

TELEPHONIC WITNESS STATEMENT

DATE: [Not Provided]

TIME: [Not Provided]

INTERVIEW OF: Representative Lisa Baldelli-Hunt

INTERVIEW BY: Detective Corporal Kenneth Buonaiuto
Rhode Island State Police Financial Crimes Unit

LOCATION: Rhode Island State Police Headquarters
311 Danielson Pike
North Scituate, Rhode Island 02857

SUBJECT: 38 Studios Investigation

1. **Q.** This shouldn't take very long at all. If you don't mind, I'm going to – I'm going to put you on speaker, but there's nobody else around, just so I can have it hands-free moving around with my papers, I want to make sure I get everything right here.

A. That's okay. I'm actually, I am driving, I'm on my way to Providence, I have a meeting, so ...

2. **Q.** Okay.

A. -- and if I have -- if we're not done in like 20 minutes, then I can just give you a call back when ...

3. **Q.** Yup. Yeah, that's fine. I can probably almost assure you we'll be done in twenty minute-- be -- before twenty minutes.

A. Oh.

4. **Q.** Okay, just so you're aware, I'm not calling you because you're a target of any investigation, or that -- or that your name has been -- been brought up at all. So I just want to assure you there. This is really just a means for us to open up some communication with legislators that were involved in the

passage of the Jobs Creation Program, or, or even just were, were a member during a timeframe when this 38 Studios issue came to - came to the lawmakers. So, if you can just kind of give me a little background, you – you were in the House. And what was your duration that you were there?

A. I was elected in – on November of 2006, ...

5. Q. Mm hmm.

A. -- and I served until December of 2013.

6. Q. Okay. And during that timeframe, were you assigned to any committees?

A. Yes.

7. Q. Okay. And what were they?

A. I was assigned to Health, Education and Welfare, ...

8. Q. Uh huh.

A. -- and I was assigned to the Small

+I Business community – Small Business Committee.

9. Q. Okay.

A. And – and I was assigned to House Oversight.

10. Q. Okay. And probably in that order?

A. Yes.

11. Q. Okay. So House – I mean, 'm sorry, Health, Education and Welfare timeframe, like 2006 to?

A. No. No, I was sworn in in two thousand – January 2007, and I've been 2007 until two thousand um – Let, let me think for a second, because I led – I left in mid-session ...

12. Q. Mm hmm.

A. So – I served on H.E.W. until I began serving on House Oversight, which was my last two years I was on House Oversight.

13. Q. Okay, so – so 2011 to 2013 you were on ...

A. Yes.

14. Q. -- House Oversight. And H.E.W. '7 to '11 then, is that correct?

A. Right. [Pause]

15. Q. Are you there?

A. Yup.

16. Q. All right. So 2007 to 2011...

A. Right.

17. Q. -- for H.E.W.?

A. Uh huh.

18. Q. And then -- and then Small Business that -- that kind of overlapped one of the two?

A. So, Small Business was -- was '9 to '11.

19. Q. Nine to '11. Okay. So you can serve on two committees on once then.

A. Yes.

20. Q. Okay. Excellent. Okay. All right. So in -- in May of 2010, the Jobs Creation Program came to the floor of the House, do you remember that?

A. Yes, I do.

21. Q. Okay. Had you heard about this bill prior to that?

A. Well I knew that there was also a bill to create the health of the small business community.

22. Q. Okay. And ...

A. [Indiscernible]

23. Q. -- and you were still in a small business committee at the time, so ... I would imagine it was important to that committee. Who brought that information to you?

A. I really shouldn't say small business community, the business community.

24. Q. Okay. All right. So who – who ...

A. [Indiscernible]

25. Q. -- brought that information to you?

A. I don't think anybody in particular brought it to me, I think it was just talk about legislation that was being considered to help because of the economy in the State that they were considering creating a bill that would be beneficial to help to incentivize business – the business owners to either stand or to help with, you know, small business loans or to create an environment that would make the State of Rhode Island business friendly.

26. Q. Okay. All right. So these conversations were within the committee group then.

A. ... probably not within the committee...

27. Q. Mm hmm.

A. Quite frankly, I don't believe that bill came to the Small Business Committee.

28. Q. Okay.

A. It was just talk – talk among legislators.

29. Q. Okay. So nobody in particular that you can recall that ...

A. No.

30. Q. -- first brought it to your attention.

A. No.

31. Q. Okay. And, and do you recall what the purpose of this particular bill was for?

A. Like – like I had said, to help because of the climate in the State ...

32. Q. Mm hmm.

A. -- that this bill would – the purpose of the bill was to help the business climate.

33. Q. And did – did you have any recollection or did anybody have conversations with you about 38

Studios possibly being interested in coming to Rhode Island, number one, and number two, maybe

utilizing funds from that – from the Jobs Creation Guaranty Program to – to make that move to Rhode Island?

A. I don't recall that.

34. Q. Okay. Did – did you know who 38 Studios was prior to this program?

A. No. Nope.

35. Q. No. Okay. Do you know who Michael Corso is?

A. I only know who he is from the newspaper.

36. Q. Okay. So you - you've never met him and you probably wouldn't even know him if you walked by him, is that correct?

A. No. That's correct.

37. Q. Okay. All right. Okay. Okay. Is there anything I haven't asked you that you think is important for – for me to know, regardless of whether it has to do with – with this investigation or anything else?

A. Well I think the – You know, there's so many bills that come before us and, you know, you rely on the individual for bringing the bill forward to have, you know, an understanding of the language of the bill.

38. Q. Mm hmm.

A. I do recall that when the bill was in – when the bill – I'm sorry, my phone was beeping – but ...

39. Q. Okay.

A. -- when the bill was being – when the bill was being discussed, you could say, ...

40. Q. Yup.

A. -- that – And I don't know if the bill was already on the calendar or if the bill was just being – going to be heard in committee, but I – I recall that – The, the reason – I guess the reason I knew more about the – not more about the bill, but the reason my attention was drawn to the bill

was because Representative Jon Brien was very upset that this bill was being introduced and he felt that this was his idea and that you know they were basically taking his idea and introducing a bill and that he had been promoting, you know, this type of situation for several years, and – and whether you understand or not,

when you're in the General Assembly, there are legislators who, you know, want their names to be on a bill because they want to get credit for things, ...

41. Q. Yup.

A. -- and – and, you know, it's happened to me. I introduce something, and it'll fail, one, two, three years, and then suddenly somebody will introduce the very same bill and it passes, and, you know, you're upset because it's something that you advocated for but it was – it was passed, but then kind of taken away. So it's like that side of – of sponsorship, I guess, that ...

42. Q. Yup.

A. -- you have ...

43. Q. Mm hmm.

A. So I can remember him being – and he sat beside me, and he was beside himself because this bill was being introduced and, and he felt as though they took his idea and, and, you know, created this bill, and now he wasn't going to get credit for something he'd been working on for several years.

44. Q. Yup.

A. So I can recall him, you know, storming down the, the aisle over to Representative Costantino and, you know, I can – I can still see them in my mind and having a conversation on the House floor, and him basically saying I want, you know, this was my idea, my – my – my uh, my – promoting this, and he wanted his – He came back and he ended up getting his name put on that bill.

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45. Q. Okay. All right. Okay. I -- I do thank you for your time.

A. Okay.

46. Q. I -- I know you're driving, so I -- I appreciate your going out of way to talk to me. Okay, if -- if you don't have anything further, we'll conclude. And thank you again. And you have my telephone number in the event that something comes to mind that you want to share with us, we'll -- we appreciate the call.

A. Okay. All right. very good.

47. Q. All right. Thank you very much. Have a nice.

A. Okay. You're welcome.

48. Q. All right.

A. You too. Bye.

STATEMENT TAKEN BY:

WITNESSED BY:
