

TELEPHONIC WITNESS STATEMENT

DATE: [Not Provided]

TIME: [Not Provided]

INTERVIEW OF: Representative Samuel Azzinaro

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 is Corporal Ken Buonaiuto with the Rhode Island State Police.

A. How are you today?

2. Q. Good. Thank you. Is it Samuel Azzinaro?

A. Yes.

3. Q. All right. Do you have a few moments?

A. I do.

4. Q. Well, I'm sure you know by now that we're reaching out to all the representatives and senators in regards to 38 Studios?

A. Yes.

5. Q. Okay. Just to open up the lines of communications, really nobody is a target whatsoever. So I guess my first question to you would be what – and you're presently a, a rep., is that correct?

A. Yes.

6. Q. And, and when did you first come – be – When did you f- When were you first sworn in?

A. I won the election in 2008.

7. Q. Okay.

A. **So it was – could have been sworn in in '09.**

8. Q. O – nine. Okay. So '09 to 2014, present right now.

A. **Yes.**

9. Q. Okay. And what committees have you served on?

A. **HEW.**

10. Q. That seems to be a popular one.

A. **Uh, it's very uh, emotional sometimes.**

11. Q. Yeah. I'm sure it is. Yeah.

A. **Veterans Affairs.**

12. Q. Okay.

A. **Um. I was just appointed Chairman of the Rules Committee, but we haven't met. We won't meet till next year if I'm re-elected.**

13. Q. Okay.

A. **That's uh – that's it, that's pretty much it.**

14. Q. Okay. If you can recall back to 2010, in May of 2010, the Jobs Creation Guaranty Program was brought to the House floor. Do you remember that?

A. **Yes.**

15. Q. Okay. And prior to it going to the House floor, did it have any reason to go through any of the committees that you were working on?

A. **Not that – No, not in my committees, no.**

16. Q. Okay. Had you heard about that particular bill prior to it coming to the floor in May of 2010?

A. **No. I did not.**

17. Q. Okay. And – and what do you remember about the bill, what – what – what can you describe

to me or the purpose of the bill and how it was presented to the – to the hou— the House floor?

A. As I recall, there was initially \$50 million put in a fund to help businesses draw on to – like to – like going to the bank to get a loan, but it'd be a, you know, a low interest loan. And it was initially \$50 million, and then at the last moment of session, I recall it went up to 125 million.

18. Q. Okay. And who – who – who pressed for that or who presented that inquiries?

A. I w- I would imagine it came out of the Finance Committee.

19. Q. Okay. So the – Would that have been Steven Costantino or?

A. Yeah, he was the chairman of – of the committee at the time, I believe.

20. Q. Okay. Is he the one that did the presentation to the floor?

A. You know, that's – that's hard for me to remember, but on – I would guess he did because it would have been part of the budget, which he was presenting.

21. Q. Okay. All right.

A. But, I mean it could have been someone else.

22. Q. Okay.

A. I really don't remember.

23. Q. Okay. Do you – do you remember any debate regarding the particular bill or did it just fly right through?

A. Uh. It – it wa- Um, I – I'm sure there were questions about it, but 38 Studios was never mentioned. There was no business ever mentioned, it was just an increase in that amount of money so that more businesses could draw on it.

24. Q. Okay. All right. So did you – you – you brought up 38 Studios. Did you know who they were at the time?

A. No, I didn't have any idea. Never – never heard of it.

25. Q. Okay. And when was the first time you heard about 38 Studios?

- A. Well I guess when they – when they got the – when the loan was given to them by the EDC and Governor Carcieri.
26. Q. Okay. All right. Did – Well let me ask you this question. Do you – Michael Corso, that name, does that ring a bell to you?
- A. Only from what I saw in the paper recently.
27. Q. Okay. So ...
- A. I never knew him.
28. Q. You never knew him. Okay.
- A. I don't know many people up state, I'm from Westerly, you know, we're kind of secluded down here.
29. Q. Heh heh heh heh. You just had a, a little bit of a fire last night, is that right?
- A. Yeah, I – Yeah, I'm trying to figure out where it was. I went through town this morning and uh it looks like it's maybe in the center of town.
30. Q. Yeah, it – well that's what it sounded like in ...
- A. Yeah.
31. Q. -- this morning, but.
- A. Too bad.
32. Q. Good thing nobody was hurt anyways.
- A. Right.
33. Q. All right. Is there anything, you know, about this whole thing that just doesn't feel right to you or sit right to you, something, you know, information maybe that you – you know first-hand that you feel that it's important for us to know?
- A. The, the only – You know, the only thing that I can remember of that night really was Bob Watson who was the minority leader at the time, getting up and not mentioning 38 Studios,

but just saying that something didn't seem right. And it was, you know, it c- I used to sit behind him, ...

34. Q. Yup.

A. And because he was negative about everything, but so, you don't – you don't really pay too much attention to it when somebody's negative all the time.

35. Q. Yeah. Yup.

A. But it seemed like he knew something was cooking.

36. Q. Okay. And what – What was it in particular that he said that you ...?

A. No, I can't remember exactly, ...

37. Q. Yup.

A. -- but uh, it wasn't uh – it, it wasn't favorable for doing what we were doing.

38. Q. Right. Okay. Okay. Anything you want to share with me in regards to anything whatsoever? It doesn't even – even have anything to do with 38 Studios, you can, you know, talk to me about anything that you think you need to tell me.

A. No, I – You know, I ... I'm happy with the new leadership, heh.

39. Q. Okay.

A. Uh, that's all I can say about that.

40. Q. Yeah, that seems to be a common theme, so.

A. Yeah. Yup.

41. Q. All right. Very good. Okay. Can I give you my name and my telephone number in the event that you think of something and you want to give me a call back?

A. Sure. Go ahead.

42. Q. Okay. It's Corporal Ken Buonaiuto. B-U-O-N-A-I-U-T-O.

A. Buonaiuto. What does that mean in Italian?

43. Q. Buonaiuto. It means "good health."
A. "Good health." All right.
44. Q. Yeah. And my phone number is 444- ...
A. Yup.
45. Q. -- 1205.
A. -- 1205. Okay. Thank you, ...
46. Q. All right.
A. -- Ken.
47. Q. Well, I - I thank you very much for your time.
A. All right.
48. Q. Okay. You have a good afternoon.
A. You too.
49. Q. Bye bye.

STATEMENT TAKEN BY:

WITNESSED BY:
