1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
2	x
3	CHRISTINE ARMOUR, ET AL., :
4	Petitioners : No. 11-161
5	v. :
6	CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS, :
7	INDIANA, ET AL. :
8	x
9	Washington, D.C.
10	Wednesday, February 29, 2012
11	
12	The above-entitled matter came on for oral
13	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States
14	at 10:09 a.m.
15	APPEARANCES:
16	MARK T. STANCIL, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; for
17	Petitioners.
18	PAUL D. CLEMENT, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; for
19	Respondents.
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1	CONTENTS	
2	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	PAGE
3	MARK T. STANCIL, ESQ.	
4	On behalf of the Petitioners	3
5	ORAL ARGUMENT OF	
6	PAUL D. CLEMENT, ESQ.	
7	On behalf of the Respondents	29
8	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF	
9	MARK T. STANCIL, ESQ.	
10	On behalf of the Petitioners	61
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25	_	

Τ	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:09 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	this morning in Case 11-161, Armour v. City of
5	Indianapolis.
6	Mr. Stancil.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF MARK T. STANCIL
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
9	MR. STANCIL: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
10	please the Court:
11	The city chose a method for abandoning its
12	sewer funding mechanism that left Petitioners paying 30
13	times more than their next-door neighbors to connect to
14	their neighborhood sewer project simply because
15	Petitioners had paid their tax bills in full.
16	Mere timing of payment does not render
L7	similarly situated taxpayers into separate groups. And
18	that is particularly true here where the taxpayers are a
19	discretely defined group of homeowners sharing equally
20	in a common specific benefit and State law explicitly
21	defines them as similarly situated.
22	The city's principal contention is that
23	jettisoning the Barrett Law, the way they funded the
24	initial taxation, was itself an end for this
25	justification and itself justified the gross disparity 3

- 1 imposed on Petitioner -- on Petitioners. That does not.
- 2 The fact that an arbitrary classification may yield a
- 3 desirable result does not render it any less arbitrary.
- 4 The city must have a reason for drawing the distinction,
- 5 but paying one's taxes in good faith does not eliminate
- 6 a taxpayer's right to equal treatment.
- 7 Indeed, State law here makes clear that
- 8 delaying payment by choosing an installment plan does
- 9 not put a taxpayer on special footing. For example, the
- 10 Barrett Law declares that installment payments, quote,
- 11 "shall be collected in the same manner as other taxes."
- 12 And installment payments are automatically secured by a
- 13 lien against the property.
- 14 Taxpayers who select the installment plan,
- 15 which they may do for any reason or no reason
- 16 whatsoever -- and, in fact, if they make no choice, they
- 17 default into the installment plan. They are required,
- 18 if the city asks as it did here, to sign an agreement,
- 19 agreeing to pay the installments in full with interest
- 20 and not to contest the validity of the underlying
- 21 assessment.
- 22 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, I understand
- 23 your arguments. Your adversary raises a point that
- 24 concerns me, which is what happens to all other amnesty
- 25 programs like parking ticket amnesties? And if you take

1	your logic to an extreme, how about something that
2	doesn't involve money but immigration status amnesty,
3	illegal aliens who can apply for citizenship and be
4	forgiven their illegal entry?
5	Doesn't the logic of your theory basically
6	mean that there are no circumstances in which the
7	government could treat people differently?
8	MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor, for several
9	reasons. For starters, this Court's equal protection
10	and rational basis cases in particular make clear that
11	context is key. So, forgiving a penalty imposed on a
12	speeder, for example, who has an overdue ticket or a
13	parking ticket is a qualitatively different judgment
14	than forgiving the underlying tax liability of a broad
15	swath of
16	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Every time a police
17	officer stops me for a traffic violation, I get angry
18	when he lets somebody else go. So, you're suggesting
19	that there is a difference between that and this case
20	where the government is basically saying you owe me
21	something and I'm going to forgive you what you owe me?
22	MR. STANCIL: Yes, Your Honor. The Chief
23	Justice's opinion in Engquist took that specific example
24	on, not with you in mind presumably, but took that
25	example on specifically and it said: This is the kind

- 1 of action itself that is inherently a subjective
- 2 individualized determination. It's not irrational to
- 3 pull over one traffic violator and not another because
- 4 that's the nature of -- of the enforcement action. That
- 5 is qualitatively different from a tax imposed on 181
- 6 homeowners who live next door to each other, and then
- 7 12 months later saying, you know, 31 of you are going to
- 8 pay 30 times as much in reality as the other 150, even
- 9 though --
- 10 JUSTICE BREYER: I thought there were a lot
- 11 more than -- there are 20 different lots, 20
- 12 different -- there are -- I mean, when -- what's your
- 13 view of -- of how the cutoff should work? Do they have
- 14 to refund all the money, everybody who, in fact, ever
- 15 paid a Barrett Law assessment?
- 16 MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor, and State law
- 17 on this is quite clear.
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: I don't care what the State
- 19 says; I'm saying a matter as a constitutional law.
- 20 MR. STANCIL: Well, constitutional law looks
- 21 to State law. That's what we took out of Allegheny
- 22 Pittsburgh and Nordlinger.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. All right. So what?
- MR. STANCIL: But -- but I will back up.
- 25 I'll do it both ways, Your Honor. State law itself says

- 1 the following taxpayers are similarly situated, your
- 2 project specific to your neighborhood, because those are
- 3 the people to whom you're guaranteed -- with whom you're
- 4 guaranteed equal treatment. It isn't that you're
- 5 entitled to a certain price for a sewer connection under
- 6 this law. It's --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, why can the State,
- 8 when they have, let's say, 10,000 people who have
- 9 already paid their assessments -- well, why doesn't it
- 10 have to give them back their money, on your theory?
- 11 That's my simple question.
- MR. STANCIL: Because they're not similarly
- 13 situated. Because --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Why aren't they?
- 15 MR. STANCIL: Because your -- the States
- 16 have flexibility to define at the outset who is
- 17 similarly situated.
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. Fine. They define
- 19 here who is similarly situated, and the people who
- aren't are the ones who are on the installment plan.
- MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor, but they have
- 22 a basis for stating that. They don't --
- JUSTICE BREYER: They do. They do. The
- 24 reason is because they think it's unfair to give the
- 25 people -- they think it's -- they don't want to bother 7

- 1 collecting it from these people who haven't paid yet.
- 2 Okay? That's why. And they don't see a way, if you --
- 3 so, if we're going to free them, we don't want to go
- 4 back into history and then suddenly give back all the
- 5 people who've ever paid their assessment. I mean -- so,
- 6 we draw the line somewhere.
- 7 MR. STANCIL: Your Honor --
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: This is where're we drawing
- 9 it. That's the State law.
- 10 MR. STANCIL: Well, that --
- JUSTICE BREYER: What's wrong with that?
- MR. STANCIL: That's not what this Court's
- 13 cases say. It's not the fact that you need to draw a
- 14 line somewhere. I'll take the case that Respondents
- 15 rely on heavily, FCC v. Beach --
- 16 JUSTICE BREYER: I mean -- my point, I'm not
- 17 making it clear. My point is that what's less rational
- 18 about saying, if you paid, too bad; we're having an
- 19 amnesty for the future? What's less rational about
- 20 doing that than saying some of the people who paid in
- 21 full will get their money back, and some will not?
- 22 Which is the line you want to draw.
- 23 MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor. Let me --
- 24 I'll back up again. So, we do have a specific
- 25 definition of who is and who is not entitled to equal

- 1 treatment or roughly equal treatment. So -- that's
- 2 under State law. So, they've already committed to who
- 3 is and who is not similarly situated. So, all you need
- 4 to decide in this case -- and this is broad as an
- 5 as-applied challenge by -- by these homeowners -- is:
- 6 Are these people who are promised you will pay the very
- 7 same as your next-door neighbor for this pipe that
- 8 you're going to flush your toilet into -- are they
- 9 allowed to then change their mind and say actually
- 10 you're going to pay 30 times as much?
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Stancil, who are
- 12 "these people"? We have the plaintiffs in this suit,
- 13 and there's a judgment -- there was a judgment in the
- 14 court of first instance and the appellate court for a
- 15 dollar amount, but we're told there are many more of
- 16 these Barrett Law projects and that they all operate the
- 17 same way.
- 18 So, the result is a lot more money than
- 19 these plaintiffs are claiming; is that not so? If your
- 20 position on the law is right.
- 21 MR. STANCIL: If we're -- if we are correct,
- 22 the city will end up paying a little more than in our
- 23 specific case, but I'd like to explain why and how much
- 24 because it's an important distinction.
- 25 There are about 21 Barrett Law projects that

- 1 still have balances outstanding. Many of them are
- 2 almost paid off. So, it -- in -- there are only three
- 3 that have the 30-year option. The rest have the 10-year
- 4 option. Anything from 2001 prior. So, in fact, I think
- 5 I can give you specific numbers.
- 6 There are seven projects that are less
- 7 than -- that are half paid off or about less than -- or
- 8 less than half paid off. Because the equal protection
- 9 violation is only triggered by gross disparity between
- 10 equally -- similarly situated taxpayers, the city may or
- 11 may not have to refund in each project down the line.
- 12 If you're in -- you're 9 of 10 of repayment, that's not
- 13 a --
- 14 JUSTICE KAGAN: That counts as a gross
- 15 disparity?
- 16 MR. STANCIL: If you're in your 9 of 10, I
- 17 don't think that counts as a gross disparity.
- 18 JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, what does, is my
- 19 question. How -- how do you separate a gross disparity
- 20 from a non-gross disparity?
- MR. STANCIL: Well, start with this case,
- 22 which is easy. It's 10 to 1 and 30 to 1. It's the same
- 23 number as in Allegheny Pittsburgh. But even if you drew
- 4 to 1 or 5 to 1 as a line, as the Court has done, say,
- 25 in punitive damages cases where it suggested outer 10

- 1 limits, that -- I think those are easy lines to draw and
- 2 certainly lines that the lower courts could draw.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: If -- if you win, does --
- 4 does the city just have to give you enough to bring it
- 5 down to 5 to 1 so that it's no longer a gross disparity?
- 6 MR. STANCIL: I don't think so, Your Honor.
- 7 I think triggering -- the gross disparity triggers the
- 8 violation. And the question is, well, what's the remedy
- 9 for a violation? I think they'd have to have a reason
- 10 for saying we're going to -- it would be the very
- 11 definition of arbitrary to say, well, even though you're
- 12 entitled to equal treatment as a matter of law, you
- 13 know, and even though we're not -- it's not -- liability
- 14 isn't triggered except for gross disparities, I think
- 15 they would have to give us that -- that figure.
- 16 And, Your Honor, if I could, I'd like to get
- 17 back, Justice Ginsburg, to your question about how these
- 18 other projects -- there's a suggestion by Respondents
- 19 that there's a terrible line-drawing problem in how do
- 20 we calculate these benefits. It's simply not the case.
- 21 We have this Federal class action in the Cox case, which
- 22 is every other Barrett Law project that's active except
- 23 ours. We opted out.
- The damages question was before that court,
- 25 because -- because the court ruled in favor of the

- 1 position that this is an equal protection violation.
- 2 The city put together a damages pleading, and it -- and
- 3 it produced to the dollar a calculation of every
- 4 overpayment in every Barrett Law project.
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: But that isn't the
- 6 administrative -- the administrative -- well, maybe
- 7 that's one of them. The administrative problem is, I
- 8 thought, the following: Imagine that you are the city
- 9 mayor. All right? And suppose the mayor does what you
- 10 want. The mayor says I'll give all these people in
- 11 their project back their money.
- 12 The next day in my office, there show up 15
- 13 people who say: Last month, we happened to be in
- 14 project 2, and we paid all our money. Why don't you
- 15 give us back our money? You just gave it to the people
- 16 in project 1. Give it to us.
- 17 And the next day after that, there are 14
- 18 people from project 3 and from project 4. What is your
- 19 answer to those angry taxpayers who have said we don't
- 20 understand why you refunded the money from project 1 but
- 21 not for us?
- What's your answer?
- 23 MR. STANCIL: Two reasons. One, you are not
- 24 promised equal treatment under State law to those other
- 25 projects; you were promised equal treatment with the

- 1 people you live next door. Two, you use a different
- 2 pipe. These pipes cost different amounts of money to
- 3 put in different places, and they're done over time.
- 4 Your Honor's hypothetical -- actually, if I
- 5 could tweak it a little bit, it -- the question is not
- 6 who comes in for somebody -- who comes in from a project
- 7 last month. The only question is who comes in from a
- 8 project 11 or more years ago, because those are the only
- 9 ones that'll still be in repayment.
- 10 The Cox -- if we win -- well, there's a
- 11 repayment plan. That's the only thing that creates
- 12 this -- this asymmetry. The only people who are going
- 13 to come in and say, well, you refunded some people on my
- 14 project but not me are people in repayment. So, it's
- only going to be from a project '95 and forward.
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You see, the problem
- 17 that I have is that you're trying to lop off half of the
- 18 project, which is what was the Barrett project, without
- 19 looking at what the new project is. And that goes to
- 20 what Justice Breyer's point was. Moving forward, every
- 21 old project and every new project is going to pay more
- 22 money than they did under the Barrett Law because I
- 23 think, if I understand correctly, the city is raising
- 24 a -- essentially not a flat fee, but a fee, assessing a
- 25 flat fee across all taxpayers so that these sewer lines

- 1 can be built.
- 2 Am I correct about that?
- MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor. For future
- 4 sewer projects that they start, each person who connects
- 5 to that new pipe pays a \$2,500 flat fee. Every resident
- 6 citywide who uses the municipal sewer -- new, old, or
- 7 whatever -- pays an extra about \$10 a month under the
- 8 new system. So, what they did is they decided this
- 9 program, the Barrett Law, is politically very unpopular;
- 10 we would like to get rid of it. Fair enough. But they
- 11 chose a way to do it. They said well, we're going to be
- 12 completely ignorant of -- of the effects.
- 13 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But it -- but it says
- 14 that new people are going to pay a flat fee. Old people
- 15 are going to pay \$10 more a month that they didn't have
- 16 to pay.
- 17 MR. STANCIL: Right.
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And so, why can't they
- 19 come in, and why don't they come in, and say exactly
- 20 what Justice Breyer said: You forgave the payments of
- 21 taxes for hooking up to the sewer system of these new
- 22 people coming in. You're treating me differently.
- 23 MR. STANCIL: There's -- there's nobody who
- 24 will pay more under the new system than my clients
- 25 because the new people pay \$2,500 and the same monthly

- 1 fees that now every Indiana resident pays.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, so, everybody else
- 3 says I want to pay \$2,500. You're still not dealing
- 4 with the fact that this was one decision tied to others.
- 5 It was a package deal and -- so that the rationality of
- 6 this package deal has to be seen in context. You want
- 7 to lop it off and say all I'm looking at is how much
- 8 these taxpayers paid for this old system, not what the
- 9 new system is creating.
- MR. STANCIL: But that's because, under this
- 11 Court's equal protection cases, they have to have a
- 12 reason for this particular line. They can't say we have
- 13 a general objective, and it doesn't matter if we pursue
- 14 it --
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: I might have missed a fact,
- 16 which -- which I'd like to know. Let's call your
- 17 project, project 1, all right? And all the others are 2
- 18 through 20. Are there any people in projects 2 through
- 19 20 who still have money outstanding, or are they all
- 20 paid off?
- MR. STANCIL: Yes. They have -- they're in
- 22 various states of repayment.
- JUSTICE BREYER: They're in various states.
- 24 Okay. What happened to the taxpayers who still owe
- 25 money in projects 2 through 20?

1 MR. STANCIL: They all got refund -- or 2 their balances were completely forgiven. 3 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. So, it's the same. 4 So, now the people for the angry taxpayers in projects 2 5 through 20 show up at the mayor and say, Mayor, you're 6 not only -- you only -- you're not only -- under your 7 system, you not only gave the all-paid-up people back, 8 if you win, but you also forgave the future people in 2 9 through 20, and you're not giving us our money back. 10 MR. STANCIL: Let me make clear, 2 through 11 20 are --12 JUSTICE BREYER: Am I right on the facts? 13 MR. STANCIL: I'm not sure. I want to make sure I understand that -- that fact. Two through 20 are 14 actually older projects --15 16 JUSTICE BREYER: Yes. Older projects. 17 MR. STANCIL: Okay. So, they owe less money, and they come into the mayor and they say: 18 Where's my money? I paid in full. I paid my --19 20 JUSTICE BREYER: Yes. Right. 21 MR. STANCIL: -- 9,000, but Joe over here 22 got his last \$1,000 forgiven. 23 Here's what the mayor says --

16
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The mayor says: I talked to

JUSTICE BREYER: Yes.

