date? And how many more could be added, I guess, if we, as we move into this new phase of vaccinating everyone? How many more could be added if demand increases?

MR. YE: Well, sir, right now DMI is capable of helping us with over 75,000 calls a day. That translates to about 700 staff that are assisting us, and we can scale upwards if necessary. And as the Governor pointed out, we are trying to do our best to make sure that we can get 100,000 shots a day. And right now, you know, we want to make sure that every single dose we get from the federal

government, we can get that shot into the arm of a Marylander as quickly as possible.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: So the call center, DMI is providing 700 staff people right now for us?

MR. YE: Yes, sir. Again, we're trying to handle 75,000 calls a day, sir. And we're trying to make sure that the average wait time is to the minimum as necessary. As part of -- when you call into the system, sir, it will also offer a Spanish routing and also text-based routing, if that's more convenient.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. On Item A10, Assistant Secretary Ye, when the first modifications were awarded last November on Item 10, Acting Secretary Schrader explained he expected CIAN to process roughly 500,000 tests by the end of December and was allocated approximately 400,000 Lab Genomics test kits of the 500,000 test kits procured from South Korea. Can you confirm if any of these test kits are still awaiting use today? Or whether that's --

MR. YE: No, sir. I think the last of the Lab Genomics kits were used on or about December 14th. So that completed the State's purchase of the Lab Genomics kits. And then I believe I read in a press release somewhere that CIAN Labs was so impressed by those kits that they ordered another million for their own usage, using their own funds.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Great. So your comments are that that supply has been completely depleted?

MR. YE: Yes, sir.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. Item 13, is it my understanding that the contract provides consulting services that enabled Maryland to launch a centralized hospital patient transfer system during the late fall and Winter of 2020? This is Item A13.

MR. YE: Yes, sir, in part. We've got a lot of subject matter experts helping us. A13 specifically helps us with the hospital demand management side of things. So that we can make sure that patients, that you know, no Marylander will ever be in a situation where they can't get a hospital bed. So that is part of the effort, sir. Yes.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And what exactly do they do, in addition to your staff?

MR. YE: Well sir, it's a huge effort. We work very closely. There's daily calls with the Maryland Hospital Association, NIMS, the emergency medical folks, Dr. Delbridge and friends, both our, we've got liaisons built in from the Hospital Association with each hospital, and then other hospital data planners, of which A13 is part of. And the basic idea is to ensure that there is demand management. That each hospital in each region, there are five regions in Maryland,

are talking to each other, making sure that patients with COVID are sent to the most clinically appropriate location, and to basically ensure that no hospital is left stranded and packed full of people.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. That's fine. Thank you for that. We'll just circle back quickly to Item A5, which the Lieutenant Governor talked about. That, out of the 11 there were two that met the 45-day report notice. One of them was A5, I will mention just for the record. It's a three-month contract award to Ernst and Young for staffing and technical consulting to assist with the State's COVID vaccination plan. The not to exceed costs of the three-month contract including two three-month renewal options is \$11.9 million. Frankly, Assistant Secretary Ye, I read all the broad, carefully crafted consultant verbiage several times over in the briefing document. My first question is very simple. What, and I didn't even pick it up from what you were conversing with the Lieutenant Governor about, what exactly are we paying Ernst and Young millions of dollars to do that we couldn't do with our own staff?

MR. YE: Sure. And the very simple answer, sir, is we need all the help we can get to ensure that we get over 100,000 doses of vaccine every week into 100,000 arms of Marylanders every week as quickly as possible with smooth data reporting both to our federal and Maryland State stakeholders. And that is an all hands on deck approach.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay --

MR. YE: Like every other health department across the State, you know, we are not on constant stand-by for a once in a century pandemic. That would not be efficient usage of government resources. We do not have the dedicated supply chain logisticians that can really focus on and the forensic accountants that can really make things work.

For example, one of the key deliverables that our colleagues at EY helped us on was with the data reporting. So the feds said that we were allocated a certain number of doses. Our records had a different number of doses. And as the Governor pointed out, this was a discrepancy of almost 200,000 doses and that made our numbers, our reporting, our standings nationally look odd. And so with the help of the EY accountants, we were able to find out that, you know, 130,000 doses were allocated to Maryland's federal agencies, of which they had only used about 60,000 doses. And that there was another 100,000 doses that were improperly charged to Maryland. And just by fixing those numbers, we got two bits of data. The first was we were doing better than the federal rankings had us, and that was just because of bad reporting. And then the second is we were trying to make sure that our federal agencies where tens of thousands of Marylanders work every day were vaccinating Maryland federal employees. And so that's a key example of just using good solid accounting principles, which I will admit is not

something that Maryland Department of Health normally employs. That was a major undertaking and a lot of help. And then they helped us with tracking all of our second doses to make sure that if you get a first dose, you are absolutely getting a second dose. And that goes to show recently, and the CDC announced that Maryland is one of the best states in the union for making sure that people get their second doses. I think we're at about 1.7 percent of people who did not get second doses. And that's very important.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. Well, I congratulate Ernst and Young, I guess, for helping us locate the fact that the number of vaccines accredited to us was erroneous. But I find it hard to believe that somebody at MDH with a sharp pencil could not have determined that and given President Biden's transition team, or whoever it was, a call. But that's okay. I'm concerned about the fact that we are overlooking our resources. I think Governor Hogan last December announced that the Maryland National Guard would be deployed to assist MDH with planning, operation, and distribution support for the State's vaccination program.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Mr. Comptroller -

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MR. YE: (Indiscernible).

