BEFORE	THE	OFFICE	OF	TAX	APPEALS
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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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IN THE MATTER OF THE APPEAL OF,)

MARINA SAILING, INC.,) OTA NO. 20066270

APPELLANT.)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Cerritos, California

Tuesday, May 9, 2023

Reported by: ERNALYN M. ALONZO HEARING REPORTER

BEFORE THE OFFICE OF TAX APPEALS 1 2 STATE OF CALIFORNIA 3 4 5 IN THE MATTER OF THE APPEAL OF,) 6)) OTA NO. 20066270 MARINA SAILING, INC., 7) APPELLANT.) 8) 9 10 11 12 13 14 Transcript of Proceedings, taken 15 at 12900 Park Plaza Dr., Suite 300, 16 Cerritos, California, 91401, commencing 17 at 1:00 p.m. and concluding at 1:24 p.m. 18 on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, reported by 19 Ernalyn M. Alonzo, Hearing Reporter, in 20 and for the State of California. 21 22 23 24 25

1	APPEARANCES:	
2 3	Panel Lead:	ALJ KEITH LONG
5	raller head.	ALO KETIH LONG
5	Panel Members:	ALJ ANDREW WONG ALJ TERESA STANLEY
6	For the Appellant:	DALE HANGER
7		
8	For the Respondent:	STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TAX AND FEE DEPARTMENT
9		RAVINDER SHARMA
10		CHAD BACCHUS JASON PARKER
11		JASON PARKER
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I	STATE OF CALIF	ORNIA OFFICE OF TAX APPEALS

I N D E X EXHIBITS (Appellant's Exhibits 1-4 were received at page 8.) (Department's Exhibits A-F were received at page 7.) OPENING STATEMENT PAGE By Mr. Hanger By Mr. Sharma CLOSING STATEMENT PAGE By Mr. Hanger

1 Cerritos, California; Tuesday, May 9, 2023 2 1:00 p.m. 3 JUDGE LONG: We are opening the record in the 4 5 Appeal of Marina Sailing, Inc. The OTA Case Number is 6 20066270. This matter is being held before the Office of 7 Tax Appeals. Today's date is May 9th, 2023, and the time is approximately 1:00 p.m. This hearing is being convened 8 9 in Cerritos, California. 10 Today's hearing is being heard by a panel of 11 three Administrative Law Judges. My name is Keith Long, 12 and I will be the Lead Administrative Law Judge. Judge Teresa Stanley and Judge Andrew Wong are the other 13 14 members of this tax appeal panel. All three judges will 15 meet after the hearing and produce a written decision as 16 equal participants. Although the lead judge in this case, 17 me, will conduct the hearing. Any judge on this panel may 18 ask questions or otherwise participate to ensure that we 19 have all the information needed to decide this appeal. 20 Also present today is the stenographer, 21 Ms. Alonzo, who is reporting this hearing verbatim. То 22 ensure we have an accurate record, we ask that everyone 23 speak one at a time and does not speak over each other. 2.4 Speak clearly and loudly. When needed, Ms. Alonzo will 25 stop the hearing process and ask for clarification. After the hearing, Ms. Alonzo will produce the official hearing
transcript which will be available on the Office of Tax
Appeals website.

The Office of Tax Appeals is an independent and 4 5 neutral agency. It is not a tax court. All three judges 6 are coequal decision makers, and we can all ask questions 7 at any time. As a reminder to ensure that everything runs smoothly today, please ensure that your microphone is not 8 9 muted when you speak. Otherwise, your voice will not be 10 heard on the live stream, even though we can hear you in 11 the room. Specifically, make sure that you're speaking 12 directly into the mic so it is picked up on the live 13 stream. As a reminder these proceedings are broadcast 14 live and anything said today and any information shared today is publicly viewable on the live stream. 15

For the record, will the parties please state their name and who they represent, starting with the representatives for Appellant.

19 I'm sorry. Can you pull the mic a little closer, 20 and then also push the button so that there's a green 21 light that comes on.

