

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
PUBLIC MEETING FOR THE FORMALDEHYDE
ADVANCE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

Meeting held at Sheraton New Orleans Hotel,
500 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, before
Tammy Hupin, Certified Court Reporter, on the
4th of March, 2009, beginning at 1:00 p.m.

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1 APPEARANCES:

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PROCEEDINGS

MS. VENDINELLO:

Good afternoon. If I could get everyone to take their seat, we want to get started, because we have a very full agenda today.

I'd like to welcome you all here today, and I want to thank you all for coming. I know many of you have traveled long distances to be here.

My name is Lynn Vendinello, and I'm with the Environmental Protection Agency. With me here today is Rebecca Edlestein, also with the Environmental Protection Agency, and Johnathan Torres with FEMA. And, then, we have some contractor support.

I'd like to welcome you here. We're very interested in hearing your concerns about formaldehyde.

As you may know, our new administrator, Lisa Jackson, who was appointed by President Obama is highly concerned about toxic pollution, and has made it one of her five priorities for her administration. And she's particularly concerned also about

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1 environmental justice issues. That's
2 another one of her key priorities.

3 Overall, environmental justice issues
4 are a high priority for the new
5 administration. And, so, I'm glad that
6 we're able to be here today to listen to
7 your concerns.

8 This is the last of six public meetings
9 that we've had over the last two months.
10 Back in December, the EPA issued an Advanced
11 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on
12 formaldehyde emissions, which I'm going to
13 get into detail in a little bit.

14 In addition to the comments that we
15 will be receiving from you all today, we
16 will also be accepting written comments to
17 our docket until the closing date of March
18 19th.

19 So you are free to submit additional
20 comments up until that point. And there's
21 instructions on how to submit those comments
22 at www.regulations.gov. And the docket
23 number for this particular rule making is
24 EPA-HQ-OPPT-2008 -- when we started this --
25 hello -- dash 0627.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER:

2 Can you repeat that.

3 MS. VENDINELLO:

4 Sure. It's EPA-HQ -- which stands for
5 headquarters -- dash OPPT -- "O" as in
6 office, "P" as in pollution, "P" as in
7 pollution, "T" as in toxins -- dash 2008-
8 0627.

9 We also have extended the period of
10 comment deadline for our industry survey.
11 We're doing a survey of the Crestwood
12 Manufacturing Industry, and you can comment
13 on that survey until March 25th. And the
14 only difference -- it's the same thing,
15 www.regulations.gov, and it's the same EPA-
16 HQ, except the last four numbers are 0717.

17 Let me go over a little bit of
18 logistics of today's meeting. We're
19 starting right now. We hope to end at 5.
20 We can stay later if there's still more
21 people that would like to speak. I'm going
22 to start off with a brief presentation on
23 what EPA is doing. I'll be followed by
24 FEMA. And, then, we will go to each of you
25 who signed up to speak.

1 I would ask, so that everybody gets a
2 chance to talk, that you try to limit your
3 comments to under ten minutes. We will
4 accommodate as many people as we can given
5 the time constraints and the day.

6 And, again, I thank you very much for
7 coming today.

8 We will take a break. We're going to
9 take a break from 2:45 to about 2:55, a ten-
10 minute break. And the restrooms are
11 conveniently located in this beautiful
12 gallery right towards the back before the
13 exit sign. Okay. So, with that, I'm going
14 to get started.

15 The purpose of today's meeting is to
16 collect public comments related to pressed-
17 wood products, including resins, the
18 manufacturing processes, emission profiles
19 and the uses and quantities. We are in the
20 process of learning more about formaldehyde
21 emission control technologies, formaldehyde
22 product alternatives, the regulation in
23 California that governs formaldehyde,
24 formaldehyde exposure information including
25 information about air exchange rates,

1 emissions data and profiles.

2 As I mentioned earlier, today's
3 comments will be submitted into a public
4 docket, and we will review each and every
5 comment that's been submitted. And,
6 basically, it's to better inform us when we
7 decide what type of a decision we're going
8 to make on how to address formaldehyde
9 emissions from pressed-wood products.

10 As most of you know, formaldehyde is a
11 colorless, strong-smelling gas, that has
12 commonly been used a preservative in both
13 medical laboratories and in mortuaries.
14 It's also found in other products, including
15 resins, in pressed wood, composite-wood
16 products. For example, particle board,
17 fiberboard and plywood. It is an irritant,
18 and it has been classified by EPA as a
19 probable human carcinogen.

20 Back in March, just about a year ago,
21 EPA was petitioned by the Sierra Club and
22 others under the Toxic Substances Control
23 Act or TSCA to adopt the California
24 regulations, and to use Section 6A to do
25 this. The California regulations address

1 formaldehyde emissions from composite-wood
2 products.

3 The petitioners also asked EPA to
4 extend the TSCA regulations to include HUD-
5 regulated composite-wood products used in
6 manufactured homes, because the California
7 regulations do not cover HUD manufactured
8 homes.

9 The California rule regulates
10 formaldehyde emissions from hardwood,
11 plywood, particle board and medium density
12 fiberboard sold, supplied or manufactured
13 for use in California. And it applies to
14 the finished goods that contain these
15 products, such as cabinets and furniture.

16 And it's divided into two phases.
17 Phase one emission standards just took
18 place, took effect in January of this year.
19 And, then, there's a more stringent level or
20 phase two that are going to be phased in
21 between 2010 and 2012.

22 The rule does not cover some of the
23 other pressed-wood products, such as soft
24 wood plywood or oriented strand board or
25 hard board, because the formaldehyde

1 emissions in those materials were already
2 very low.

3 We're required under TSCA to respond to
4 the petitions, and we did so with a partial
5 grant and a partial denial. And the reason
6 why we couldn't just adopt the California
7 regulation is that we operate under a
8 different statute. And we decided that the
9 available information that we learned from
10 the current rule was not enough. It wasn't
11 sufficient to support regulating
12 formaldehyde emissions from pressed-wood
13 products under TSCA.

14 So what we are doing and what we told
15 the public that we would do was to start to
16 investigate whether a regulatory or
17 voluntary action might be appropriate to
18 protect against the potential risks posed by
19 formaldehyde emitted from pressed-wood
20 products.

21 After we complete the investigation, we
22 anticipate determining whether action is
23 warranted under TSCA section -- there's two
24 sections of TSCA that we're looking at, 6A
25 or 6B -- or whether a voluntary action makes

1 more sense or some other regulatory action.

2 What we've done recently, in December,
3 we gave notice through the federal register
4 of this proposed rule making. And, during
5 the comment period, which I said goes on
6 until March 19th, we have held a total,
7 including this one, of six public meetings.

8 We have been all over all different
9 parts of the United States where particle
10 board is manufactured. And, after that,
11 what we will be doing is we will be reading
12 and reviewing all of the submitted comments.

13 As I mentioned earlier, we are also
14 going to be sending out an industry survey
15 to find out about where the industry is in
16 terms of manufacturing processes to reduce
17 formaldehyde. Our scientists are developing
18 an irritation hazard characterization.
19 After which, we will also develop a
20 formaldehyde risk and exposure assessment.

21 And, then, as is required under TSCA in
22 order to do a rule making, we will have to
23 quantify the costs and the benefits of any
24 regulatory action that we may choose. And,
25 from that information, then determine the

1 appropriate course of action.

2 I think I already talked about the
3 industry survey, so we'll skip that.

4 Specifically on the hazard
5 characterization, the exposure and the risk
6 characterization, my office, which is the
7 office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics,
8 is working very closely with EPA's office of
9 research and development, and we are
10 collaborating on this irritation hazard
11 characterization.

12 My office will be working on an
13 exposure assessment, and is focusing on
14 consumer exposures to formaldehyde,
15 particularly children's exposures, for
16 example from cribs.

17 Based on the irritation hazard
18 characterization and the exposure
19 assessment, we then plan to develop an
20 irritation and risk assessment to determine
21 the risk posed by formaldehyde emissions
22 from pressed-wood products. And, as we are
23 required to do and as it makes sense to do,
24 we also need to look at the substitutes,
25 because you don't want to be encouraging

1 substitutes that turn out to be more
2 hazardous or risky than the original
3 pollutant.

4 Somebody's phone.

5 We'll also be developing a preliminary
6 economic analysis based on the responses we
7 get from these public meetings and other
8 available information. We are very
9 interested in learning what it's costing
10 industry to comply with the California
11 standards or any other industry or other
12 standards to reduce formaldehyde.

13 And, so, to be very clear, the
14 boundaries in which we operate right now
15 under TSCA is that we have to find that the
16 manufacturing, processing, distribution and
17 commerce use or disposal of pressed-wood
18 products containing formaldehyde presents or
19 will present an unreasonable risk of injury
20 to health or the environment if we are going
21 to use that section of TSCA to take action.

22 Now, the actions under TSCA is a broad
23 range. We can go sort of from the most
24 strict to the least strict. The most strict
25 would be to prohibit or limit the

1 manufacturer, processing, distribution and
2 so forth, for example from a ban or from a
3 requirement of reduced level.

4 Alternatively, as you go down to less
5 strict options, we could require warnings,
6 labeling, use restrictions or other consumer
7 notices of risk, or we can also require
8 record keeping, monitoring or testing to
9 insure compliance with whatever we come up
10 with.

11 The other part of TSCA that we're
12 looking at is specifically focused on
13 quality control issues. Section 6B provides
14 EPA with the authority to order a
15 manufacturer or processor to submit a
16 description of it's relevant quality control
17 procedures.

18 In other words, what are they doing
19 within their plant to insure that
20 formaldehyde emissions are not off-gassing.
21 We can order the manufacturer or the
22 processor to modify its quality control
23 procedures to prevent unreasonable risk.

24 And, of course, we will also be looking
25 at voluntary options. There are already a

1 lot of initiatives within the industry and
2 with EPA working in partnership with
3 industry to voluntarily bring down
4 formaldehyde emissions, and these icons here
5 are an example of all the projects -- some
6 of the projects, not all of them -- some of
7 the projects that we have under way within
8 my own office to work on green chemistry,
9 designing for the environment, encouraging
10 suppliers to buy green and so forth.

11 At this point, I would like to turn the
12 mike over to Johnathan. Again, I thank you
13 all so much for being here. We are so
14 looking forward to hearing your comments.
15 And the main person on my staff, who is
16 writing the potential rule making, is right
17 here, and she would welcome any e-mails or
18 questions that you may have. So thanks
19 again.

20 MR. TORRES:

21 I would like to thank Lynn and the EPA
22 for inviting me down here. And, certainly,
23 it's always a pleasure to be in the
24 beautiful City of New Orleans.

25 I'm going to speak a little bit today

1 about generally FEMA's response to
2 formaldehyde concerns the last couple years,
3 and I'll discuss a little bit about some of
4 the actions we've taken to address concerns
5 of individual occupants and to investigate
6 generally the formaldehyde problem in terms
7 of its public health implications and how it
8 can inform FEMA policy making to improve the
9 way that we provide disaster housing.

10 And I'll speak a little bit as well
11 about some of the changes that we've made in
12 our housing operations to improve them, and
13 certainly to do that. So that's generally
14 what I'll be speaking about today.

15 I work in FEMA's national headquarters
16 at 500 C Street in Washington. I work in
17 the Disaster Housing Operations Unit. I
18 have been there for a couple years now, and
19 one of the hats I wear is I am the project
20 officer with our interagency agreements with
21 the Centers for Disease Control and
22 Prevention.

23 There are actually two centers I deal
24 with mainly, the National Center of
25 Environmental Health and the Agency for

1 Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, that
2 I'll get into in a little bit.

3 Our list background is certainly not
4 exhaustive. I'm not going to speak to any
5 of the previous or ongoing litigation that
6 has occurred or may occur in the future.
7 But, generally, between the spring and the
8 summer of 2006, we became aware through the
9 Sierra Club and individuals about concerns
10 of their housing units in terms of the smell
11 and respiratory symptoms that they were
12 experiencing.

13 And our initial action to investigate
14 that problem, we actually did engage with
15 the EPA. We had an interagency agreement in
16 place after Katrina. We actually modified
17 the existing agreement to take some of our
18 housing units and perform some testing to
19 verify at that time whether or not just
20 increased ventilation would address the
21 problem satisfactorily.

22 And, of course, they went ahead and
23 they did that for us. They provided the
24 results to us, and we actually forwarded the
25 results to the agency for -- I'll just refer

1 to them ATSDR, the agency for Toxic
2 Substances and Disease registry, which is a
3 component of the CDC, and they analyzed the
4 work that they did and reported it back to
5 us.

6 And, initially, the report that we
7 received was that, you know, if you
8 ventilate the housing, if you -- the air
9 exchange will mitigate the formaldehyde
10 fumes, and it'll be safe for most people to
11 occupy.

12 Now, as it turns out, that's certainly
13 not the end of the story or none of us would
14 be here. We actually received information
15 later on that the analysis was actually
16 performed insufficient, and that it could
17 actually be misleading.

18 So we continued to investigate it.
19 And, again, the concerns resurfaced around
20 the summer of 2007. And, of course, there
21 were congressional hearings and very
22 noticeable public interest.

23 And, around July of 2007, FEMA
24 Administrator Paulsen formally requested CDC
25 to assist us in addressing the issues

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1 related to formaldehyde Dr. Louise Gerbiny
2 (phonetic), the then director of the CDC.
3 And they agreed to do so.

4 And, in August of 2007, we actually
5 entered into an interagency agreement with
6 the CDC National Center Environmental Health
7 that is still ongoing.

8 And one of my responsibilities in the
9 Disaster Housing Office is the project
10 officer of that interagency agreement with
11 the CDC. And they agreed to do a number of
12 things for us. One of the things that they
13 did do was they convened an expert panel
14 from academia, from industry, from a variety
15 of backgrounds to advise CDC and also FEMA
16 on how to approach this problem, and where
17 to start, and where the relevant expertise
18 was.

19 We had actually asked them to give us a
20 definitive standard of what is a safe level
21 of formaldehyde, something that any person
22 could occupy regardless of, you know, any
23 individual risk factors or how their health
24 was. And they actually, not surprisingly,
25 declined to do that for us.

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1 But they have helped us in a number of
2 ways. They performed the exposure
3 assessments of our housing units here in
4 Louisiana and in Mississippi around December
5 of 2007 and January of 2008. They came
6 down, and they did a representative sample
7 of the occupied housing units in Louisiana
8 and Mississippi.

9 And the results were released at a
10 press conference in February with FEMA
11 Administrator Paulsen and CDC Director
12 Gerbiny, and they found a range of levels.
13 There was significant concern that something
14 needed to be done in terms of moving people
15 out.

16 So one of the things that they've done
17 for us as well is they've also tested our
18 unoccupied units in the various storage
19 areas. They are currently investigating now
20 for us a way to -- or potential ways to
21 reduce the formaldehyde emissions within the
22 travel trailers that we've already
23 purchased.

24 And they're also in the process of
25 initiating a long-term health effect study

1 to study over a period of a number of years
2 children that occupied FEMA housing after
3 Katrina, and to determine what, if any of
4 the long-term health effects of that
5 occupancy are.

6 And they also assist us from time to
7 time communicating with the public in
8 providing the relevant public health
9 information to the public as it becomes
10 available, things of that nature.

11 Now, we obviously are in a transition
12 period right now. The administration has
13 not named the new administrator for FEMA.
14 We have an acting administrator, Nancy Ward
15 (phonetic), who's been with FEMA for a very
16 long time as FEMA Regional Administrator.
17 But, certainly, Administrator Paulsen's
18 priorities articulated a number of times is
19 that our priority is the safety of our
20 occupants. That was his first priority, and
21 that is certainly something that we're going
22 to remain to now that he's gone.

23 We're going to continue to work closely
24 obviously with our public health partners,
25 whether it's the Center for Disease Control,

1 whether it's EPA or whether it's the
2 Department of Homeland Security's Office of
3 Health affairs or whoever we need to work
4 with to insure a broadly collaborated
5 federal approach to these problems.

6 And we constantly evaluate our own
7 housing programs, both in terms of the types
8 of units that we provide and also the manner
9 in which we provide them, whether it's
10 direct housing, which is obviously the
11 travel trailers, manufactured homes, things
12 of that nature, or whether it's ways we can
13 provide financial assistance more
14 effectively, more timely and things of that
15 nature.

16 And, certainly, as we continue to
17 evaluate our programs of how we can provide
18 the safest and most accommodating housing
19 units we can is certainly a chief
20 consideration that we look at.

21 And we've issued press releases. We'll
22 continue to issue press releases obviously
23 at each milestone of the efforts to address
24 the concerns. Certainly, the most
25 noticeable that comes out was the February

1 14, 2008 press conference with Administrator
2 Paulsen and Director Gerbiny. We
3 distributed fliers to occupants of our
4 temporary housing units multiple times
5 beginning when the concerns surfaced in
6 2006.

7 Certainly, when the initial exposure
8 assessment of the sample in December was
9 conducted, we reached out to all of our
10 occupants individually, provided them fliers
11 of what we were doing, what was available at
12 the time, and we continue to follow-up with
13 that.

14 We always provide them information of
15 who they can call to either identify health
16 concerns that they may have or to just ask
17 questions generally about FEMA and their
18 housing assistance.

19 We've had, and continue to have, a toll
20 free number where they can call, if they
21 have questions or concerns about the FEMA
22 housing assistance. They can speak to FEMA
23 representatives. And if they have health or
24 safety concerns, we refer them to a call
25 center that's managed by the Center for

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1 Disease Control, and they can receive the
2 relevant health information from them.

3 And, obviously, it's our hotline. Ever
4 since the February 14, 2008, press
5 conference. It has been a twenty-four-hour
6 service. We've received a little over
7 eleven thousand calls from occupants in
8 Louisiana, eight thousand of those since
9 February 14, 2008, press conference.

10 And, of those, about five thousand six
11 hundred or so have expressed their temporary
12 housing concerns. And we've relocated at
13 their request just over twenty-four hundred
14 of those persons to a hotel and subsequently
15 to a more long-term housing resource.

16 And, again, we offer -- if an occupant
17 has a health concern and they do not feel
18 safe or they feel that the housing unit that
19 they're staying in is making them ill or
20 weak, we can offer to relocate them
21 immediately.

22 We don't require them to, you know,
23 provide written notice from their doctor or
24 anything like that. If they call us with a
25 concern, we act on that basis and provide

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1 them with a hotel or emergency lodging
2 assistance immediately, place them there.
3 They continue to work with them and have HUD
4 work with them on a more appropriate long-
5 term housing resource.

6 And, around March, 2008, we had done
7 this before, where we actually formalized
8 the guidance in March of 2008 to be able to
9 pay for expenses, to provide assistance in
10 terms of meals, moving and transportation of
11 personal property, storage of personal
12 property, assistance with pets for hotels
13 that wouldn't allow occupants to bring their
14 pets with them, things of that nature.

15 And, as I mentioned before, we did do
16 the initial testing of a representative
17 sample in February of 2008. And the very
18 day after the press conference, we actually
19 awarded the national contract to provide
20 testing on demand. Obviously, as a
21 representative sample, the testing had to be
22 randomly selected. There's a requirement to
23 be scientifically and statistically
24 defensible.

