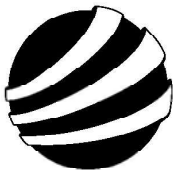


In the Matter Of:
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

8:24-cv-879

KETO NORD HODGES

November 26, 2024



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KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

1

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
TAMPA DIVISION

KETO NORD HODGES, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

Case No.: 8:24-cv-879

KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO, et al.,

Defendants.

VIDEOCONFERENCE DEPOSITION OF KETO NORD HODGES

TAKEN ON BEHALF OF THE DEFENDANT

DATE TAKEN: November 26, 2024

TIME: 2:09 p.m. - 3:49 p.m.

LOCATION: Via Zoom Videoconference

Examination of the witness taken before:

Wendy E. Rivera, FPR

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

2

APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL
(Via Videoconference)

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KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

3

I N D E X O F E X A M I N A T I O N

WITNESS: KETO NORD HODGES

PAGE

Direct Examination by Ms. Harle

4

Certificate of Oath

57

Certificate of Reporter

58

Errata (to be forwarded upon execution)

59

D E F E N D A N T ' S E X H I B I T S

EXHIBIT NO.

DESCRIPTION

PAGE

Exhibit 1

Complaint

29

Exhibit 2

Plaintiff's Rule 26
Initial Disclosures

51

Exhibit 3

November 9, 2012 Blog

54

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

4

1 VIDEOCONFERENCE DEPOSITION OF KETO NORD HODGES

2 November 26, 2024

3 - - -

4 KETO NORD HODGES,

5 having been first duly sworn and responding "Yes,"
6 testifies as follows:

7 DIRECT EXAMINATION

8 BY MS. HARLE:

9 Q. Good afternoon, Mr. Nord Hodges. My name is
10 Denise Harle. I'm one of the attorneys for the Florida
11 Senate in this case and I'll be taking your deposition
12 today.

13 Can you please state and spell your name for
14 the record.

15 A. Yes. Keto, K-e-t-o, Nord, N-o-r-d, Hodges,
16 H-o-d-g-e-s.

17 Q. Great. And do you understand that you are
18 under oath today and giving deposition testimony, which
19 is subject to the penalty of perjury?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Have you ever been deposed before?

22 A. No, I haven't.

23 Q. Did you observe any of the depositions of your
24 co-plaintiffs in this case yet?

25 A. Yes. I observed the -- I believe it was the

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

5

1 first one, the lady with the Hispanic last name. She
2 referred to herself as an Afro-Latina. I don't recall
3 her last name.

4 Q. Ms. Garcia?

5 A. Yes. There you go. Ms. Jen Garcia, yes.

6 Q. Great. Well, this will probably sound all
7 very familiar to you today, but we just need, for the
8 sake of ground rules, to make sure a few things happen:
9 One, that you speak audibly and give complete answers;
10 two, try to let me finish my question before you begin
11 to answer; three, if your attorney does object, you need
12 to go ahead and answer the question unless she instructs
13 you not to answer.

14 Four, if you don't understand my question, I
15 need you to just let me know that it's not clear. I
16 could've asked a bad question. That definitely happens.
17 If you do give an answer, it will be on the record under
18 oath and we will all assume that you understood the
19 question; and five, I just need you to make sure your
20 responses are verbal, so, you know, things like head
21 nods, for example, or uh-huhs doesn't really work very
22 well because this is being transcribed.

23 Does all that make sense to you?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Great. If you need to take a break at any

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

6

1 time, please just let me know and we can find a stopping
2 point. No problem. If at any point seeing a document
3 will help refresh your recollection, also please let me
4 know and I'll try to get that in front of you.

5 Is there anything that's preventing you from
6 giving truthful testimony today?

7 A. No, there's not.

8 Q. Very good. What did you do to prepare for
9 your deposition today?

10 A. Spoke with the attorneys.

11 MS. ROBERTSON: Keto, just make sure you don't
12 disclose anything you spoke about with your
13 attorneys.

14 THE WITNESS: Of course. Of course. I spoke
15 with the attorneys and I reviewed the -- I believe
16 it was the initial filing document laying out the
17 -- I guess the ground rules of the case or ground
18 information of the case.

19 BY MS. HARLE:

20 Q. Okay. Did you review any other documents in
21 preparation for today?

22 A. You asked did I review any other documents in
23 preparation for today?

24 Q. Yes, sir.

25 A. No, I did not.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

7

1 Q. And again, not telling me anything that was
2 said, but approximately how long did you meet with your
3 attorney to prepare for your deposition?

4 A. I'm not exactly sure how long.

5 THE WITNESS: Would you estimate an hour?

6 MS. ROBERTSON: If you know --

7 THE WITNESS: I'll estimate about two hours to
8 my recollection.

9 BY MS. HARLE:

10 Q. Okay. Can you please state your address,
11 where you currently reside.

12 A. Yes. I reside at 10907 North Hyacinth Avenue,
13 Tampa 33612.

14 Q. And when did you move to that address?

15 A. I moved to that address June of 2019.

16 Q. What was your most recent prior address?

17 A. My most recent prior address, I struggle to
18 remember. It was in Town 'n' Country, ZIP code 31655.
19 I believe it was 9,000 something. It was in a condo
20 community. I don't recall the exact address.

21 Q. Was that in Tampa?

22 A. Well, actually, let me see. Sorry. Give me a
23 -- may I correct myself?

24 Q. Yes.

25 A. Okay. Let's see. 7349 Abonado Road, Tampa,

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

8

1 33615. There it is.

2 Q. Okay. How far is that from where you live
3 now?

4 A. I'm sorry. Can you repeat the question?

5 Q. Sure. How far is that Abonado Road address
6 from where you live now?

7 A. That is I'd say approximately eight to
8 nine miles.

9 Q. Okay. So then Abonado Road, is that -- it's
10 more in South Tampa or middle of Tampa?

11 A. That's in Town 'N' Country. That's on the
12 other side of the airport.

13 Q. Oh, okay. So -- okay. I'm bad at that.

14 Back to where you live now, is it a house or
15 an apartment?

16 A. It's a house.

17 Q. Do you own it?

18 A. No, rent.

19 Q. Is there any reason you're aware of that you
20 might be moving in the next year or two?

21 A. Possibly, yes. I may be moving in the next
22 year or two.

23 Q. And where would you be moving to?

24 A. I'm not sure yet, wherever the rent is not too
25 high.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

9

1 Q. Do you know if you would stay in Tampa?

2 A. I do not know that at this time. I have
3 children in college, so I'm not sure.

4 Q. Are they in college in Florida?

5 A. Yes. Yes, they are.

6 Q. Whereabouts?

7 A. Hillsborough Community College and University
8 of South Florida.

9 Q. It's nice to have your children nearby?

10 A. Yes, sometimes.

11 Q. Did you live in Lakeland, Florida, in the
12 past --

13 A. Yes, I did.

14 Q. Okay. When was that?

15 A. Let's see. Two -- eight through -- I believe
16 it was May 2008 through about the end of September 2011
17 I lived in North Lakeland, Florida.

18 Q. And did you own a home there?

19 A. Yes, I did. I owned a home with my -- with my
20 wife and family at the time.

21 Q. But you've been in Tampa since what year?

22 A. I originally moved to Tampa September 1991 as
23 a child.

24 Q. And then in your most recent stint in Tampa,
25 where did you move -- which year did you move back to

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

10

1 Tampa?

2 A. I moved back to Tampa that -- I believe it was
3 the last day of September 2011.

4 Q. You said you may move somewhere in the next
5 year to find lower rent.

6 Are you currently scoping out different places
7 to live at the moment?

8 A. No, I'm not. I'm tired of looking right now
9 because the market is un -- has proven to be
10 unreasonable, so I'm not looking right at this time.

11 Q. Have you been looking for a place to move
12 recently, say, in the past three to six months?

13 A. In the past six months, yes.

14 Q. Can you give me your educational background,
15 if you would, starting just since high school.

16 A. All right. Certainly. I graduated from
17 Hillsborough Adult High school in Tampa with my underage
18 GED, and then I earned my associate in arts degree,
19 two-year degree, at Hillsborough Community College in
20 computer science. Then I transferred to the University
21 of South Florida, earned my bachelor of science in
22 management information systems magna cum laude in 2002
23 and my MBA from USF, entrepreneurship, in 2005 -- May
24 2005.

25 Q. Well, congratulations.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

11

1 A. Thank you.

2 Q. Who is your current employer?

3 A. My current employer is Hillsborough County
4 Public Schools.

5 Q. And what is your job title there?

6 A. VE. That's variant exceptionalities math
7 instructor. That's another word for special education
8 math instructor.

9 Q. Great. What -- are you assigned to one
10 particular school?

11 A. Yes. I'm assigned to Dr. Carter G. Woodson PK
12 through 8 academy.

13 Q. When did you first start working as a VE math
14 instructor for Hillsborough County Public Schools?

15 A. I started working as a VE math instructor
16 November 2014 full time, but I was a part-time VE
17 instructor, you know, as a substitute from about
18 August 2011 until November 2014.

19 Q. Thank you.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Are -- did your LinkedIn say that you're a
22 digital political organizer?

23 A. Yes, it says that among other things.

24 Q. All right. Could you tell me what that means,
25 that you're a digital political organizer?

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

12

1 A. Yes. That means that -- excuse me -- I
2 utilize graphics design to create digital products for
3 different political campaigns in the Tampa Bay area.

4 Q. And is that a paid position?

5 A. Yes. Yes. It's a -- it's -- how would you
6 say -- at-will. So if a campaign reaches out to me and
7 says, you know, we need these particular products, then
8 they may pay me on a at-project basis or, you know, on a
9 monthly basis, for example, to provide work for the
10 campaign.

11 Q. So you're kind of like a contractor?

12 A. Yes. I would say that.

13 Q. And it's just your own business? You're kind
14 of an entrepreneur in that space?

15 A. Yes. Yes. Yes.

16 Q. List for me the -- any of the political
17 campaigns that you've worked on?

18 A. All right. Well, full time -- let's see.
19 Full time and part time or as a volunteer, it's too many
20 to name, but I could -- because I've been doing it since
21 -- I've been volunteering or working in different
22 campaigns since about 2019 when I first got my voter's
23 registration, but most recently, I recall three -- let's
24 see -- two or three campaigns, Tammy Shamburger for
25 school board in Hillsborough County. Let's see. Who

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

13

1 else? Walter L. Smith, II, for Tampa City Council and
2 -- let's see. Who else? Starr Brookins for county
3 court judge in this most recent cycle. That is all I
4 can remember right now.

5 Q. And those three you just named, were those --
6 were those campaigns where you were hired digital
7 political organizer?

8 A. Let's see. The first two, Smith and
9 Shamburger, yes. The most recent one I named, I was a
10 photographer. So the photography on the -- you know,
11 some -- some clients will book me for both combined
12 services, photography and digital organizer; some, one
13 or the other.

14 Q. Have you ever volunteered on any political
15 campaigns?

16 A. Yes. Since 2019, it's been more campaigns
17 than I can count and I would do a disservice to try to
18 sit here and name all of them, local and -- local,
19 citywide, municipal, county, and statewide and national.

20 Q. Well, let's start with statewide.

21 Have you ever worked on any campaigns for a
22 state legislator?

23 A. Let's see. I don't believe I have. I don't
24 believe I have. Oh, wait. Let me see. I apologize. I
25 recall one in 2014. I volunteered. I wasn't on staff.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

14

1 I volunteered with photography. Let's see. 2014, yes,
2 I volunteered and I believe I was paid for photography.
3 I was a new photographer at the time for Ed Narain for
4 Florida State Representative in Hillsborough County.