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- Ernst and Young?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Come on, Mr. Comptroller. They are. They are not doing the work that Ernst and Young --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: If I --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- Ernst and Young do data analytics. They are providing forensic accounting --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- supply chain management. The National Guard is out at all of these mass vaccination sites handling the logistics of getting people through. They are going to the community sites. They do site work and analysis on logistics. But they are not the data people that we, and we don't have the data people in the State to be able to do this type of deployment, the largest peacetime deployment, and we don't have the staff, nor should we have the staff, for a once in a lifetime, once in a hundred year event. So I mean, I'm not sure where you're going with this --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- I understand --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- but it's just, you know, it doesn't work that way. And you should --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I understand.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- know that. You use contractors in your facility as well. So you know, we have approved contracts

with Ernst and Young for work that is being done in the Comptroller's Office. So, I mean, come on. I'm going to, I'll mute myself. I'm sorry.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you. No, you don't have to mute yourself. I'm always interested in your comments. But I am particularly concerned here because you know, we have been at this virus crisis for over a year. And it is not as if we don't have enough time to do some advance planning perhaps for what we would hope would be the production of a large enough supply of vaccines for us to need that kind of program. So I'm, I guess it has been coming for months. And why wasn't there a plan to do this in advance of the all of the stuff that has happened recently in the last month? We knew the vaccines were coming. And perhaps they have gotten here sooner than we anticipated. But I would have assumed that the State all of these months was planning for the distribution of the vaccines. And you know, I hate to say it, but I think what we are experiencing right now is a collision of good intentions with just bad execution.

My notes, Mr. Ye, indicate that part of Ernst and Young's scope of work provided for a seven-day end-to-end assessment, which included actionable recommendations. Can you elaborate on what some of those specific recommendations that Ernst and Young identified in the initial assessment report, what results we have seen following these recommendations, as well as some of the other deliverables stipulated within the contract?

MR. YE: Absolutely, Mr. Comptroller. And first, I would say I respect your comments, sir. But, and I happen to be privileged to work with the Maryland Department of Health. It's one of the largest agencies in Maryland. But over the course of the past year, it has been made abundantly clear that we, it's an all hands on deck State government and beyond endeavor. We have got, I have been privileged to work over the past year with all of my colleagues at the Department of Commerce, Labor, Planning. Like we have brought in hundreds if not thousands of colleagues to assist us and all of our colleagues at the local health departments are working their hearts out to try to make sure that, we're trying to do five or six things at the same time. And I think that's beyond the scope of any State agency on a normal basis, much less a crisis where we have to get everything done right away.

To answer your question about, well, why couldn't we have planned it, as the Board is uniquely positioned to know, the average time for a procurement in the State of Maryland is somewhere between 12 months to two years. If we were trying to go through normal procurement methods to get something like this up and running, we would still be talking about it and not getting shots in arms.

With EY, you know, just in their initial assessments, they have helped us with our improvements to the first and second dose vaccine supply chain management, they have given us assistance with getting the pre-registration and

registration system up and running. Like I said, we're using a very close cousin of the California system. We are, they have helped us with technology and getting things worked out with the previous 20-year old system called PrepMod, and they have helped us with data reports to make sure that every dose that we get is correctly charged to Maryland, administered to Marylanders, and reported so that it's in a timely manner. And lastly, they are helping us with the Vaccine Equity Task Force so that we can get shots in folks who are disproportionately affected. So all of these we think are extremely important efforts. We value the help of our EY colleagues. We continue to value the work of our National Guard colleagues. And it's a combined effort. We've got lots of people, lots of really smart people, and they are all working 16-plus hours a day, seven days a week, to try to get shots in arms, sir.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. If you could provide the members of the Board, or their staff, with a copy of the initial assessment report from Ernst and Young, I would be appreciative. Is that possible?

MR. YE: Mr. Comptroller, we'll take a look at it. We didn't ask for a report to stick on a bookshelf and have it look pretty, sir. It was an operational set of items that we immediately took and implemented and you can see that we are delivering results right now.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Well, that's fine. But just send us what you have. You don't have to have it bound. Thank you. Is that a yes or no?

MR. YE: We'll do our best to get it to you, sir.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And if I could ask --

TREASURER KOPP: And --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- I'm sorry --

TREASURER KOPP: -- a moment, that answer, because I had the same question. I'd just like to clarify, my understanding is that you hired them to do an overall assessment to evaluate 34 processes to help improve them. I have great respect for Ernst and Young and I think it was a good idea to hire them. I don't think it's a good idea to keep secret, however, what their report was since we did pay for it.

MR. YE: Madam Treasurer, I think the focus is not so much on the actual report but rather the operational support they have given us. We have embedded EY staff with our National Guard, Health Department, and other agency staff.