25 But, after that, based on part of the

1 results of the findings, we actually offered
2 on-demand testing to any occupant who wished
3 to have their unit tested. And we performed
4 a number of those tests in Louisiana,
5 Mississippi, but also nation-wide in
6 subsequent housing operations that we've
7 done.

8 And the occupants always receive a
9 notice of their test, and in most cases we
10 actually have a public health official or
11 licensed professional come down and explain
12 to them what the tests mean based in part on
13 their own personal health characteristics,
14 based on a number of things.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER:

16 Excuse me. Can we ask questions?

17 MR. TORRES:

18 We're actually not answering questions
19 at this time, I believe, but I will be
20 around afterwards. So I'll be more than
21 happy to speak with anyone and address any
22 individual questions or concerns that you
23 may have. They just asked me to make it a
24 one-way presentation for the time being. I
25 do anticipate a number of questions.

1 Certainly, we've done a number of
2 things to change how we do disaster housing.
3 One of the ways that we look at now, all of
4 our housing units are tested for
5 formaldehyde prior to installation and
6 occupancy. And they're not even delivered
7 into the state until they've been tested and
8 found to be within a level -- an emissions
9 level of formaldehyde that's been determined
10 by the state, whether it's the governor's
11 authorized representative or emergency
12 management director or it differs.

13 But, generally, it does have to come,
14 you know, from the Governor's office
15 specifying what emission level of
16 formaldehyde is acceptable. It does vary a
17 little bit from state to state. But, for
18 the most part, it's been -- the most common
19 standard identified has been about forty
20 parts per billion.

21 And we actually have modified our
22 specifications for housing units. One of
23 the things that we do differently than in
24 Katrina, obviously with the tremendous
25 demand for housing units we were under, we

1 didn't have sufficient contract vehicle to
2 have that in place, so we had to buy -- you
3 know, we had to buy off the lot. We had to
4 buy basically whatever we could get our
5 hands on to meet the demand at that time.

6 And what we have now, we actually have
7 pre-negotiated contracts in place, that we
8 can order against basically as we need them
9 to ramp up delivery of supplemental or
10 national inventory, if we need to do that.

11 And one of the things that we have done
12 is we actually require all of our housing
13 units, whether it's a park model or it's a
14 manufactured home or if it's going to be a
15 travel trailer, it cannot emit more than
16 sixteen parts per billion, which is there
17 are a number of standards that we use for a
18 reference, because there really isn't a
19 national residential regulatory standard for
20 formaldehyde emissions to go on.

21 HUD regulates emissions of certain
22 components that go into manufactured homes,
23 and they have regulations that stipulate the
24 air exchange of a manufactured home. So we
25 found one of the most aggressive levels we

1 could find, which was the NIOSH, National
2 Institute for Occupational Safety and
3 Health, recommended exposure limit time-
4 weighted average of that sixteen parts per
5 billion. So no unit that we purchase will
6 emit sixteen parts -- it has to be less than
7 sixteen parts per billion.

8 And one of the ways that we've done
9 this is we've eliminated MDF, medium-density
10 fiberboard, vinyl gypsum, Luan, any products
11 that contain urea formaldehyde. By
12 specification and contract, those materials
13 cannot be used in FEMA housing units, or we
14 won't purchase them.

15 And we actually have our testing for
16 this is, of course, done by a third party.
17 The laboratory that they use to analyze the
18 result has to be an American industrial
19 hygiene association, accredited laboratory,
20 and we actually have -- we have what's a
21 quality insurance program, where we
22 basically have another third party go back
23 behind the third party and make sure that
24 that test has been completed accurately.

25 We've done a lot. Again, FEMA is not

1 by design a public health agency. It's not
2 one of our core competencies. We're an
3 emergency management and disaster assistance
4 agency, certainly. So one of the things
5 that we've had to do is reach out to our
6 external partners.

7 And one of the things that we've done
8 just recently after some considerable back
9 and forth and some productive work with the
10 CDC, we've actually provided them at their
11 request eleven million dollars to initiate
12 the design and the work-up of a long-term
13 health effects study in children. That will
14 probably be, if all goes well, probably
15 about another year before the actual work on
16 that gets started. It'll start off with a
17 limited population, and it'll grow.

18 One of the processes the CDC uses is
19 whether it's the long-term health effects
20 study or whether it's the Katrina health
21 registry, because of the unknowns in terms
22 of the size of the population and the
23 logistics are going to be involved in this
24 long-term study and because of the costs --
25 and not really knowing what the costs are

1 going to be, because some of the resource
2 really hasn't been done before at least in
3 the way that FEMA needs to do it now,
4 there's still uncertainty in terms of the
5 costs projected.

6 So what they do is they start with a
7 limited population to do what they refer to
8 as a pilot in order to scope what the total
9 estimated population is going to be, what
10 the costs are going to be, and to make sure
11 that the scientific methodology that they're
12 utilizing is actually going to give them,
13 you know, clear results of what it is we're
14 looking for.

15 And, then, beyond the pilot phase, we
16 have a better understanding of what the
17 costs and the time frame and everything else
18 is going to be, and the effort expands from
19 there to the full-blown study. So it'll be
20 a number of years before the study is
21 actually completed, but it'll give us an
22 independent and a scientific medical
23 understanding of what the long-term health
24 effects really are in children. And we're
25 going to continue.

1 Certainly, eleven million dollars will
2 not do all that work, but it is what we're
3 going to get started. And, as that effort
4 progresses, our commitment to funding will
5 progress along with it.

6 Also, we've provided three and a half
7 million dollars recently to the CDC-ATSDR to
8 begin a Katrina health registry. And that's
9 something that they're working on right now.
10 They're going to be reaching out to people
11 who either are occupying or have occupied
12 FEMA housing after Katrina specifically or
13 Rita to gather their information or take
14 some limited health history of those
15 individuals and find out some information
16 from them.

17 But a health registry is similar to
18 what we've done after 9/11. That gives us a
19 way to monitor that population over a long
20 period of time, and be able to reach them
21 should we find any significant developments
22 in our understanding of formaldehyde and its
23 health effects. Should Congress at any
24 point create a program or an eligibility or
25 a benefit for that population, we would be

1 able to probably reach out to them and
2 provide, you know, those benefits and things
3 of that nature.

4 So it's something that we're going to
5 continue to work on, and the CDC has been
6 committed to supporting us in developing
7 that, so that we have the means to reach
8 that population and to study the effects of
9 this over time.

10 And another piece that the CDC is
11 working with right now is actually just a
12 couple of weeks ago, and they're working on
13 identifying a couple of devices and
14 techniques that may potentially reduce or
15 even eliminate formaldehyde emissions within
16 travel trailers.

17 And they've actually engaged some
18 scientific expertise from NASA to accomplish
19 this effort. And, over at STENNIS over in
20 Mississippi, they're testing about a dozen
21 techniques right now, some of which may be
22 promising. The most promising is probably
23 going to be -- well, I can't get into it,
24 but, hopefully we can eliminate that process
25 entirely now.

1 Again, we're still going to remain
2 committed to doing everything we can to
3 eliminate the emission of formaldehyde in
4 our housing units through specification
5 design and improving removing materials that
6 emit formaldehyde. But, certainly, anything
7 we can do to eliminate what little
8 formaldehyde is emitted in our new housing
9 units, it will certainly be useful
10 information that we'll use to potentially
11 address anything that comes on after that.

12 Again, my name is Johnathan Torres. I
13 work for Emergency Support Function Six, the
14 Disaster Housing Operations Unit. You can
15 reach me at johnathan.torresdhs.gov, and
16 it's spelled right there. And I do
17 appreciate your time and your attention.
18 And I will be around afterwards to speak
19 with anyone that has some concerns, you
20 know, that I can address. Thank you very
21 much.

22 MR. SCHREIBER:

23 Good afternoon. My name is Daemian
24 Schreiber. I am with Quantech, the
25 contractor that was hired to provide support

1 for this meeting. I'd like to take this
2 opportunity to please remind the speakers to
3 state their name and organization for the
4 Record.

5 Our first speaker is Tom Julia,
6 Composite Panel Association.

7 MR. JULIA:

8 Thank you. My name is Tom Julia. I'm
9 the President of the Composite Panel
10 Association. We're based just outside of
11 Washington, D.C. We're about a fifty-year-
12 old trade association, and we represent more
13 than ninety percent of the production
14 capacity in the US, Canada and Mexico of two
15 of the three products that California has
16 regulated and that the EPA is considering
17 regulating, particle board and medium-
18 density fiberboard.

19 We also operate the largest and, I
20 submit, the most stringent third-party
21 independent non-profit testing and
22 certification program for these industry
23 products in North America, which includes
24 rigorous mill specific quality control
25 requirements as well as audits --

1 unannounced audits of mills and sampling of
2 those products to insure that they do meet
3 very rigorous levels of compliance with now
4 the California statute.

5 I'm also pleased to say that as of
6 January 1, some ninety-six percent of this
7 domestic production as well as approximately
8 eighty percent of the other product that's
9 covered in this regulation, hardwood
10 plywood, has already been certified by
11 third-party firms to be compliant with the
12 phase two requirements of the California
13 rule.

14 In short, the domestic industry fully
15 supports not only the Sierra Club petition,
16 indeed we were the first industry group to
17 support that petition last summer, but we
18 encouraged the EPA to indeed move forward
19 with a rule-making, and indeed impose what
20 has been talked about not for years but for
21 decades truly a federal standard on
22 formaldehyde emissions from wood products.

23 I was very sympathetic to the
24 conversation, the comments that Johnathan
25 just made from FEMA about all the things

1 that FEMA has tried to do in terms of a
2 different type of response to the situation
3 that exists here in the Gulf, and I'm
4 certainly very impressed and pleased with
5 what's being done.

6 But I have to tell you, it's not even
7 close to enough. And it sort of begs the
8 bigger issue, the bigger question of we're
9 operating in a situation where there's a
10 lack of federal oversight, a single
11 regulation as Johnathan, I think, quite
12 correctly said, a single path to guide the
13 country as to what is the right way to
14 regulate these products.

15 What is the right way to provide the
16 necessary consumer protection, so the kinds
17 of things that happened here won't happen
18 again? And I submit to you that the only
19 way that's going to happen is with a single
20 federal standard.

21 And, fortunately, we are in a situation
22 unique where California has spent the last
23 seven years developing exactly that model.
24 Now, you might say, "Well, isn't it good
25 enough? Can't we just take the California

1 model and let everybody else do it?" Some
2 would say, "Well, it's becoming the defacto
3 national standard, the defacto national
4 law." Yes and no.

5 I'm very pleased to tell you that many
6 of the customer groups that we work with,
7 doors, cabinets, flooring, furniture,
8 trailers, others are quickly adopting the
9 levels required in the California law. But,
10 in every single location where EPA has held
11 these hearings, in Raleigh, in Portland, in
12 Chicago, in Dallas, in Washington, D.C., and
13 here in New Orleans, you can't enforce that
14 law.

15 You absolutely have no mechanism to
16 enforce that law. So I would submit to you
17 without an enforcement mechanism, you don't
18 have a national standard, you don't have a
19 defacto national standards.

20 Our objective is not to take a look at
21 the best performers, those who are
22 progressive in terms of environmental
23 stewardship, those who believe in
24 environmental justice.

25 Our objective in imposing a national

1 standard is to make sure that we take care
2 of everything at the bottom, so that nothing
3 slips through the cracks, so that no
4 products are sold into our stores, come into
5 our homes with high formaldehyde levels that
6 have not been tested, not been certified and
7 have not subjected themselves to any
8 national law.

9 And this, ladies and gentlemen, is the
10 crux of the problem, and why we were the
11 first industry group to partner with and we
12 are partnering today with the Sierra Club
13 and others, and asking the EPA to move
14 forward with a federal standard.

15 Not only that, we believe it is even
16 more urgent to do so and that to avoid what
17 could otherwise be a multi-year regulatory
18 process, that quite frankly is only going to
19 make the lawyers rich, where we could be
20 looking at years and years of battling over
21 what's the right number, what's the right
22 level, let's study this some more, is it an
23 unreasonable risk, is it not an unreasonable
24 risk. It could take years for American
25 consumers to see the necessary consumer

1 protection here imposed nationally. Why go
2 through all of that?

3 We are going therefore to the kill, to
4 the Congress with the Sierra Club with a
5 piece of legislation, which we'll be
6 bringing to the hill this month, which calls
7 for federal legislation, which we've titled
8 the Formaldehyde Standards for Composite
9 Woods Act.

10 It is an amendment to TSCA. It would
11 permit the EPA to effectively write a new
12 section of TSCA and enforce the California
13 rule including the limits, the requirements,
14 including the product scope, including the
15 time table for compliance and all of the
16 major components of the California rule.

17 It wouldn't bypass EPA. What it would
18 do is give guidance to EPA. It would give
19 direction to EPA. It would give urgency to
20 EPA, and it would say, "Don't spend five
21 years doing this. Do it in a year. Do it
22 now," and you'll have the model to work
23 from.

24 The California rule has been
25 characterized as -- quote, unquote -- "the

1 toughest production standard in the world."

2 And I can tell you I and others in this
3 room worked on this for many years with the
4 State of California, not always agreeing,
5 but I can tell you I probably was at every
6 single one of those meetings, every single
7 one of those hearings, and I rolled up my
8 sleeves and worked with that staff on this
9 rule. And, you know what, it really is the
10 toughest production standard in the world.
11 And it's not just because of the emission
12 levels.

13 We often get caught up in the number of
14 what's the right level, what's the right
15 level, what's the right level. I would
16 submit to you, ladies and gentlemen, that
17 the products manufactured today under
18 voluntary standards and even that are
19 manufactured under the California rule are
20 all going to be well below the level of
21 concern. That's not the issue.

22 The issue is what are we doing to test
23 these products and to insure that they're
24 compliant. In particular, what are we doing
25 about these products coming into this

1 country from offshore, most particularly
2 Asia, where they're lacking in this third-
3 party testing and oversight?

4 I can testify to you today that we have
5 been battling interest groups for the past
6 year who sought to overturn the California
7 rule, who sought to get an eighteen month
8 extension on compliance, who today -- who
9 today will come to EPA and will come to the
10 hill and as wolves in sheep's clothing will
11 tell you that they're for national standard.
12 And, then, they will enumerate their list of
13 buts, but, but, but, but, but, but, we don't want
14 testing of our products.

15 Excuse me. This is the problem. This
16 is the problem we need to solve with a
17 national standard. We need to make sure
18 that not just some of the products are
19 manufactured safely, but that all the
20 products are manufactured safely, so that
21 every consumer in every state has the
22 assurance that the products that they're
23 buying, the homes that they're living in
24 indeed are manufactured the same way,
25 doesn't matter where they're made in the

1 country -- I'm sorry, where they're made in
2 the world, the products sold here are all
3 manufactured to the same level.

4 So what I would submit to you is that
5 what is the strength of the California law
6 and what must be in any federal law is a
7 rigorous system of testing and
8 certification.

9 California calls it their TPC process,
10 third-party certifier. You could go on the
11 California air resources board web site
12 right now. It is completely transparent.
13 You have to apply to California to get
14 registered as one of these.

15 You have to demonstrate proficiency in
16 testing. You have to demonstrate that you
17 have international accreditations. You have
18 to demonstrate that proficiency in wood.
19 You have to demonstrate that you understand
20 formaldehyde testing. You have to
21 demonstrate that you are indeed an
22 independent party and not a self-interested
23 party.

24 In doing that, California reviews those
25 applications, accepts some, denies other.

1 And, now, there are some, I believe, sixteen
2 such organizations worldwide -- we're one of
3 them -- that are certified under the
4 California rule to test these wood products.
5 And what that gives you, as consumers, is an
6 assurance that somebody other than the
7 manufacturer is saying, "I am okay."

8 Because in all honesty what we have
9 dealt with, I think all of you would
10 recognize and agree with is too many
11 products coming into our country with much
12 less than quality assurance, where we don't
13 have that manufacturing assurance that's
14 coming in whether it's dog food or baby
15 formula or furniture or you name what it is,
16 lead in toys, children's jewelry.

17 What do all these things seem to have
18 in common? I think what they have in common
19 is a lack of the ability of the Federal
20 Government to provide the oversight that it
21 needs to insure that products that come in
22 to our shores that are sold here have
23 undergone some form of testing and
24 certification by an independent agency.
25 It's not a guarantee of perfection, but it's

1 a whole lot better than just saying, "Trust
2 me."

3 And, ladies and gentlemen, with this
4 potential regulation, we have the ability to
5 take a first step to provide a greater sense
6 of environmental justice, to provide a
7 greater sense of product stewardship, a
8 greater sense of consumer protection and,
9 yes, a greater sense of fair trade.

10 I'm not a big fan of big government. I
11 would sit here and tell you as an industry
12 executive I'm a free trader. But you know
13 what's wrong with that statement? It
14 quickly gets lost. It quickly gets lost,
15 and we forget about something called fair
16 trade.

17 Free trade is not unfair trade where we
18 have to comply as domestic manufacturers and
19 domestic workers where all the governmental
20 rules, and everybody that manufactures
21 everybody everywhere else gets a pass. I
22 don't see that as fair trade, free trade. I
23 see that as very unfair trade.

24 Now, you're going to hear and we began
25 to hear this song at the DC hearing that the

1 EPA scheduled, and you're going to hear more
2 of it in the press. You're going to hear
3 people standing up and saying they're for
4 this national standard, "We believe in this
5 national standard."

6 I ask you to read between the lines. I
7 ask you to listen to the buts, listen to the
8 fact that they want federal preemption of
9 the California law, listen to the fact that
10 they want some very fuzzy co-recognition of
11 different ways of testing and certifying
12 products. I read that as self-
13 certification.

14 Listen to the fact that they don't want
15 de-constructive testing or any other testing
16 of finished products. And, then, I ask you,
17 "Are they really for a national standard, or
18 are they really looking to lock in place
19 through the mechanism of the EPA the very
20 problem that we're trying to solve here?"
21 And I submit to you we cannot let that
22 happen.

23 If there indeed is going to be a
24 federal standard, it must be a federal
25 standard that is enforceable and that is

1 enforced. It cannot be one that just is a
2 feel-good standard where we all lock in and
3 say, "California, atta boy, you did the
4 right thing. We'll do it, too."

5 It has to have teeth. It has to allow
6 individual consumers, the media, the
7 regulatory computer community, environmental
8 groups, industry groups, anybody to very
9 transparently understand how wood products
10 are made.

11 I'll be the first to say, "We'll take
12 you on a tour of our testing facility."
13 We're very transparent. There's nothing to
14 hide. There's nothing to worry about. This
15 is not self-certification. This is not
16 trust but don't verify. We think trust and
17 verify is a good approach. And we think
18 California, therefore, has taken a very good
19 approach.

20 The past year as I indicated two
21 particular groups have fought the state of
22 California. They've put a lot of money into
23 the governor's office. They've lobbied.
24 They've lobbied the California legislature.
25 They've told half truths about the impact of

1 the California bill. They've claimed that
2 jobs would be lost because of the California
3 bill. Yes, jobs might be lost in China, but
4 they're not going to be lost here.

