

Deposition of:

Conf. & Non-Conf. Trial Vol. IV

January 20, 2017

In the Matter of:

In Re: Georgia Southern Nurses

Veritext Legal Solutions

1075 Peachtree St. NE , Suite 3625 Atlanta, GA, 30309 800.808.4958 | calendar-atl@veritext.com | 770.343.9696

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1	IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF BRYAN COUNTY
2	STATE OF GEORGIA
3	
	MEGAN REBECCA RICHARDS,
4	
5	Plaintiff, CIVIL ACTION FILE
5	VS.
6	NO. 2015-V-174(RO)
	TOTAL TRANSPORTATION OF
7	MISSISSIPPI, LLC, U.S. XPRESS
	ENTERPRISES, INC., U.S.
8	XPRESS, INC., U.S. XPRESS
	LEASING, INC., NEW MOUNTAIN
9	LAKE HOLDINGS, LLC, MOUNTAIN
	LAKE RISK RETENTION GROUP,
10	INC., JOHN WAYNE JOHNSON,
	GREYWOLF LOGISTICS, INC., ARCH
11	INSURANCE COMPANY, and ROBERT
12	GORDON TAYLOE,
12	Defendants.
13	Defendants.
14	
15	VOLUME IV
16	CONFIDENTIAL AND NON-CONFIDENTIAL PROCEEDINGS HELD
17	BEFORE HONORABLE CHARLES P. ROSE
18	January 20, 2017
	9:00 A.M.
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	151 South College Street
20	Pembroke, Georgia
21	Lee Ann Barnes, CCR-1852, RPR, CRR
22 23	
24	
25	
20	

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1 2	APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL
3	On behalf of Plaintiff:
4	ROBERT D. CHEELEY, ESQ. KEITH A. PITTMAN, ESQ.
5	CHEELEY LAW GROUP, LLC
6	299 South Main Street Suite A
	Alpharetta, Georgia 30009
7	770.861.4100 678.559.0273 (facsimile)
8	bob@cheeleylawgroup.com
9	keith@cheeleylawgroup.com
10	- and -
10	BILLY N. JONES, ESQ.
11	CARL R. VARNEDOE, ESQ. JONES, OSTEEN & JONES
12	206 E. Court Street
13	Hinesville, Georgia 31313 912.876.011
- 4	bjones@jojlaw.com
14 15	cvarnedoe@jojlaw.com
1.0	On behalf of the Defendants Greywolf Logistics, Arch
16 17	Insurance and Robert Tayloe: MATTHEW F. BARR, ESQ.
18	HAWKINS PARNELL THACKSTON & YOUNG LLP 4000 SunTrust Plaza
10	303 Peachtree Street, NE
19	Atlanta, Georgia 30308-3243 404.614.7453
20	mbarr@hptylaw.com
21 22	
23	
24 25	

	Page 812
1 2	APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL
3	On behalf of the Defendants John Wayne Johnson, Total Transportation and the U.S. Xpress Entities:
4	DAVID A. DIAL, ESQ.
5	JACKSON A. DIAL, ESQ.
6	RICHARD H. HILL, II, ESQ. ROBERT MARCOVITCH, ESQ.
7	AMY CREAGER, PARALEGAL WEINBERG WHEELER HUDGINS GUNN & DIAL 3344 Peachtree Road
8	Suite 2400 Atlanta, Georgia 30326
9	404.832.9534 404.875.9433 (facsimile)
10	ddial@wwhgd.com jdial@wwhgd.com
11	rhill@wwhgd.com rmarcovitch@wwhgd.com
12	
13	- and -
14	NALL & MILLER, LLP MICHAEL D. HOSTETTER, ESQ.
	Peachtree Center, North Tower
15	235 Peachtree Street, NE, Suite 1500
	Atlanta, Georgia 30303
16	678.608.1713
	404.522.2208 (facsimile)
17	mhostetter@nallmiller.com
18	
19	On behalf of the Defendants US Xpress Enterprises, US Xpress, Inc., US Xpress Leasing, Mountain Lake Holdings, and Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group:
20	MARK A. BARBER, ESQ.
21	BAKER, DONELSON, BEARMAN, CALDWELL & BERKOWITZ, PC
22	Monarch Plaza
23	Suite 1600 341 Peachtree Road NE
24	Atlanta, Georgia 30326 404.443.6713
25	404.238.9753 (facsimile) mbarber@bakerdonelson.com

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1	(The following proceedings were held
2	outside the presence of the jury.)
3	THE COURT: All right. Let's bring our
4	jury in, please.
5	(The following proceedings were held in
6	the presence of the jury.)
7	THE COURT: All right. Everyone please be
8	seated.
9	When we adjourned last night, I believe
10	the plaintiffs' counsel stated that there were
11	no additional witnesses, but there are
12	additional documents and stipulations.
13	MR. JONES: There are, Your Honor.
14	We've gone over these this morning with
15	opposing counsel and the plaintiffs would
16	tender Plaintiff's Exhibit 32, 35, 140, 87,
17	216, 252, 170, 73, 67, and 59, Your Honor.
18	THE COURT: All those exhibits are
19	admitted without objection?
20	MR. D. DIAL: Yes, Your Honor.
21	THE COURT: All right.
22	(Plaintiff's Exhibits 32, 35, 59, 67, 73,
23	87, 140, 170, 216, and 252 were admitted into
24	evidence.)
25	MR. D. DIAL: In addition, Your Honor, at

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the end of the day we talked about
Exhibit 171-1 through 5 and that we had to do
some adjustments to them. We've done those,
we've gone over them with plaintiff, and we
would move to admit as evidence Exhibits 171-1
through 171-5.

THE COURT: All right. They are admitted without objection?

MR. JONES: That's correct.

I still have the stipulations to address.

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

MR. JONES: If you'll reserve those, Your Honor, we'll do those at the appropriate time, and with that, we'll rest.

THE COURT: There are no stipulations to be read in the presence of the jury?

MR. JONES: Your Honor, quite frankly, I think we -- they do need to be read to the jury, but I don't think we're quite ready with all of the parties to do that at this time yet.

Mr. Pittman, if you want to address that.

MR. PITTMAN: Yes. Your Honor, they're the stipulations that are in the pretrial order from the section for the U.S. Xpress defendants and the corporate Greywolf defendants. It's

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Page 817 1 about 11 or 12. Fine. THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. 3 All right. Plaintiffs have now rested. Are the defendants ready to proceed? 5 MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, we have -- we'd like to make a motion if we could. 6 7 THE COURT: Okay. All right. Ladies and gentlemen, the plaintiff has now rested in this 8 case. There are a couple of matters I have to 10 take up outside your presence, so if you'll go 11 back with the bailiffs, we'll have you back in 12 just a few minutes. (The following proceedings were held 13 14 outside the presence of the jury.) 15 THE COURT: All right. The jury's out. 16 Counsel, you may proceed. 17 MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, at this time, we 18 move for a directed verdict on claims made by 19 the plaintiff. 2.0 First, I'll address the punitive damage 21 claim against John Wayne Johnson. As Your 2.2 Honor knows the standard, we don't need to 23 repeat that. I know Your Honor's been studying 24 the law on this issue, so I won't make this

argument very long.

But we believe in the beginning of the case, in opening statement, the plaintiff said that they were going to base their punitive damages case on the unconscionable conduct of Mr. Johnson watching either videos or playing a game at the time of the accident.

As Your Honor knows, that attempt failed miserably based upon incorrect calculations of plaintiff's expert witness, Randy Stone, and also the only evidence in the case concerning his use is that they specifically quizzed Mr. Johnson about whether or not he was using the phone at the time of the accident and he said no. So that's that issue.

They then switched strategies and said,
"We're now going to prove punitive damages
based on a pattern of conduct of fatigued
driving," and they entered into evidence the
2011 accident that happened some three and a
half years before this one. It was a
single-vehicle accident in which Mr. Johnson
admitted that he did fall asleep and that
accident resulted.

We don't believe that that violation of a rule of the road evidence is a pattern or

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policy of conduct. It was a one-time event that happened during this man's driving career.

It is no evidence that it's substantially similar to this event. There's essentially no evidence of any fatigue on the part of Mr. Johnson with this accident. He has testified, and he said so at the scene, that he was awake and he saw lights ahead of him; he simply did not understand he was gaining on them at the rate he was and did not react in time to stop. That's what the evidence is.

So I don't think that that single event that happened three and a half years earlier, which was nothing more than another violation of the rule of the road, it did not cause a suspension of his license, it did not cause him to be ineligible to drive, it did not eliminate him from being a truck driver in the United States in any state on any highway. That is not enough conduct, and certainly not clear and convincing evidence that Mr. Johnson acted want- -- wantonly, willfully, and with conscious disregard. That's that issue.

The other issue, we would again, based -- and I would incorporate our motion for summary

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judgment on that issue, as well, Your Honor, and the cases cited therein.

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. D. DIAL: With respect to the other issue, we would move for a directed verdict under the long-established Georgia law, the impact rule, that in this case, the evidence that we've heard -- and I would also move for a mistrial on the basis that the evidence we heard largely is about the emotional distress caused by Megan Richards being involved in this tragic event in which her friends, co-students, were killed and injured. That has been the bulk of the evidence of what is causing her posttraumatic stress disorder and other emotional distress. We've heard very little about any of that arising from a physical injury.

So we believe under the Lee case, that case, that should be dismissed and, if not dismissed, we would also move for a mistrial for that evidence having come in.

Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Counsel.

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MR. JONES: I'll address the punitive damages issue briefly, Your Honor.

We have never switched tracks. We have maintained from the very outset that this driver, holding a CDL license -- we've always tried to admit, and we did it in our recent oppositions to the motions for summary judgment -- we showed the Court about this previous falling asleep and having a wreck and then his lack of attention in doing so.

There can be no greater lack of attention than when a driver of a commercial vehicle is asleep. It is the very definition of lack of attention.

And the Clinch case says that if you can show that a driver has a history of inattentiveness, then -- and that is also related to the facts of this case, then that's sufficient to go to the evidence -- to go to the jury on punitive damages. It's for the jury to decide whether or not it's enough to award punitive damages. The Court's function is to merely decide whether or not that should go to the jury.

Secondly, the reason we put in all the

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text messages was not to show that he was texting at the time of the accident, but to show that from the time he got up in Shreveport, Louisiana, until he took the bus trip to Jackson, Mississippi, and then he took his truck and drove all the way across the states of Mississippi and Alabama and into Georgia and into the early morning hours, all of those text messages showed that he never got any sleep. He says he was sleeping all that time. He says he slept at the terminal. He says he slept the night before on the bus. Well, all those text messages show, or a jury could conclude, that he didn't get enough sleep and, consistent with his inability to explain what happened -- I mean, he sat here on the witness stand himself and said, "I hope one day somebody finds out what happened. I hope some expert concludes or figures out what I was doing and what happened, because I can't explain it myself." So the jury can certainly conclude from his own testimony that he was asleep at the time this collision occurred, as well.

So we've got the two falling -- we've got

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the falling asleep three years prior to this one, we've got the falling asleep here. It's certainly in evidence and certainly something that the jury can decide, and it certainly meets the Clinch County case as to whether or not we should go to the jury on the issue of punitive damages, Your Honor. We think -- we would ask that the Court let that issue go to the jury.

MR. PITTMAN: Your Honor, I'm going to address the impact rule.

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. PITTMAN: And two further points on Mr. Jones.

You know, there's evidence before this jury that he told different stories about what happened, that he initially said, "Oh, I tried to brake," and that goes to his credibility, and the rollover that went in is, of course, notice of the importance of driving not distracted.

On the impact rule, Your Honor -- and this also goes to their charges, they've asked for a limited charge -- the impact rule is only applicable, including as a charge, if there is

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some manner to limit the damages that are sought for her mental pain and suffering, and that's just not in this case for multiple grounds.

The Court has ruled that the impact rule should not be followed here, including under the compelling circumstances test of Lee, so the fact that maybe some of it does involve the memories of her deceased friends is not -- is not a reason to move as these defendants have.

We have put in abundant testimony from physicians that the PTSD and the mental suffering, which is -- of course the Court will charge on the pattern charges for mental pain and suffering -- is a part of her physical injuries, including her physical injuries that were suffered at the scene. There is a physical component to that.

Dr. Lacy testified to the fact that it actually changes the brain structure, and so we've got that issue, as well, Your Honor.

There's certainly no basis for a mistrial, and moreover, there's no directed verdict available for that for the abundant testimony that we've put in from Dr. Lacy, Dr. Sass, and

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Ms. Richards and other witnesses themselves.

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THE COURT: All right. Thank you, Counsel.

All right. With regard to the issue of punitive damages, there does have to be a pattern of dangerous driving. You know, the Court can't substitute its judgment for that of the jury. The Court is going to submit it to the jury and the jury will have to make that determination.

As far as the motion for mistrial, the Court will deny the motion based on its previous ruling.

And I believe that addresses the issues.

MR. BARBER: Judge, I also have a motion --

THE COURT: That's right, on the corporate piece.

MR. BARBER: -- on the corporate piece.

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. BARBER: And I'll be very quick.

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

MR. BARBER: These are the same law that I cited in the summary judgment motion you've already read, but I did want to point out now

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we actually have the evidence in, joint venture requires mutual control. There's no testimony in the case that John Stomps at Total

Transportation had any control over any of the other entities that are defendants, the U.S.

Xpress defendants, New Mountain Lake, U.S.

Xpress Enterprises, U.S. Xpress, Inc., U.S.

Xpress Leasing, and the Risk Retention. He had no control over this. You have to have mutual control. There's no evidence he had any mutual control.

I noticed that's the one jury charge we all agree on the law and their jury charge is almost like our jury charge. They didn't show any evidence in the case of mutual control. They have to do that. It's not just mutual control at the moment John Johnson's driving, they're saying the business model of running Total Transportation is a joint venture. That requires — the legal requirement is they have to show mutual control, and they did not do that in this case. There's no evidence in the record.

And then on the alter ego, there's no evidence of insolvency, which, as we argued in

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our brief for summary judgment, the panel case says you have to have evidence of insolvency.

I asked their expert the question did they pay their debts when due. He said, "Yes." I said, "Do they have positive stockholder's equity?"

He said, "Yes." Judge, that's it. There is no evidence of insolvency.

What he tried to do is get around it by saying, "Well, they might not have been able to stand on their own, they were weak because they were undercapitalized." That's not insolvency. They have to show insolvency. It's undisputed fact that there is no insolvency.

And, again, under the panel case, we believe that is a requirement under the law. They did not make a prima facie case, so we would move for summary judgment on that -- or not summary judgment, directed verdict.

The last piece is the dual agency, and we believe that there's not enough evidence about Mr. Johnson acting as an agent for all of the defendants. There's no evidence that he acted as an agent for U.S. Xpress Leasing or the Risk Retention Group or the other motor carrier, U.S. Xpress, Inc. The only allegation was that

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he was somehow part of a corporate holding with what they keep calling the mother ship, but, again, Judge, there was no direct evidence that he was acting on their behalf furthering their business, and so we would move for a directed verdict on that ground, as well, also using the law we cited to the Court in our summary judgment briefs.

THE COURT: Thank you, Counsel.

Plaintiff's response?

MR. PITTMAN: Yes, Your Honor. There are multiple theories as part of this case as to the --

THE COURT: And I want to try to distill that for the jury. I could charge them for 30 minutes on agency, parent, subsidiary, parent agency, dual agency, alter ego. I think that is just totally confusing to this jury. I think we've got to simplify it for them. We've got to condense it. We've got to put it in a way that's understandable.

MR. PITTMAN: And we agree with Your Honor, and, in fact, it's --

THE COURT: But I digressed. Please respond.

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MR. PITTMAN: No, no, we always appreciate the guidance from the Court.

Your Honor, we have presented abundant evidence as to the control under the common enterprise theory and as to the -- the dual agency going on between these parties.

It's very clear that -- and I'm not going to use the word mother ship here, but the owner, New Mountain, controls, through its control of the board, the -- we've put in front evidence that U.S. Xpress Enterprises controls the money; we've put in that U.S. Xpress, Inc., the other carrier, pays; that U.S. Xpress Leasing is responsible for the equipment, the cab that he was driving at the time; and we intend to put before as part of the charges that whether you view it as a common enterprise with control or some type of agency, that -this is an integrated enterprise, and when Defendant Johnson was driving that truck, he was driving a truck that was put on the road by all of these, including U.S. Xpress.

You know, some of the confusion, some of the points he makes, has to do with the piercing the corporate veil theory, which is

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often -- I'm sure the Court's familiar with -in post-judgment situations and the insolvency
and those issues. That's not what we're
talking about here. We're talking about a
common enterprise that operates as one such
that they are, as a group of entities,
responsible for putting him on the road and,
therefore, under respondeat superior, they are
all liable for the admitted liability of Total
Transportation of Mississippi.

And we saw other examples. I don't want to go on long while the jury's here. The claims reporting, hiring procedures, policies. It's clear there's abundant evidence to go to the jury on whether this is a common enterprise for which control is exerted on the Total Transportation by the U.S. Xpress entities.

THE COURT: I'll let it go to the jury, but we're going to have to get together and formulate a charge that is much shorter than what's been offered thus far.

MR. D. DIAL: And, Your Honor, I just --

MR. PITTMAN: I agree on that, Your Honor.

MR. D. DIAL: I'm sorry. I would just

like to make sure the record's clear that when

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you denied my motion for mistrial, you're also denying my motion for directed verdict.

THE COURT: Yes, sir. Yes.

MR. BARR: Your Honor, I would move for directed verdict on behalf of the Greywolf defendants. We spoke at the pretrial order about the Smith case, but what we didn't talk about is the pattern charge on the situation, which is 670.2.202 that I believe all the parties agree should be given. I don't know if Your Honor had a chance to look at that last night, but it requires the evidence be that the injuries were the natural, reasonable, and probable result of the original negligent act.

And I don't believe plaintiffs are even alleging that this accident was likely to happen and, in fact, they're alleging punitive damages. There's been lots of evidence about the distance, the unlimited line of sight, and so I don't, frankly, Judge, see how any reasonable jury could find that these injuries were reasonable, that they were natural, or that they were probable, meaning likely to occur, just because of the first accident.

THE COURT: Well, you'd be surprised what

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Page 832 1 a reasonable jury might do. They'll surprise you. But --3 MR. BARR: True enough. THE COURT: -- Counsel, your response. 5 MR. PITTMAN: Yes, Your Honor. 6 Greywolf defendants have stipulated as to the 7 negligence of the first driver as to the blocking the road and all that, and as the 8 9 Court will remember from the briefing on this 10 issue --11 THE COURT: Well, I decided on the Smith 12 case there was a jury question, but --13 MR. PITTMAN: Exactly. 14 THE COURT: And the Smith case was very 15 close with regard to the facts of that case and 16 this case. 17 But, I mean, most of the focus of this 18 case has been against the driver and Total and 19 U.S. Xpress. You want a verdict form that's 2.0 going to apportion liability? 21 MR. PITTMAN: Yes, Your Honor. 2.2 THE COURT: All right. I'll allow it to 23 go to the jury. 24 MR. BARR: The only other thing, for the 25 record, Judge, we would join in the

Page 833 1 codefendants' impact rule motions that were just stated. 3 THE COURT: All right. That's preserved 4 for the record. 5 MR. BARR: Thank you, sir. 6 THE COURT: All right. Anything else 7 before we bring the jury back in. MR. JONES: And just to be sure, Judge, 8 9 there's confusion about these blowups. 10 THE COURT: Yes, sir. 11 MR. JONES: We still -- everybody's looked 12 at them. We've identified them. We still 13 haven't been able to get the small pictures and 14 collate that. And, you know, I don't want to 15 waste everybody's time, but we do need to 16 tender those pictures, all the numbered 17 pictures, of these photographs that are 18 blowups. 19 MR. D. DIAL: We looked at those 2.0 yesterday --21 MR. JONES: And we talked about all that. 2.2 I just wanted to be sure we were all in 23 agreement. 24 THE COURT: That's fine. Those can go out 25 to the jury as they are.

MR. JONES: And we may have to do that. 1 We've been trying to find pictures. 3 MR. PITTMAN: Well, in fact, Your Honor, with that instruction, we will label these -- I 4 5 mean, really, all we're talking about here is 6 assigning a number -- just asking the Court's 7 forbearance to assign exhibit numbers to what everybody's already agreed has been shown. 8 9 So we'll do that at one of the breaks and 10 we'll put those numbers into the record, and 11 we'll also tender some type of photo or 12 something so there's something in the small 13 record as to what these were. 14 THE COURT: All right. MR. PITTMAN: 15 Thank you, Your Honor. 16 THE COURT: All right. Can we bring the 17 jury back in? 18 MR. BARBER: Judge, can I have just --19 THE COURT: Yes, sir. 2.0 MR. BARBER: -- about two minutes to make 21 sure I've got everything ready to hand to the 2.2 witness? 23 THE COURT: Sure. 24 MR. BARBER: I'm almost done. I don't 25 want to do it while they're here, so...

	Page 835
1	THE COURT: Sure.
2	Bring the jury in.
3	(The following proceedings were held in
4	the presence of the jury.)
5	THE COURT: Everyone please be seated.
6	Ladies and gentlemen, if you'll bear with
7	us for just a minute. We weren't quite ready,
8	but we see that you are.
9	MR. BARBER: Judge, we're going to get one
10	more document in a minute, but I'm going to go
11	ahead and start and then she'll just bring me
12	the document when it's ready.
13	THE COURT: Okay.
14	MR. BARBER: I'd like to go ahead and get
15	started.
16	Okay. On behalf of the defendants, Judge,
17	we call Lisa Pate to the stand.
18	THE COURT: All right.
19	LISA MARIE PATE,
20	a witness herein, being first duly sworn in the
21	above cause, was examined and testified as follows:
22	THE COURT: All right.
23	DIRECT EXAMINATION
24	BY MR. BARBER:
25	Q. Good morning, Ms. Pate.

Page 836 1 Good morning. Α. Q. Would you please tell the jury your name. 3 Lisa Marie Pate. Α. 4 And where do you live, Ms. Pate? Ο. 5 Α. 8332 Mill Race Drive, Ooltewah, Tennessee. And where do you work? 6 Ο. 7 U.S. Xpress Enterprises. Α. And what is your title there? 8 Q. 9 Α. My title is chief administrative officer 10 and acting general counsel. 11 Okay. And just describe for the jury what 12 you do in that role. 13 Α. I'm in charge of the non-financial back 14 office services, so essentially things like IT, HR, 15 safety, risk management, which is our claims, legal 16 matters. We have a process and prevent group that 17 reports up through me, communication. So, really, 18 all the non-operational and non-financial 19 departments report up through me. 2.0 Okay. And you're here today testifying on Ο. 21 behalf of New Mountain Lake Holding, LLC; correct? 2.2 Α. Yes. 23 And U.S. Xpress Enterprises, Inc.; Ο.

24

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correct?

Α.

Yes.