MR. STANCIL:

24

25

- 1 my lawyers. If it's a grossly disproportionate
- 2 burden -- so, if you end up paying grossly
- 3 disproportionately to your next-door neighbor, because
- 4 that's what Allegheny Pittsburgh and Nordlinger and all
- 5 the Court's cases say, then I'm entitled -- I have to
- 6 give you a refund. But, if you end up paying 10 percent
- 7 more than the other person to connect to this pipe,
- 8 that's just not an equal protection problem.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: Oh, I see the --
- 10 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Stancil --
- 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: I think -- I think that
- 12 Justice Breyer is suggesting that if you treat
- 13 unconstitutionally a whole lot of people, you can get
- 14 away with it.
- 15 (Laughter.)
- MR. STANCIL: Well --
- 17 JUSTICE BREYER: Oddly enough, I was not
- 18 suggesting that.
- 19 (Laughter.)
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Counsel, some --
- 21 some time ago, I thought you were just about to tell us
- 22 how much money the city says will be at stake if you
- 23 prevail.
- MR. STANCIL: In my case, there's
- \$25 \$273,391.63. In the Cox case, \$2,783,702.59, on the

- 1 assumption that all of those people are grossly
- 2 disproportionately burdened.
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And the -- the city
- 4 says that's the total amount that's at issue if you
- 5 prevail, if the taxpayers prevail on this claim.
- 6 MR. STANCIL: That's -- that's what it said
- 7 in Cox. Yes, Your Honor.
- 8 JUSTICE ALITO: Could the city cure the
- 9 problem by rescinding the forgiveness for those who paid
- 10 under the installment plan --
- MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: Why not?
- 13 MR. STANCIL: This was specifically
- 14 addressed in Allegheny Pittsburgh. That's exactly what
- 15 the West Virginia Supreme Court said. They said, well,
- 16 if you have any remedy, it's only to raise the taxes on
- 17 other people. And this Court specifically rejected
- 18 that.
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: You wouldn't have any
- 20 incentive to bring a lawsuit if that were the remedy,
- 21 would you?
- MR. STANCIL: Right. I'm already unpopular.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: So, effectively --
- MR. STANCIL: I'm unpopular in Indianapolis
- 25 as it is.

1 (Laughter.) MR. STANCIL: If I went back and just raised 2 everybody's taxes, I'll -- I'll never get to go. 3 4 (Laughter.) 5 MR. STANCIL: But, again, this -- and that's 6 just the practical reality. 7 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Why isn't that a choice for the legislature? Because everybody could be treated 8 9 equally by getting their money back, or nobody gets out from under the old system. So, why shouldn't that be --10 11 the decision is you can't treat these two groups of 12 people differently. So, I think the Court has said in a 13 number of cases you can equalize up or down as a 14 legislative choice. MR. STANCIL: It was a legislative choice, 15 16 Justice Ginsburg, but having now made a choice that 17 inflicts a constitutional violation, this Court's cases are clear, that the correct and the default rule is 18 19 refunds, because -- for exactly the reason 20 Justice Scalia raised. Even if it's possible to go back and do that, which -- it isn't always the case, but even 21 22 if it's possible, that just means the equal protection 23 cases and tax cases don't get brought because the most 24 you can hope to get is --JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Stancil, if that's 25

- 1 right, and let's take a case which is different from the
- 2 one that -- that you're saying. Let's take a case where
- 3 there are many, many, many more open projects, involving
- 4 much, much more cost than you're saying is true here.
- 5 And the mayor looks at this and says: You know what?
- 6 Unless I can just draw the line here, I'm not going to
- 7 be able to change this financing system, either unless I
- 8 can draw the line here or unless I can say, you know,
- 9 nobody gets any money.
- 10 What's a mayor to do?
- 11 MR. STANCIL: Well, again, I agree with
- 12 Justice Scalia that making a big mess isn't a
- 13 justification for arbitrarily ending it.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, but I -- I guess what
- 15 I'm asking is we have this terrible program; everybody
- 16 hates it; it's not fulfilling its intended purposes; the
- 17 mayor and everybody else wants to change it: How is the
- 18 mayor going to change this program now?
- 19 MR. STANCIL: There are two ways he could
- 20 have changed this program. One, he could have offered
- 21 us refunds. Two --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I'm suggesting --
- MR. STANCIL: I know --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: -- that that is financially
- 25 prohibitive.

1	MR. STANCIL: I will pay for it then because
2	he can go and he could he could have done two things
3	here. They could have and I'm using "the mayor"
4	loosely; it's actually the board of public works and the
5	city-county council. But he could have increased that
6	monthly fee under the new program. There actually
7	these sewer projects still cost the same.
8	JUSTICE SCALIA: Have we ever decided an
9	equal protection case on the basis that the the State
10	who had violated the the Constitution can't afford to
11	pay for it? Is there any case that supports that?
12	MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor.
13	JUSTICE SCALIA: It's just too expensive?
14	MR. STANCIL: No.
15	JUSTICE SCALIA: And, therefore, we have to
16	deny equal protection?
17	MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor. And I
18	JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, isn't that what you're
19	saying, Mr. Stancil? Is what you're saying that when
20	cities create tax policy, they can't think about the
21	budget implications of that tax policy?
22	MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor. What I'm
23	saying is when they want to change tax policy, having
24	already said these taxpayers are the same and entitled
25	under law to equal treatment, they can't just say, well, 21

- 1 it would be too expensive on us to treat them equally
- 2 when unwinding that program. This Court in Plyler has
- 3 said resources are not sufficient.
- 4 And any tax case could be justified. If
- 5 the -- if the city says, well, you know, we want to
- 6 have -- we want to refund X dollars to our taxpayers,
- 7 but we only have enough to refund to the blonde people
- 8 and not to brunettes, that's arbitrary, even if they
- 9 couldn't afford to do it other ways -- another way.
- 10 So, they can't just pick a method that sort
- 11 of where the math works out or is convenient, and just
- 12 say, well, that's the way we could have done it.
- I would, if I could, just return to the
- 14 practical ways they could have done this, And I think
- 15 that highlights just how arbitrary this line was. They
- 16 could have increased those monthly fees under STEP, the
- 17 new program. I mean, that's how they paid for the rest
- 18 of these projects. They're paying off the bonds of the
- 19 old projects by charging everybody in Indianapolis \$10
- 20 more a month.
- 21 They could have just collected -- in our
- 22 project, they could have collected for 2 more years.
- 23 They could have said you'll be forgiven -- I think it's
- 24 about 27 months. You will -- we're going to forgive
- 25 your balances as of, you know, whatever that would be --

- 1 June of 2010, whatever it would be, 2007 -- collected
- 2 that money, and then they would have had the cash to
- 3 refund to the people who had paid an inequal amount that
- 4 they were forgiving to the others. So, I think -- I
- 5 think that's sort of -- it's a red herring to say, gosh,
- 6 we had no other way, or we only had these options A, B,
- 7 and C.
- 8 I'd like to -- I really want just to drill
- 9 down on the illustration of just how crazy I think this
- 10 is. Suppose that the United States decides tomorrow to
- 11 go to a national sales tax instead of the Federal income
- 12 tax. It's February 29th; millions of people have paid
- 13 their taxes for 2011; many, many -- most of us have not
- 14 yet paid. Could the IRS come in and say: Well, if
- 15 you've already filed and paid your taxes for 2011, too
- 16 bad. But lucky you, if you're a late filer; you're
- 17 going to get your entire tax bill forgiven.
- I don't think that's remotely close. I
- 19 think that is arbitrary, and I'll give you a couple of
- 20 reasons. One, absolutely no notice. So, the timing of
- 21 payment, the method of payment that was selected, gives
- 22 those taxpayers absolutely no notice as to some
- 23 constitutional significance that attaches to it.
- 24 And I don't think -- and I can tell you from
- 25 talking to my clients, they don't -- they didn't think

- 1 that by paying up front in full that they had -- they
- 2 were somehow sacrificing their chance to equal treatment
- 3 or that the city might some day wipe out 97 percent of
- 4 their neighbors' tax obligations.
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That is the parking
- 6 amnesty example that you have said wasn't the same.
- 7 Because if an individual taxpayer has filed late, it's
- 8 like the parking quy who didn't file his ticket, either.
- 9 MR. STANCIL: Well --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, you really are
- 11 saying that amnesty programs are out of the question if
- 12 the risk is imposed equally on everyone.
- 13 MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor. In the
- 14 parking ticket example, forgiving a penalty for late
- 15 payment is a qualitatively different -- to borrow from
- 16 Engquist again, a subjectively individualized
- 17 determination designed to achieve another goal, a
- 18 legitimate goal in itself. Pay your parking ticket, and
- 19 we'll let the penalty go. That is different.
- So, if my clients were here saying, well,
- 21 you're not charging me --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, but you're saying if
- 23 you forgive the parking ticket, that's an equal
- 24 protection violation.
- MR. STANCIL: No, Your -- I mean, I would 24

- 1 not, Your Honor. Again, it's context-driven. The
- 2 parking --
- JUSTICE BREYER: The goal here is very
- 4 simple. They say we have hundreds or dozens or 20
- 5 different programs anyway, and once we start getting
- 6 into the business of distinguishing among people who are
- 7 already paid up, it's going to be a nightmare. And so,
- 8 the only clear line we draw is between the people who
- 9 are already paid up and the people who haven't paid.
- 10 And we don't want those people who haven't paid to have
- 11 to pay because that's going to be another 20 years of
- 12 administrating \$33 a month.
- 13 Okay. That's their rationale. Now, that
- 14 may not be perfect, but it sounds reasonable, doesn't
- 15 it? What's wrong with it?
- 16 MR. STANCIL: It's not, Your Honor. And
- 17 I'll say it rests on the faulty --
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: It's not their rationale,
- 19 or it's not perfect?
- 20 MR. STANCIL: It's not reasonable, Your
- 21 Honor. It rests on the faulty premise that this is some
- 22 administratively --
- JUSTICE BREYER: It's not impossible. They
- 24 don't say it's impossible. Say, try looking through the
- 25 U.S. tax code. It has thousands of pages. There is not 25

- 1 one human being alive who understands every provision.
- 2 All we have to do is start comparing the provision on
- 3 page 1 with page 3 with page 7 and page 9, and we will
- 4 discover irrationality forever.
- 5 So, I don't -- I mean, you may have this
- 6 fairly simple case, but I foresee, if you win, the --
- 7 don't ask me what will happen, but I have a suspicion
- 8 it's not going to be too good.
- 9 MR. STANCIL: Your Honor, I mean -- there's
- 10 one -- there's somebody not here in this case that I
- 11 think belies this notion --
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: What?
- 13 MR. STANCIL: -- that this is going against
- 14 the tax code broadly or amnesty programs or forgiveness
- 15 decisions generally. If -- if -- I think if people
- 16 really thought that this case was going to foul up the
- 17 tax code or forgiveness, I think the IRS would be here
- 18 or the United States would be here saying this is very
- 19 similar to what we do on a daily basis in compromising
- 20 debt on an individual basis.
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Is there an easier
- 22 thing to administer than the system that was struck down
- 23 in Allegheny Pittsburgh?
- MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Whatever you paid, 26

- 1 that's what your assessment was. And they argued, well,
- 2 this is easy; that's enough. And this Court said, no,
- 3 it's an equal protection violation.
- 4 MR. STANCIL: Correct, Your Honor, and,
- 5 again, the administrative burden there was actually
- 6 quite significant.
- 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: You don't believe in the
- 8 administrative nightmare exception to the Equal
- 9 Protection Clause?
- 10 (Laughter.)
- 11 MR. STANCIL: Not when it takes only three
- 12 pages and --
- 13 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Can you tell me -- I'm
- 14 curious to know, if other States have provisions like
- 15 the Barrett Law and they're concerned about this, can
- 16 they provide in the initial documents a -- a promise
- 17 that there will be no forgiveness, so that there would
- 18 be a contract clause sort of argument against what
- 19 happened here? In other words -- and if we could
- 20 explore that for just a minute, I'm going to ask what it
- 21 is that you thought constituted a promise in this case.
- MR. STANCIL: Well, there are four --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: And maybe not a promise in
- 24 the contract sense.
- MR. STANCIL: Yes. Four separate provisions

- 1 of the Barrett Law -- just -- I'll rattle them off for
- 2 you. First, it says installment payments shall be
- 3 collected in the same manner as other taxes. It
- 4 actually says "shall collect" two other times. Requires
- 5 a lien. It says that municipal officials who don't
- 6 collect installment payments can actually be held
- 7 personally liable and removed from office for failing to
- 8 discharge their duties. That's on pages 2a to 3a of the
- 9 appendix to the blue brief.
- 10 So, I don't think there's any sensible way
- 11 to read the Barrett Law as saying it doesn't require
- 12 payment. And none of the State court judges who've
- 13 looked at this have suggested that. And --
- 14 JUSTICE KENNEDY: On the other aspect of my
- 15 case, do you think other States could provide protection
- 16 against this, in the event you do not prevail here, and
- 17 -- and put in the documents that it is understood that a
- 18 condition for your approving of this, these sewers, will
- 19 be that there will be no forgiveness?
- 20 MR. STANCIL: I suppose they could, Your
- 21 Honor. I -- again I'd argue that --
- 22 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Would that then be
- 23 enforceable under the contract clause, do you think?
- 24 MR. STANCIL: I'm not sure it would be
- 25 under the contract clause. But could I flip it and

- 1 suggest that if a State wanted to preserve its right to
- 2 forgive willy-nilly, they could include a provision in
- 3 their law that says, by the way, if you choose an
- 4 installment plan and we change our policy, there shall
- 5 be -- you're not entitled to equal treatment with people
- 6 who pay up front?
- 7 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Give you a warning?
- 8 MR. STANCIL: Right. And let's -- we'll see
- 9 who pays up front under that system.
- 10 (Laughter.)
- 11 MR. STANCIL: If I can, Your Honor -- if I
- 12 can, I'd like to reserve the remainder of my time.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 14 Mr. Stancil.
- Mr. Clement.
- 16 ORAL ARGUMENT OF PAUL D. CLEMENT
- 17 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS
- 18 MR. CLEMENT: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice,
- 19 and may it please the Court:
- 20 In 2005, the City of -- the City of
- 21 Indianapolis decided that it wanted to abandon its
- 22 reliance on the Barrett Law, a program that had proved
- 23 unpopular for financing public improvements. In doing
- 24 so, they decided to make a clean break and forgive the
- outstanding balances that were due under the Barrett Law

- 1 program. The alternative of maintaining those accounts
- 2 and maintaining the tax liens associated with those
- 3 accounts for nearly three decades was particularly
- 4 unattractive. Now, the --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: I think you've put your
- 6 finger on the reason for this, which is that the city
- 7 calculated that what it did would be more politically
- 8 acceptable than treating the people who paid up front
- 9 equally on an economic basis with the people who paid in
- 10 installment plans. Now, if that's the reason for this,
- 11 is that rational?
- 12 MR. CLEMENT: Well, Justice Alito, it -- it
- 13 might well be rational. I mean, sometimes things that
- 14 make policy sense that the public likes also make good
- 15 government sense. And in this context, what they wanted
- 16 to do is they wanted to get out of the Barrett Law
- 17 business. That's the exact words --
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: But what does that mean,
- 19 they wanted to get out of the Barrett Law business?
- 20 MR. CLEMENT: Can I put it very concretely?
- 21 I mean, before this -- you know, when they used to have
- the Barrett Law and used it on an ongoing basis, within
- 23 the controller's office, they had a Barrett Law office.
- 24 They wanted to get rid of the Barrett Law office.
- How do you get rid of the Barrett Law

