Submitted by: Tanya-Marie Singh, Chief Executive Officer & Chief Operating Officer July 27, 2023

GOOD DAY SENATOR FRETT-GREGORY, CHAIRWOMAN OF THE LEGISLATURE'S COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE 35TH LEGISLATURE. I AM TANYA-MARIE SINGH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM. I AM HERE TODAY TO RESPECTFULLY REQUEST YOUR SUPPORT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM'S 2024 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,431,902.

TODAY, IN THE WELL, I HAVE WITH ME, NEDRA THOMAS, THE SYSTEM'S CFO, MARIE WHITE, SENIOR FINANCIAL OFFICER, KIA-T'NIQUE THOMAS, DISASTER RECOVERY SPECIALIST, AND ROLDA MASON, OUR DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES. OUR DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, CHRISTOPHER BENTON, JOINS US REMOTELY.

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM CONTINUES TO BE THE PBS (PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE) MEMBER STATION IN THE TERRITORY. WE ARE ALSO THE NPR (NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO) MEMBER STATION SERVING THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. PBS PROVIDES ITS MEMBER STATIONS WITH EDUATIONAL PROGRAMMING IN ARTS AND PERFORMANCES, HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, AND SCIENTIFIC AREAS, IN CHILDREN'S FARE, AND IN NEWS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS. PROVIDES EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO ITS MEMBER STATIONS TO EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT THE STARTING AT THE PRE-SCHOOL LEVEL. NPR OFFERS A BROAD RANGE OF HIGH-QUALITY NEWS AND INFORMATIONAL PROGRAMMING TO RADIO STATIONS THROUGH PROGRAMS SUCH AS: MORNING EDITION. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, FRESH AIR, AND THROUGHLINE TO NAME A FEW. IN SHORT, WTJX IS PART OF TWO NATIONWIDE SYSTEMS THAT STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES AND TRANSFORM LIVES TO GIVE

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EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHERE YOU LIVE OR YOUR ECONOMIC MEANS,
ACCESS TO A WORLD OF IDEAS.

IN 1972 THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM BEGAN TO TRANSMIT, AND FOR 51 YEARS THIS MONTH, WTJX-TV HAS PROVIDED NON-COMMERCIAL, EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMING, ALONG WITH INFORMATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. LAST AUGUST WE CELEBRATED OUR GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY WITH A SPECTACULAR GALA ON ST. CROIX, BRINGING NEW AND REVITALIZED ENERGY AND ATTENTION TO THE STATION AS IT CELEBRATED 50 YEARS ON TELEVISION.

WTJX-FM HAS BEEN ON THE AIR FOR EIGHT YEARS. THE ORGANIC COVERAGE OF THE TELEVISION AND RADIO STATIONS EXTEND BEYOND OUR BORDERS TO THE BVI, VIEQUES, CULEBRA, AND THE EASTERNMOST AREAS OF PUERTO RICO. THIS YEAR WE ADDED ABILITY RADIO TO OUR LOCAL PROGRAMMING ROSTER. THE PROGRAM COMES FROM THE DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS AND IS DESIGNED TO REMOVE THE STIGMA SURROUNDING DISABILITY AND PROMOTE A MORE INCLUSIVE VIRGIN ISLANDS. WE'VE ALSO ADDED THE BBC WORLD SERVICE TO OUR RADIO PROGRAMMING LINEUP.

THE SYSTEM RECEIVES OVERSIGHT BY AN 11-MEMBER BOARD. PRESENTLY, WE HAVE 10 BOARD MEMBERS AND ONE VACANCY.

SENATORS, NO ONE LIKES TO SOUND LIKE A BROKEN RECORD; HOWEVER, I AM HERE TO REPORT THAT ONCE AGAIN, OUR AUDIT IS UNMODIFIED AND THERE WERE ZERO AUDIT FINDINGS. THIS HAS BEEN

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CONSISTENT SINCE FY 2018 AND WE HAVE HAD UNMODIFIED AUDITS

SINCE 2016.

WE JUST COMPLETED A TWO-HOUR NEGOTIATION WITH THE UNITED STEELWORKERS ON TUESDAY. THE NEGOTIATION WAS VERBALLY RATIFIED WITH THE SHOP YESTERDAY. WE WILL BE PROCESSING THE AGREEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING WEEKS. OUR CURRENT AGREEMENT WITH THE STEELWORKERS EXPIRES ON SEPTEMBER 30 OF THIS YEAR.