5 Q. Can you name for me the national political
6 campaigns that you recall working on whether paid or
7 volunteer?

8 A. Yes, of course. Let's see. Let's see. Let's
9 see. I would say starting in 2008, I worked for the --
10 or did work. I volunteered photography and other
11 activities for Obama for America in 2008 and 2012,
12 volunteered for -- let's see -- I believe Hillary
13 Clinton campaign and then the Biden campaigns most --
14 the last two Biden campaigns most recently and the
15 Kamala Harris campaign.

16 Q. I may have misheard. Did you say you first
17 got your voting registration in 2019?

18 A. I believe -- I believe it was 2019 because I
19 had became a U.S. citizen a few months prior to that,
20 and so 2019 would've been the first time I was allowed
21 to vote.

22 Q. Well, that's wonderful.

23 A. Thank you. I take it very seriously.

24 Q. Are you currently involved with any voting
25 rights groups?

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
15

1 A. How would you define a voting rights group?

2 Q. Are you currently involved with any
3 organizations that work on issues relating to voting or
4 voters?

5 A. Yes. I would say I -- involved as a
6 photographer and social media manager for Hillsborough
7 County NAACP.

8 Q. Anything else?

9 A. I don't recall any sort of organizations at
10 this time.

11 Q. Are you involved with the Hillsborough County
12 Democrats?

13 A. Yes, I am.

14 Q. How long have you been involved with them?

15 A. I've been a precinct captain or precinct
16 committee person since May 2018.

17 Q. Are you an officer currently for Hillsborough
18 County Democrats?

19 A. I'm not an officer. I am a committee
20 chairperson for the diversity equity and inclusion
21 committee.

22 Q. What do you do in your role as the committee
23 chair for diversity and inclusion for the Hillsborough
24 County Democrats?

25 A. As the DEI chairperson, I encourage

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
16

1 approximately -- well, I encourage the membership of the
2 county Democratic Party to run for state committee
3 person positions for the -- for the Florida Democratic
4 Party, which -- to look as much as possible as the
5 makeup of our membership.

6 Q. And what do Hillsborough County Democrats do
7 just generally as a organization?

8 A. To my understanding, Hillsborough County
9 Democrats seek to encourage democracy by -- by educating
10 on voters' rights for anyone in the Tampa Bay area --
11 well, anyone in Hillsborough County, Florida, who is of
12 voting age.

13 Q. Have you ever done any election canvassing
14 like go door-to-door?

15 A. Yes, I have.

16 Q. And when did you do that?

17 A. I don't believe -- I don't believe it was for
18 the Democratic Party though. Well, not recently for the
19 Democratic Party.

20 Q. No. I guess I was switching gears a little
21 bit on you.

22 When did you do election canvassing?

23 A. I did election canvassing in 2018 and 2019 for
24 Walter L. Smith, II, for Tampa city council.

25 Q. Okay. Have you ever done any phone banking

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

17

1 for election?

2 A. Yes, I have.

3 Q. Okay. And when was that?

4 A. I did phone banking for Walter L. Smith, II,
5 2018 and '19; Obama for America 2008 and 2012; and
6 possibly other campaigns as well, but I don't recall at
7 this time.

8 Q. Have you ever been involved with a campaign
9 that was not for a particular candidate or an issue that
10 was going to be on the ballot?

11 A. I would have to think about that. Let's see.
12 I'm trying to recall if there were any. Yes. Yes. I
13 believe I was -- I can recall being involved in
14 Hillsborough County -- Hillsborough Classroom Teachers
15 Association, HCTA, recently in -- in pushing for the
16 half-cent sales tax referendum for Hillsborough County
17 with the goal of increasing full-time teacher pay in
18 Hillsborough County.

19 Q. Have you done any public advocacy on any
20 political or partisan issues?

21 A. Any -- have I done any public advocacy on
22 political or partisan issues, do you ask?

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. I'm -- I'm trying to think. I hosted a town
25 hall for Black men for the Kamala Harris campaign

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
18

1 recently.

2 Q. Where was that held?

3 A. That was held at a Baptist church in East
4 Tampa. I don't recall the name.

5 Q. Anything else you can think of?

6 A. I cannot recall any other events at this time.

7 Q. What did you-all discuss at the town hall for
8 Black men for Kamala Harris?

9 A. Let's see. There were multiple issues
10 discussed. I believe one issue may have been our stance
11 on support of public education in -- nationally and as
12 it relates to Florida.

13 Q. And did you-all discuss any issues particular
14 to Black men?

15 A. Yes. Yes. The whole town hall was for Black
16 men, so any issues that we discussed were related to how
17 it would impact Black men in Florida.

18 Q. Do you have a blog that you keep updated?

19 A. No, I don't.

20 Q. Do you have an old blog?

21 A. Yes, I have. My old blog was called The Great
22 Blog of Keto, and -- yes.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yes. That's been discontinued. I'm surprised
25 it's still around, still up there.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
19

1 Q. Do you recall talking about political issues
2 on your blog?

3 A. Yes, I did.

4 Q. Okay. Did you criticize Republicans on your
5 blog?

6 A. Who? Can you repeat their name, please.

7 Q. Republicans?

8 A. Oh, Republicans --

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. -- on the blog? I don't recall. I may have.
11 I struggle to recall. It's been a long time since I had
12 that blog.

13 Q. Why did you discontinue it?

14 A. I'm really not sure. I started it when I was
15 a technology and blog trainer for -- for personal injury
16 law firms around the country and I became good at
17 blogging very quickly, and it was fun, so I started a
18 blog to speak about issues personal to me and my
19 community.

20 Q. What kind of issues do you remember blogging
21 about if not political?

22 A. Let's see. I remember blogging about my
23 adopted mom who was -- who was a missionary to Haiti
24 since 1969 and who moved here with me to Florida in
25 1991. She had at the time -- I know this was an article

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
20

1 from 2010. I did several of them. She landed in Haiti
2 on the day of the 2010 earthquake, which killed possibly
3 100,000 or more people, and she went missing for several
4 weeks. So as part of my research and to try to find
5 her, I posted blogs from time to time about the process
6 of trying to locate -- locate her in Haiti.

7 Q. Did you find her?

8 A. Yes, we did.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Thank God, yes. Some missionaries -- some
11 American missionaries I believe located her at an
12 orphanage assisting with children in the countryside of
13 Haiti.

14 Q. I'm so glad to hear that.

15 A. Thank you.

16 Q. Are you a board member of the Corporation to
17 Develop Communities of Tampa?

18 A. Yes, I am.

19 Q. What does that group do?

20 A. Corporation to Develop Communities of Tampa is
21 a nonprofit in Hillsborough County founded by Ms. Chloe
22 Coney. It exists to do multiple things, which fight
23 poverty. One is workforce development, so through the
24 acquisition of grants and funding, training the
25 community, those hardest economically hit in places like

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
21

1 East Tampa to have good economic paying jobs and careers
2 often with a certification or training component. So
3 that's one, the workforce.

4 And then buying and building affordable
5 housing for Tampa Bay's families, hardworking families,
6 that's two. There's a new unit that participates in
7 providing low cost marketing materials for small
8 businesses in the Tampa Bay area, nominal cost. That's
9 three, three pillars. There may be a fourth, but I
10 believe I referred to the real estate, which has to do
11 with acquiring and building the homes. That's what I
12 can recall.

13 Q. Is there a certain portion of Tampa that you
14 focus on or is it for the entire Tampa area?

15 A. Well, originally, the organization was born in
16 and targeted East Tampa, which is home to the largest
17 concentration of African-Americans in Hillsborough
18 County many of whom are chronically underemployed,
19 possibly undereducated and underemployed for the
20 workforce in order to help them bring up the standard of
21 living and their career opportunities, yes.

22 Q. Is your home in East Tampa?

23 A. No. My home is in North Tampa. I formerly
24 lived in East Tampa, but my home is in North Tampa and
25 what's considered an ALICE community, which is --

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
22

1 Q. A what community?

2 A. An ALICE community, A-L-I-C-E. That means the
3 majority of the residents in that ZIP code are
4 economically underserved.

5 Q. So your -- let's see. Was your Abonado Road
6 address in East Tampa?

7 A. No. That's in Town 'n' Country.

8 Q. I see --

9 A. That was the -- I lived there -- I'm sorry.

10 Q. I still don't know where Town 'n' Country is.

11 A. Right. Right.

12 Q. So when was it that you lived in East Tampa?

13 A. I lived in east -- well, let's see -- East
14 Tampa from about 1995 to 2008 when I moved to Lakeland.

15 Q. All right. So -- I'm sorry. I think I
16 interrupted you. So originally, the Corporation to
17 Develop Communities of Tampa was focussed on East Tampa.

18 Is that still the mission focus today?

19 A. It's not -- it's the main focus, but we have
20 expended throughout Hillsborough County and also have
21 ongoing projects in St. Petersburg, Florida, for -- in
22 support of the business community there. Oh, let's see.
23 We also recently added Fort Myers, Florida, as home to
24 some of our workforce opportunities.

25 Q. So it's still called Corporation to Develop

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
23

1 Communities of Tampa?

2 A. Yes, Inc. Incorporated, yes.

3 Q. Inc. Okay. But let me make sure I got this
4 right. Now, you-all serve Tampa, parts of St. Pete, and
5 Fort Myers, so also Hillsborough County and Pinellas
6 County; is that right?

7 A. Yes. That would be correct.

8 Q. All right. And the services on kind of the
9 same issues in all of those localities, it's workforce
10 affordable housing, small businesses; is that right?

11 A. Yes. I would say that.

12 Q. All right. Besides this lawsuit, have you
13 ever been involved in a civil lawsuit as a party?

14 A. No, I have not.

15 Q. Have you ever been charged with a crime?

16 A. No, I have not.

17 Q. Have you ever been charged with driving while
18 your license was suspended?

19 A. I do not believe I have.

20 Q. Ever filed for bankruptcy?

21 A. Yes, I have.

22 Q. How many times?

23 A. Once in 2013, I believe, as part of my divorce
24 -- as part of my economic restructure after my divorce.

25 Q. Have you ever testified in court?

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
24

1 A. Yes, I have for -- I believe for minor traffic
2 offenses, traffic tickets.

3 Q. Your own traffic tickets?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Can you estimate how many times you've
6 testified in court for traffic infractions?

7 A. You'd have to specify over what number of
8 years or time periods.

9 Q. Ever.

10 A. Ever? Ever is a long time. I would struggle
11 to say. I'll say at least twice that I'm aware of.

12 Q. Tell me in your own words why you're bringing
13 this lawsuit?

14 A. I'm bringing this lawsuit because I believe
15 that it's fundamentally unfair to seemingly dilute the
16 will of the voters in multiple districts by trying to
17 combine all of the voters that -- as many as possible of
18 the voters that look alike into one district, whereas
19 previously, they were in two or -- those same persons or
20 communities were in two districts.

21 Q. And tell me a little bit more about how you
22 think the will of the voters is diluted, if I got your
23 word right, under the current map that you're
24 challenging?

25 A. Well, if previously -- if, for example,

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
25

1 previously, the different communities had one, let's
2 call them representative -- political representative
3 each and now those communities only have one total
4 between the two of them, I would struggle to see how one
5 person could effectively represent and advocate for the
6 diverse interest of both communities.

7 Q. And which communities used to have two
8 representatives, but now only have one representative?

9 A. South St. Petersburg, Florida, and a large
10 portion of my district in -- which includes East Tampa,
11 Florida -- East Tampa, North Tampa, so forth.

12 Q. And again, I never want to know what you said
13 to your lawyer or what your lawyer said to you, but
14 other than that, can you tell me, how did you come to be
15 involved in this lawsuit?

