THE STATE OF ARIZONA INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF VIDEOCONFERENCE PUBLIC MEETING

Via GoogleMeets

January 4, 2022

8:02 a.m.

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1	PUBLIC MEETING, BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT
2	REDISTRICTING COMMISSION, convened at 8:02 a.m. on
3	January 4, 2022, via GoogleMeets, Arizona, in the presence
4	of the following Commissioners:
5	Ms. Erika Neuberg, Chairperson Mr. Derrick Watchman, Vice Chairman
6	Mr. Derlick Watchman, vice Challman Mr. David Mehl Ms. Shereen Lerner
7	Mr. Douglas York
8	OTHERS PRESENT:
9	Mr. Brian Schmitt, Executive Director Ms. Loriandra Van Haren, Deputy Director
10	Ms. Valerie Neumann, Executive Assistant Ms. Michele Crank, Public Information Officer
11	Mr. Roy Herrera, Herrera & Arellano
12	Mr. Daniel Arrellano, Herrera & Arellano Mr. Eric Spencer, Snell & Wilmer
13	Mr. Brett Johnson, Snell & Wilmer
14	Mr. Mark Flahan, Timmons Group Mr. Brian Kingery, Timmons Group
15	Mr. Douglas Johnson, NDC Ms. Ivy Beller Sakansky, NDC
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CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. Welcome, everybody. Happy New Year and very happy birthday to Roy; we have a celebration today. So wishing you all good things in the year ahead.

And with that, we will dive right in.

 $\label{eq:Agenda Item I, call to order and roll call I(A),} % \begin{center} \begin{center} Agenda Item I, call to order and roll call I(A), call for quorum. \end{center}$

It is 8:02 Tuesday, January 4th, 2022. I call this meeting of the Independent Redistricting Commission to order. For the record the Executive Assistant Valerie Neumann will be taking roll.

When your name is called, please indicate you are present. If you are unable to respond verbally, we ask that you please type your name.

Val.

MS. NEUMANN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Vice Chair Watchman.

VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Present.

MS. NEUMANN: Commissioner Lerner.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Present.

MS. NEUMANN: Commissioner Mehl.

COMMISSIONER MEHL: Present.

MS. NEUMANN: Commissioner York.

1 COMMISSIONER YORK: Present. 2 MS. NEUMANN: Chairperson Neuberg. 3 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Present. MS. NEUMANN: And for the record also in attendance 4 5 is Executive Director Brian Schmitt, Deputy Director Lori Van Haren, Public Information Officer Michele Crank; from 6 7 our legal team we've got Brett Johnson and Eric Spencer from 8 Snell & Wilmer, Roy Herrera and Daniel Arellano from Herrera 9 Arellano; and Mark Flahan and Brian Kingery from Timmons; Doug Johnson and Ivy Beller-Sakansky from NDC Research; and 10 11 our transcriptionist today is Angela Miller. 12 That is everyone, Madam Chair. 1.3 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: All right. Thank you. 14 Please note for the minutes that a quorum is 15 present. 16 Agenda Item I(B), call for notice. 17 Val, was the notice and agenda for the Commission 18 meeting properly posted 48 hours in advance of today's 19 meeting? 20 Yes, it was, Madam Chair. MS. NEUMANN: 21 CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Thank you. 22 Agenda Item II, approval of minutes from 23 December 22nd, 2021. We have II(A), our general session, we 24 had one executive session, II(B), where we sought legal 25 advice regarding constitutional criteria.

1	Is there any discussion on the minutes?
2	If there's no discussion, I'll entertain a motion
3	to approve the general session and executive session minutes
4	from December 22nd of 2021.
5	COMMISSIONER MEHL: This is Commissioner Mehl. I
6	move we approve both of those sets of minutes.
7	VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Vice Chair Watchman seconds.
8	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: With no further discussion,
9	Vice Chair Watchman.
10	VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Aye.
11	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.
12	COMMISSIONER MEHL: Aye.
13	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.
14	COMMISSIONER LERNER: Aye.
15	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner York.
16	COMMISSIONER YORK: Aye.
17	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Neuberg is an
18	aye.
19	With that, the minutes are approved from
20	December 22nd. Thank you Val.
21	Sorry, I hear an echo. I don't know if everybody
22	hears the echo.
23	But Agenda Item III, opportunity for public
24	comments.
25	Public comment will now open for a minimum of

30 minutes and remain open until the adjournment of the meeting. Comments will only be accepted electronically in writing on the link provided in the notice and agenda for the public meeting and will be limited to 3,000 characters.