WE HAVE GOOD NEWS REGARDING OUR RECOVERY. THE TWO MAJOR PROJECTS ON ST. THOMAS HAVE FINALLY BEEN OBLIGATED: THE DEMOLITION AND REBUILD OF OUR MAIN OFFICE AND STUDIO AT HAYPIECE HILL HAS BEEN AWARDED A FIXED COST AMOUNT OF \$20,313,646 AND WE WERE AWARDED \$1,866,897 TO ADDRESS THE EXTENSIVE DAMAGES AT OUR TRANSMITTER SITE AT MOUNTAIN TOP. AND WHILE WE WORK TOWARDS THE REBUILD OF OUR HAYPIECE FACILITY, MY STAFF AND I HAVE THE VERY DISTINCT HONOR OF AWAITING THAT DAY IN ALTON ADAMS SENIOR'S FORMER RESIDENCE UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF ICMC. WE COMPLETED OUR MOVE THERE LAST NOVEMBER.

DESPITE THE SNAIL'S PACE OF OUR RECOVERY, THE SYSTEM CONTINUES TO PROGRESS, COLLABORATE, AND SUPPORT OUR HOME. LAST MONTH, WTJX COMPLETED A CONSTRUCTION PERMIT THAT WE APPLIED FOR FROM THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION. THIS CONSTRUCTION INCREASED THE POWER OUTPUT OF OUR TELEVISION TRANSLATOR ON ST. CROIX FROM 300 WATTS TO 3,000 WATTS. AS A RESULT, THE COVERAGE AND RECEPTION OF WTJX-TV ON ST. CROIX HAS IMPROVED FROM 70% TO OVER 90% FOR RESIDENTS WHO DEPEND ON RECEIVING THE STATION WITH AN ANTENNA. THE

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STRONGER SIGNAL PENETRATES BUILDINGS EASIER. FOR EXAMPLE, DEPENDING ON WHERE THEY RESIDE, SOME RESIDENTS WOULD NEED AN INSIDE ANTENNA AS OPPOSED TO AN OUTDOOR ANTENNA. THIS IS A BIG WIN FOR VIEWERS ON ST. CROIX WHO HAVE DECIDED TO CUT THE CORD AND WANT ACCESS TO OUR THREE CHANNELS. ALSO THIS YEAR, WE HAD ANOTHER BIG WIN FOR OUR DISH VIEWERS. IN 2019 WE WERE ABLE TO GET THE DISH NETWORK TO CARRY CHANNEL 12, BUT ONLY OUR STANDARD DEFINITION SIGNAL. OUR SIGNAL APPEARED IN A SQUARE BOX AND IT WAS NOT THE BEST QUALITY. EARLIER THIS YEAR, DISH APPROVED OUR REQUEST TO BROADCAST OUR HD SIGNAL. ON FEBRUARY 22, DISH TRANSITIONED TO OUR HD SIGNAL, GIVING CHANNEL 12 VIEWERS ON DISH, A SHARPER, CLEARER, VISUAL EXPERIENCE.

IN EDUCATION, WE COLLABORATED WITH THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON THE VI CENTRIC CIVICS TEXTBOOK DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE AND THE VI HISTORY AND CULTURE WORKBOOK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT. THESE PROJECTS TARGET STUDENTS FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE WITH A SYSTEMATIC INTRODUCTION TO VIRGIN ISLANDS HISTORY. LINKS TO WTJX PROGRAMMING THAT ARE RELATED TO THESE TOPICS WILL BE SEAMLESSLY ACCESSIBLE IN THE DEPARTMENT'S EBOOKS. DR. LARRY LARSEN HAS BEEN THE FORCE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON THIS PROJECT AND WE HOPE TO SEE THESE BOOKS IN THE SCHOOLS FOR THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR.

WE TOOK GREAT PRIDE IN SUPPORTING THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS CORPS WITH OUR MOBILE SATELLITE UPLINK TRUCK DURING PRESIDENT BIDEN'S VISIT TO ST. CROIX IN JANUARY. ABC NEWS RENTED THE ENG TRUCK FOR THE PRESS CORPS AND OUR DIRECTOR

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OF ENGINEERING PROVIDED TECHNICAL SUPPORT. ONE OF THE PRESS CORPS REMARKED THAT THIS WAS THE BEST TRUCK THAT THEY'VE BEEN IN. THE FUNDING FOR THE UPLINK TRUCK CAME FROM THIS INSTITUTION IN THE 32ND LEGISLATURE SO I WANT TO TAKE THIS TIME TO THANK THE LEGISLATURE FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT AS THE BUDGET THAT YOU PASS FOR WTJX PROVIDES MAINTENANCE, UPKEEP, AND REPLACEMENT OF EQUIPMENT.