TREASURER KOPP: You told us they gave you a report in their framework to include people, process, technology, and data. I think it would be an interesting document, or set of documents, or whatever it is, to see.

MR. YE: I understand, Madam Treasurer.

TREASURER KOPP: -- what you told us, sir.

MR. YE: I understand, Madam Treasurer.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- yes from the Deputy Health Director. I can't imagine there not being a --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: You know, we need to look into that. If they said that there is a report, then we need to, you know --

TREASURER KOPP: A recommendation.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- production of that report, so.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. So I have a couple of other questions. Mr. Ye, how much of the contract has been expended to date? Can you briefly discuss the financial structure of the contract?

MR. YE: Yes, sir. What type of questions do you have? I think there's -- well, go ahead, sir. I'm not quite sure I understand your question.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: How much of the contract has been expended?

MR. YE: I don't know the answer to that, sir. I'll have to get back to you. And we'll certainly do our best to get you the documents that you have requested and the Treasurer.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. And if you could just briefly describe the financial structure? What --

MR. YE: Yes, no problem, sir. The basic question, as stated in our report to the Board of Public Works, it's a not to exceed contract. The initial three-month period is about \$3.8 million. The basic idea is we're trying to use EY staff to assist us at the beginning and then start transitioning State employee staff to replace these folks as time goes on. We'll anticipate probably moving on using State employees to the extent possible as they get trained up by the EY staff, and that's the basic financial structure.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Okay. And let me just ask about other consulting contracts similar to this one with perhaps other companies other than Ernst and Young. Are, and since nine out of the 11, this one happened to be presented on time, but are there other contracts that have been executed or consulted with that are similarly going to be late entries to the 45-day window to get them before the Board?

MR. YE: Sir, I sincerely apologize for our late submitted reports. We are doing everything we can to get everything reported to the Board of Public Works as quickly as we can.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: How many emergency contracts are awaiting review and approval by the Board?

MR. YE: Sir, as soon as we submit the reports, that will be in the hands of the Board staff and we are working as quickly as we can.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And so I happened to have called a couple of weeks ago for an independent commission of fiscal experts to examine in a positive way, I'm not suggesting that relief is not great. Relief funding from the feds is terrific. But I think we need to examine and have some accountability as to these emergency contracts, particularly the ones that are arriving late. And so I would move, Lieutenant Governor, that we defer this item, in addition to Items A13 and A15, until our next meeting, hoping that a few more weeks will provide MDH some time to better justify the spending and perhaps get us the assessment, the report that the Treasurer articulated better than I. But there has to be something they can be providing in response to our questions. And if I have a second, terrific. Obviously, the money has already been paid. There is no question about that. So I don't think there is any harm in simply, you know, asking. That's all. And I'd love to get your support, Lieutenant Governor, because I know you are an expert on procurement. And really --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: You know --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- make sure that the, you know, that the information -- well, first of all, that it's presented to us within the 45-day period. And secondly, when we ask questions that there be some tangible response.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well I think, and particularly as it relates to A9 or A5, you know, we will make sure that we get that

information to you that you all are looking for. I don't really see a reason to defer it. They are providing value, as we've mentioned. But they can get that initial assessment information to you, even if as the Health Department, they said that there was a report, we'll get that report. And if they were mistaken, then they write up what it was that Ernst and Young found. I don't see that. I don't remember the other ones that you said, what numbers, did you say A9?

SECRETARY GONTRUM: A13 and A15 is what I heard, Governor.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: A13 and A15.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh, wait a minute.
So 5, 13, and --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Fifteen.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: A15.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Not A9?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: No.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. I'm not sure, I mean, I don't remember, you know, the questions that you had for this Berkeley Research. I just, I don't see a need for that. But --

TREASURER KOPP: I --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Well I would press my motion --

TREASURER KOPP: -- could I --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Madam --

TREASURER KOPP: All of these are emergency contracts which have gone into effect, isn't that right?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Correct.

TREASURER KOPP: That's what I thought. I would second the Comptroller's motion. I think we do need more information. And I, Mr. Ye, am very interested in your response and trying to understand it. And this will give us time to understand why the emergency contracts cannot be, why we can't be notified of the emergency contracts when they are executed or at least within 45 days after they are executed. And the response that you are essentially underfunded and don't have enough people in your huge department in the procurement agency, well, that's not anything that this Board has anything to do with. But you know where to get the procurement personnel. I don't think lack of transparency ought to be blamed on underfunding or insufficient personnel. It's not an impressive response.

MR. YE: Madam Treasurer, I don't think I am saying that we are underfunded or under-personneled. I am saying that my colleagues in the procurement office are working their hearts out seven days a week to try to turn things around as quickly as possible. We're trying to manage the procurements for

the mass vax sites at the same time that we are trying to take care of these items.

And I should note --

TREASURER KOPP: -- these are reports to us. This is not, this is not to do a procurement. And I am only saying what you said, which is you are trying to recruit. And everyone knows, I do believe most people know, that the State employees right now are overburdened and there are insufficient numbers of them in some offices. I can't imagine that you are denying that.