Page 837 1 And U.S. Xpress, Inc. --Ο. Α. Yes. 3 0. -- correct? And U.S. Xpress Leasing, Inc.? 5 Α. Yes. And Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group? 6 0. 7 Α. Yes. Okay. Ms. Pate, I would like you to just 8 Q. 9 address the jury on this one point. 10 Is Total Transportation of Mississippi 11 managed and run separately from the U.S. Xpress 12 defendants I just named? 13 Α. Yes, absolutely. 14 And on the date of the accident, was John Ο. 15 Wayne Johnson acting on behalf of any U.S. Xpress 16 entity other than Total Transportation of 17 Mississippi, LLC? 18 Α. No. 19 Was he acting as an agent for any other 2.0 U.S. Xpress entity other than Total Transportation 21 of Mississippi? 2.2 Α. No. Was he under the control of any other U.S. 23 Ο. 24 Xpress entity other than Total Transportation of 25 Mississippi?

A. No.

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- Q. And you understand that Total

 Transportation of Mississippi has admitted that John

 Johnson was acting in furtherance of their business

 and in the scope of his employment with them?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And so to the extent you're in that corporate tree, you also agree that Total Transportation is responsible for the actions of John Wayne Johnson on April 22, 2015?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. Is there any doubt in your mind who runs Total Transportation of Mississippi on a day-to-day basis?
- A. There's absolutely no doubt. It's John Stomps.
- Q. Okay. Would you just give us a brief description of the functions that Total Transportation performs that are independent of similar functions that might be run at U.S. Xpress, Inc.
- A. Sure. Total has its own sales and marketing department, so they sell their services to customers directly. They have their own operations staff. They have their own driver recruiting

department. They have their own safety department, their own HR department. They have a completely separate website.

They have their own DOT motor carrier number and authority. One of the Total entities, the Logistics, has its own brokerage authority number. So it's completely separate in those regards.

- Q. How about its CEO? Is the CEO of Total Transportation different than the CEO of the other U.S. Xpress entities that are defendants in the case?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. Okay. And the CEO of Total Transportation of Mississippi is who?
 - A. Is John Stomps.
 - Q. John Stomps. Okay.

You mentioned broker authority. Does Total Transportation of Mississippi have broker authority?

- A. My understanding is it's the Total Logistics entity that has the brokerage authority.
- Q. Okay. And is it separate from the U.S.

 Xpress --
- 25 A. Yes.

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Page 840

- Q. -- broker authority?
- A. Yes.

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- Q. How about driver training?
- A. They're responsible for their own driver training. They have a different driver training program from the U.S. Xpress, Inc. driver training program.
 - Q. And how about payroll?
 - A. They administer their own payroll.
 - Q. How about marketing?
- A. They do all of their own marketing to customers.
- Q. Okay. Do these items that Total

 Transportation -- or I guess these services that
 they provide for their company, do those cost money
 to the company?
 - A. It costs money to Total, correct.
 - Q. Sure.

And if they were being run as a part of U.S. Xpress and as if you-all were just a single entity, would you need to incur all this expense?

- A. No. It would be redundant.
- Q. Are there occasions, to your knowledge, where U.S. Xpress and Total compete against each other?

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A. Yes.

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- Q. Okay. And would it make any sense to you if a single company being run as a single company had entities within its group that competed against each other?
 - A. No.
- Q. Okay. Are there occasions when Total Transportation and U.S. Xpress, Inc. provide transportation service to the same customers?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And do you use separate con- -- or do the two companies use separate contracts?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. One thing I forgot to mention at the beginning.
- New Mountain Lake Holdings, what do they do?
- A. New Mountain Lake Holdings is really a -it's just a pure holdings entity. When U.S.

 Xpress -- U.S. Xpress Enterprises was a public
 company and we went private in 2007, and at that
 time that was the entity created to go private. So
 that's what it is.
- Q. Okay. So does it have any operational function?

1 A. No.

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- Q. Okay. So the first operating company that has actual work to do is U.S. Xpress Enterprises?
 - A. Correct.
- Q. All right. Now, under U.S. Xpress Enterprises, there is also U.S. Xpress, Inc.
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And is that the what we call U.S. Xpress motor carrier?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. So we have a U.S. Xpress motor carrier, which is U.S. Xpress, Inc., and then there's another motor carrier, Total Transportation of Mississippi, LLC.
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And those are the two largest motor carriers?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. And then the leasing -- just explain what the function of U.S. Xpress Leasing is.
- A. U.S. Xpress Leasing is the entity that owns all of what we call rolling stock, but it's -- your rolling assets are your tractors and trailers.

And that entity then leases that equipment to the motor carrier, so it leases equipment to U.S.

Xpress, Inc. and it leases equipment to Total
Transportation of Mississippi, and both entities are
charged the direct cost of that equipment.

- Q. Okay. And getting back to the point we were previously, you said that there were certain occasions where you shared actual customers together; correct?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. And can you just give some examples where U.S. Xpress, Inc., the U.S. Xpress motor carrier, and Total actually served the same customers?
- A. Sure. We both -- both U.S. Xpress, Inc. and Total Transportation provide services for Amazon. We both provide services for Walmart, for FedEx, for Smucker's, I think Conagra, as well. There are several examples.
- Q. Okay. Just to give the jury a flavor of that, I want to show you what's been marked as Exhibits 142-1, -2, and Exhibits 128-1 and -2, and just ask you to look at these and identify them.
- A. Sure. Exhibit -- these are customer contracts with U.S. Xpress, Inc., so there's a Walmart agreement with U.S. Xpress, Inc., a FedEx agreement with U.S. Xpress, Inc., and a -- another FedEx agreement with -- one's FedEx Ground and

one's -- yeah, both are FedEx Ground, I'm sorry, with U.S. Xpress, Inc. and one with Total Transportation.

And then this one is a Walmart agreement with Total Transportation.

- Q. Okay. So you've got Walmart with two contracts, one with Total and one with U.S. Xpress?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. And you've got FedEx Ground, one contract with U.S. Xpress and one contract with Total Transportation of Mississippi?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. Would it -- would it make any sense under the sun for you to have two separate contracts for the same customer if you were being run as the same entity?
 - A. No.
 - MR. BARBER: Okay. We would tender the documents identified, Judge, into evidence.
- THE COURT: Any objection?
- 21 MR. JONES: May I see them?
- MR. BARBER: Sure. I'm sorry.
- MR. JONES: I'd like to take a look at
- them. You can continue with your questions.
- MR. BARBER: Yeah, I'm going to have more

questions. Okay.

- Q. (By Mr. Barber) Ms. Pate, despite the fact that Total is run separately on an operational basis, are there occasions when the companies work together as a concerted group?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. And, in fact, the companies actually have a contract together?
 - A. Yes. There's a consulting agreement.
- Q. All right. And that consulting agreement is between the parent of Total Transportation -- which is Transportation Investments; correct?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. -- and U.S. Xpress Enterprises?
 - A. Correct.
- 16 | 0. Okay.
 - MR. BARBER: Could you bring up the Exhibit 68, please, Bates -4345.
 - Q. (By Mr. Barber) I'm going to show you what's been marked Exhibit 68.
 - MR. BARBER: Go ahead and highlight paragraph 1, please.
 - Q. (By Mr. Barber) You were here yesterday when we went over this services contract with Mr. Gingras?

A. Yes.

Q. So I'm not going to spend too much time on it today because we've already seen it, but is this the consulting agreement, Exhibit 68, that exists between, among other entities, Transportation

Investments, the parent company of U.S. Xpress -- excuse me, the parent company of Total

Transportation of Mississippi, LLC, and U.S. Xpress, Inc.?

A. Yes.

MR. BARBER: All right. We would tender Document 68 into evidence, Judge.

MR. JONES: We have no objection to 68.

THE COURT: All right. They're all admitted.

(Defendants' Exhibits 68, 128-1 and -2, and 142-1 and -2 were admitted into evidence.)

- Q. (By Mr. Barber) And looking just quickly at the part that says "Services," just describe for me -- without reading it and going through the detail of it, just describe to the jury what this is intended to do and how it operates in practice.
- A. So it -- what it's intended to do is take advantage of some economies of scale. And so in practice, that would mean things such as the finance

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and treasury functions, we provide services at the U.S. Xpress Enterprise level for the operating entities.

For U.S. Xpress Leasing, for instance, that entity that owns the rolling assets, the tractors and trailers, if you can buy them all together, there's cost economies.

Same for certain things like benefits.

Total does have its own benefit plans with different premiums and different parameters, but U.S. Xpress Enterprises negotiates those benefit plans with the third-party vendors.

There are certain services like legal services that Enterprise provides for all of the operating entities and that Total Transportation pays for.

- Q. Would claims also fall under that group?
- A. Yes, they would. So the claims services is part of the consulting agreement services offered.
- Q. Okay. We heard some testimony in this case about the fact that Mr. Johnson called Total Transportation first from the scene; correct?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. That's your memory of his testimony?

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- A. That's my memory.
- Q. Right. And then he called Don
 Rittenhouse.
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. All right. And Don Rittenhouse works for U.S. Xpress, Inc.
- A. He does. He's a member of the claims department.
 - Q. Okay. But in his role there, is this part of the service that was provided for under the consulting contract?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. Okay. So it was actually planned as a part of this consulting agreement that in the event of a Total claim, the claim department of U.S.

 Xpress, Inc. would be contacted?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. Okay. Does that have anything to do with who operationally runs Total Transportation on a day-to-day basis?
 - A. No.
 - Q. And that still remained with Mr. Stomps?
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. All right. And you mentioned treasury. Would -- we've also heard some testimony

about the loan process that was conducted in 2014.

A. Yes.

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- Q. Is that a part of the treasury and finance, I guess, group?
- A. Yes. It's part of the -- I would probably categorize that as part of the finance function, and that's part of the services provided to the operating entities through the consulting agreement.
- Q. And there's no doubt -- and we're not trying to hide it -- there's no doubt that the U.S. Xpress entities, as all of them, including Total, were parties to the loan agreement.
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. Is there any doubt that all the companies had to pledge their assets to get the loan?
 - A. There's no doubt.
 - Q. Okay. And that was required by the bank?
 - A. By the lenders, yes.
- Q. Okay. Does this have anything to do with whether Total Transportation is run separately from U.S. Xpress?
- A. No.
- Q. And, in fact, despite this loan process, were they run separately?

A. Yes.

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- Q. And, again, the loan process, was this a part of the back office function?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. All right. Now, these -
 MR. BARBER: Would you please highlight
 paragraph 2?
- Q. (By Mr. Barber) These services that are being provided by U.S. Xpress Enterprises and its affiliates, these services are actually charged to Total Transportation; correct?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. And you can see that the fee is \$284,000 per year.
 - A. Yes.
- Q. All right. So those back office services you mentioned, among others, would be part of this fee that's paid?
 - A. Correct.
- Q. And the contract was entered into in 2005 -- and I'm going to just do rough estimates -- 11-1/2 years, a little bit more -- but 11-1/2 years of \$284,000 a year is just about 3. -- it's very close to \$3.2 million; right?
 - A. Yes.

- Q. All right. So is it true that in the last 11-1/2 years, Total Transportation of Mississippi, LLC, has been charged 3.2, roughly, million dollars for these back office services?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. Okay. Would there be any reason under the sun to charge a subsidiary \$3.2 million if they were run as the same company?
 - A. No.
- Q. Okay. You mentioned another back office service and, again, you're calling it treasury.

 Let's be sure we understand what that means in terms of the day to day.

That includes banking?

- A. It includes banking, cash management, things like that.
- Q. Okay. Well, explain how the money from

 Total -- and, again, just very broadly, I don't want

 detail, just -- let's give it the 30,000-foot

 treatment -- just explain broadly how money from

 Total is accounted for separately from the money

 from U.S. Xpress.
- A. Just high level how it works, Total provides services for its customers. It bills its customers for those services. The customers pay

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those bills and they pay their checks to Total.