SINCE OUR LAST BUDGET HEARING IN JUNE 2022, WE WERE ON THE CUSP OF ELECTIONS, WHICH DOMINATED OUR LOCAL PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTION TIME. OUR COVERAGE OF ELECTION PROGRAMMING PROVED ONCE AGAIN THAT WTJX CONTINUES TO REFLECT THE PULSE OF THE PEOPLE. THE FOLLOWING WERE THE NOTABLE LOCAL PROGRAMS WE AIRED SINCE OUR 2022 BUDGET HEARING: LIVE PRIMARY NIGHT COVERAGE, HOSTED BY ERNICE GILBERT AND USIE RICHARDS AT THE ELECTIONS SYSTEM'S OFFICE ON ST. CROIX, MEET THE CANDIDATES WITH THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, WHERE THE LEAGUE INTERVIEWED CANDIDATES FOR THE 35TH LEGISLATURE AND HOSTED A LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR AND GUBERNATORIAL FORUM, THE AARP VIRGIN ISLANDS LIVE GUBERNATORIAL FORUM, HOSTED BY DR. LAVERNE RAGSTER AND SUSAN ELLIS, WTJX & VIRGIN ISLANDS CONSORTIUM LIVE LIEUTENANT AND GUBERNATORIAL DEBATES HOSTED BY ERNICE GILBERT, AND LIVE GENERAL ELECTION NIGHT COVERAGE FROM OUR STUDIO ON ST. CROIX.

WE LOST TWO FORMER GOVERNORS SINCE I WAS HERE LAST. WE BROADCASTED THE *FUNERAL OF GOVERNOR CHARLES WESLEY TURNBULL, PHD*, IN AUGUST, WHICH WAS HOSTED BY HIS FORMER EMPLOYEES: JAMES O'BRYAN, JR., AND JOANNE BARRY. AND, IN JANUARY, WE AIRED LIVE *THE FUNERAL OF GOVERNOR ROY L.*

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SCHNEIDER, MD, WHICH WAS HOSTED BY TWO OF HIS FORMER STAFFERS, ATTORNEY AMOS CARTY AND LESLEY HIGHFIELD.

ALSO IN JANUARY, WE BROADCASTED LIVE GOVERNOR BRYAN'S SECOND INAUGURATION, THE SWEARING IN CEREMONY OF THE 35TH LEGISLATURE, AND GOVERNOR BRYAN'S FIFTH STATE OF THE TERRITORY ADDRESS. WE ALSO BROADCASTED LIVE THE CRUCIAN CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL PARADES, THE ST. THOMAS CARNIVAL PARADES, AND THE ST. JOHN CELEBRATION PARADE. WE AIRED SEASON TWO OF SENIOR SINGALONG, A PROGRAM FROM ST. JOHN, SEASON THREE OF RECOVERY IN FOCUS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ODR AND VIHFA, AND WE CONTINUE TO AIR CONVERSATIONS WITH AARP VI AND THE WASHINGTON REPORT WITH STACEY PLASKETT.

IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR WE LAUNCHED A VERY IMPORTANT PROGRAM THAT I WOULD LIKE YOUR INDULGENCE IN DESCRIBING. LAST WEEK. WE WRAPPED 10 EPISODES OF VIRGIN ISLANDS CASE FILES HOSTED BY CELIA CARROLL, WHOSE SON WAS MURDERED ON ST. THOMAS. VIRGIN ISLANDS CASE FILES WAS A MONTHLY, HALF-HOUR SHOW THAT EXPLORED LOCAL UNSOLVED MURDER CASES. THE SHOW WAS CREATED TO BRING RENEWED PUBLIC ATTENTION TO THESE CASES IN AN ENGAGING AND NON-EXPLOITATIVE WAY. THE FOLLOWING VICTIMS WERE FEATURED IN THE EPISODES: AARON AND RIQUE ASHBY MURDERED ON ST. THOMAS IN 2020 - AARON'S MOTHER AND AUNT AS WELL AS RIQUE'S UNCLE ARE DEVASTATED AND THEY WANT ANSWERS; SHAKURA ST. LOUIS MURDERED IN 2014 ON ST. CROIX - HER MOTHER IS PRAYING FOR JUSTICE FOR HER BELOVED DAUGHTER; KURT LAWRENCE MURDERED IN 2002 ON ST. CROIX - HIS COUSIN, A DETECTIVE ON THE CASE, WANTS TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED: DAN'L LIBURD MURDERED IN 2002 ON ST. THOMAS - HIS MOTHER HAS BEEN