MR. YE: Ma'am, we are trying our best to, we've got ongoing recruitments for our procurement office along with DGS. But we're trying to do the best we can. And I think that this was a good faith effort by my procurement colleagues. I should note that these contracts were --

TREASURER KOPP: -- I did not say that the people who were working there were not working their hearts out. I am saying that there are insufficient resources put into this, and therefore you are not reporting to us in the legally set required timeframe.

MR. YE: I understand, Madam Treasurer. We will do our best to improve our future performance.

TREASURER KOPP: Or get some people.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, we can work with them as well as maybe see if there are resources in other departments that can

help them out with regard to some of these if there's backlogs on these emergency contracts, see where everything is. So --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: if I could add in, Lieutenant Governor --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- defer those three items?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: -- yeah, those are going to be deferred. And I'd also suggest that the Acting Secretary of the Department of Health appear at the next Board of Public Works meeting. Please.

MR. YE: I will take that back, Mr. Comptroller.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you, Governor. Do we need to vote? Or do we just need to --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, we'll need to vote separately. Are there any other questions on the Secretary's Agenda?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I would move approval with the deferral of those three items.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes, we have the exception on the two items. So John, do you want to take it as two votes? Is it two separate votes?

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Those three items, correct, yes, please, if there could be a vote on the motion to defer Items A9 -- I'm sorry. A5, A13, and A15. A5, A13, and A15, if there could be a vote on that motion, please?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. I think it's two to one. I'm opposing it.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Very good. And then just a vote on the balance of the Secretary's Agenda.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Move approval.

TREASURER KOPP: I will second, but I would like to say for the record that I do think that the Lieutenant Governor made some very good points about the need for a capacity to have emergency contracts. And I don't think anyone disagrees with that. But because there is that need, I think it's all the more important that there be transparency and that we know what is being done.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: No, I agree. The reports should be getting to the Board quicker. But the ones that created the, you know, press articles did not get to the Board late. And so that was particularly what I was addressing. And the examples that the Legislature is talking about is not, you know, they didn't get to the Board late. They were transparent. There was competition. One of the press items, and I guess they were quoting somebody else

who said there was no competition. They called it a sole source and some were calling it secret. But you know, the press likes controversy.

TREASURER KOPP: Right.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: So, you know, that's what sells. And so, you know, that's what I was really addressing when it came to Ernst and Young and even the other DMI contract. So --

TREASURER KOPP: We need emergency capacity. I do agree with you. Although I would point out, Governor, that sometimes the real emergencies are caused by inadequate maintenance and --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh, no question about it. I can, you know, as the former DGS Secretary --

TREASURER KOPP: Yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- and I can remember several years ago testifying before one of the committees, I think it was Appropriations in the House, and I said to the Subcommittee Chair at the time, I said, you know, none of you guys go to a ribbon cutting of a new HVAC system or a new plumbing system or a new roof. You want a new building, but not the maintenance that takes place. And so that's why we're asking for these facilities renewal. And it's non-partisan, you know.

TREASURER KOPP: Right. Yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: State buildings only have one constituency and that is State employees. It's not roads, it's not children, it's not, you know, whatever other group. And so that's, and so the public doesn't always call and say, hey, I think, you know, that office building, State Center, is looking terrible. I think you need to do something about the plumbing.

TREASURER KOPP: I must admit, State Center was springing to mind. But the prisons also.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. No question about them. Yeah. The prisons. Yeah, we often have pipes bursting and air conditions failing there. Okay. So it sounds like we have approved the Secretary's Agenda.

TREASURER KOPP: (Indiscernible.)

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. John, I think we're fine? We lost John. Department of Natural Resources.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Yes, Governor. Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Thank you.

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Hi, good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. For the record, Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. First, I want to thank you for

highlighting and approving the Coastal Resiliency Project that was on the Secretary's Agenda. And we also have 13 items for your approval today on our Real Property Agenda. And we're happy to answer any questions you may have.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Move approval, if appropriate.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Let me just say for the Treasurer's purposes, she particularly likes our park tours, and I guess it's two weeks we'll be designating, I don't know if the Commerce Department is going to get upset with me, State Park Week. They will be launching that, I think it's in two weeks. And highlighting our State Parks, our wonderful State Parks that I think that Marylanders have really been taking great advantage of over the last year.

TREASURER KOPP: That's -- I do have a question now that I look at 1A Open Space. This is not really one of your parks, Madam Secretary. We are replacing deteriorating artificial turf with new artificial turf. Do you all, do you all have any position or do you look at the question, I get letters of concern about the impact of artificial turf both on people and on the environment. Do you all, have you looked at this?

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Yes. So artificial turf is often utilized by local parks and particularly with sports fields and it is an acceptable practice for Program Open Space Local. But we certainly understand your concerns.

TREASURER KOPP: I'm just trying to understand better the letters of concern that I am getting. But thank you, Lieutenant Governor.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: We know for the professional athletes, they prefer the, you know, grass turf because it just is not as hard. But the, typically school systems will use the artificial because it's cheaper, it costs a lot less. And in our climate, you wear out those fields very quickly and they become, like when I was in high school you played on dirt and that might as well be artificial turf when it's, you know, in late October and early November when it's hard and --

MS. HADDAWAY-RICCIO: Mm-hmm. So I should also point out that there are environmental regulations that govern the disposal of the turf and the counties are required to comply with those regulations. So there are policies and practices in place for that.