They're paid into a lockbox.

That lockbox then does go into a consolidated bank account, but the money is managed in such a way that Total's expenses are paid and attributed to Total and Total's revenue is attributed to Total on their financial documents.

So all of their expenses and their money coming in is all attributed to Total and not mixed up with U.S. Xpress or any other entity.

- Q. Do you consider this commingling of the funds?
 - A. I don't.

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- Q. Okay. Just explain why not.
- Well, if you need to do more than you just did, but...
 - A. It's -- really, it's just cash management. It's commonly done at a corporate level.
 - Q. Okay. And is this a -- as you pointed out, it's commonly done. Are there other companies you're aware of that do it the same way that you-all do?
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. Okay. And when you provide this treasury function, which includes the banking, do you

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consider this one of the back office services that are paid for by Total Transportation of Mississippi?

- A. Yes.
- Q. All right. Does that have anything to do with whether Total is run independently of U.S.
- 6 Xpress?

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- A. No.
- Q. All right. Now, there are certain instances where there's no doubt that U.S. Xpress, Inc. does act as a limited agent for Total Transportation of Mississippi; correct?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. All right. And some examples would be payroll taxes, issuance of W-2s, that sort of thing.
 - A. Yes.
- Q. All right. But this -- in these instances where they act as agent, first of all, it's with permission and with the understanding from Total that they're doing it on their behalf?
 - A. Yes.
 - O. Okay. And it's in limited circumstances?
- A. Yes.
- Q. All right. And just because U.S. Xpress,

 Inc., acts as an agent for certain items, does that

 mean that that at all times they're acting as an

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agent for Total?

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- A. No.
- Q. And just the fact that in certain circumstances U.S. Xpress performs these services as agent, limited services, does it mean that the Total Transportation employees are really working as agents for the U.S. Xpress entities?
 - A. No.

MR. BARBER: Could you go to paragraph 5, which is -4347.

Q. (By Mr. Barber) Under the -paragraph 5 -- I'm not going to read it all, but the
essential point here is that as a general
proposition, just because of the services agreement,
you're not intending to be joint ventures or agents?

MR. JONES: Your Honor, I object to -I've been letting him go pretty far afield, but
he is absolutely leading the witness now.

THE COURT: It is leading in nature. If you could try to rephrase your questions.

MR. BARBER: Well, Judge, when I'm speaking about a document, I thought I could lead her to get to the document.

THE COURT: You're on direct. If you would try to avoid it.

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Page 855 1 I'll do my best, sir. Okay. MR. BARBER: 2 (By Mr. Barber) All right. Well, look at Q. 3 paragraph 5. 4 And you're familiar with paragraph 5; 5 correct? 6 Α. Yes. 7 And would you just explain whether Ο. Okay. 8 or not this paragraph seeks to make U.S. Xpress 9 Enterprises in all -- in all cases an agent for 10 Total Transportation? 11 It specifically says, "This agreement Α. No. 12 shall not be construed as constituting any party as 13 a partner, joint venture, agent, fiduciary, et cetera." 14 15 Ο. Right. So just by the agreement itself, 16 you're not an agent. 17 Α. Correct. 18 Ο. Or a joint venture. 19 Α. Correct. 2.0 But you could perform functions as an Ο. 21 agent with agreement. 2.2 Α. Yes. 23 Ο. Okay. And that's done? 24 Α. Yes.

All right. Okay.

Q.

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There has been an

argument made in this case that the corporations are not separate.

Do you agree with that?

- A. I do not agree.
- Q. All right. And are the defendants, Total Transportation of Mississippi, LLC; New Mountain Lake Holdings, LLC; U.S. Xpress, Inc.; U.S. Xpress, Incorporated; U.S. Xpress Leasing; and Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group, are they all separate either corporate entities or limited liability companies?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. Okay. And they all have separate corporate formation documents; correct?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. I'm going to do each one of these very quickly --
 - A. Okay.
- Q. -- and separately.

Exhibit 147, is that the corporate formation documents for U.S. Xpress, Inc.?

- A. Yes.
- Q. And Document 148, is this the corporate formation document of U.S. Xpress Leasing?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And is Document 133 the corporate

formation document for Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group?

A. Yes.

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- Q. And Exhibit 146, corporate formation documents for U.S. Xpress Enterprises, Inc.?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. All right. So are these corporate formation documents documents that are held by the company in the normal course of business?
 - A. Yes.

MR. BARBER: Okay. And I would just tender these exhibits into evidence.

MR. JONES: No objection, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. They're admitted.

(Defendants' Exhibits 133, 146, 147, and

148 were admitted into evidence.)

- Q. (By Mr. Barber) And, again, the only reason that we're submitting these is to show that they are corporately separate; correct?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. And we won't spend much time on this, but these companies, in addition to being formed as companies, they also have to hold board meetings and that sort of thing?
 - A. Yes.

Page 858 And they do regularly do that? 1 0. Α. Yes. 3 And they have minutes and so on? Ο. Yes. 4 Α. 5 And there are hundreds and hundreds of Ο. pages of minutes --6 7 Α. Yes. -- which we won't tender, but you say you 8 Ο. 9 know they exist for all these entities? 10 Α. I do. 11 Okay. Now, you mentioned earlier U.S. Ο. 12 Xpress Leasing, it owned the truck involved in this 13 accident; correct? 14 It does. Α. 15 And it leased the vehicle to Total 16 Transportation of Mississippi? 17 Α. Yes. 18 Okay. Now, there was a separate charge Q. for that, though; right? 19 20 Α. Yes. There's --21 So that --0. 2.2 Α. -- a separate lease agreement between the 23 entities and charge associated therewith. 2.4 Okay. And there was a written lease as a Ο. 2.5 result of that; correct?

A. Yes.

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- Q. All right. And Total Transportation, is it charged any different than the U.S. Xpress, Inc.?
 - A. No.
- Q. Okay. So Leasing buys it and then leases to the two motor carriers?
- A. Right, and they're charged the actual cost of the vehicle.
- Q. Okay. And why is using a single company, U.S. Xpress Leasing, advantageous to the collective group?
- A. It's really a buying power thing. The more volume, the more of a discount you can get from your third-party vendors and truck manufacturers.
- Q. Okay. Let's talk for a second about the concept of control.

Mr. Gingras yesterday testified about control. Now, is there any doubt that through the corporate tree, U.S. Xpress owns or has what we might call ownership control of Total Transportation of Mississippi?

- A. It does.
- Q. Okay. And if I understand it, they own 90 percent of Total Transportation of Mississippi through the corporate tree?

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Page 860 1 Correct. Α. Ο. And Mr. Stomps owns 10 percent? 3 Α. Yes. Okay. And I think even Mr. Stomps said 4 Ο. 5 this, but if the U.S. Xpress corporate tree ever wanted to come take over the operation of U.S. 6 7 Xpress, could they do it? Α. 8 Yes. 9 Excuse me, the operation of Total 10 Transportation, could they do it? 11 Α. Yes. 12 And have they chosen to exercise that 0. 13 authority? 14 We have chosen not to exercise that 15 authority. Okay. And so, again, who has operational 16 Ο.

- control?
- Α. John Stomps and his team have operational control.
- Is Mr. Stomps on the corporate boards of Ο. any of the other U.S. Xpress entities that are defendants in this case?
- Α. No.

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2.4 Is he an officer of any of those 2.5 companies?

- A. No, not outside of the Transportation Investors, Inc. and Total entities.
- Q. Yeah. But the other defendants in this case, is he involved as an officer, director of any of those companies?
 - A. He is not.

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- Q. Okay. Does Mr. Stomps or any of the other managers at Total Transportation of Mississippi, do they have any control over any aspect of the operations of New Mountain Lake Holdings, LLC, U.S. Xpress Enterprises, Inc., U.S. Xpress, Inc., or U.S. Xpress Leasing, Inc.?
 - A. He does not.
- Q. So he doesn't and does anybody else at Total have any control in any way over the actions of those companies?
 - A. They do not.
- Q. Okay. There was some testimony about Mr. Johnson's log in this case, and the log says that the motor carrier is U.S. Xpress, Inc.

Have you explored the circumstances about how that happened?

- A. I have.
- Q. Could you explain that to the jury?
- A. Sure. So what happened was the day of the

accident, as is normal, the DOT asks for eight days of Mr. Johnson's logs, from the day of the accident back eight days.

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And I'm not sure if the truck -- if the -we do electronic logs, not paper logs, so the
electronic logs are done on what's called a
DriverTech unit in the truck. That's where they
enter the logs and that's where we can get them for
the DOT.

But I don't know if the truck was unavailable --

MR. JONES: Excuse me, Your Honor. If she doesn't know, then she can't testify about it.

THE WITNESS: My understanding was that --

MR. JONES: Your Honor, I --

THE COURT: Hold on.

MR. JONES: -- object to her testifying about something that she says she doesn't know about it.

THE COURT: What's your response, Counsel?

MR. BARBER: Well, she did investigate it for this accident, Judge, and I think she does have the ability to testify about it.

MR. JONES: Well, Your Honor, not if she's relying on hearsay from other people. I mean,

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she can't back-door the information. Either she knows it and she can testify about it or she can't.

MR. BARBER: Well, she's the corporate representative, Judge, which means her knowledge is going to come necessarily from other people. That's what we do when we do a 30(b)(6) deposition. It's the same concept.

MR. JONES: No, Your Honor, this witness is on that witness stand and she can testify about what she knows about.

THE COURT: What is the question again, please?

MR. BARBER: I was asking her to explain the circumstances about how the log shows U.S. Xpress, Inc. instead of Total Transportation.

THE COURT: All right. I'll allow the question. We went through the same thing with Mr. Stomps and other corporate representatives. I'll allow it.

You may proceed.

THE WITNESS: The DriverTech unit was unavailable on the truck to produce the logs, so the DOT was in touch with Total and the safety department at Total utilized a training

DriverTech unit that was in the safety department to print off Mr. Johnson's logs.

What we didn't know until we investigated the situation was that the DriverTech unit had been purchased from U.S. Xpress, Inc. for training purposes, but no one had reprogrammed it. Because it was purchased from U.S. Xpress, Inc., it had U.S. Xpress, Inc.'s carrier information and DOT number on it, and it had never been reprogrammed because the intent was only to use it for training purposes, not in an actual truck.

So when those logs were printed off on that unit, it printed off the U.S. Xpress, Inc. carrier information, including the DOT number, rather than the Total Transportation carrier information, and all of Mr. Johnson's other logs have "Total Transportation" on it, all the logs that were not printed from that actual unit. So it was a programming issue.

Q. (By Mr. Barber) Okay. Well, just -despite this printing issue, as a factual matter,
was Mr. Johnson working for U.S. Xpress, Inc. on the
day of this accident?

A. He was.

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Page 865 1 Inc. or Total? Ο. I'm sorry. He was working for Total Α. 3 Transportation of Mississippi. Sorry. 4 Ο. Okay. All right. So he was working for 5 Total Transportation of Mississippi, LLC, on the day of the accident? 6 7 Α. Yes. 8 Ο. Any doubt about that? 9 Α. No doubt at all. 10 Okay. Was he working for U.S. Xpress, Ο. 11 Inc. on the day of the accident? 12 He was not. Α. 13 O. Okay. Any doubt about that? No doubt. 14 Α. 15 Ο. Okay. So the fact that the log says what 16 it says is a feature of this printing? 17 Α. Correct. 18 Okay. Now, Mr. Gingras raised an argument Ο. yesterday that Mr. Stomps has an incentive to hurt 19 2.0 his own company in order to help the parent company. 21 Do you remember him saying that? 2.2 Α. T do. 23 And I wasn't sure exactly where that came Ο. 24 from, but do you agree with that? 2.5 Α. I do not.