22 MR. HANGER: Oh, there it is. Okay. Now I've 23 got it. 24 JUDGE LONG: All right. And say your name again.

25

MR. HANGER: Dale Hanger, CPA, representing

STATE OF CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF TAX APPEALS

1 Marina Sailing. 2 JUDGE LONG: Thank you. 3 And would the representatives for CDTFA please state their name for the record. 4 5 MR. SHARMA: Ravinder Sharma, Hearing 6 Representative. 7 Jason Parker, Chief of Headquarters MR. PARKER: Operations Bureau. 8 9 MR. BACCHUS: Chad Bacchus, Tax Counsel IV with 10 the Department. 11 JUDGE LONG: Thank you. 12 And my understanding is that there are no witnesses for today. With respect to hearing exhibits, at 13 14 our prehearing conference and in our April 21st, 2023, minutes and orders, the Office of Tax Appeals acknowledged 15 16 CDTFA Exhibits A through F. At the prehearing conference, 17 Appellant did not have any objection to these exhibits, 18 and they are admitted into the record. 19 (Department's Exhibits A-F were received in 20 evidence by the Administrative Law Judge.) 21 Thereafter, on April 24th, 2023, CDTFA submitted 22 a revised exhibit index and attached Exhibit G, Audit 23 Report Letter dated April 24th, 2023. My understanding is 2.4 that this exhibit relates to a concession by CDTFA with 25 respect to Issue Number 3, whether Appellant's purported

1	purchase of a boat is subject to use tax, and the taxable
2	measure with respect to this item has been reduced to
3	zero.
4	Can CDTFA please confirm.
5	MR. SHARMA: That is correct. Thank you.
6	JUDGE LONG: Thank you.
7	And does Appellant have any objection to this
8	exhibit?
9	MR. HANGER: No objection.
10	JUDGE LONG: Thank you.
11	Additionally, at the prehearing conference, the
12	following exhibits were identified for Appellant:
13	Exhibit 1, a schedule of charter sales dated November 2014
14	through August 14th, 2015; Exhibit 2, declaration from
15	Chris Mosier; Exhibit 3, tax return transcript for the tax
16	year beginning February 1st, 2014; and Exhibit 4, amended
17	federal income tax return for the 2015 tax year.
18	At the prehearing conference, OTA did not have
19	any objections to Appellant's exhibits, and these exhibits
20	are admitted into the record.
21	(Appellant's Exhibits 1-4 were received
22	in evidence by the Administrative Law Judge.)
23	There are three issues in this appeal. They are:
24	One, whether adjustments to the deficiency measure based
25	on Appellant's sale of business assets are warranted;

1	Issue Two, whether adjustments to the deficiency measure
2	based on Appellant's boat rentals are warranted; and Issue
3	Three, whether Appellant was negligent.
4	Previously OTA identified whether Appellant's
5	purported purchase of a boat in California is subject to
6	use tax as an issue. However, CDTFA has now indicated
7	that it concedes to that issue.
8	CDTFA, is that your understanding of the issues?
9	MR. SHARMA: That is correct. Thank you.
10	JUDGE LONG: Thank you.
11	And, Mr. Hanger, is that your understanding of
12	the issues as well?
13	MR. HANGER: Yes, it is.
14	JUDGE LONG: Thank you.
15	This hearing is estimated to take approximately
16	90 minutes. Appellant has requested 30 minutes to make
17	its opening statement and presentation and an additional
18	15 minutes after CDTFA's presentation for a final
19	statement.
20	Mr. Hanger, you may begin when you are ready.
21	MR. HANGER: Very good. Thank you.
22	
23	PRESENTATION
24	MR. HANGER: Yes. In regards to the boat rental
25	receipts, the \$185,522 is

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1 JUDGE LONG: Mr. Hanger, I'm sorry to interrupt 2 you immediately. Would you mind pulling your microphone 3 almost -- almost like uncomfortably close. Okay. All right. 4 MR. HANGER: 5 JUDGE LONG: Thank you. MR. HANGER: That's better. 6 7 Yes. The boat rental and receipts, the computation of \$185,522 is grossly overstated. In my 8 9 Exhibit 1 that was submitted to the Board, it did indicate 10 that there is some charter income from Marina Sailing. 11 The seven boats that they had on their fleet, out of the 12 seven boats there was only one that would actually generate any kind of a rental income -- charter income. 13 14 The other boats were all 20-foot or under. And 15 those types of boats are not even chartered out. Very 16 little charter is income generated off of those. If there 17 is charter income, it would certainly be about \$100 a day 18 versus the 5 or \$600 charter on the larger boats. 19 JUDGE LONG: Mr. Hanger. I'm sorry. Would you 20 mind slowing down just a little bit so I can keep up. 21 MR. HANGER: Okay. 22 JUDGE LONG: Thank you. 23 MR. HANGER: Hm-hm. Yeah. The information that 2.4 we presented on Exhibit 1 clearly indicated that the 25 charter income was about 2.4 percent, not 10.4 percent.