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you. Thank you. I'll inquire there. Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Any other questions on -- I think we had a motion on --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes. I would move approval, yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. I'll second. Okay. All right. Thank you, Madam Secretary. University System.

MR. HICKEY: Good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. Tom Hickey, representing University System of Maryland. We have five items for your consideration this morning and we have a team of folks ready to answer any questions you may have.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Any questions on the University System Agenda?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Governor, I just want to indicate my strong support for Towson University, Item 4-C, your administration. And please pass along to the Governor my appreciation for the new science complex, which is being built up at Towson, which is one of the gems of our system. And I was lucky enough to be on a phone conversation with Linda Gooden, the Chair of the Regents, and two of my old friends, former County Executive Ike Leggett, and Bobby Neall, former Senator Bobby Neall. And they were suggesting that this was a really, really, really important program. And I agree with them and just want to applaud the leadership of the Chancellor Jay Perman and the President of Towson Kim Schatzel, and obviously the Board of Regents. Thank you.

TREASURER KOPP: I agree completely.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I would move approval, if people don't have questions.

TREASURER KOPP: Second.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. That was easy. Okay. Thank you, Tom.

MR. HICKEY: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Department of Transportation.

MR. POWELL: Good morning. Good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. For the record, my name is Sean Powell, Deputy Secretary for the Maryland Department of Transportation. We have nine items to present today for your approval. And with that, we do have representatives on the call if you have any questions. So thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Any questions for Transportation?

TREASURER KOPP: I have a general question that was raised by Item 3, really, about the Port Administration. But it just looks like things were a mess and you are correcting it now. But --

MR. POWELL: Yes, ma'am. This is some corrective action. I believe if you need a little deeper dive on that, I believe that Executive Director Doyle is on the line.

TREASURER KOPP: Well, I just wondered, the new Director, I appreciate that you are digging into this. But should we be expecting other items

like this, where things just have been overlooked and now create real problems? I mean, the fire protection systems way over date. I mean --

MR. POWELL: Yeah, I can, I'll let the Executive Director --

TREASURER KOPP: -- is this just, is this an indication of more things we should be prepared to see? That's my question.

MR. POWELL: Executive Director, are you on the line?

SECRETARY GONTRUM: We are --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Maybe he's muted.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: We are not seeing Mr. Doyle on the line. Is there another person, Mr. Powell?

MR. POWELL: Well, let me double check, sir. Sorry about that. Mr. Thornton, our Procurement Manager?

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Is John Thornton available? Yes, John Thornton. Mr. Thornton, are you available?

MR. POWELL: And I want to apologize. It slipped my mind that the Executive Director had a personal matter he needed to attend to today, so I apologize.

TREASURER KOPP: Maybe you could get back to us. I don't want to hold --

MR. POWELL: Yes, ma'am.

MR. THORNTON: I can answer the question, if you can hear me.

MR. POWELL: Oh, great.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay.

MR. THORNTON: Good morning. This is John Thornton, Manager of Procurement for the Maryland Port Administration. We are not making this request in Item 3-M-MOD because anything was done incorrectly or improperly. We have old buildings on our terminals and we ended up in the original contract budgeting half a million dollars for these additional capital improvements and repairs that might be necessary for our fire protection system. Life being as it is, in the course of our inspections over the last few years, more problems have popped up than that original half a million dollar allowance can account for. Our facility maintenance people believe we need another \$600,000 simply in contract capacity to cover additional possible repairs and improvements through the remaining term of the contract. And that's the reason for our request.

TREASURER KOPP: And I get that, and I am not, I support this item. I don't doubt that. But that is looking at one set of unanticipated repairs and improvements to the fire protection system. And I assume you think that that will take care of this particular fire protection system issue. My question really is more broadly, as you look at the plant of the Port, which is not a new plant and grew over

time, whether we should anticipate, whether you are really doing a thorough evaluation of the maintenance and plant repair needs of the Port.

MR. THORNTON: Well, I understand your question and it's certainly a good point. I'm the Manager of Procurement, so I don't know --

TREASURER KOPP: Right.

MR. THORNTON: -- the extent or the detail to which the facilities maintenance program is, what its current state is. But I'm sure the Port Administration could report back on that question specifically.

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you. That's why I thought you wouldn't be able to answer it, because I respect what you do and this is not your wheelhouse. I get that.

MR. POWELL: Thank you, Madam Treasurer. We will get back to you in short order.

TREASURER KOPP: Thanks.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes, Sean, yes, I guess if you can get, you know, something with regards to facilities maintenance and their projections in terms of what they may need or they expect needing so that, you know, we're not looking at a lot of, you know, modifications to existing contracts. As the Treasurer had mentioned before, on emergency procurements, you know, it's making sure we maintain the properties that we have. So --

MR. POWELL: Understood, sir.

TREASURER KOPP: I have another sort of high level question and I don't know honestly if it's of you, Mr. Powell, or Commerce, or whatever. But we're reading more and more about problems with supply chain and how that is impacting Maryland and our economy and our businesses. I think --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: The Port of Los Angeles and Long Beach, you know, have ships sitting off shore.