16 MS. ROBERTSON: Keto, just make sure you don't
17 disclose any conversations with any of your
18 attorneys.

19 THE WITNESS: I got you. I got it. The law
20 firm reached out to me and informed me of the case.

21 BY MS. HARLE:

22 Q. Have you spoken with any of the other
23 plaintiffs in this case? Just yes or no. I don't need
24 to know what was said. Have you ever spoken with any
25 other plaintiffs?

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
26

1 A. Yes, I have, but not about the case.

2 Q. Oh, okay. And which plaintiff was that?

3 A. Jarvis El-Amin.

4 Q. And do you know him in a personal capacity
5 separate and apart from the case?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. Yes. We volunteered for many community --
9 community activities together.

10 Q. Got it. When the redistricting process was
11 going on that resulted in the map that you're
12 challenging, were you aware at the time that
13 redistricting was happening?

14 A. Yes, I was aware.

15 Q. Did you communicate with any members of the --
16 members or staff of the Florida Legislature during the
17 redistricting process?

18 A. No, I did not.

19 Q. Have you communicated with any members or
20 staff of the Florida Legislature about the districts
21 since the redistricting happened?

22 A. No, I have not.

23 Q. Have you ever communicated with any members of
24 the media regarding the redistricting process?

25 A. Yes, I have.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
27

1 Q. When was that?

2 A. It was a few months ago after the lawsuit was
3 filed. I don't remember the reporter's name, but it was
4 a law reporting organization called -- I believe called
5 Law360, and they cover lawsuits and legal happenings all
6 over the State of Florida.

7 Q. All over the nation in fact. I'm very
8 familiar.

9 A. Okay. Okay.

10 Q. So did you communicate directly with the
11 Law360 reporter?

12 A. Yes, I did. He contacted me.

13 Q. Oh. Was your -- was it an interview?

14 A. I would say it was. He -- we spoke over the
15 phone briefly.

16 Q. Did he quote you in an article?

17 A. I believe he did.

18 Q. Was your attorney on the phone call too?

19 A. No. No, they weren't.

20 Q. Uh-oh. And what did you tell the reporter
21 about the redistricting process?

22 A. To my recollection, I told him the same thing
23 I stated a few minutes ago, which was that it was
24 difficult for me to see how having less representation,
25 less political representation for two or more distinct

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
28

1 voting regions was beneficial to the communities in
2 those voting regions.

3 Q. Do you recall any other time that you've
4 spoken with the media about the district lines that
5 you're challenging?

6 A. I don't recall having participated in any
7 other interviews.

8 Q. Have you made any written or oral statements
9 to any community groups regarding the districts that
10 you're challenging?

11 A. No. I do not recall having made any written
12 or oral communications to any community groups.

13 Q. Have you spoken with folks at the NAACP
14 regarding the redistricting process or the lawsuit?

15 A. I don't recall having spoken with anyone at
16 the NAACP about the redistricting process.

17 Q. Have you spoken with anyone at the
18 Hillsborough County Democrats about the redistricting
19 process you're challenging?

20 A. No. I don't recall having spoken with anyone
21 at Hillsborough County Democrats about the districting
22 process.

23 Q. Have you made any statements or comments on
24 social media about this lawsuit?

25 A. I do not believe I've made any comments on

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

29

1 social media about the lawsuit. I believe I may have
2 once mentioned to someone that the lawsuit had been
3 filed, but nothing beyond that.

4 Q. Okay. Which social media accounts do you
5 have?

6 A. I have multiple social media accounts on --
7 let's see -- Twitter, Facebook, and -- what's the other
8 one? Instagram to my recollection.

9 Q. And you have LinkedIn, right?

10 A. I'm sorry. Can you say that again?

11 Q. You have LinkedIn, right?

12 A. Yes. Oh, that's right, yes.

13 Q. Do you have TikTok?

14 A. I have, but I don't use it.

15 Q. Are you currently a registered voter?

16 A. Yes, I am.

17 Q. When's the last time you voted?

18 A. I vote every year. I'm a super voter.

19 Q. So have you voted in every state congressional
20 election you've been eligible for?

21 A. To my recollection, I have voted in every
22 state congressional election that I'm eligible for.

23 MS. HARLE: Let's pull up the complaint as
24 Exhibit 1.

25 (Defendant's Exhibit No. 1 was marked for

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
30

1 identification.)

2 BY MS. HARLE:

3 Q. And looking at -- let's start just by looking
4 at the map that you're challenging, figure 3 on page 20.

5 A. Okay. Was there a question stated?

6 Q. Yes. I was just going to pull that up for --
7 to give us a frame of reference.

8 Can you explain to me -- well, first, I guess
9 does this map look familiar to you?

10 A. Yes, it does.

11 Q. Okay. And these are the districts that you're
12 challenging in this lawsuit, right?

13 A. Yes. That's correct.

14 Q. Can you just explain to me while we have this
15 up all of the reasons that you think that these district
16 line are problematic.

17 A. Yes. We can see all the sections in purple
18 are two different areas of the State of Florida. The
19 larger section to the right is primarily Hillsborough
20 County or -- yeah, Hillsborough County from about the
21 University of South Florida/North Tampa area down to
22 much further south, the southernmost part of
23 Hillsborough County, and then the small sliver on the
24 left is part of South St. Pete.

25 Q. Okay. So in terms of reason why you think

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
31

1 this map is problematic and illegal --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- tell me what those are.

4 MS. ROBERTSON: Object to form.

5 When I say that, you can still answer --

6 THE WITNESS: Okay.

7 MS. ROBERTSON: -- unless I tell you.

8 THE WITNESS: Okay. Yes. There are multiple
9 -- several reasons I can think of. People in
10 Hillsborough County and St. Pete -- excuse me --
11 have different factors that they're concerned
12 about. One is public transportation. So if you're
13 in South St. Pete, you have a certain level of
14 service that you come to expect from PSTA, which is
15 the public bussing system. If you're in -- and you
16 have a much smaller area in which you may need to
17 travel.

18 In Hillsborough County -- excuse me. Sorry.
19 In Hillsborough County, in that section of
20 Hillsborough County, HART, H-A-R-T, services much
21 of that area, but there's a totally different level
22 of service as customers try to piece together
23 routes so they can get back and forth from home to
24 work, school, church, shopping, sports activities,
25 so forth. That's one issue.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
32

1 Then another issue is the -- is the school
2 districting. If you're in South St. Pete, you're
3 part of the Pinellas County Public School district,
4 which is much -- much, much smaller and limited in
5 the number of schools and student that it serves.
6 In Hillsborough County, that's that slice -- the
7 purple slice is part of over 200 schools and I
8 believe the seventh largest school district in the
9 country with over \$3.2 billion budget, which has
10 very different factors and -- and points of
11 interest for the citizens of Hillsborough County as
12 opposed to St. Pete. Those are two of the issues
13 that I can think of.

14 Oh, affordable housing, of course, is the
15 third one. In St. Pete, where it looks like it's
16 South St. Pete, as far as property values and the
17 ability of the residents to secure affordable
18 housing is drastically different from what it looks
19 like in many parts of Hillsborough County with East
20 Tampa, North Tampa, you know, South Tampa, so forth
21 as far as ability of the residents to find
22 affordable housing.

23 BY MS. HARLE:

24 Q. Tell me just a little bit more about how the
25 affordable housing issue is different in East Tampa and

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
33

1 North Tampa versus South St. Pete?

2 A. Well, I'm certainly not a geographic expert --
3 geographic or real estate expert. My understanding is
4 that some of the -- how do you say -- a number of the
5 communities in South St. Pete may primarily be
6 economically depressed, whereas in Hillsborough County,
7 throughout that large slice, you have multiple levels of
8 economic ability.

9 So you may have Seminole Heights, for example,
10 which has houses average three hundred, four hundred
11 thousand dollars, you know, whereas you may have East
12 Tampa where a lot of folks live in apartment
13 communities -- in low income apartment communities.

14 Q. And just going back to what you said about the
15 school districts, do the voters in the purple part of
16 St. Pete vote for the Pinellas County School Board?

17 A. Yes, they do.

18 Q. All right. Let's look up to paragraph 6 and 7
19 of your complaint. There we go. Okay. I'll give you
20 some time for you to read this.

21 A. All right. Okay.

22 Q. Okay. So I wanted to focus on a couple of
23 your -- your allegations here. In paragraph 6, you say,
24 quote, The legislature elevated race above all other
25 considerations, end quote. And then in paragraph 7, you

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

34

1 say, quote, Legislators and their staff purportedly drew
2 these districts in a race-predominant manner, end quote.

3 So my first question was going to be, what --
4 do you have any particular facts regarding the racial
5 motivations of the legislature in drawing the district
6 lines?

7 A. No. I don't have any particular facts. I
8 would have to defer to my attorneys regarding that
9 discussion, but looking at the maps visually, I can't
10 see another reason why you would -- why someone or an
11 entity would divide up the voting district that way
12 especially considering you have two -- it's one of the
13 few if not the only district in the area where you have
14 to cross a body of water and possibly multiple counties.

15 Q. And who is it that you believe is harmed by
16 the way that district lines are currently drawn?

17 A. I believe primarily African-American voters
18 living in South St. Pete and Hillsborough County are
19 harmed by the redrawing of this district.

20 Q. And how are the Black voters in South St. Pete
21 and Hillsborough County harmed by the way the districts
22 are drawn?

23 A. Voters in both areas are harmed because they
24 are -- they previously had multiple political
25 representatives and now that number has been

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
35

1 artificially shrunk to fewer representatives. Less
2 representation to me does not seem like a fair thing
3 especially when you have more, more, more residents
4 combined in that area now than in years past.

5 Q. Do you believe there are too many Black voters
6 in your district?

7 A. Let's see. Can you restate what you mean by
8 that?

9 Q. Yeah. I'm trying to get at what the harm is
10 to the Black voters from your perspective.

11 Is it your contention that there are too many
12 Black voters backed into District 16?

13 MS. ROBERTSON: Object to form.

14 You can answer, Keto, if you --

15 THE WITNESS: Okay. Okay. If I believe I
16 heard you correctly, you're asking do I believe
17 that the voters -- that the voters are harmed or a
18 specific group of voters are harmed?

19 BY MS. HARLE:

20 Q. Do you believe there are too many Black voters
21 that are packed into District 16 under the current map?

22 MS. ROBERTSON: Object to form.

23 Go ahead and answer if you know.

24 THE WITNESS: Yes, I do. I believe there are
25 too many voters in the district that are diverse --

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

36

1 represent diverse communities.

2 BY MS. HARLE:

3 Q. Do you believe there are too many Black voters
4 in District 16 currently?

5 A. Yes, I do believe that.

6 Q. And do you know what the current percentage of
7 Black voting age population is for District 16?

8 A. I'm not aware of that fact. I would have to
9 defer to my attorneys for their knowledge.

10 Q. Do you have an estimated percentage in mind
11 that for you is a fair percentage of Black voting age
12 population for your district?

13 A. No. I do not have a certain percentage in
14 mind at this time.

15 Q. Are you familiar with the history of the
16 district boundaries for Hillsborough and Pinellas?

17 A. I'm familiar with some of the history, not all
18 of it, and for that discussion, I would certainly have
19 to refer to my attorneys for historical perspective.

20 Q. What of the history can you -- or which part
21 of the history of the boundaries are you familiar with?

22 A. I'm familiar with the fact that I -- to my
23 recollection, the South St. Petersburg sliver was
24 formerly in a Pinellas County voting district, whereas
25 the Hillsborough County sliver was strictly in a

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
37

1 Hillsborough County voting district. And with the
2 drawing that we saw a few -- earlier today, that has
3 changed. You have combined voters from both areas.

4 Q. Are you aware that the communities that are
5 combined into District 16 currently have been combined
6 to a shared district since the early 1990s?

7 A. I'm not familiar with all of the dates. For
8 that, I'd have to defer to the knowledge of my
9 attorneys.

10 Q. Did you read the complaint before it was
11 filed?

12 A. I believe I did. I don't recall the exact
13 date, so I wouldn't be able to say for sure.

14 Q. Yeah. I don't need the date. I'm just
15 wondering did you read it in full before it was filed.

16 A. I believe I did.

17 Q. Let's go to paragraph 11.

18 A. Okay. You want me to read it silently?

19 Q. Yes. That'd be great.

20 A. Okay. Okay. I read it.

21 Q. Okay. Great. So I was going to ask about the
22 part where you say, quote, Plaintiffs are further harmed
23 because the legislature sacrificed genuine communities
24 of interest, end quote.

25 My first question is, which genuine

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
38

1 communities of interest are you referring to there that
2 you believe the legislature sacrificed?

3 A. They genuine communities of interest would be
4 Black communities in particular in South St. Petersburg
5 and in Hillsborough County, for example, in East Tampa.

6 Q. And how do you believe the community of Blacks
7 in East Tampa were sacrificed by the legislature?

8 A. They -- the -- it's my belief that the
9 legislature put together two totally different
10 communities, communities who have sent their children to
11 school in different community schools and different
12 county systems. For example, communities that pay taxes
13 in a different -- in different ways at different tax
14 referendums, different tax rules, different incentives
15 for small business, for example, they put them all
16 together among other factors. All of those folks were
17 suddenly put together despite their differences.

18 Q. And so how has putting them together
19 sacrificed those communities, just in your own words?

20 A. Putting these two communities together
21 sacrifices their interest because it's very difficult
22 for a -- for one person to represent two totally
23 different areas that have different interests and
24 different factors that they struggle through on a daily
25 basis.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
39

1 Q. And what specific facts are you relying on for
2 that claim that the legislature sacrificed genuine
3 communities of interest?

4 A. Can you restate the question, please?

5 Q. Yeah. Were there any specific facts you're
6 relying on in support of your allegation that the
7 legislature sacrificed those genuine communities of
8 interest?

9 A. Well, for specific facts, I would have to
10 defer to the knowledge of my attorneys.

11 Q. Are there any other communities of interest
12 that you believe were sacrificed because of the way the
13 district lines were drawn?

14 A. I'm not aware of any other communities of
15 interest. It would seem strange for the district to be
16 drawn this way based on any other factors.

17 Q. What do you understand communities of interest
18 to mean?

19 A. Communities of interest are groups of people
20 that reside typically in the same or similar geographic
21 area in a region, and so they have I would just say many
22 commonalties and mutual interests in that particular
23 area that others outside that area may not share.

24 Q. And so the two communities of interest that
25 you've mentioned are the Black voters in South St. Pete

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
40

1 and the Black voters in East Tampa.

2 So other than race, is there another factor
3 that you think can serve as a basis for a community of
4 interest?

5 A. I'm not aware of any other factor at this
6 time.

7 Q. Do you think political party could be the
8 basis for a community of interest?

9 A. Not sure. I'm not sure. I'm not sure. I
10 would have to defer to the knowledge of my -- of my
11 attorneys in this -- in that case.

12 Q. Do you think income level could serve as a
13 basis for a community of interest?

14 A. I'm not sure and I'd have to defer to the
15 knowledge of my attorneys.

16 Q. Looking at the next paragraph there, paragraph
17 12, just -- if you'll read that to yourself and let me
18 know when you're ready.

19 A. Yes, I'm ready.

20 Q. Okay. So this one says, quote, The
21 legislature's racial gerrymandering unjustifiably packed
22 Black voters into District 16 stripping them from
23 adjacent District 18 and reducing their influence there,
24 end quote.

25 So my question is, do you have any specific

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

41

1 facts asserting -- excuse me -- supporting the
2 allegation that the influence of Black voters in
3 District 18 is reduced?

4 A. I'm not aware of any specific facts, so I
5 would have to defer to the knowledge of my attorneys,
6 but I can't see why you would divide up the district if
7 that were not a consideration.

8 Q. Okay. So the next paragraph we'll take a look
9 at too --

10 MS. ROBERTSON: I apologize. Is anyone ready
11 for a break? I actually need to use the bathroom.

12 MS. HARLE: Yeah. That's fine. We can go off
13 the record. Back in five.

14 (Brief recess.)

15 BY MS. HARLE:

16 Q. Mr Nord Hodges, I think we were just looking
17 at paragraph 13 there. We'll give you a minute to read
18 that. Let me know when you're ready.

19 A. All right. All right. I'm ready.

20 Q. So starting on that third line where you say,
21 quote, Floridians including individual legislators
22 called out and questioned the legislature's
23 unconstitutional actions, end quote, I'm wondering, are
24 there any specific Floridians you're aware of that
25 called out and questioned the legislature?

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
42

1 A. I'm not aware of specific names at this time.
2 I'd have to defer to my attorneys for their knowledge of
3 different actors in the case.

4 Q. Do you have any general recollection that you
5 can share with me of who called out what?

6 A. I do not. I watched the news and -- at the
7 time and I know some did. I don't recall who because it
8 was all the local Tampa Bay area news stations.

9 Q. Okay. Let's look at paragraph 20, please.

10 A. I'm sorry. Which paragraph number?

11 Q. Paragraph 20. If you can just read that to
12 yourself.

13 A. Okay. I read it.

14 Q. Okay. So this one talks about the district's
15 line splitting up Plaintiff's communities.

16 My question is, which community are you
17 referring to there that you feel like is split up?

18 A. The two communities that's -- two communities
19 in particular are East Tampa community and the South
20 St. Petersburg community.

21 Q. And do you consider your community to be North
22 Tampa?

23 A. Yes. I live in North Tampa. I -- yes.

24 Q. Okay. But North Tampa is not split up, right?

25 A. I'm not sure what you mean by that.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

43

1 Q. Well, so this is -- quote, The enacted plan
2 harms Plaintiffs because among other reasons, it splits
3 up their communities.

4 So I'm just wondering, is your community,
5 North Tampa, split up in your view?

6 A. Oh, right. I'm trying to make sure I
7 understand what you're asking. The North Tampa
8 community that I'm in appears to be part of the same
9 portion of the Hillsborough County side of the district.
10 So it's not physically politically split up for them to
11 be divided from the St. Petersburg -- South
12 St. Petersburg district.

13 Q. And when you think of your own community, how
14 would you define your -- Mr. Hodges -- Nord Hodges'
15 community?

16 A. Let's see. How -- how would I define my
17 community? Can you be specific as to which community
18 you're referring to?

19 Q. Well, I'm trying to wrap my mind around what
20 is meant in your complaint. At various times,
21 communities are referred to. So I guess if I were just
22 asking you, you know, how do you define or describe your
23 community? Is there one answer? Are there different
24 answers that you would give me?

25 A. Well, one answer I would give you right now

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
44

1 through my recollection is that I'm part of the
2 Hillsborough County community and all that that entails,
3 and that community is different from the South
4 St. Petersburg community.

5 Q. So later in that paragraph 20 where it says,
6 groups their communities with dissimilar ones, is --
7 what are you referring to there in terms of
8 dissimilar --

9 MS. ROBERTSON: Object to form. I'm sorry.
10 Object to form.

11 THE WITNESS: I'm referring to the fact that
12 Black communities in areas like East Tampa and
13 South St. Petersburg are very dissimilar other than
14 them being Black -- primarily Black.

15 BY MS. HARLE:

16 Q. And you don't consider yourself in East Tampa,
17 right?

18 A. That's correct, although I serve residents of
19 East Tampa in the -- through my job in the school
20 district.

21 Q. So your -- was it called Dr. Carter?

22 A. Yes, Dr. Carter G. Wilson school.

23 Q. That's located in East Tampa?

24 A. No. That's located in West -- in North Tampa
25 also, but the students come from all over -- all parts

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
45

1 of Hillsborough County including East Tampa.

2 Q. Okay. And then that last line that says,
3 quote, Simply because of their race, are there any facts
4 that you know of that we haven't talked about today that
5 indicate that the lines were drawn simply because of the
6 race of the voters?

7 A. I would have to defer to my attorneys for
8 further discussion of that matter, but I can't see why
9 you would draw the district -- redraw the district that
10 way if race were not a factor.

11 Q. Let's look at paragraph 95. Read that and let
12 me when you're ready.

13 A. All right.

14 Q. So this is where you say, quote, These
15 race-based decisions resulted in a map that splits
16 neighborhood and ignores traditional redistricting
17 criteria.

18 So my first question is, which --

19 A. Well, hang on.

20 Q. I'm sorry.

21 A. I haven't had a chance to finish reading it
22 yet.

23 Q. Oh, I'm sorry.

24 A. That's okay. You said 95 or 96?

25 Q. Just number 95, yes, sir.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
46

1 A. Right. Okay. Go ahead.

2 Q. My first question is, which neighborhoods are
3 split in the map?

4 A. Well, South St. Petersburg -- South
5 St. Petersburg is politically split from the rest of
6 St. Petersburg, which is not -- which has not always
7 been the case.

8 Q. Is South St. Petersburg -- South
9 St. Petersburg itself a neighborhood?

10 A. Yes, it is.

11 Q. And is all of South St. Petersburg currently
12 in District 16?

13 A. You would need to show me a map again and
14 restate the question, please.

15 Q. Okay. Sure. Let's -- let's go down to the
16 figure 3 real quick.

17 So the purple part on the map there, that's
18 South St. Petersburg, correct?

19 A. Yes. Well, the purple shaded part.

20 Q. Purple with the diagonal white lines?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. So my question is, just that boundary
23 between 16 and 18 on the Pinellas side, do you see that?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay. Is any part of South St. Pete in

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
47

1 District 18 on that map?

2 A. Yes, it is.

3 Q. Okay. So is South St. Petersburg the
4 neighborhood, as you described it, split between
5 District 16 and 18?

6 A. Oh, is South St. Pete split between District
7 16 and 18?

8 Q. That's what I'm trying to ask.

9 A. No, it's not. It's divided from it.

10 Q. Okay. Thank you. All right. Let's look back
11 at 95 for the second part of that question, which is --
12 this says that the legislature ignores traditional
13 redistricting criteria, so I'm wondering, which criteria
14 do you understand it to be appropriate for the
15 legislature to use when drawing district lines?

16 A. Well, for further discussion of that, I would
17 have to defer to the knowledge of my attorneys.

18 Q. And which criteria do you believe the
19 legislature ignored in drawing these district lines?

20 A. I believe they simply ignored geographic
21 criteria by going across multiple counties and dividing
22 it up with the body of water all of -- both of which are
23 unusual.

24 Q. Anything else?

25 A. Not at this time.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
48

1 Q. Okay. All right. Let's look at paragraph 97.

2 A. Okay. Let me read it. Okay. Go ahead.

3 Q. Just focussing on the first line that refers
4 to, quote, The direct evidence of racial predominance,
5 what direct evidence are you aware of that race
6 predominates the drawing of the district lines you're
7 challenging?

8 A. I'm not certain on all of the particular
9 factors, so I would have to defer to my attorneys for
10 more complete answering of this.

11 Q. But do you know of any direct evidence that
12 race predominates the drawing of the lines?

13 A. I'm not sure at this time, but I can't see why
14 else you would need to draw a district in this way.

15 Q. Looking at paragraph 131 -- take a minute to
16 read that and let me know, please.

17 A. Yes. You can go ahead.

18 Q. Okay. Do you know what the phrase Tier One
19 compliance means in that allegation?

20 A. I don't recall. I've seen the definition
21 somewhere in my reading of this lawsuit, I believe, but
22 I'd have to refer to -- or defer to my attorneys for
23 more definitions or knowledge.

24 Q. Let's look at the map of what's called plan
25 42, which is in your complaint. There it is.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
49

1 Does that look familiar to you?

2 A. Yeah. I have seen it in the past.

3 Q. I'll just represent to you this is a --
4 obviously, it's in your complaint. This is a map that
5 you and your Co-Plaintiffs have proposed as a better
6 alternative to the map you're challenging.

7 Can you tell me anything about this map that
8 you think is better than the map that you're challenging
9 in the lawsuit?

10 A. Yes. If you look at 19, 18, 16, and 24, you
11 can travel the width and height of the -- of those areas
12 without crossing into another county, and the entire
13 community or geographic area is enclosed within the
14 boundaries of each specific voting district.

15 Q. Based on your knowledge of the demographics in
16 Hillsborough, would there be roughly the same number of
17 Black voters in this map or more or less than the one
18 that you're challenging?

19 A. I would have to defer to my attorneys, who I'm
20 sure may be relying on the census and other political --
21 and other information or more accurate and complete
22 discussion of that question.

23 Q. Okay. Let's look at what's called the Isbell
24 map. It's also in your complaint. Does this -- let's
25 see.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
50

1 The Isbell Plan, does that look familiar to
2 you?

3 A. I believe I've seen it before.

4 Q. Okay. And this is in your complaint as an
5 alternative map.

6 What is it about this map that you prefer to
7 the map that you're challenging in the lawsuit?

8 A. Again, it appears that the -- that each of the
9 voting districts is self-contained and does not cross
10 over or -- or share parts of another voting district.
11 You can travel the width and the depth of each district
12 without crossing a body of water and without -- without
13 crossing through another district.

14 Q. And in this plan, it looks like the voters of
15 South St. Pete are not combined with the voters of
16 Tampa; is that right?

17 A. That appears to be accurate.

18 Q. Do you know whether under this plan in the
19 region shaded 17 there would be a diminishment of the
20 Black voting power as compared to the map that you're
21 challenging now?

22 A. I'm not aware of all the specific boundaries
23 of this proposed plan. I'd have to defer to my
24 attorneys for more complete and accurate discussion.

25 Q. Have you seen any of the maps that your expert

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
51

1 witnesses have provided in their reports in this case?

2 A. I'm not sure. I -- I'm not sure. I would
3 have to be pointed to specific maps. It seems like
4 there's a lot of them.

5 MS. HARLE: That is correct. Let's look at
6 your initial disclosures. This will be Exhibit 2.

7 (Defendant's Exhibit No. 2 was marked for
8 identification.)

9 If you can scroll down, Leila, to the bottom
10 and then back up.

11 BY MS. HARLE:

12 Q. Does this document look familiar to you
13 Mr. Nord Hodges?

14 A. Let's see. Let me see. Well, my name looks
15 familiar.

16 Q. Okay. Are you able to say whether you've
17 reviewed this before?

18 A. I believe I have. All the documents kind of
19 seem to run together.

20 Q. I understand. Well, let's look at what it
21 says there in 1A where it has your name. So it says
22 that you, quote, have information tending to show that
23 the challenged districts caused harm to themselves and
24 other residents.

25 So I'm wondering, what harm do the challenged

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
52

1 districts cause to you?

2 A. Yes. Specifically, the harm to me is that I'm
3 forced to share a legislature now -- or not necessarily
4 legislature, a political representative with -- with
5 residents of South St. Pete with whom I have nothing in
6 common other than being Black. So again, less
7 representation to me is not better than more
8 representation.

9 Q. And do you believe that Black voters are a
10 community of interest?

11 A. Yes, I do.

12 Q. So in what way does being in the same district
13 as other Black voters harm you?

14 MS. ROBERTSON: Object to form.

15 You can answer.

16 THE WITNESS: Okay. In what way does being in
17 a district with other Black voters harm me?

18 MS. HARLE: Yes, sir.

19 THE WITNESS: Well, if the -- I'm sorry. Go
20 ahead.

21 MS. HARLE: Yes, sir. That was my question.

22 THE WITNESS: Okay. It harms me if I have to
23 share time with a legislator who's -- instead of
24 being able to be dedicated to the interest of my
25 community has conflicting interest in at least two

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
53

1 different communities that they have to consider,
2 research, work on, so forth. So possibly, I may
3 get less, less advocacy on -- for my community on
4 my side of the map and some in another part of the
5 map.

6 BY MS. HARLE:

7 Q. And if -- if the voters of South St. Pete were
8 moved out of your voting district and that caused the
9 number of Black voters in your district to go down,
10 would you be in favor of that?

11 A. Yes, I would.

12 Q. Okay. So the second part of your claim there
13 is that you have information tending to show that the
14 challenged district cause harm to other residents.

15 So is there any harm to other residents of the
16 districts that you have information on that we haven't
17 talked about yet?

18 A. I'm not aware of other specific information.
19 I'd have to defer to my attorneys for complete and
20 accurate discussion.

21 Q. Okay. Are there any other individuals you
22 know of that have information about whether the district
23 lines were drawn near -- primarily based on race?

24 A. I'm not aware at this time of who has or
25 doesn't have information about the districts being

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
54

1 redrawn.

2 MS. HARLE: And then just one, I think, final
3 exhibit. This will be your blog from November 9th,
4 2012. Give you time to read it.

5 (Defendant's Exhibit No. 3 was marked for
6 identification.)

7 THE WITNESS: Okay.

8 BY MS. HARLE:

9 Q. Does this kind of look like your blog?

10 A. Yes. That is definitely me.

11 Q. Okay. If you don't mind, just read that entry
12 and I'll just have a couple questions.

13 A. All right. Sure. Give me a moment. All
14 right. I finished.

15 Q. Okay. I just wanted to hone in on towards the
16 bottom there starting with -- I'll read it into the
17 record just so we have it. Quote, Even the Cuban
18 population is no longer Republican in Florida.
19 Unfortunately, I guarantee that the blind will continue
20 to lead the blind and tea partying war-mongering GOP
21 party leadership will stupidly assume that they lost
22 this election because their candidates were not more
23 extreme. For their sakes, they should get it right
24 because the number of old white men in America is
25 shrinking and you cannot win with just their vote. Duh,

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
55

1 end quote.

2 Did I read that right?

3 A. Yes, you did.

4 Q. Okay. Would you say that you had animosity
5 towards Republicans at the time you wrote this?

6 A. No, not at all. I've -- I'm a first
7 generation immigrant who grew up in the south in
8 Arkansas and Florida surrounded by Republicans,
9 Democrats, Independents, and others from school age
10 including my school in church and my community groups
11 that I actively fellowshiped and was and am still
12 friends with until this day.

13 Q. Okay. So you don't have any animosity today
14 towards old white men?

15 A. No, I did not.

16 Q. Okay. And do you think -- do you think
17 Republicans are stupid?

18 A. No. This was just an opinion piece based on
19 certain political actions at the time. And being 12
20 years ago, many things have -- are not the same today as
21 they were in 2012.

22 MS. HARLE: Understood. Well, thank you. I
23 think that's the end of my questions.

24 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

25 MS. ROBERTSON: I don't have any questions.

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

56

1 We would like to read.

2 MS. HARLE: And we will order an electronic
3 copy.

4 MS. ROBERTSON: We'll also order. And can you
5 bill the ACLU instead of Butler.

6 (This deposition was concluded at 3:49 p.m.)

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KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
57

CERTIFICATE OF OATH

STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF DUVAL)

I, WENDY E. RIVERA, Florida Professional
Reporter, Notary Public, State of Florida, certify that
KETO NORD HODGES personally appeared before me via
videoconference on November 26, 2024, and was duly
sworn.

Signed this 13th day of December, 2024.

Wendy E. Rivera
Notary Public, State of Florida
Commission No.: HH 373469
Expires: March 15, 2027



WENDY E. RIVERA
Commission # HH 373469
Expires March 15, 2027

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
58

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF DUVAL)

I, WENDY E. RIVERA, Florida Professional Reporter, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did remotely stenographically report the videoconference deposition of KETO NORD HODGES; that a review of the transcript WAS requested; and that the foregoing transcript, pages 1 through 56, is a true record of my stenographic notes.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, or attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

DATED this 13th day of December, 2024.



Wendy E. Rivera

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
59

DEPOSITION ERRATA SHEET

Assignment No.: J12026730

Case Caption: KETO NORD HODGES et al vs. KATHLEEN
PASSIDOMO et al

Witness: KETO NORD HODGES

DECLARATION UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY

I declare under penalty of perjury that I have read the entire transcript of my deposition taken in the captioned matter or the same has been read to me, and the same is true and accurate, save and except for changes and/or corrections, if any, as indicated by me on the DEPOSITION ERRATA SHEET hereof, with the understanding that I offer these changes as if still under oath.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 20____.

KETO NORD HODGES

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
60

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Page No. _____ Line No. _____ Change to: _____

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KETO NORD HODGES

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
61

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Page No. _____ Line No. _____ Change to: _____

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Page No. _____ Line No. _____ Change to: _____

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Page No. _____ Line No. _____ Change to: _____

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Page No. _____ Line No. _____ Change to: _____

Reason for change: _____

Page No. _____ Line No. _____ Change to: _____

Reason for change: _____

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KETO NORD HODGES

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: \$3.2..advocate

	49:10	55:21	33:18,23	accounts
\$	1969	2013		29:4,6
	19:24	23:23	7	accurate
\$3.2	1990s	2014		49:21
32:9	37:6	11:16,18	7	50:17,24
		13:25	33:18,25	53:20
1	1991	14:1	7349	ACLU
	9:22		7:25	56:5
	19:25	2018		acquiring
1	1995	15:16		21:11
29:24,25	22:14	16:23	8	acquisition
100,000	1A	17:5		20:24
20:3	51:21	2019	8	
10907		7:15	11:12	actions
7:12	2	12:22		41:23
11		13:16	9	55:19
37:17	2	14:17,18,		actively
12	51:6,7	20 16:23	9,000	55:11
40:17	20	49:10	7:19	activities
55:19	30:4		95	14:11
13	42:9,11	3	45:11,24,	26:9
41:17	44:5		25 47:11	31:24
131	200	3	96	actors
48:15	32:7	30:4	45:24	42:3
16	2002	46:16	97	added
35:12,21	10:22	54:5	48:1	22:23
36:4,7	2005	31655	9th	address
37:5	10:23,24	7:18	54:3	7:10,14,
40:22	2008	33612		15,16,17,
46:12,23	9:16	7:13	A	20 8:5
47:5,7	14:9,11	33615		22:6
49:10	17:5	8:1	A-L-I-C-E	adjacent
17	22:14		22:2	40:23
50:19	2010	4	ability	adopted
18	20:1,2		32:17,21	19:23
40:23	2011	42	33:8	Adult
41:3	9:16 10:3	48:25	Abonado	10:17
46:23	11:18		7:25 8:5,	advocacy
47:1,5,7	2012	6	9 22:5	17:19,21
49:10	14:11		academy	53:3
19	17:5 54:4	6	11:12	advocate
17:5				