5 Because the worse thing -- and the
6 California regulators understood this very
7 well, and Governor Schwarzenegger understood
8 this very well -- that the continued erosion
9 of domestic jobs and green industries here
10 in the US would be a horrible and unintended
11 consequence of any regulation that
12 California would pass that would govern just
13 the domestic industry. So California did
14 the right thing. Their regulation has
15 teeth, and it also can demand compliance
16 from offshore manufacturing.

17 So I would just close by saying I want
18 to credit the Sierra Club for her fine work
19 here in the Gulf. I want to credit Tom
20 Nelter (phonetic) in particular. I want to
21 credit Becky Gillette and her team and
22 others for the work that they're doing in
23 support of the victims here. I want to
24 credit FEMA certainly for the work that
25 they've done, I think and I hope, giving

1 Americans a whole better sense of Federal
2 Government response than perhaps we did a
3 few years ago.

4 But there's a lot more work to be done,
5 and this is truly an opportunity here if the
6 EPA decides to move forward with a national
7 regulation of formaldehyde in pressed woods
8 to do the right thing and set as a model for
9 other industries for other products the way
10 we want to regulate and the way to want to
11 protect consumers.

12 So I'll close, and I'll say I am not at
13 liberty in case any of you might ask to at
14 this point share a copy of this legislation.
15 It has been shared with EPA. It will be
16 shared with others very, very soon. But I
17 think, frankly, as a courtesy to those on
18 the hill who are interested in this as well
19 as the EPA, we want to first give them a
20 full opportunity to consider it.

21 Thank you for your time.

22 MR. SCHREIBER:

23 Thank you, Tom.

24 Our next speaker is Dave Harmon,
25 representing Arclin, Georgia Pacific

1 Chemicals and Hexion.

2 MR. HARMON:

3 Good afternoon. And I appreciate again
4 the opportunity to come and speak at one of
5 these public hearings.

6 The producers of resins, the major
7 producers have all put together a common
8 statement, and I will be delivering it.

9 Again, I'm Dave Harmon. I'm the North
10 American Technical Manager for Hexion
11 special chemicals, but I'm also representing
12 Arclin and Georgia Pacific Chemicals.

13 Before we get into this too much and as
14 we look forward to the comments that will be
15 coming forward from the audience and other
16 participants, recognize that we're all in
17 sympathy with the victims of Katrina who
18 lost their homes.

19 Over the past couple of months, the
20 resin producers have attended all of these
21 meetings as has representatives from certain
22 other organizations. Today, we would like
23 to reaffirm our support for the industry's
24 commitment, that is for wood products
25 industry in combination with their present

1 suppliers to provide the best possible
2 technologies to the producers of pressed-
3 wood products.

4 Wood adhesives or glues have been
5 around for many generations, and the
6 technology behind them has been constantly
7 changing and accelerating as time has gone
8 by. The result of this is products with
9 increasingly lower emissions, and we have
10 provided testimony on that at prior hearings
11 and where, in fact, it's going to take us.

12 As you've heard Tom Julia mention, that
13 the largest majority of wood product
14 producers today are already meeting the CARB
15 phase one reduced emissions levels. Well,
16 what about the second phase, the CARB two
17 phase? Much, much lower.

18 You've also heard Lynn mention that
19 many of the structural products are outside
20 of the carb regulation, because they are
21 well-recognized to have such low emissions
22 levels, that they're not of concern. That's
23 what I'm here to reveal to you again today
24 at this meeting, is that the producers have
25 advanced the technology of the resin systems

1 that we currently can and do produce to
2 reach the carb phase two levels. This has
3 been done on both the laboratory scale and
4 is just being rolled out in commercial
5 production as we are speaking.

6 Those levels are extremely low, as a
7 matter of fact, reaching down to where
8 natural wood is. And if you can conceive
9 that most people can tolerate natural sawn
10 wood, that's where we are at today, and
11 working out the commercial proof of those
12 products availability right now.

13 The other part of that is that those
14 levels are so low, they're down in the same
15 range as natural wood, but at that point, it
16 doesn't's make any difference whether you
17 are using one of these very low formaldehyde
18 based systems or a non-added formaldehyde
19 system. The formaldehyde level is the same
20 as you get off the wood. That's really as
21 low as you can go.

22 These improvements do allow the
23 producers of pressed-wood products to
24 continue to provide safe, cost-effective,
25 high-performing products that contribute to

1 the availability of economical high-quality
2 housing in North American, and yet have the
3 lowest possible emissions limits.

4 Resin manufacturers will continue to
5 support these customer efforts with ours to
6 supply products to meet the current and
7 growing and future needs of the market and
8 consumers through new technology
9 developments being proven out today.

10 Thank you for your consideration.

11 MR. SCHREIBER:

12 Our next speaker is Becky Gillette,
13 Formaldehyde Campaign Director from the
14 Sierra Club.

15 MS. GILLETTE:

16 Hello. My name is Becky Gillette, and
17 I'm Formaldehyde Campaign Director from
18 Sierra Club. And I would like to thank EPA
19 for holding this meeting here in New
20 Orleans, which more of the people that have
21 been affected by formaldehyde could speak.

22 But I would say that there are number
23 of people that I expected to be here today
24 who were not able to be here because of the
25 illnesses of themselves or their mother or

1 their sisters. So, for every person you
2 hear speak today, there are going to be
3 hundreds more that were affected that were
4 not able to come.

5 I would like to address the issues of
6 how formaldehyde affects the health of
7 pregnant women, children -- the unborn,
8 newborns and children. According to the
9 Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease
10 Registry, "Children exposed to the same
11 levels of formaldehyde as adults may receive
12 higher doses, and this is because they're
13 short and because there are higher levels of
14 formaldehyde found near the ground."

15 I would like to introduce to the Record
16 scientific studies regarding the effect of
17 mutagenic and tetraatogenic effects of
18 formaldehyde. Formaldehyde exposure has
19 been shown to be related to delayed
20 conception and increased risk of spontaneous
21 abortion in woodworkers. And studies on
22 embryo toxicity of formaldehyde rodents
23 demonstrates that formaldehyde can cross the
24 fetus -- the placenta to the fetus, and can
25 cause birth defects.

1 I'm quoting from the study by Dr. Jack
2 Thrasher, Embryo Toxicity and Teratogenicity
3 of Formaldehyde. "Formaldehyde crosses the
4 placenta and enters fetal tissues." Dr.
5 Trasher said there is no doubt that high
6 levels of formaldehyde can develop -- can
7 affect a developing fetus.

8 And article of mutagenesis, May, 2002,
9 Evaluation of the mutagenic effects of
10 formaldehyde in vitro states, "Formaldehyde
11 is known to be a geno-toxic substance. We
12 now demonstrate that formaldehyde
13 efficiently induces mutations in the mouse
14 lymphoma assay."

15 Research published in Mutation Research
16 March, 1983, is titled "Formaldehyde is
17 mutagenic for cultured human cells."
18 Another article in that journal published in
19 '88 is titled "Review of genotoxicity of
20 formaldehyde."

21 In 1981, CDC bulletin, Formaldehyde:
22 Evidence of Carcinogenicity says, "It is
23 prudent to regard formaldehyde as posing a
24 carcinogenic risk to humans. Most chemicals
25 known to cause cancer are also capable of

1 causing a change in the genetic material
2 within a cell mutation. Therefore,
3 mutagenicity tests support the results of
4 animal tests to determine carcinogenic
5 potential. Formaldehyde has long been known
6 to be a mutagenic."

7 Many women living in FEMA trailers have
8 reported miscarriages, pre-term labor, low
9 birth weight babies, babies that develop --
10 children that developed asthma and babies
11 that turn blue.

12 One of the blue babies was born to
13 Jennifer Donelson, who spent the earlier
14 months of her pregnancy in a FEMA trailer.
15 And her baby started turning blue, and they
16 would rush him to the hospital, and they
17 wouldn't be able to find out what was wrong
18 with him. A couple of times, he just
19 stopped breathing. One time, she was able
20 to shake him and get him breathing again.
21 Another time, he stopped breathing for
22 fifteen minutes. He's now permanently
23 brain-damaged.

24 I'd like to introduce into the Record
25 Jennifer Donelson's YouTube interview on

1 this.

2 We know of two newborns in Bay St.
3 Louis, whose deaths were linked to the
4 trailers that had high formaldehyde levels.
5 At least two similar deaths were reported
6 here in New Orleans.

7 And here's a statement by
8 Representative Henry Waxman from the first
9 U.S. House Committee on Government Oversight
10 Reform Hearing. It was held in 2007.
11 Quote, "FEMA requested that a contractor
12 test one occupied trailer. On April 5,
13 2006, Bonner Analytic Testing Company tested
14 the FEMA trailer occupied by a couple and
15 their four-month old daughter. The mother
16 was two months pregnant and had, quote,
17 'expressed concern' for her unborn child and
18 young daughter.

19 "Shortly after moving into the trailer
20 in February of '06, the family experienced
21 burning eyes and feeling sick. Their
22 doctors had suggested that they may have
23 been exposed to formaldehyde.

24 "The test found excessive levels of
25 formaldehyde. Over an eight-and-a-half hour

1 period, formaldehyde levels in the master
2 bedroom averaged one point two parts per
3 million. The test found that formaldehyde
4 levels were significantly higher than this
5 average during the hottest part of the day.

6 "The average of one point two PPM is
7 seventy-five times higher than the NIOSH
8 Workplace Guideline of point zero one six
9 PPM and twelve times higher than the point
10 one PPM level that NIOSH recommends should
11 not be exceeded for more than fifteen
12 minutes." That's the end of the quote from
13 Representative Waxman.

14 In a formaldehyde council letter to EPA
15 in response to this rule-making effort, the
16 council claimed that the average of point
17 zero seven seven PPM formaldehyde found in
18 the FEMA trailers in 2008 is no reason for
19 concern.

20 However, look at these much, much
21 higher levels found done when these trailers
22 were first occupied. Formaldehyde levels
23 decrease over time, so the average
24 formaldehyde levels in the FEMA trailers at
25 the beginning were far higher than those

1 done two years later in the winter, when
2 it's cold and there's less out-gassing.

3 And here's another statement from
4 Representative Waxman about the death of a
5 baby in Texas in a FEMA trailer. "In
6 August, 2006, an infant girl died in a FEMA
7 trailer in Texas. The mother and father
8 thought formaldehyde exposure was the cause
9 of the death, and they asked that the
10 trailer not be used by FEMA again.

11 "Upon entering the trailer, a FEMA
12 representative noted that formaldehyde in
13 the trailer made her nose burn.
14 Nonetheless, it appears that FEMA never
15 conducted any testing or warned future
16 occupants of potential risk."

17 Also consider this testimony by
18 pediatrician Dr. Scott Needle of the first
19 toxic trailer hearing. He said -- Dr.
20 Needle said, "Studies since 1990 have found
21 higher rates of asthma, chronic bronchitis
22 and allergies in children exposed to
23 elevated levels of formaldehyde." This is
24 consistent with the many health problems
25 that Dr. Needle saw among his young patients

1 living in FEMA trailers in Bay St. Louis.

2 Out of the sixty-nine first FEMA
3 trailers that we tested, we had four deaths
4 that we know of, Desiree Collins, Mickey
5 Kizziah, Hilda Nelson and Alexa Marie
6 Martin, who lived only ten days after being
7 born July 12, 2007. Adults have spoken of
8 waking up in their FEMA trailers gasping for
9 air. How would this same toxic air affect a
10 newborn or a premature newborn?

11 The EPA should carefully consider the
12 two house oversight committee
13 investigations.

14 At the second hearing, four
15 manufacturers of the FEMA trailers highest
16 in formaldehyde were called to testify.
17 Their defense was based on two things: One,
18 there's no law against it; number two, they
19 use the same materials and processes that
20 have been used for years, which are standard
21 in their industry.

22 By their own admission, not just FEMA
23 trailer residents, but millions of Americans
24 have been exposed to formaldehyde in
25 products manufactured by these companies.

1 And, since the FEMA trailer problem has been
2 publicized, more people have come to realize
3 that their health problems have been caused
4 by formaldehyde.

5 We have received complaints and done
6 testing that have found high formaldehyde
7 levels in privately purchased RVs across the
8 country, in mobile homes and in modular
9 apartment complexes. HUD's regulations for
10 wood products are far too high to be
11 protected and are non-enforced. They create
12 a false sense of security.

13 Evidence of this is an important CDC
14 study on the components of FEMA trailers.
15 The indoor levels in these four FEMA
16 trailers were very high, ranging from point
17 one -- point three one PPM to point seven
18 eight PPM. Yet, out of forty-five materials
19 sampled, only one exceeded HUD's limit for
20 formaldehyde.

21 This is clear evidence that HUD's
22 standards for materials used in
23 manufacturing are far too high to be
24 protected. And, not only that, but they
25 give people a false sense of security that

1 they're -- you know, it's regulated, so they
2 think it's okay.

3 I want to give just one true life
4 example of the consequences of failure to
5 regulate formaldehyde, and this is from a
6 privately purchased mobile home. Shannon
7 Turner, Vinegar Bend, Alabama, wrote me July
8 4, 2008, "After purchasing a double-wide
9 mobile home in 2005, my family started
10 having many unexplained medical problems.

11 "My three year old daughter was staying
12 sick with upper respiratory infections,
13 leading to pneumonia and hospitalization.
14 This continued on for a year until a doctor
15 was so concerned with her chronic illness,
16 that she was tested for autoimmune
17 disorders.

18 "You can only imagine my struggle with
19 my three year old, all the sleepless nights
20 praying and wondering what could be wrong
21 with my little angel.

22 "In the meantime, my son was eight, and
23 he began having severe nose bleeds and sinus
24 infections.

25 "Within this time frame, I also started

1 having troubles with shortness of breath and
2 upper respiratory infections. I went to the
3 doctor and was diagnosed with asthma. I had
4 never had asthma or problems of shortness of
5 breath, but now all three of us are dealing
6 with these unexplained illnesses.

7 "I hope you can get the message across
8 to EPA, because we still fight a losing
9 battle. My son's allergist agrees that his
10 symptoms are related to formaldehyde
11 exposure due to the allergy testing he had
12 performed.

13 "We are stuck with this mortgage, and
14 the manufacturer will not acknowledge there
15 being a problem. The thought has crossed my
16 mind so many times to stop paying the
17 mortgage just so we could be rid of this
18 house that has made my babies so sick. I
19 can deal with the symptoms, but watching
20 them sometimes is more than I can bear.

21 "I've worked in the medical field for
22 ten years, and I have seen so many things.
23 I've watched someone die before my eyes.
24 But nothing comes close when your children
25 are sick, and you know what is causing it,

1 and there's nothing you can do. I feel so
2 guilty. I feel like it's my fault, because
3 I continue to stay in this house with toxic
4 gases that I know is making us all sick.

5 "I just pray there will be stronger
6 regulations for formaldehyde and its usage
7 in homes."

8 We sent Shannon Turner a test kit, and
9 her test -- trailer tested at that point one
10 zero one PPM, which is above the level what
11 people should be exposed to for even short
12 periods of time. Yet the family had been
13 living in this mobile home for three years.

14 In 1981, Congress held hearings and
15 heard stories about people living in mobile
16 homes that had been affected by
17 formaldehyde. The hearing concluded that
18 formaldehyde regulations were needed.
19 Twenty-eight years later, we still don't
20 have effective formaldehyde regulations.

21 Solving this one problem could improve
22 the health of millions of Americans. It
23 could save lives. I urge EPA to adopt the
24 CARB formaldehyde standards without delay.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. SCHREIBER:

2 The next speaker is Darryl Malek-Wiley,
3 Regional Representative, Environmental-
4 Justice Organizer, Sierra Club.

5 MR. MALEK-WILEY:

6 Good afternoon. My name is Darryl
7 Malek-Wiley. I'm an Environmental Justice
8 Organizer for the Sierra Club.

9 I've got written comments that I'll
10 submit, but I've probably got to go off
11 script here and speak some other things.

12 I think that for everybody in the
13 audience, it's hard to understand how EPA
14 has to work through the regulations to get
15 to the point where they're protecting folks'
16 health.

17 And living here in New Orleans, I've
18 seen so many folks impacted by living in
19 FEMA trailers. There's been injustice done
20 on top of the lack of response by FEMA on
21 the poor folks that live in New Orleans, and
22 I think that this is a very technical
23 process we have to go through to try and get
24 regulations specifically on formaldehyde,
25 and there needs to be additional hearings to

1 talk about how FEMA messed up folks in New
2 Orleans and have caused health impacts. And
3 that's going to have to be another day.

4 But the concerns of health and
5 formaldehyde emissions in trailers is an
6 ongoing issue, and we need to do more in-
7 depth analysis of that. And the Sierra Club
8 through its efforts tested a number of
9 trailers. And, in all of our testing of
10 trailers -- let me find where I am. I'm
11 supposed to be on script here. I'm better
12 on my -- nine out of ten trailers we tested
13 were above federal EPA of the point one part
14 per million standard.

15 And it's just inconceivable what
16 happened here how high these levels were in
17 trailers. I've tested trailers in New
18 Orleans East with the Vietnamese community.
19 I tested trailer in the lower Ninth Ward. I
20 tested trailer in Plaquemines Parish. And,
21 consistently, we found numbers of high
22 levels of formaldehyde, and the need for
23 these standards which should have been put
24 in place years ago.

25 In this rule-making process, we've

1 heard some folks testify that formaldehyde
2 does not cause cancer. And we think that
3 that's just totally not based in fact; that
4 formaldehyde has been regulated because of
5 the concerns of its cancer-causing
6 possibilities; and, that the formaldehyde
7 council and the formaldehyde institute have
8 both been coming to and talking about some
9 of their objections to this rule that we
10 feel are not based on scientific fact; and,
11 in fact, that they have made false
12 statements and have supported -- quote --
13 "scientific studies" that are in some ways
14 biased.

15 One of the researchers is a Gary Marsh,
16 and he's been actively funded by the
17 Formaldehyde Institute and Monsanto and
18 Dupont and other chemical companies. And we
19 feel that any kind of scientific research
20 done on formaldehyde needs to be done by an
21 independent body, not by researchers that
22 are funded by the industry.

23 We need to stop allowing powerful trade
24 industry groups working to prevent
25 regulations by buying scientific research.

1 And we object to -- you know, the objective
2 of some of these industries is to put the
3 idea of how much money they can make before
4 the public health and safety of Americans.

5 I'll just submit the rest of it, but I
6 think what we're trying to do here, all of
7 us who have been working with formaldehyde
8 and other issues of pollution in trailers,
9 there has been an injustice done to people
10 in New Orleans and the Mississippi Coast and
11 Texas. And, now, we just heard about
12 trailers -- FEMA trailers being sold in
13 Missouri. So there's an ongoing problem
14 with this, and we need to get more detailed
15 testing on formaldehyde.

16 I appreciated the comments of the first
17 speaker saying that we need a very active
18 testing of products for formaldehyde, and
19 making sure that we have these standards in
20 place is just something that its time has
21 way past come.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. SCHREIBER:

24 Our next speaker is Jill Mastrototaro,
25 Senior Field Organizing Manager from the

1 Sierra Club.

2 MS. MASTROTOTARO:

3 Good afternoon. My name is Jill
4 Mastrototaro, Senior Field Organizing
5 Manager with the Sierra Club based in our
6 New Orleans, Louisiana, office.

7 And, first, I wanted to thank EPA for
8 responding to the public concern about the
9 need to hold a public hearing along the Gulf
10 Coast to allow our citizens, who have been
11 the most closely effected in the Country by
12 FEMA trailer formaldehyde issues, an
13 opportunity to directly share their concerns
14 about the need for stronger public health
15 regulations.

16 Next, I would like to present the
17 comments prepared by Ms. Mary Devani
18 (phonetic), an industrial hygienist from
19 Vancouver, Washington, who has donated many
20 hours to provide technical assistance to the
21 Sierra Club's national formaldehyde
22 campaign.

23 Ms. Devani has extensive experience
24 testing FEMA trailers, and she has been a
25 strong advocate for strengthening regulatory

1 limits on formaldehyde exposure.

2 Ms. Devani shares, "The petitioners ask
3 that EPA protect all citizens of the United
4 States by nationalizing the California air
5 toxics rule, which would dramatically reduce
6 formaldehyde emissions from pressed wood,
7 particle board and plywood products.

8 "For decades, the adverse toxic effects
9 and the carcinogenic potential of
10 formaldehyde have been well known. NIOSH,
11 the National Institute of Occupational
12 Safety and Health and a division of the CDC,
13 recommended a workplace exposure of no more
14 than point oh one six parts per million for
15 no more than ten hours per day and no more
16 than forty hours per week nearly three
17 decades ago.

18 And this level was designed to protect
19 the health of normal healthy adult workers,
20 not more than vulnerable segments of our
21 population.

22 "ATSDR, the Agency for Toxic Substances
23 and Disease Registry, also part of the CDC,
24 established a limit for chronic exposure no
25 more than point oh oh eight PPM. Thousands

1 of citizens have experienced significant
2 adverse health effects at the point oh one
3 part per million level, the level that EPA
4 is currently considering, and at lower
5 levels.

6 "We have sampling results from hundreds
7 of trailers, travel trailers lived in by
8 thousands of people sickened by formaldehyde
9 exposure. As one might imagine, symptoms
10 worsened at higher concentrations.

11 "Because of this, we urge the EPA to
12 follow its charter to protect the health and
13 the environment of Americans, and lower the
14 allowable concentration of formaldehyde.
15 This will not happen without a regulatory
16 mandate.

17 "In conclusion, we have more than
18 enough evidence to warrant limiting
19 formaldehyde exposure, and I strongly
20 recommend that the EPA adopt a new
21 standard."

22 And that again were comments by Mary
23 Devani of Devani Industrial Consultants in
24 Vancouver, Washington.

25 Second, people from all over the

1 country have contacted the Sierra Club
2 regarding their concerns about formaldehyde
3 in the homes, offices and schools.

4 I would like to present to EPA comments
5 from three thousand one hundred eighty-nine
6 citizens from across the United States, who
7 are calling on the agency to deliver on its
8 mission to protect the health of all
9 Americans by adopting the California Air
10 Resources Board standards on formaldehyde.

11 These letters represent a fraction, one
12 third of the comments we're submitting to
13 EPA's public Record today. The complete
14 file is also being submitted electronically
15 on two CDs.

16 Clearly this outpouring of interest and
17 concern by citizens nationwide speaks to
18 just how serious, widespread and personal
19 the formaldehyde issue has become in the
20 lives of day-to-day Americans.

21 We anticipate EPA rising to meet and
22 enforce its mission on the promulgation of
23 stronger formaldehyde standards.

24 And I thank you again for the
25 opportunity to present these to you.

1 MR. SCHREIBER:

2 Thank you.

3 Our next speaker is Jesse Fineran.

4 MR. FINERAN:

5 Hello. My name is Jesse Fineran. I
6 lived in a FEMA trailer in Bay St. Louis,
7 Mississippi, for approximately two and a
8 half years after Katrina.

9 In September of 2005, I served with the
10 Hancock County Emergency Management Agency
11 as hazardous material response person. I
12 provided local knowledge to United States
13 Coast Guard Strike Team and the EPA field
14 personnel. I attended daily meetings at
15 Hancock County's Emergency Operations
16 Center, and all participating agencies were
17 there. That was FEMA, OSHA, EPA and state
18 agencies.

19 Just days after FEMA began providing
20 travel trailers in our county, people began
21 calling up about illnesses and complaints
22 about the air quality in these trailers. We
23 brought this out in our county meetings
24 before EPA and before FEMA and before OSHA,
25 and OSHA finally in November of 2005 tested

1 the trailers that were being housed in Kiln,
2 Mississippi. They found high levels of
3 formaldehyde not only in the trailers but in
4 the air outside of the trailers. This
5 information was provided to FEMA and EPA.

6 Some of these survivors had real severe
7 reactions when they went into these
8 trailers. They would go in and have
9 breathing issues. Some of them we even had
10 to bring in to get first aid and bring them
11 in to get breathing treatments. Other
12 people just had very light problems. Some
13 experienced little problems.

14 My wife was one of these people who
15 reacted severely to it, because she entered
16 my son -- who was provided or leased a
17 trailer by FEMA -- she went in the trailer,
18 and we had to get her to a hospital
19 immediately.

20 Now, in our meeting, I met with Bectel
21 (phonetic), who was one of the contractors,
22 who was delivering the trailers for FEMA,
23 and asked him, you know, had they had
24 experience with this in Florida and other
25 places where FEMA had used these trailers.

1 They said, "Yeah. You know, some of
2 the products used in these trailers were
3 making some of the people sick, but it
4 wasn't any big deal, because nobody was
5 breaking the law." I said, "Okay."

6 So we went on. He said, "Actually," he
7 says, "they make trailers for people who are
8 product sensitive to formaldehyde and the
9 other chemicals that affect the indoor air
10 quality in these trailers."

11 This progressed on FEMA. They actually
12 sent people into our county, and they said,
13 "Oh, yeah, we were" -- you know, "we're
14 aware of this. We're looking into it."
15 Matter of fact, I think I was given the same
16 story as Mr. Torres, that health was a
17 priority, that we'll take care of the
18 people, and no harm is going to come to the
19 people, that there was no risk.

20 In 2005, FEMA provided me with a
21 Keystone trailer, which was to house my wife
22 and my three little pets, which was dogs.
23 And, man, this appeared to be a wonderful
24 gift, because it got us out of the mud.

25 I aired the trailer out for a couple of

1 days. Actually, in reading the product
2 information on the trailer -- this was a
3 Keystone -- you read the product
4 information, they said it was made with safe
5 material, of materials that were low in VOCs
6 and formaldehydes. Aired it out for three
7 of four days while they got the power on,
8 cooled it down as recommended.

9 Got in the trailer and within weeks, my
10 wife had to move out of the trailer and back
11 to Louisiana. I stayed in the trailer
12 because I was not there all day. I was out
13 working in the field. I was out working
14 with the EPA. I apparently react
15 differently even though -- well, I stayed
16 for one reason, I believed in my government.
17 I believed in what FEMA told me, that these
18 things wouldn't hurt me.

19 So we continued on. Anyway, we're
20 getting down to November. I went to work
21 for FEMA. I wound up being the mobile homes
22 operations manager for Hancock County. I
23 was told that I was not supposed to speak
24 about formaldehyde. I continued to see
25 problems.

1 My supervisor would instruct our people
2 to go out if someone complained about
3 formaldehyde -- they had to use the "F"
4 word, formaldehyde. If they complained
5 about formaldehyde, I was to send an
6 untrained individual out into this trailer
7 to do what they called a sniff test.

8 That meant taking a person that is
9 untrained, has no knowledge or ignorant of
10 the dangers of formaldehyde, and put them in
11 a trailer that contained a toxic chemical
12 agent to see how they reacted. If they
13 reacted and had some -- or felt there was
14 formaldehyde in the trailer, FEMA's only
15 choice then was to give them another
16 trailer.

17 Some of the particular trailers that we
18 had were some of the ADA models, which, you
19 know, they designed these for people who had
20 disabilities or handicapped. The interior
21 walls of these trailers were nice and clean,
22 actually created a vapor barrier. A lot of
23 these trailers actually from the way they
24 were designed, they were not designed to be
25 in our southern climate.

1 So what happened is condensation formed
2 with inside the walls on the trailer. The
3 materials, the press boards that they -- all
4 these gentlemen have been talking about this
5 morning, all these materials are absorbent.
6 The moisture gets into the material, then
7 they appear to off-gas the formaldehyde.
8 This is what I've learned from this.

9 Eventually -- FEMA didn't like me
10 questioning. Eventually, I was demoted, and
11 I no longer work for FEMA because I was
12 terminated. I say I didn't go back to work.
13 We'll go to that later. That's why we have
14 attorneys.

15 FEMA's policy was if people didn't --
16 this is what one of my supervisors did and
17 I'll quote it, "If people -- if the
18 occupants did not like what FEMA gave them,
19 that FEMA -- that they would take the unit
20 from the people, and they can sleep in the
21 mud."

22 Apparently, I didn't react to the
23 formaldehyde in the same manner as my wife.
24 I experienced breathing problems. I had
25 hear murmurs, and I got some nerve damage to

1 my legs, to my extremities.

2 About -- later on in 2006, I asked the
3 Sierra Club to test my unit. We tested it.
4 It tested out -- this is what the industry
5 called a product sensitive unit. It tested
6 point two one parts per million of
7 formaldehyde. The other problem with the
8 unit was that it suffered from rain and
9 water damage and condensation problems.

10 The maintenance that was done on these
11 trailers -- well, FEMA, initially, they were
12 worried a big campaign. They were worried
13 about these trailers blowing away when Rita
14 came.

15 Remember, Rita came right after Katrina
16 and double-slammed us. Well, they were
17 worried about all these poor victims as FEMA
18 called us -- I thought we were survivors --
19 that we were going to wash away in these
20 trailers.

21 So FEMA decided to take these -- these
22 are travel trailers that were designed to
23 take your family on a weekend at the beach
24 or the mountains and stay for a week, a
25 short, short term period. They're going to

1 place these trailers up on blocks. They're
2 designed to up and down the highway.

3 What the manufacturers are telling me,
4 that once you put them on blocks and level
5 them, it splits the seams on the top of the
6 trailers, and they start to leak, and the
7 water runs in the inside of the panels, and
8 this encourages mold growth, and then
9 encourages the formaldehyde and off gas.

10 None -- very, very little -- the
11 manufacturers recommend that the seams on
12 these trailers be caulked every three
13 months, also every time they're moved.

14 Many of the RV types as I said earlier
15 use a vinyl coating or a membrane on the
16 interior barrier. This created the other
17 moisture problems. Mold was common in
18 almost all of these units. FEMA continues
19 not to address the mold problem. And I know
20 that's not what you're here for, but this
21 does occur. Mold grows quickly on these
22 pressed-board materials once they're exposed
23 to moisture.

24 The moisture is also -- will pick up
25 moisture also from the cooking inside that

1 was done, from the bathing. And, then,
2 actually, there were some issues with the
3 heating units or the gas units where they're
4 producing sometimes an abundance or higher
5 levels of carbon dioxide, which actually
6 does have some formaldehyde combined in that
7 combustion or combustion exhaust.

8 I guess my biggest question here or my
9 biggest thing was to experience this, to see
10 the people that have been affected, and to
11 be there when -- you know, when we had --
12 our government was sitting there -- you
13 know, before I was a disabled person, before
14 I went to work for FEMA, I volunteered for
15 the -- with the Coast Guard as an auxiliary
16 to work in my community. I got to work with
17 a premiere agency that I thought was going
18 to be doing the recovery for the coast --
19 well, for anyone.

20 And, then, to get in, to find out that
21 you had people out here who were suffering.
22 We had people sick. We had people who were
23 having to go to the doctor. People that
24 couldn't stay in -- so we had people that
25 were storing their clothes in the trailers

1 and sleeping in tents, because they couldn't
2 stay in them.

3 FEMA knew about this as early on as
4 2005 and did nothing but protect themselves.
5 In the Waxman e-mails, you can actually find
6 letters from people in the upper notches of
7 the Gulf Coast that got e-mails from
8 attorneys stating that if we address or test
9 the trailers that will be owning the
10 problem. So they knew, and they did
11 nothing.

12 They're continuing to do -- I
13 understand now that the CDC is not able to
14 do the study that they promised to do in
15 2008, because somehow FEMA will not let the
16 freedom of information act allow them to get
17 the names of the occupants of the trailers.
18 So, actually, the CDC to date from what I
19 understand has done nothing.

20 I asked -- I did the CDC meetings that
21 they did on the Gulf Coast and talked to
22 several of the doctors that were there. I
23 asked them, I said, "Doc, answer this
24 question: Would you take your family and
25 your pets, and would you put them in one of

1 these trailers that any of the FEMA mobile
2 housing design, the temporary housing
3 designs and leave them here for a period of
4 time?" He said, "Absolutely not."

5 So how did this happen that we have all
6 these agencies? Apparently, we have rules
7 that don't work, because nobody knows what
8 the other rules are. It's like, you know,
9 they start out saying, "Well, it's three
10 parts per billion, per million that was the
11 issue." Well, that's how you grade a sheet
12 of plywood once you put it in a confined
13 area and see what it off-gasses.

14 But, when you take a two hundred and
15 forty square foot box, which is a confined
16 area, and then you put people in there for
17 long, long periods with low dose exposure
18 for long terms, this is what the issue is.
19 Nothing is addressing this.

20 But once they saw that people were
21 suffering, somebody should have done
22 something. Somebody should have had the
23 common sense to pull the plug, but we
24 continued to order more trailers. But
25 that's behind us. What we have to do now is

1 to find out what we can do in the future, so
2 this doesn't happen.

3 You know, we've got -- from what I've
4 learned -- even the CDC told me this, that
5 we're going to have people experiencing
6 problems probably five and ten years from
7 now that were ignorant of the fact.

8 And, then, what FEMA did to do this --
9 or if they had -- like in Biloxi, they went
10 in and their chief of staff was a retired
11 Coast Guard captain, who had a career or
12 hazardous materials knowledge, where he knew
13 the federal regulations up and down,
14 basically to deal with the formaldehyde
15 issues on the complaints that came in.

16 When I made my complaints to management
17 about formaldehyde, instead of being handled
18 by Human Resources, I was handle by this
19 particular officer.

20 Something has to be done. I don't know
21 what. I don't have the answers, but we've
22 got to figure out a way to make this happen.
23 You know, it was health and safety policies
24 that were, that DHS had at this time.
25 Purchasing should have picked this up

1 earlier and then stopped it. But we had so
2 many people dependent upon it.

3 You know, we talked about the --
4 apparently, in some of these trailers, a lot
5 of products came in out of China -- well,
6 let's say out of Asia. Some came in from
7 South America. They weren't tested, but
8 they were allowed to get in here.

9 But here we are, we're sitting here.
10 We have an agency that's supposed to be
11 protecting the homeland, we're sitting here
12 poisoning -- half a million people have been
13 affected by this. A lot of people don't
14 know it, and they're standing in it and
15 still will not have accountability that they
16 did anything.

17 To be honest with you, Johnathan. I
18 would not buy a used car from you today,
19 sir.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. SCHREIBER:

22 Our next speaker is Cindy Martin, R.N.

23 MS. MARTIN:

24 Wow, it's tough to follow people that
25 speak with such passion.

1 My name is Cindy Martin. I would also
2 like to thank you for the opportunity to be
3 here today to speak of my personal tragedy.
4 And, since I don't speak quite so well, I'm
5 going to have to read from my prepared
6 statement.

7 I would like to tell you about myself.
8 I am a mother, a grandmother, a nurse. I
9 have a career of service in my community as
10 an advocate for those who speak -- in my
11 community for those who cannot speak for
12 themselves. And I would like to introduce
13 you to Alexa Marie Martin. And this is
14 very, very hard for me to speak about. So
15 I'm a little nervous, so bear with me,
16 please.

17 It is my concern for the families and
18 in particular the unborn babies, who do not
19 speak, that brings me here today. I am
20 respectfully asking you to look at the face
21 of this newborn baby that brought so much
22 joy to her family and an unspeakable amount
23 of pain in just ten short days of her life.

24 In short, I'm asking your consideration
25 with the formaldehyde issue as it has been

1 well stated does have a profound effect on
2 the developing fetus.

3 Alexis was conceived in a toxic FEMA
4 trailer, in which her family lived for many
5 months during her gestational period. At
6 birth, she appeared to be fine. However, an
7 autopsy revealed premature development even
8 though she was carried to term. Alexis'
9 cause of death has been determined as SIDS,
10 which we believe to be a direct cause from a
11 toxic formaldehyde environmental resulting
12 from exposure in a FEMA trailer.

13 Would you please keep this in your
14 thoughts throughout this meeting.

15 I remain outraged at the lack of
16 urgency that was demonstrated by FEMA to
17 inform the trailer population of the
18 formaldehyde dangers. I also request that
19 EPA set building material standards.

20 And I will be here after the meeting,
21 and I would love for anyone to tell me their
22 stories or ask me any questions that you
23 might have for me.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. SCHREIBER:

1 Nancy Hirschfield, Informed Choices.

2 MS. HIRSCHFIELD:

3 Hi. I'm Nancy Hirschfield. I started
4 Informed Choices as a support group for the
5 chemically injured or chemically sensitive
6 back in 1993. But I'm going to talk about
7 my own story.

8 First of all, prior to Katrina, I was
9 disabled and, of course, chemically
10 sensitive. Matter of fact, if I hesitate a
11 little bit, once I've been -- this is a long
12 day for me. And being in here among all of
13 you with all the chemical fragrances and
14 whatnot, I'm a little light headed right
15 now. So if my tongue gets twisted, please
16 bear with me.

17 But after spending now six months
18 living in a tent and taking cold showers
19 with a garden hose, of course, I welcomed my
20 FEMA travel trailer. It was one for the
21 handicapped primarily because it was all
22 electric. Because being chemically
23 sensitive, I had to avoid the propane that's
24 in most of them.

25 When they first delivered it, it

1 smelled so badly of chemicals, I couldn't
2 even enter it. And the workmen who set it
3 up opened all the windows, opened the door,
4 left me the key, and we tried airing it out.

5 Before I moved into it, I purchased an
6 air purifier. I did so after talking with
7 FEMA, and made sure that it hit all their
8 specs, and with the assumption that I would
9 be reimbursed for it. Well, it's been over
10 three years, and I'm still waiting.

11 It took me probably about a year before
12 I connected the dots as to what my health
13 problems were, because they were far
14 different than what I had been experiencing,
15 you know, with the formaldehyde.

16 And, of course, formaldehyde is a known
17 sensitizer, and it can or trigger what they
18 term as multiple chemical sensitivity, even
19 our public health agency ATSDR in their
20 publication called Medical Management
21 Guidelines for formaldehyde speaks or states
22 that you can become sensitized to it. Once
23 you're sensitized to it, it means you have
24 to avoid it.

25 Of course, I'm still living in one of

1 FEMA's travel trailers. I was not -- I was
2 unsuccessful in getting FEMA to allow me to
3 make any modifications to my travel trailer
4 that would have helped me. It wouldn't have
5 prevented me from getting ill, but it would
6 have probably helped me from getting so ill.

7 I requested -- in both the bedroom and
8 the living area, there was carpet. I
9 requested permission to remove it, and they
10 wouldn't allow it. I requested permission
11 to put in ceiling fans, that would have
12 given more ventilation. They refused to let
13 me do that. Matter of fact, really warned
14 me not to change anything.

15 ATSDR even recommends that you can seal
16 your formaldehyde, and I wanted to know if I
17 could seal the cabinets, and no, nothing.
18 In the three years that I've lived there,
19 they've not offered to test it. They don't
20 seem to be concerned.

21 One of my big problems that I'm going
22 to have now -- first, I just -- right before
23 the holidays, I got my Road Home money, but
24 the problem -- after all this time, and I
25 was running -- you're laughing, but I was

1 sick most of the time, so part of it -- I
2 can't blame it on Road Home. A lot of it
3 was me.

4 But one of the problems I had with my
5 damaged home was a mobile home, an old one.
6 And, so, I am faced either with rebuilding
7 it or replacing it, which again presents
8 another formaldehyde issue. It's another
9 exposure. So I really want EPA to regulate
10 this, so that when I get ready to move from
11 my toxic trailer, I will be fairly assured
12 that I can move into a safe environment and
13 that I won't get sick again.

14 That's about it. Thank you.

15 MR. SCHREIBER:

16 Our next speakers are Mary and Richard
17 Bain.

18 MS. BAIN:

19 Hi, my name is Mary Bain. This is my
20 husband Richard. I'll explain later why --
21 I'll explain later why I will be doing most
22 of the talking.

23 In 2005, Katrina came and wiped out our
24 way of life. We came back from the Memphis
25 area three weeks after Katrina to find our

1 home had been hit by a tornado. It took us
2 two years of fighting with the insurance
3 companies to get it rebuilt.

4 When it was finally rebuilt, we moved
5 into it. This was not after -- this was
6 after two years of living in FEMA trailers.
7 During the time we were in FEMA trailers, we
8 had nothing but trouble with the FEMA
9 trailers. We had leaks from our roof. We
10 had to replace our bathtub and our sink,
11 because they were breaking. Because the
12 bathtub, itself, only had one wooden panel
13 under it to support it. The bathtubs were
14 so small, you couldn't even sit in them let
15 alone take a bath.

16 You had to take a shower. And that was
17 very difficult for me, because shortly after
18 we moved into it, I had to have knee
19 surgery.

20 At that time, I had requested and FEMA
21 knew that I had a handicap. And two days
22 after I had surgery was when they finally
23 came out and put a ramp on our travel
24 trailer, so I could get in and out. And
25 this was after I explained to them how I had

1 to get into it when I came home from the
2 hospital, which was on my behind.

3 Okay. We had all these problems, but
4 we were still thankful that we had someplace
5 to be while our home was being rebuilt.
6 That was blasted to smithereens three months
7 later after we moved back into our home,
8 when my husband was diagnosed with a
9 glioblastoma multiforme, the most severe
10 type of brain tumor you can get.

11 I did extensive studies on trying to
12 find out how he got this. We went through
13 the Brain Institute and Foundation, and
14 found out that the glioblastomas, they have
15 three causes: One, heredity -- there was no
16 sign of anything like this in my husband's
17 family -- two, smoking or that type of thing
18 -- my husband has never smoked, and I quit
19 smoking years ago -- three, chemicals. The
20 only chemical that my husband was exposed to
21 was in the formaldehyde trailers.

22 He worked for years for the government,
23 for the Federal Government as an engineering
24 tech. doing buildings, both in Memphis,
25 Florida and here, and in the world also when

1 he was with the military as a CD. He had
2 never been exposed to any chemicals until
3 the FEMA trailers.

4 When they did the surgery on my
5 husband, they did the biopsy, the surgeon
6 informed me that the tumor was more than
7 three months old but less than a year, which
8 means that it was -- it began sometime after
9 March of '07.

10 FEMA had not released to the general
11 public and had certainly not informed us
12 until late '07 that there was a problem with
13 formaldehyde in our trailer. We went
14 through FEMA and the CDC trying to get our
15 trailer tested. We finally got it done
16 through the maintenance department of the
17 FEMA trailer division, and they came out
18 after we had moved out of our trailer and
19 back into our home.

20 Their findings were that it was above
21 the level that it should be when they did
22 the testing for an eight-hour period of
23 time.

24 We later contacted -- my son contacted
25 the Sierra Club in order to find out ways of

1 testing it, ourselves. Sierra Club sent us
2 different testing kits to test our trailer.
3 The first test showed a level that was so
4 high that they decided that they better test
5 it again.

6 When they tested it again, we
7 reconstructed the atmosphere that we had
8 been in originally, because the first test
9 was done with our air conditioner off. When
10 we put the air conditioner on, the levels
11 measured even higher, at point three six
12 one, which is well above what is supposed to
13 be safe.

14 OSHA says that over an eight-hour
15 period of time, if the formaldehyde level
16 exceeds point oh seven five, that you should
17 be wearing an oxygen tank with a mask. That
18 was over an eight-hour period of time. We
19 lived in these trailers for two years.

20 I want something done. Most of these
21 products that were built after September of
22 '05 were done with products brought in from
23 China. There's no regulation in this
24 Country to stop them from being able to
25 poison whatever they want on us. Their

1 level of formaldehyde was extremely high,
2 and a lot of their people are getting sick
3 over there because of the use of
4 formaldehyde.

5 I've done a lot of research, because I
6 want to know.

7 A couple of months after my husband was
8 diagnosed and had surgery and began
9 radiation and chemo therapy, my doctors who
10 had been sending me through all kinds of
11 tests because I was having problems
12 breathing, coughing, choking, having all
13 kinds of symptoms of problems with my nerves
14 in my legs and my arms

15 Okay. He sent me to an allergist. He
16 sent me to an ENT specialist. But none of
17 us suspected formaldehyde, none of us.

18 A couple of months after my husband was
19 diagnosed, I was diagnosed with emphysema.
20 I don't smoke. How did I get it? I quit
21 smoking years ago. How did I get it? The
22 only answers my doctor could give me is that
23 it was laying dormant until I was exposed to
24 the formaldehyde, and that's how I got it.
25 Because, otherwise, I would not have gotten

1 it. It would not have developed any further
2 from the time I quit smoking, and the
3 American Lung Association backs that up.

4 So, obviously, formaldehyde is killing
5 us both. Stop it before it kills more.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. SCHREIBER:

8 Thanks. We'll take a break now until
9 3:00

10 -- BRIEF RECESS --

11 MS. VENDINELLO:

12 Our next speaker is Thomas Rodgers with
13 Lifesave Biological Research.

14 We're going to switch the order, so we
15 can connect up Tom's laptop for his
16 presentation. So, therefore, I would ask
17 Paul Nelson of the Alabama Arise to come up
18 to the microphone, please.

19 Oh, they might be outside. Okay.

20 And I think he's with Zack Carter.

21 All right. Let me keep going down the
22 list. William Hamblin. Oh, there you go.
23 D&D Disaster Service.

24 MR. HAMBLIN:

25 I'd really like for everybody to be in.

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1 Please come in and take your seats.

2 -- OFF-THE-RECORD --

3 MR. HAMBLIN:

4 You might want to write this down. My
5 name is Bill Hamblin -- H-A-M-B-L-I-N. I'm
6 with D&D Emergency Services, which is a
7 FEMA-related agency, and I work directly for
8 FEMA and Disaster Housing Development. We
9 started out as a unit and set up mobile
10 homes, park models and travel trailers.

11 I'm going to make a lot of you mad
12 while I'm up here. Almost everybody in the
13 room is going to get mad before I'm done,
14 but maybe you'll get happy by the end of it,
15 because I've got some good news.

16 I would like that this be recorded.

17 The EPA has offered us the opportunity
18 to present, you know, ways of mitigating
19 formaldehyde. We know and they have already
20 announced that it's going to take them years
21 at least to -- if not more, to do anything
22 about this.

23 Our Katrina people are already into
24 this thing over three years ago, 1905 -- or
25 2005. I'm sorry. I'm way in the past. I'm

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1 getting old, too.

2 Anyway, the FEMA guy talked -- Jonathan
3 gave a very good speech. I can tell you
4 that FEMA is now doing something about it,
5 because I'm building mobile homes, travel
6 trailers and park models for FEMA through
7 the direction and assistance of several of
8 the mobile home builders throughout the
9 Country.

10 I'm working with Forest River, Clayton
11 Mobile Homes, Superior Homes and two or
12 three others that I won't mention, because I
13 don't have a contract with them. And we are
14 developing and building formaldehyde-safe
15 housing for disaster workers.

16 I just developed a unit in Texas that
17 was put on -- we finished it on Christmas
18 Eve, so we could move people into it on
19 Christmas Day. It's called the Arcadian
20 Annex in Bridge City, Texas. The entire
21 park is built of formaldehyde-free mobile
22 homes that FEMA purchased from me to put in
23 there.

24 I also made them, with this contract,
25 give me a two-year contract to maintain

1 those homes, so I can test them every ninety
2 days to make sure that they maintain below
3 five parts per billion.

4 In front of me, I have a list of those
5 thirty units, and the highest formaldehyde
6 level we had in any of them was three point
7 five. That's parts per billion now, not
8 million. Okay? That's a lot, lot, lot
9 less, point zero zero three two to three
10 five.

11 So the problem is solved on new product
12 if FEMA will continue to purchase trailers
13 that are low or no formaldehyde emissions.
14 Of course, they've only ordered thirty so
15 far from me.

16 There's other companies that build
17 them, that says they are formaldehyde low
18 emissions, but they're not formaldehyde
19 free. My units are formaldehyde free, maybe
20 not the day I send them out there, but the
21 longer they're out there, the lower the
22 formaldehyde reading will become. And I'll
23 explain why in a second.

24 Jonathan said this thing started and
25 the CDC actually put out their report

1 February 14, 2007. I have an e-mail in
2 front of me that I wrote. There's about a
3 hundred names on here and director Paulsen
4 is the first one on the list throughout all
5 the FEMA people that I could think of that I
6 could get an e-mail address on. This was
7 addressed to them on 2/14 of '08.

8 It says, "Please contact me on how to
9 take care of this formaldehyde problem. I
10 have a procedure that will bring those
11 trailers down to acceptable levels. I can
12 also explain how it makes -- it works and
13 how it will work in the future for building
14 travel trailers, mobile homes and park
15 models. What I am saying is I would like to
16 have the opportunity to cure the problem
17 that FEMA now has."

18 And I'll tell you how I got into that.
19 This is the same day they announced it, as
20 Johnathan said, that they're going to move
21 all the people out.

22 When I was sixteen years old, my mother
23 died when I was twelve, and I moved to
24 Chicago. I had a brother and sister that
25 was younger than me that I had to take care

1 of, so I got me a job.

2 I got a job in the scientific company
3 that made and shipped biology specimens
4 throughout the United States to universities
5 and colleges all over the Country. My job
6 was filling containers with formaldehyde.

7 I worked there about three weeks. And,
8 when I'd go out on the corner -- we all hung
9 out on the corner back then -- I would start
10 talking to my friends and my girlfriends,
11 and I noticed they started backing up from
12 me. I couldn't figure out why. I realized
13 I was smelling like formaldehyde.

14 So I went in to work the next morning,
15 and I put my notice in. I said, "Look, I'm
16 not staying in this stuff. I got to get out
17 of it. I can't even get a date." And this
18 seventy-five year old man come to me. He
19 said, "Look, son, you're doing a good job.
20 Don't quit your job. I can help you with
21 this."

22 I said, "What am I supposed to do?" He
23 said, "Go to Sears & Roebuck" -- that's what
24 they called it back then. This was in the
25 sixties -- "get you a wool flannel shirt,

1 long-sleeve. It's got to be a hundred
2 percent wool. You've got to button it at
3 the collar, and get you a pair of wool
4 pants. Work for one week, and then evaluate
5 your decision to quit."

6 So, I did that. In four days, I had a
7 date. People were getting closer to me. I
8 couldn't smell the formaldehyde in the pores
9 of my skin any longer, and I had a good job.
10 I was making seven bucks an hour. That was
11 in '68. That's good money back then.

12 But, anyway, that's how I originally
13 thought of this when FEMA come out and said
14 -- because I was a contractor deactivating
15 these units that they were announcing they
16 were going to move everybody out of. And I
17 said, "Well, shoot." I remembered what that
18 old man told me. I mean, this was like in
19 August -- the first time they announced that
20 formaldehyde was a problem.

21 I started testing those units that I
22 was deactivating. I ordered me a
23 formaldehyde tester, and I started ordering
24 wool from a carpet company down in Georgia.
25 And the only thing I could find in wool was

1 carpet padding that went underneath your
2 carpet. Well, I started putting this in
3 those trailers and testing them. I found
4 out that the formaldehyde was dropping every
5 day.

6 I put a little more wool in them the
7 next time. Formaldehyde dropped even more.
8 When I finally met the goal after about one
9 or two weeks, I was putting about half of a
10 square foot of formaldehyde that the trailer
11 was. So if a travel trailer was two hundred
12 and forty feet, I was putting in a hundred
13 and fifty foot of wool. In twenty-four
14 hours, my meter was reading zero.

15 So I started going after FEMA at that
16 time, telling them I could fix the problem.
17 That's the reason I said I was going to make
18 you mad, because I notified FEMA when it
19 first occurred that I could fix the problem.
20 The answer I got was, "That's too simple,"
21 that this doesn't sound like it would work
22 if it's too simple.

23 So I made reservations to go to
24 Washington, D.C. I met with Virginia Fox,
25 Congresswoman. She got me an appointment

1 with one of the FEMA people. He was the
2 Director of Congressional Affairs. I can't
3 recall his name, but he was really nobody,
4 because all he did was hang around Congress
5 wanting to know what they were talking
6 about, if it pertained to FEMA or not.

7 But, anyway, I got to talk to him. And
8 he said, "Look, Mr. Hamblin," he said, "even
9 if you could cure them, we couldn't -- we
10 couldn't do this to the market, but if you
11 cured all those trailers," we would put the
12 trailer industry out of business. That's
13 the answer I got in D.C. And I said, "What
14 about the people that's living in those
15 units?"

16 I typed another letter June of last
17 year that said, "You could be responsible
18 for helping me save a hundred thousand
19 people from ill effects of formaldehyde,
20 saving our government millions of dollars in
21 current inventory of mobile homes, travel
22 trailers, also helping our Country meet and
23 keep it a green goal, using material
24 resources that is correct and very critical
25 problem of formaldehyde for indoor air

1 quality.

2 "I have contacted you on several
3 occasions about the use of green renewable
4 source to help clean up the indoor air
5 quality in FEMA trailers. And, yet, no one
6 has taken any steps to correct the problem.

7 "Our Government is spending millions of
8 dollars to the exposure and the effects of
9 the exposure of formaldehyde, but not one
10 dime has been spent to correct it. We are
11 spending millions to test trailers in Hope,
12 Arkansas, and Selma, Alabama, just to find
13 out that most of them have formaldehyde.

14 "I have done several tests with great
15 results in all cases. I have spent several
16 thousand dollars to have third-party
17 testing. I have had several prototypes
18 built by Forest River Manufacturing using
19 natural products. In all tests, the
20 formaldehyde levels were nil.

21 "I realize that this seems to be a very
22 simple solution to a very difficult problem,
23 but the public will question why we haven't
24 fixed it sooner. But, in fact, we can fix
25 it now and save lives and put all the fears

1 of formaldehyde to rest."

2 And that's been way over a year ago,
3 and I'm still hearing stories about babies
4 dying. I couldn't help but sit there and
5 weep when I heard that. It said, "Is the
6 health of a hundred thousand victims saving
7 our Government a half a billion dollars and
8 changing the housing industry worth the
9 effort?" I said, "Damn right, it is."

10 With your help, we can make a
11 difference. And, folks, I'm telling you I
12 knew I was going to make some people mad.
13 You're mad now, because it could have been
14 fixed. FEMA's mad because they didn't fix
15 it sooner, but I told you they're trying to
16 fix it now.

17 I even offered -- I put in an
18 unsolicited proposal to FEMA to fix over
19 fifty thousand units they had in inventory.
20 That's when the guy told me they couldn't do
21 that because it would flood the market with
22 used trailers. I have a copy of that right
23 here.

24 I just got a letter from the CDC, which
25 I contacted them in February of '08, also.

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1 The CDC told me in '08, "Mr. Hamblin, it
2 looks like you may have something that would
3 work, but our job is not to fix this
4 problem." That's what they told me, I swear
5 to God, and I'm an honest person. "Our job
6 is to determine the effects, the long-term
7 effects of formaldehyde."

8 And Johnathan just testified -- I'll
9 call this a testimony -- that they paid CDC
10 eleven million dollars in one instance and,
11 what was it, fourteen on the other. It was
12 like twenty million dollars to study the
13 long-term effects of formaldehyde.

14 I could have fixed all fifty thousand
15 units that was in Louisiana, Mississippi and
16 Texas in this proposal for twelve million
17 dollars. They've already spent twenty to
18 determine if it's okay to live in them, and
19 we got people dying.

20 I'm upset. I'm upset with our
21 Government and our system, because when I
22 first came here today, one of the EPA
23 members said, "We would like to find a
24 solution right away, but it's going to take
25 a year or two to regulate this thing."

1 Well, we've got a solution, folks. For
2 you people who are still in those units, go
3 buy wool.

4 The Wikipedia Encyclopedia states that
5 wool insulation will keep your building
6 seven celsius degrees cooler in the summer
7 and four celsius degrees warmer in the
8 winter. Says wool has a long-term stand and
9 can be used over and over again. Wool also
10 has a low embodied energy at approximately
11 fifteen kilowatts per hour per cubic meter
12 of wool.

13 You know what that means? That means
14 it puts off fifteen kilowatts of energy in
15 your home of heat or what have you per hour
16 for that much. If you had your whole home
17 wrapped in it, you would probably stay warm
18 without any heat.

19 You've got to remember that the sheep
20 were put here by God. God put them here for
21 a reason. It wasn't to eat. Sheep was put
22 here as a renewable source for clothing, for
23 filtering the air that we breathe.

24 The only animal present when Jesus was
25 born in the manger was sheep. He was

1 wrapped in wool when he was born. He wore
2 wool while he walked on earth. And, you
3 know what, I was fortunate enough to see the
4 wool cape that he wore. It still exists,
5 and it is over two thousand years old.

6 The reason I brought that up is the
7 last correspondence that I got from CDC was
8 just a couple of days ago. It makes it very
9 clear that they realize that wool works. I
10 got hundreds of homes on here that were told
11 there's no formaldehyde in these trailers.