- office? You get of the obligation to continue to

 collect these payments for 30 years; you get rid of the
- 3 obligations to keep all these files together and see
- 4 whether you're in a position to enforce a tax lien.
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: That really doesn't seem
- 6 very complicated, to collect payments that people have
- 7 agreed to pay. And if they didn't want to do it
- 8 anymore, I bet they could have contracted that out for a
- 9 very modest fee to any number of private entities that
- 10 would have done it for them.
- 11 MR. CLEMENT: Well, Justice Alito, of
- 12 course, they could have continued to collect. I think
- 13 that's common ground here, which I think ultimately
- 14 shows why this is a very curious equal protection
- 15 theory, because if the city would have continued to
- 16 collect these, you know, for 30 years, then they agree,
- 17 there's no Equal Protection Clause problem at all.
- 18 Now, I think as Justice Kagan was
- 19 suggesting, if you now create a rule that says when they
- 20 do forgive, they actually have to provide refunds and
- 21 face Equal Protection Clause violations, then in the
- 22 future, nobody is going to ever forgive. What they're
- 23 going to do in the future is, even though they're trying
- 24 to move away from this policy, even though they're
- 25 trying to get out of the Barrett Law business, they're

- 1 going to be stuck.
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: So, I think maybe if you
- 3 prevail in this opinion, we should say the principle we
- 4 are adopting in this case is: Don't trust the
- 5 government.
- 6 MR. CLEMENT: No, Justice Kennedy, I don't
- 7 think that's right. But the fact that that's your
- 8 reaction I think shows that this is not really an equal
- 9 protection claim, and it's not really like Allegheny
- 10 Pittsburgh because, as your colloquy with Mr. Stancil
- 11 suggested, they would admit that if the government said,
- 12 as part of the Barrett Law, look, you know, we reserve
- 13 the right to abandon the Barrett Law, and if we do so,
- 14 we -- you know, we may forgive installment payments --
- 15 if they said that, the equal protection claim would go
- 16 away in their view.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, that's simply
- 18 because, as we said in Allegheny Pittsburgh, the basis
- 19 for considering the equal protection claim is the rights
- 20 that you're given under State law. In Allegheny
- 21 Pittsburgh, it says you have the right to be treated
- 22 equally with respect to assessments. And you weren't.
- 23 Here the law says you have the right to be
- 24 treated equally, or whatever it is, the apportionment,
- and they weren't. All that you're saying there is that

- 1 State law gets to set the base. And if the State law
- 2 says we don't treat people the same in extending sewer
- 3 hook-ups, then that takes away your Equal Protection
- 4 Clause. But it just sets the base.
- 5 MR. CLEMENT: Two differences,
- 6 Mr. Chief Justice. First of all, you know, there's
- 7 no -- there's no real analogue to Allegheny Pittsburgh
- 8 because Allegheny Pittsburgh is a one time in time case.
- 9 There the problem was that statute was very different.
- 10 It was facially neutral, and it was being applied in an
- 11 unequal way.
- Nothing, not one word, in Allegheny
- 13 Pittsburgh suggests that if the State of West Virginia
- 14 wanted to change its policy and adopt proposition 13 as
- 15 the law of West Virginia, that it couldn't do so. And
- 16 that's the anomaly here. This equal -- this equal
- 17 treatment requirement they get, they get it from the
- 18 Barrett Law.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The change in
- 20 policy --
- MR. CLEMENT: That's the exact law that --
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The change in
- 23 policy is from treating people equally to treating
- 24 people unequally. I don't see how the fact that they're
- 25 changing that policy addresses the issue at all.

- 1 They're going from a system where everybody was subject
- 2 to the same assessment to a system where some pay
- 3 something and other people pay 30 times that. Yes, it's
- 4 a change, but it's the change that presents the problem.
- 5 MR. CLEMENT: No, I -- with respect, I think
- 6 it's the change that makes this case different from
- 7 Allegheny Pittsburgh. It's the change that makes this
- 8 government action rational.
- 9 This would be a different case if they
- 10 didn't change the Barrett Law program, and they just
- 11 stuck by it and said, you know, we're going to forgive
- 12 some people. But here they decide they're going to --
- they're going to abandon the very law that imposes,
- 14 supposedly -- I want to talk about what State law really
- 15 does. But it supposedly imposes this equal protection
- 16 requirement. That's the very law they want to move away
- 17 from.
- 18 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, I still don't --
- 19 MR. CLEMENT: And this idea that --
- 20 JUSTICE ALITO: Other than political
- 21 expediency and administrative convenience, I still don't
- 22 understand what rational basis you claim there was for
- 23 the distinction that was drawn. Now, maybe one of those
- 24 is sufficient, but other than those two possible bases,
- 25 I don't see another one.

1 MR. CLEMENT: Well, you know, I count five, Justice Alito. If you want to hear -- I mean, I'll go 2 3 through them. One is what I call making a clean break, having not to deal with the vestiges of the old program. 4 5 You may call it political expedience. I don't think it 6 I think that's, you know, a good government 7 concern. 8 The second is avoiding the administrative burdens of particularly the refund process. And I think 9 it's worth recognizing that -- you know, they say, well, 10 11 what could be simpler; just cut a check. But to whom 12 and for what amount? I mean, you know, if you're going 13 to go back to close accounts, the first thing you're going to have to confront is what do we do with the 14 15 people that have sold their house? 16 Well, I mean, you know, we've got to figure 17 out where they are now. We've got to figure out, I 18 mean, do we --19 JUSTICE ALITO: Those are reasons for not 20 giving refunds, but what are the reasons for forgiving the debt that people agreed to? 21 22 MR. CLEMENT: Well -- okay. But, if I 23 could, they don't challenge the forgiveness. So, the

reason that I'm trying to explain that there are

24

25

- 1 challenge that's really brought here is to Resolution
- 2 101, and it's --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: But you don't -- you
- 4 don't --
- 5 MR. CLEMENT: -- it's forgiveness without
- 6 refunds.
- 7 JUSTICE KENNEDY: You don't dispute that the
- 8 city would have that option if we rule against you.
- 9 MR. CLEMENT: Would have the option what,
- 10 Mr. Justice Kennedy?
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Just not to forgive the
- 12 unpaid balances. The city has the option, I assume.
- 13 MR. CLEMENT: They certainly have the option
- in the future. I think it's a dispute between the
- 15 parties whether they have the option as a part of the
- 16 remedy. I would say, not to get ahead of myself, but to
- 17 address the remedy, this is very different from
- 18 Allegheny Pittsburgh. And it has to be that one option
- 19 is to simply invalidate Resolution 101.
- I'm not -- I don't -- I'm not aware of any
- 21 other area of the law where you can have a statute or an
- 22 ordinance that draws an invalid distinction, and one
- 23 remedial option is not to invalidate the statute or the
- 24 ordinance. And that's the position.
- Their position is, you know, if you would 36

- 1 have put something in there that said we're not going to
- 2 do anything, you'd be fine. But having given
- 3 forgiveness and said we're not going to give refunds,
- 4 you're stuck not only with the forgiveness but also with
- 5 giving refunds.
- 6 JUSTICE KENNEDY: That's a -- that's a big
- 7 difference. In one case, there's an expectation; in the
- 8 other case, there isn't.
- 9 MR. CLEMENT: No, Mr. Justice Kennedy,
- 10 because the expectation here is at the time of
- 11 Resolution 101. At the time of Resolution 101, I think
- 12 it's common ground. The city was under no obligation to
- 13 provide forgiveness.
- So, if in 101, by providing forgiveness
- 15 without refunds, they violated the Equal Protection
- 16 Clause, why isn't the logical remedy for that to simply
- 17 invalidate Resolution 101? No forgiveness; everybody
- 18 gets equal treatment.
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: Because you would -- you
- 20 would eliminate all litigation on Equal Protection
- 21 Clause grounds if all that the plaintiff is going to
- 22 achieve is not any benefit to him but harming somebody
- 23 else.
- 24 That's -- the classic case is -- is the sex
- 25 discrimination case, where a State had a drinking law

- 1 which said that -- that men could drink at the age of 18
- 2 but women at the age of 21. And what happened in the
- 3 lawsuit? Did the court say, well, I guess -- I guess
- 4 men won't be able to drink at 18. No, that's --
- 5 MR. CLEMENT: No, I think what they said --
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: They said men would have to
- 7 drink at 18, not that women will have to wait to 21
- 8 because --
- 9 MR. CLEMENT: No, I think they said that
- 10 was, with respect --
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: They said it could go
- 12 either way.
- MR. CLEMENT: Exactly.
- 14 JUSTICE GINSBURG: It was up to the Oklahoma
- 15 legislature. They could make it 21 for everyone or 18
- 16 for everyone.
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And the city retains
- 18 that option in this case going forward. The problem
- 19 with --
- MR. CLEMENT: No, but --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- your analogy is
- 22 you're dealing with a situation -- you're saying, well,
- 23 here's a violation and the law can -- and what does the
- 24 law do? But this -- this is exactly 180 degrees away.
- 25 There's no violation, and the law creates the violation.

- 1 In that situation --
- MR. CLEMENT: Right. So, then you --
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- I think you're
- 4 dealing with an entirely different case.
- 5 MR. CLEMENT: If the law that created the
- 6 violation is Resolution 101, than the remedy in every
- 7 other area of constitutional law, including sex
- 8 discrimination, is clearly that the State has the
- 9 option. They can level up or they can level down. The
- 10 only case that's different is Allegheny Pittsburgh and
- 11 the assessment cases it relies on. But there's an
- 12 important difference.
- 13 JUSTICE BREYER: Then you're saying that the
- 14 difference between the two classes is that if you
- 15 continue to have the tax apply to the people who haven't
- 16 paid it yet, there is a large administrative expense.
- 17 And if you -- an expense that does not exist in respect
- 18 to the class that has already paid.
- 19 So, the question, I would have thought, in
- 20 our Court is whether that's a rational distinction. And
- 21 I think contrary to what was suggested, administrative
- 22 expenses, of course, make a difference where the Equal
- 23 Protection Clause is concerned because they
- 24 differentiate between the two classes. And trying to
- 25 avoid an administrative expense is a rational reason,

- 1 normally, for making a distinction.
- Now, I mention that because I know -- what
- 3 -- it can -- does that bring to mind any authority which
- 4 would be helpful? Because there was a question that
- 5 there is no such authority. It makes sense to me, but
- 6 is there some authority for that?
- 7 MR. CLEMENT: Sure, there is, Your Honor. I
- 8 mean, you look to a number of places. I would look to
- 9 Carmichael v. Southern Coal where, you know, this Court
- 10 is confronting a case where the State says, you know,
- 11 we're not going to tax employers -- employers who are
- 12 smaller than eight, because, you know, the game is not
- 13 worth the candle. And in a similar way here, they say
- 14 we want to get out of the Barrett Law business. We want
- 15 to make a clean break. And they say, you know, we don't
- 16 want to keep this office in the controller's office.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: But here -- here the State
- 18 has defined the class. That's the difference. I mean,
- 19 to say employers with less than eight is a separate
- 20 class, that's fine. But -- but here, the State said
- 21 we're creating this class of -- of people who have to
- 22 pay for sewer assessments, and we're going to treat them
- 23 equally. That's what the law required.
- MR. CLEMENT: I would have thought, Justice
- 25 Scalia, if this was an equal protection case, not a

- 1 contracts case, not a Winstar case, not an estoppel
- 2 case, if this was an equal protection case, the relevant
- 3 time period would be the time period of the ordinance
- 4 that's challenged, Resolution 101. At that time, there
- 5 is a difference already in real-world fact between those
- 6 who've paid in full and those who have outstanding
- 7 balance, and they're going to keep the city in the
- 8 Barrett Law business for three decades.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: So, you're saying that any
- 10 future law which -- which disregards an equal
- 11 classification that a prior law established is okay? So
- 12 long as it's a future law that does it.
- MR. CLEMENT: It --
- 14 JUSTICE SCALIA: There will always be a
- 15 future law that does it.
- 16 MR. CLEMENT: No, it -- it could be. There
- 17 still has to be a rational basis for it.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: Yes.
- MR. CLEMENT: And -- and --
- 20 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's what we're
- 21 questioning.
- MR. CLEMENT: Right, but a rational basis is
- 23 -- boy, you know, we have two sets of accounts. Half of
- 24 these accounts are going to be a nightmare to maintain.
- 25 We have an estimate from our controller -- this is in

- 1 the Cox litigation, but it's cited in one of the amicus
- 2 briefs. We've got an estimate from our controller
- 3 that's going to cost \$200,000 to upgrade and maintain
- 4 this system. We really don't want to spend that.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I think I
- 6 don't see the answer --
- 7 MR. CLEMENT: Now, is that \$200,000
- 8 associated --
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Excuse me. I don't
- 10 see the answer to Justice Scalia's question. You're
- 11 saying this would be a rational system going forward,
- 12 but you also promised the people that they would be
- 13 treated equally over a certain period.
- When you start out it's not equal because
- 15 somebody pays \$400 and somebody else pays 10,000, and --
- 16 but over the 30-year period, it's the same. That's why
- it's equal in the beginning, even though somebody pays
- 18 400 and somebody pays 10,000 because they're going to
- 19 pay the same over the period.
- Then you lop off the period. So, you're not
- 21 treating them equally. Go -- when you started. You can
- 22 no longer say don't worry about the inequality; it will
- 23 sort out in 30 years. Now you can't -- you have no way
- 24 of telling them why it's not unequal.
- MR. CLEMENT: With all due respect,

- 1 Mr. Chief Justice, you're making this sound like it's an
- 2 estoppel case, like it's a Winstar case. It's not a
- 3 broken promise case. This is an equal protection case.
- 4 And the reason there's a rational difference at the time
- 5 Resolution 101 is, is because that point in time has
- 6 passed and they're in an different position.
- 7 But I also do want to make clear that you
- 8 will look in vain in the Barrett Law for this stern
- 9 promise that no matter what happens, we will eventually
- 10 collect the same amount from everybody. What there is,
- 11 is there is a requirement for equal assessment in the
- 12 first instance -- nobody says that was violated -- and
- 13 then, if you elect four installments, there's a
- 14 provision that says you shall collect.
- The irony of their position is they say it's
- 16 perfectly okay for the city to break that promise. It's
- 17 perfectly okay to give forgiveness. They don't have a
- 18 quorum -- a quarrel with forgiveness. They want
- 19 forgiveness. They just want to get some refunds, too,
- 20 as a result.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, they want forgiveness,
- 22 but you outline correctly in your brief the fact that
- 23 the city had three options. One of the options was to
- 24 hold everybody to what they understood when they signed
- 25 up under the Barrett Law.

1	And I I do not understand how your
2	administrative convenience argument fits in with the
3	decision to forgive the debt of the people who agreed to
4	pay on the installment plan. When the city was
5	collecting those payments was that a net loss? Were the
6	administrative costs of making those collections more
7	than the amount of money that was brought in?
8	If not, then I don't see how administrative
9	convenience justifies a rejection of that option.
0	MR. CLEMENT: Justice Alito, as I hear you,
1	you've switched from rational basis to it has to be, you
_2	know, a net unless we can show a net loss, we lose.
_3	Why can't we make a rational judgment that there's a
_4	unique \$200,000 cost associated with maintaining this
_5	program? We don't want to maintain the program. It's
_6	tremendously politically unpopular. We've moved away
_7	from it. We don't want to I mean, can you imagine
8_	the city
_9	JUSTICE ALITO: It's rational for a city to
20	say that it costs us \$100,000 to collect this money, and
21	if we do collect it, we're going to bring in \$500,000;
22	so, we don't want to pay the \$100,000; so, we're going
23	to get rid of the program? That's rational?
24	MR. CLEMENT: It is rational, Justice Alito,
25	because they have to maintain an office to do it. You 44

- 1 know, think about the city. Do you really think --
- JUSTICE ALITO: No, but the net -- the
- 3 net --
- 4 MR. CLEMENT: Do you really think --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: If the net -- if it's a net
- 6 gain, what is the rationality of abandoning it?
- 7 MR. CLEMENT: Because they want to get rid
- 8 of the office; they want to get out of the business;
- 9 they want to make a clean break.
- 10 Can you imagine the city 27 years from now
- 11 trying to take somebody's home by imposing and then
- 12 trying to enforce a tax lien based on a program that
- 13 they walked away from 27 years earlier? They'd get
- 14 laughed at. They couldn't do that.
- 15 And if they could make that judgment in --
- 16 another way of thinking about it, 10 years from now,
- okay, they've collected everything from the 10-year
- 18 payers. All they've got left are the 20-year payers,
- 19 the 30-year payers. They say, you know, this is
- 20 ridiculous. It's still -- we're still taking in more
- 21 money than we're -- than it would cost, but it's
- 22 ridiculous. We want to get out of this business. We've
- 23 told the people --
- JUSTICE ALITO: You put your finger on it.
- They want to get out of the business. What they've done 45

- 1 is to shift the cost of the sewers from a -- from a
- 2 small group, a small interest group that is able to
- 3 presumably exert some political power to -- to
- 4 everybody. They spread the cost around to everybody.
- 5 And everybody -- the ordinary person who has to pay a
- 6 little bit more every month doesn't get all fired up
- 7 about it.
- 8 That's what this -- that's what this is
- 9 about, isn't it?
- 10 MR. CLEMENT: No, it's not what it's about,
- 11 the way you're describing it. Maybe there's a takings
- 12 claim for somebody to bring, but it's not an equal
- 13 protection claim. What you just articulated would be
- 14 exactly the same if there were a provision in the
- 15 Barrett Law that said, by the way, if we ever get rid of
- 16 the Barrett Law, all bets are off; we might not
- 17 collect the insolvency --
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, there is a
- 19 provision -- you said I'd search in vain for this
- 20 provision in the Barrett Law.
- MR. CLEMENT: Yes.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I went and
- 23 searched and 15 --
- 24 (Laughter.)
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- 15(b)(3)says, 46

- 1 "The costs shall be primarily apportioned equally among all abutting lands or lots." 2 3 MR. CLEMENT: Yes, that's the -- I -- I --4 that's the provision I already mentioned about 5 appraisals. That's talking about the costs --6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It says "costs." 7 MR. CLEMENT: The costs of the project when they are doing the appraisal. When they're coming up 8 with the cost for how much it's going to cost to stick 9 the pipes in the ground, they have a law that it has to 10 11 be divided equally among the lots. That's an 12 assessment. There's a specific provision that you can 13 challenge the assessment if you don't like it. Once you don't challenge it, it's final. 14 15 There's actually two provisions in the 16 Barrett Law that you won't search in vain for that talk 17 about the interest of finality, which is yet another reason that justifies the differential treatment here 18 between people who paid have in full, their accounts are 19 20 closed, and people who have ongoing outstanding 21 balances.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Where -- where do I
 23 look to find that when they say the costs shall be
 24 apportioned equally, they are not referring to the
 25 costs, but they were referring to the assessments?

1 MR. CLEMENT: They're referring to the costs of the project, the improvement, that will then be 2 3 reflected --4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The costs of the 5 project are funded by the -- the sewer hook-ups, and 6 some people pay 400 and some people paid 10,000. 7 MR. CLEMENT: No, but it's the costs that are then reflected in the assessment on each lot. And 8 9 there's then a process for challenging that assessment 10 on the assumption that the costs are allocated equally 11 to each lot, and then when that's done, the finality 12 provisions kick in. 13 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But that just --14 MR. CLEMENT: And nobody says there was 15 anything wrong. 16 JUSTICE KENNEDY: That just underscores the 17 promise of the State -- or the city that all owners will be treated equally. That just underscores the point 18 that that was the understanding and the commitment. 19 20 MR. CLEMENT: With respect, that's not. 21 The original idea is, sure, you know, we're going to 22 assess the costs of the project equally among everybody 23 whose benefiting from the project. And then we're going 24 to have an assessment, and if the Barrett Law doesn't 25 change, the assumption is everybody's going to pay the

- 1 same amount.
- I'm not here to tell you otherwise, but the
- 3 point is the Barrett Law, like most laws, doesn't have a
- 4 clause that plans for its own demise. It doesn't say,
- 5 well, you know, if -- if we get rid of this law, we
- 6 either will or will not enforce the installments.
- 7 And I think the question here is at a
- 8 different point in time when they've made a different
- 9 judgment -- we don't like the Barrett Law. It's proven
- 10 unpopular. It's proven unwieldy. It's not just
- 11 popularity or political. It's that, you know, they're
- 12 facing lots of low-income subdivisions with septic
- 13 tanks, and, you know, they're forcing the prospect of
- 14 trying to get people to pay \$10,000 to improve a -- the
- 15 sewer on a house that's worth \$50,000. They realize
- 16 that's a non-starter. We've got to get out of this
- 17 business.
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You just said it's
- 19 not popularity. In page 1 of your brief, you say, "The
- 20 Barrett Law method eventually proved to be politically
- 21 unpopular." Sounds like it's popularity to me.
- MR. CLEMENT: It's not just popularity. You
- 23 know, every once in a while the people have a point.
- 24 And it's not just that they don't like something; it's
- 25 the right to not like it. And they're very much right 49

- 1 to not like a law that says you got a \$50,000 house and
- 2 we're going to make you pay for a \$10,000 sewer hook-up.
- 3 They were right to get out of the business.
- 4 Having done that, I don't understand why they're saddled
- 5 with a provision of law that exists in the old law that
- 6 they're trying to get away from.
- 7 And just to be clear -- I mean, if you want
- 8 to look at a case that I think shows you why the State
- 9 law is not as equality über alles as they're presenting,
- 10 take a look at an old Indiana case called Allendorf, 176
- 11 N.E. 240. That's a case where some people in the
- 12 project challenged the -- the assessment, said, you
- 13 know, that's unfair; it's too much. Other people paid
- 14 in full.
- The people who challenged it went to court.
- 16 They eventually settled with the city for a reduced
- 17 amount. Then later on the people who had paid in full
- 18 went into court and said we're entitled to pay no more
- 19 than those guys. You know what the Indiana appellate
- 20 court said? No dice. That doesn't work. You
- 21 basically -- you either waived your right in express
- 22 waiver or if you paid in full, it's -- you know, it's
- 23 too late. It's too late.
- So, the -- and this is, with respect, I
- 25 think part of the problem with the Allegheny Pittsburgh, 50

- 1 and particularly this extension of it. You're putting
- 2 so much weight on the State law, and it gets you in this
- 3 business of flyspecking the Barrett Law.
- I mean, you know, this -- I mean, Justice
- 5 Thomas made this point very well in the Nordlinger case,
- 6 that there's an anomaly here, which is you're looking --
- 7 supposed to be looking at Federal law, and the violation
- 8 seems to be tied to potentially a violation of State
- 9 law.
- 10 If I could focus on that for a minute,
- 11 because this is another really important difference
- 12 between Allegheny Pittsburgh and this case, which speaks
- 13 right to the remedy. In Allegheny Pittsburgh, it's a
- 14 facially neutral statute. And so, it would be an
- 15 anomaly there to say that when there's a facially
- 16 neutral statute, you're going to invalidate the -- the
- 17 statute. The statute's fine. The problem is you've
- 18 been assessed at 100 percent; everybody else has been
- 19 assessed at 50 percent. The Court in that unique
- 20 context says, you know, there's no obligation to go and
- 21 sort of mandamus the assessor, to bring everybody else
- 22 up. You get to sort of go back to that level.
- 23 This is very different. The challenge here,
- like in Nordlinger, is a challenge to a distinction
- 25 drawn in a law. Resolution 101, unlike the law in

- 1 Allegheny Pittsburgh, is not facially neutral. It draws
- 2 a distinction. So, the relevant question is the
- 3 rationality of that distinction. Is it rational?
- 4 We submit there are multiple reasons why it
- 5 is rational. But if you disagree with me, the obvious
- 6 remedy is to strike down the statute or at least remand
- 7 to the State court with express instructions that they
- 8 have the option, which is exactly what happened in the
- 9 sex discrimination cases.
- 10 And, Justice Scalia, if you're worried about
- 11 incentives and standing, look at Heckler v. Mathews,
- 12 another sex discrimination case. This exact issue came
- 13 up. And what the Court said is standing is based on
- 14 your right to guaranteed equal treatment. Whether or
- 15 not it's a pocketbook injury, you have standing if
- 16 you're denied equal treatment.
- Now, these guys may have been denied equal
- 18 treatment on the assumption they're right. But they can
- 19 get equal treatment restored just as easily by
- 20 Resolution 101 being invalidated in full as they can by
- 21 getting an additional windfall by getting a refund. And
- 22 as Justice Alito --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, why is that -- why
- 24 is that a big deal for us? I mean, that's the law. You
- 25 get your -- your choice.

- 1 MR. CLEMENT: Okay. But, I mean, that's a
- 2 big difference because that's different from what
- 3 they're saying. They're saying there's no remedial
- 4 option. They're saying we are stuck now. We -- we have
- 5 to give refunds. That's the only permissible
- 6 constitutional remedy. And, obviously, the city would
- 7 prefer to get out of the Barrett Law business and to
- 8 provide these forgiveness, but it would certainly be a
- 9 lot better for the city if they would at least -- as the
- 10 Court made clear, they have the option of leveling up or
- 11 leveling down. I do think, though, that gets to Justice
- 12 Kagan's --
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But you mentioned
- 14 Heckler v. Mathews. In Heckler v. Mathews, the Court
- 15 said, quote: "Ordinarily, extension" -- of the withheld
- 16 benefit -- "rather than nullification is the proper
- 17 course."
- MR. CLEMENT: Yes.
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So, while it is true
- 20 that you can cure a violation by leveling up or leveling
- 21 down, ordinarily, extension of the benefit is the proper
- 22 course. And that's for the reason Justice Scalia gave,
- 23 because, otherwise, there would be no equal protection
- 24 case brought.
- MR. CLEMENT: If that were the rule, Heckler 53

- 1 v. Mathews would have come out the other way. The Court
- 2 was -- you know, the Court --
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, what -- what
- 4 did the Court mean when they said, ordinarily, extension
- 5 is the proper course?
- 6 MR. CLEMENT: Well, they were talking about
- 7 a specific situation (a) under Federal law. So, I don't
- 8 know why the rule would be the same. And the sex
- 9 discrimination cases are much more on point for purposes
- 10 of this. But they're also talking about a very specific
- 11 context where you have a limitation on a benefit. And
- 12 the idea is, if you strike down the limitation, the
- 13 default option is everybody gets the benefit.
- 14 This is different. I mean, you know, really
- 15 what Heckler is talking about is severability concerns.
- 16 There's no severability that works here. Resolution
- 17 101 -- if you look at it, it doesn't say anything about
- 18 refunds. It simply says we're going to forgive the
- 19 balances on the outstanding accounts.
- 20 If that's somehow impermissible, then the
- 21 law goes. There's nothing to sever. There's nothing --
- 22 there's not one word in the statute about refunds. And
- 23 that's different from the context where you have a
- 24 general extension of benefits and you have some
- 25 limitations on the benefits.

- 1 JUSTICE BREYER: What do you think would happen if the city says -- if it came out that way -- we 2 3 really want to give refunds or cut off -- we want to 4 stop collecting the money, period? Then to make it fair 5 on this hypothesis, the city would have to go back and 6 refund money. To whom? And how many? 7 MR. CLEMENT: And -- and in what amount? 8 JUSTICE BREYER: And you heard your -- your 9 friend try to make a distinction between this project, and you wouldn't have to give the money, he said, to 10 11 every other person, whoever back in 1850 or 1890 or 12 whenever it was began to make Barrett Law payments. But 13 you would with this one. 14 Now, what -- I'd like a little comment on that. 15 16 MR. CLEMENT: Well, you're absolutely right. 17 And, you know -- and, you know, I talked about the 18 question --19 JUSTICE BREYER: Right, because it's a 20 question. 21 MR. CLEMENT: Well -- okay. Then the answer 22 is it would be an administrative nightmare. If I 23 understand the question --
- 25 Why? I mean, people paid the lump sum.

24

JUSTICE SCALIA: I don't understand that.

1	MR. CLEMENT: With respect to
2	JUSTICE SCALIA: If people come forward and
3	say I'm one of the ones who paid the lump sum, I want a
4	refund; and if somebody doesn't come and present such a
5	claim, the city doesn't pay. If someone does
6	JUSTICE BREYER: That's right, Justice
7	JUSTICE SCALIA: Surely, the city has
8	records.
9	JUSTICE BREYER: Let me try to get my
_0	question, which is, I'm not I'm thinking this is
.1	project 1. So, certainly, on the hypothesis, you have
_2	to pay back the people who already paid up for project
_3	1. But in your brief, you say there's project 2 through
_4	20. And is there, in your opinion, a basis for
_5	distinguishing all those people who have paid up in
_6	those projects, or would you have to give them their
_7	money back, too?
_8	Now, you heard your friend's statement
_9	explanation of why you wouldn't have to give them the
20	money back, and I want to get your response to that.
21	MR. CLEMENT: Well, with respect, what I
22	heard him say is we probably would. And I think we
23	certainly would as to most of the projects. There might
24	be a couple of the projects where the differences are so
25	small that he would say there's no gross inequality 56

- 1 there. But as to most of the other projects, there are
- 2 still substantial differences --
- JUSTICE BREYER: How many people does that
- 4 involve, about?
- 5 MR. CLEMENT: It involves -- you know, I
- 6 don't -- I know the number of projects. It's like 20
- 7 projects. So, I'm guessing it's at least 1,000 people.
- 8 And then, of course, somebody's going to come in if we
- 9 do that, as you suggested, and say wait a second --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Was his figure of
- 11 2 million accurate? As the stake -- in the other case.
- 12 MR. CLEMENT: The stakes in the other case
- 13 without interest I think are \$2.7 million. So, you
- 14 know, I think the -- the ballpark figures are right.
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: When you say "the
- 16 other case, " you mean every other project? Because
- 17 that's -- that's, what, a class action; right?
- 18 MR. CLEMENT: It's -- it's a class action,
- 19 the Cox -- the Federal litigation. But still, that's
- 20 not a -- that's not an insubstantial amount.
- Of course, the relevant question is not, you
- 22 know, are the damages a set figure after you've had
- 23 litigation in Federal court? The question is what is
- 24 the city administrator, at the time he's trying to
- 25 decide whether he has a refund obligation, to do?

- 1 And, Justice Scalia, you said, well, it's
- 2 clear as mud. I mean, did you listen to the answer
- 3 about gross inequality? What, are they supposed to run
- 4 it through the gross inequality calculator that tells
- 5 them, well, you know, it's close, but it's not really --
- 6 there's not a discrete obligation? I don't know how --
- 7 I would not know how to advise them as to which of the
- 8 other 21 projects they owed a refund to and which they
- 9 didn't. I would be at a complete loss.
- 10 And the reason --
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, if
- 12 everybody -- if everybody entitled to a refund came
- 13 forward, it would cost you \$2.7 million. And it --
- MR. CLEMENT: No, actually it would -- plus
- 15 this one. So, it would be a little over 3.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Okay. Three --
- 17 \$3 million. And you say the real problem is the huge
- 18 administrative cost in trying to figure out who you owe
- 19 it to. If it's that huge, all they do is somebody who
- 20 comes forward, asks for a refund, verify that they're --
- 21 you know, were a homeowner on the project, give them the
- 22 refund.
- MR. CLEMENT: Well, I mean --
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The most it's going
- 25 to cost is \$3 million.