Please note, members of the Commission may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.

With that, we will move to Agenda Item Number IV, discussion on public comments received prior to today's meeting.

I open it up as usual to my colleagues to see if everybody has any responses or -- or comments.

All right. I would like to just again thank everybody, the public, for their incredible involvement and discourse. I know we just completed, you know, a very intense, very serious deliberation process. I know some, you know, are not happy and -- and there's a variety of reactions.

I just want to comment that after, you know, having the time to absorb it all, I feel really good about the work that we've done. I feel really good about the maps we

delivered to the State. I believe these maps are going to bring even more talented and qualified candidates to be running in our districts.

I think regarding our congressional map, I think communities of interest were really well respected; all regions are represented well, the urban, the rural; a third of our districts are competitive, two so extremely competitive that these districts elected Biden, Kelly, Brnovitch, and Ducey, that's pretty independent; five of the nine voted for Biden and Kelly. The best candidates are going to win.

Regarding the legislative districts, I think we did our best to maximize as many communities of interest having representation as possible. There are five competitive districts, four of them extremely so. The party that will come out with leadership will be the party that puts forth the talented and best candidates.

Our minority communities were very well, I think, represented. The Latinos' legislative requests; the seven majority-minority districts were overwhelming accepted per their desires; the Native American community, I think, was able to secure, you know, their ability to elect a candidate of their choice; I think we did a really good job of trying to strengthen the unification of minority groups that have community of interest and political cohesion like our

African American and Asian communities.

No map is going to be perfect. We'll see how they hold up over, you know, the next ten years, but I have nothing but the greatest appreciation and respect for my colleagues and the public for everybody's participation in the process.

With that, we'll move to Agenda Item Number V, update from our mapping team.

And we have two items, an update on the constitutional criteria data review on the adopted maps; and II, the discussion of county election officials technical change requests to the congressional legislative maps.

We do have the ability to go into executive session which will not be open for the public for the purpose of obtaining legal advice to further implement and/or advance these issues if necessary.

I turn it over to Doug and Mark.

MR. FLAHAN: Good morning.

I think we'll take (B) first. The -- the final approved draft maps were sent over to the County, both for legislative and congressional.

Out of all of the counties, we received six responses back. We're currently processing their responses and working on seeing if the data will fit into the map.

So we're still processing their requests. Some

counties had just only a couple of requests, some counties had a couple dozens requests. So we're processing that, getting it completed as fast as we can.

For topic (A) I'll turn it over to Doug.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Mark, can I ask a question?
What happens if counties don't submit any feedback? Is
there any additional review on your part just to make sure
that there aren't any, you know, unexpected divisions or
things like that or do we just not worry about it?

MR. FLAHAN: Doug might be able to elaborate a little bit more, but we plan on still looking for all the little slivers of data, whether the county actually turned anything in or not. So maybe a block here or there or weird looking shapes, we still plan on doing that review.

But if we don't receive anything from the county, there's no way to, you know, really get any of their feedback or solicit any of that and incorporate it into the administrative changes.

But we are $\mbox{--}$ we are doing our best to try to at least look at the splits and incorporate that into the final official map.

Doug, do you have the anything to elaborate on that?

MR. D. JOHNSON: No, I think you said it perfectly, which is we'll do that review just to make sure we don't

have any little slivers of a city or anything like that.

But we won't -- we won't be checking for like

zero-population precincts and those kinds of things that
only the registrars can check for.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Thank you.

DIRECTOR SCHMITT: And Madam Chair, on that we are making every effort to reach out to counties to make sure they get back to us, we just haven't heard back from some.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay.

DIRECTOR SCHMITT: We'll continue to do that.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: We'll there's valid reasons with the holidays and the virus and all of that, so.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Can I ask what our end date is to receive any word from counties? Like, what is the last possible date for them to -- to reply?

MR. FLAHAN: The original deadline was Thursday of last week. We did extend it for one county to Friday since they asked, but that was the deadline.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: So what happens -- I guess my question is, what happens if -- if -- since Executive Director Schmitt said they're still reaching out to counties, what if they submit something this week?

MR. FLAHAN: We will do our best to get it incorporated into the map. If it's a couple of changes and we receive it this week, I don't necessarily see it being a

problem; but if it's dozen of changes and depending on what the changes are, that could lead to more of a lead time to get it processed.

MR. D. JOHNSON: Yeah, as you might imagine at this point we have to be extremely careful and meticulous in our work and make sure that nothing gets slipped -- messed up or slips by. So we do need to take our time and the clock is ticking on them for sure.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you.