- Q. Okay. How -- how did you come to the conclusion that that couldn't be right?
- A. Mr. Stomps owns 10 percent of Total
 Transportation, so he's incentivized through his
 ownership and he's also incentivized through a bonus
 program as outlined in his employment agreement, in
 which he receives a bonus based on Total
 Transportation results.
 - O. And you reviewed that contract?
- A. I reviewed it and helped negotiate it, so I'm familiar.
- Q. Okay. All right. Ms. Pate, have you been involved in acquisitions of other motor carriers prior to the -- prior to the Total Transportation acquisition?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. And in some of those occasions, were those motor carriers just absorbed into the U.S. Xpress, Inc. company?
- A. Yes. They were merged in as part of the purchase.
- Q. Okay. And -- and in those cases, was there any attempt made to keep the company separate?
 - A. No.
 - Q. And some examples would be Victory Xpress?

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- A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. How about PST Trucking?
- A. Yes.

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- Q. All right. And then there was another motor carrier, if I'm understanding, Southwest Motor Freight?
- A. That was before my time, but that was -- actually, all of those were before my time, but that was what happened in those circumstances.
- Q. And in those cases, those motor carriers ceased to exist as separate entities?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. All right. And did you choose to do that here with Total Transportation of Mississippi?
 - A. We did not.
- Q. All right. And on the date of this accident, was any other USX defendant controlling the actions of John Wayne Johnson other than Total Transportation of Mississippi?
 - A. No.
 - MR. BARBER: Excuse me one second.
- Q. (By Mr. Barber) All right. Last one document-wise. We finally found the one I was missing. Sorry about that.
 - There is a Document 107 that I'm going to

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1	show you, and that is the corporate formation
2	documents for Mississippi for Total
3	Transportation of Mississippi, LLC; is that correct?
4	A. Yes, it is.
5	MR. BARBER: Okay. I would move
6	Exhibit 107 into evidence, Judge.
7	THE COURT: Any objection?
8	MR. JONES: No objection.
9	THE COURT: They're admitted.
10	(Defendants' Exhibit 107 was admitted into
11	evidence.)
12	MR. BARBER: Okay. That's all I have,
13	Judge.
14	THE COURT: All right. Cross-examination.
15	CROSS-EXAMINATION
16	BY MR. JONES:
17	Q. Good morning, Ms. Pate.
18	A. Good morning.
19	Q. How are you?
20	A. I'm all right.
21	Q. Now, when this wreck happened, as soon as
22	you learned about it, were you a part of the effort
23	by U.S. Xpress to hire a public relations firm to
24	handle this matter?
25	A. No. My understanding was the insurance

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company did that.

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- Q. All right. You weren't involved in that at all?
- A. I was aware of it, was -- but was not involved in the decision to do so.
- Q. Were you a part of the board meeting of U.S. Xpress where y'all met to examine the cause of this wreck?
- A. There were several meetings in which we discussed this accident and the -- what may have caused it --
 - O. Uh-huh (affirmative).
- A. -- and I believe that the actual board meeting was done at the New Mountain Lake level.
- Q. And so at the New Mountain Lake level, which is the holding company up at the top of that food chain, if you will, that's where the board meeting was held to discuss and examine what happened in this wreck?
- A. The purpose of that meeting was to inform the board of the wreck -- we do have outside board members -- and to update them on what we knew at that time.
- Q. Okay. Now, you indicated in a response to your attorney's question that y'all had bought other

companies -- U.S. Xpress and New Mountain Lake
Holdings, LLC, have bought other companies prior to
buying 90 percent of the stock in Total
Transportation.

- A. New Mount- -- since 2007, I'm not aware of any acquisitions, and that was the time when New Mountain Lake was created. But prior to that, yes, that is correct.
- Q. And in response to his question, he asked you if, when y'all purchased the 90 percent interest in Total Transportation, if y'all could have terminated or absorbed Total Transportation and your answer to that was "yes," was it not?
 - A. We could have, correct.
 - O. You could have.

So you could have terminated the existence of Total Transportation if y'all had made that decision?

- A. If that was a business decision we wanted to make, yes, correct.
- Q. So you had the ability to extinguish the very existence of Total Transportation if you wanted to make that decision.
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. Isn't that the very definition of control?

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- A. It is control associated with ownership, but not control associated with day-to-day operations of an entity.
 - Q. But it is the ability to control it.
 - A. Through ownership, correct.
 - Q. Right.

Now, who are the major individual owners?

You're one of the major owners of New Mountain Lake

Holdings, LLC, are you not?

- A. The -- the ownership is -- with the exception of certain management ownership that makes up a small percentage of ownership of New Mountain Lake, it's divided between the Quinn family and the Fuller families, who are the -- the founding families of U.S. Xpress, Inc.
 - 0. Okay.
- A. And my father's deceased, so I am one of those owners now.
 - O. Mr. Quinn was your father?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Okay. And Mr. Quinn and Mr. Fuller for years and years and years had been in the business and had grown U.S. Xpress over the years?
 - A. Correct.
 - Q. And how big is U.S. Xpress, how many

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- A. There's -- with all of the entities combined, it's about 8,000 trucks, give or take.
- Q. Okay. And how many trucks are in Total Transportation?
- A. It's -- my understanding, there's around 750-ish. It kind of ebbs and flows a bit, but around that number.
- Q. And one of the companies owned by New Mountain Lake Holdings is U.S. Xpress Leasing, is it not?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And U.S. Xpress Leasing owns all of the trucks operated by Total Transportation.
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Now, this -- you indicated -- you used the word earlier that when establishing this line of credit -- who is that line of credit established with?
- A. It's two lending companies, Provident and GSO.
- Q. And those are lenders in New York, I assume?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And as a part -- as a part of the process

in making that loan, did y'all prepare a management presentation?

- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And you presented that to those huge banks or lenders?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Were you involved in the preparation of that document, that management presentation?
- A. At a very kind of peripheral level, but yes, I had involvement in it.
- Q. Do you -- are you familiar that it lists in there that you have a one-way demand critical transports in the eastern U.S.? What does that mean?
- A. Demand critical is a service for companies such as FedEx or Amazon, where they have an expectation for team services, so that their load is legally delivered in an expeditious manner.
 - O. Delivered on time?
 - A. Delivered on time, yes, sir.
- Q. And when you made this presentation to the bank, that was sort of your way of saying, "We have one-stop shopping"?
 - A. Yes, sir.
 - Q. And did you include on this presentation

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to those lenders that that includes Total Transportation?

> I don't recall. I don't recall. Α.

> > MR. JONES: May I approach the witness,

Your Honor?

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THE COURT: You may.

- Do you recognize this Ο. (By Mr. Jones) management presentation? And I've marked it there for you.
- Okay. Okay. Yes, it does say -- I Α. believe it says -- under the "Solo Regional" bucket, one bullet point refers to demand critical and one bullet point states that the solo regional includes Total Transportation, meaning they provide those services.

MR. JONES: I need to mark this exhibit, Your Honor. Is this the -- that is Plaintiff's Exhibit No. 81, Your Honor. We would tender into evidence this management presentation made by U.S. Xpress, Inc. to these lenders.

MR. BARBER: Judge, I object to that and can I approach?

THE COURT: You can.

(The following proceedings were held at the bench, outside the hearing of the jury.)

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MR. BARBER: First of all, this is full of financial information, which is not relevant to anything in the case if the parent company's not Total. It doesn't have separate information about Total, it's got parent company financial information, which I think is prejudicial and inadmissible.

In addition, it is -- at the least pursuant to your confidentiality order, if he's going to ask any questions about the amounts, I want to ask that the cameras be turned off and that it be filed under seal.

MR. JONES: I can make this real easy,

Judge. I'll redact this document to show just

the first page and the seventh page, which

shows the Total Transportation --

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. JONES: -- and I'll -- I'll agree to take the figures out.

MR. BARBER: Without the figures, we have no objection whatsoever.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

(The following proceedings were held in open court, in the hearing of the jury.)

Q. (By Mr. Jones) Just to be clear,

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Mrs. Pate, for the record, with counsel we've approached the bench. We have agreed to use just the first page of this document, Plaintiff's Exhibit 1, which is the management presentation that U.S. Xpress made to those lenders where y'all were asking for this loan, and we've agreed to take out any reference to any financial information.

But page 7 thereof also shows that as a part of this one-stop shopping concept, that it includes Total Transportation; is that fair?

A. Yes.

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- Q. Okay. Now, would you agree that Mr. Johnson's form W-2 shows that U.S. Xpress is the employer of record and shows U.S. Xpress' employee identification number?
 - A. It does. It -- yes, it does.
- Q. Okay. So you agree that at least with respect to what you-all report to the Internal Revenue Service and to the federal government, that you show that U.S. Xpress was -- was his employer?
- A. As allowed by the tax code, we're allowed to do so, and as an agent for Total and as part of the consulting agreement services, correct.
- Q. Have you looked at the shipping documents in this case?

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A. I have not.

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- Q. Are you aware that the shipping documents in this case list U.S. Xpress as the carrier?
 - A. I was not aware of that.
- Q. Are you aware that Mr. Johnson was instructed if he was involved in a wreck or a collision, that he was to call U.S. Xpress?
- A. I am aware of that. The -- the risk management department or claims department provides those services to Total.
- Q. On Plaintiff's Exhibit 32, item F, are you aware that an employer -- an employee is to call a U.S. Xpress toll-free number, 1-800-601-5500?
 - A. Yes, I'm aware of that.
- Q. And if we dial that number right now, would somebody answer for U.S. Xpress?
- A. I don't know if that number's changed, but if it hasn't changed, yes.
- Q. Okay. Now, this finance function that you mentioned earlier in establishing this line of credit, that line of credit allowed the U.S. Xpress companies to be able to access cash credit, when it needed, to operate; is that fair to say?
 - A. Correct.
 - Q. Now, are you aware of whether or not any

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of that credit that was established was ever used by Total Transportation or was it not, in fact, all used by U.S. Xpress?

- A. I don't know.
- Q. You don't know the answer to that?
- A. I don't.

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- Q. Are you aware that Mr. Stomps testified that he was -- Mr. Stomps, who is seated right over here, testified that he was unaware that this loan that y'all went to New York to obtain, he was unaware that the assets of Total Transportation were pledged as -- as collateral for that loan?
- A. I'm aware he testified to that, although he did sign the consents and the board consents that were required for the loan to be finalized.
- Q. Okay. Well, nobody ever explained it to him what he signed, I assume, if he says he was unaware of it; would you agree with that?
 - A. I'm unaware of --
 - MR. BARBER: Objection, Judge.
- 21 THE WITNESS: -- what happened at that time.
- MR. BARBER: That's speculating.
- Q. (By Mr. Jones) You are the chief financial officer or what is your title?

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- A. I am not the chief financial officer.
- Q. Were you one of the parties that signed those documents to secure this loan?
- A. I was one of the officers that signed documents related to this loan.
- Q. Okay. Did you ever explain yourself to Mr. Stomps what he was signing when you say he signed some authorization for you and the other officers to obtain this loan?
- A. I personally did not handle the administration of obtaining all of the signatures required, so I did not.
 - Q. You didn't discuss it with him.

And you have no doubt that he was unaware of it if he says he was unaware of it?

- A. I have no doubt that he doesn't remember it.
- Q. Do you know how the moneys were disbursed?

 Do you know to which companies the moneys were

 disbursed on the line of credit?
 - A. I do not.

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- Q. Are you aware that Mr. Stomps testified that he had never seen this agreement, the loan agreement?
 - A. The loan agreement? I am aware of that,

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yes.