- 1 MR. CLEMENT: Yes, in this case. And the -2 and the law you develop here is not going to be limited
- 3 to this case; it's going to apply in other contexts as
- 4 well. Heaven knows where it stops. As I said,
- 5 Allegheny Pittsburgh -- it was at least limited to a
- 6 particular context. Now, I mean, I don't know why any
- 7 city ever -- I mean, maybe this is the limiting
- 8 principle that no city ever again will provide amnesty
- 9 or forgiveness under any circumstances.
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Amnesty -- I don't
- 11 get -- amnesty is entirely different. Amnesty is for
- 12 people who did something wrong. Nobody did something
- 13 wrong here; it wasn't wrong to pay with installments.
- MR. CLEMENT: But, Mr. Chief Justice,
- 15 it's the --
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So, amnesty cases
- 17 don't apply.
- 18 MR. CLEMENT: It's the same principle. I
- 19 mean, I could certainly see some -- you know, suppose
- 20 the city elects a laissez-faire mayor and says you know
- 21 what? Parking tickets -- it's not worth the hassle;
- 22 we're going to getting out of the parking ticket
- 23 enforcement business, and we're going to forgive
- 24 everybody their parking tickets.
- 25 If I had just paid my parking tickets, I'd 59

- 1 be hacked off, but I wouldn't feel like I had a Federal
- 2 constitutional right to get my money back. And that's
- 3 the difference --
- 4 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What do you do with the
- 5 hypothetical about the income tax and the sales tax?
- 6 So, you don't pay any income tax if the sales tax had
- 7 gone into effect.
- 8 MR. CLEMENT: I think if they really got rid
- 9 of the -- the Federal tax forever, I don't think there
- 10 wouldn't be an equal protection violation. I think
- 11 there might be a different constitutional violation. If
- 12 you listen to him, the first thing he ticked off about
- 13 why that would be so horrible is there was no notice.
- 14 Well, that sounds like a due process concern to me, not
- 15 an equal protection concern.
- 16 And that's really what's happening here.
- 17 When they transport Allegheny Pittsburgh from the
- 18 context it arose in to this very different context,
- 19 they're converting it from an equal protection case to
- 20 something more like a contract clause case or to a
- 21 Winstar case or something like that. And not one word
- 22 in that opinion suggests that once a State adopts a
- 23 certain policy, that it's trapped. It can't make a
- 24 reasonable and rational transition away from that policy
- 25 to a policy that better serves the citizenry.

1	JUSTICE ALITO: Is
2	MR. CLEMENT: And if it doesn't
3	JUSTICE ALITO: Is there some identified or
4	identifiable demographic difference between the two
5	groups that either justifies or could on on a remand
6	justify the different treatment?
7	MR. CLEMENT: Well, I think the one I
8	don't think there's a demographic difference. I think
9	the one concrete difference that really is a difference
0	is, from the city's perspective, they're looking at two
1	groups, all of whom are going to have to pay a new
_2	higher monthly fee.
_3	And I think they can make a rational
_4	decision that says, look, you know, one of these groups
_5	has to make two monthly payments to the city for sewer
_6	and water. That seems a little crazy. So, why are
_7	we what we'll do is we'll just make everybody in the
8_	city in terms of their ongoing payments to the city for
_9	sewer and water we will treat them all exactly the
20	same. One fee.
21	Thank you, Your Honor.
22	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
23	Mr. Stancil, you have 4 minutes remaining.
24	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF MARK T. STANCIL
25	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS 61

Τ	MR. STANCIL: Justice Alito, I want to just
2	pick up right there. What they're actually saying on
3	these two monthly payments idea is that it's rational
4	for somebody who's just paid \$300, and now everybody
5	pays an extra \$10 a month we don't want them to have
6	to make their \$30 a month Barrett Law payment having
7	paid \$300 and the extra 10.
8	My clients still have to pay the extra \$10 a
9	month, but we're out of pocket \$9,300. I think that is
LO	I think that's patently irrational, to say that we're
11	trying to help people who are out 300 bucks from having
12	to pay an extra \$30 a month going forward.
13	JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Stancil, here's what
14	worries me about this case: To me, this is a case about
15	transition rules. All legislation creates classes of
16	citizens, and some are and and puts them all in a
17	group and says you're going to be treated in the same
18	way as long as this legislation exists. And then a
19	legislature comes along and changes that piece of
20	legislation, and different people are affected
21	differently by it.
22	And to me what you are suggesting is that
23	when that break is made and when that transition occurs,
24	the I don't know how you would apply the rule that
25	you're suggesting, which is that everybody in the former 62

- 1 class has to be treated the same as a matter of
- 2 transition policy.
- 3 MR. STANCIL: If you've promised equal
- 4 treatment -- and we're talking about a -- this is a -- a
- 5 specific case. A specific commonly shared benefit among
- 6 people who are indistinguishable on any rational basis.
- 7 They live next door to each other; they flush into the
- 8 same pipe; and they paid and were promised equal
- 9 payment. In that instance, you -- then there has to be
- 10 a rational method. You have to treat them equally when
- 11 you transition.
- So, there may be times where the city has
- 13 promised and committed, and there is no independent
- 14 rational basis for distinguishing.
- 15 It's not that -- if we want to go forward
- 16 and we want to tax blondes instead of brunettes, well,
- 17 the fact that we're going to start doing that
- 18 prospectively doesn't make that okay. And, moreover,
- 19 this isn't prospective. We're talking about an
- 20 assessment historically imposed on the very same day for
- 21 the very same.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Time is usually a rational
- 23 reason for doing it. If -- suppose everybody paid on
- 24 the installment plan. The city could say as of a
- 25 certain date we're -- no more installment payments. And

- 1 the people who paid up previously, would -- would they
- 2 be -- would they have an equal protection claim?
- 3 MR. STANCIL: If we -- I'm sorry. I
- 4 thought --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: Suppose that there had never
- 6 been the option of making the lump-sum payment.
- 7 Everybody paid on installment plans over a 10-year
- 8 period, and then the city decided January 1, 2012, no
- 9 more installment plans; everything that's still due is
- 10 forgiven. That would be rational, wouldn't it?
- MR. STANCIL: Right. Because we'd all be
- 12 treated equally.
- 13 Could I quickly get to the administrative
- 14 nightmare? In -- if you go to the Cox litigation and go
- on Pacer and you pull up document number 98, you'll find
- 16 the city's filing in the Cox case, in which they give
- 17 the name and address and amount of -- owed to every
- 18 taxpayer under any of these 20 other Barrett Law
- 19 projects. This is -- I think it's -- I think it's
- 20 ludicrous to say there's some Gordian knot that would
- 21 have to be cut to issue refunds.
- But, more generally, I think this is part of
- 23 the city's argument. They say, well, perfection may be
- 24 difficult to achieve. Well, so be it. It always is;
- 25 but that does not justify gross disparities and

- 1 "anything goes." You may want to make a clean break and
- 2 go to a new system, fine. But you have to do it in a
- 3 way that treats the same people the same.
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: The argument isn't that
- 5 it's expensive to administer as much as it is there are
- 6 1,000 people in all these projects who are already paid
- 7 up. We don't have enough money to pay them all back.
- 8 That's why we don't want to pay them back. At the same
- 9 time, we don't want to collect the money for 30 years
- 10 from these other people who aren't fully paid yet.
- MR. STANCIL: Well, if that's the case --
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: The question, I guess, is,
- 13 is that rational?
- 14 MR. STANCIL: No, Your Honor. Simply
- 15 sending in your tax bill -- again, if you sent in your
- 16 taxes yesterday, are you "too bad, so sad"? I don't
- 17 think that's rational.
- 18 And I want to get back to reliance interest
- 19 because -- I can't.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- The case is submitted.
- 22 (Whereupon at 11:09 a.m., the case in the
- above-entitled matter was submitted.)

24

25

	advise 58:7	18:4 23:3	arose 60:18	56:12,17,20
A 20.21	afford 21:10	35:12 43:10	articulated	60:2 65:7,8,18
abandon 29:21	22:9	44:7 49:1	46:13	bad 8:18 23:16
32:13 34:13	age 38:1,2	50:17 55:7	asking 20:15	65:16
abandoning		57:20 64:17	asking 20.13 asks 4:18 58:20	balance 41:7
3:11 45:6	ago 13:8 17:21			
able 20:7 38:4	agree 20:11	amounts 13:2	aspect 28:14	balances 10:1
46:2	31:16	analogue 33:7	assess 48:22	16:2 22:25
above-entitled	agreed 31:7	analogy 38:21	assessed 51:18	29:25 36:12
1:12 65:23	35:21 44:3	angry 5:17	51:19	47:21 54:19
absolutely 23:20	agreeing 4:19	12:19 16:4	assessing 13:24	ballpark 57:14
23:22 55:16	agreement 4:18	anomaly 33:16	assessment 4:21	Barrett 3:23
abutting 47:2	ahead 36:16	51:6,15	6:15 8:5 27:1	4:10 6:15 9:16
acceptable 30:8	AL 1:3,7	answer 12:19,22	34:2 39:11	9:25 11:22
accounts 30:1,3	aliens 5:3	42:6,10 55:21	43:11 47:12,13	12:4 13:18,22
35:13 41:23,24	Alito 18:8,12	58:2	48:8,9,24	14:9 27:15
47:19 54:19	30:5,12,18	anymore 31:8	50:12 63:20	28:1,11 29:22
accurate 57:11	31:5,11 34:18	anyway 25:5	assessments 7:9	29:25 30:16,19
achieve 24:17	34:20 35:2,19	APPEARAN	32:22 40:22	30:22,23,24,25
37:22 64:24	43:21 44:10,19	1:15	47:25	31:25 32:12,13
action 6:1,4	44:24 45:2,5	appellate 9:14	assessor 51:21	33:18 34:10
11:21 34:8	45:24 52:22	50:19	associated 30:2	40:14 41:8
57:17,18	61:1,3 62:1	appendix 28:9	42:8 44:14	43:8,25 46:15
active 11:22	63:22 64:5	applied 33:10	assume 36:12	46:16,20 47:16
additional 52:21	alive 26:1	apply 5:3 39:15	assumption 18:1	48:24 49:3,9
address 36:17	Allegheny 6:21	59:3,17 62:24	48:10,25 52:18	49:20 51:3
64:17	10:23 17:4	apportioned	asymmetry	53:7 55:12
addressed 18:14	18:14 26:23	47:1,24	13:12	62:6 64:18
addresses 33:25	32:9,18,20	apportionment	as-applied 9:5	base 33:1,4
administer	33:7,8,12 34:7	32:24	attaches 23:23	based 45:12
26:22 65:5	36:18 39:10	appraisal 47:8	authority 40:3,5	52:13
administrating	50:25 51:12,13	appraisals 47:5	40:6	bases 34:24
25:12	52:1 59:5	approving 28:18	automatically	35:25
administrative	60:17	arbitrarily	4:12	basically 5:5,20
12:6,6,7 27:5,8	Allendorf 50:10	20:13	avoid 39:25	50:21
34:21 35:8	alles 50:9	arbitrary 4:2,3	avoiding 35:8	basis 5:10 7:22
39:16,21,25	allocated 48:10	11:11 22:8,15	aware 36:20	21:9 26:19,20
44:2,6,8 55:22	allowed 9:9	23:19	a.m 1:14 3:2	30:9,22 32:18
58:18 64:13	all-paid-up 16:7	area 36:21 39:7	65:22	34:22 41:17,22
administrativ	alternative 30:1	argue 28:21		44:11 56:14
25:22	amicus 42:1	argued 27:1	B	63:6,14
administrator	amnesties 4:25	argument 1:13	B 23:6	Beach 8:15
57:24	amnesty 4:24	2:2,5,8 3:3,7	back 6:24 7:10	began 55:12
admit 32:11	5:2 8:19 24:6	27:18 29:16	8:4,4,21,24	beginning 42:17
adopt 33:14	24:11 26:14	44:2 61:24	11:17 12:11,15	behalf 2:4,7,10
adopting 32:4	59:8,10,11,11	64:23 65:4	16:7,9 19:2,9	3:8 29:17
•	59:16	arguments 4:23	19:20 35:13	61:25
adopts 60:22	amount 9:15	Armour 1:3 3:4	51:22 55:5,11	belies 26:11
adversary 4:23		1.00.1	ĺ	20.11
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

believe 27:7	broad 5:14 9:4	41:1,2,2 43:2,2	38:17,21 39:3	32:15,19 34:22
benefit 3:20	broadly 26:14	43:3,3 50:8,10	42:5,9 43:1	46:12,13 56:5
37:22 53:16,21	broken 43:3	50:11 51:5,12	46:18,22,25	64:2
54:11,13 63:5	brought 19:23	52:12 53:24	47:6,22 48:4	claiming 9:19
benefiting 48:23	36:1 44:7	57:11,12,16	49:18 53:13,19	class 11:21
benefits 11:20	53:24	59:1,3 60:19	54:3 57:15	39:18 40:18,20
54:24,25	brunettes 22:8	60:20,21 62:14	58:11,16,24	40:21 57:17,18
bet 31:8	63:16	62:14 63:5	59:10,14,16	63:1
bets 46:16	bucks 62:11	64:16 65:11,21	61:22 65:20	classes 39:14,24
better 53:9	budget 21:21	65:22	choice 4:16 19:7	62:15
60:25	built 14:1	cases 5:10 8:13	19:14,15,16	classic 37:24
big 20:12 37:6	burden 17:2	10:25 15:11	52:25	classification
52:24 53:2	27:5	17:5 19:13,17	choose 29:3	4:2 41:11
bill 23:17 65:15	burdened 18:2	19:23,23 39:11	choosing 4:8	clause 27:9,18
bills 3:15	burdens 35:9	52:9 54:9	chose 3:11 14:11	28:23,25 31:17
bit 13:5 46:6	business 25:6	59:16	CHRISTINE	31:21 33:4
blonde 22:7	30:17,19 31:25	cash 23:2	1:3	37:16,21 39:23
blondes 63:16	40:14 41:8	certain 7:5	circumstances	49:4 60:20
blue 28:9	45:8,22,25	42:13 60:23	5:6 59:9	clean 29:24 35:3
board 21:4	49:17 50:3	63:25	cited 42:1	40:15 45:9
bonds 22:18	51:3 53:7	certainly 11:2	cities 21:20	65:1
borrow 24:15	59:23	36:13 53:8	citizenry 60:25	clear 4:7 5:10
bother 7:25		56:11,23 59:19	citizens 62:16	6:17 8:17
boy 41:23	C	challenge 9:5	citizenship 5:3	16:10 19:18
break 29:24	C 2:1 3:1 23:7	35:23 36:1	city 1:6 3:4,11	25:8 43:7 50:7
35:3 40:15	calculate 11:20	47:13,14 51:23	4:4,18 9:22	53:10 58:2
43:16 45:9	calculated 30:7	51:24	10:10 11:4	clearly 39:8
62:23 65:1	calculation 12:3	challenged 41:4	12:2,8 13:23	Clement 1:18
Breyer 6:10,18	calculator 58:4	50:12,15	17:22 18:3,8	2:6 29:15,16
6:23 7:7,14,18	call 15:16 35:3,5	challenging 48:9	22:5 24:3	29:18 30:12,20
7:23 8:8,11,16	called 50:10	chance 24:2	29:20,20 30:6	31:11 32:6
12:5 14:20	candle 40:13	change 9:9 20:7	31:15 36:8,12	33:5,21 34:5
15:15,23 16:3	care 6:18	20:17,18 21:23	37:12 38:17	34:19 35:1,22
16:12,16,20,24	Carmichael	29:4 33:14,19	41:7 43:16,23	36:5,9,13 37:9
17:9,12,17	40:9	33:22 34:4,4,6	44:4,18,19	38:5,9,13,20
25:3,18,23	case 3:4 5:19	34:7,10 48:25	45:1,10 48:17	39:2,5 40:7,24
26:12 39:13	8:14 9:4,23	changed 20:20	50:16 53:6,9	41:13,16,19,22
55:1,8,19 56:6	10:21 11:20,21	changes 62:19	55:2,5 56:5,7	42:7,25 44:10
56:9 57:3 65:4	17:24,25 19:21	changing 33:25	57:24 59:7,8	44:24 45:4,7
65:12	20:1,2 21:9,11	charging 22:19	59:20 61:15,18	46:10,21 47:3
Breyer's 13:20	22:4 26:6,10	24:21	61:18 63:12,24	47:7 48:1,7,14
brief 28:9 43:22	26:16 27:21	check 35:11	64:8	48:20 49:22
49:19 56:13	28:15 32:4	Chief 3:3,9 5:22	citywide 14:6	53:1,18,25
briefs 42:2	33:8 34:6,9	17:20 18:3	city's 3:22 61:10	54:6 55:7,16
bring 11:4 18:20	37:7,8,24,25	26:21,25 29:13	64:16,23	55:21 56:1,21
40:3 44:21	38:18 39:4,10	29:18 32:17	city-county 21:5	57:5,12,18
46:12 51:21	40:10,25 41:1	33:6,19,22	claim 18:5 32:9	58:14,23 59:1
	-	-	-	-