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WAITING FOR WITNESSES TO SPEAK UP FOR OVER TWO DECADES; ARSDALE FERDINAND MURDERED IN 2021 ON ST. CROIX - HIS WIDOW NEEDS HELP IN IDENTIFYING HIS MASKED KILLERS WHO WERE CAUGHT ON THE COUPLE'S HOME MONITORING SYSTEM: ROBERT 'BUCKY' O'CONNOR III MURDERED IN 2003 ON ST. CROIX - HIS MOTHER MISSES HIM TERRIBLY: ROSALIE FIGUEROA MURDERED IN 2013 ON ST. CROIX -HER MOTHER IS STILL GRIEVING THE LOSS OF HER TEENAGE DAUGHTER AND IS STILL STRUGGLING TO COME TO TERMS WITH THAT LOSS: PRESTON FRANCIS MURDERED IN 2010 ON ST. THOMAS - HIS SISTER WANTS ANSWERS FOR HER BROTHER'S MYSTERIOUS MURDER; LEWAYNE FRASER AND VICTOR SMITH MURDERED IN 2009 ON ST. THOMAS - THEIR FAMILY WANTS TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED THAT FATAL HALLOWEEN NIGHT; TINTAWEE CHRISTIAN MURDERED IN 2020 ON ST. CROIX - HIS PARENTS AND SISTER WANT TO KNOW WHY THIS PROMISING ATHLETE AND HONOR STUDENT WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM THEM AT THE AGE OF 16: DAVID FRANCOIS MURDERED IN 2013 ON ST. CROIX - HIS FIVE BROTHERS WANT TO KNOW WHY NO ARREST HAS BEEN MADE; KYJUAN NAUGHTON MURDERED IN 2017 - HIS GIRLFRIEND WANTS TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FATHER OF HER CHILD WHILE DEPLOYED TO ST. THOMAS IN THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE IRMA: ABIJAH TODMAN MURDERED IN 2007 ON ST. CROIX - HIS SISTER WANTS THE WITNESSES PRESENT AT HER BROTHER'S MURDER TO COME FORWARD; LEROY BROOKS MURDERED IN 2011 ON ST. CROIX -HIS SISTER DEMANDS A WARRANT FOR THE ARREST OF HER BROTHER'S MURDERER: SEKANII BELL MURDERED IN 2018 ON ST. THOMAS - HIS MOTHER IS DEMANDING A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION AFTER HER SON WAS MOWED DOWN ON THE WEYMOUTH RHYMER HIGHWAY BY A HIT AND RUN DRIVER; ROBIN 'NANCY' HITESMAN MURDERED IN 2019 ON ST. CROIX - NANCY'S SON WANTS ANSWERS AFTER HIS MOTHER WAS FOUND DEAD IN A SHALLOW GRAVE;

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FERDINAND MARSHALL MURDERED IN 2020 ON ST. THOMAS – HIS SISTER AND COUSIN WANT LEADS TO THE PERSON WHO SHOT HIM MULTIPLE TIMES IN THE DOORWAY OF HIS APARTMENT; MARIO 'MENSAH' DANIELS MURDERED IN 2000 ON ST. CROIX – HIS DAUGHTER WANTS ACCOUNTABILITY; STEVE HART MURDERED IN 2005 ON ST. CROIX – HIS SISTER WANTS WITNESSES TO HER BROTHER'S MURDER DURING A DICE GAME TO COME FORWARD; AND KADIYEN ILLIDGE MURDERED IN 2020 ON ST. CROIX – HER PARENTS WANT JUSTICE FOR CUTTING SHORT A LIFE THAT WAS FULL OF POTENTIAL. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FAMILIES OF THESE VICTIMS WHO BEARED THEIR SOUL TO US. WE ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO VIEW THE SHOW ON DEMAND ON VIDEO.WTJX.ORG, NOT FOR THE MELEE VALUE, BUT WITH THE INTENTION OF HELPING THESE FAMILIES FIND CLOSURE FOR THE LOSS OF THEIR LOVED ONES. THE NUMBER TO CALL IS 1-800-222-8477.