MR. D. JOHNSON: And on the -- on (A) on the polarized voting side of it, we don't have any new data to present today.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: So I -- I thought we were going to hear the constitutional -- I have a few comments about that. Am I able to express those, Chairwoman?

Because I thought we were going to hear some review of the constitutional -- is that -- wasn't that IV(A)? I'm sorry if I'm misunderstanding.

V(A), sorry.

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CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Yeah, I'm not sure, you know, what you had in mind with that but, you know, by all means if it's relevant to the topic, I don't see -- you know, I think counsel would agree that it -- there's no reason not to -- to give you the floor.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Thank you.

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So I -- I didn't know if you were going to be again reviewing the constitutional criteria. I know we did that at one point earlier in the process, but that's what I was -- so you're saying you have no updates on that at this point; is that correct?

MR. D. JOHNSON: Correct.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Okay.

All right. So I do want to make a couple of comments about the constitutional criteria that I actually have some real concerns about. I already expressed my concerns on legislative; I'm not going to repeat anything that I've already expressed on the legislative on December 22nd, but I do have concerns about the congressional and whether or not they have -- meet all the constitutional criteria.

So am I able to express that at this time, Chairwoman?

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: I'm going to defer to counsel on this one. If -- if this is the appropriate time/place.

I mean, it's fine for me but I don't know if this is directly relevant to, you know, what we have agendized.

MR. B. JOHNSON: Chairwoman, can you hear me? It's Brett.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Yes.

MR. B. JOHNSON: So the -- the purpose of this agenda item was for the mapping consultants to present their information that they've collected over the period of time and any other kind of constitutional criteria that they've -- they've established.

In regard to deliberation on the existing maps and whether it's going to happen, that can either be that -- will be obviously agendized for the final determination, but it is -- it's a pretty broad item; and if the other Commissioners wanted to discuss some of those issues now to possibly bring up in a different meeting that -- that's fine, too. But it was really meant for Mapping to give their report on the -- on the constitutional criteria.

I don't know if Roy agrees or disagrees.

MR. HERRERA: Yeah, I -- excuse me. I agree,
Commissioner Lerner, I think the description is broad
enough, so if you're discussing the constitutional criteria
in how the maps comply with them or whether they comply with
them, I think that would fit within this.

But given that Timmons is not going to be presenting any, you know, particular data on it now, it may be more appropriate to wait until we have it -- the full presentation at the last meeting, but it's really up to you. I do think it would fit within the agenda item if you want to, you know, do an exposition now.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: I'm fine doing it now, then they can present what they want to present or -- or the next time. But -- but I just have some things about the congressional that I wanted to -- that relate strictly just to the constitution, that's all I'm referring to nothing -- nothing other than that.

So if that's okay, I'll go ahead. If not, I can wait until the next meeting.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Your choice. There's enough room to do as -- as you would like.

COMMISSIONER LERNER: Okay. I'll go ahead and do it now because I don't know what our next meeting will be and how long that will go, so maybe for the sake of time today is better potentially.

So -- so I want to be real specific here as what I see as the constitutional flaws in our congressional maps.

I spent the last couple of weeks just as you did,

Chairwoman, looking at the maps in terms of the consideration how I felt at the conclusion of those.

As you know, we had very little time in between the approval that we made -- or, the deliberations and then approval. So I have spent time looking at that. So I want to bring up my constitutional concerns about the congressional districts. As I said, I already think I've expressed my concerns about the legislative at the last

meeting.

So a lot of my concerns in terms of constitutional flaws relate to competitiveness, communities of interest and geographic boundaries, those three things; and I'm going to be very specific and give you the items that I am concerned about as part of the constitution.

very strong rural districts and I feel that we did not accomplish that. From the beginning there was a refusal to consider the constitutional requirements of geographic boundaries such as Mingus Mountain; to increase competitiveness in especially CD-2; to consider communities of interest and testimony, for example, the White Mountains communities saying they did not want to be with Prescott; Lake Havasu asking to be with Yavapai and Prescott; the West Valley of Maricopa County specifically saying they did not want to be in a rural district; and also the fact that the history of western Yavapai has been to be with the Colorado River communities.

We repeatedly, Commissioner Watchman and I, made the point about these kinds of issues and that western Yavapai County and the Mohave County used to be -- are used to being together.

We could have had, as I said, two rural districts, one of which would have been competitive. We could have

acknowledged that the Native Americans should have a voice in electing a representative that will be responsive to their needs, but we were denied those requests repeatedly.