59:14,18 60:8	concern 35:7	controller's	15:11 17:5	61:14
61:2,7	60:14,15	30:23 40:16	19:17	decisions 26:15
clients 14:24	concerned 27:15	convenience	Cox 11:21 13:10	declares 4:10
23:25 24:20	39:23	34:21 44:2,9	17:25 18:7	default 4:17
62:8	concerns 4:24	convenient	42:1 57:19	19:18 54:13
close 23:18	54:15	22:11	64:14,16	define 7:16,18
35:13 58:5	concrete 61:9	converting	crazy 23:9 61:16	defined 3:19
closed 47:20	concretely 30:20	60:19	create 21:20	40:18
Coal 40:9	condition 28:18	correct 9:21	31:19	defines 3:21
code 25:25	confront 35:14	14:2 19:18	created 39:5	definition 8:25
26:14,17	confronting	27:4	creates 13:11	11:11
collect 28:4,6	40:10	correctly 13:23	38:25 62:15	degrees 38:24
31:2,6,12,16	connect 3:13	43:22	creating 15:9	delaying 4:8
43:10,14 44:20	17:7	cost 13:2 20:4	40:21	demise 49:4
44:21 46:17	connection 7:5	21:7 42:3	cure 18:8 53:20	demographic
65:9	connects 14:4	44:14 45:21	curious 27:14	61:4,8
collected 4:11	considering	46:1,4 47:9,9	31:14	denied 52:16,17
22:21,22 23:1	32:19	58:13,18,25	cut 35:11 55:3	deny 21:16
28:3 45:17	constituted	costs 44:6,20	64:21	describing
collecting 8:1	27:21	47:1,5,6,7,23	cutoff 6:13	46:11
44:5 55:4	Constitution	47:25 48:1,4,7	D	designed 24:17
collections 44:6	21:10	48:10,22		desirable 4:3
colloquy 32:10	constitutional	council 21:5	D 1:18 2:6 3:1	determination
come 13:13	6:19,20 19:17	counsel 4:22	29:16	6:2 24:17
14:19,19 16:18	23:23 39:7	17:20 61:22	daily 26:19	develop 59:2
23:14 54:1	53:6 60:2,11	65:20	damages 10:25	dice 50:20
56:2,4 57:8	contention 3:22	count 35:1	11:24 12:2	difference 5:19
comes 13:6,6,7	contest 4:20	counts 10:14,17	57:22 date 63:25	37:7 39:12,14
58:20 62:19	context 5:11	couple 23:19		39:22 40:18
coming 14:22	15:6 30:15	56:24	day 12:12,17 24:3 63:20	41:5 43:4
47:8	51:20 54:11,23	course 31:12		51:11 53:2
comment 55:14	59:6 60:18,18	39:22 53:17,22	deal 15:5,6 35:4	60:3 61:4,8,9,9
commitment	contexts 59:3	54:5 57:8,21	52:24	differences 33:5
48:19	context-driven	court 1:1,13	dealing 15:3 38:22 39:4	56:24 57:2
committed 9:2	25:1	3:10 9:14,14	debt 26:20 35:21	different 5:13
63:13	continue 31:1	10:24 11:24,25	44:3	6:5,11,12 13:1
common 3:20	39:15	18:15,17 19:12	decades 30:3	13:2,3 20:1
31:13 37:12	continued 31:12	22:2 27:2	41:8	24:15,19 25:5
commonly 63:5	31:15	28:12 29:19	decide 9:4 34:12	33:9 34:6,9
comparing 26:2	contract 27:18	38:3 39:20	57:25	36:17 39:4,10
complete 58:9	27:24 28:23,25	40:9 50:15,18	decided 14:8	43:6 49:8,8
completely	60:20	50:20 51:19	21:8 29:21,24	51:23 53:2
14:12 16:2	contracted 31:8	52:7,13 53:10	64:8	54:14,23 59:11
complicated	contracts 41:1	53:14 54:1,2,4	decides 23:10	60:11,18 61:6
31:6	contrary 39:21	57:23	decision 15:4	62:20
compromising	controller 41:25	courts 11:2	19:11 44:3	differential
26:19	42:2	Court's 5:9 8:12	17.11 44.3	47:18
	<u>l</u>	<u> </u>	<u>l</u>	<u>l </u>

1100			<u> </u>	<u> </u>
differentiate	25:8	entities 31:9	eventually 43:9	extension 51:1
39:24	drawing 4:4 8:8	entitled 7:5 8:25	49:20 50:16	53:15,21 54:4
differently 5:7	drawn 34:23	11:12 17:5	everybody 6:14	54:24
14:22 19:12	51:25	21:24 29:5	15:2 19:8	extra 14:7 62:5
62:21	draws 36:22	50:18 58:12	20:15,17 22:19	62:7,8,12
difficult 64:24	52:1	entry 5:4	34:1 37:17	extreme 5:1
disagree 52:5	drew 10:23	equal 4:6 5:9 7:4	43:10,24 46:4	
discharge 28:8	drill 23:8	8:25 9:1 10:8	46:4,5 48:22	F
discover 26:4	drink 38:1,4,7	11:12 12:1,24	51:18,21 54:13	face 31:21
discrete 58:6	drinking 37:25	12:25 15:11	58:12,12 59:24	facially 33:10
discretely 3:19	due 29:25 42:25	17:8 19:22	61:17 62:4,25	51:14,15 52:1
discrimination	60:14 64:9	21:9,16,25	63:23 64:7	facing 49:12
37:25 39:8	duties 28:8	24:2,23 27:3,8	everybody's	fact 4:2,16 6:14
52:9,12 54:9	D.C 1:9,16,18	29:5 31:14,17	19:3 48:25	8:13 10:4 15:4
disparities		31:21 32:8,15	exact 30:17	15:15 16:14
11:14 64:25	E	32:19 33:3,16	33:21 52:12	32:7 33:24
disparity 3:25	E 2:1 3:1,1	33:16 34:15	exactly 14:19	41:5 43:22
10:9,15,17,19	earlier 45:13	37:15,18,20	18:14 19:19	63:17
10:20 11:5,7	easier 26:21	39:22 40:25	38:13,24 46:14	facts 16:12
disproportion	easily 52:19	41:2,10 42:14	52:8 61:19	failing 28:7
17:1	easy 10:22 11:1	42:17 43:3,11	example 4:9	fair 14:10 55:4
disproportion	27:2	46:12 52:14,16	5:12,23,25	fairly 26:6
17:3 18:2	economic 30:9	52:17,19 53:23	24:6,14	faith 4:5
dispute 36:7,14	effect 60:7	60:10,15,19	exception 27:8	faulty 25:17,21
disregards	effectively 18:23	63:3,8 64:2	Excuse 42:9	favor 11:25
41:10	effects 14:12	equality 50:9	exert 46:3	FCC 8:15
distinction 4:4	eight 40:12,19	equalize 19:13	exist 39:17	February 1:10
9:24 34:23	either 20:7 24:8	equally 3:19	exists 50:5 62:18	23:12
36:22 39:20	38:12 49:6	10:10 19:9	expectation 37:7	Federal 11:21
40:1 51:24	50:21 61:5	22:1 24:12	37:10	23:11 51:7
52:2,3 55:9	elect 43:13	30:9 32:22,24	expedience 35:5	54:7 57:19,23
distinguishing	elects 59:20	33:23 40:23	expediency	60:1,9
25:6 56:15	eliminate 4:5	42:13,21 47:1	34:21	fee 13:24,24,25
63:14	37:20	47:11,24 48:10	expense 39:16	14:5,14 21:6
divided 47:11	employers 40:11	48:18,22 63:10	39:17,25	31:9 61:12,20
document 64:15	40:11,19	64:12	expenses 39:22	feel 60:1
documents	enforce 31:4	ESQ 1:16,18 2:3	expensive 21:13	fees 15:1 22:16
27:16 28:17	45:12 49:6	2:6,9	22:1 65:5	figure 11:15
doing 8:20 29:23	enforceable	essentially 13:24	explain 9:23	35:16,17 57:10
47:8 63:17,23	28:23	established	35:24	57:22 58:18
dollar 9:15 12:3	enforcement 6:4	41:11	explanation	figures 57:14
dollars 22:6	59:23	estimate 41:25	56:19	file 24:8
door 6:6 13:1	Engquist 5:23	42:2	explicitly 3:20	filed 23:15 24:7
63:7	24:16	estoppel 41:1	explore 27:20	filer 23:16
dozens 25:4	entire 23:17	43:2	express 50:21	files 31:3
draw 8:6,13,22	entirely 39:4	ET 1:3,7	52:7	filing 64:16
11:1,2 20:6,8	59:11	event 28:16	extending 33:2	final 47:14

		•		
finality 47:17	36:5 37:3,4,13	Ginsburg 9:11	59:2,3,22,23	43:9
48:11	37:14,17 43:17	11:17 19:7,16	61:11 62:12,17	harming 37:22
financially	43:18,19,21	38:11,14	63:17	hassle 59:21
20:24	53:8 59:9	give 7:10,24 8:4	good 4:5 26:8	hates 20:16
financing 20:7	forgiving 5:11	10:5 11:4,15	30:14 35:6	hear 3:3 35:2
29:23	5:14 23:4	12:10,15,16	Gordian 64:20	44:10
find 47:23 64:15	24:14 35:20	17:6 23:19	gosh 23:5	heard 55:8
fine 7:18 37:2	former 62:25	29:7 37:3	government 5:7	56:18,22
40:20 51:17	forward 13:15	43:17 53:5	5:20 30:15	Heaven 59:4
65:2	13:20 38:18	55:3,10 56:16	32:5,11 34:8	heavily 8:15
finger 30:6	42:11 56:2	56:19 58:21	35:6	Heckler 52:11
45:24	58:13,20 62:12	64:16	gross 3:25 10:9	53:14,14,25
fired 46:6	63:15	given 32:20 37:2	10:14,17,19	54:15
first 9:14 28:2	foul 26:16	gives 23:21	11:5,7,14	held 28:6
33:6 35:13	four 27:22,25	giving 16:9	56:25 58:3,4	help 62:11
43:12 60:12	43:13	35:20,25 37:5	64:25	helpful 40:4
fits 44:2	free 8:3	go 5:18 8:3 19:3	grossly 17:1,2	herring 23:5
five 35:1	friend 55:9	19:20 21:2	18:1	higher 61:12
flat 13:24,25	friend's 56:18	23:11 24:19	ground 31:13	highlights 22:15
14:5,14	front 24:1 29:6	32:15 35:2,13	37:12 47:10	historically
flexibility 7:16	29:9 30:8	38:11 42:21	grounds 37:21	63:20
flip 28:25	fulfilling 20:16	51:20,22 55:5	group 3:19 46:2	history 8:4
flush 9:8 63:7	full 3:15 4:19	63:15 64:14,14	46:2 62:17	hold 43:24
flyspecking 51:3	8:21 16:19	65:2	groups 3:17	home 45:11
focus 51:10	24:1 41:6	goal 24:17,18	19:11 61:5,11	homeowner
following 7:1	47:19 50:14,17	25:3	61:14	58:21
12:8	50:22 52:20	goes 13:19 54:21	guaranteed 7:3	homeowners
footing 4:9	fully 65:10	65:1	7:4 52:14	3:19 6:6 9:5
forcing 49:13	funded 3:23	going 5:21 6:7	guess 20:14 38:3	Honor 5:8,22
foresee 26:6	48:5	8:3 9:8,10	38:3 65:12	6:16,25 7:21
forever 26:4	funding 3:12	11:10 13:12,15	guessing 57:7	8:7,23 11:6,16
60:9	future 8:19 14:3	13:21 14:11,14	guy 24:8	14:3 18:7,11
forgave 14:20	16:8 31:22,23	14:15 20:6,18	guys 50:19	21:12,17,22
16:8	36:14 41:10,12	22:24 23:17	52:17	24:13 25:1,16
forgive 5:21	41:15	25:7,11 26:8	H	25:21 26:9,24
22:24 24:23	G	26:13,16 27:20	hacked 60:1	27:4 28:21
29:2,24 31:20	$\overline{\mathbf{G}}$ 3:1	31:22,23 32:1	half 10:7,8	29:11 40:7
31:22 32:14	gain 45:6	34:1,11,12,13	13:17 41:23	61:21 65:14
34:11 36:11	game 40:12	35:12,14 37:1 37:3,21 38:18	happen 26:7	Honor's 13:4
44:3 54:18 59:23	general 15:13	40:11,22 41:7	55:2	hooking 14:21
forgiven 5:4	54:24	41:24 42:3,11	happened 12:13	hook-up 50:2 hook-ups 33:3
16:2,22 22:23	generally 26:15	42:18 44:21,22	15:24 27:19	48:5
23:17 64:10	64:22	47:9 48:21,23	38:2 52:8	hope 19:24
forgiveness 18:9	getting 19:9	48:25 50:2	happening	horrible 60:13
26:14,17 27:17	25:5 52:21,21	51:16 54:18	60:16	house 35:15
28:19 35:23	59:22	57:8 58:24	happens 4:24	49:15 50:1
20.17 33.23		57.0 50.2T		17.13 30.1
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	ı

			1	
huge 58:17,19	63:13	52:20	32:6,17 33:6	Kennedy 27:13
human 26:1	Indiana 1:7 15:1	involve 5:2 57:4	33:19,22 34:18	27:23 28:14,22
hundreds 25:4	50:10,19	involves 57:5	34:20 35:2,19	29:7 32:2,6
hypothesis 55:5	Indianapolis 1:6	involving 20:3	36:3,7,10,11	36:3,7,10,11
56:11	3:5 18:24	irony 43:15	37:6,9,19 38:6	37:6,9 48:13
hypothetical	22:19 29:21	irrational 6:2	38:11,14,17,21	48:16 52:23
13:4 60:5	indistinguisha	62:10	39:3,13 40:17	60:4
	63:6	irrationality	40:24 41:9,14	key 5:11
<u> </u>	individual 24:7	26:4	41:18,20 42:5	kick 48:12
idea 34:19 48:21	26:20	IRS 23:14 26:17	42:9,10 43:1	kind 5:25
54:12 62:3	individualized	issue 18:4 33:25	43:21 44:10,19	knot 64:20
identifiable 61:4	6:2 24:16	52:12 64:21	44:24 45:2,5	know 6:7 11:13
identified 61:3	inequal 23:3		45:24 46:18,22	15:16 20:5,8
ignorant 14:12	inequality 42:22	J	46:25 47:6,22	20:23 22:5,25
illegal 5:3,4	56:25 58:3,4	January 64:8	48:4,13,16	27:14 30:21
illustration 23:9	inflicts 19:17	jettisoning 3:23	49:18 51:4	31:16 32:12,14
imagine 12:8	inherently 6:1	Joe 16:21	52:10,22,23	33:6 34:11
44:17 45:10	initial 3:24	judges 28:12	53:11,13,19,22	35:1,6,10,12
immigration 5:2	27:16	judgment 5:13	54:3 55:1,8,19	35:16 36:25
impermissible	injury 52:15	9:13,13 44:13	55:24 56:2,6,6	40:2,9,10,12
54:20	insolvency	45:15 49:9	56:7,9 57:3,10	40:15 41:23
implications	46:17	June 23:1	57:15 58:1,11	44:12 45:1,19
21:21	installment 4:8	Justice 3:3,9	58:16,24 59:10	48:21 49:5,11
important 9:24	4:10,12,14,17	4:22 5:16 6:10	59:14,16 60:4	49:13,23 50:13
39:12 51:11	7:20 18:10	6:18,23 7:7,14	61:1,3,22 62:1	50:19,22 51:4
imposed 4:1	28:2,6 29:4	7:18,23 8:8,11	62:13 63:22	51:20 54:2,8
5:11 6:5 24:12	30:10 32:14	8:16 9:11	64:5 65:4,12	54:14 55:17,17
63:20	44:4 63:24,25	10:14,18 11:3	65:20	57:5,6,14,22
imposes 34:13	64:7,9	11:17 12:5	Justice's 5:23	58:5,6,7,21
34:15	installments	13:16,20 14:13	justification	59:6,19,20
imposing 45:11	4:19 43:13	14:18,20 15:2 15:15,23 16:3	3:25 20:13	61:14 62:24
impossible	49:6 59:13	,	justified 3:25	knows 59:4
25:23,24 improve 49:14	instance 9:14	16:12,16,20,24	22:4	$\lfloor \frac{}{}$
_	43:12 63:9	17:9,10,11,12 17:17,20 18:3	justifies 44:9	laissez-faire
improvement 48:2	instructions	18:8,12,19,23	47:18 61:5	59:20
improvements	52:7	19:7,16,20,25	justify 61:6	lands 47:2
29:23	insubstantial	20:12,14,22,24	64:25	large 39:16
incentive 18:20	57:20	21:8,13,15,18	K	late 23:16 24:7
incentives 52:11	intended 20:16	24:5,10,22	Kagan 10:14,18	24:14 50:23,23
include 29:2	interest 4:19	25:3,18,23	17:10 19:25	laughed 45:14
including 39:7	46:2 47:17	26:12,21,25	20:14,22,24	Laughter 17:15
income 23:11	57:13 65:18	27:7,13,23	21:18 31:18	17:19 19:1,4
60:5,6	invalid 36:22 invalidate 36:19	28:14,22 29:7	62:13	27:10 29:10
increased 21:5	36:23 37:17	29:13,18 30:5	Kagan's 53:12	46:24
22:16	51:16	30:12,18 31:5	keep 31:3 40:16	law 3:20,23 4:7
independent	invalidated	31:11,18 32:2	41:7	4:10 6:15,16
	mvanuateu	31.11,10 32.2	11.7	1.10 0.15,10
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

6:19,20,21,25	11:13	42:20	35:2,12,16,18	months 6:7
7:6 8:9 9:2,16	liable 28:7	lose 44:12	40:8,18 44:17	22:24
9:20,25 11:12	lien 4:13 28:5	loss 44:5,12 58:9	50:7 51:4,4	morning 3:4
11:22 12:4,24	31:4 45:12	lot 6:10 9:18	52:24 53:1	move 31:24
13:22 14:9	liens 30:2	17:13 48:8,11	54:4,14 55:25	34:16
21:25 27:15	likes 30:14	53:9	57:16 58:2,23	moved 44:16
28:1,11 29:3	limitation 54:11	lots 6:11 47:2,11	59:6,7,19	Moving 13:20
29:22,25 30:16	54:12	49:12	means 19:22	mud 58:2
30:19,22,23,24	limitations	lower 11:2	mechanism 3:12	multiple 52:4
30:25 31:25	54:25	low-income	men 38:1,4,6	municipal 14:6
32:12,13,20,23	limited 59:2,5	49:12	mention 40:2	28:5
33:1,1,15,18	limiting 59:7	lucky 23:16	mentioned 47:4	
33:21 34:10,13	limits 11:1	ludicrous 64:20	53:13	N
34:14,16 36:21	line 8:6,14,22	lump 55:25 56:3	Mere 3:16	N 2:1,1 3:1
37:25 38:23,24	10:11,24 15:12	lump-sum 64:6	mess 20:12	name 64:17
38:25 39:5,7	20:6,8 22:15		method 3:11	national 23:11
40:14,23 41:8	25:8	M	22:10 23:21	nature 6:4
41:10,11,12,15	lines 11:1,2	maintain 41:24	49:20 63:10	nearly 30:3
43:8,25 46:15	13:25	42:3 44:15,25	million 57:11,13	need 8:13 9:3
46:16,20 47:10	line-drawing	maintaining	58:13,17,25	neighbor 9:7
47:16 48:24	11:19	30:1,2 44:14	millions 23:12	17:3
49:3,5,9,20	listen 58:2 60:12	making 8:17	mind 5:24 9:9	neighborhood
50:1,5,5,9 51:2	litigation 37:20	20:12 35:3	40:3	3:14 7:2
51:3,7,9,25,25	42:1 57:19,23	40:1 43:1 44:6	minute 27:20	neighbors 3:13
52:24 53:7	64:14	64:6	51:10	24:4
54:7,21 55:12	little 9:22 13:5	mandamus	minutes 61:23	net 44:5,12,12
59:2 62:6	46:6 55:14	51:21	missed 15:15	45:2,3,5,5
64:18	58:15 61:16	manner 4:11	modest 31:9	neutral 33:10
laws 49:3	live 6:6 13:1	28:3	money 5:2 6:14	51:14,16 52:1
lawsuit 18:20	63:7	MARK 1:16 2:3	7:10 8:21 9:18	never 19:3 64:5
38:3	logic 5:1,5	2:9 3:7 61:24	12:11,14,15,20	new 13:19,21
lawyers 17:1	logical 37:16	math 22:11	13:2,22 15:19	14:5,6,8,14,21
left 3:12 45:18	long 41:12 62:18	Mathews 52:11	15:25 16:9,18	14:24,25 15:9
legislation 62:15	longer 11:5	53:14,14 54:1	16:19 17:22	21:6 22:17
62:18,20	42:22	matter 1:12 6:19	19:9 20:9 23:2	61:11 65:2
legislative 19:14	look 32:12 40:8	11:12 15:13	44:7,20 45:21	next-door 3:13
19:15	40:8 43:8	43:9 63:1	55:4,6,10	9:7 17:3
legislature 19:8	47:23 50:8,10	65:23	56:17,20 60:2	nightmare 25:7
38:15 62:19	52:11 54:17	mayor 12:9,9,10	65:7,9	27:8 41:24
legitimate 24:18	61:14	16:5,5,18,23	month 12:13	55:22 64:14
let's 7:8 15:16	looked 28:13	16:25 20:5,10	13:7 14:7,15	non-gross 10:20
20:1,2 29:8	looking 13:19	20:17,18 21:3	22:20 25:12	non-starter
level 39:9,9	15:7 25:24	59:20	46:6 62:5,6,9	49:16
51:22	51:6,7 61:10	mean 5:6 6:12	62:12	Nordlinger 6:22
leveling 53:10	looks 6:20 20:5	8:5,16 22:17	monthly 14:25	17:4 51:5,24
53:11,20,20	loosely 21:4	24:25 26:5,9	21:6 22:16	normally 40:1
liability 5:14	lop 13:17 15:7	30:13,18,21	61:12,15 62:3	notice 23:20,22

50.40		l , ,,,,		
60:13	ones 7:20 13:9	package 15:5,6	50:2,18 56:5	63:6 64:1 65:3
notion 26:11	56:3	page 2:2 26:3,3	56:12 59:13	65:6,10
nullification	one's 4:5	26:3,3 49:19	60:6 61:11	percent 17:6
53:16	ongoing 30:22	pages 25:25	62:8,12 65:7,8	24:3 51:18,19
number 10:23	47:20 61:18	27:12 28:8	payers 45:18,18	perfect 25:14,19
19:13 31:9	open 20:3	paid 3:15 6:15	45:19	perfection 64:23
40:8 57:6	operate 9:16	7:9 8:1,5,18,20	paying 3:12 4:5	perfectly 43:16
64:15	opinion 5:23	10:2,7,8 12:14	9:22 17:2,6	43:17
numbers 10:5	32:3 56:14	15:8,20 16:19	22:18 24:1	period 41:3,3
N.E 50:11	60:22	16:19 18:9	payment 3:16	42:13,16,19,20
	opted 11:23	22:17 23:3,12	4:8 23:21,21	55:4 64:8
0	option 10:3,4	23:14,15 25:7	24:15 28:12	permissible 53:5
O 2:1 3:1	36:8,9,12,13	25:9,9,10	62:6 63:9 64:6	person 14:4 17:7
objective 15:13	36:15,18,23	26:25 30:8,9	payments 4:10	46:5 55:11
obligation 31:1	38:18 39:9	39:16,18 41:6	4:12 14:20	personally 28:7
37:12 51:20	44:9 52:8 53:4	47:19 48:6	28:2,6 31:2,6	perspective
57:25 58:6	53:10 54:13	50:13,17,22	32:14 44:5	61:10
obligations 24:4	64:6	55:25 56:3,12	55:12 61:15,18	Petitioner 4:1
31:3	options 23:6	56:15 59:25	62:3 63:25	Petitioners 1:4
obvious 52:5	43:23,23	62:4,7 63:8,23	pays 14:5,7 15:1	1:17 2:4,10 3:8
obviously 53:6	oral 1:12 2:2,5	64:1,7 65:6,10	29:9 42:15,15	3:12,15 4:1
occurs 62:23	3:7 29:16	parking 4:25	42:17,18 62:5	61:25
Oddly 17:17	ordinance 36:22	5:13 24:5,8,14	penalty 5:11	pick 22:10 62:2
offered 20:20	36:24 41:3	24:18,23 25:2	24:14,19	piece 62:19
office 12:12 28:7	ordinarily 53:15	59:21,22,24,25	people 5:7 7:3,8	pipe 9:7 13:2
30:23,23,24	53:21 54:4	part 32:12 36:15	7:19,25 8:1,5	14:5 17:7 63:8
31:1 40:16,16	ordinary 46:5	50:25 64:22	8:20 9:6,12	pipes 13:2 47:10
44:25 45:8	original 48:21	particular 5:10	12:10,13,15,18	Pittsburgh 6:22
officer 5:17	outer 10:25	15:12 59:6	13:1,12,13,14	10:23 17:4
officials 28:5	outline 43:22	particularly	14:14,14,22,25	18:14 26:23
Oh 17:9	outset 7:16	3:18 30:3 35:9	15:18 16:4,7,8	32:10,18,21
okay 6:23 7:18	outstanding	51:1	17:13 18:1,17	33:7,8,13 34:7
8:2 15:24 16:3	10:1 15:19	parties 36:15	19:12 22:7	36:18 39:10
16:17 25:13	29:25 41:6	passed 43:6	23:3,12 25:6,8	50:25 51:12,13
35:22 41:11	47:20 54:19	patently 62:10	25:9,10 26:15	52:1 59:5
43:16,17 45:17	overdue 5:12	PAUL 1:18 2:6	29:5 30:8,9	60:17
53:1 55:21	overpayment	29:16	31:6 33:2,23	places 13:3 40:8
58:16 63:18	12:4	pay 4:19 6:8 9:6	33:24 34:3,12	plaintiff 37:21
Oklahoma	owe 5:20,21	9:10 13:21	35:15,21 39:15	plaintiffs 9:12
38:14	15:24 16:17	14:14,15,16,24	40:21 42:12	9:19
old 13:21 14:6	58:18	14:25 15:3	44:3 45:23	plan 4:8,14,17
14:14 15:8	owed 58:8 64:17	21:1,11 24:18	47:19,20 48:6	7:20 13:11
19:10 22:19	owners 48:17	25:11 29:6	48:6 49:14,23	18:10 29:4
35:4 50:5,10		31:7 34:2,3	50:11,13,15,17	44:4 63:24
older 16:15,16	P	40:22 42:19	55:25 56:2,12	plans 30:10 49:4
once 25:5 47:13	P 3:1	44:4,22 46:5	56:15 57:3,7	64:7,9
49:23 60:22	Pacer 64:15	48:6,25 49:14	59:12 62:11,20	pleading 12:2
	I	I	l	I

	1	1	ı	1
please 3:10	32:3	15:18,25 16:4	47:4,12 50:5	41:17,22 42:11
29:19	previously 64:1	16:15,16 20:3	provisions 27:14	43:4 44:11,13
plus 58:14	price 7:5	21:7 22:18,19	27:25 47:15	44:19,23,24
Plyler 22:2	primarily 47:1	56:16,23,24	48:12	52:3,5 60:24
pocket 62:9	principal 3:22	57:1,6,7 58:8	public 21:4	61:13 62:3
pocketbook	principle 32:3	64:19 65:6	29:23 30:14	63:6,10,14,22
52:15	59:8,18	promise 27:16	pull 6:3 64:15	64:10 65:13,17
point 4:23 8:16	prior 10:4 41:11	27:21,23 43:3	punitive 10:25	rationale 25:13
8:17 13:20	private 31:9	43:9,16 48:17	purposes 20:16	25:18
43:5 48:18	probably 56:22	promised 9:6	54:9	rationality 15:5
49:3,8,23 51:5	problem 11:19	12:24,25 42:12	pursue 15:13	45:6 52:3
54:9	12:7 13:16	63:3,8,13	put 4:9 12:2	rattle 28:1
police 5:16	17:8 18:9	proper 53:16,21	13:3 28:17	reaction 32:8
policy 21:20,21	31:17 33:9	54:5	30:5,20 37:1	read 28:11
21:23 29:4	34:4 38:18	property 4:13	45:24	real 33:7 58:17
30:14 31:24	50:25 51:17	proposition	puts 62:16	reality 6:8 19:6
33:14,20,23,25	58:17	33:14	putting 51:1	realize 49:15
60:23,24,25	process 35:9	prospect 49:13		really 23:8
63:2	48:9 60:14	prospective	Q	24:10 26:16
political 34:20	produced 12:3	63:19	qualitatively	31:5 32:8,9
35:5 46:3	program 14:9	prospectively	5:13 6:5 24:15	34:14 36:1
49:11	20:15,18,20	63:18	quarrel 43:18	42:4 45:1,4
politically 14:9	21:6 22:2,17	protection 5:9	question 7:11	51:11 54:14
30:7 44:16	29:22 30:1	10:8 12:1	10:19 11:8,17	55:3 58:5 60:8
49:20	34:10 35:4	15:11 17:8	11:24 13:5,7	60:16 61:9
popularity	44:15,15,23	19:22 21:9,16	24:11 39:19	real-world 41:5
49:11,19,21,22	45:12	24:24 27:3,9	40:4 42:10	reason 4:4,15,15
position 9:20	programs 4:25	28:15 31:14,17	49:7 52:2	7:24 11:9
12:1 31:4	24:11 25:5	31:21 32:9,15	55:18,20,23	15:12 19:19
36:24,25 43:6	26:14	32:19 33:3	56:10 57:21,23	30:6,10 35:24
43:15	prohibitive	34:15 37:15,20	65:12	39:25 43:4
possible 19:20	20:25	39:23 40:25	questioning	47:18 53:22
19:22 34:24	project 3:14 7:2	41:2 43:3	41:21	58:10 63:23
potentially 51:8	10:11 11:22	46:13 53:23	quickly 64:13	reasonable
power 46:3	12:4,11,14,16	60:10,15,19	quite 6:17 27:6	25:14,20 60:24
practical 19:6	12:18,18,20	64:2	quorum 43:18	reasons 5:9
22:14	13:6,8,14,15	proved 29:22	quote 4:10 53:15	12:23 23:20
prefer 53:7	13:18,18,19,21	49:20	R	35:19,20 52:4
premise 25:21	13:21 15:17,17	proven 49:9,10	$\frac{\mathbf{R}}{\mathbf{R}}$ 3:1	REBUTTAL
present 56:4	22:22 47:7	provide 27:16	raise 18:16	2:8 61:24
presenting 50:9	48:2,5,22,23	28:15 31:20	raise 18:16 raised 19:2,20	recognizing
presents 34:4	50:12 55:9	37:13 53:8	raised 19:2,20 raises 4:23	35:10
preserve 29:1	56:11,12,13	59:8	raising 13:23	records 56:8
presumably	57:16 58:21	providing 37:14	rational 5:10	red 23:5
5:24 46:3	projects 9:16,25	provision 26:1,2	8:17,19 30:11	reduced 50:16
prevail 17:23	10:6 11:18	29:2 43:14	30:13 34:8,22	referring 47:24
18:5,5 28:16	12:25 14:4	46:14,19,20	35:25 39:20,25	47:25 48:1
			33.43 37.40,43	

	<u> </u>	ı	1	1
reflected 48:3,8	33:17 34:16	52:14,18 55:16	17:22 18:4	seven 10:6
refund 6:14	43:11	55:19 56:6	20:5 22:5 28:2	sever 54:21
10:11 16:1	Requires 28:4	57:14,17 60:2	28:4,5 29:3	severability
17:6 22:6,7	rescinding 18:9	62:2 64:11	31:19 32:21,23	54:15,16
23:3 35:9	reserve 29:12	rights 32:19	33:2 40:10	sewer 3:12,14
52:21 55:6	32:12	risk 24:12	43:12,14 47:6	7:5 13:25 14:4
56:4 57:25	resident 14:5	ROBERTS 3:3	48:14 50:1	14:6,21 21:7
58:8,12,20,22	15:1	17:20 18:3	51:20 54:18	33:2 40:22
refunded 12:20	Resolution 36:1	26:21,25 29:13	55:2 59:20	48:5 49:15
13:13	36:19 37:11,11	32:17 33:19,22	61:14 62:17	50:2 61:15,19
refunds 19:19	37:17 39:6	38:17,21 39:3	Scalia 11:3	sewers 28:18
20:21 31:20	41:4 43:5	42:5,9 46:18	17:11 18:19,23	46:1
35:20,25 36:6	51:25 52:20	46:22,25 47:6	19:20 20:12	sex 37:24 39:7
37:3,5,15	54:16	47:22 48:4	21:8,13,15	52:9,12 54:8
43:19 53:5	resources 22:3	49:18 53:13,19	27:7 37:19	shared 63:5
54:18,22 55:3	respect 32:22	54:3 57:15	38:6 40:17,25	sharing 3:19
64:21	34:5 38:10	58:11,16,24	41:9,14,18,20	shift 46:1
rejected 18:17	39:17 42:25	59:10,16 61:22	52:10 53:22	show 12:12 16:5
rejection 44:9	48:20 50:24	65:20	55:24 56:2,7	44:12
relevant 41:2	56:1,21	roughly 9:1	58:1	shows 31:14
52:2 57:21	Respondents	rule 19:18 31:19	Scalia's 42:10	32:8 50:8
reliance 29:22	1:19 2:7 8:14	36:8 53:25	search 46:19	sign 4:18
65:18	11:18 29:17	54:8 62:24	47:16	signed 43:24
relies 39:11	response 56:20	ruled 11:25	searched 46:23	significance
rely 8:15	rest 10:3 22:17	rules 62:15	second 35:8 57:9	23:23
remainder	restored 52:19	run 58:3	secured 4:12	significant 27:6
29:12	rests 25:17,21		see 8:2 13:16	similar 26:19
remaining 61:23	result 4:3 9:18	S	17:9 29:8 31:3	40:13
remand 52:6	43:20	S 2:1 3:1	33:24 34:25	similarly 3:17
61:5	retains 38:17	sacrificing 24:2	42:6,10 44:8	3:21 7:1,12,17
remedial 36:23	return 22:13	sad 65:16	59:19	7:19 9:3 10:10
53:3	rid 14:10 30:24	saddled 50:4	seen 15:6	simple 7:11 25:4
remedy 11:8	30:25 31:2	sales 23:11 60:5	select 4:14	26:6
18:16,20 36:16	44:23 45:7	60:6	selected 23:21	simpler 35:11
36:17 37:16	46:15 49:5	saying 5:20 6:7	sending 65:15	simply 3:14
39:6 51:13	60:8	6:19 8:18,20	sense 27:24	11:20 32:17
52:6 53:6	ridiculous 45:20	11:10 20:2,4	30:14,15 40:5	36:19 37:16
remotely 23:18	45:22	21:19,19,23	sensible 28:10	54:18 65:14
removed 28:7	right 4:6 6:23	24:11,20,22	sent 65:15	situated 3:17,21
render 3:16 4:3	9:20 12:9	26:18 28:11	separate 3:17	7:1,13,17,19
repayment	14:17 15:17	32:25 38:22	10:19 27:25	9:3 10:10
10:12 13:9,11	16:12,20 18:22	39:13 41:9	40:19	situation 38:22
13:14 15:22	20:1 29:1,8	42:11 53:3,3,4	septic 49:12	39:1 54:7
require 28:11	32:7,13,21,23	62:2	serves 60:25	small 46:2,2
required 4:17	39:2 41:22	says 6:19,25	set 33:1 57:22	56:25
40:23	49:25,25 50:3	12:10 14:13	sets 33:4 41:23	smaller 40:12
requirement	50:21 51:13	15:3 16:23,25	settled 50:16	sold 35:15

somebody 5:18	17:16,24 18:6	STEP 22:16	sure 16:13,14	3:18 4:14 7:1
13:6 26:10	18:11,13,22,24	stern 43:8	28:24 40:7	10:10 12:19
37:22 42:15,15	19:2,5,15,25	stick 47:9	48:21	13:25 15:8,24
42:17,18 46:12	20:11,19,23	stop 55:4	Surely 56:7	16:4 18:5
56:4 58:19	21:1,12,14,17	stops 5:17 59:4	suspicion 26:7	21:24 22:6
62:4	21:19,22 24:9	strike 52:6	swath 5:15	23:22
somebody's	24:13,25 25:16	54:12	switched 44:11	taxpayer's 4:6
45:11 57:8	25:20 26:9,13	struck 26:22	system 14:8,21	tell 17:21 23:24
sorry 64:3	26:24 27:4,11	stuck 32:1 34:11	14:24 15:8,9	27:13 49:2
sort 22:10 23:5	27:22,25 28:20	37:4 53:4	16:7 19:10	telling 42:24
27:18 42:23	28:24 29:8,11	subdivisions	20:7 26:22	tells 58:4
51:21,22	29:14 32:10	49:12	29:9 34:1,2	terms 61:18
SOTOMAYOR	61:23,24 62:1	subject 34:1	42:4,11 65:2	terrible 11:19
4:22 5:16	62:13 63:3	subjective 6:1	l	20:15
13:16 14:13,18	64:3,11 65:11	subjectively	T	Thank 29:13,18
15:2 24:5,10	65:14	24:16	T 1:16 2:1,1,3,9	61:21,22 65:20
24:22 57:10	standing 52:11	submit 52:4	3:7 61:24	theory 5:5 7:10
sound 43:1	52:13,15	submitted 65:21	take 4:25 8:14	31:15
sounds 25:14	start 10:21 14:4	65:23	20:1,2 45:11	they'd 11:9
49:21 60:14	25:5 26:2	substantial 57:2	50:10	45:13
Southern 40:9	42:14 63:17	suddenly 8:4	takes 27:11 33:3	thing 13:11
speaks 51:12	started 42:21	sufficient 22:3	takings 46:11	26:22 35:13
special 4:9	starters 5:9	34:24	talk 34:14 47:16	60:12
specific 3:20	State 3:20 4:7	suggest 29:1	talked 16:25	things 21:2
5:23 7:2 8:24	6:16,18,21,25	suggested 10:25	55:17	30:13
9:23 10:5	7:7 8:9 9:2	28:13 32:11	talking 23:25	think 7:24,25
47:12 54:7,10	12:24 21:9	39:21 57:9	47:5 54:6,10	10:4,17 11:1,6
63:5,5	28:12 29:1	suggesting 5:18	54:15 63:4,19	11:7,9,14
specifically 5:25	32:20 33:1,1	17:12,18 20:22	tanks 49:13	13:23 17:11,11
18:13,17	33:13 34:14	31:19 62:22,25	tax 3:15 5:14 6:5	19:12 21:20
speeder 5:12	37:25 39:8	suggestion	19:23 21:20,21	22:14,23 23:4
spend 42:4	40:10,17,20	11:18	21:23 22:4	23:5,9,18,19
spread 46:4	48:17 50:8	suggests 33:13	23:11,12,17	23:24,25 26:11
stake 17:22	51:2,8 52:7	60:22	24:4 25:25	26:15,17 28:10
57:11	60:22	suit 9:12	26:14,17 30:2	28:15,23 30:5
stakes 57:12	statement 56:18	sum 55:25 56:3	31:4 39:15	31:12,13,18
Stancil 1:16 2:3	states 1:1,13	supports 21:11	40:11 45:12	32:2,7,8 34:5
2:9 3:6,7,9 5:8	7:15 15:22,23	suppose 12:9	60:5,5,6,6,9	35:5,6,9 36:14
5:22 6:16,20	23:10 26:18	23:10 28:20	63:16 65:15	37:11 38:5,9
6:24 7:12,15	27:14 28:15	59:19 63:23	taxation 3:24	39:3,21 42:5
7:21 8:7,10,12	stating 7:22	64:5	taxes 4:5,11	45:1,1,4 49:7
8:23 9:11,21	status 5:2	supposed 51:7	14:21 18:16	50:8,25 53:11
10:16,21 11:6	statute 33:9	58:3	19:3 23:13,15	55:1 56:22
12:23 14:3,17	36:21,23 51:14	supposedly	28:3 65:16	57:13,14 60:8
14:23 15:10,21	51:16,17 52:6	34:14,15	taxpayer 4:9	60:9,10 61:7,8
16:1,10,13,17	54:22	Supreme 1:1,13	24:7 64:18	61:8,13 62:9
16:21,25 17:10	statute's 51:17	18:15	taxpayers 3:17	62:10 64:19,19
<u> </u>				

64:22 65:17	32:21,24 42:13	17:13	view 6:13 32:16	22:9,12 23:6
thinking 45:16	48:18 62:17	underlying 4:20	violated 21:10	28:10 29:3
56:10	63:1 64:12	5:14	37:15 43:12	33:11 38:12
Thomas 51:5	treating 14:22	underscores	violation 5:17	40:13 42:23
thought 6:10	30:8 33:23,23	48:16,18	10:9 11:8,9	45:16 46:11,15
12:8 17:21	42:21	understand 4:22	12:1 19:17	54:1 55:2
26:16 27:21	treatment 4:6	12:20 13:23	24:24 27:3	62:18 65:3
39:19 40:24	7:4 9:1,1 11:12	16:14 34:22	38:23,25,25	ways 6:25 20:19
64:4	12:24,25 21:25	44:1 50:4	39:6 51:7,8	22:9,14
thousands 25:25	24:2 29:5	55:23,24	53:20 60:10,11	Wednesday
three 10:2 27:11	33:17 37:18	understanding	violations 31:21	1:10
30:3 41:8	47:18 52:14,16	48:19	violator 6:3	weight 51:2
43:23 58:16	52:18,19 61:6	understands	Virginia 18:15	went 19:2 46:22
ticked 60:12	63:4	26:1	33:13,15	50:15,18
ticket 4:25 5:12	treats 65:3	understood		weren't 32:22
5:13 24:8,14	tremendously	28:17 43:24	W	32:25
24:18,23 59:22	44:16	unequal 33:11	wait 38:7 57:9	West 18:15
tickets 59:21,24	triggered 10:9	42:24	waived 50:21	33:13,15
59:25	11:14	unequally 33:24	waiver 50:22	we'll 3:3 24:19
tied 15:4 51:8	triggering 11:7	unfair 7:24	walked 45:13	29:8 61:17,17
time 5:16 13:3	triggers 11:7	50:13	want 7:25 8:3,22	we're 8:3,18
17:21 29:12	true 3:18 20:4	unique 44:14	12:10 15:3,6	9:15,21 11:10
33:8,8 37:10	53:19	51:19	16:13 21:23	11:13 14:11
37:11 41:3,3,4	trust 32:4	United 1:1,13	22:5,6 23:8	22:24 34:11
43:4,5 49:8	try 25:24 55:9	23:10 26:18	25:10 31:7	37:1,3 40:11
57:24 63:22	56:9	unpaid 36:12	34:14,16 35:2	40:21,22 41:20
65:9	trying 13:17	unpopular 14:9	40:14,14,16	44:21,22 45:20
times 3:13 6:8	31:23,25 35:24	18:22,24 29:23	42:4 43:7,18	45:21 48:21,23
9:10 28:4 34:3	39:24 45:11,12	44:16 49:10,21	43:19,21 44:15	50:2,18 54:18
63:12	49:14 50:6	unwieldy 49:10	44:17,22 45:7	59:22,23 62:9
timing 3:16	57:24 58:18	unwinding 22:2	45:8,9,22,25	62:10 63:4,17
23:20	62:11	upgrade 42:3	50:7 55:3,3	63:19,25
toilet 9:8	tweak 13:5	use 13:1	56:3,20 62:1,5	we've 35:16,17
told 9:15 45:23	two 12:23 13:1	uses 14:6	63:15,16 65:1	42:2 44:16
tomorrow 23:10	16:14 19:11	usually 63:22	65:8,9,18	45:22 49:16
total 18:4	20:19,21 21:2	U.S 25:25	wanted 29:1,21	whatsoever 4:16
traffic 5:17 6:3	28:4 33:5		30:15,16,19,24	where're 8:8
transition 60:24	34:24 39:14,24	V	33:14	who've 8:5
62:15,23 63:2	41:23 47:15	v 1:5 3:4 8:15	wants 20:17	28:12 41:6
63:11	61:4,10,15	40:9 52:11	warning 29:7	willy-nilly 29:2
transport 60:17	62:3	53:14,14 54:1	Washington 1:9	win 11:3 13:10
trapped 60:23		vain 43:8 46:19	1:16,18	16:8 26:6
treat 5:7 17:12	<u>U</u>	47:16	wasn't 24:6	windfall 52:21
19:11 22:1	ultimately 31:13	validity 4:20	59:13	Winstar 41:1
33:2 40:22	unattractive	various 15:22,23	water 61:16,19	43:2 60:21
61:19 63:10	30:4	verify 58:20	way 3:23 8:2	wipe 24:3
treated 19:8	unconstitutio	vestiges 35:4	9:17 14:11	withheld 53:15
	•	-	-	-

women 38:2,7	\$200,000 42:3,7	180 38:24	5
word 33:12	44:14	181 6:5	5 10:24 11:5
54:22 60:21	\$273,391.63	1850 55:11	50 51:19
words 27:19	17:25	1890 55:11	
30:17	\$3 58:17,25		6
work 6:13 50:20	\$30 62:6,12	2	61 2:10
works 21:4	\$300 62:4,7	2 12:14 15:17,18	
22:11 54:16	\$33 25:12	15:25 16:4,8	7
worried 52:10	\$400 42:15	16:10 22:22	7 26:3
worries 62:14	\$50,000 49:15	56:13 57:11	
worry 42:22	50:1	2a 28:8	9
worth 35:10	\$500,000 44:21	20 6:11,11 15:18	9 10:12,16 26:3
40:13 49:15	\$9,300 62:9	15:19,25 16:5	9,000 16:21
59:21		16:9,11,14	95 13:15
wouldn't 18:19	1	25:4,11 56:14	97 24:3
55:10 56:19	1 10:22,22,24,24	57:6 64:18	98 64:15
60:1,10 64:10	11:5 12:16,20	20-year 45:18	
wrong 8:11	15:17 26:3	2001 10:4	
25:15 48:15	49:19 56:11,13	2005 29:20	
59:12,13,13	64:8	2007 23:1	
X 7	1,000 57:7 65:6	2010 23:1	
X	10 10:12,16,22	2011 23:13,15	
x 1:2,8 22:6	17:6 45:16	2012 1:10 64:8	
Y	62:7	21 9:25 38:2,7	
	10,000 7:8 42:15	38:15 58:8	
years 13:8 22:22 25:11 31:2,16	42:18 48:6	240 50:11	
42:23 45:10,13	10-year 10:3	27 22:24 45:10	
45:16 65:9	45:17 64:7	45:13	
	10:09 1:14 3:2	29 1:10 2:7	
yesterday 65:16 yield 4:2	100 51:18	29th 23:12	
yieiu 4.2	101 36:2,19	3	
Ü	37:11,11,14,17		
über 50:9	39:6 41:4 43:5	3 2:4 12:18 26:3 58:15	
	51:25 52:20	3a 28:8	
\$	54:17	30 3:12 6:8 9:10	
\$1,000 16:22	11 13:8 11-161 1:4 3:4	10:22 31:2,16	
\$10 14:7,15		34:3 42:23	
22:19 62:5,8	11:09 65:22	65:9	
\$10,000 49:14	12 6:7 13 33:14	30-year 10:3	
50:2	13 33:14 14 12:17	42:16 45:19	
\$100,000 44:20		300 62:11	
44:22	15 12:12 46:23	31 6:7	
\$2,500 14:5,25	15(b)(3)says 46:25		
15:3	46:25 150 6:8	4	
\$2,783,702.59	150 6:8 176 50:10	4 10:24 12:18	
. ,,			i de la companya de
17:25 \$2.7 57:13 58:13	18 38:1,4,7,15	61:23	