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: affordable..bill

25:5	alternative	38:23	39:10	background
affordable	49:6 50:5	44:12	40:11,15	10:14
21:4	America	49:11	41:5 42:2	bad
23:10	14:11	Arkansas	45:7	5:16 8:13
32:14,17,	17:5	55:8	47:17	
22,25	54:24	article	48:9,22	ballot
African-	American	49:19	50:24	17:10
american	20:11	19:25	53:19	banking
34:17	animosity	27:16		16:25
African-	55:4,13	artificiall	audibly	17:4
americans	answering	y	5:9	bankruptcy
21:17	48:10	35:1	August	23:20
Afro-latina	answers	arts	11:18	Baptist
5:2	5:9 43:24	10:18	Avenue	18:3
afternoon	apartment	asserting	7:12	based
4:9	8:15	41:1	average	39:16
age	33:12,13	assigned	33:10	49:15
16:12	apologize	11:9,11	aware	53:23
36:7,11	13:24	assisting	8:19	55:18
55:9	41:10	20:12	24:11	basis
ahead	appears	associate	26:12,14	12:8,9
5:12	43:8	10:18	36:8 37:4	38:25
35:23	50:8,17	Association	39:14	40:3,8,13
46:1	approximate	17:15	40:5	bathroom
48:2,17	ly	assume	41:4,24	41:11
52:20	7:2 8:7	5:18	42:1 48:5	Bay
airport	16:1	54:21	50:22	12:3
8:12	area	at-project	53:18,24	16:10
ALICE	12:3	12:8		21:8 42:8
21:25	16:10	at-will	B	Bay's
22:2	21:8,14	12:6	bachelor	21:5
alike	30:21	attorney	10:21	begin
24:18	31:16,21	5:11 7:3	back	5:10
allegation	34:13	27:18	8:14 9:25	belief
39:6 41:2	35:4	attorneys	10:2	38:8
48:19	39:21,23	4:10	31:23	beneficial
allegations	42:8	6:10,13,	33:14	28:1
33:23	49:13	15 25:18	41:13	Biden
allowed	areas	34:8	47:10	14:13,14
14:20	30:18	36:9,19	51:10	bill
	34:23	37:9	backed	56:5
	37:3		35:12	

**KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO**November 26, 2024
Index: billion..Clinton

billion	body	31:15	15:15	changed
32:9	34:14			37:3
bit	47:22	Butler	career	charged
16:21	50:12	56:5	21:21	23:15,17
24:21	book	buying	careers	child
32:24	13:11	21:4	21:1	9:23
Black	born		Carter	children
17:25	21:15	C	11:11	9:3,9
18:8,14,	bottom		44:21,22	20:12
15,17	51:9	call	case	38:10
34:20	54:16	25:2	4:11,24	Chloe
35:5,10,	boundaries	27:18	6:17,18	20:21
12,20	36:16,21	called	25:20,23	chronically
36:3,7,11	49:14	18:21	26:1,5	21:18
38:4	50:22	22:25	40:11	church
39:25	boundary	27:4	42:3 46:7	18:3
40:1,22	46:22	41:22,25	51:1	31:24
41:2	break	42:5	caused	55:10
44:12,14	5:25	44:21	51:23	citizen
49:17	41:11	48:24	53:8	14:19
50:20	briefly	49:23	census	citizens
52:6,9,	27:15	campaign	49:20	32:11
13,17	bring	12:6,10	certificati	city
53:9	21:20	14:13,15	on	13:1
Blacks	bringing	17:8,25	21:2	16:24
38:6	24:12,14	campaigns	chair	citywide
blind	Brookins	12:3,17,	15:23	13:19
54:19,20	13:2	22,24	chairperson	civil
blog	budget	13:6,15,	15:20,25	23:13
18:18,20,	32:9	16,21	challenged	claim
21,22	building	14:6,13,	51:23,25	39:2
19:2,5,	21:4,11	14 17:6	53:14	53:12
10,12,15,	business	candidate	challenging	Classroom
18 54:3,9	12:13	17:9	24:24	17:14
blogging	22:22	candidates	26:12	clear
19:17,20,	38:15	54:22	28:5,10,	5:15
22	businesses	canvassing	19 30:4,	clients
blogs	21:8	16:13,22,	12 48:7	13:11
20:5	23:10	23	49:6,8,18	Clinton
board	bussing	capacity	50:7,21	14:13
12:25		26:4	chance	
20:16		captain	45:21	
33:16				

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: co-plaintiffs..criticize

co-	7 28:1	49:21	contractor	14:4
plaintiffs	33:5,13	50:24	12:11	15:7,11,
4:24 49:5	36:1	53:19	conversatio	18,24
code	37:4,23	compliance	ns	16:2,6,8,
7:18 22:3	38:1,3,4,	48:19	25:17	11 17:14,
college	10,12,19,	component	copy	16,18
9:3,4,7	20 39:3,	21:2	56:3	20:21
10:19	7,11,14,	computer	Corporation	21:18
combine	17,19,24	10:20	20:16,20	22:20
24:17	42:15,18	concentrati	22:16,25	23:5,6
combined	43:3,21	on	correct	28:18,21
13:11	44:6,12	21:17	7:23 23:7	30:20,23
35:4	53:1	concerned	30:13	31:10,18,
37:3,5	community	31:11	44:18	19,20
50:15	7:20 9:7	condo	46:18	32:3,6,
comments	10:19	7:19	51:5	11,19
28:23,25	19:19	Coney	correctly	33:6,16
committee	20:25	20:22	35:16	34:18,21
15:16,19,	21:25	conflicting	cost	36:24,25
21,22	22:1,2,22	52:25	21:7,8	37:1
16:2	26:8,9	congratulat	could've	38:5,12
common	28:9,12	ions	5:16	43:9 44:2
52:6	38:6,11	10:25	council	45:1
commonaltie	40:3,8,13	congression	13:1	49:12
s	42:16,19,	al	16:24	couple
39:22	20,21	29:19,22	count	33:22
communicate	43:4,8,	considerati	13:17	54:12
26:15	13,15,17,	on	counties	court
27:10	23 44:2,	41:7	34:14	13:3
communicate	3,4 49:13	considerati	47:21	23:25
d	52:10,25	ons	country	24:6
26:19,23	53:3	33:25	7:18 8:11	cover
communicati	55:10	considered	19:16	27:5
ons	compared	21:25	22:7,10	create
28:12	50:20	contacted	32:9	12:2
communities	complaint	27:12	countryside	crime
20:17,20	29:23	contention	20:12	23:15
22:17	33:19	35:11	county	criteria
23:1	37:10	continue	11:3,14	45:17
24:20	43:20	54:19	12:25	47:13,18,
25:1,3,6,	48:25		13:2,19	21
	49:4,24			criticize
	50:4			19:4
	complete			
	5:9 48:10			

**KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO**November 26, 2024
Index: cross..dividing

cross	37:8	6:9 7:3	6:12	41:3,6
34:14	39:10	depositions	25:17	43:9,12
50:9	40:10,14	4:23	disclosures	44:20
crossing	41:5 42:2	depressed	51:6	45:9
49:12	45:7	33:6	discontinue	46:12
50:12,13	47:17	depth	19:13	47:1,5,6,
Cuban	48:9,22	50:11	discontinue	15,19
54:17	49:19	describe	d	48:6,14
cum	50:23	43:22	18:24	49:14
10:22	53:19	design	discuss	50:10,11,
current	define	12:2	18:7,13	13 52:12,
11:2,3	15:1	Develop	discussed	17 53:8,
24:23	43:14,16,	20:17,20	18:10,16	9,14,22
35:21	22	22:17,25	discussion	district's
36:6	definition	development	34:9	42:14
customers	definitions	20:23	36:18	districting
31:22	48:23	diagonal	45:8	28:21
cycle	degree	46:20	47:16	32:2
13:3	10:18,19	differences	49:22	districts
<hr/>	DEI	38:17	50:24	24:16,20
D	15:25	difficult	53:20	26:20
<hr/>	democracy	27:24	disservice	28:9
daily	16:9	38:21	13:17	30:11
38:24	Democratic	digital	dissimilar	33:15
date	16:2,3,	11:22,25	44:6,8,13	34:2,21
37:13,14	18,19	12:2	distinct	50:9
dates	Democrats	13:6,12	27:25	51:23
37:7	15:12,18,	dilute	district	52:1
day	24 16:6,9	24:15	24:18	53:16,25
10:3 20:2	28:18,21	diluted	25:10	diverse
55:12	55:9	24:22	28:4	25:6
decisions	demographic	diminishmen	30:15	35:25
45:15	s	t	32:3,8	36:1
dedicated	49:15	50:19	34:5,11,	diversity
52:24	Denise	direct	13,16,19	15:20,23
defendant's	4:10	48:4,5,11	35:6,12,	divide
29:25	deposed	directly	21,25	34:11
51:7 54:5	4:21	27:10	36:4,7,	41:6
defer	deposition	disclose	12,16,24	divided
34:8 36:9	4:11,18		37:1,5,6	43:11
			39:13,15	47:9
			40:22,23	dividing
				47:21

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO

November 26, 2024

Index: divorce..favor

divorce 23:23, 24	earned 10:18, 21	23 17:1 29:20, 22 54:22	54:11	extreme 54:23
document 6:2, 16 51:12	earthquake 20:2	electronic 56:2	equity 15:20	<hr/> F <hr/>
documents 6:20, 22 51:18	east 18:3 21:1, 16, 22, 24 22:6, 12, 13, 17 25:10, 11 32:19, 25 33:11 38:5, 7 40:1 42:19 44:12, 16,	elevated 33:24	estate 21:10 33:3	Facebook 29:7
dollars 33:11	economic 21:1 23:24 33:8	eligible 29:20, 22	estimate 7:5, 7 24:5	fact 27:7 36:8, 22 44:11
door-to-door 16:14	economically 20:25 22:4 33:6	employer 11:2, 3	estimated 36:10	factor 40:2, 5 45:10
drastically 32:18	Ed 14:3	enacted 43:1	events 18:6	factors 31:11 32:10 38:16, 24 39:16 48:9
draw 45:9 48:14	educating 16:9	enclosed 49:13	evidence 48:4, 5, 11	facts 34:4, 7 39:1, 5, 9 41:1, 4 45:3
drawing 34:5 37:2 47:15, 19 48:6, 12	education 11:7 18:11	encourage 15:25 16:1, 9	exact 7:20 37:12	fair 35:2 36:11
drawn 34:16, 22 39:13, 16 45:5 53:23	educational 10:14	end 9:16 33:25 34:2 37:24 40:24 41:23 55:1, 23	exceptional 11:6	familiar 5:7 27:8 30:9 36:15, 17, 21, 22 37:7 49:1 50:1 51:12, 15
drew 34:1	effectively 25:5	entails 44:2	excuse 12:1 31:10, 18 41:1	families 21:5
driving 23:17	El-amin 26:3	entire 21:14 49:12	exhibit 29:24, 25 51:6, 7 54:3, 5	family 9:20
Duh 54:25	election 16:13, 22,	entity 34:11	exists 20:22	favor 53:10
<hr/> E <hr/>		entrepreneur 12:14	expect 31:14	
earlier 37:2		entrepreneurship 10:23	expended 22:20	
early 37:6		entry	expert 33:2, 3 50:25	
			explain 30:8, 14	

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: feel..happened

feel	16:3,11	frame	39:20	55:7
42:17	18:12,17	30:7	47:20	ground
fellowshipe	19:24	friends	49:13	5:8 6:17
d	22:21,23	55:12	gerrymander	group
55:11	25:9,11	front	ing	15:1
fewer	26:16,20	6:4	40:21	20:19
35:1	27:6	full	give	35:18
fight	30:18	11:16	5:9,17	groups
20:22	54:18	12:18,19	7:22	14:25
figure	Florida/	37:15	10:14	28:9,12
30:4	north	full-time	30:7	39:19
46:16	30:21	17:17	33:19	44:6
filed	Floridians	fun	41:17	55:10
23:20	41:21,24	19:17	43:24,25	guarantee
27:3 29:3	focus	fundamental	54:4,13	54:19
37:11,15	21:14	ly	giving	guess
filing	22:18,19	24:15	4:18 6:6	6:17
6:16	33:22	funding	glad	16:20
final	focussed	20:24	20:14	30:8
54:2	22:17		goal	43:21
find	focussing	G	17:17	
6:1 10:5	48:3		God	H
20:4,7	folks	Garcia	20:10	
32:21	28:13	5:4,5	good	H-A-R-T
fine	33:12	gears	4:9 6:8	31:20
41:12	38:16	16:20	19:16	H-O-D-G-E-S
finish	forced	GED	21:1	4:16
5:10	52:3	10:18	GOP	Haiti
45:21	form	general	54:20	19:23
finished	31:4	42:4	graduated	20:1,6,13
54:14	35:13,22	generally	10:16	half-cent
firm	44:9,10	16:7	grants	17:16
25:20	52:14	generation	20:24	hall
firms	Fort	55:7	graphics	17:25
19:16	22:23	genuine	12:2	18:7,15
Florida	23:5	37:23,25	great	hang
4:10 9:4,	founded	38:3	4:17 5:6,	45:19
8,11,17	20:21	39:2,7	25 11:9	happen
10:21	fourth	geographic	18:21	5:8
14:4	21:9	33:2,3	37:19,21	happened
			grew	

**KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO**November 26, 2024
Index: happening..instructor

26:21	HART	34:18, 21	house	55:10
happening	31:20	36:16, 25	8:14, 16	inclusion
26:13	HCTA	37:1 38:5	houses	15:20, 23
happenings	17:15	43:9 44:2	33:10	income
27:5	head	45:1	housing	33:13
hardest	5:20	49:16	21:5	40:12
20:25	hear	hired	23:10	Incorporate
hardworking	20:14	13:6	32:14, 18,	d
21:5	heard	Hispanic	22, 25	23:2
Harle	35:16	5:1	hundred	increasing
4:10 6:19	height	historical	33:10	17:17
7:9 25:21	49:11	36:19	Hyacinth	Independent
29:23	Heights	history	7:12	s
30:2	33:9	36:15, 17,		55:9
32:23	held	20, 21	I	individual
35:19	18:2, 3	hit		41:21
36:2	high	20:25	identificat	individuals
41:12, 15	8:25	Hodges	ion	53:21
44:15	10:15, 17	4:9, 15	30:1 51:8	influence
51:5, 11	Hillary	41:16	54:6	40:23
52:18, 21	14:12	43:14	ignores	41:2
53:6	Hillsboroug	51:13	45:16	information
54:2, 8	h	Hodges '	47:12	6:18
55:22	9:7	43:14	II	10:22
56:2	10:17, 19	home	13:1	49:21
harm	11:3, 14	9:18, 19	16:24	51:22
35:9	12:25	21:16, 22,	17:4	53:13, 16,
51:23, 25	14:4	23, 24	illegal	18, 22, 25
52:2, 13,	15:6, 11,	22:23	31:1	informed
17 53:14,	17, 23	31:23	immigrant	25:20
15	16:6, 8, 11	homes	55:7	infractions
harmed	17:14, 16,	21:11	impact	24:6
34:15, 19,	18 20:21	hone	18:17	initial
21, 23	21:17	54:15	incentives	6:16 51:6
35:17, 18	22:20	hosted	38:14	injury
37:22	23:5	17:24	includes	19:15
harms	28:18, 21	hour	25:10	Instagram
43:2	30:19, 20,	7:5	including	29:8
52:22	23 31:10,	hours	41:21	instructor
Harris	18, 19, 20	7:7	45:1	11:7, 8,
14:15	32:6, 11,			
17:25	19 33:6			
18:8				

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: instructs..locate

14,15,17	16 19:1,	54:9	30:12	40:12
instructs	18,20	knowledge	48:21	levels
5:12	23:9	36:9 37:8	49:9 50:7	33:7
interest	32:12	39:10	lawsuits	license
25:6		40:10,15	27:5	23:18
32:11	J	41:5 42:2	lawyer	limited
37:24		47:17	25:13	32:4
38:1,3,21	Jarvis	48:23	laying	lines
39:3,8,	26:3	49:15	6:16	28:4
11,15,17,	Jen		lead	34:6,16
19,24	5:5	L	54:20	39:13
40:4,8,13	job	lady	leadership	45:5
52:10,24,	11:5	5:1	54:21	46:20
25	44:19	Lakeland	left	47:15,19
interests	jobs	9:11,17	30:24	48:6,12
38:23	21:1	22:14	legal	53:23
39:22	judge	landed	27:5	Linkedin
interrupted	13:3	20:1	legislator	11:21
22:16	June	large	13:22	29:9,11
interview	7:15	25:9 33:7	52:23	List
27:13		larger	legislators	12:16
interviews	K	30:19	34:1	live
28:7		largest	41:21	8:2,6,14
involved	K-E-T-O	21:16	legislature	9:11 10:7
14:24	4:15	32:8	26:16,20	33:12
15:2,5,	Kamala	laude	33:24	42:23
11,14	14:15	10:22	34:5	lived
17:8,13	17:25	law	37:23	9:17
23:13	18:8	19:16	38:2,7,9	21:24
25:15	Keto	25:19	39:2,7	22:9,12,
Isbell	4:15 6:11	27:4	41:25	13
49:23	18:22	Law360	47:12,15,	living
50:1	25:16	27:5,11	19 52:3,4	21:21
issue	35:14	lawsuit	legislature	34:18
17:9	killed	23:12,13	's	local
18:10	20:2	24:13,14	40:21	13:18
31:25	kind	25:15	41:22	42:8
32:1,25	12:11,13	27:2	Leila	localities
issues	19:20	28:14,24	51:9	23:9
15:3	23:8	29:1,2	level	locate
17:20,22	51:18		31:13,21	20:6
18:9,13,				

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: located..neighborhood

located	10:22	12:1 22:2	minutes	20:22
20:11		48:19	27:23	24:16
44:23, 24	manager			29:6 31:8
	15:6	meant	misheard	33:7
long		43:20	14:16	34:14, 24
7:2, 4	manner		missing	47:21
15:14	34:2	media	20:3	municipal
19:11	map	15:6		13:19
24:10	24:23	26:24	mission	
	26:11	28:4, 24	22:18	mutual
longer	30:4, 9	29:1, 4, 6		39:22
54:18	31:1	meet	missionarie	
lost	35:21	7:2	s	Myers
54:21	45:15		20:10, 11	22:23
	46:3, 13,	member	missionary	23:5
lot	17 47:1	20:16	19:23	
33:12	48:24	members	mom	N
51:4	49:4, 6, 7,	26:15, 16,	19:23	
low	8, 17, 24	19, 23	moment	N-O-R-D
21:7	50:5, 6, 7,	membership	10:7	4:15
33:13	20 53:4, 5	16:1, 5	54:13	NAACP
lower	maps	men	monthly	15:7
10:5	34:9	17:25	12:9	28:13, 16
	50:25	18:8, 14,	months	named
M	51:3	16, 17	10:12, 13	13:5, 9
	marked	54:24	14:19	names
made	29:25	55:14	27:2	42:1
28:8, 11,	51:7 54:5	mentioned	motivations	Narain
23, 25	market	29:2	34:5	14:3
magna	10:9	39:25	move	nation
10:22	marketing	middle	7:14 9:25	27:7
main	21:7	8:10	10:4, 11	national
22:19	materials	miles	moved	13:19
majority	21:7	8:8	7:15 9:22	14:5
22:3	math	mind	10:2	nationally
make	11:6, 8,	36:10, 14	19:24	18:11
5:8, 19, 23	13, 15	43:19	22:14	nearby
6:11 23:3	matter	54:11	53:8	9:9
25:16	45:8	minor	moving	necessarily
43:6	MBA	24:1	8:20, 21,	52:3
makeup	10:23	minute	23	neighborhoo
16:5	means	41:17	multiple	d
management	11:24	48:15	18:9	

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: neighborhoods..Petersburg

45:16		27:4	43:8 44:1	39:19
46:9 47:4	<u>O</u>	organizatio	46:17,19,	percentage
neighborhoo		ns	25 47:11	36:6,10,
ds	oath	15:3,9	53:4,12	11,13
46:2	4:18 5:18	organizer	part-time	periods
news	Obama	11:22,25	11:16	24:8
42:6,8	14:11	13:7,12	participate	perjury
nice	17:5	originally	d	4:19
9:9	object	9:22	28:6	person
nods	5:11 31:4	21:15	participate	15:16
5:21	35:13,22	22:16	s	16:3 25:5
nominal	44:9,10	orphanage	21:6	38:22
21:8	52:14	20:12	partisan	personal
nonprofit	observe	owned	17:20,22	19:15,18
20:21	4:23	9:19	parts	26:4
Nord	observed		23:4	persons
4:9,15	4:25	<u>P</u>	32:19	24:19
41:16	offenses		44:25	perspective
43:14	24:2	packed	50:10	35:10
51:13	officer	35:21	party	36:19
North	15:17,19	40:21	16:2,4,	Pete
7:12 9:17	ongoing	paid	18,19	23:4
21:23,24	22:21	12:4	23:13	30:24
25:11	opinion	14:2,6	40:7	31:10,13
32:20	55:18	paragraph	54:21	32:2,12,
33:1	opportuniti	33:18,23,	partying	15,16
42:21,23,	es	25 37:17	54:20	33:1,5,16
24 43:5,7	21:21	40:16	past	34:18,20
44:24	22:24	41:8,17	9:12	39:25
November	opposed	42:9,10,	10:12,13	46:25
11:16,18	32:12	11 44:5	35:4 49:2	47:6
54:3	oral	45:11	pay	50:15
number	28:8,12	48:1,15	12:8	52:5 53:7
24:7 32:5	order	part	17:17	Petersburg
33:4	21:20	12:19	38:12	22:21
34:25	56:2,4	20:4	paying	25:9
42:10	organizatio	23:23,24	21:1	36:23
45:25	n	30:22,24	penalty	38:4
49:16	16:7	32:3,7	4:19	42:20
53:9	21:15	33:15	people	43:11,12
54:24		36:20	20:3 31:9	44:4,13
		37:22		46:4,5,6,
				8,9,11,18

**KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMO**

November 26, 2024

Index: phone..quote

47:3	43:2	20:2	6:2	32:7
phone	plan	21:19	problematic	33:15
16:25	43:1	34:14	30:16	46:17,19,
17:4	48:24	53:2	31:1	20
27:15,18	50:1,14,	posted	process	purportedly
photographe	18,23	20:5	20:5	34:1
r	point	poverty	26:10,17,	pushing
13:10	6:2	20:23	24 27:21	17:15
14:3 15:6	pointed	power	28:14,16,	put
photography	51:3	50:20	19,22	38:9,15,
13:10,12	points	precinct	products	17
14:1,2,10	32:10	15:15	12:2,7	putting
phrase	political	predominanc	projects	38:18,20
48:18	11:22,25	e	22:21	
physically	12:3,16	48:4	property	Q
43:10	13:7,14	predominate	32:16	
piece	14:5	s	proposed	question
31:22	17:20,22	48:6,12	49:5	5:10,12,
55:18	19:1,21	prefer	50:23	14,16,19
pillars	25:2	50:6	proven	8:4 30:5
21:9	27:25	preparation	10:9	34:3
Pinellas	34:24	6:21,23	provide	37:25
23:5 32:3	40:7	prepare	12:9	39:4
33:16	49:20	6:8 7:3	provided	40:25
36:16,24	52:4	preventing	51:1	42:16
46:23	politically	6:5	providing	45:18
PK	43:10	previously	21:7	46:2,14,
11:11	46:5	24:19,25	PSTA	22 47:11
place	population	25:1	31:14	49:22
10:11	36:7,12	34:24	public	52:21
places	54:18	primarily	11:4,14	questioned
10:6	portion	30:19	17:19,21	41:22,25
20:25	21:13	33:5	18:11	questions
plaintiff	25:10	34:17	31:12,15	54:12
26:2	43:9	44:14	32:3	55:23,25
Plaintiff's	position	53:23	pull	quick
42:15	12:4	prior	29:23	46:16
plaintiffs	positions	7:16,17	30:6	quickly
25:23,25	16:3	14:19	purple	19:17
37:22	possibly	problem	30:17	quote
	8:21 17:6			27:16
				33:24,25