ON THE NATIONAL FRONT, WTJX ALSO AIRED SPECIAL PROGRAMS OF VALUE SUCH AS THE FOLLOWING: OPPORTUNITY KNOCK\$ A LIMITED SERIES WHICH SHOWS SIX FAMILIES A DIFFERENT WAY FORWARD BY PAIRING THEM WITH RENOWNED FINANCIAL EXPERTS TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR FINANCES BY PROVIDING THEM -- AND VIEWERS-WITH ACTIONABLE ADVICE, TOOLS, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES. WE AIRED FACING SUICIDE WHICH JOURNEYS TO THE FRONTLINES OF MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH TO MEET THOSE WHO ARE WORKING TO HELP PEOPLE AT RISK. TIMELY AND INFORMATIVE, THE PROJECT AIMS TO ELEVATE AND DESTIGMATIZE THE TOPIC OF SUICIDE. EMPOWERING AUDIENCES AND COMMUNITIES WITH PREVENTION WE BROADCASTED **ENDING HIV IN AMERICA** WHICH STRATEGIES. TELLS THE STORY OF AN INCREDIBLE SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORK THAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE TO END HIV IN AMERICA. WE ALSO AIRED THE FOLLOWING NOTEWORTHY

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PROGRAMMING: HARRIET TUBMAN: VISIONS OF FREEDOM WHICH GOES BEYOND THE STANDARD NARRATIVE TO EXPLORE WHAT MOTIVATED TUBMAN. INCLUDING DIVINE INSPIRATION. TO BECOME ONE OF THE GREATEST FREEDOM FIGHTERS IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY: BECOMING FREDERICK DOUGLAS WHICH EXPLORES THE INSPIRING STORY OF HOW A MAN BORN INTO SLAVERY TRANSFORMED HIMSELF INTO ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT STATESMEN AND INFLUENTIAL VOICES FOR DEMOCRACY IN AMERICAN HISTORY: KASTURBA GHANDI: ACCIDENTAL ACTIVIST TELLS THE STORY OF KASTURBA GHANDI WHO LIVED HER LIFE IN THE SHADOWS OF HER ICONIC HUSBAND, MAHATMA GHANDI, THE MASTER OF NONVIOLENCE, WHO CREDITED HER WITH TEACHING HIM ABOUT NONVIOLENCE. THIS BIODOC TELLS THAT UNTOLD STORY. AND HOW SHE BECAME ONE OF THE FIRST WOMEN ACTIVISTS IN MODERN HISTORY, IMPACTING THE GROWING NUMBER OF WOMEN ACTIVISTS TODAY; BUFFALO SOLDIERS: FIGHTING ON TWO FRONTS EXPLORES THE COMPLEX HISTORY OF BLACK SOLDIERS IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY BY TELLING THE STORY OF HOW NEWLY FREE BLACK AMERICANS ENLISTED IN THE U.S. ARMY, A RELIABLE PATH TO INCOME AND GREATER RESPECT, AND IN THE PROCESS HELPED TO BOTH FULFILL AMERICA'S MANIFEST DESTINY AND DISRUPT THE LIVES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: WE ALSO AIRED FIGHT THE POWER: HOW HIP HOP CHANGED THE WORLD, A FOUR PART SERIES WHICH RECOUNTS THE ORIGINS OF THIS BOLD AND REVOLUTIONARY ART FORM THROUGH THE VOICES OF THOSE WHO WERE THERE AT THE BEGINNING, CREATING AN ANTHOLOGY OF HOW HIP HOP BECAME A CULTURAL PHENOMENON AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF AMERICAN HISTORY.

BEFORE I CLOSE, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK EVERYONE TO REGISTER FOR OUR ONLINE AUCTION BY LOGGING ON TO WTJX.ORG/AUCTION. WE'RE EXCITED TO SEE HOW THIS ONLINE AUCTION GOES AND WHAT WE CAN

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LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE AS WE SEEK TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE

STATION IN A VERY CROWDED SPACE.

I WOULD LIKE TO PUBLICLY THANK MY STAFF, WHO CONTINUES TO RISE TO THE NEVER-ENDING CHALLENGES WE CONTINUE TO FIELD. ADDITIONALLY, I'D LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE WHO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR STATIONS: OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS, DONORS, MEMBERS, UNDERWRITERS, AND PARTNERS WHO GIVE SO GENEROUSLY OF THEIR TIME, ENERGY, AND CONTRIBUTIONS. IT IS THROUGH THEIR SUPPORT, ALONG WITH THE FUNDING SUBMISSION FROM THE ADMINISTRATION, AND THE APPROVAL OF YOU, THE LEGISLATURE, THAT OUR VIEWERS AND LISTENERS ALLOW US THE HONOR OF BEING WELCOMED INTO THEIR HOMES, RIDE ALONG IN THEIR VEHICLES, AND THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING ON THEIR SMART DEVICES.

SENATORS, I APPRECIATE YOUR TIME. MY TEAM AND I LOOK FORWARD TO ADDRESSING YOUR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS.