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3 Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Program

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8 Date: September 10, 2008

9 Time: 9:30 a.m.

10 Location: Waterfront Centre Building

11 800 9th Street, Southwest

12 Washington, DC 20024

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1 DR. HEFFERAN: Good morning. I'm Colien
2 Hefferan, the administrator of the Cooperative State
3 Research, Education, and Extension Service. The part of
4 the US Department of Agriculture which is delegated the
5 responsibility for administering the Agriculture and Food
6 Research Initiative, the new program which we're here to
7 talk about today.

8 As you know, the CSREES within the next year
9 will become the National Institute for Food and
10 Agriculture, and that's something for which we will be
11 collecting a lot of stakeholder input. But today we hope
12 to focus on the AFRI Program, which we will be
13 instituting effective October 1st of this year.

14 There's just a couple of things I want to tell
15 you about today's session. And I'll start with the most
16 important. There are coffee pots over here. And if you
17 either go through the side here or around the back and
18 through the maze, you can certainly get a cup of coffee

19 and water and we encourage you to do that when you feel
20 comfortable to do so.

21 And, of course, if I'm going to tell you about
22 coffee pots, I should remind you of where the restrooms

1 are, which are sort of this side behind the elevator.

2 So, if you go out the rooms in that direction, the men's

3 and the women's rooms are in that hall.

4 The other critical thing I want to tell you,

5 is that today's session is being recorded. And

6 everything that is said will be recorded. And, so, keep

7 that in mind primarily -- not for the reasons you're

8 thinking -- but primarily because we want to make sure

9 that the recorder can hear your comments. And, so, if

10 you make a statement, you need to either speak from this

11 microphone or one of the two microphones that are at the

12 side of the room. We will have a public record of this

13 meeting. And it's critical that we get all of your

14 comments down.

15 This is the first of what we expect to be

16 quite a few opportunities for public input in the

17 administration of programs that are delegated to our

18 agency to administer, as a result of either expanded or

19 altered authorities from the Food, Conservation, and
20 Energy Act of 2008. On September 15th we will be having
21 a public meeting in regard to the veterinary medical
22 repayment -- loan repayment program.

1 On October 12th we'll be having a meeting in
2 Chicago regarding the Hispanic-serving institutions --

3 MR. MOYER: In Denver.

4 DR. HEFFERAN: In Denver. I'm sorry. Thank
5 you, Jim. In Denver we'll be having that meeting. We
6 also will have a meeting here on October 27th concerning
7 the New Farmers and Ranchers Program. And we anticipate
8 many other opportunities.

9 I will tell you, however, that in addition to
10 public meetings, we are accepting written input on these
11 and all other programs. And some of that is reflected in
12 requests for applications that we send out where we call
13 for written input and other opportunities.

14 So, we hope that those of you who have not
15 signed up to talk today will decide you want to make a
16 statement. We have plenty of room on the schedule here,
17 or will send us written comments, or will participate in
18 some of our other, either specific or broad meetings,

19 that we're going to have.

20 Well, implementation of the Farm Bill is the
21 responsibility of all of us at the US Department of
22 Agriculture, and certainly our policy leadership is

1 absolutely essential in doing that. So, as part of our
2 introduction this morning, I would like to introduce the
3 under secretary for research, education, and economics,
4 and chief scientist of the US Department of Agriculture,
5 Dr. Gail Buchanan.

6 DR. BUCHANAN: Well, thank you, Colien. It's
7 really great to be here. And for those of you that are
8 from out of town, I was down here yesterday speaking to
9 the CSREES staff and had a great meeting. And, so, it's
10 good to be in the agency two days in a row. So, I've got
11 to make sure I balance IT out and get the ARS and ERS in
12 mass in the next few days. But, anyway, it's really
13 great to be here.

14 And I want to thank each of you for making the
15 effort to come and be with us today, because this is a
16 very, very important occasion. I can tell you that the
17 process of planning and implementing the provisions as
18 provided for in the Research Title of the Food

19 Conservation Energy Act of 2008 is tremendously
20 important. And I can tell ya that some of us -- and I'm
21 looking at some of you that work for hard for the past
22 several months in getting this legislation -- so, we are

1 very pleased at where we are. But the real work and the
2 real challenge lie ahead. And it's not something that
3 any one group or small group can do, it's something
4 that's going to take the effort of everybody to really
5 make this law do what we all think it can do.

6 You know, we're living in some of the most
7 exciting times in agriculture. I can't remember in my
8 lifetime -- and I've been involved some 40-plus years --
9 but I can't ever remember a time when we had such
10 challenges and opportunities facing us. It's really a
11 great time to be involved in agriculture. The only thing
12 is I wish I was a young scientist again starting over.
13 But I'm towards the end of my career. But we have so
14 many things that I think can make a difference and make
15 the world a better place. And certainly I think those of
16 us engaged in agriculture have a front row seat and a
17 front row responsibility of making that happen.

18 Well, as Colien pointed out who I am, so, I

19 won't have to go through that anymore. But what we're
20 doing today is seeking your guidance on the design of
21 programmatic focus, guidelines, and other things that
22 will help characterize the Agriculture Food and Research

1 Initiative. This is a newly authorized program to be
2 administered initially by the Cooperative States
3 Research, Education, and Extension Service. But, of
4 course, sometime prior to October 1, 2009, the National
5 Institute of Food and Agriculture will be in place. And,
6 of course, at that time that will be the institute that
7 will be responsible for this program.

8 The AFRI will consolidate programs currently
9 administered through the National Research Initiative,
10 including integrated research, education, extension
11 activities. And it will be the flagship, competitive
12 grant program of the department.

13 And I can tell you, those of you that's out of
14 town, I work competitive program with NCSREES is one of
15 the outstanding competitive programs in this town. I
16 don't think we have to take a back seat to anyone in the
17 quality of that program, starting with developing the
18 kind of RFAs that really make a difference. And, of

19 course, our effort to solicit everybody that can
20 contribute and everybody that has an idea for a proposal,
21 then the way that we solicit individuals to make the
22 reviews. It's a first-class program any way you look at

1 it. And I think it's running a way that everybody can be
2 assured of the fairness and the quality of the programs.
3 So, I'm very proud of our competitive program. And it's
4 a record that I think all of us should be pleased with.
5 And that includes everybody from the scientists, to the
6 institutions, to those of us in government, everybody
7 ought to be pleased with it.

8 Well, as a department, the RE mission area and
9 it's agencies are implementing new and expanded
10 opportunities created through the Farm Bill. We're
11 seeking input from those who we fund and support for our
12 research efforts, and teaching research, and extension;
13 as well as those who can benefit from this work. So,
14 both categories are very important clientele. We
15 certainly are very sensitive to the needs of scientists.
16 And having been a scientist back in the earlier days when
17 I did useful work, it's very important that we have an
18 opportunity that pleases scientists, because they're

19 critical.

20 But that's just the beginning. The results of

21 research, and education, extension programs benefits the

22 people. And that's really the proof in the pudding.

1 And, clearly, we have sensitivity for both directions.

2 Well, as Dr. Hefferan pointed out, this is

3 just one of the first meetings we'll be having, because

4 we are seeking input from several different directions.

5 And if you are a little bashful and don't want to stand

6 up and talk, well, just sit back there and write down

7 what you want to say and we'll take that just as well.

8 Because we really want to get your ideas, opinions,

9 thoughts, and suggestions. And I had the opportunity of

10 visiting with some of you yesterday and got some good

11 ideas. And I think you got some good ideas from me as

12 well. So, it's a two-way street.

13 But, anyway, these are the kind of

14 opportunities -- and as I said yesterday when I met the

15 CSREES staff, I don't think there's any other branch of

16 the Federal Government that listens to the people we

17 serve any better than we do. Because we truly -- and

18 having been an experiment session director and the dean,

19 I can tell you I learned that lesson a long time ago.

20 But we do value the input that you make,

21 because we do listen. And we try to consider everything

22 that you suggest. And the good ideas we'll try to

1 incorporate as quickly as we can, and the other ones
2 we'll certainly gave them careful consideration.

3 I'm not going to be able to stay all morning,
4 but I want to stay at least an hour, Dr. Hefferan. But I
5 want to, again, thank everybody for making the effort to
6 come into town and share your thoughts and ideas with
7 us. And keep in mind the goal is very simple, it is to
8 follow the 4-H pledge, and what is that?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Make the best better.

10 DR. BUCHANAN: Good. That's not as good as I
11 want it yet, but that's getting better. We want to make
12 the best better. And that's exactly what we're here to
13 do today. So, Dr. Hefferan, thank you for giving me the
14 time to make a couple of comments.

15 DR. HEFFERAN: Thank you. Thank you,
16 Dr. Buchanan. The eyes in the back of my head were
17 seeing everybody go, I pledge my heart -- yeah, you
18 know. We're going for the simple one, to make the best

19 better.

20 Well, I am very pleased today that our meeting
21 will actually be managed by our competitive program staff
22 led by our interim deputy administrator, Debbie Sheely.

1 I also want to point out, we have some of our other staff
2 here who work on competitive programs, as well as across
3 the entire agency. And I would encourage people as they
4 come in, if someone sits down next to you, please ask
5 them to come forward. Mark Poth, who is the director of
6 our research programs for competitive programs is sitting
7 at the table here. And today one of his roles is to make
8 sure everybody signs in. That's probably your easiest
9 job of the year, but we'll try to help you with it.

10 Well, again, I'm pleased to introduce
11 Dr. Debbie Sheely, who's our interim director -- interim
12 deputy administrator for competitive programs, who will
13 manage today's meeting. Debbie.

14 DR. SHEELY: All right. Terry. Let's turn
15 this thing back on. Okay. Great. Good morning, folks.

16 (Good morning.)

17 DR. SHEELY: So, is this microphone carrying
18 all right in the back, Marty? Yes. Okay. Very good.

19 So, I want to also welcome you this morning.
20 And thank you so much for coming and taking some time out
21 of your busy schedules to come and give us your views on
22 the AFRI Program and share with us all of your best ideas

1 that -- for how we might go about implementing this new
2 and exciting program. And I want to thank agency staff
3 for coming and listening in.

4 I'm going to take a few minutes and just walk
5 you through some of the major elements of the AFRI
6 Program. It's straight out of the legislation. I'm sure
7 you're all familiar with it. But this will get us all in
8 the same starting point.

9 So, as you've heard, this is going to be a
10 competitive grants program. And through this program we
11 will be supporting grants for fundamental research,
12 applied research, extension, education, and integrated
13 research education and extension.

14 So, we have complete flexibility, full
15 flexibility to support work in any of these sort of
16 functional areas. This is a very exciting opportunity
17 for us. And it would be our intent to get your thoughts
18 and how we might most effectively take advantage of this

19 flexibility.

20 The program will address the six primary
21 areas. And the legislation provides more detail with
22 regard to what falls under these major categories. But,

1 of course, there's plant health production and plant
2 products, animal health production and products, food
3 safety, nutrition and health, renewable energy, natural
4 resources and environment, agriculture systems and
5 technology, agriculture economics in rural communities.

6 So, you'll recognize those six broad topic
7 areas as those which will be important in the Rio offices
8 that will be established over time.

9 This program is authorized up to a level of
10 \$700 million annually for each of the years, 2008 through
11 2012. At least 30 percent of the AFRI appropriation will
12 be spent on integrated research, education, and extension
13 activities. Of the funds that are allocated for
14 research, no less than 60 percent will be spent on
15 fundamental research. And of those dollars spent on
16 fundamental research, we'll be spending no less than 30
17 percent on work conducted by multi-disciplinary teams,
18 and no less than 20 percent will be spent -- I'm sorry,

19 two percent will be spent on equipment grants.

20 The eligible institutions are many. This is a

21 very broad eligibility. It -- so -- and you can see the

22 whole list there, including state ag experiment stations,

1 colleges and universities, university research
2 foundations, other sorts of research institutions and
3 organizations. Federal agencies are eligible, as are
4 national laboratories. Private organizations and
5 corporations are eligible, as are individuals. And then
6 groups of -- and then any group that is composed of any
7 of the preceding groups.

8 The legislation does direct us to make a
9 certain -- some certain portion of the -- and it doesn't
10 specify how much -- of the funding available for, broadly
11 speaking, capacity development in the individuals and
12 institutions that conduct research education and
13 extension.

14 So, we're instructed to provide institutional
15 capacity building by providing grants for improvement of
16 research, development, technology transfer, and
17 educational capacity. Also to provide grants for single
18 investigators or coinvestigators who are beginning their

19 research careers. And these will be individuals who are
20 within five years of their -- of a career track position.

21 We're directed to ensure that grants go to
22 faculty of small, midsized, and minority-serving

1 institutions who have not been previously successful in
2 the program; and to provide grants to improve research
3 extension and education capabilities in states that have
4 been less successful. So, a variety of mechanisms for
5 providing capacity development through grants from AFRI.

6 These grants will be awarded based on merit,
7 quality, and relevance. And, so, of course, that means
8 we will be developing evaluation criteria that will be
9 used to select the most meritorious proposals submitted
10 to the program. Any insights that you might have, or
11 suggestions, with regard to evaluation criteria, of
12 course, are welcome. We will be selecting these
13 proposals through a peer review process. The awards are
14 not to exceed ten years in duration. Now, that is a very
15 exciting, new element of the AFRI Program. This long-
16 term -- or longer term of award. And, so, we will be --
17 we're very interested in knowing your opinions on what
18 should be the duration of an award.

19 And, of course, we historically have offered
20 awards of varying durations, and would be specifically
21 interested in how -- and your guidance on how we might
22 think about implementing that ten-year award category.

1 We are also directed to solicit and consider
2 input from persons who conduct or use agricultural
3 research extension or education. And as you've heard, we
4 have a variety of public stakeholder meetings that are --
5 that have been announced. And the agency has, of course,
6 historically conducted a number -- or participated in a
7 number of different kinds of activities to acquire
8 stakeholder input. And we do use stakeholder input
9 provided in a number of ways, a variety of -- our
10 national program leaders are involved in many different
11 interagency committees through the National Science and
12 Technology Council, other types of interagency
13 committees. We, of course -- we accept input from the
14 NARI (ph) Board, various scientific societies. I won't
15 go through the whole list. But I want to point out that
16 the agency does have a stakeholder input page in which
17 you would find a very comprehensive listing of the
18 reports and various sources of information that we have

19 been using in the past. We'd be -- of course, we would
20 welcome your input on how we might move forward in the
21 future in the collection of this sort of stakeholder
22 input.

1 We are directed to seek the widest
2 participation of qualified individuals in the federal
3 government, colleges, universities, ag experiment
4 stations in the private sector, in the program. So,
5 looking to seek the widest participation of folks in
6 terms of receiving proposals and seeking proposals, as
7 well as in performing the peer review of those
8 proposals. And any input that you would have with regard
9 to how we might move forward with engaging that broad
10 segment of the community would be most appreciated.

11 In summary, we'll be collecting -- we'll be
12 accepting the written comments from this stakeholder
13 session through September the 24th. So, that's two
14 weeks. So, if you -- please feel free to continue
15 submitting your comments until that date. They will --
16 we, of course, always are interested in your comments.
17 But in terms of developing the implementing legislation,
18 or implementing regulation for this particular program,

19 we can promise to incorporate anything received by the
20 24th.

21 We will be releasing the program announcement
22 for the AFRI Program by the end of November. This is a

1 slightly different approach. The actual RFA will be
2 released in mid-January. And that is basically due to
3 some changes with grants.gov that we want to, basically,
4 avoid and -- running into those. So, there will be new
5 forms released. I don't need to get into the details.
6 But we will be releasing the gist of the program by the
7 end of November in the form of a formal announcement. It
8 will have all the information, but people need to begin
9 working on their grant proposals.

10 Then in mid-January the actual RFA, request
11 for applications, will be released. And at that -- at
12 that time it will be a full application package with the
13 application forms. And then deadline dates for proposals
14 will be scheduled beginning approximately four weeks
15 after the RFA is released.

16 That's the summary of AFRI. I'm going to
17 actually turn the meeting over to Dr. Mark Poth, who's
18 been introduced. Dr. Poth is the director of our

19 research programs. He's going to walk you through a few
20 of the meeting procedures. He's going to be the time
21 keeper today. And with that I'll turn it over. Thank
22 you, Mark.

1 MR. POTH: Thank you, Debbie. And thank you
2 all for attending today. Please be aware that this
3 session is being recorded and will be transcribed. So,
4 if you're up here speaking, please use the microphone.
5 It really helps with that. We do have microphones at the
6 side, should we get into discussion later, and please use
7 those if we do anything related to discussion.

8 Before beginning your comments, please clearly
9 state your name and who you're representing here today.
10 Speaking time has been assigned in five-minute
11 allotments. That's what we said we would do in the
12 federal register announcement. Now, we do have a lot of
13 blank space in our time schedule; however, for the
14 initial comments we'll stick very closely to that five-
15 minute time limit. Once you reach four minutes I will
16 stand up. At five minutes we wrestle for the microphone.

17 We do have a lunch break scheduled from noon
18 till 1. And lunch is on your own.

19 Any questions? Excellent. We are ready for

20 our first speaker, then.

21 MR. BELL: Am I going to mess this up if I sit

22 it on top of here?

1 MR. POTH: You can use it.

2 DR. HEFFERAN: You can close it.

3 MR. BELL: Okay. My name is Keith Bell. Is

4 that good --

5 MR. POTH: You really have to have your mouth

6 close --

7 MR. BELL: Okay.

8 MR. POTH: (Inaudible) kind of mic.

9 MR. BELL: My name is Keith Bell. I am head

10 of the Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries Department at

11 the University of Tennessee. But as I look out at -- in

12 the face of my dean, I have to tell you that I'm not here

13 representing that organization per se, I'm here to give

14 some input from the National Association of the

15 University Forest Resources Programs. We're a

16 69-university organization that represents scientists,

17 educators, extension specialists in the areas of

18 forestry, wildlife fisheries, forest resources, and other

19 related disciplines.

20 I've got my notes up here. I know I've got

21 five minutes, Mark, that I'm not so far removed from the

22 classroom that when I have a captive audience I'm not set

1 to go for 50 minutes, so, you may be wrestling with me
2 here.

3 I'm looking forward to hearing more about the
4 process and the discussion that goes on. I don't know
5 how far removed we'll get from the process that we had
6 for the NRI, but it will be a little bit of that and a
7 little bit of something else. But we have been
8 discussing the process as an organization over the last
9 six months, or even longer, but we've really gotten
10 moving on that in the last six months. We've met with
11 CSREES Program leaders and other folks in CSREES
12 recently. And one of the things that we've realized that
13 we are -- is that we are really not fully engaged in the
14 process. We've left a lot of that engagement, in terms
15 of priorities, to our individual scientists, or our
16 individual department heads or deans. And I think we're
17 talking about more of a collective, organized engagement
18 in this new process.

19 And I wanted to mention two of the
20 recommendations that we are discussing that will come up
21 for more discussion in voting or approval of our annual
22 meeting in November that have something to do with this

1 process. We can talk about other things, too.