1 The ratio that they -- the computation that the 2 Board -- the auditor came up with divided the seven 3 charter boats that Marina had on their listing, divided that by the 67 boats on the total listing for charter to 4 5 come up with a 10.45 percent, and that is just grossly 6 overstated. So if you apply the 2.4 percent times the 7 gross rental income, that would be a more reasonable charter income generated by the charter for Marina 8 9 Sailing. So that's the issue there.

10 I think it's grossly overstated and should be 11 adjusted accordingly down to about 2.4 percent is my --12 the sale of the boats to the buyer, when they sold the 13 business, they sold the boats to a new buyer. I think it 14 was another charter operation. They did buy the boats 15 with the intent of chartering it out, and they did make 16 the election to pay the sales tax based on the charter 17 income.

18 It is the responsibility of the buyer to pay the 19 use tax or the sales tax generated off of the acquisition 20 of the boats that were sold for the -- doing the business 21 when it was sold. So our contention is it would be up to 22 the buyer to pay the sales tax on the acquisition of those 23 boats.

In regards to the penalty, the negligence penalty, I think the indication was in the audit report is 1 that the records were not available. The records were 2 available. They did have accounting records. It was 3 maintained on QuickBooks, a software program. They had 4 also documentations supporting, you know, the expenses --5 income and expenses that they had, you know, in their 6 sales tax returns as well.

7 Those documents, unfortunately, were up in Washington State at the time the audit was being 8 9 conducted. And I indicated to that auditor several times 10 that the records were not available in California because 11 they were in Washington State. So I don't believe that 12 the negligence penalty is warranted. They do keep 13 accounting records, and they are very good and complete 14 accounting records, and that should be abated.

And that was about it for me.

JUDGE LONG: Okay. Thank you. I just have a couple of questions, but I think I would like to let my co-panelist ask questions if they have anything.

19Judge Stanley, do you have any questions?20JUDGE STANLEY: Thank you, Judge Long. I don't21have any questions right now.

JUDGE LONG: Thank you.

15

22

23And, Judge Wong, do you have any questions?24JUDGE WONG: No questions at the moment. Thanks.25JUDGE LONG: I do have just a couple of questions

1	I want to clarify. When you refer to charter of the boat,
2	do you mean that the boat was provided to the customer, or
3	was that a crew ship with a captain and staff, et cetera.
4	MR. HANGER: No. It would be a charter would
5	be if someone wanted to rent the boat out for a day or a
6	weekend. So they would provide their own captain or their
7	own sailing skipper.
8	JUDGE LONG: Thank you. And then with respect to
9	the records that were kept in Washington State, was there
10	anything preventing the retrieval of those records over
11	the course of the audit, other than they were in another
12	state?
13	MR. HANGER: In another state. And then also the
14	owner of the, you know, the business that was sold was
15	on was on a sailing venture and sailing to, I think it
16	was Hawaii and some other, you know, nation. So that also
17	delayed, you know, the recordkeeping providing the
18	records.
19	JUDGE LONG: Okay. And then with respect to the
20	sale of the business to the successor, is there any
21	dispute that the successor was ultimately, did not use
22	the business for charter or the boats for charter or
23	only or rental only, I should say?
24	MR. HANGER: Yeah. They acquired the vessels
25	specifically for the charter operation, and they were