12 But the statement from CDC recently, a
13 guy named Michael Brizzle (phonetic), who's
14 a Ph.D. with a CSP Degree, whatever that
15 means. That's some kind of scientist. He
16 represents Engineering Team Public Health
17 Services, Engineering and Physical Hazard
18 branch, division of applied research and
19 technology National Institute of
20 Occupational Safety and Health, Center for
21 Disease Control Prevention. That's who he
22 represents.

23 He said, and I quote, that "I have took
24 a look at D&D's letter. Certain components
25 of the wool are reportedly able to

1 categorize a decompensation of formaldehyde.
2 It is my understanding" -- you guys have to
3 excuse me. I can't see. I'm getting old, I
4 told you. "It is my understanding that D&D
5 Services has proposed applying wool
6 materials to walls and ceilings." And what
7 I proposed was insulation inside the walls
8 and inside the ceiling.

9 "This remediation approach did not fit
10 into the mitigation study we are conducting
11 at NASA," which I think Johnathan mentioned
12 that they were doing some studies at NASA
13 now on formaldehyde mediation, but this
14 study did not warrant that study is what
15 he's saying.

16 "I do not know that D&D spoke to
17 representatives of FEMA," which I have.
18 I've got it documented, "regarding the long-
19 term effects of proposed application of wool
20 to remove formaldehyde. The limited
21 published data suggests wool's effectiveness
22 on a short-term basis.

23 "Many materials are capable of
24 absorbing formaldehyde, i.e, foam rubber" --
25 is an example he used. Foam rubber does

1 absorb formaldehyde, but it stays there.
2 Wool changes the component of formaldehyde
3 to a different chemical.

4 This study here shows that wool is a
5 protein fiber consisting mainly of amino
6 acid, sixty percent of these are reactive,
7 which discovers that formaldehyde
8 absorbtion. Then it goes on to say that --
9 I've got a lot of notes here. I'm almost
10 done. "Key word wool fiber, indoor air
11 quality, fiber, filter and absorb material
12 ion from formaldehyde."

13 This is from the study that was done in
14 China by Dr. Wing Wang Wang Chang (phonetic)
15 and whoever that other guy is, and you're
16 welcome to copy that if you'd like. And it
17 also says that wool breaks down formaldehyde
18 to CO2.

19 It absorbs moisture, which stops your
20 molding inside your walls that someone else
21 spoke about. It absorbs humidity. It's
22 fireproof. Wool will not burn. It will
23 only singe at five hundred and sixty degrees
24 celsius. So there's another reason to use
25 wool.

1 And Wikipedia says, "Wool insulation
2 also helps prevent sick building syndrome,
3 because it permanently traps formaldehyde,
4 nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide."

5 It emits all those chemicals from your
6 home completely. It does not come back.
7 "Self-extinguishing and will not melt. And
8 the sheep wool is naturally a flame
9 retardant self-igniting. Five hundred and
10 sixty degrees celsius, it will not emit any
11 toxic gas."

12 So no matter how hot it gets, it ain't
13 holding any formaldehyde to release, which
14 means that the chemical was changed;
15 otherwise, when it burned or melted, the
16 formaldehyde would come out of it. And this
17 is scientists, not Bill Hamblin. I only
18 went to the seventh grade, folks, and I
19 ain't no genius, but this is what people's
20 telling me.

21 The construction costs on installing
22 wool is the same as installing fiberglass.
23 It's almost no difference at all. I think
24 with all of the green products we got in
25 there, we got a product that is natural.

1 It's self-sustaining. It's renewable.
2 It's fireproof. It absorbs moisture. It
3 prevents mold. It will not let mites grow
4 in your home, and cockroaches don't even
5 like it. What else could you want?

6 We're talking -- I see a bunch of signs
7 that says green technology. It don't get
8 any greener than wool.

9 One more point, then I'll get out of
10 your way.

11 Now, you heard me read from CDC that
12 they didn't know the long-term effects.

13 1996, it says, "Wool can go on
14 purifying the air for up to thirty years."
15 We already know it will last two thousand.
16 It says "up to thirty years." They don't
17 know if it will go beyond that.

18 How long will these trailers last,
19 folks? Thirty years, it says, a study done
20 in '96. And a professional scientist from
21 CDC said there are no long-term studies
22 showing that it will keep on working. I
23 don't understand it. I don't believe he's a
24 very good scientist, or he would have at
25 least looked it up in the encyclopedia and

1 got the same notes I did.

2 And we should be out there fixing those
3 trailers right now. We should be out there
4 -- if I was you -- I'm not trying to make
5 money. I will supply you the wool, if
6 you'll contact me to fix your FEMA trailer
7 at my cost.

8 I don't care who you are. If you've
9 got a problem, call me up, e-mail me, and
10 I'll fix your FEMA trailer. I'll send you
11 the wool to do it with. I'll send you test
12 materials to test it with just like Sierra
13 Club's been doing, and prove to you that in
14 ten days you'll have no more formaldehyde
15 problem.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. SCHREIBER:

18 Mr. Rodgers, can I ask you to
19 (inaudible).

20 Thank you. Mr. Rodgers, if you will,
21 please state your full name and your
22 organization for the Record. We have
23 fifteen speakers left, so let's keep going.

24 MR. RODGERS:

25 I'm Thomas Rodgers. I'm from Utah.

1 What in the world am I doing out here? A
2 little secret, your trailers are heading
3 west, and who's receiving those trailers and
4 those manufactured mobile homes? The Native
5 Americans, the Mexican farm workers, the
6 industrial labor that's cheap and quite
7 often slave labor, Asians, again Mexicans,
8 Polynesians that are being trafficked by
9 coyotes.

10 And, when I had a family contact me in
11 February of this last year with a deathly
12 ill child, they didn't call me to diagnose
13 their child. What they called me for was
14 because the State of Utah and Child
15 Protective Services were about to take that
16 child away from that family, because the
17 state determined that the family was
18 negligent in the care of that child.

19 I know in my heart there are thousands
20 of families that are being destroyed by
21 Child Protective Services wrongly, because
22 they happen to be living in a HUD-regulated
23 house.

24 Now, in this case, you may not think
25 this is related, because what you see up

1 here is a HUD regulation, FEMA regulation in
2 the evacuation of furnace exhaust. How many
3 of you saw the trailer parked out here at
4 the sidewalk this morning? Now, you looked
5 at the particle board and the other stuff
6 inside, and you were thinking about that
7 issue, which is an appropriate issue, and
8 Becky's right.

9 But I'm here to support Becky in this
10 battle against formaldehyde, because what
11 you're seeing in that photograph up there,
12 that video is the production of CO and its
13 companion gas H₂CO. Whenever you produce
14 carbon monoxide, you will always produce
15 formaldehyde.

16 Firemen working in the forests of the
17 west or anywhere often are injured because
18 of their exposure to these two gases. How
19 many of you have a tobacco habit? How many
20 of you roll that carton of cigarettes on its
21 side? You will read two gases that are
22 lethal to infants or fetuses and to you.

23 Why are infants and fetuses the primary
24 victims? Because they require twenty times
25 more oxygen per pound of body weight. Now,

1 that's at birth. When you're talking about
2 a zygote, a developing fetus in the womb,
3 the oxygen levels are thousands of time
4 higher per pound of body weight than yours.
5 If you have any compound that's noxious or
6 toxic to a fetus or an infant, that is far
7 more lethal.

8 In this case, this family was living in
9 a HUD-regulated unit. The problem with HUD
10 is it supercedes state regulatory agency
11 power.

12 By the way, I apologize. I have a
13 broken plate. Why is my plate broken?
14 Because the people I help have no money. I
15 can't even afford -- I couldn't even stay in
16 the Sheraton last night. None of you could,
17 could you? I stayed off base. I shouldn't
18 say that here.

19 But when you're helping the poor, the
20 already injured people, they're not going to
21 have funds. And what's really sad, they
22 also don't have the wear with all to speak
23 for themselves, and so you must speak for
24 them.

25 I'm just an old Army fart -- sorry,

1 didn't mean to say that word. I went into
2 the military, because I love my Country and
3 I love the people who I fought for. I went
4 into medicine, because I love the people and
5 the people that I thought I would heal. I
6 found out that I've been betrayed in both
7 areas, both professions.

8 I'm going to tell you a little secret
9 in this case, what happened here. Both the
10 Government that I fought for and the
11 military -- I should say both the Government
12 and military included and my medical
13 profession have betrayed you.

14 Now, that's a harsh thing for me to
15 say. It's not the nurses and the doctors.
16 It's the bankers on top. Because I don't
17 know how many of you had any difficulty
18 getting tested for your poisoning. Did it
19 just happen? You had to beg, borrow, steal.
20 You had to get an act of Congress to get
21 that to happen.

22 This family's baby was dying with
23 carbon monoxide and formaldehyde
24 intoxication. When the doctor examined the
25 baby, he deliberately overlooked, he

1 deliberately avoided testing for either one
2 of those toxins. And I had to go to battle.
3 And, of course, I have offended my fellows
4 before, so they like to write you off as
5 being a nut, you don't know what you're
6 talking about. And, by the way, since they
7 own all the test equipment, you can't get
8 the test.

9 But, in my eighteen, twenty-five years
10 of working with dead bodies, living bodies,
11 I knew that not only this baby was poisoned,
12 but as I looked at the mother and father, I
13 saw the indications of poisoning. So I
14 pressed through my legislature, even that
15 did not force the doctors to do the right
16 thing.

17 We ended up in the courtroom. We
18 prevailed, because we had the truth. It was
19 obvious to any dumb old farmer. If you have
20 a furnace exhaust, which you see up here
21 puffing this vapor, three feet away from the
22 power vent bringing air back into the unit,
23 you're going to have sick or dead people
24 inside.

25 There are twenty-six million units that

1 I know of exactly like that under the
2 regulation authority of HUD. Now, what's
3 HUD's responsibility? To care, provide
4 housing, safe housing, understood, for the
5 poor. Well, what the hell. They're just
6 trailer trash. Let's just get rid of them.
7 Gas them.

8 And the medical profession stands back
9 silent. If the medical profession would
10 come forward in your issue with
11 formaldehyde, it would be a dead issue,
12 wouldn't it? It would be done. It would be
13 fixed.

14 If you went in after being in one of
15 your trailers and you were found to be toxic
16 with formaldehyde and the doctor spoke out
17 and reported it to the health department,
18 health department reported it to my old
19 neighbor, Michael Levet (phonetic). Michael
20 Levet would have come to HUD and FEMA and
21 said, "Get your act together. You're
22 killing people."

23 But, you know what, if the doctor
24 doesn't open his mouth, this all happens.
25 The trailer manufacturers get away with

1 their junk. The regulatory agencies that
2 are having coffee instead of going out there
3 and examine things, they get paid while
4 babies die.

5 I went into medicine to save lives.
6 Thankfully, these families have found me, an
7 idiot farmer according to everybody out
8 there in profession now, because I've been
9 defrocked and all that. I'm just a
10 pathological liar instead of a pathologist
11 now.

12 But tell me, does that lie? Can you
13 not see that those vapors are going past a
14 vent that's drawing air back in?

15 Now, did you notice on the trailer
16 outside where the furnace exhaust was?
17 Right by the door. And Jesse's telling me
18 about these fires when they put wooden steps
19 next to door, well, hell, you've got exhaust
20 coming out right against the wood. What's
21 in that exhaust?

22 Did you notice there's another hole
23 right below it in that trailer. That's the
24 combustion air and within a few inches of
25 each other. So what's the combustion air

1 drawing in? Old exhaust. And, when you
2 recycle this stuff, you get carbon monoxide
3 and H₂CO.

4 So, indeed, you may have vented the
5 original construction of formaldehyde, but
6 you've reabsorbed it three years later when
7 you're running the furnace and you're
8 opening the door where that stuff is coming
9 back in, like in this case. So you will
10 measure formaldehyde, and you will think
11 it's the off-gassing of the material. Much
12 of it is.

13 Well, let me think about that. If
14 formaldehyde was absorbed by cellulose in
15 the beginning in the manufacturing, you re-
16 expose that old cellulose especially that
17 that's been wetted, and it's a great sponge
18 for formaldehyde along with carbon monoxide.
19 So you have again re-contaminated the woods
20 with formaldehyde.

21 Who's responsible? The manufacturers?
22 No. Who tells them how to put the unit
23 together? Somebody tell me. HUD and their
24 companion criminal, FEMA.

25 Now, I'm not blaming the people on the

1 front line of FEMA, but deep in FEMA. They
2 can't be that stupid, can they? People in
3 HUD can't be that stupid.

4 Nobody can get a permit anywhere in the
5 United States to build a house and put an
6 exhaust three feet from a free-air intake
7 especially a power intake.

8 You can't go to the City of New Orleans
9 and build a house and say, "Hey, I want to
10 put my fresh-air intake three feet from my
11 furnace exhaust." Guess what the inspection
12 department in New Orleans is going to tell
13 you, "We refuse your permit." It's got to
14 be twelve to fourteen feet.

15 NIOSH, how does HUD spit in the eye of
16 NIOSH? How does HUD spit in the eye of the
17 National Homebuilders Association, the ICC?
18 How do they do that? It's for money.

19 Because if we can put this arrangement in a
20 trailer or manufactured home, it saves us
21 the additional expense of running pipe in
22 your conduit or ducting an additional way.

23 But, you know what -- I know I'm
24 putting myself really in the line of the
25 bullet -- it takes committees after

1 committees. They can take a toilet seat
2 that would cost you five dollars at Home
3 Depot -- I hope there's Home Depot out here
4 -- and they can make it cost you what, three
5 thousand bucks. Well, that's what this is.
6 It's about saving money, but charging you
7 more, and everybody profits.

8 Now, I know I sound like a nut, but I
9 hate dead babies being on my table. I hate
10 families being destroyed by an incompetent
11 bureaucracy that instead of taking
12 responsibility for the situation that caused
13 the baby's illness or the death and saying,
14 "Oops, we made a mistake," but instead they
15 turn against the parents and blame them.

16 I'm sure you've been told many times
17 your sickness is your own fault. Well, I'm
18 Thomas Rogers. My web site is
19 gassingamerica.com. It's talking about
20 carbon monoxide, but formaldehyde is there
21 too.

22 And I appreciate Becky and the work
23 she's doing and you wonderful people who've
24 got the courage to come and stand against
25 the gorilla.

1 Thank you. Thomas Rodgers,
2 gassingamerica.com.

3 MR. SCHREIBER:

4 Thank you, Mr. Rodgers.

5 Dr. Heidi Sinclair, if you could please
6 approach the podium. Dr. Sinclair had pre-
7 registered. So if you saw your name right
8 after hers, you may not be next.

9 MR. RODGERS:

10 Oh, by the way, I just wanted to say in
11 Utah, the Native Americans are getting this
12 gift. The great base in the west, they're
13 getting this gift, and that's a crime.

14 DR. SINCLAIR:

15 Hi. My name is Dr. Heidi Sinclair.
16 I'm a pediatrician and internal medicine
17 physician with Masters of Public Health,
18 Primary Care Provider.

19 Originally from New Orleans, displaced
20 after Katrina. And I work with a medical
21 mobile program, and we served primarily
22 families living in the tribal trailer
23 villages in the Baton Rouge, Baker area
24 since the fall of 2006.

25 And I'm here as a representative of the

1 American Academy of Pediatrics. There's a
2 lot that I have to say or would like discuss
3 about the living situations of families in
4 the travel trailers that go beyond just the
5 formaldehyde issue, but I understand today
6 is particularly addressing formaldehyde and
7 the request for the EPA to look into
8 adopting the recent California Air Resource
9 Board Airborne Toxics Control Measure. So
10 I'd like to focus on that today.

11 The American Academy of Pediatrics
12 strongly supports the nationwide application
13 of the California Air Resource Board
14 Airborne Toxics Control Measure for
15 formaldehyde emissions from hardwood,
16 plywood, particle board and medium density
17 fiberboard as referenced in federal registry
18 on December 3, 2008.

19 Such regulations are not overboard.
20 This will just put American manufacturing in
21 line with regulations in Europe, Japan and
22 numerous other industrial nations throughout
23 the world.

24 The AAP Handbook states that
25 formaldehyde is a known respiratory irritant

1 in the occupational setting and a common air
2 pollutant in the home. And the Agency for
3 Toxic substances and Disease Registry states
4 that formaldehyde is an eye, skin and
5 respiratory tract irritant, that can produce
6 narrowing of the bronchi and an accumulation
7 of fluid in the lungs.

8 Children are more susceptible than
9 adults to these respiratory effects because
10 of the relatively small diameter of their
11 airways, and because they have a relatively
12 increased ventilation. They breathe more
13 quickly. They may fail to evacuate an area
14 promptly when exposed.

15 Also, young children may spend more
16 time indoors, and they stand lower to the
17 ground. And formaldehyde gases are heavier
18 than air, so formaldehyde gases tend to
19 accumulate closer to the ground where our
20 children are running around.

21 Studies since 1990 have found higher
22 rates of asthma, chronic bronchitis and
23 allergies in children exposed to elevated
24 levels of formaldehyde, often with long-term
25 changes, with increased sensitivity to

1 chemical exposures and to allergens.

2 The International Agency for Research
3 on Cancer, which is part of the World Health
4 Organization, has classified formaldehyde as
5 a carcinogen, and the US National Toxicology
6 Program also classifies it as a -- quote --
7 "reasonably anticipated to be a human
8 carcinogen."

9 Formaldehyde exposure has also been
10 linked with neurological symptoms such as
11 fatigue, headaches, insomnia, memory and
12 concentration problems. And, again, we
13 don't know how many of these are short-term
14 or how many of these may -- you know, how
15 much formaldehyde may contribute to long-
16 term neurological problems.

17 There have been studies that show
18 increased rates of ALS or as you may call
19 Lou Gehrig's Disease in workers who have
20 been exposed to high levels of formaldehyde
21 in their occupational environment.

22 There's also a possible increased risk
23 of miscarriage, prematurity, birth defects
24 and there may even be possibly detrimental
25 effects on early childhood development.

1 All of these things, if you search the
2 literature, it's all maybe, maybe, maybe,
3 maybe. Because most of the studies have
4 been on animal models or, you know, in the
5 petri dish or looking at adult occupational
6 exposure.

7 So, unfortunately, you know, this
8 Katrina has created a, you know, unfortunate
9 big laboratory experiment, really, to see
10 what the possible long-term effects may be
11 on our children.

12 Formaldehyde is used in hundreds of
13 products, particularly in the resins used to
14 bond laminated wood products and to bind
15 wood chips and particle board. And there
16 are alternatives, such as soy-based glues.

17 Particle board as we all know is often
18 used in high concentrations in mobile homes
19 and travel trailers as well as in
20 inexpensive furnishings so often found in,
21 you know, the homes of lower income families
22 and in children's bedrooms, such as their
23 cribs.

24 So, given the hazards to children's
25 health posed by formaldehyde, the AAP

1 supports the adoption of the CARB ATCM for
2 formaldehyde emissions on a nationwide
3 basis. This regulation would be an
4 important step toward protecting children's
5 health from both the short and long-term
6 effects with formaldehyde exposure.