2 But, first of all, we -- we're talking about
3 using our network. We have a built-in network of
4 scientists from a -- as I mentioned, 69 different
5 universities, to generate on a regular basis -- possibly
6 annually, possibly even more often than that -- a set of
7 priorities. In other words, poll our scientists and find
8 out what they think. And then regionally, and then
9 nationally summarize those priorities and make those
10 available to CSREES as a whole or to program managers
11 individually as needed. So, that's one thing that we
12 really haven't done in the past and I think we're
13 committed to doing. And that will fit in with our recent
14 effort in partnership with CSREES to produce the
15 McIntyre-Stennis Strategic Plan, in which we'd outlined
16 our overall broad research priorities. So, we'll be
17 looking within that context, and also within the context
18 of those broad priorities mentioned in the AFRI

19 legislation.

20 The second thing we've been working on is a

21 little bit of change in the culture. As a department

22 head I'm probably as guilty of this as anyone else. We

1 don't encourage our scientists enough and make it clear
2 enough to them that service on panels is a valued
3 activity to us, and that they will be rewarded and
4 recognized for that in their annual reviews, and their
5 promotion and tenure process. So, I think that that's a
6 valuable discussion to have internally in the
7 organization, probably in every organization that has
8 faculty members that are on the tenure track, to let them
9 know that this activity is extremely valuable, for their
10 professional development, but also in terms of the
11 working of the process for a grant program like this.
12 So, I think we're going to be committed to developing
13 that communication to those scientists. But also putting
14 together a database of qualified and willing scientists
15 within our organization that we can, again, communicate
16 and pass on to program managers at need, or on a regular
17 basis, however you'd like to do that.
18 So, those are the two big things we're talking

19 about. While I have the microphone, I also followed
20 something as I was listening to the summary just a few
21 minutes ago. One of the things that I skipped right
22 over, but really is important to the forest resources

1 community, in terms of this new -- the new regulations in
2 this program, is this ten-year window, or this
3 opportunity for long-term research.

4 In forestry and related disciplines, we think
5 in terms of decades. And we have, in the past, been hand
6 strung by shorter term windows for research. It's hard
7 to turn results around in a year, or two years, or even
8 three years. When we start to talk about ten-year
9 projects, we can do some things that we really couldn't
10 do in the past, in terms of making a difference in our
11 understanding of the ecosystems, because they tend to
12 function in decades and centuries even. So, to me that's
13 an exciting part. And that -- I just threw that in. We
14 haven't talked about that as an organization, but I
15 imagine I'd get a pretty big consensus there on that
16 issue.

17 So, thank you for your time. I guess I've
18 come in under the five minutes, and I look forward to the

19 discussion.

20 MR. POTH: Okay. Thank you. Ferd.

21 MR. HOEFNER: Good morning. It's a pleasure

22 to be here. I'm Ferd Hoefner, policy director for the

1 Sustainable Agriculture Coalition. I think most of you
2 in the room know us, but for those who don't, we're a
3 national network of grassroots based farm, conservation,
4 and rural organizations that work together to change
5 Federal policy to support a more sustainable food and
6 agricultural system. And we're 20 years old. And we've
7 been involved in the research and extension activity
8 since the very get go.

9 I'm happy to be here to talk about the new
10 AFRI Program. You know, just quickly some observations
11 -- oh, by the way, I did bring copies of my remarks. I
12 wasn't sure what the protocol would be, so, they're up
13 here if anybody wants them afterwards. Actually there's
14 more comments in the remarks than I'll make in five
15 minutes. But I -- you know, we think Congress did a good
16 job of melding the NRI and the IFS Program into this new
17 vehicle.

18 And, you know, one of the things that focused

19 our intention on was, what's new? I mean, there's lots
20 of important stuff from those two predecessor programs
21 that will continue, and that's great. But we also wanted
22 to look and see what's new, to help us do that at the

1 office. You won't be able to see this in the back, but
2 we sort of color coded the law so we could see -- all the
3 yellow stuff and the white stuff is stuff that
4 continues. And some of the green stuff that's new or
5 different. And a lot of that's pro forma. So, we tried
6 to -- wanted to zero in some remarks on some of the new
7 things.

8 And, so, in the priority category, in priority
9 areas for research, education, and extension, a couple of
10 new things. One, conventional or classical plant and
11 animal breeding, both in the plant systems and animal
12 systems over all of the six headings that Debbie went
13 through. We think this is very significant. Congress
14 went on to develop quite a bit of report language
15 relative to this program. Our recommendation very
16 strongly would be that these both become new national
17 programs starting immediately. So, that's one.

18 Another one that's new is rural

19 entrepreneurship. There's been questions about this in
20 the past. We hope that the new legislation has answered
21 those questions quite specifically. And, you know,
22 within the next decade, estimates are that one out of

1 three jobs in rural America will be self-employment. We
2 just desperately need more integrated work in this area.
3 And, again, we would recommend that this become a new
4 national program area, perhaps in the first year as a
5 subset of the basic rural development program, but very
6 quickly thereafter becoming its own program. So, that
7 would be another one of our recommendations moving
8 forward.

9 There are some continuing emphasis. I'm not
10 going to talk about all of them, because there's too
11 many. But one that's near and dear to our heart,
12 Congress once again reaffirmed, as it did in passing the
13 IFS language in 1998, that research, education, extension
14 on small and midsized family farms is a major priority
15 for them. It is for us. We just strongly recommend that
16 the current national program in agriculture prosperity
17 for small and medium-sized family farms continues and
18 actually expands. And we list in our comments, you can

19 read them, some of the areas that we would like to see

20 that expanded into.

21 I also just want to voice our continuing

22 strong support for the managed ecosystem program and also

1 are very interested in seeing that continue and expand.

2 The issue of the grant terms came up. That
3 was one of the changes. Very importantly in being
4 involved in a lot of the discussions about that on
5 Capitol Hill. There was a particular interest in that
6 area because of the new language relative to conventional
7 or classical plant and animal breeding. And we would
8 very much like to see that longer grant term apply to
9 many of those project submissions. Also the whole area
10 of agro-eco system long-term systems trials would be
11 another obvious area for longer term grants.

12 With that said, our basic recommendation would
13 be that the default settings, so-called, of grants would
14 continue to be the five and under, but that where
15 relevant and appropriate, that longer term grants would
16 now be open for people to pursue.

17 On the integrated program area, we're really
18 glad to see the new 30 percent requirement. That's

19 higher than the requirement that's been in the
20 appropriations laws the last few years, but consistent
21 with the President's recommendation the last few years.
22 We're strong backers of that. We want to make sure that

1 that is interpreted as it's written, which is a minimum,
2 not a maximum. There's a lot of need for pure research
3 projects, but a lot of times we miss those educational
4 extension component opportunities. And we don't want to
5 see those opportunities missed in the future.

6 I'll just add briefly -- this is a longer
7 discussion -- but it is our dear hope that the words
8 pursuant to Section 406 in the funding language relative
9 to integrated programs gets interpreted the way it was
10 intended, which was that's how you define integrated
11 programs, and not that Congress had some crazy intention
12 to take a whole bunch of AFRI funds and move them to
13 other programs. Clearly that's not what they intended.
14 And sometimes I wonder what's in the water over at OGC,
15 but please don't force a new legislation to come through
16 to fix that. It's pretty clear, I think.

17 And last but not least, funding levels.

18 Obviously everybody in this room needs to join together

19 in the biggest, most unified effort we've ever made to --
20 you know, we won't see \$700 million in the near term, but
21 we really need those steady increases. And I would love
22 to entertain further outside hall room -- hallway

1 discussions about how we do that. Because we need to get
2 serious about increasing the funding level.

3 MR. POTH: Good. Next up, Al. Come down
4 front. Okay.

5 MR. ZWILLINGER: Good morning and thank you
6 for the opportunity. My name is Al Zwillinger, an
7 extension specialist with the University of Illinois. My
8 comments this morning will reflect 15 years of experience
9 with USDA funding, and experience with a recently
10 developed initiative in Illinois called the Illinois
11 Resource Net. A university-based resource to increase
12 federal dollars to Illinois.

13 My comments this morning will focus around
14 three areas, support for the concepts, suggested
15 modifications, and a clarifying question.

16 Generally I support most written information,
17 and highly support the concept that funds be made
18 available for up to the ten years for those proposals,

19 with merit, quality, and relevance. In the areas named,
20 this time frame could be very critical to success of this
21 research.

22 Suggested modifications. Grants should be

1 available for a joint university local government and not
2 profit research organizations. Currently, I think it is
3 in the language just not clearly spelled out that way, in
4 the category of other organizations.

5 Include wording that indicates that funds
6 should foster agricultural research and development that
7 facilitates community economic development, food systems,
8 new agricultural enterprises, marketing of alternative
9 crops, and energy production capacity.

10 Grant reviews and point criteria should reward
11 projects that reflect multi-institution, university
12 community collaborations, and public engagement.

13 AFRI should be executed in such a way that
14 other federal programs that could be supportive, such as
15 small business development funding, alternative energy
16 system development, and nutrition education can be easily
17 integrated into the applied projects supported by this
18 initiative.

19 The submission process to AFRI also be
20 integrated into a federal-wide system, whereby one
21 application by an institution, organizations, or groups
22 proposals could be vetted through several agencies --

1 through several federal agencies that have similar
2 interest in this kind of work for possible funding for
3 the best potential outcomes. Those that seem closely
4 aligned include the EDA, the EPA, Department of Energy,
5 Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, Homeland
6 Security, Housing and Urban Development, and the National
7 Institutes of Health.