1 going to continue on as Marina Sailing did on chartering some of the vessels out. So, you know, they did make that 2 3 election to pay the sales tax at the time the charter 4 income was generated, so -- and they should have. You 5 know, they assured me. I've talked to them several times, 6 and they assured me that sales tax was paid accordingly. 7 JUDGE LONG: And do you have any evidence of that? 8 9 MR. HANGER: I do not. 10 JUDGE LONG: Okay. And I did just receive a 11 message from one of my co-panelist. Judge Wong has a 12 question. 13 Go ahead, Judge Wong. 14 JUDGE WONG: Thank you. So during this oral argument, you mentioned that 15 16 the charter revenues for the boats at issue were only 17 2.4 percent of the total charter revenues; is that 18 correct? 19 That is correct. Yes. MR. HANGER: 20 JUDGE LONG: Okay. Because during the -- in the 21 briefing it seems like you said 2.9 percent. So I just 22 want to see if there's a -- did you refine the numbers? 23 Or what's -- what's the --2.4 MR. HANGER: Maybe it was 2.9. 25 JUDGE LONG: Okay.

1 MR. HANGER: Yeah. 2 JUDGE WONG: So how did you calculate that? You 3 just took the --MR. HANGER: It was off the Exhibit 1 that I 4 5 provided to you. It was the --6 JUDGE WONG: So just the total -- the revenue 7 from the six boats at issue --8 MR. HANGER: Yeah. 9 JUDGE WONG: -- the that percentage? 10 MR. HANGER: Yeah. Right. Right. Yeah. 11 JUDGE WONG: Okay. Thank you. No other 12 questions at this time. 13 JUDGE LONG: Thank you for your presentation. 14 At this time, I would like to allow CDTFA to make 15 its presentation. CDTFA, I believe you asked for 16 30 minutes. 17 MR. SHARMA: Thank you, Judge. We will take 10, not 30 minutes. 18 19 JUDGE LONG: Okay. 20 MR. SHARMA: Thank you. 21 22 PRESENTATION 23 MR. SHARMA: Appellant, a corporation, operated six marina locations in California, engaged in the 24 25 business of leasing boats, selling boat parts, and

provided sailing lessons since July 1985.

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The Department performed an audit examination for the period of October 1, 2013, through the closeout date of August 15, 2015. Appellant reported taxable sales of little more than \$49,000 and claimed no deductions for the audit period; Exhibit A, page 41.

7 Records available for the audit: Federal income tax returns for the audit period, some purchase invoices 8 9 for boats, asset sales argument, and some rental 10 agreements. Appellant did not provide complete sales 11 records and purchase records for the audit period. 12 Appellant did not provide any supporting worksheets for quarterly sales and use tax returns. Due to lack of 13 14 detailed sales records or worksheets, the Department could 15 not verify the accuracy of reported amounts.

16 In the absence of complete books and records, the 17 Department used an indirect audit method to verify the 18 accuracy of reported amounts and to determine unreported 19 taxable sales. During the audit process, the Department 20 noted that Appellant was engaged in leasing of its own 21 boats and boats owned by others through its yacht 22 management program. Despite various requests, Appellant 23 did not provide boat rental agreements or other sales 2.4 records for the audit period.

Due to lack of rental agreements and sales

records, the Department used available advertising materials and Appellant's website to determine Appellant's ownership to be 10.45 percent of the entire rental fleet. The Department used gross receipts from Appellant's federal income tax returns and determined unreported gross receipts of approximately \$5.3 million for the audit period.

8 During the audit process, Appellant informed the 9 Department that rental revenue would be 33.5 percent of 10 the gross receipts. The Department used Appellant's 11 estimate to calculate unreported boat rental receipts of 12 around \$1.78 million for the audit period. The Department 13 used Appellant's ownership percentage to determine 14 unreported boat rental receipts of little more than 15 \$185,000 for the audit period; Exhibit A, pages 49 to 54.

The Department used asset sales agreement and other available information to determine unreported taxable sales of around \$190,000 consisting of \$130,000 for boats and \$60,000 for furniture and equipment at the time of the close out of business; Exhibit A, pages 44 to 48.

Based on the above audit procedures, the Department determined unreported taxable measure of \$375,000 for the audit period. When the Department is not satisfied with the amount of tax reported by the taxpayer, the Department may determine the amount required to be paid based on any information which is in its possession or may come into its possession.

In the case of an appeal, the Department has a 4 5 minimal initial burden of showing that its determination 6 was reasonable and rational. Once the Department has met 7 its initial burden, the burden of proof shifts to the taxpayer to establish that a result different from the 8 9 Department's determination is warranted. Unsupported 10 assertions are not sufficient to satisfy a taxpayer's 11 burden of proof. The Department used Appellant's federal 12 income tax returns and other documents to determine the 13 audit liability. Doing so produced a reasonable and 14 rational determination.

