

## TELEPHONIC WITNESS STATEMENT

**DATE:** [Not Provided]

**TIME:** [Not Provided]

**INTERVIEW OF:** Representative Charlene Lima

**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

### [TELEPHONE RINGING]

1. **A.** Hello.

2. **Q.** How are you Mrs. Lima?

**A.** I'm good. How are you?

3. **Q.** Good. I – I appreciate you giving me a call. It's a common thing, me playing phone tag, because I'm – I'm going through a list of people and I'll leave messages and, and they call me back when I'm on the phone. So, I – I did get your message. Actually, I think you left two of them, actually.

**A.** I did, ...

4. **Q.** Yeah.

**A.** -- I called you back the same day. I didn't want you to think I wasn't calling you back.

5. **Q.** No, I – and I know – I know you were. At the end of last week, I think the end of last week I got your message; I tried giving you a call back; I missed you. And then yesterday, I tried giving you a call back after you left the message. So I missed you. But I – No, I totally understand

that, and I – I appreciate you – you calling me back twice. So you know why we're calling, you – you and, nor is anybody else in the House of Representatives or the Senate are the target of any investigation, we're just really opening up the lines of communication, doing our due diligence, making sure we don't miss something. And basically that's about it.

**A. Okay.**

6. **Q.** So I gue- My – I'll start off with some basic questions. You're a rep. at this time, is that correct?

**A. Correct.**

7. **Q.** Okay. And how long have you served when – when were you first – I know the election usually is in the year before you're actually sworn in, but when were you sworn in?

**A. Nineteen ninety-two.**

8. **Q.** Okay. So 1992. All the way through present that was continued – continuous?

**A. Yes.**

9. **Q.** Okay. And during that time I'm sure you've been assigned to many committees. Let's, let's say in the last five, six years, what committees have you been on, and, and are you on now?

**A. Judiciary and Municipal Government.**

10. **Q.** Okay. And are you on Municipal Government right now, is that what it is?

**A. Yes.**

11. **Q.** Okay. All right. And spec- spec- specifically, if I can get it out of my mouth, specifically in 2010 in January, the Jobs Creation Guaranty Program bill came to the House floor, prior to that, did it go through any committees that you were involved in?

**A. No.**

12. **Q.** Okay. Are you familiar with the bill?

A. **Very. [Laughs]**

13. Q. Okay. Heh heh heh heh.

A. **[Laughs]**

14. Q. [Laughs] As many are right now.

A. **Who isn't?**

15. Q. Yes. Yes. Okay. So what's your, what's your recollection of that day, the day, if you remember, the day that that bill came to the floor, how it was presented, and, you know, what were your – what was your interpretation of the bill, what did you think about the bill when it came through?

A. **The first time we voted on it, it was, I believe, part of the supplemental budget.**

16. Q. Okay. Yup.

A. **And there were six of us that voted against it. And I voted against it. Then it came up as a bill that I don't believe was vetted in committee late at night, which a lot of times raises a red flag. Not all the time. But I had some questions on the floor on what this bill was about, and the second time I did vote for it. Because we were told that it was going to be money given out to help small businesses. So I was thinking, well, that could help with some small business, a couple of million here in Cranston, a couple of million in Providence, and I didn't want to vote against economic development.**

17. Q. Right.

A. **Did not know it was going to be going to one very shaky company.**

18. Q. Alr- So when you were making your inquiries, who – who was actually – you – who were you asking those questions to, and who was giving you the answers?

A. **I was asking Steven Costantino, the Chairman of Finance.**

19. Q. Okay. And, and that's – is that the committee that the – the bill went through prior to

coming to the floor.

**A. Yeah, the Finance Committee.**

20. **Q.** Okay. All right. So he – he basically said it would be for small business. Did he give dollar amounts of like, you know, what the average or what the maximum was going to be that would go out to these businesses?

**A. All we know we were adding 75 million dollars to a 50 million-dollar budget, and the budget for Economic Development was going to be 125 million.**

21. **Q.** Okay. And – and who – who would make a decision on who got those – who got the money?

**A. The Department of Economic Development, their board.**

22. **Q.** All right. And did they have any input during any of these hearings?

**A. I don't know, I wasn't in Finance.**

23. **Q.** Okay. All right.

**A. Do you mean at the Finance hearings? I don't know.**

24. **Q.** All right. How about on the floor when it came to the full – full House?

**A. No.**

25. **Q.** Okay. All right.

**A. Not – not to me.**

26. **Q.** Right. Okay. Any conversations whatsoever, and before the fact, because we know there's been a lot of conversations after the fact about 38 Studios, but was there any talk, whether it be, you know, in session or even out of session, in the hallways of the, the State House about 38 Studios coming to Rhode Island or the interest in coming to Rhode Island?

**A. No.**

27. Q. Okay. Did you know who 38 Studios was?

A. No.

28. Q. Okay. So the first time you heard about them was when?

A. The first time I heard it was 38 Studio was I guess right after the vote, and I sent a letter and a press release out to Keith Stokes expressing my concerns, ...

29. Q. Mm hmm.

A. And he sent me a letter back that I have, and one of the quotes in the letter is "the taxpayers will never be on the hook for this \$75 million."

30. Q. All right. Oh yeah. Okay. Heh heh, I guess he – he made that wrong call, I guess, huh?

A. Yeah. I can send you that letter if it's helpful.

31. Q. Yeah, um – Is it something you can email to me or fax to me, which way is easier for you?

A. I can email it to you. Wait a minute, let me get a pen and ...

32. Q. Yup.

A. -- write down your email.

33. Q. Okay.

A. Okay, what's your email?

34. Q. It's going to be my first name, *Kenneth*. K-e-n-n-e-t-h.

A. Yup.

35. Q. -- "dot" ...

A. Yup.

36. Q. -- *Buonaiuto*. B-u-o-n-a-i-u-t-o.

A. Buonaiuto.

37. Q. Yeah, that's it. Nice. You said it very well – "at" ...
- A. -- "at" --
38. Q. -- *RISP*, Rhode Island State Police ...
- A. Yup.
39. Q. -- *dps*, Department of Public Safety, ...
- A. -- *dps*.
40. Q. -- *.RI.gov*.
- A. -- *.RIgov*?
41. Q. Yeah, *RI.gov*.
- A. *RI.gov*. Okay.
42. Q. Yup.
- A. **It's *Kenneth.buon* – b- *Buena-e* [phonetic]. It's a tough one.**
43. Q. Oh, you said it nice the first. *Buonaiuto*.
- A. ***buonaiuto@risp.dps.ri.gov***.
44. Q. That's it. Excellent. Yup. Perfect. Okay. So I guess my next question would be, do you know Mike Corso?
- A. **Do not.**
45. Q. Okay. You know – you know who he is now, but you don't know him personally or professionally.
- A. **No.**
46. Q. Okay. Is there anything I haven't asked you that you think is important for me to know, whether it has anything to with 38 Studios or it could be a completely different topic?
- A. **No. The only thing I had heard on the floor was Representative Larry Ehrhardt tried**

to put an amendment to limit the amount of money given to a business. I believe it was in \$10 million increments.

47. Q. Mm hmm.

A. And I believe he was told – I think it was by Keith Stokes – that it wasn't needed, and I think he pulled the amendment and didn't do it.

48. Q. Okay. All right. Were you – were you – Is this first-hand information or did you ...

A. Oh.

49. Q. -- overhear a conversation or no?

A. No.

50. Q. No. Okay. All right. very good. Okay. You have my telephone number in the event that something comes to mind that you think that, oh geez, I should have mentioned that, or something new comes along or anything. It doesn't even have – need to be anything to do with 38 Studios, please give me a call and we'll – I'll, I'll give you the – give you my ear.

A. What is your cell phone, it's not the 444 number.

51. Q. No, that's my office number. That's my ...

A. Okay. what's your cell?

52. Q. [REDACTED]

A. [REDACTED]

53. Q. [REDACTED]

A. [REDACTED] And I will email over that letter to you.

54. Q. I appreciate it very much.

A. Okay.

55. Q. Thank you for your time.

A. Thank you.

56. Q. Have a good day.

A. ...

57. Q. Bye bye.

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STATEMENT TAKEN BY:

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WITNESSED BY:

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