Instead, CD-2 is not competitive and there's clear evidence in map 8.4 that it could have been, which in my mind says that we did not properly address the constitution with communities of interest, geography, and competitiveness; and CD-9 will be more ru- -- urban than rural, despite their requests.

For CD-6 and CD-7, I feel that there was a complete manipulation of the borders; and while it does fall into our competitive range, we showed in map 7.1, 9.1, 10.1, 11, 11.2, and 12 that it could have been even more competitive, and the decision on the last day was to make it less so.

And in terms of vote spread it went from 4-5 to 3-6

Democrats to Republican.

In CD-3 we gave Councilwoman Pastor wide range of using requests for her boundaries that impacted the rest of the districts around those. The councilwoman requested boundaries that aligned with her Phoenix council districts and, thereby, if we look at the numbers, packed Democrats into a district and that affected the competitiveness of CD-1.

We talked about historic districts a lot in that area, but not all historic districts are the same and

there's no reason that they all needed to be in a VRA district at that point; and every attempt that we made to modify that district was refused despite community of interest concern.

Overall my feeling is from a constitutional perspective that competitiveness was not adequately considered, despite the fact that we brought this up over and over again.

The foul- -- and I'll give you some very specific examples. And Chairwoman, you just went through some examples that I also looked at about the election of our president in 2020 and senator in 2020. But when I look back at the -- the data that we compiled, that we were using as competitiveness factors, from the congressional district, only two of nine actually went to the Democrats, the governor 2018 and treasurer, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Mining, 2016 president all were three of nine.

So those -- that is really not a -- a balanced when it's that -- that -- those numbers, when I went back and looked at that.

But let me give you a few just examples and then I'll be done on where I think that things did not follow the constitution, despite our attempts to do so -- or I should say my attempt and my colleague Commissioner Watchman, his attempt as well since draft map 7.1 congressional map and

1 some earlier maps. 2 CD-1 went from a 1.6 percent with a 5-4 Democrat 3 advantage; in map series 11, CD-1 was .2 percent with a 5-4 4 Dem/Republican; and it ended with a 2.6, 4-5 Republican 5 advantage. CD-2 in map 8.4 was a 1.1 percent with a 4-56 7 Republican advantage, and then went to 7.1 with a 0-98 Republican advantage. 9 CD-3 went from 40 percent in map 7.1 with a 9-0 10 Democrat advantage to 53 percent. 11 CD-4 went from 5.6 percent to 7.0 with a 8-1 12 Democrat. 13 CD-5 went from 14.7 to 18.1 percent with a 0-914 Republican advantage. CD-6 went from .1 percent in map 9.1, as 15 16 competitive as it could be, with a 5-4 Democrat advantage, to 2.4 with a 3-6 Republican advantage. 17 18 CD-7 went from a 20 percent in map 7.1 to 19 35.4 percent with a Democrat advantage. 20 CD-8 went from 4.1 percent to 15.3 with a 0-9 Republican advantage from a 3-6. There was no significant 21 change in CD-9. In fact, congressional map CD draft map 7.1 22 23 had five congressional districts with a single-digit vote 24 spread.

Time and again our colleagues across the aisle

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rejected -- the three colleagues across the aisle rejected our attempt to use competitiveness as a factor. It is part of the constitution. The areas that we wanted to use it were not going to significantly change communities of interest, and it allowed the maps to be systematically modified, the borders, to increase the vote spread in many of these districts.

The Democratic proposal 7.2, 8.4, 9.1, 10.12, 11.2, and 12 showed that we could have had competitive districts that honor all the constitutional criteria, but the maps that were approved do not do so and these concerns will affect my final vote.

Thank you, Chairwoman.

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CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Thank you for your comments.

I think everyone has their subjective opinion about what facts lead to a constitution CD map, but we're a democratic commission and every voice is equal.

The map was a creation of democratic consensus and I'm proud of the 5-0 vote. Some may have some buyer's remorse and wish for changes here and there; I do for sure. But the fact is that it was a unanimous decision and that speaks for itself.

Monday morning quarterbacking does not do justice to our sincere and equitable process.

I'd like to be able to move forward with the work

that we've done, and if there's no further comments, I'll open it up to my colleagues, we can move on with the agenda.

Okay. We'll move on to Agenda Item Number VI,

Executive Director's report. We have two items, (A) public records update; and (B), final map approval and certification logistics.

Brian.

DIRECTOR SCHMITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. First up for the public records update I'm going to turn it over to Lori.