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: race..residents

34:1,2	56:1	18:1	38:14	repeat
37:22,24	reading	22:23	referred	8:4 19:6
40:20,24	45:21	recess	5:2 21:10	reporter
41:21,23	48:21	41:14	43:21	27:11,20
43:1				
45:3,14	ready	recollectio	referring	reporter's
48:4	40:18,19	n	38:1	27:3
51:22	41:10,18,	6:3 7:8	42:17	reporting
54:17	19 45:12	27:22	43:18	27:4
55:1	real	29:8,21	44:7,11	reports
	21:10	36:23	refers	51:1
R	33:3	42:4 44:1	48:3	
	46:16	record	refresh	represent
race	reason	4:14 5:17	6:3	25:5 36:1
33:24	8:19	41:13	region	38:22
40:2	30:25	54:17	39:21	49:3
45:3,6,10	34:10	redistricti	50:19	representat
48:5,12	reasons	ng	regions	ion
53:23	30:15	26:10,13,	28:1,2	27:24,25
race-based	31:9 43:2	17,21,24	registered	35:2
45:15	recall	27:21	29:15	52:7,8
race-	5:2 7:20	28:14,16,	registratio	ive
predominant	12:23	18 45:16	n	14:4
34:2	13:25	47:13	12:23	25:2,8
racial	14:6 15:9	redraw	14:17	52:4
34:4	17:6,12,	45:9	related	representat
40:21	13 18:4,6	redrawing	18:16	ives
48:4	19:1,10,	34:19	relates	25:8
reached	11 21:12	redrawn	18:12	34:25
25:20	28:3,6,	54:1	relating	35:1
reaches	11,15,20	reduced	15:3	Republican
12:6	37:12	41:3	relying	54:18
read	42:7	reducing	relying	Republicans
33:20	48:20	40:23	39:1,6	19:4,7,8
37:10,15,	recent	refer	49:20	55:5,8,17
18,20	7:16,17	36:19	remember	research
40:17	9:24	48:22	7:18 13:4	20:4 53:2
41:17	13:3,9	reference	19:20,22	reside
42:11,13	recently	30:7	27:3	7:11,12
45:11	10:12	referendum	rent	39:20
48:2,16	12:23	17:16	8:18,24	residents
54:4,11,	14:14	referendums	10:5	22:3
16 55:2	16:18			
	17:15			

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: responses..south

32:17,21	roughly	scoping	31:20	52:18,21
35:3	49:16	10:6	seventh	sit
44:18	routes	scroll	32:8	13:18
51:24	31:23	51:9	shaded	slice
52:5	rules	section	46:19	32:6,7
53:14,15	5:8 6:17	30:19	50:19	33:7
responses	38:14	31:19	Shamburger	sliver
5:20	run	sections	12:24	30:23
rest	16:2	30:17	13:9	36:23,25
46:5	51:19	secure	share	small
restate		32:17	39:23	21:7
35:7 39:4	S	seek	42:5	23:10
46:14		16:9	50:10	30:23
restructure	sacrificed	seemingly	52:3,23	38:15
23:24	37:23	24:15	shared	smaller
resulted	38:2,7,19	self-	37:6	31:16
26:11	39:2,7,12	contained	shopping	32:4
45:15	sacrifices	50:9	31:24	Smith
review	38:21	Seminole	show	13:1,8
6:20,22	sake	33:9	46:13	16:24
reviewed	5:8	Senate	51:22	17:4
6:15	sakes	4:11	53:13	social
51:17	54:23	sense	shrinking	15:6
rights	sales	5:23	54:25	28:24
14:25	17:16	separate	shrunk	29:1,4,6
15:1	school	26:5	35:1	sort
16:10	10:15,17	September	side	15:9
Road	11:10	9:16,22	8:12 43:9	sound
7:25 8:5,	12:25	10:3	46:23	5:6
9 22:5	31:24	serve	53:4	south
ROBERTSON	32:1,3,8	23:4	silently	8:10 9:8
6:11 7:6	33:15,16	40:3,12	37:18	10:21
25:16	38:11	44:18	similar	25:9
31:4,7	44:19,22	serves	39:20	30:21,22,
35:13,22	55:9,10	32:5	simply	24 31:13
41:10	schools	service	45:3,5	32:2,16,
44:9	11:4,14	31:14,22	47:20	20 33:1,5
52:14	32:5,7	services	sir	34:18,20
55:25	38:11	13:12	6:24	36:23
56:4	science	23:8	45:25	38:4
role	10:20,21			39:25
15:22				42:19

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: southernmost..Tampa

43:11	42:15	13:20	19:11	
44:3,13	spoke	30:3	24:10	T
46:4,8,	6:10,12,	started	25:4	
11,18,25	14 27:14	11:15	38:24	taking
47:3,6	spoken	19:14,17	student	4:11
50:15	25:22,24	starting	32:5	talked
52:5 53:7	28:4,13,	10:15	students	45:4
55:7	15,17,20	14:9	44:25	53:17
southernmos	sports	41:20	stupid	talking
t	31:24	54:16	55:17	19:1
30:22	St	state	stupidly	talks
space	22:21	4:13 7:10	54:21	42:14
12:14	23:4 25:9	13:22	subject	Tammy
speak	30:24	14:4 16:2	4:19	12:24
5:9 19:18	31:10,13	27:6	substitute	Tampa
special	32:2,12,	29:19,22	11:17	7:13,21,
11:7	15,16	30:18	suddenly	25 8:10
specific	33:1,5,16	stated	38:17	9:1,21,
35:18	34:18,20	27:23	super	22,24
39:1,5,9	36:23	30:5	29:18	10:1,2,17
40:25	38:4	statements	support	12:3 13:1
41:4,24	39:25	28:8,23	18:11	16:10,24
42:1	42:20	statewide	22:22	18:4
43:17	43:11,12	13:19,20	39:6	20:17,20
49:14	44:4,13	stations	supporting	21:1,5,8,
50:22	46:4,5,6,	42:8	41:1	13,14,16,
51:3	8,9,11,	stay	surprised	22,23,24
53:18	18,25	9:1	18:24	22:6,12,
Specificall	47:3,6	stint	surrounded	14,17
y	50:15	9:24	55:8	23:1,4
52:2	52:5 53:7	stopping	suspended	25:10,11
spell	staff	6:1	23:18	30:21
4:13	13:25	strange	switching	32:20,25
split	26:16,20	39:15	16:20	33:1,12
42:17,24	34:1	strictly	system	38:5,7
43:5,10	stance	36:25	31:15	40:1
46:3,5	18:10	stripping	systems	42:8,19,
47:4,6	standard	40:22	10:22	22,23,24
splits	21:20	struggle	38:12	43:5,7
43:2	Starr	7:17		44:12,16,
45:15	13:2			19,23,24
splitting	start			45:1
	11:13			50:16

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: targeted..volunteer

targeted 21:16	tickets 24:2,3	55:13,20	10:19	24:15
tax 17:16 38:13,14	Tier 48:18	told 27:22	typically 39:20	unit 21:6
taxes 38:12	Tiktok 29:13	total 25:3	U	University 9:7 10:20 30:21
tea 54:20	time 6:1 9:2, 20 10:10	totally 31:21 38:9,22	U.S. 14:19	unjustifiab ly 40:21
teacher 17:17	11:16 12:18,19 14:3,20	town 7:18 8:11 17:24 18:7,15 22:7,10	uh-huhs 5:21	unreasonabl e 10:10
Teachers 17:14	15:10 17:7 18:6	traditional 45:16 47:12	Uh-oh 27:20	unusual 47:23
technology 19:15	19:11,25 20:5 24:8,10	traffic 24:1,2,3, 6	un 10:9	updated 18:18
telling 7:1	26:12 28:3	trainer 19:15	unconstitut ional 41:23	USF 10:23
tending 51:22 53:13	29:17 33:20 36:14 40:6	training 20:24 21:2	underage 10:17	utilize 12:2
terms 30:25 44:7	42:1,7 47:25 48:13	transcribed 5:22	undereducat ed 21:19	v
testified 23:25 24:6	52:23 53:24 54:4 55:5,19	transferred 10:20	underemploy ed 21:18,19	values 32:16
testimony 4:18 6:6	times 23:22 24:5 43:20	transportat ion 31:12	underserved 22:4	variant 11:6
That'd 37:19	tired 10:8	travel 31:17 49:11 50:11	understand 4:17 5:14 39:17 43:7 47:14 51:20	VE 11:6,13, 15,16
thing 27:22 35:2	title 11:5	truthful 6:6	understandi ng 16:8 33:3	verbal 5:20
things 5:8,20 11:23 20:22 55:20	today 4:12,18 5:7 6:6, 9,21,23 22:18 37:2 45:4	Twitter 29:7	understood 5:18 55:22	versus 33:1
thousand 33:11		two-year	unfair	view 43:5 visually 34:9 volunteer

KETO NORD HODGES
HODGES V. PASSIDOMONovember 26, 2024
Index: volunteered..ZIP

12:19	15:1,3	white	workforce
14:7	16:12	46:20	20:23
volunteered	28:1,2	54:24	21:3,20
13:14,25	34:11	55:14	22:24
14:1,2,	36:7,11,	width	23:9
10,12	24 37:1	49:11	working
26:8	49:14	50:11	11:13,15
volunteerin	50:9,10,	wife	12:21
g	20 53:8	9:20	14:6
12:21		Wilson	would've
vote	W	44:22	14:20
14:21	wait	win	wrap
29:18	13:24	54:25	43:19
33:16	Walter	witnesses	written
54:25	13:1	51:1	28:8,11
voted	16:24	wonderful	wrote
29:17,19,	17:4	14:22	55:5
21	wanted	wondering	Y
voter	33:22	37:15	
29:15,18	54:15	41:23	
voter's	war-	43:4	year
12:22	mongering	47:13	8:20,22
voters	54:20	51:25	9:21,25
15:4	watched	Woodson	10:5
24:16,17,	42:6	11:11	29:18
18,22	water	word	years
33:15	34:14	11:7	24:8 35:4
34:17,20,	47:22	24:23	55:20
23 35:5,	50:12	words	you-all
10,12,17,	ways	24:12	18:7,13
18,20,25	38:13	38:19	23:4
36:3 37:3	weeks	work	Z
39:25	20:4	5:21 12:9	
40:1,22	West	14:10	
41:2 45:6	44:24	15:3	ZIP
49:17	When's	31:24	7:18 22:3
50:14,15	29:17	53:2	
52:9,13,	Whereabouts	worked	
17 53:7,9	9:6	12:17	
voters'		13:21	
16:10		14:9	
voting			
14:17,24			