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- Q. You're aware that Mr. Stomps, the owner of Total Transportation, never saw the loan agreement?
 - A. I am aware of that.
- Q. Are you aware that none of the proceeds of that loan for which the collateral of -- Total Transportation's assets were pledged, are you aware that none of those loan proceeds were contributed to fund any of the operations of Total Transportation?
 - MR. BARBER: Judge, I'm going to object as assuming a fact not in evidence.
 - MR. JONES: Your Honor, Mr. Gingras testified to that during his testimony yesterday.

THE COURT: I'll overrule the objection.

- Q. (By Mr. Jones) Are you aware of that?
- A. I did not know that, no.
- Q. You do not know whether or not any of the funds from that loan went to Total Transportation?
 - A. No.
 - Q. Or were ever used by Total Transportation?
- 22 A. No.
- Q. Now, who is Mr. Costello? Is he the
 accountant of one of your companies, one of the U.S.
 Xpress companies?

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- A. My understanding is he's an expert in this case, but he personally is not one of our accountants.
- Q. Okay. Now, this -- this cash box idea or zero -- where all the moneys every day taken in by all the companies, they all go into one account?
 - A. That's my understanding.
 - Q. And you've testified to that?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Okay. So money made by each and every one of these companies which are defendants in this case, every day, at the end of every day, at the end of yesterday, as of last night when we all left here, they were all put in the same account?
- A. I think technically the moneys come in for services for U.S. Xpress, Inc. and for U.S. Xpress -- or, I'm sorry, and for Total Transportation. The other entities that aren't actual operating entities, there wouldn't be money coming in on a regular basis.

And they come into individual lockboxes and then are consolidated into a common bank account.

- Q. And then put into a common bank account?
- A. Yes, sir.

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- Q. And the companies that would deposit funds into that account every day are U.S. Xpress, Inc.?
- A. The -- the lockboxes that would be consolidated on a regular basis would be U.S. Xpress, Inc. and Total Transportation.
- Q. Okay. Now, who are the -- who are the directors of New Mountain Lake Holdings, LLC?
- A. The directors of New Mountain Lake
 Holdings are Max Fuller, Eric Fuller, Brian Quinn,
 myself, a gentleman named Phil Conners, and we're
 currently in transition, but the current person is
 Jim Roche and we're transitioning to Mike Fabiano
 for his seat.
- Q. Okay. So Mr. Fuller and Eric Fuller are obviously from the Fuller family?
 - A. Yes, sir.

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- Q. And Brian Quinn, is that your brother?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And you obviously were a Quinn before you got married.

So the Fullers and the Quinns have the controlling interest in New Mountain Lake Holdings,

- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And New Mountain Lake Holdings, LLC, owns

- U.S. Xpress, Inc.?
- A. Owns U.S. Xpress Enterprises, which owns
- 3 U.S. Xpress, Inc.

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- Q. And who are the directors of U.S. Xpress Enterprises?
- A. I think the current directors of U.S.
- 7 Xpress Enterprises are Max Fuller, Eric Fuller, I am 8 a director, and my brother's a director.
 - Q. Okay. So the same family members control that corporation?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And how about U.S. Xpress Enterprises,

 Inc.?
- A. Oh, I'm sorry. I was referring to U.S.

 Xpress Enterprises, Inc. there.
 - Q. Okay. How about U.S. Xpress, Inc.?
 - A. U.S. Xpress, Inc. --
- 18 Q. Who's on that board of directors?
- A. I am not on that board of directors. So I know Max and Eric are, Eric Fuller, but I'm not sure of the other board directors on there. I think
- 22 Brian is.
- Q. Okay. So your brother's on that one.
- 24 What about U.S. Xpress Leasing? Are --
- does that board of directors consist of Fullers and

Quinns and yourself?

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- A. I'm not on that board, so I -- I don't remember who's on that board.
- Q. Who's on the board of Total Transportation of Mississippi?
- A. I believe the members are John Stomps, Eric Peterson, Eric Fuller, and Max Fuller.
 - Q. So the Fullers are on that board, as well?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And what about New Mountain Lake Risk
 Retention Group, which is the insurance company for
 Total Transportation?
- A. Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group,
 there's Leigh Anne Battersby, I am a board member,
 Eric Peterson is a board member, and I think that
 Peter Joy may be a board member, as well, at that.
 - Q. Okay.
 - A. And that one I can't remember entirely.
- Q. Now, were you in the courtroom yesterday when Megan Richards testified?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Do you agree with me that Megan Richards knew absolutely nothing about all these internal documents that your lawyer has gone over with you today?

A. Oh, yeah, I agree with that.

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- Q. And these are internal operating and consulting agreements and they -- would you agree that they're not available to the public?
 - A. I would agree with that.
- Q. Would you agree that as far as the outside world is concerned, outside of your corporate family, nobody knows about all these internal agreements?
- A. We're a private company, so, yes, I would agree with that.
- Q. And would you agree that as to the outside world, Total Transportation acts on behalf of U.S. Xpress as its agent?
 - A. No, I would not agree with that.
- Q. Okay. Now, you indicated that in the safety department at Total Transportation, there was a computer that printed off the logs to send to the U.S. Department of Transportation?
 - A. It was a DriverTech unit.
- Q. And y'all sent that to the federal government and reported that U.S. Xpress was the carrier in this wreck.
- A. We sent that to the Department of
 Transportation, who subsequently did a full audit

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related to this accident, a very extensive audit, and they understood what happened with those particular logs.

And as a result of that audit, Total

Transportation was found to be a hundred percent

compliant with all rules and regulations.

- Q. So did -- did you file an amendment showing that there was a different carrier for this wreck?
 - A. No, we did not.

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- Q. So that wreck would be listed or charged against U.S. Xpress?
- A. No. The DOT charged it against Total Transportation.
 - MR. JONES: I believe that's all I have, Your Honor. Just one second.

May we approach the bench, Your Honor?

(The following proceedings were held at the bench, outside the hearing of the jury.)

MR. JONES: I just wanted to make sure I didn't run afoul of any ruling. You know, we've got out the issue of negligent hiring, but I just want to show that U.S. Xpress' legal department approves the driver application form for Total Transportation.

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Page 887 THE COURT: Any objection? 1 I'm not sure what we're MR. BARBER: 3 asking here, Judge. 4 MR. JONES: I'm going to ask her if U.S. 5 Xpress' legal department approves this form. 6 MR. BARBER: You're asking can you do some 7 more testimony? MR. JONES: Yeah. 8 9 MR. BARBER: Okay. I thought you were 10 done. 11 THE COURT: He's showing you in advance 12 what he's going to get into. 13 MR. JONES: I'm showing you in advance this document. I didn't want to run afoul of 14 15 any order of the Court on negligent hiring. 16 I'm not going to go into negligent hiring, I 17 just want to ask her if that's --MR. BARBER: 18 That's fine, Judge. 19 THE COURT: Okay. 2.0 MR. BARBER: Okay. No objection. 21 (The following proceedings were held in open court, in the hearing of the jury.) 2.2 23 (By Mr. Jones) I show you what has been Ο. 24 labeled Plaintiff's Exhibit 5, which I've exhibited

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to your lawyers.

1 Are you familiar with that form? Α. Yes. And that's a form that a driver uses when 3 Ο. 4 he fills out an application? 5 Α. Yes, sir. And down at the very bottom of that on the 6 0. 7 left-hand side, does that show that that form has 8 been approved by the U.S. Xpress legal department? 9 Α. Yes, sir, as part of the consulting 10 agreement services. 11 MR. JONES: I don't believe I have 12 anything else, Your Honor. No further 13 questions. 14 THE COURT: Thank you. 15 Anything else, defense counsel? 16 Judge, can I ask Mr. Jones to MR. BARBER: 17 approach? 18 THE COURT: Sure. 19 (The following proceedings were held at 2.0 the bench, outside the hearing of the jury.) 21 Judge, we don't have any MR. BARBER: 2.2 objection to page 1 of this document coming in, 23 which is the only thing I looked at, but there's a bunch of other stuff on here related 24

to previous employment that we would object to.

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	Page 889
1	So if it's only the first page, we don't object
2	to Plaintiff's 5.
3	THE COURT: Is that agreeable?
4	MR. JONES: That's agreeable.
5	THE COURT: So the first page is admitted.
6	MR. BARBER: Has it been moved and
7	admitted? I just want to make sure.
8	THE COURT: I think so.
9	MR. JONES: I did move, Your Honor.
10	THE COURT: All right. It's admitted.
11	(Plaintiff's Exhibit 5 was admitted into
12	evidence.)
13	MR. BARBER: I don't have any further
14	questions of Ms. Pate.
15	THE COURT: All right. Ladies and
16	gentlemen, we'll go ahead and take a morning
17	break. You can go out with the bailiffs.
18	We'll take ten minutes.
19	(Whereupon, a recess was taken from 10:28
20	a.m. to 10:44 a.m. and the following
21	proceedings were held outside the presence of
22	the jury.)
23	THE COURT: Yes, sir, we're on the record.
24	MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, this may or may
25	not be an issue, but I have noticed some of the

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family members, the parents of the other nursing students are here, and I just don't want there to be any kind of introduction of them to this jury. It can only be elicited separately.

THE COURT: Do you intend to do that?

MR. CHEELEY: I can tell the jury that family members of the other girls are here.

I'm not going to have them stand up and introduce each one.

MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, that's not anything that's in evidence. We're supposed to be arguing the evidence.

THE COURT: I don't think we need to go there, I mean, to say that families of the other parties are here.

MR. CHEELEY: Okay.

THE COURT: I agree with defense counsel.

MR. CHEELEY: That's fine.

THE COURT: You've got plenty to argue without that.

MR. CHEELEY: All right.

THE COURT: All right. Let's bring the jury back in, please.

(The following proceedings were held in

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Page 891 1 the presence of the jury.) THE COURT: All right. Everyone please be 3 seated. Mr. Barber, you may continue. 5 MR. BARBER: Thank you. Judge, we're going to call Ms. Pate back for one more 6 7 question. 8 REDIRECT EXAMINATION 9 BY MR. BARBER: Ms. Pate, you're still under oath. 10 Ο. Okay. 11 Do you understand? 12 Α. Yes. 13 Ο. Okay. During your cross-examination, you 14 were asked a question about shipping documents, and 15 the question was: Did you know that the shipping 16 documents said that the carrier in this case was 17 U.S. Xpress? 18 Do you remember that question? 19 Yes, sir. Α. 2.0 Okay. I want to show you -- what is the Ο. 21 exhibit number showing you? 2.2 Α. This is Defendants' Exhibit 298. 23 Ο. Okay. And is that the bill of lading in 24 this case? 2.5 Α. Yes.

1 And over on the right top, who is the Ο. carrier shown? 3 Α. It says "TTMS," Total Transportation of Mississippi. 4 5 MR. BARBER: Okay. No further questions and -- well, I would tender that into evidence. 6 7 THE COURT: Any objections to the exhibit? 8 MR. JONES: No objection. 9 THE COURT: It's admitted. 10 (Defendants' Exhibit 298 was admitted into 11 evidence.) 12 THE COURT: Any further questions on 13 cross? MR. JONES: No, Your Honor. 14 15 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, ma'am. 16 You can step down. 17 Call your next witness. 18 MR. BARBER: Judge, we call to the stand 19 Mike Costello. He's right out the door there. 2.0 DAVID MICHAEL COSTELLO, 21 a witness herein, being first duly sworn in the 2.2 above cause, was examined and testified as follows: 23 DIRECT EXAMINATION 24 BY MR. BARBER: 2.5 Good morning, Mr. Costello. 0.