MS. CRANK: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Yes?

MS. CRANK: Lori -- Lori Van Haren is on a delayed flight right now and can't join us. She sent out the most recent public records request list to you-all.

We now ask to go into executive session to receive legal advice to the current public records request.

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. I will open it up to a motion to move into executive session, which will not be open to the public for the purpose of obtaining legal advice to further implement and/or advance these legal issues pursuant to public records A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3).

VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Madam Chair,

Vice Chair Watchman motions to go into executive session

regarding the public records update -- I'm sorry, regarding

1	the
2	COMMISSIONER YORK: Commissioner York seconds.
3	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Do I have a second? Was that
4	Commissioner York?
5	COMMISSIONER YORK: Yes.
6	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. We'll do a quick vote.
7	Vice Chair Watchman.
8	VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Aye.
9	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.
10	COMMISSIONER MEHL: Aye.
11	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.
12	COMMISSIONER LERNER: Aye.
13	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner York.
14	COMMISSIONER YORK: Aye.
15	CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Neuberg is an
16	aye.
17	With that, we will move into executive session for
18	the purpose of obtaining legal advice. We will resume in
19	public session, give an update.
20	Please X out of this link and go into the executive
21	session link.
22	(Whereupon the proceeding is in executive session
23	from 8:27 a.m. until 8:47 a.m.)
24	
25	* * * *

CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. Welcome back, everybody. We just finished up executive session on Agenda Item VI, where we were seeking legal advice with the filling responsibility for public records requests.

And with that, we'll move to Agenda Item

Number VII, discussion of future agenda items requests.

Anything would like to put on the agenda?

Just, you know, foreshadowing with Item VIII

announcements and Item IX next meeting date, we are aiming
to reconvene two weeks from today, January 18th, 8:00 a.m.,
to do the final map certification and address any other
outstanding business items.

But is there anything else that anybody would like to add to the agenda?

Okay. Again, a reminder, the next meeting date January 18th.

We'll move to Agenda Item Number X, closing of the public comments.

Please note members of the Commission may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the matter for further consideration or decision at a later date.

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With that, we move to Agenda Item Number XI, I will
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         open it up -- I will entertain a motion to adjourn.
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                  COMMISSIONER MEHL: Commissioner Mehl motions.
                  VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN: Vice Chair -- I'll second.
 4
 5
                  CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Okay. We have Commissioner
         Mehl moving to adjourn; we have Vice Chair Watchman
 6
 7
         seconding that motion.
                  We'll do a vote. Vice Chair Watchman.
 8
 9
                  VICE CHAIR WATCHMAN:
                                        Aye.
                  CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Mehl.
10
11
                  COMMISSIONER MEHL: Aye.
12
                  CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Lerner.
1.3
                  COMMISSIONER LERNER: Aye.
14
                  CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner York.
15
                  COMMISSIONER YORK: Aye.
16
                  CHAIRPERSON NEUBERG: Commissioner Neuberg is an
17
         aye.
18
                  With that, we will adjourn, and we look forward to
19
         seeing everybody two weeks from today.
20
                  Take care. Bye-bye.
                  (Whereupon the proceeding concludes at 8:50 a.m.).
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22
23
         "This transcript represents an unofficial record. Please
24
         consult the accompanying video for the official record of
25
         IRC proceedings."
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1	$\underline{C} \ \underline{E} \ \underline{R} \ \underline{T} \ \underline{I} \ \underline{F} \ \underline{I} \ \underline{C} \ \underline{A} \ \underline{T} \ \underline{E}$
2	
3	STATE OF ARIZONA)
4) ss.
5	COUNTY OF MARICOPA)
6	
7	BE IT KNOWN that the foregoing proceedings were
8	taken before me, Angela Furniss Miller, Certified Reporter No. 50127, all done to the best of my skill and ability;
9	that the proceedings were taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to print under my direction.
10	I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of the
11	parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the outcome thereof.
12	I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have complied with the
13	requirements set forth in ACJA 7-206. Dated at Litchfield Park, Arizona, this 6th of January, 2022.
14	a la Litar
15	Angela Furniss Miller, RPR, CR
16	CERTIFIED REPORTER (AZ50127)
17	* * *
18	I CERTIFY that Miller Certified Reporting, LLC, has complied with the requirements set forth in ACJA 7-201 and
	7-206. Dated at LITCHFIELD PARK, Arizona, this 6th of
19	January, 2022.
20	MCR
21	Miller Certified Reporting, LLC Arizona RRF No. R1058
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25	