7 In closing, the AAP appreciates the
8 opportunity to share our support for the
9 regulation of formaldehyde emissions from
10 wood products.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MR. SCHREIBER:

13 Thank you, Dr. Sinclair.

14 Is Paul Nelson present?

15 Okay. Our next speaker is Marion
16 Thornton.

17 MS. THORNTON:

18 Thank you.

19 MR. SCHREIBER:

20 Thank you for your patience.

21 MS. THORNTON:

22 My name is Marion Thornton. I hope I
23 don't get upset.

24 My son and I lived in a trailer almost
25 a year, and we suffered with symptoms. I'm

1 living with my symptoms, but my son passed
2 away. And I just want you all to know that.

3 This time last year, I brought him to
4 the hospital, and I brought him in walking,
5 and he never did come out. And, on April
6 the 19th, he passed away, and I miss him so
7 much.

8 I thank you.

9 MR. SCHREIBER:

10 Is it Joann Mitchell?

11 MS. MITCHELL:

12 Yvonne.

13 MR. SCHREIBER:

14 Oh, Yvonne. Ms. Mitchell, you're next.

15 MS. MITCHELL:

16 Thanks.

17 Hi, Yvonne Mitchell. I live in New
18 Orleans East.

19 I, myself, had a FEMA trailer. Like
20 everyone else, I guess we're furious that,
21 you know, the EPA and FEMA knew about this,
22 would not tell us about it when we asked.

23 I don't know about the others. But, I
24 begged to have them to get me an apartment.

25 Well, each time I was told, "No, but you

1 could have the trailer." But if I would
2 have known that the trailer was something
3 that could kill you, I would not have taken
4 it, myself.

5 I have a sister-in-law, who died,
6 Desiree Collins. She died also from the
7 FEMA. Brother-in-law was really sick. I
8 have a sister who has cancer now. I,
9 myself, still have trouble with my eyes and
10 headaches and everything else that is
11 causing the problem because of this.

12 But my problem is if they would have
13 only told us about it. They knew about it.
14 Why not let the people know about this? Why
15 keep it hidden until after they found out
16 this was going on, that immediately. But,
17 before, I begged for an apartment. "No, no,
18 no."

19 But, after this was -- they found out
20 this formaldehyde was in here, all I had to
21 do was ask, called because I saw it on CNN,
22 I need to be moved, "Of course, immediately,
23 you can move." For whole year I'd been
24 trying, two years I've been trying to get an
25 apartment. "No."

1 So I think they should be held
2 responsible for it. That's it, responsible
3 for the whole thing. Too many people have
4 died. And, from what I can gather, I think
5 there's a lot of people still living in the
6 trailers, and I think they should do
7 something about it. I think something --
8 someone should be held liable for this.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. SCHREIBER:

11 Next speaker is Hugh Lambert, Lambert &
12 Nelson, PLC. Mr. Lambert?

13 MR. LAMBERT:

14 I'm an attorney. I'm involved in the
15 FEMA litigation, which is ongoing in Federal
16 Court. And I've had an opportunity to take
17 depositions of manufacturers of mobile
18 homes, particularly travel trailers, and
19 also to look into information having to do
20 with these regulations.

21 The California standard -- by the way,
22 all the people who have spoken here today,
23 we have all the sympathy that you can
24 possibly imagine for you. We're working
25 hard to try and expose some of these things

1 that everybody has been talking about.

2 The California standard has to do with
3 a test which has been alluded to that has to
4 -- I call it a chamber test. In other
5 words, you take a piece of material, you put
6 it in a chamber, and you test the off-
7 gassing of that sample.

8 The testing that's really meaningful is
9 when the environment is tested, in other
10 words the trailer, itself, so that you find
11 out what people that are living in the
12 trailer are exposed to. The reason why this
13 distinction is so important when you start
14 looking at standards is the devil is in the
15 details in terms of how the numbers are
16 recorded.

17 The numbers that you hear when you
18 listen to people speak were taken from
19 samples of trailers in the wintertime in low
20 humidity environments for the most part.
21 There's a huge difference between that and a
22 trailer, a travel trailer that's in
23 Louisiana or Mississippi, along the Gulf
24 Coast with high humidity and high
25 temperatures. There's a factor, a multiple

1 factor above the numbers that are actually
2 recorded inside of that unit in the
3 wintertime as opposed to in the summertime.

4 The testing protocol is important.
5 Because when FEMA runs a test, they open up
6 the travel trailer for a long period of
7 time, ventilate it heavily, then they cap it
8 up, air condition it to a nice cool
9 temperature, and then test it for a period
10 of time, and come up with a figure. That's
11 not the way people live in FEMA trailers.

12 The humidity is extremely important.
13 Because the higher the humidity, the
14 moisture in the walls as you've heard about,
15 the high moisture content that happens when
16 you have an inside environment in the
17 seventies -- bless you -- and an outside
18 temperature in the nineties, in a high
19 humidity environment, you have condensation
20 inside the walls in that space in-between
21 those areas, and that promotes formaldehyde
22 off-gassing.

23 So the important thing to remember is
24 that when you hear numbers of point zero one
25 six, what is that? Is it in a chamber where

1 there's a little piece of -- a little sample
2 at a certain temperature and humidity, or is
3 it in a unit where there's people living,
4 particularly as you've heard young people
5 and the infirmed.

6 You know, the standard that we're
7 comparing to for different agencies that
8 have to do with healthy working -- the
9 healthy working population in an eight-hour
10 period, that's a far different level of
11 exposure than a child or a person with
12 already existing respiratory problems, or as
13 the scientists refer to it, people in the
14 normal mix of human beings that live in
15 society.

16 You can't expose children to the same
17 level of formaldehyde that you're going to
18 expose a mature worker for an eight-hour
19 period, where he's going to be out of that
20 environment for sixteen hours. So the
21 numbers are so important.

22 I've taken some notes of everybody, and
23 I'm going to go back to the very beginning
24 of -- and I'm not going to go through each
25 of these, believe me. I'm going to sit down

1 in just a second.

2 But the first person we heard from was
3 from the Composite Panel Association. Nice
4 gentleman, good speaker, nothing personal
5 against him. The point is who's talking to
6 you? Who's talking to you is an individual
7 who has every interest in the world to
8 promote what he's promoting to you all.

9 And the second question you have to ask
10 yourself is, why isn't he standing here
11 saying, "Well, let's adopt this California
12 standard." Well, the reason is because if
13 you look at the numbers, point zero one six
14 is twice as much as point zero zero eight.
15 Okay? Take point zero zero eight, multiply
16 it by two, you got point zero one six.
17 That's the California standard.

18 Now, again, this is a chamber test, so
19 we're talking about apples and oranges in
20 terms of where people live. But I suggest
21 to you that that standard is a result of the
22 Composite Panel Association.

23 The next gentleman that spoke had to do
24 with Georgia Pacific, and the Resin
25 Producers, Manufacturers of America, they're

1 happy with zero one six in that kind of a
2 test.

3 Zero zero eight is what ATSDR, which is
4 part of CDC, the agency that really has been
5 the most out front in terms of this whole
6 issue, that's what they recommend as the
7 appropriate level for this kind of test.

8 You also heard the representatives of
9 these corporations say, "We know how to do
10 that. We know how to make these resins or
11 this material, these composite wood
12 materials so they'll do that."

13 Well, they know how to do that, and
14 they've known how to do it for a long time.
15 The reason they didn't do it was because it
16 costs a little more to use some glue that
17 doesn't have urethane formaldehyde
18 emissions, it's cheaper to do it the way
19 that they're doing it.

20 Another thing that's a little bit scary
21 is that HUD, which regulates mobile homes,
22 mobile homes, doesn't -- the same
23 applicability doesn't apply to travel
24 trailers, because they're supposed to be
25 used temporarily. They're not supposed to

1 be used for long-term residence. So got to
2 make sure that this standard applies to
3 travel trailers or any units that the
4 government uses for something to house
5 people for more than a long weekend. Okay?

6 So I suggest that there needs to be a
7 national standard, no question about it.
8 But the standard needs to be the one that's
9 promoted by the Agency for Toxic Substances
10 and Disease Registry, which is ATSDR, which
11 is a subsidiary of the Center for Disease
12 Control, which is our government agency that
13 says, "This is what we should be concerned
14 with from a toxicity standpoint."

15 And what that is, is half of what the
16 California standard is proposed to be, which
17 is point zero zero eight in this chamber
18 test. Because when you get in the real
19 world, what you have is wood products used
20 in housing units that have a volume that's
21 far smaller than a mobile home.

22 But they've still got cabinets. They
23 still got bathrooms. They still got beds.
24 They still got tables. They're just closer,
25 less space. So the off-gassing that's going

1 to occur from wood products in that
2 environment is going to be more concentrated
3 than it would be in a mobile home.

4 So, yes the standard, no question about
5 it. But the standard that is recommended by
6 the Center for Disease Control and it's
7 agencies, which is point zero zero eight in
8 a chamber.

9 So, then, when you get in a living
10 environment, maybe you'll have something
11 that won't hurt kids, and it won't hurt the
12 infirmed, and that in high concentrations
13 which it's going to be in, in many instances
14 won't hurt healthy people, because there's
15 been a lot of people hurt by what our
16 Government has done over the past several
17 years.

18 Thank you very much.

19 MR. SCHREIBER:

20 The next speaker is Eloise Bachko.
21 Eloise? Okay. We'll give Eloise another
22 chance later.

23 Richard Smith, Jr., are you here?

24 Okay. Shirley Woodfork.

25 MS. GILLETTE:

1 Shirley Woodfork asked me to give a
2 brief comment on her behalf, because she had
3 to leave. She wasn't feeling well.

4 She lives here in New Orleans, and she
5 told me that she's had tumors removed from
6 her face, multiple tumors removed from her
7 face, and has lost teeth as a result of
8 living in the trailer. She asked me to
9 please put that into the Record, because she
10 had to leave.

11 MR. SCHREIBER:

12 Denise Roland. Denise?

13 MS. ROLAND:

14 Good evening. My name is Denise
15 Roland.

16 I have been in and out of clinics since
17 2006. I have two pages of medications and
18 doctors that I've been seeing. I developed
19 a rash, a bad rash. I called my husband in
20 the bathroom to see I had a rash from head
21 to toe, and he said, "You need to get to a
22 doctor. And do you need me to take you?"

23 And I said, "No, I can drive, myself."
24 My nerves is (sic) bad like they are now,
25 and I'm still on medication.

1 And, after that, they put me on
2 different medications. There's a doctor.
3 Could you read some of these medications?
4 They're difficult to pronounce. Yes,
5 please.

6 And, afterward, my skin cleared up like
7 it is right now. It's clear. My whole
8 body's clear. Then, a little while later, I
9 developed -- no. I went to the doctor, and
10 she looked at me, and she said, "You look
11 fine. I don't see anything wrong with you."
12 So they put me on, I think it was Zantac,
13 which it wasn't enough milligrams for me to
14 get rid of the rash. So I developed the
15 rash again.

16 And I went back, and she looked at me.
17 She said, "Oh, Denise," she say, "I feel so
18 sorry for you." I looked like somebody that
19 had leprosy. My face was disfigured. My
20 lips was out. My eyes were big. My nose
21 was spread. Had rashes all over my neck.
22 It was in my mouth. And they sent me over
23 to the Hutchinson (phonetic) Clinic, and
24 they said, "We don't know what's causing
25 it."

1 And I'm fifty-three years old. And,
2 before the storm, I was never on any
3 medications. The only time I been in the
4 hospital was to have my babies, which are
5 now twenty-nine and twenty-seven. So I
6 never had surgery or anything. The only
7 thing I was on was vitamins, and I
8 exercised.

9 And, now, I'm like I'm overweight,
10 taking medicine, medication. Every night, I
11 have to take these pills (indicating) in
12 order to not get this rash. So I missed
13 take -- during Mardi Gras, I missed taking
14 the pills. Because, you know, on Mardi
15 Gras, you want to have a little wine, and I
16 don't believe in drinking and taking
17 medication. So I missed two days.

18 And, when I got home, the rash was on
19 my stomach. And I started breaking out
20 again, so I knew I had to take these.

21 And they have a medication -- I'll let
22 the doctor tell you the different
23 medications that I take.

24 DR. SINCLAIR:

25 It's Prednisone, a lot of prescriptions

1 for oral prednisone at different doses,
2 which is usually prescribed for allergic
3 reactions, for a systemic allergic reaction,
4 like you said, with swelling and rash; and
5 Zyrtec, which is an allergy medicine; and
6 Diphenhydramine and Hydroxyzine, those are
7 both allergy medicines as well; and
8 Ranitidine, which is Zantac, and sometimes
9 they add that for allergies. It's more
10 often used for stomach problems.

11 MS. ROLAND:

12 And there was another. I don't know
13 the name of -- I can't think of the name of
14 it, but it was said that I needed to carry
15 this medication in my purse at all times,
16 because my throat could close up and I could
17 die.

18 It's a pin that I should puncture in my
19 leg if I feel like my throat is closing up,
20 because I have to be very cautious at all
21 times of that, because I could just die.

22 And, when I went into the hospital, my
23 neck was -- it was swollen. And this rash,
24 it was really awful. I just couldn't
25 understand what was causing it. And it

1 started with just an itch, and I'm thinking
2 mosquitoes was getting into the trailer. I
3 was in the trailer for two and a half years.
4 I'm thinking that it was mosquitoes. And,
5 then, I said, "Oh, no, maybe it's something
6 in the mattress." So I put the mattress
7 outside. And, then, the next day, that's
8 when I developed the rash.

9 And my husband and I, we were the first
10 to move back into our neighborhood into a
11 trailer, and I was like telling the
12 neighbors, "Everybody get a trailer. Come
13 on back home. Let's rebuild our homes."
14 And we been in our home for what, seventeen
15 years. And, then, I said, "Well, you know,
16 this is where I plan to spend the rest of my
17 life."

18 So it was no doubt in my mind that --
19 you know, I really appreciated the trailer.
20 But, at the same time, I didn't know I was
21 going to get sick from it, and I didn't even
22 know if I might maybe later on, God forbid,
23 that I get cancer. You know, I hope that
24 doesn't happen.

25 But the pills -- this is the only

1 medication that I'm on. I don't have any
2 other medications that I take. Even before
3 the storm, I didn't have any medications.

4 And this rash, I just hope and pray
5 that it goes away, because the itching and
6 the way it look (sic), it's just terrible.

7 And one Sunday I went to church, and it
8 was on my neck. And everybody was looking
9 at me strangely, saying, "Denise, what is
10 wrong with you? What's that on your neck?"
11 And that's when the rash was just popping
12 out over my body.

13 So it's not -- it started coming on my
14 legs, but -- and, then, later it developed
15 and came on stomach. So it's like I don't
16 really know, you know, exactly what it is.
17 The doctors don't know what it is. It's not
18 poison ivy, that's for sure, you know. They
19 would know that.

20 So I really believe it was something to
21 do with the trailer, and I just hope that
22 something will be done. And I have all my
23 records and doctors that I'm seeing now, so
24 I just hope something's done.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. SCHREIBER:

2 James Joseph.

3 MR. JOSEPH:

4 Good evening. My name is James Joseph.
5 My story is kind of unique.

6 I lived in a FEMA trailer in front of
7 my house after about a year I guess it was
8 nineteen -- December of '06 when we got it.
9 And, when they parked the trailer in my
10 house -- I mean, in my driveway, my wife, my
11 daughter's twenty-eight at the time. They
12 both went inside and said, "I'm not living
13 in here with the odor," and I laughed at
14 them.

15 And I had a German Shepherd. I said,
16 "Well, I'm just going to live in the trailer
17 with the German Shepherd," because the house
18 was in the process of being rebuilt. We had
19 plywood on the floors. I did hook the air
20 conditioner up. And we lived there about
21 four or five months, I did, me and the
22 German Shepherd.

23 And one of the first things I noticed
24 was that the hose I got with the trailer, it
25 comes in a package, when I turned it on, the

1 water come out green. Well, I figured
2 that's a little algae built up, but it went
3 on all the time I lived there even after the
4 water ran for hours and days. The water in
5 the toilet would turn green overnight.

6 And I went and got the hose, "Made in
7 China." Everything was made in China in
8 this trailer, and the walls -- and the smell
9 never did go away. But I never thought that
10 would hurt me.

11 In June of -- May of -- no, I'm sorry,
12 June. I was working. I lost my business,
13 so I was working with a friend of mine who
14 drove river pilots around down in Venice.
15 Well, prior to that for two days, I was --
16 I'd blow my nose, and hunks of blood would
17 come out. And that went on for about every
18 hour and a half, but I felt fine.

19 And, so, when you feel good, you don't
20 go to the -- I figured I just had to maybe
21 ruptured, you know, a artery or something --
22 I mean, a vessel.

23 I was down in Venice, had shorts on,
24 and the sun was going down. All my legs
25 turned thousands of red dots, and my arms,

1 red dots started appearing in front of my
2 eyes. And I didn't know what the hell this
3 was.

4 Called my wife, and she said, "You got
5 to get to the hospital." I'm forty miles
6 from nowhere. I said, "Well, I got these
7 river pilots I got to pick up. She said,
8 "You got" -- I said, "Wait a minute.
9 Something's wrong with me, if I'm by myself
10 driving this vehicle and I pass out, I want
11 to have somebody in the car with me."

12 So I waited for them. I brought them
13 home in the night about eleven o'clock. I
14 said, "Well, I'm a (sic) go to the doctor
15 tomorrow."

16 He took one look at me, he says -- East
17 Jefferson Hospital -- he says, "I don't know
18 what you have but I really don't like it."
19 They immediately took blood, and they
20 sending -- told me not to get out of bed,
21 sending some people took bone marrow out my
22 hip. This whole process, I never felt bad
23 except when they took the bone marrow. That
24 was a little rough.

25 And, prior to all this, I cut grass at

1 my house, which is about a foot and a half
2 high, because my son borrowed the lawnmower.
3 And I'm telling you this 'cause I -- you'll
4 find out why in a minute, so I'll be quick.

5 And I worked up a big sweat, I was
6 really -- you know, but I'm a cut this
7 grass. My lawnmower was borrowed by my son.
8 He brought it back, and I had to cut the
9 grass. That was before I went to get the
10 river pilot. Took a shower, went down
11 there.

12 All right. At the hospital, they
13 suspected leukemia, so they take blood. And
14 they come back in. They said, "Well, we
15 don't know. What we seeing, we can't
16 believe. We taking more blood."

17 Then they called in a specialist, and
18 he comes back and says, "We suspect
19 idiopathic tramposina (phonetic) purpura."
20 I said, "What does that mean in English?"
21 You have no blood platelets left in your
22 body. You're down to about a thousand or
23 less. I said, "How many should I have?" He
24 says, "A hundred and ninety, two hundred
25 thousand. We taking more blood, because we

1 don't know how you're here right now."

2 I said, "What do you mean by that?" He
3 says, "Well, without blood platelets," my
4 brain and all my organs should've bled
5 internally, and it would've killed me. So
6 he took more blood, because he thought they
7 made a mistake.