- Good morning. Α.
- Q. Would you please give your full name to 3 the jury, please.
 - Α. Yes. It's David Michael Costello.
 - Ο. And you go by Mike?
 - Α. I go by Mike, yes, sir.
 - Okay. Where do you live, Mr. Costello? Ο.
 - I live at 1214A Fort Stephenson Oval, Α. Lookout Mountain, Tennessee 37350.
 - And who do you currently work for? Ο.
 - I work for Elliott Davis Decosimo, which Α. is a CPA firm that's regional throughout the Southeast.
 - Okay. And what do you do there for that Ο. firm?
 - I'm in charge of fraud forensic services and litigation support services.
 - Ο. And do you -- as part of your job, are you considered a forensic accountant?
 - Yes, I'm known as a forensic accountant, Α. yes, sir.
 - Ο. Just give the jury a quick explanation what a forensic accountant does.
- Α. Basically, we analyze financial 25 information and then prepare ourselves to make

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presentations to organizations or sometimes legal bodies such as this.

Q. And give us a brief synopsis of your educational background.

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A. Okay. I attended University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, known as UTC, from 1970 to 19- -- well, actually from 1973 to '75. I attended University of Tennessee in Knoxville for a couple years.

And then after I graduated, I went back to school and -- well, the first time there I got a bachelor of science degree in business administration, and then later I went back and around 1995, I got a master's degree in accountancy from UTC.

- Q. And give us a brief overview of your professional background as an accountant.
- A. Okay. I first started when I graduated from UTC in 1975 as the staff accountant for Combustion Federal Credit Union. It was a fairly large credit union in Chattanooga connected to Combustion Engineering, which was a major employer at that time.

In 1980 -- I had passed the CPA exam in 1979, so in 1980 I went to work for a company known

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as Joseph Decosimo & Company. At that time, it was the largest CPA firm in Chattanooga.

I worked with that firm from 1980 to 1984, and I started as a staff accountant and then I was promoted to manager accountant and did a lot of auditing and tax return preparation during that time.

Then I left in 1984 and formed my own CPA firm known as Costello, Strain & Company -- Strain, S-T-R-A-I-N, & Company -- and I was the managing director of that firm for 19 years and we did primarily the same things that I did at the Decosimo firm, which is auditing, accounting, and tax work, but then I added to that the forensic accounting part. I started doing work in the courts and in other venues as a forensic accountant.

And as a result of that, the firm that I left back in 1984, the Decosimo firm, approached me and asked me to come back and merge my firm. I had 15 employees at that time. So I merged my firm with the Decosimo firm in 2003. And so I've been back at the Decosimo firm for about -- I would say 12 to 14 years.

And then about two years ago, roughly, the Decosimo firm merged with this Elliott Davis firm

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out of Greenville, South Carolina, and so now I'm a shareholder with Elliott Davis Decosimo for the last couple of years.

- Q. All tolled, how many years have you acted as a forensic accountant?
 - A. Probably 35-plus years.
- Q. Do you do any teaching in the area of accountancy?
- A. Yes. I have taught cost accounting at UTC, where I went to school, and I also taught, two or three years ago, advanced accounting to graduate students there at the University -- advanced auditing, excuse me.

And then I've taught at a local college called Tennessee Temple, which is a Baptist school, and I taught auditing at Tennessee Temple.

- Q. Have you written any articles in the field of accounting?
- A. Yes. I've written a number of articles in accounting.
- Q. And do you have experience -- I think you mentioned it, but how much experience would you say you have preparing and analyzing tax returns?
- A. Well, you know, when I had -- especially when I had my own company, I did a lot of tax work.

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That was one of the reasons that the Decosimo offer to me to come back and merge with their company was interesting to me, was because I had done a lot of auditing and tax work and accounting work in my own CPA firm for 19 years and we -- you know, I probably was preparing 500 returns in a year at my own firm.

And when they asked me to come back, they said, "You know, what you would do at our firm is you would just do your forensic accounting and you wouldn't have to do the tax work and auditing," which I was real happy about.

So that's -- all I do now is the forensic accounting work and I no longer do tax or auditing work.

- Q. Okay. Are you a member of any professional associations?
- A. Yes. I'm a member of the American

 Institute of Certified Public Accountants, which I

 joined right away in 1979 when I passed the CPA

 exam. Also, I joined the Tennessee Society of

 Certified Public Accountants at that time.

And then later, as I got more credentials,
I joined the Association of Certified Fraud
Examiners, the American Society of Appraisers, and
those are the main ones that I'm involved with right

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Page 898 1 now. MR. BARBER: Judge, I would tender this 3 witness as an expert in the field of forensic accounting. 4 5 THE COURT: Any objection? 6 MR. CHEELEY: No objection. 7 All right. You may proceed. THE COURT: (By Mr. Barber) Okay. Mr. Costello, 8 Q. 9 first of all, would you promise me one thing? Would 10 you promise to be sure you answer my question if I 11 ask it to you? 12 Α. Of course. 13 O. And would you make the same accommodation 14 to counsel --15 Α. Yes, sir --16 -- for the other side? Ο. 17 -- absolutely. Yes, I will. Α. 18 Q. Okay. Good. 19 In your capacity as a forensic accountant, 2.0 do you believe that Total Transportation of 21 Mississippi is being run as a separate company from 2.2 the USX parents? 23 I do, yes, sir. 24 And what evidence convinces you of that 0. 25 from an accounting standpoint?

A. Well, from an accounting standpoint, you know, I've just looked at things like their corporate charter. They've got a separate charter. They file a separate corporate tax return in Mississippi. Their accounting records are separate. They have a separate general ledger that reflects all of their assets, liabilities, equity, revenues, and expenses.

And they have, there at Total

Transportation of Mississippi, the capacity to do

payroll. They have employees that do payroll, they

have employees that prepare accounts payable, and

they also, when they make sales, they have a sales

department there at Total Transportation of

Mississippi. They make sales and then they bill for

their sales. They prepare their own bills and send

those out, and then they collect those bills.

And those receivables that are created from the invoices get booked on Total Transportation of Mississippi's financial statements.

Q. And from an operational standpoint, as opposed to accounting standpoint, from an operational standpoint, what evidence do you see that Total Transportation is being run separately from U.S. Xpress?

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- A. Just testimony by Mr. Stomps and then also by the CEO of U.S. Xpress, Mr. Max Fuller.
- Q. But what -- what examples is what I was getting to. What are the items that you think make -- appear to you to make it separate?
- A. Oh, well, the fact that they -- as I said, they have their own billing department. They do billing, collections. They have their own sales department. Of course, you know, they sell their transportation services.

They have, you know, their -- they have their own operation. In other words, they have their own office with their name on the door, you know; when you go there, you know you're at Total Transportation of Mississippi.

They have their own website, so their website shows that they are separate. You can, you know, Google "Total Transportation of Mississippi" and that's what comes up. They have -- the safety and recruiting departments are there at Total Transportation of Mississippi.

And I'm sure there are lots more, but those are the ones that come to mind right now.

Q. Do they have the same CEO as the U.S. Xpress entities?

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- A. No. U.S. Xpress, as I mentioned earlier, has Mr. Fuller and then Total Transportation of Mississippi has Mr. Stomps. So there's separate CEOs running separate companies.
 - O. How about the drivers?

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- A. The drivers are hired by Total

 Transportation of Mississippi and are employed by

 Total Transportation of Mississippi.
 - O. What about DOT numbers?
- A. Oh, the DOT numbers on the trucks are

 Total Transportation of Mississippi DOT numbers and
 the trucks, in fact, say "Total Transportation of
 Mississippi." In other words, their logo is on the
 truck. That would be another feature.
 - O. What about the customer base?
- A. They have a separate customer base. They have -- I did, as I prepared to testify here today, look at a lot of contracts and they have their own contracts with customers.

And in some cases, I learned that they have contracts with customers and the same customers are customers of U.S. Xpress. So they -- U.S. Xpress has different contracts, so there's separate contracts for the separate companies.

Q. Okay. Well, I want you to assume that in

evidence already are contracts with Walmart and FedEx from U.S. Xpress, Inc., and also contracts from Walmart and FedEx from Total Transportation.

- A. Okay.
- Q. Same customer, but different companies and different contracts.
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And those are part of what you reviewed for preparation; correct?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Okay. Would it make any sense to you to create separate customer contracts if you're really running a single company?
 - A. No, sir, it wouldn't, no.

You know, what could have happened in this case -- you know, this is a company -- Total Transportation was purchased by U.S. Xpress in 2005, and they could have at that time folded all the operations into U.S. Xpress, but instead of doing that, they decided to keep these companies separate.

Q. All right. Just -- I think we've -- we've established through Ms. Pate through the corporate tree, would you agree that Transportation Investments, which is a subsidiary of U.S. Xpress, owns an ownership controlling interest in Total

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- A. Yes, it does.
- Q. There's no doubt about that?
- A. No doubt about it.
- O. Okay.
- A. When they made that acquisition, like I said, when the company was purchased years ago, it was purchased at 90 percent. So Mr. Stomps, in fact, owns 10 percent.
- Q. Okay. But despite owning 90 percent, do the U.S. Xpress companies choose to control the day-to-day operations of Total Transportation?
- A. No, sir. They have Mr. Stomps, who controls the operations on a day-to-day basis.
- Q. Okay. Well, yesterday Mr. Gingras testified that he thought the U.S. Xpress family or group of companies was being run as one company.

Do you agree with that?

- A. No, sir. They're being run as separate companies.
- Q. Okay. Well, one reason Mr. Gingras gave was that they filed -- or prepare, I should say, what are called consolidated financial statements.

In your professional opinion, does the filing of a consolidated financial statement which

includes both the parent and subsidiary mean that Total Transportation was not being run separately?

- A. No, sir. No. What that means, when a corporation -- you asked about consolidated financial statements?
 - O. Correct.
- A. Yes. Consolidated financial statements have to be prepared in accordance with what's known as Generally Accepted Accounting Principles that are accepted in the United States, and those are the accounting rules that every CPA has to follow.

And the company, the parent company, U.S.

Xpress Enterprises, is audited every year, and the auditors decide -- if the company owns another company, owns 50 percent or more of another company, then they decide if those separate companies have to be included in the financial statements, which are called consolidated financial statements.

And it's based on an accounting rule that's generally accepted, as I said, in the United States.

- Q. And is it based on ownership or actual control?
 - A. It's based on ownership.
 - Q. Okay. Does it have anything to do with

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operational control?

- A. It has nothing to do with operational control. It is a -- a requirement based on accounting rules.
- Q. And -- and do you consider there to be a difference between having ownership control and then exercising actual day-to-day control of the company?
- A. Yes, there is a difference. The control is defined in the accounting literature -- and I spoke it out a moment ago -- over 50 percent ownership, and then that's what creates the control for consolidated financial statement purposes.

And then operating control has to do with if management decides to have someone run a company separately and then turns that over to them and gives them all the responsibility for that company's management, then that's the operational control.

Q. Okay. Mr. Gingras also said yesterday that by filing a consolidated tax return, the U.S. Xpress companies were acting as a single, integrated company.

Do you agree with that?

- A. No, sir.
- Q. Okay. Explain why not.
- A. Well, because it's a similar situation

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based on the Internal Revenue Code. The Internal Revenue Code, Section 1504A, speaks to the test for companies filing consolidated tax returns, and there's an 80 percent ownership test and an 80 percent voting test, and if those two tests are met, then companies can elect to file tax returns together.

So that's another -- it's not really a They're not required to do it, but they may elect to do it. And so that's an IRS....

- So, again, is this ownership control or operational control?
 - Α. This is ownership control.
 - All right. Ο.