8 And then, finally, my clarifying question. In
9 the background and purpose information it states the
10 secretary may award grants to a number of organizations,
11 one of which is included as federal agencies.

12 My question is: Is this really the primary
13 intent, or is the intent more along the lines that the
14 AFRI process encourages collaborations with other federal
15 agencies through the submission process with other
16 organizations being in the lead?

17 Thank you for the opportunity to comment
18 today.

19 MR. POTH: Next up is Mark McCann.

20 MR. MCCANN: Good morning. I'm Mark McCann,

21 director of Extension at Virginia Tech. And I'm here

22 with my colleague, Ed Smith, director of AgriLife

1 Extension in Texas. We're here representing the people
2 of our states, our extension organizations, as well as
3 the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors,
4 an organization composed of two territories in 13 states
5 that range from Virginia to Texas. We appreciate the
6 opportunity to provide comments regarding AFRI and the
7 value of the partnership with CSREES that leverages funds
8 and human resources from the local, state, and federal
9 levels.

10 We understand and are optimistic that the AFRI
11 will support not only research and integrated programs,
12 but also stand alone extension programs. It's been
13 demonstrated that extension adds value to research and
14 helps to make research findings relevant and useful to
15 our mutual customers on their identified needs.

16 In my conversations with my experiment station
17 colleague in Virginia, I often remind him that research
18 without extension is analogous to building a house

19 without windows.

20 While it is essential that extension programs

21 have a strong foundation and is supported by dependable

22 formula grant funds, it's equally important that

1 competitive programs be implemented in such a way that
2 quality proposals with an extension focus have an
3 equitable opportunity to compete with a reasonable degree
4 of success.

5 It is also important that competitive programs
6 include strategies and topics that are high priority to
7 extensions customers.

8 We appreciate the extension RFA mechanisms
9 that are included in AFRI, and encourage their maximum
10 use. Stand alone and integrated RFAs need to include
11 focus areas appropriate to extension. Many RFAs seem to
12 be written as research questions, and many times are not
13 applicable to the extension function. Integrated RFAs in
14 the past many times have included extension as a part of
15 accomplishing the research. AFRI offers an opportunity
16 for RFAs to be designed to focus on extension,
17 accomplishment extension programs, relevant to
18 educational goals, and their related outcomes.

19 It's important as a new program's design to be
20 time efficient for all parties involved. So, in terms of
21 those that would minimize and reduce faculty time, in
22 terms of a preproposal and that process, as long as the

1 agency also as they review these, I think would be
2 beneficial for all parties involved.

3 While the statute related to AFRI specifies
4 certain broad priority areas, we encourage the
5 interpretation of these in terms that include research,
6 extension, and education. Particularly in the applied
7 area, research findings that are not made available to
8 customers in ways that enhance timely adoption are of
9 very little value.

10 We also encourage strong consideration of
11 education and information dissemination strategies that
12 accommodate the changing information seeking behavior of
13 our current customers, who want 24/7, 365 day access.
14 The recent specialty crop RFA included the extension
15 projects. We applaud this and encourage similar
16 flexibility in implementing the AFRI initiative.

17 Stand-alone extension and integrated RFA
18 should be evaluated based on criteria that are

- 19 appropriate to both the extension and research
- 20 functions. RFAs inviting any extension proposals should
- 21 include evaluation criteria that ensure that proposals
- 22 compliment appropriately the extension system and to see

1 extension strategy.

2 Application review panel leaders and members
3 should be appropriate for the RFA. Stand-alone extension
4 proposals should be evaluated by individuals with
5 expertise in extension. Integrated RFAs should include
6 appropriate representation of panel leaders and members
7 from both research and extension. When needed for
8 particular expertise, ad hoc reviewers should be
9 considered, and experiment station directors and
10 extension directors should be seen as a resource in this
11 solicitation.

12 We encourage significant modification to the
13 system of award evaluation. The application review
14 process sometimes seems to be to -- to be increasingly
15 narrow in scope. It is intended that grants be awarded
16 on the basis of merit, quality, and relevance.
17 Consideration should be given to the creation of unique
18 panels appropriate to the type of RFA and the focus of

19 the proposal.

20 We recognize that extension is not the only
21 entity that is involved in outreach function, but it's
22 important to recognize the local, state, and federal

1 partnership that undergirds the extension system.

2 Education and behavioral change is a long-term
3 process. The extension is a system that has the
4 infrastructure to effectively reach into every county in
5 the United States. This boots on the ground element that
6 engages and interacts with customers on a continuing
7 basis is invaluable. Effective outreach and extension
8 projects need this element of continuing interaction.

9 One shot dissemination efforts are generally
10 ineffective. This principle should be considered and
11 stand alone in integrated RFAs and in criteria for
12 evaluating proposals.

13 In determining priority areas, we encourage
14 consideration of not only subject and disciplinary areas,
15 but also inclusion of strategic mechanisms that can
16 advance the overall agenda of using science-based
17 information in all subject areas to improve the economic
18 and social welfare of America's citizens. More emphasis

19 should be placed on supporting the dissemination and
20 adoption of technologies in a multi-state collaborative
21 fashion. Thank you, very much.

22 MR. POTH: Thank you. I want to remind the

1 speakers to get close to the microphone so that it kicks
2 in. And we have to have it turned -- tuned this way to
3 avoid feedback. Our next presentation is by Tom Coon,
4 Michigan State.

5 MR. COON: I have nothing to add.

6 DR. PATTERSON: You have nothing to add?

7 MR. COON: Yeah.

8 MR. POTH: Okay. That brings us to Jim
9 Moyer. And while Jim's coming up, I'll remind you that
10 we do have interpreters here, so, anybody who needs --
11 who's hard of hearing who needs help with that, anybody?
12 Let's see if we can -- I didn't see a hand go up. Nope.
13 All right. Good.

14 MR. MOYER: Thank you, Mark. I'm Jim Moyer.
15 I'm head of the Department of Plant Pathology at North
16 Carolina State University. But today I'm representing
17 the American Phytopathological Society. This year I have
18 the pleasure of being president of that organization.

19 For those of you that aren't familiar, the
20 American Phytopathological Society represents basic and
21 applied scientists, extensionists, and stakeholders in
22 the industry, as well as having strong relationships with

1 our greatest stakeholders, the growers. We were -- we're
2 -- in general we're very supportive of the new
3 initiatives, particularly the linkage between basic and
4 applied research. Principle building and agricultural
5 systems is extremely important. We think that in many of
6 the challenges that we are faced in our particular areas
7 of responsibility, we've been to the well so many times
8 that there are a large number of knowledge gaps that are
9 wanting for attention.

10 We're also heightened by the linkage --
11 apparent linkage of the applied aspects with basic. I
12 think this is going to ensure that the principles that
13 are developed are then extended into application.

14 We are also interested in aspects that would
15 enhance development of priorities. New programs that
16 have been initiated were the PI meetings of the NRI grant
17 recipients, panel members. If these could be in -- used
18 in strategic thinking sessions, as well as review of

19 results, perhaps even together with stakeholders to
20 develop models for basic and applied research, we would
21 view this very, very favorably and be supportive.
22 There's some models out there that are already

1 in use, such as has been applied with soybean rust, and
2 UG99 systems, where there's closer linkage between the
3 scientists. And we hope that there will -- this will --
4 these opportunities will be used to engender greater
5 understanding between the basic and applied scientists.

6 I also want to say something about the term.
7 We also see some great opportunities here to enhance the
8 agricultural programs. I would support what has been
9 said previously, though, that most of the discovery
10 research needs to be at the five-year -- under the five-
11 year authority. But this ten-year authority really
12 provides some great opportunities to build on what's
13 already been done, in terms of enhancing genomics
14 databases. We see all of the work that's -- that has
15 been done, the advances that have been made, but we're
16 now seeing the challenges that are being placed before us
17 to utilize all of this information. And it's going to
18 require a significant investment.

19 Similarly, the biological databases, cultural
20 collections, this is both genomics databases and culture
21 collections are the highest priority for the American
22 Phytopathological Society. We've -- we have a group that

1 meets here with -- in fact, we met with several of you
2 every spring. This is going to continue to be a high
3 priority, along with education. We've met with
4 Dr. Hefferan and several others on educational efforts.
5 There's a big -- and this goes way beyond just plant
6 pathologist, but it -- we're finding now that this is a
7 big need across, not only the agricultural scientists,
8 but NSF is interested in training the next generation of
9 agricultural scientist is getting to be a -- rapidly
10 becoming a national need. And there needs to be
11 significant efforts.

12 The final thing I want to say from the
13 American Phytopathological Society, is that we have an
14 organization -- a segment in house, as well as employing
15 consultants from outside. And we would look forward to
16 the opportunity of partnering to develop additional
17 research funds and other initiatives as best we can. So,
18 we see this as -- we see it as an opportunity, as well as

19 a need. That's it.

20 MR. POTH: Our next scheduled talk will be at
21 2 p.m. That leaves us a long lunch break, or we have
22 extra time now for those who, perhaps, based on what

1 you've heard so far, would like to comment or add your
2 thoughts. We certainly have the time. So, it's -- I
3 hate to say it's open mike, but that looks like what
4 we're at. So, is there anybody else who would care to
5 add comments?

6 While we wait for this speaker to make their
7 way to the front, I'll remind you that you can turn in
8 your written comments here, or in the announcement, if
9 you want to rethink those comments and submit them
10 electronically. It was in the federal register
11 announcement about how to do that. You may want to
12 revise them after what you've heard here. And please
13 sign the sheet here that you attended up front. It's on
14 the table where I'm sitting. Thank you. Please
15 introduce yourself.