TREASURER KOPP: Yes.

MR. POWELL: Right.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: We're getting them through, you know, the Panama Canal. So I don't know, has that impacted East Coast ports and particularly Baltimore?

MR. POWELL: Yeah, I don't know if there has been any major impacts, Madam Treasurer. But I will certainly get a little bit more detailed information to see if we're having any more local effects. I know that we have had the record number of port, you know, record number of cargo ships and things coming in. And of course, that does cause some backlog sometimes in getting things trucked off of the Port and I guess in some respects that's a good problem because we have a lot of things that we need. So we'll certainly make sure that we

find out from our standpoint on the supply chain -- oh good, Madam Secretary Schulz is on.

MS. SCHULZ: I thought that I would just jump in to see, Madam Treasurer, if I could answer your question. And again, I don't have all the information as well. But I can say that at the beginning of the pandemic, our manufacturing community in that industry was suffering from supply chain issues as it was coming over from our global partners, mostly. However, we have heard from the manufacturing community that things have gotten increasingly better. And I think this is actually helping us to understand more thoroughly the need to be able to do some manufacturing reshoring in this country and in the State. And I can guarantee you that the Department of Commerce is working on something to that effect as we speak.

TREASURER KOPP: Well I would --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Madam Secretary, can you introduce yourself for the record? Sorry, can you --

MS. SCHULZ: Oh, I'm sorry. Sure. My name is Kelly Schulz. I'm Secretary of Maryland's Department of Commerce.

TREASURER KOPP: Madam Secretary, if you don't mind I would like to follow this up with you at some later date.

MS. SCHULZ: Of course. Of course.

MR. POWELL: Thank you for your question.

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Any other questions on the Transportation Agenda?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, if I could just comment briefly on MDOT Agenda Item 4-S-OPT. This is a Maryland Port Administration two-year extension, \$1.5 million renewal option on a contract for waste management services at Dundalk Marine Terminal. But let me just echo I think what Secretary Schulz was commenting on and what I think Executive Director Doyle is eminently qualified to, you know, answer for. The Port is like a goalpost for the State of Maryland's economic future. I mean, the Port and the Airport are just two tremendous State-owned assets. So I, please give my regards to Executive Director Doyle. And Mr. Powell, are you the Deputy Secretary of MDOT or of the Port?

MR. POWELL: The Maryland Department of Transportation, sir.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, so you are above Mr. Doyle, I guess, or somewhere on the, please give him my regards because I think they are doing an excellent job. And but I did have a question about this Agenda item because we're three years into this waste management service contract. The

MBE goal was ten percent three years ago and the vendor has achieved so far less than one percent compliance.

MR. POWELL: Okay --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: And I just would like to obviously see that improved. I mean, three years into the contract, we're giving two option years here, and he is way out of compliance. I think it is less than a half a percent. So it's not, you know, an enormous deal. It's more of a, kind of a, you know, housekeeping measure here. But I would hope that the Port is holding their vendors' feet to the fire on these very important diversity goals that we have.

MR. POWELL: Absolutely. Understood, sir. And you know, that's our intent across MDOT as well. So we'll certainly carry that message back to ensure that we're, you know, that we're following what we have laid out in the contract.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yeah, I think Mr. Thornton is still on the line. So he can contact, you know, the company Allstate Power and ask them about their compliance or lack thereof with --

MR. THORNTON: Yes.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- this agreement.

MR. POWELL: And we will certainly --

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Thank you.

MR. THORNTON: I could address it now, if you'd like.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Oh, great.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Oh. Yes.

MR. THORNTON: Yes. We were aware of this shortage on the part of our contractor. Our Office of Fair Practices is the office that is engaged in the MBE compliance during the course of contract performance. They advised us that this was not our contractor's fault. The subcontractor, the main subcontractor who was being used for the hazardous waste disposal lost its license for hazardous waste disposal, for hazardous waste hauling. It's very difficult if not impossible, almost impossible, to find MBE companies who are licensed hazardous waste haulers. This licensed MBE subcontractor, the hazardous waste hauler, lost its license so the contractor could not use it for required hazardous waste hauling on this contract. It took the subcontractor some time to get its hazardous waste permit renewed. That was taken care of in January. We still have I think about 80 percent of the contract value remaining to be paid. And the hazardous waste MBE subcontractor now can be used for the hazardous waste portion of the remaining payments on the contract. So there should be substantial MBE participation for the remainder of the contract. And the contractor has committed to that.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Well, that's dangerous to answer questions because it brings up another question for me. If 82 percent of the contract value has not been paid, why are you asking for an extension?

MR. THORNTON: Because we will need it to complete the work that's required by the consent decree by the time the consent decree requires that we complete the removal of chromium contaminated soil.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, I could see that. April 2006 agreement. Okay. Well, I mean, you get my message. The fact that somebody lost their permit is not our problem. That is the vendor's problem. And I sincerely hope that the ten percent goal is going to be met. And I find it to be odd that the agency would accept a, gee, it's not our fault. Well, yeah, but you are the ones that signed the contract. Ten percent is very clear. You are at .42 percent three years in so please correct it. And you know, this reminds me of that old thing when I went in and asked my boss decades ago for a raise and he looked at me and he said, well what have you done for the company? I said, well, I don't know but I've got a lot of bills to pay. He said, well, Peter, that's your problem. That's your problem, not my problem at the company. And I think here we should ask the vendor to redouble their efforts and get the percentages up so that we look better.