15 Appellant contends that its ownership percentage 16 should be 2.9 percent or not claimed 2.4 percent as 17 compared to 10.45 percent calculated by the Department. 18 In response, the Department submits that it has reviewed 19 Appellant's six-page worksheet and noted that it listed 20 rental income for the period from November 2, 2014, to 21 August 14, 2015, for Marina Del Rey location only; 22 Exhibit D, pages 425 to 430.

Despite various requests, Appellant did not provide any supporting documents, such as a sales agreements or sales journals for all boats and for all locations. Due to lack of complete sales records for all
locations, the Department rejected Appellant's submission
as incomplete and not representative of the Appellant's
business activities for all locations during the audit
period.

6 Appellant contends that the sales of boats for 7 \$130,000 should be exempt as sales for resale but has not provided any documentary evidence as required by 8 9 Regulation 1668, such as a valid resale certificate in 10 support of its contention. Further, the Department was 11 not able to verify that the purchaser used the boats for 12 leasing or bought for resale in the regular course of business. 13

14 Based on the above, the Department has fully 15 explained the basis for deficiency and proved that the 16 determination was reasonable based on the available books 17 and records. Further, the Department has used approved 18 audit methods to determine the deficiency. Appellant has 19 not met its burden to prove otherwise. The Department 20 assessed a 10 percent negligence penalty for the audit 21 period.

Unreported taxable measure is 762 percent of the reported taxable sales because due to negligence in maintaining and providing necessary books and records as required and mandated by Revenue & Taxation Code 70053 and

1 70054 and Regulation 1698. Even though this is Appellant's first audit, a significant higher percentage 2 3 of understatement was the result of Appellant's failure to maintain standard books and records and clearly 4 5 demonstrate that Appellant was negligent in reporting the 6 correct amount of sales tax to the Department. 7 The understatement cannot be attributed to a bona fide and reasonable belief that the bookkeeping and 8 9 reporting practice was sufficiently complying with the 10 requirements of sales and use tax law. Therefore, 11 Appellant was negligent and the penalty should be upheld. 12 The Department request that the Appellant's appeal be denied. 13 14 This concludes my presentation, and I'm available 15 to answer any questions you may have. Thank you. 16 JUDGE LONG: Thank you. 17 And, Judge Stanley, do you have any questions? 18 Yes. I do just have one because JUDGE STANLEY: 19 I guess I'm not understanding Appellant's argument with 20 respect to the books and records being in Washington. Was 21 there any reason why they could not have been gathered 22 from somebody in Washington and given to the Department? 23 MR. HANGER: Well there's no -- there was no relative or other friends or -- could access the 2.4 25 information in Washington. It was that they were out of

1	town. They were on a sailing excursion, and it was a
2	lengthy situation for the, you know, for the taxpayer. So
3	they just didn't have the opportunity to go to Washington
4	and provide the documentation.
5	JUDGE STANLEY: So nobody was available before
6	the audit was ended?
7	MR. HANGER: No. Unfortunately, no.
8	JUDGE STANLEY: Okay. That's all I have. Thank
9	you.
10	JUDGE LONG: Judge Wong, do you have any
11	questions?
12	JUDGE WONG: I do for CDTFA. Based on the
13	briefs, it looks like you looked into the successor and
14	their activities a little bit. So they didn't report any
15	use tax on the purchase of the boats; is that correct?
16	MR. SHARMA: Yeah. I think without divulging any
17	information for the successor, yes, the Department has
18	looked into that one. And based on the information
19	available to the Department, the tax was not reported.
20	And the election was not made, the information made
21	available to the Department.
22	So it is the responsibility of the seller in
23	California because the sale is complete in California, and
24	it is subject to sales and use tax, unless proved
25	otherwise.

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1 JUDGE WONG: And yeah, don't mention the name of 2 the successor or anything like that. But the successor 3 didn't report -- so it got a seller's permit in 2015. It was a start date of -- in August; is that right, the 4 5 successor? 6 MR. SHARMA: That is correct. 7 JUDGE WONG: And then after that, it didn't report any use tax or any tax on any lease or rentals; is 8 9 that correct? 10 MR. SHARMA: Based on the information available 11 in the audit working papers, that is correct. 12 JUDGE WONG: Okay. But there is some evidence in 13 the audit working papers that the successor was offering 14 these boats for lease? I'm referring -- I'll --15 MR. SHARMA: I --16 JUDGE WONG: Sorry. Go ahead. Could be. 17 MR. SHARMA: 18 JUDGE WONG: Okay. 19 But that doesn't mean because they MR. SHARMA: 20 can offer for lease, but if -- they didn't elect to pay 21 the tax. 22 JUDGE WONG: Right. 23 MR. SHARMA: Then it's --2.4 JUDGE WONG: Okay. 25 MR. SHARMA: -- we don't know all the

information. But based on the information available to 1 2 the Department, the sales reports are still subject to 3 sales tax. JUDGE WONG: Right. Because I heard you earlier. 4 5 You said that they were not being leased by the successor. 6 So I just wanted to make sure and confirm what --7 MR. SHARMA: I think the Department's statement is the Department was not able to verify --8 9 JUDGE WONG: Okay. 10 MR. SHARMA: -- whether that -- these were --11 means sales tax was paid or they were purchased for in the 12 regular course of business or these were purchases for leasing. We don't have enough information to prove that 13 14 or say it was not subject to sales tax. 15 JUDGE WONG: Thank you. I have no further 16 questions at this time. 17 JUDGE LONG: Thank you. 18 I have no questions at this time. I would like 19 to move Appellant's closing statement. 20 Mr. Hanger, you have 15 minutes, and you may 21 begin when you're ready. 22 23 CLOSING STATEMENT 24 MR. HANGER: Okay. Marina Sailing has three main 25 sources of revenue. It's commissions that they or broker

1	commissions when they broker out the vessels for charter.
2	They get a commission off that brokered charter income.
3	They also have memberships, and that was a significant
4	amount of income that was generated off memberships. And
5	the final third if the revenues generated by Marina
6	Sailing is, I want to say, lessons that they give for
7	charters for skippers. They train skippers.
8	So the main source of revenue is not charter
9	income. It's a very low percentage of their gross
10	revenues. And that's why I'm saying that the 2 that
11	the 10.4 percent is extremely high. It should be reduced
12	down to, you know, what we provide in the way of
13	supporting evidence that the 2.9 percent is what we feel
14	would be appropriate.
15	And let's see. I think I don't have any
16	questions. So I think that would be it for me.
17	JUDGE LONG: Okay. Thank you.
18	Before we conclude, I just want to check in with
19	my co-panelists and see if they have any questions.
20	Judge Stanley, do you have any additional
21	questions?
22	JUDGE STANLEY: Thank you, Judge Long. No, I
23	don't have any additional questions.
24	JUDGE LONG: And, Judge Wong, do you have any
25	questions?

1	JUDGE WONG: No further questions. Thank you.
2	JUDGE LONG: Thank you.
3	Well, then that sorry. That concludes this
4	hearing. This case is submitted on Tuesday, May 9th,
5	2023. The record is now closed.
6	I want to thank everyone for coming in today. My
7	co-panelists and I will meet and decide your case later
8	on, and we will send a written opinion of our decision
9	within 100 days after the record is closed.
10	Today's hearing in the Appeal of Marina Sailing
11	is now adjourned.
12	(Proceedings adjourned at 1:24 p.m.)
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	STATE OF CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF TAX APPEALS 25

1	HEARING REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
2	
3	I, Ernalyn M. Alonzo, Hearing Reporter in and for
4	the State of California, do hereby certify:
5	That the foregoing transcript of proceedings was
6	taken before me at the time and place set forth, that the
7	testimony and proceedings were reported stenographically
8	by me and later transcribed by computer-aided
9	transcription under my direction and supervision, that the
10	foregoing is a true record of the testimony and
11	proceedings taken at that time.
12	I further certify that I am in no way interested
13	in the outcome of said action.
14	I have hereunto subscribed my name this 30th day
15	of May, 2023.
16	
17	
18	
19	ERNALYN M. ALONZO
20	HEARING REPORTER
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