8 Then the test from the bone marrow come
9 back, and they said, "No, you got idiopathic
10 tramposina (phonetic) purpura." Idiopathic
11 means they don't know what had happened, but
12 somewhere, somehow something got in my blood
13 that was destroying all my platelets, and I
14 was walking around -- when I was cutting
15 that grass, "Being severely overheated, he
16 said, "you should've dropped dead right then
17 and there."

18 So, now, I've got two doctors that told
19 I should've died, two specialists. And four
20 doctors told me they didn't know how I
21 walked in there, because when that happens,
22 normally your white blood cells, your red
23 blood cells die, and you would bleed to
24 death internally.

25 Those red dots was all my capillaries

1 breaking in my body.

2 Anyway, I said, "What do we do?" He
3 said, "Well, we got to build your platelets
4 up." And I spent eleven days in East
5 Jefferson Hospital. I was going to the VA,
6 but they didn't have that.

7 But, anyway, after like six or seven
8 days, the blood platelets started going up.
9 And they let me out when I had about thirty
10 thousand count. And what happened was I
11 said, "Well, it's still kind of low." He
12 said, "Yeah, but your bone marrow's good.
13 You don't have -- it's not leukemia. That's
14 the good news. But we don't know if this
15 virus" -- idiopathic means they don't know
16 where it comes from, but it got in my blood.

17 And that green water. I never drank
18 any of this water, after thinking about it,
19 but I did make ice cubes with it. And I
20 don't know if I can prove this. I probably
21 can't. It's impossible to prove. But that
22 German Shepherd died, also. And I'm still
23 being monitored by a specialist, a blood
24 specialist, 'cause it hasn't reappeared. It
25 took him about six months to -- with all

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1 kinds of steroids, and I blew up about fifty
2 -- thirty pounds, fifty pounds more than I
3 weigh now. And I've been off steroids.

4 What I'm saying is I didn't come here
5 to give testimony. I didn't know what this
6 was all about. I haven't done anything
7 about this. But the more I hear about all
8 these things, you know, if the Government
9 would've gave me fifteen hundred dollars, I
10 could a built a house, instead I'm spending
11 thirty thousand dollars on this trailer.

12 Like I say, that -- I laughed at my
13 wife and my daughter about the dangers of
14 living in a trailer, but I really believe
15 this with all my heart, and I don't think
16 any regular -- and God respect this man -- I
17 don't want any government regulation to my
18 life -- tell me what anything should be. I
19 try to take my own tests from now on if I
20 got to do something like this.

21 So that's probably one of the stranger
22 stories, but it's like when four people tell
23 you that you walking around, you shouldn't
24 be here and they doctors, I believe them.

25 And I said all my heart and soul I

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1 think this is from -- probably from that
2 water that I drank. I don't know. If you
3 can get a virus from inhaling it, I don't
4 know, but I lived in that trailer, and it
5 was bad.

6 So I thank you for your time. Anyway,
7 thanks.

8 MR. SCHREIBER:

9 Thank you, Mr. Joseph.

10 Our next speaker is Ann Nunnery.

11 MS. NUNNERY:

12 My name is Ann Nunnery.

13 I moved in a FEMA trailer in 2005,
14 December of 2005, me -- my two sons and I.
15 I was very -- we were very much affected by
16 the formaldehyde in the trailer. There have
17 been time (sic) that I wake up in the middle
18 of the night very sick from the fumes in the
19 trailer. And my sons, they would get cold
20 real easy, and they would suffer from
21 bronchitis. And they never suffered from
22 that before. So that's my story.

23 MR. SCHREIBER:

24 George Gaynor. Is George present?

25 Quinnan Johnson, your next.

1 MR. JOHNSON:

2 At first, I did not know what this
3 meeting was all about. I'm from LaPlace,
4 Louisiana. I just came down to see what it
5 was about.

6 Well, my house was destroyed. I bought
7 a mobile home in 1975, and I reared three
8 children in that mobile home, and I had my
9 house tested three years after I lived in
10 it. Three bedrooms, two full baths. And my
11 daughter is forty-seven, my son is forty-
12 four, and my baby is thirty-four years old.

13 No one every got sick in that mobile
14 home. It was a Binel (phonetic) mobile
15 home. It was one of the best mobile homes
16 you could ever buy. That's why I bought it,
17 because I made the money. I paid forty-two
18 thousand dollars for a mobile home. No one
19 ever got sick. But the house was destroyed.
20 I lost three vans.

21 And about five months later, they
22 bought me a FEMA trailer. So, at night, I
23 would tell my wife, "Why we both crying?"
24 You know, we'd get up, put stuff in our
25 eyes, because, you know -- I didn't know

1 what was going on.

2 So the next night, we still putting
3 stuff in our eyes. I went to my doctors. I
4 have one of the best, Robert Ross and Jeffry
5 Singer. And Jeffry Singer sent me to Robert
6 Ross, who is a -- he's a medical in that
7 department. So, again, I said, "Maybe it's
8 just something you have to get used to."

9 About four months later, I woke up at
10 about three o'clock in the morning. I could
11 not breathe, so I told my wife, "Get me to a
12 hospital quick." So we drove from LaPlace
13 all the way to Kenner Regional. And I got
14 to the first step, and that's where I passed
15 out on the first step of the hospital.

16 They came out. They got me. I did not
17 go to triage or anything like that. And I
18 stay on a respirator for four hours. And
19 they checked my heart. It was not beating
20 right. And my wife had a rash, and my eyes
21 are still not clear. I have a meeting with
22 Robert Ross and Jeffry Singer this week.

23 And I was a longshoreman for twenty-six
24 years, picking up two hundred pounds. That
25 was no problem for me, you know, picking up

1 sacks. Now, I get in this mobile home, and
2 I can't cut my grass no more than fifteen
3 minutes. Something's wrong with that. I
4 take vitamins. I take care of myself.

5 So, now, I began to wonder. I read the
6 paper the next day where a lady was found
7 dead in some part of Louisiana, and she was
8 in a mobile home. I said, "Oh, oh, it's
9 time for us to do something."

10 I took all of my stuff out of the
11 mobile home, put it in my grandmother's
12 house, and my eyes still water. And I think
13 the doctor -- some doctors will tell you,
14 "Maybe you live in -- do you live in a
15 mobile home?" Some doctors will not tell
16 you the truth. And it's a maze we're living
17 in. And I'm still going through this right
18 now.

19 My wife has a skin rash in her face.
20 My wife has very beautiful black skin.
21 She's having problems with her hair falling
22 out. And, now, she has this skin rash.
23 And, now, she has something called -- I
24 don't know what it is. It's a strange name,
25 but she had to go to the doctor tomorrow to

1 Dr. (Inaudible) in LaPlace, Louisiana. So
2 we are still going to the doctor.

3 Now, this came from the FEMA trailer.
4 I couldn't have come from the one I was
5 living in. Because we lived in that trailer
6 for almost thirty years. So we wait until
7 2005 to start getting sick, and I'm still
8 sick right now.

9 I may not look sick, but I can't cut my
10 grass no more than fifteen minutes and I
11 have to go sit down, and I could throw two
12 hundred pound sacks for almost twelve hours
13 a day. And I had to pick up iron pieces
14 that were fifty pounds on the waterfront.
15 And you know the waterfront is hard work.

16 Now, we have to find someone -- we have
17 to find something. Because, now, my bill at
18 the hospital was almost fifteen thousand
19 dollars. I retired in the year 2000. Who's
20 going to pay those bills? Who's going to
21 pay my eye bill, my wife (sic) eye bill, her
22 rash? So this is the problem we're having.

23 I didn't know what the meeting was
24 about, but this is what -- I almost died
25 sitting on the steps of that hospital, and

1 they dragged me in there, and I stayed on
2 those respirators and everything for about
3 -- I say about five to six hours. I had
4 doctors looking after me constantly.

5 So, now, it's time for us to get
6 someone to pay for this, because I can't pay
7 for it. And that's the problem I have. And
8 I didn't know what it was about, but that's
9 the problem I'm having now. Okay.

10 Thank you for listening.

11 MR. SCHREIBER:

12 Darlene Jones.

13 MS. JONES:

14 Good afternoon. My name is Darlene
15 Jones.

16 I can relate to this lady right here
17 and the gentleman that was just speaking. I
18 lived in a FEMA trailer from 2006 to 2007.

19 The first couple of days I was in the
20 trailer, I broke out in this rash all over.
21 I've never been allergic to anything. I
22 don't have any allergies like, you know, for
23 the pollen or anything like that. So, when
24 I broke out in a rash, even my family didn't
25 know what it was, because I've never been

1 sick. So, you know, we just kind of blew it
2 off.

3 Then my oldest son, he's a grown man,
4 he came with his two year old daughter, they
5 immediately broke out in a rash when they
6 came into the trailer, too. That's how we
7 realized that we were allergic to the
8 trailer. This was before we even knew
9 anything about the formaldehyde or anything
10 that was causing the problems in the
11 trailer. We just knew we were allergic to
12 the trailer.

13 After maybe three weeks or so, the rash
14 finally went away and it didn't come back.
15 And, then, but I've got all these
16 respiratory problems I never had before.
17 I've got a phlegm that's in my throat, that
18 never goes away. I'm on inhalers and
19 allergy medicines and just, you know, all
20 kinds of things that just didn't make any
21 sense. It's like how could this just come
22 out of nowhere and, you know, now all this
23 stuff I've got to go along with. And we
24 found out it's from the FEMA trailer.

25 So I just wanted to go on record saying

1 that all of these symptoms and everything
2 that these people are saying, we can relate
3 to them, because this happened because of
4 the FEMA trailers.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. SCHREIBER:

7 Gilda Woods.

8 MS. WOODS:

9 My name is Gilda Woods.

10 Me and my children, we lived in a FEMA
11 trailer. I've been in a FEMA trailer since
12 December, '05. Well, about around December,
13 '06, I kept on experiencing like shortness
14 of breath. And my doctor kept on saying,
15 "Well, Gilda, something have (sic) to be
16 going on.

17 Something has to be going on, which, I
18 mean, I went to the doctor so many times.
19 And come to find out, that I develop (sic)
20 asthma. Never had asthma before. Right
21 now, I'm still -- I'm on the Advair and
22 Provental, you know.

23 And my children, one of my son (sic),
24 you know, he develop like bronchitis. My
25 other son -- we all could test to the same

1 things, like my baby boy, he -- every time
2 he (sic) cough, he would like cough up
3 blood. If he blow his nose, you know, he
4 would have blood.

5 I develop like a rash. I don't know.
6 I heard everybody say about rashes, but my
7 skin was very dry. And everybody was like
8 "Oh, Gilda, what's wrong with your skin?"
9 So the doctor had been giving me a
10 particular lotion and everything. But she
11 say, "Well, Gilda, it got (sic) to be
12 something in the trailer."

13 I never had heard of formaldehyde until
14 she wrote -- my doctor end up writing FEMA a
15 letter saying that from the mold and
16 everything in the trailer. All my clothes,
17 everything -- when I move out the trailer,
18 everything was mildewed even inside and
19 outside the trailer. So, I mean, I develop
20 a bad health for my breathing and
21 everything.

22 And, so, I think everybody kind of like
23 attest to the same thing, so is it the FEMA
24 trailer.

25 So thank you.

1 MR. SCHREIBER:

2 Claude McClintock?

3 MR. McCLINTOCK:

4 How is everybody?

5 I'd like to say that after the storm, I
6 lived in Baton Rouge for about a year, and I
7 came back. They put me in the Astor Crown
8 Plaza Hotel. I stayed there. And they kept
9 -- FEMA kept not extending my rooms. And I
10 would be there for a week or so, then they
11 would cut me off. And, then, I'd have to
12 sleep in my truck. And, then, they'd redo
13 it for a week or so. So that went on for a
14 while.

15 And they finally gave me a person that
16 said that they had a trailer available that
17 they would put me in, which was a trailer on
18 the RTA trailer, they called it, where all
19 the bus drivers and the people were staying
20 across the River right off on Wall, Wall
21 Street there. And it was a supposed to be a
22 federal facility. It was fenced in, and it
23 had security guards there. Well, all that
24 was fine.

25 But I noticed that there would be a

1 funny smell that would be in there, and I
2 would wake up at night. And, so, even
3 though I had the air conditioner on, I
4 always left the windows be (sic) up and have
5 the bathroom ventilator thing going. But it
6 would never leave. Sometimes I would have
7 to open the doors and go outside.

8 So what happened, you know, even though
9 I heard this gentleman that was the lawyer
10 speak about how they test the trailers, we
11 live in a unique area where we have -- we're
12 in a bowl. And, when it rains consistently,
13 we flash-flood.

14 I was in the trailer one day. I was at
15 work, and I wasn't feeling good, so I came
16 home to try and rest. I suffer with
17 shortness of breath now. I suffer with
18 headaches, my blood pressure's changed. I
19 get swelling in my feet and legs. But we
20 live in a unique area where it flash-floods.

21 So I came home one day, because I was
22 feeling bad. It was after lunch, and I laid
23 down in the trailer to take a nap. And I
24 was sleeping. And, during this time, they
25 had a lot of consistent thunderstorm

1 patterns coming through. And I went to
2 sleep, and my phone rang. And my brother
3 called and told me, he said, "You know, it's
4 flooding over here," he says, "Have you
5 looked outside?"

6 So, when I went outside and looked, the
7 water was about maybe this high
8 (indicating). So I took my truck and I
9 backed it up on the -- not -- off of the
10 pavement on to the grassy area, which was
11 really even with the curb within a few
12 inches, six inches, maybe a half a foot. So
13 I backed it up there. I said, "Well,
14 that'll be better." And I went back inside.
15 I wasn't feeling good. I laid down, and I
16 went back to sleep.

17 And he called me again about forty-five
18 minutes, maybe an hour later and said, "You
19 better get out of there." So I looked out
20 of the window. And, now, the water was up
21 about this high (indicating).

22 And I got some things together, and I
23 was in a -- I'm handicapped, so I was in a
24 handicapped trailer. And I had got some
25 things together.

1 I couldn't go down the ramp, because
2 the water had come up the first stage of the
3 ramp to the level where when you walk down,
4 you got that whole level, and then you go
5 down. So I had to climb over the ramp into
6 the water, and get in my truck, and drive
7 out of there. And, by the time I got all of
8 these things together, the water was maybe
9 about this high (indicating).

10 And my truck started. I didn't think
11 that it would, but it started. And I came
12 down off of the curb, and I slowly drove,
13 and I got out, and I navigated my way out.

14 But the entire lot of the RTA parking
15 trailer area was a lake, and I know that
16 when things get wet, mold, you have to deal
17 with it. We dealt with it in our homes, and
18 I know that all of that occurs. But we were
19 already in a bad situation with the trailers
20 being dry.

21 So I know that the water raising up to
22 the bottoms of the trailers and maybe up --
23 some of the trailers probably got water
24 inside of them. I know that that even
25 complicated what was already going on.

1 I have quite a few medical problems
2 that I've never had before. I just wanted
3 to say that. We have a lot of bus drivers
4 that are still working, that were living
5 back there. I think all of our drivers were
6 back there. And all of us were exposed to
7 not only what the trailers brought to us,
8 but the complications of flood waters,
9 flash-flood waters complicated that.

10 So I'd just like to say that I think
11 FEMA's responsible for all of that.

12 MR. SCHREIBER:

13 Mary Anne Ladner, you're next.

14 MS. LADNER:

15 My name is Mary Anne Ladner, and I'm
16 speaking on behalf of my mother, who lived
17 in a FEMA trailer for two and a half years.
18 All of a sudden she started with shortness
19 of breath, where she couldn't walk from the
20 bedroom to the bathroom without having to
21 sit down.

22 I brought her to the emergency room
23 after Christmas, December 27. They
24 diagnosed her with pneumonia and emphysema,
25 which she's never been a smoker. They

1 admitted her, and they ran tests from head
2 to toe. She died February 4th.

3 They still could not diagnose her.
4 They were bringing up about the autoimmune
5 diseases, multiple autoimmune diseases, but
6 nothing was ever finalized when she died
7 February 4th.

8 I believe it was the formaldehyde
9 poisoning from the trailer. I had mentioned
10 it to the doctors. It seemed like they
11 didn't want to touch it with anything. It
12 was just ignored.

13 MR. SCHREIBER:

14 Thanks.

15 I'm going to go back on the list, and
16 ask if the following people are present:
17 Eloise Bachko. Okay. Richard Smith, Jr.
18 George Gaynor. Okay.

19 Would you anybody else like the
20 opportunity to talk?

21 MS. JASMINE:

22 I will.

23 MR. SCHREIBER:

24 Ma'am, if you would, please speak into
25 the microphone, and state your name for the

1 Record.

2 MS. JASMINE:

3 Okay. My full name?

4 MR. SCHREIBER:

5 Yes, ma'am.

6 MS. JASMINE:

7 Good evening. My name is Yvonne
8 Jasmine, and this is my grandson, Isaiah
9 Jasmine. And we were living in a FEMA
10 trailer when we came back in 2006, and I've
11 been diagnosed with asthma, and Isaiah just
12 had a tumor removed from his brain. And
13 that's why I wanted to make it over here, to
14 let you know. And I feel that it is a cause
15 from the trailer, and we don't claim
16 anything.

17 I'm not claiming asthma, but I can
18 barely walk from one spot to another, and I
19 just -- you know, something needs to be
20 done. They need to take care of the problem
21 and not put people in that situation. I
22 would have never had my grandchildren, my
23 daughters or myself in something that was
24 going to end up killing us.

25 And I can't even tell you how much my

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1 little grandson had to suffer. We just
2 found out on the 3rd of October that he had
3 a tumor on his brain. And it's been
4 removed, and he's cancer-free.

5 And thank you.

6 MR. SCHREIBER:

7 At this time, I just want to ask if
8 anyone else wanted to make comments.

9 MR. JOHNSON:

10 I would.

11 MR. SCHREIBER:

12 Please state your name again.

13 MR. JOHNSON:

14 My name is Quinnan Johnson. I was born
15 May 21, 1944.

16 They found out that I had moved out of
17 the FEMA trailer, 'cause I told them I was
18 feeling bad. When I wasn't home, they moved
19 the FEMA trailer from my house. They moved
20 it, and we didn't know anything about it.
21 So I had to move in my grandmother's house
22 -- my wife's grandmother's house. They will
23 do that to you in a minute.

24 Some doctors are not telling me,
25 because now I'm going to a specialist at

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1 Kenner Regional to breathe. I failed all my
2 breathing tests and the other doctor I was
3 going to -- could not blow into that thing
4 and make the ball move.

5 So if you're having that problem -- I
6 quit smoking in 1964, when cigarettes were
7 twenty-one -- twenty-three cents a pack.

8 MR. SCHREIBER:

9 Thank you. This concludes the public
10 meeting. Thank you again for coming.

11 Everyone have a safe trip home. Thanks.

12 THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 4:50 P.M.

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2 This certification is valid only for a
3 transcript accompanies by my seal stamped in blue
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6 for the State of Louisiana, as the officer before
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9 voicewriting reporting method, was prepared and
10 transcribed by me or under my personal supervision,
11 and is true and correct to the best of my ability
12 and understanding.

13 This 3rd day of March, 2009, New Orleans,
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15

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17 Tammy Hupin

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