MR. THORNTON: And that is exactly what we intend to do and we have already done it.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Excellent. Delighted. Thank you.

MR. POWELL: Thank you, Mr. Comptroller, for your questions.

TREASURER KOPP: Could I just ask one clarification question on that issue? The written thing says that the subs allowed its permit to expire in 2019 until it was renewed in 2021, and you said it lost its permit. And I'm not sure whether we're saying the same thing?

MR. THORNTON: Well, I think it, yes, the permit expired. It was not revoked.

TREASURER KOPP: And it took them a year to be able to have it renewed?

MR. THORNTON: I don't know if they attempted to get it renewed during all of that time. All I know is that it was, at some point it expired and they didn't get it reinstated until --

TREASURER KOPP: But then, all right, so they didn't lose it for anything they did? They just --

MR. THORNTON: Correct.

TREASURER KOPP: -- didn't keep it. Okay. That seems strange but better than if it had been taken away.

MR. POWELL: Correct.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I would move approval if it's appropriate.

TREASURER KOPP: Second.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Give my regards to Doyle. I think he's a real find for the State, by the way.

MR. POWELL: Absolutely, Mr. Comptroller, and we thank you for your support of our items and your questions today.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Once we get the expansion of the Howard Street Tunnel, we will really see a lot more activity and economic activity coming out of that Port.

MR. POWELL: Absolutely and it's moving along very well.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I think we're all in approval.

TREASURER KOPP: That's exciting.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Deputy Secretary.

MR. POWELL: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Department of General Services?

MR. CHURCHILL: Good morning, Governor --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Good morning.

MR. CHURCHILL: -- Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. For the record, I'm Ellington Churchill, Secretary for the Maryland Department of General Services. Today we are presenting 31 items, including one supplemental for your consideration. And I stand ready to answer any questions that you may have.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I had a concern about one of the items. Unfortunately I didn't mark my book like I usually do. 25-IT.

MR. CHURCHILL: 25-IT, the delivery project management services. Yes, of course I am available, and of course Secretary Leahy with the Maryland Department of Information Technology is available.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, I'm concerned about some of the description in terms of, first of all, the dollar amount is pretty high. But I'm concerned about the description that it's, you know, bringing in technical writers and some of what these technical writers would do would seem to be in conflict with the reorganization of procurement. And so I'm concerned about that procurement. It seems as though it could very well get a little out of hand and get beyond the scope of what is authorized by that department as compared to the Office of Procurement and DGS. So I don't know if there is anyone to explain where I may be off on that.

MR. CHURCHILL: Well, again, Secretary Leahy is available for comment, and then we would also have in terms of your question about procurement and alignment with the Office of State Procurement, we can also speak to that.

MR. LEAHY: Good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller. Mike Leahy, Secretary of the Department of Information Technology. Mr. Governor, I do not mean to sound long-winded. But this program in terms of setting up the departmental project management office, which has been lacking historically but has been viewed as necessary for quite some time, does two things. The first is to your point about overlapping with the Office of State Procurement. The responsibility for policy implementation and technology oversight remains with DoIT and I believe Secretary Churchill would agree that we are working very closely together to make certain that the technology needs of the State are met effectively and efficiently within the procurement process as it currently exists.

The impetus for doing things this way was we set this office up both we believe in conformity with 3.8.202(e) and (f) of the Procurement and Finance Article, and also in alignment with the COMAR regulations and we discussed this significantly with our Assistant Attorney General. And our goal was that historically the State has relied on vendors themselves or outside vendors associated

with the vendors doing projects to provide project management. So that does two things. First, the project managers are more aligned in their loyalty with the vendor than necessarily with the State, which we believe is an important consideration. And secondly, in studying this before we went to DBM to ask for permission to implement a developmental PMO, we found that in many cases agencies moving forward with these sorts of projects would hire a project manager full time and that project manager was actually working a third time or a quarter time. So what we are doing is coordinating efforts so that we right size the number of people doing project management and although DBM did not provide us the budget to implement this internally to the State, we believe it would be more effective and efficient. And as the Comptroller tells us every meeting, you know, we're concerned as stewards of the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. And finally, your concerns about competition, we do implement and abide by the secondary competition rules that are in place before any of these contracts are issued or let as work orders. And as I have offered on many occasions, you know, those contracts don't currently go to the Board, but we are happy to report them to the Board if they would like the additional information.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: I didn't ask a question about competition, at least I don't think I did. Maybe I'm getting tired. No, my concern, really is the category three, the technical writing. That's where it

seems like it gets too close to or overlap with the jurisdiction of DGS. You know, some of the information that was provided said they would actually write solicitations and that's not really what within the authority of the department.

MR. LEAHY: Certainly, sir. And --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Project management, I understand that. And that's, you know, and I understand that conflict concern that you have. But I'm really focused much more on the technical writing side of it.