16 MR. VAN ARSDALE: Yes. Good morning. My name
17 is Tom Van Arsdale. And I'm here today in my capacity as
18 executive director of the National Coalition for Food and

19 Agriculture Research. That's a customer-led coalition
20 that brings the research extension and education
21 community together with its customers. And a common
22 coalition and forum for, number one, helping policymakers

1 understand -- put a real face on what federal funding
2 yields, in terms of research extension and education.
3 Part of that effort involves a lunch-and-learn series of
4 seminars where we bring in leading edge researchers and
5 extension specialists to talk about their projects up on
6 the Hill. So that later in the year when we go in and
7 say, we need more funding, they have some idea of what
8 they're funding.

9 We're also advocating increased funding.
10 That's our main objective. That was a means to an end.
11 We supported NEFA (ph). We supported the restructuring
12 of the Farm Bill, with the hope that that will make us
13 more competitive in getting more funding. The model
14 we've used in the past, both in terms of the structure,
15 as well as collective efforts to get more funding,
16 arguably have not been that successful. What we need to
17 do now, in my opinion, as the customers and research
18 community, is to convene some sort of dialogue to say,

19 all right, what are we going to do with this reorganized
20 deck so it doesn't become the Titanic, but it becomes a
21 ship that really advances scientific research, extension,
22 education?

1 And, so, sometime this fall we're going to --
2 our leadership is working to set up a stakeholder
3 dialogue with that in mind to -- the researchers
4 certainly we want there, but more importantly we want the
5 customers, those who need those research and extension
6 outcomes from all sorts of the broad range of stakeholder
7 community we have, to say, is there something we can
8 agree on to make real progress in this difficult budget
9 climate to go in that direction?

10 So, if you're interested in that and you're
11 not plugged into national CFAR, you can go to
12 www.NCFAR.org and find out what we're doing and we will
13 try to get an estimate out in that in the future.

14 The other -- I'm going to switch hats just
15 briefly. I'm also a public affairs director for a group
16 called the Pollinator Partnership. And we talk about
17 integrated research, in terms of going from fundamental
18 research through extension education. But the other

19 thing, and most of you know this, is we need to break
20 down the stovepipes. Let me just give you one example.
21 There are going to be a lot of bioenergy research looking
22 at feed stocks for biofuels and bioenergy. Those are

1 going to have intended or unintended consequences, in
2 terms of conservation. We have challenges in the natural
3 resource arena that's over in another stovepipe the way
4 we've got it set up now involving honeybees and other
5 pollinators that are important to agriculture productions
6 -- production in healthy wildlife ecosystems. I would
7 hope that we consciously look for that in the policy
8 process so that we don't create new problems or that we
9 help address the same problems. I'd like to think we're
10 smart enough to do both bioenergy and conservation at the
11 same time. I guess, Ferd, you'd call that sustainable
12 agriculture. Thank you, very much.

13 MR. POTH: Do we have anyone else who would
14 like to speak, or any of the previous speakers who would
15 like to extend their comments? Please introduce
16 yourself.

17 MR. NUCKOLLS: Sure. Hi, I'm Randy Nuckolls
18 the Washington Council for the National Association of

19 University Forest Resource Programs. Our member, Keith,
20 spoke earlier. I had a question, Debbie. Is the
21 ten-year grants, what -- how will that be integrated into
22 the existing program? Do -- how much do we know yet

1 about that? And how -- what share of the program will
2 ten-year grants comprise?

3 DR. SHEELY: Well, those decisions have not
4 been made yet. We definitely wanted to wait and hear
5 what all of you thought about the best way to implement
6 that ten-year authority. It -- we -- as I've heard a few
7 of you say already, there are certain kinds of work that
8 seem to -- that seem to lend themselves to, perhaps, the
9 four-to-five year grants and other kinds of work that
10 lend themselves to the longer term grants. And that's
11 exactly the kind of information we were hoping to get
12 from you.

13 So, we'll be taking this feedback thinking
14 about that, in terms of the various programmatic areas
15 that will be written into the program and making some
16 decisions about where that authority makes the most
17 sense, with regard to the work that should be done, the
18 science. That's the basic answer.

19 MR. NUCKOLLS: Well, I do have a comment
20 following up on that. The -- for several years the
21 forestry and natural resource schools have been concerned
22 that there was not a discrete enough set aside of

1 programs for forestry and natural resources within NRI.
2 Perhaps one of the reasons that that it is a bit a
3 challenge is because of the short-term nature of the
4 grants in the past. I think this new authority for ten
5 years and -- fits very well with the continuing,
6 recurring, I guess, push that is in the Senate of
7 interior appropriations language each year for a greater
8 share of NRI to fund natural resources and forestry. So,
9 you have more authority now to go -- you have this
10 authority for ten years. And that would lend itself, it
11 seems to me, very well to a discrete, special program for
12 forestry and natural resources programs within that
13 ten-year program.

14 So, as you look at building those ten-year
15 possibilities, I would suggest that one area for a
16 program emphasis would be on forestry and natural
17 resources.

18 MR. POTH: Anyone else, or do we have

19 questions, or items for discussion for some of the

20 previous presenters? If not --

21 MS. SHEELY: We've got --

22 MR. POTH: Yes.

1 BILL BROWN: And you can just repeat it maybe.

2 MR. POTH: Please step to the microphone for
3 your question.

4 MS. SHEELY: Yeah, because we're going to need
5 you to identify yourself for the record.

6 MR. POTH: Be careful, that's the booby trap
7 way in.

8 MR. BROWN: Yeah. That's fine. Yeah. Bill
9 Brown, University of Tennessee. And the question,
10 Debbie, relates to the major focus areas for the
11 programs. And you had mentioned in your comments that
12 legislation was available that further characterized the
13 programs. Some additional thoughts on that. And then
14 also, would you envision several calls within the AFRI
15 Program, within your major six to seven categories?

16 DR. SHEELY: Okay.

17 MR. BROWN: Just different panels.

18 DR. SHEELY: Okay. Sure. So, as I mentioned,

19 the AFRI legislation lays out the six major topical areas
20 that the program is to address. And with -- and the
21 authorizing legislation then does have a number of
22 bullets under each of those major topical areas that

1 provides Congress' thinking, with regard to the kinds of
2 work that they were envisioning that be funded under
3 those topical areas.

4 So, with -- so that your question, then, I
5 suppose, gets at how will we then move forward with
6 deciding, which -- how we will implement those six areas
7 within the first AFRI RFA?

8 And then your second question dealt with the
9 number of requests that will go out. So, we are
10 anticipating this year that there will be two separate
11 requests for applications.

12 One specific reason for why we'll be doing
13 that, is the legislation states that the AFRI Program
14 will use the Section 406 authority to make awards for
15 integrated research, education, and extension. So, the
16 integrated research piece of the AFRI Program on the
17 legal authority under which we will make those awards is
18 Section 406. And the program is defined by that

19 authority.

20 So, that authority received a change in the
21 eligibility that pertains to the addition of Hispanic-
22 serving colleges of agriculture. Hispanic-serving

1 institutions with colleges of agriculture. So, we're --
2 the agency is working through a process of determining
3 exactly which of those -- which institutions then do
4 become eligible under the Section 406 authority. So,
5 there's a little bit of a delay in determining that
6 eligibility; therefore, we'll be issuing a separate RFA
7 for those integrated programs that will be funded under
8 the AFRI authority.

9 What that means then, is the announcement that
10 will be released in November, and the RFA that will be
11 released in January, the related RFA, those will focus on
12 the nonintegrated funds, the nonintegrated part of the
13 program -- of the AFRI Program. So, that's where you
14 will see the programs where we'll be supporting the
15 fundamental and applied research, the extension, the
16 education. That's where those programs will be found.
17 And, so, then in terms of how we will decide exactly
18 which those programs are, that's -- that is the process

19 that we're undergoing currently. We're looking for as
20 much input from all of you as possible. We also have
21 received -- as I mentioned earlier, we -- we're
22 constantly receiving stakeholder input through all of our

1 national program leaders and various sources of
2 information that feed into our work. So, that's the
3 general answer.

4 MR. POTH: Very early in my career I see -- or
5 I received some excellent advice about meetings, that the
6 most valuable time at meetings were the breaks and meal
7 times. So, I'm going to propose about a ten-minute break
8 here until 11:00 so that we can drink the coffee and
9 water that we paid for here for this meeting and,
10 perhaps, we'll do some valuable networking during that
11 time. So, let's take a break and drink some coffee.

12 Please, for those of you who have not signed
13 in, come up to the front desk and add your name to the
14 list.

15 (Pause in proceedings.)

16 MR. POTH: I'll make everybody sit down. I'm
17 -- maybe I should ask, who would like to speak next?
18 Do we have anybody who would actually like to speak next?

19 If not, we'll extend coffee break by ten

20 minutes, how's that?

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

22 MR. POTH: Okay. I knew that would be

1 popular. So, let's take another ten minutes or so.

2 (Pause in proceedings.)

3 MR. POTH: Okay. I do have another speaker
4 and it's time to reconvene. If we could -- I think we've
5 done an excellent job of drinking up all the coffee, so,
6 I want to congratulate you on a job well done.

7 But we do have one extra person who signed up
8 to speak here and has some comments related to what we've
9 heard already this morning. And I'll ask Mike Harrington
10 to come up and provide us with his comments now.

11 MR. HARRINGTON: You know, being a former
12 educator in a previous life I'm programmed also for 50
13 minutes, and so -- but I have this daunting task of
14 filling in until 2:00; is that right?

15 MR. POTH: That would be good.

16 MS. SHEELY: That would be great, Mike.

17 MR. POTH: We break for lunch, though.

18 MR. HARRINGTON: Okay. I just want to make a

19 couple of comments. And I represent the Western

20 Association of Agricultural Experiment Station

21 Directors. I'm Mike Harrington. I work with 13 western

22 states and four pacific territories. I'm also vice chair

1 of ESCOT's (ph) Budget and Legislative Committee. And
2 work closely with my colleague, Eric Young, in the back
3 who represents the Southern Experiment Station Directors.

4 We're both here listening today and a couple
5 of things that we thought needed -- points that needed to
6 be made. And this relates to a split of funds in AFRI,
7 and as well the authorization -- or the reference to 406
8 Programs.

9 First of all, on the surface, if you read the
10 language, it says, 60 percent for fundamental research,
11 40 percent for applied, and of those 30 percent for
12 integrated.

13 Now, as I first read this, okay, so, if we
14 have \$220 million in the program, 60 percent would be
15 fundamental, 40 percent would be applied, and of those 30
16 percent would be integrated. That's one way of looking
17 at it.

18 Another way, though, relates to how we look at

19 the reference to Section 406. And I think -- and I --
20 well, in fact, I know the intent is to reference the
21 programs there and -- as well as the integrative nature
22 of the programs, not necessarily commit 30 percent of the

1 funds to those specifically named programs in the 406
2 program. So, I wanted to -- I see people nodding their
3 heads, and I know that there are some different
4 interpretations about that going around. But for those
5 of you in the room who may be able to help change that a
6 little bit, I think we need to make sure that we
7 reference the intent and not the specific programs.

8 The other comment that I think needs to be
9 made, is how do we end up splitting whatever the total
10 pot is between research and education grants? I think
11 that, again, referring to the point that I initially
12 made, 60, 40, and 30 as percent splits. But clearly
13 there's certainly a great deal of interest in having
14 extensions with specific grants, which heretofore have
15 not been present, other than things like E-extension,
16 which have been somewhat separate.

17 In addition to that there have been academic
18 programs or educational grants available in the old NRI.

19 And certainly this is something that, from an experiment
20 station perspective, we see as a valuable program -- a
21 couple of valuable programs to continue. In fact, we are
22 in the midst right now where we have just recently

1 completed a national survey on priorities. And we will
2 be further refining that at our upcoming section meeting
3 in Traverse City, week of -- well, actually beginning
4 next Sunday and Monday. And then we will provide written
5 input into this program at a later time.

6 In addition, my region will be having input,
7 and I believe this is the case with all of our regions,
8 we are all a little bit unique, certainly the west is
9 certainly characterized by specialty crops. I'm always
10 reminded of former dean of Oregon State, Fayne Dutson
11 (ph), who had said, that in Oregon we have 250 major
12 commodities and a whole bunch of others. So, specialty
13 crops are really important in the west.

14 So, with that I will yield -- I realize that
15 that didn't fill up the time until 2:00, but thanks.

16 MR. POTH: Well, now that you've had time to
17 network, and get some coffee down, and those kinds of
18 things, I'm sure you've all come up with extra comments

19 you'd like to add. Yes. Please repeat your name and

20 affiliation.

21 MR. HOEFNER: Yeah, Ferd Hoefner. Sustainable

22 Agriculture Coalition again. Just from the last speaker,

1 just wanted to say another word about this 406 problem.
2 You know, it would be our very strongly felt feeling,
3 that having a separate and later RFA for integrated
4 activities would really be a bad idea. And I think it
5 behooves all of us to try to prevent that from
6 happening. And, you know, it is possible that the only
7 way that that's going to be prevented is from a change in
8 the law. Although I don't think that that is required,
9 and I think anybody in this room that's in a position to
10 do something about it internally, that would be the far
11 preferable way to go.

12 Clearly, as I said before, Congress did not
13 intend that AFRI funds be used for different programs.
14 And it's absurd to -- for anybody to argue that that was
15 the intent of that provision. And since there are more
16 than one meanings of the word pursuant, it is not
17 impossible by any stretch of the imagination -- I've been
18 through this many, many times before -- for the

19 department to decide that Congress meant what Congress
20 meant, which was that integrated means the same thing
21 that it means in 406.

22 So, I just think it behooves us altogether as

1 a community to try to get this fixed internally. And if
2 that doesn't work, then to get it fixed legislative. But
3 that's a much bigger task, as you all know. So, I just
4 wanted to -- since there was another reference to it
5 here, I just wanted to reiterate that point.

6 MR. POTH: Yeah, please come to the front.

7 Good. It's great to see all these hands go up. It will
8 be great. Yeah. Please repeat your name and
9 affiliation.

10 MR. ZWILLINGER: Al Zwillinger, University of
11 Illinois. And I'd like to engage us in a dialogue about
12 looking at some stakeholder input following up on part of
13 Deborah's question about how we might broaden stakeholder
14 input, particularly to the end users of our research
15 products. How might we utilize part of our technology to
16 engage farmers, consumers in our own states, potentially
17 through a systematic process, may be led through USDA
18 around this particular funding opportunity.

19 And, so, again, if I may entertain thoughts
20 from the group for a couple of minutes about that, as
21 well as I was thinking maybe some video technology,
22 web-based technology, and utilizing expertise within our

1 states to help arrange that, if the group thought that
2 was a beneficial and useful way to gather additional
3 stakeholder input.

4 So, I see some nodding heads, but thoughts on
5 that topic?

6 DR. SHEELY: You wouldn't even have to come to
7 the front if you -- we have microphones on both sides, if
8 someone wanted to just make a comment. I would ask you
9 to please use a microphone.

10 MR. POTH: Switch it on.

11 DR. SHEELY: Switch it on.

12 MR. MOYER: Yeah, with respect to stakeholder
13 input, I think one of the things in addition to just
14 getting input from the stakeholder is actually bringing
15 the stakeholders together with the scientists and the
16 extensionists. I think we've evolved to the point where
17 this can be extremely productive. And we've seen it work
18 very well with some of these national emergencies with

19 threats like UG99s (inaudible), where you get from all in
20 the same room. And there are mechanisms where you can
21 pull individuals from panels together with the leaders of
22 national commodity groups and industry. And I really

1 think that to make progress and get them all working
2 together, we've got to get them all in the same room or
3 on the same video link and talking to one another so that
4 there's an appreciation of the knowledge gaps that exist
5 before progress can be made on some of these problems.

6 And, so, I think there's very little
7 substitute for just getting people together that have
8 slightly different perspectives and interest to work on
9 these problems, so --

10 MR. ZWILLINGER: And, so, I heard you say
11 there's somewhat of a model there that maybe you could
12 share in this input way as a way to help organize that?

13 DR. SHEELY: Would you say your name again for
14 the record?

15 MR. MOYER: Yes. I'm Jim Moyer and I'm
16 president of APS.

17 MR. POTH: Why don't you come to the
18 microphone.

19 MR. SMITH: This input into these programs

20 already --

21 MR. POTH: Your name and affiliation.

22 MR. SMITH: -- oh, I'm sorry -- Ed Smith,

1 director of Texas AgriLife Extension -- always surprises
2 me, because as Mark and our testimony, we alluded to this
3 network where we're in all 3,000 counties across the
4 nation, and extension by definition is a needs-based --
5 our strategic plans are based on the needs of the input.

6 And I'll just use Texas for an example. We
7 have 254 counties. We have 17,000 folks that serve on
8 our leadership advisory boards in those 254 counties.
9 They address the research issues that are needed. When
10 there is research there, we can disseminate. Those
11 programs are put together. When there's not, we work
12 with the research community to try to get the best
13 information and whatever time it can be developed to
14 address issues that they identify.

15 So, a lot of times, I think -- and Secretary
16 Buchanan, I would have told him that, extension -- this
17 land grant system has input sessions, listing sessions on
18 a continuous basis in every area of this country. Not

19 just at the county, the region, all these stakeholder

20 groups you're talking about, it's a continuous process.

21 Why do we ignore it? I don't know. It's --

22 are we trying to come up with something new, engagement,

1 outreach, extension? You know, we shouldn't apologize
2 for it. That network is out there. It -- like we said,
3 it's invaluable. We need to use it. And you don't have
4 to -- I mean, it's a political deal to say, well, we're
5 going to hold a lot of listing sessions. We can hold
6 those sessions in every area of this country with the
7 cooperative agreement that we have between state,
8 federal, and local. So, I think the model is there. It
9 has been there. And it can continue to be used. We
10 don't have to come up with a new model. It's in place.

11 MR. POTH: Yeah, please remember to state your
12 name and affiliation.

13 MS. MARKELL: Hello. My name is Jean
14 Markell. I'm from the University of Minnesota on loan
15 from the extension there, most recently as the associate
16 dean and director. But this year I'm spending my year in
17 Washington, DC as the NACO, National Association of
18 Counties, extension fellow. I've been here since

19 January. And while I'm not here prepared to give a
20 formal testimony on behalf of NACO, I -- as I was
21 listening, I was compelled to get up and give an
22 extemporaneous pitch on behalf of what I've learned so

1 far with one foot in that organization, which is the
2 membership organization for counties across America, and
3 obviously one foot still in my extension home, and also
4 one foot in relationship with NALGU, the National
5 Association of Land Grant Universities.

6 So, the picture I would like to make
7 extemporaneously, is that I've had a chance to see at the
8 national level what I've really known at my local county
9 and then university level, and that's the incredible
10 importance that this branch of government has dedicated
11 one slice through USDA CSREES, to be an integrated force
12 between federal funding for research, and education,
13 extension, and memberships like NACO, the Association of
14 Counties.

15 So, I think that it's really important that
16 whatever the new morphing of the -- of this part of the
17 agency is, that that emphasis on the integration of
18 practical, applied research to the user continues.

19 That's one piece of it. That integration that's been
20 talked about a lot this morning, which is really, as far
21 as I can see, pretty unique to this part of the federal
22 government.

1 And, secondly, it's link through systems like
2 the National Land Grant System, which touches every state
3 in the country. And NACO which touches every county --
4 practically every county in the United States to really
5 get to those users. And not all of that work can be done
6 at the federal agency level. There's also, you know, the
7 partnerships that we've created. But whatever we do in
8 this new model, I hope that the emphasis that's been
9 there for about 100 years around those partnerships
10 continues. And most are going to go back to NACO after
11 today and get them to issue more of a formal statement in
12 the testimony for this. Thanks.

13 MR. POTH: Yes, come on up. See, now people
14 are getting excited, and ready to contribute, and the
15 caffeine is taking affect. It's great.

16 MR. ETKA: My name is Steve Etk. I'm the
17 Washington representative for the National Organic
18 Coalition, which is a coalition based here in DC focusing

19 on federal policy, with regard to organic agriculture.

20 We were very involved with the Farm Bill over

21 what ended up being ten year -- or not ten year, three-

22 year process. It seemed like ten year sometimes. And

1 one of the priorities that we really focused on in the
2 Farm Bill was classical plant and animal breeding.

3 We were really pushing to make classical plant
4 and animal breeding a priority within the NRI, now the
5 AFRI. And to also clarify that the term limits under
6 AFRI should be expanded to ten years to reflect the long-
7 term nature of those breeding activities.

8 The reason we did this, is that we have heard
9 time and time again, that we're really facing a crisis in
10 our land grant institutions, in terms of losing our plant
11 and animal breeders. And as a result we're really losing
12 the diversity of germ plasm that's publicly held in our
13 country.

14 This has really been a critical problem in a
15 macro sense for all of agriculture, but it's particularly
16 critical for farmers in organic and sustainable systems,
17 because they're so dependent on locally adapted seed
18 varieties. And what we're seeing is we're just losing

19 the variety and the diversity of those germ plasm.

20 So, what we're really pushing for in this --

21 through this process with AFRI is that there be the

22 creation of specific program areas created to reflect the

1 priorities that Congress stated for plant and animal
2 breeding on the classical side. And one note on that, is
3 that Congress said in the law conventional plant and
4 animal breeding, but in the report language it also
5 stated that the term conventional is used interchangeably
6 with classical. A lot of the breeders that we work with
7 have often used the term classical, and Congress said
8 sort of conventional and classical and we really are
9 seeing those as being one in the same.

10 But in terms of the ten-year time frame, and
11 there's been a lot of discussion here about that, we were
12 really pushing for that, as I said, because we think that
13 plant and animal breeding really does require a longer
14 term time frame. And I'm hearing other folks saying that
15 in their particular areas that might be helpful as well.

16 I think we need to be careful, though, how
17 that's implemented. So, if you're accounting for those
18 funds for all programs for ten years, we may create a

19 situation where there aren't very many funds to go in any
20 given year, that you're tying up funds for ten years.
21 So, some of the comments that we'll probably be making to
22 the agency are ways to manage that so that you don't just

1 deplete all the funds in any given year, particularly in
2 the beginning of that process. So, we're looking forward
3 to making more written comments to you all.

4 MR. POTH: Anyone else who's ready to comment?

5 MR. BELL: Keith Bell with NAFRA. I just
6 wanted to follow up on those comments about the ten-year
7 program, and we had been talking during the break with --
8 as the caffeine kicked in, about maybe the structure of
9 those long-term grant programs, where the funding stream
10 would look more like a U, where you had a buildup of
11 funds to begin with to establish the program, and then
12 maybe not a whole lot of funding in between, but there's
13 a commitment at the end of that ten-year program to ramp
14 back up and to do some measurements, and some analysis,
15 and finish up the project. And that could fit well with,
16 say, graduate students in the beginning for an
17 establishment, cross-sectional study. And, again, for a
18 long-term study maybe the Ph.D level. But it wouldn't

19 necessarily have to mean continuous funding for ten years
20 at the same level. That can help alleviate some of the
21 concern about tying up money for a long period when
22 really a lot of what we do in forestry depends on that

1 commitment ten years down the road to follow up that
2 early investment in that program. So, to me that can
3 work, in terms of a funding scheme for long-term
4 programs. Thank you.

5 MR. POTH: Do I see any other hands? Any
6 questions for the folks who have spoken here this
7 morning? If we do not have any additional questions, or
8 comments that people want to make, and since we drank all
9 the coffee, we could leave for lunch early, I guess. Is
10 that right?

11 We will reconvene at 1:00 this afternoon here
12 in this room. Thank you all for attending.

13 (Pause in proceedings.)

14 MR. POTH: Good afternoon. And welcome back
15 after lunch. I see many people who were casualties of
16 lunch and have not made it back yet.

17 One thing I'd encourage you, there are
18 valuable conversations that I'm sure happened during the

19 break and at lunch where some key points have come up, I

20 would remind you that it's important to get those, where

21 there's something important that came up later that you

22 feel is -- needs to be considered for the AFRI Program,

1 to get that in our official record. So, if you have any
2 extra comments or things, we still do have plenty of time
3 before our next scheduled speaker for you to step up and
4 get those comments in the record. I've got two here
5 coming. Name and affiliation.

6 MR. WILKERSON: John Wilkerson, University of
7 Tennessee. One of the topics of conversation that had
8 come up during the break had to do with the timing of the
9 RFP coming out in two stages. And one of my concerns, is
10 that if we break out the integrative part with a separate
11 date, the PIs, when they see that original list they're
12 going to think that's the list and they're going to force
13 their projects probably into one of those areas.

14 So, my concern is where you've got two
15 different lists, coming out two different dates, we'll
16 wind up with projects that will be submitted -- or
17 proposals that will be submitted, maybe not in the ideal
18 location.

19 So, I would encourage folks, if possible, to
20 be able to release enough information on the front end to
21 where we at least have that entire list of projects that
22 will be -- or RFAs that will come out.

1 MR. POTH: Name and affiliation.

2 MR. COON: Okay. Hi, I'm Tom Coon from
3 Michigan State University Extension. Just a couple of
4 things, one is to follow up on the comments from the
5 previous speaker. Again, I -- I'm concerned about the
6 split in RFAs, and especially if the split is not only in
7 time but also integrated in one and nonintegrated in the
8 other. And, so, I -- I'm a little confused, but I think
9 I understand that the -- incorporating the Hispanic-
10 serving institutions was part of the driver of that
11 split, if I -- if that's correct. And I just wonder if
12 that's the case, if it might not be possible to have the
13 first RFA be a complete RFA for all programs. And maybe
14 this is what you intended, Dr. Sheely.

15 And then the second one be sort of an addendum
16 that would be an integrated RFA that would specifically
17 involve the Hispanic-serving institutions in the way that
18 the new language permits. But -- so, in other words,

19 that there be integrated opportunities at the up front

20 RFA. Is that what you had intended?

21 MR. POTH: Name and affiliation.

22 DR. SHEELY: Debbie Sheely, CSREES. That is

1 not what we intended. What --

2 MR. COON: Okay.

3 DR. SHEELY: -- our -- so, what we had

4 initially said was that we would -- we would -- the first

5 RFA would contain those programs where we would be

6 offering support for single-function work, primarily

7 research, but also teaching, and extension.

8 MR. COON: Okay.

9 DR. SHEELY: That was our thinking. And then

10 the second RFA that would come some unspecified time

11 later, would contain all the programs and opportunities

12 for the integrated research, education, and extension.

13 I think we've gotten a very clear message from

14 those of you in the room, though, that that would create

15 certain complications and problems. And we're already

16 beginning to think about how we might do what you're

17 suggesting instead. We see the value in doing what

18 you're suggesting. And you're right, one reason we were

19 considering the delay in the release of the integrated
20 RFA, was for those -- two reasons, the uncertainty with
21 regard to that 30 percent funding and congressional
22 intent versus language. And then also this change in

1 eligibility that comes along with the Section 406
2 authority, because that is the authority now that will be
3 making -- you know, we use the 401 authority to make
4 integrated grants through the old NRI Program, we'll be
5 making the 406 authority to make integrated grants
6 through AFRI.

7 So, sorting out that eligibility was part of
8 the issue.

9 MR. COON: Okay. All right. Thank you for
10 that clarification. A second concern I have is, again,
11 just my own confusion, and perhaps a need to revisit the
12 language, but the business of the percentages. There's
13 40 percent, and 60 percent, and 30 percent, and, of
14 course, they add up to more than 100. So, just a
15 clarification. The 40 and 60 percent, as I understand
16 it, is the break out of the funding that is available for
17 research must be split 60 percent fundamental, 40 percent
18 applied.

19 The 30 percent for integrated would apply to
20 that full 100 percent, if I understand that correctly,
21 but not necessarily 30 percent of the applied and 30
22 percent of the fundamental. So, you likely would end up

1 with a greater percentage of integrated in the applied
2 than in the fundamental, is that -- I mean, not that it
3 would have to, but it could happen that way; is that
4 fair?

5 DR. SHEELY: Well, okay. Debbie Sheely,
6 CSREES. So, the way that it's been explained to me by
7 our Office of General Council, is that you take your AFRI
8 appropriation, 30 percent of that appropriation -- at
9 least 30 percent of that appropriation is to be used for
10 integrated research, education, and extension.

11 Okay. Then we're allowed to take four percent
12 of the appropriation for administrative costs.

13 MR. COON: Uh-huh.

14 DR. SHEELY: Of what remains, remember, we can
15 support research, teaching, or extension. Of the dollars
16 that we choose to use for the support of research, 60
17 percent must go for fundamental research, 40 percent must
18 go for applied research, okay? So, that's --

19 MR. COON: Okay.

20 DR. SHEELY: That's the -- if that's clear.

21 MR. COON: Great. Yep. That helps

22 tremendously. Tom Coon, again, Michigan State.

1 The final -- a follow up on the percents, then
2 that -- the language -- the legislation does not specify
3 of that remaining 70 percent what percent of that should
4 go to research, or what percent to teaching, what percent
5 to extension. So, that's going to be a decision that's
6 made administratively. Okay.

7 The -- another question, I guess, I had asked
8 you, Debbie, and I just would ask for the record, you're
9 -- I'm going to ask you to answer a hypothetical, which
10 you know the politicians say you shouldn't do. But in
11 the event that we end up with a continuing resolution for
12 funding this next fiscal year, there isn't authority in
13 the continuing resolution as it would stand now for money
14 for AFRI. There is authority for NRI and 406. So, how
15 would that be translated? If we end up with a continuing
16 resolution, how would you get money for AFRI?

17 DR. SHEELY: Debbie Sheely. My understanding
18 of how that would have to work is it -- for AFRI to have

19 access to -- for AFRI to have an appropriation under a
20 continuing resolution, there would need to be specific
21 language provided by Congress in the continuing
22 resolution bill that would allow AFRI to use NRI funding.

1 And I know -- I don't -- I'm quite certain I
2 don't know the proper terminology for that, but that is
3 my understanding of how it would need to work, and that
4 there is no -- and that we have reason to believe that
5 that's -- that that would not be a big problem.

6 MR. COON: Okay. Tom Coon, Michigan State.
7 If I could, one more comment. Just one other aspect of
8 this is the -- that the break out of the six subject
9 areas that you've explained in your introductory
10 comments, Dr. Sheely. You're -- there is nothing in
11 those that is explicitly directed at youth development,
12 say, or family issues beyond those related to nutrition,
13 food safety, and so on, or in community development.

14 My understanding is the reason for that
15 structure in an REEO is because those six areas have
16 people responsible to them from multiple agencies, ARS,
17 ERS, NAS and so on, and that the youth and family
18 programs don't have that multi-agency perspective. So, I

19 understand that in the structure of the administration,
20 but as far as the program areas for competitive grants, I
21 -- it's not explicit -- those six same areas get carried
22 over into the programs for competitive grants.

1 So, I understand that youth, development, and
2 family proposals would be welcomed. They would need to
3 be couched within those six areas, though. And, so, I
4 guess my question is: Would it be possible, when the RFA
5 comes out, to have specific project-type areas listed
6 that would be analogous to what we've done -- what we've
7 had before in the NRI, whether the 32 or so specific
8 project areas within the six general areas? Could we
9 work to have some that are very clearly identified as
10 targeted for youth development, or a family -- say family
11 resource management issues?

12 MR. POTH: Mark Poth with CSREES. The
13 creation of these six areas is one of these exercises
14 toward a set theory and reporting. If you look at that,
15 you're not alone with youth development and being left
16 out. For instance, there's no specific mention of
17 microbiology. There's no specific mention of
18 entomology. So, there's many different areas that -- of

19 -- or disciplines that are neglected in that particular

20 taxonomy.

21 However, there are going to be opportunities

22 for all of those kinds of disciplines, depending on the

1 issue that needs to be dealt with by a particular
2 program. So, that's where you'll find those
3 opportunities.

4 For some kinds of work in the -- in past RFAs,
5 we've included a note in the front. And if you looked at
6 this last one for the National Research Initiative, we
7 were trying to point out to social scientists where the
8 opportunities were and point them in the right
9 direction. You may be able to do that for some areas in
10 the future as well. But I think that the way we're going
11 to get more money is to be responsive to issues and
12 understand where that is. And, so, to solve certain
13 kinds of issues will require certain sorts of cross-
14 disciplinary efforts and the right kinds of structure to
15 teams. So, that if you're going to have effective
16 integrated awards dealing with childhood nutrition and
17 obesity, there may be important aspects related to youth
18 development and all those kinds of things. So, it -- you

19 know, rather than look for -- and this goes across AFRI

20 to -- you know, where's my home program for my scientific

21 discipline? Think more about issues and, what are you

22 going to respond to on that issue?

1 And I think that works well as a strategy,
2 too, for the ag community as a whole to be responsive to
3 issues, because Congress is much more excited about what
4 you're going to do about bioenergy, or affordable food,
5 or sustainability than they are about what did you do for
6 my particular discipline of science, or my particular
7 favorite thing here? Now that I said my spiel, who's
8 next?

9 Our next scheduled speaker is at 2:00. We had
10 -- yeah, we have lots of cookies, and a new batch of
11 coffee, and fewer people to drink all the coffee and eat
12 all the cookies. So, once again with that good advice I
13 got, let's break until 2:00 until our next scheduled
14 speaker and have those good informal discussions.

15 (Pause in proceedings.)

16 MR. POTH: Well, now that we've had quite an
17 extended lunch break and time to graze on cookies and
18 drink more coffee, we do have one scheduled presentation

19 at 2:00. Is Dr. Robert Donaldson here yet? And if
20 Dr. Donaldson is not, then it's time to drink more coffee
21 and eat more cookies. And we'll wait and see when he
22 shows up, so, continue your productive conversations.

1 (Pause in proceeding.)

2 MR. POTH: Just a reminder that you can submit
3 written comments. Please take advantage of the
4 opportunity to do so. Especially after hearing some of
5 the introductory comments today, you may want to revise
6 what you initially thought you would submit. I would
7 encourage you to do that.

8 We do still -- we are still waiting for
9 Dr. Donaldson from the American Society of Plant
10 Biologists, who is in the building -- has not signed in
11 here for the building, so, until then we still have an
12 open microphone here and there is an opportunity for
13 anything that surfaced in your discussions to be placed
14 into the official record, if you'd like to come up and
15 say a few words about it. So, again, I'll call for
16 hands. Do we have a show of hands?

17 Okay. No hands. Well, let's just -- who
18 likes the oatmeal cookies best? I do. Okay.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That does not go into
20 the record.

21 MR. POTH: Of course it does. She's taking
22 down every word. Okay.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Mark.

2 MR. POTH: All right. Thank you. All right.

3 Well, we'll just wait a little bit longer, and if you do
4 think of something that you'd like to put into the
5 record, just let me know and we'll have you come up to
6 the microphone.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is there anybody who
8 did not sign in this morning?

9 MR. POTH: Please make sure to have signed in
10 on our sign-in log for everyone attending. And I did see
11 a hand up.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just a question. Will
13 the introductory remarks be posted on the web at all, in
14 some form, outlined or otherwise?

15 MR. POTH: The -- let me repeat that question
16 for the record here in the microphone. Will the
17 introductory remarks -- you mean the PowerPoint
18 presentation or all of the remarks?

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, the ones that --

20 MR. POTH: Everything will be in the official

21 record that we have. I'm not sure if that gets posted.

22 Does that get posted anywhere, Dr. Sheely?

1 DR. SHEELY: Yes. Yes, it will. The
2 transcript from today's meeting will be.

3 MR. POTH: Okay. Well, let me fill in while
4 she walks up here. The transcript and everything,
5 including your PowerPoint presentation, will be posted on
6 our website and available.

7 And seeing no other hands, I will go get
8 another oatmeal cookie.

9 (Pause in proceedings.)

10 MR. POTH: We are winding down here. We are
11 in our final ten minutes for this stakeholder listening
12 session. This is your final chance to have your two
13 cents worth. You know, we've got the microphone, we have
14 our recorder here ready to document your words, your
15 profound thoughts, your insights, your views on exactly
16 how things should be shaped. And this is your chance.
17 If I had a flashing blue light I'd have it here, you
18 know, the blue light special. So, speak now. No hands.

19 Okay.

20 Again, I'll remind you that there is the
21 opportunity for written comments. And please take
22 advantage of that. Think about this. You know, there

1 may be a chance to sleep on it. You know, as you think
2 and maybe talk to colleagues, there will be key insights
3 that occur to you after this meeting here today. And
4 we'd appreciate getting that back from you on those
5 written comments.

6 Again, thank you all for attending and we'll
7 stay her for another ten minutes or so. And I believe we
8 still have cookies and coffee. So, the job here is not
9 done. Thank you.

10 (Pause in proceedings.)

11 MR. POTH: Congratulations to everyone here.

12 You have survived until 3:00 and --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And you upheld the
14 letter of the law.

15 MR. POTH: Yes. Yes.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Congratulations to you.

17 MR. POTH: Thank you. And now we are all
18 dismissed. And, of course, there are still cookies

19 available.

20 (Whereupon, the hearing was concluded.)

21

22

1 CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

2

3 I, Natalia Kornilova, the officer before whom
4 the foregoing was taken, do hereby certify that the
5 following was taken by me by audio recording and
6 thereafter reduced to typewriting under my
7 direction; that said transcript is a true record of
8 the recording taken by me; that I am neither counsel
9 for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties
10 to the action in which this deposition was taken; and,
11 further, that I am not a relative or employee of any
12 counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto,
13 nor financially or otherwise interested in the
14 outcome of this action.

15

16

17 Natalia Kornilova

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