MR. LEAHY: Sure. As you've said, the Office of State Procurement is responsible for the actual solicitations, but they do rely on resources within DoIT or resources available to DoIT to ascertain the actual technical requirements and to incorporate them into whatever solicitations are going out. So it is not our intent to overstep our authority. We believe this to be a collegial action in support of the Office of State Procurement.

MR. CHURCHILL: Governor, I would also add one last thing and echoing what Secretary Leahy mentions. That this is a unique working relationship between our two departments because of the procurement transformation. So we are in now regular conversation with the department about, you know, overall frame of reference on procurements, and one of the discussion points of course is the conversation around technical writing. So I don't have anything more in depth to

add for this conversation today, but would be glad to update anyone after as concerning the progress of those conversations.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, then let me ask both of you, would there be a challenge with deferring this item, you know, to allow you to have some additional conversations about that category three technical writing?

MR. CHURCHILL: Governor, let me just make sure I understand. You are only deferring category three or are you --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: No, deferring the item because since it's all one item.

MR. CHURCHILL: Okay. All right. Yes. And I do not know of an issue that would be cause for deferment. I would ask my colleague whether he knows of anything.

MR. LEAHY: Well, again, this has been part of an ongoing plan which has been in place for over a year. But we certainly want to make certain whatever we are putting in place is understood and meets the requirements of the Board. So on that basis, I'm happy to address this at a time convenient for the Board and provide you whatever information you request in the interim.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, and I'd like to hear probably back from both departments with regard to how those discussions

are taking place. So I'd like to move that we defer this item, 25-IT. I think it's the only task order in 25-IT, correct --

MR. LEAHY: That's correct, Mr. Governor.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- okay. Do I have a second?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I second the motion. But I do have a question for our Procurement Advisor. Is Mr. Gnall available or not? Gabe Gnall?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Gabe Gnall?

MR. GNALL: I am here. Can you hear me?

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yes.

MR. GNALL: Good morning. Good morning, Governor, Madam Treasurer, Mr. Comptroller.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: If you could just reference the conversation we just, the Lieutenant Governor just had with respect to work orders that would be issued under this task order. If those are provided, if the amount is beyond DGS' delegated authority, can you confirm whether the approval falls within the direct authority of the Board?

MR. GNALL: Yes. So reviewing the Item 25-IT, this is a bit of an odd task order. What is being presented to the Board is a task order award to

essentially create another master contract within a master contract. The original master contract is the CATS+ master contract and what they are doing here is providing a pool of qualified vendors to engage in work orders. So essentially, that is what a master contract is, a pool of qualified vendors to issue work. So again, this appears to be essentially a master contract within a master contract.

Now as you are aware, we required in regulation that secondary competition task orders and purchase orders valued over \$200,000 come before the Board of Public Works for approval. So as this again is essentially a master contract, any work orders that are competed upon, secondary competition work orders, would have to come to the Board if valued over \$200,000.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: But would that only be through some procurement agency activity report that we are expected to --

MR. GNALL: No, the regulation --

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: -- over \$200,000 it comes to the Board. Under \$200,000 goes to that procurement agency, the PAAR report, activity report.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Yeah, so I actually share your concern, Lieutenant Governor, for a different reason. I continue to think, I'm a little uncomfortable with the amount of the money, number one. And the fact that despite the best intentions, it may actually inhibit competitiveness. So I'm happy

to defer it. I was prepared to vote no on it otherwise. But I'm happy to support you. I think it's a legitimate, you know, area to take a look at for a couple of weeks. I don't mean to step in front of the Treasurer. She may --

TREASURER KOPP: No. I agree. \$100 million is worth looking at.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Yes. Okay. So I think we're all in agreement of deferring that item. Yes, it is, there are some concerns about it. And thanks for asking Gabe Gnall to come in and clarify that it would require reporting to the Board as standard items should they be over \$200,000 and below they will go to the PAAR report. But I think we need to look at this a little more carefully.

TREASURER KOPP: Let me just say, I think it is important as we opened this meeting to remember that the PAAR report is now published on the website. It's important if we're using this device for contracts, procurements under \$200,000, that we make a particular effort to bring them to public attention because they are not voted on individually on these agendas.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Right.

TREASURER KOPP: And it's like the Comptroller's good work to get the task orders before us. I think it's part of the same effort, which I respect and appreciate very much.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, we all supported getting task orders here. This was part of recommendations from our Procurement Task Force was to get the task orders. And there were people who wanted to lift the amount going to the Board. I think there was some proposals of \$500,000, only \$500,000, and we were opposed to that, saying no, \$200,000 is --

TREASURER KOPP: Was this the Rutherford Task Force?

(Laughter.)

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Well, I think it's officially the Governor's Task Force. But it was something that I really wanted to see happen. So.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: I would move approval with the deferral of Item 25.

TREASURER KOPP: Second.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. We're all in favor, General Services. Thank you very much. Thank you, everyone. And we'll be meeting again in a couple of weeks. It's always fun. Enjoy the rain, we haven't had any in a couple of weeks. The farmers are happy.

TREASURER KOPP: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR RUTHERFORD: Okay. Take care.

COMPTROLLER FRANCHOT: Have a good day.

(Whereupon, at 11:56 a.m., the meeting was concluded.)