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- Α. There's a test that you have to follow, and if you meet that test, then you can elect to file a consolidated return.
- Ο. And if the -- if the percentage is 80 percent ownership, would this ownership tree with Total Transportation of Mississippi have -- has qualified for Total to be part of the consolidated financial statement?
 - Α. That's correct, yes, sir.
- Is there anything inconsistent with Total Ο. Transportation being run as a separate company but

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also being included as a part of the consolidated tax return of the corporate group?

A. No, sir.

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Q. All right. Mr. Gingras also stated to me yesterday that Total Transportation did not file a separate tax return.

Do you agree with that?

- A. No, I don't agree with that. I respectfully disagree with Mr. Gingras, because Total Transportation of Mississippi files a separate corporate tax return in the State of Mississippi. The State of Mississippi requires a corporation, whether it's consolidated for federal purposes or not, to file a separate return in that state, and Georgia has a similar rule.
- Q. And do you believe that by filing this Mississippi -- this separate Mississippi tax return, is that significant to you?
- A. Well, yes. It just shows that there's a requirement for a separate corporation to file a separate return in that state where it's registered.
- Q. And is it significant in the sense that it has anything to say about whether Total is tracked as a separate company or a part of a corporate whole?

A. It says they're a separate company.

They're required to file their own separate tax return.

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Q. And Mr. Gingras also said that he believed the United States -- I keep saying United States -- that U.S. Xpress, Inc. was acting as an employer when it filed W-2 and paycheck information showing its own tax ID number, even though the employees being represented on some of these documents were actually Total Transportation of Mississippi employees.

Do you agree with Mr. Gingras that that makes U.S. Xpress the employer?

- A. No. I respectfully disagree with him, again, because there's a Tax Rule 3504 that allows groups of employers to have one employer group take responsibility for filing the payroll tax returns for the other employers as an agent. And so that's commonly done. It's not anything unusual.
- Q. Does that make every employer -- or, excuse me, employee an employee of the filing company?
- A. No. They're separate employees. In other words, what this rule talks about is separate companies. And if one employer does the payroll tax

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returns for other employers, then they're allowed to do that. So it speaks to the fact that these are separate companies.

- Q. So in this case, how would you describe what U.S. Xpress, Inc. was doing?
- A. U.S. Xpress, Inc. was acting as the -basically, the payroll agent. They were doing -- in
 other words, Total Transportation would do their own
 payroll and then transmit it to U.S. Xpress, and
 U.S. Xpress would just pay -- you know, write the
 payroll checks and then do the payroll tax returns
 that were associated with that.
- Q. Does this have anything to do with who is controlling Total Transportation on an operational basis?
 - A. No, it does not.
- Q. So if U.S. Xpress, Inc. acts as a paying agent for taxes, does it mean that all Total Transportation of Mississippi employees are acting as agents for U.S. Xpress?
 - A. No, sir.

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- Q. What is your understanding about the ability of an agency relationship to be limited?
- A. It could be limited, and in this case this is limited because it's an IRS rule that speaks to

this very one specific situation.

- Q. And if you do have limited agency, does that mean you can assume that the agent is an agent for all other purposes or is it limited to the limitations of the agency?
- A. No, it's just limited to this one purpose. I mean, it's for tax purposes. It's a specific tax rule that allows this situation to exist.
- Q. Mr. Gingras also mentioned that because the U.S. Xpress companies as a group applied for a loan, that that was proof that they're really just one entity.

Do you agree with that?

- A. No, sir, I do not.
- Q. First of all, before we get into the details, is there anything unusual about corporate families approaching lending institutions as a corporate group?
- A. No. As a matter of fact, that's common. That's done every day. That's why -- you know, that's why companies merge in with other companies and, you know, companies acquire one another and there's a parent and subsidiary and that type of thing. These companies all consolidate and combine for economies of scale. They're trying to get more

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And so one of the efficiencies that comes from that is the ability to go to a bank or lending organization and request borrowing, and then one reason that they would do it this way is because the bank is going to require every year a financial statement. As we discussed earlier, it's gonna be a consolidated financial statement of the parent and subsidiaries that are filing these consolidated financial statements, and the bank's going to require them to hand over those financial statements because they want to see how they're doing.

And so, you know, why would you go separately to borrow money when your financial statement shows this consolidated group? You go as a group to borrow money. It just makes sense.

- Q. Well, just because you're a corporate group and act in concert with your sister and parent companies, does that mean that the subsidiaries are not being run operationally as separate companies?
 - A. No, it does not.
 - Q. Does it have anything to do with it?
 - A. Nothing to do with it.
- Q. And that's true even if they are requested by the bank to pledge all of their assets together

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to secure the loan?

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- A. That's correct. The bank's going to require them to pledge all assets of every member that the bank can find. You know, that's generally how that works.
- Q. Well, you mentioned efficiencies, economies of scale.

Is this -- is this loan process a part of that?

- A. Yes, absolutely.
- Q. All right. How about the banking relationships between the U.S. Xpress entities? Is that another example of economies of scale and efficiencies?
- A. Yes. It's an operating efficiency the way the bank situation is operated, yes, sir.
- Q. Do you believe this arrangement results in improper commingling of funds between the various companies?
- A. No, not at all, because what happens is, you know, first of all, with respect to Total Transportation of Mississippi, as I said earlier, they bill their own invoices. They collect the payments. They go into a separate lockbox.

Well, those payments that go into that

separate lockbox are recorded on the general ledger of Total Transportation of Mississippi as sales revenues, and then when checks are written, whether it's payroll or accounts payable or what have you, from this checking account, those checks are posted to the general ledger of Total Transportation of Mississippi.

So what you have is a situation where whatever goes through that account gets separated to the correct place and recorded properly and reflected in the separate financial statements of the various entities that they provide this checking account service for.

- Q. And is there actually a separate financial statement prepared for Total Transportation of Mississippi?
- A. Yes, yes, it's prepared, and I've reviewed those in preparing for my testimony here today.
- Q. Does Total Transportation's participation in this group banking arrangement mean that they're not being run separately?
 - A. No.
- Q. Does it have anything to do with who controls the day-to-day operations of the company?
 - A. Nothing to do with it whatsoever.

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Q. And you mentioned that you reviewed the financial statements.

In April of 2015, was Total Transportation of Mississippi solvent from an accounting standpoint?

- A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. What does that mean?
- A. As a forensic accountant, what I looked at was their current assets minus their current liabilities.

On the financial statement of Total Transportation of Mississippi, the largest current asset is accounts receivable, because that's -- that consists of these bills that have gone out to their customers and then you collect all those together and add -- total them up and they total the accounts receivable.

Well, they have more than enough receivables and other current assets to pay their payroll taxes, their payroll, their accounts payable, and so they have about one-and-a-half times current assets as they do current liabilities.

And so the test for solvency is can a company pay its normal obligations in the normal operation of the business, the debts and

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obligations.

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And because they had this relationship that I just described, with their current assets being one-and-a-half times more than their current liability, then they are solvent.

- Q. Did you -- do you -- did you see anything in the file of this case that you reviewed indicating that Total Transportation of Mississippi was unable to pay its debts when due in the normal course of business?
 - A. Nothing.
- Q. All right. How about the sort of strict balance sheet test for solvency? Did you review that, too?
 - A. Yes.
- Q. All right. And just explain what you're looking for there.
- A. Okay. In that case, I look to see if the -- well, let me back up.

This is probably one of the first things I learned in Principles of Accounting 101: Assets equals liabilities plus owner's equity. It's the most fundamental accounting equation. And so what that means is that a company should have assets that equal what they owe its creditors and then what the

owners have put in, so that's the owner's equity.

So in this case, Total Transportation -using that formula, Total Transportation of
Mississippi had more assets than it owed its
creditors, which are its liabilities. So total
assets equals total liabilities plus owner's equity,
it had also an owner's equity. So from that
perspective, they're solvent.

Q. Okay. Mr. Gingras said yesterday that he thought Total Transportation was shaky financially.

Do you believe that?

A. No, sir.

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- Q. So based on every financial test known to you, was Total Transportation of Mississippi insolvent in April of 2015?
 - A. No, sir.
- Q. Now, as a part of your review of the file in this case, did you become aware of the consulting contract?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And that is between U.S. Xpress

 Enterprises and the parent of Total Transportation

 of Mississippi, which is Transportation Investments;

 correct?
- A. Yes, sir.

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- Q. All right. And you understand that it was the basis for providing what I think has been described as what we call back office services?
 - A. That's correct, yes, sir.

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- Q. Okay. And am I correct in saying that there was a charge associated with those services?
- A. Yes, sir. I believe it was \$284,000 a year.
- Q. And so that is a charge against the revenue of Total Transportation of Mississippi?
- A. Yes. That would be one of those expenses that would be recorded on the books of -- and general ledger of Total Transportation of Mississippi, yes, sir.
- Q. Would there be any reason under the sun for the U.S. Xpress parent companies to charge their subsidiary \$284,000 a year if they were trying to run this single integrated company?
 - A. No, sir.
- Q. And so in 11-1/2 years, \$284,000 is close to \$3.2 million; correct?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. So if they were being run as one company, which Mr. Gingras said, would there be any reason to charge a subsidiary that sum of money for 11-1/2

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years?

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- A. No, there would be no reason for it.
- Q. Okay. Now, the services provided under this agreement, just because the services are provided under the agreement, do you believe that that means that Total Transportation is not independent?
 - A. No, sir.
- Q. Okay. Well, then, if the services are provided under this agreement for them, do you know what those services are?
 - A. Yes, I know some of them, yes, sir.
- Q. Okay. Just from the standpoint of accounting, can you give me some -- what the back office services would include?
- A. Well, yes. As we discussed earlier, they include preparation of payroll and payroll tax returns, assistance with the audit every year, assistance with the tax return every year.

They would be keeping the general ledger accounting for all the companies -- well, in this case, they're charging Total Transportation, so keeping their general ledger up to date so, you know, the companies know on a monthly basis where they stand.

And those are examples.

- Q. Okay. And then how about the banking relationship?
- A. Yeah, the banking relationship would be another one. They operate to the banking situation.

Yeah, what they -- what they do there is they have a situation where they try to minimize their interest expense, and what they do is they advance on their line of credit when they need money for cash flow purposes. And so then when they collect their receivables and pay their debts and they've got excess cash flow available, then they pay back on the loan, and in that way they try to keep the interest expense as low as possible.

And so what you'll see on all the various companies is a very low or even sometimes a very small negative cash balance, because they're not leaving cash in their checking accounts because if they do that, that just means they're paying interest on it.

So what they want to do is take that money and take it out of their checking account, pay it right to the bank, so they keep their interest expense at the lowest possible amount. I mean, that's just prudent management on the part of these

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- Q. Well, Mr. Gingras pointed out that at the end of April 2015, there was negative 600-some dollars in the cash account -- I think it was called the payroll account, actually -- for Total Transportation of Mississippi, and he tried to make it sound like that made them financially unviable.
 - Do you agree with that?
 - A. No, sir.
- Q. Is there anything unusual about having low or slight small negative cash balances during the month?
- A. No, sir. I just explained exactly why they would have that. That's another place where I would respectfully disagree with Mr. Gingras.
- Q. And the back office services, would those also include claims --
 - A. Yes.
 - Q. -- and legal?
 - A. That's correct, yes, sir.
- Q. And computers and IT?
- A. That's correct.
 - Q. All right. Mr. Costello, is it common, in your experience, for corporate family members to engage in these type of collaborative arrangements?

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Page 921 1 Α. Yes. 2. Ο. Is there anything inconsistent between 3 having a subsidiary be a part of one of these arrangements and still be run independent? 4 5 There's nothing inconsistent about it. It's done all the time. I mean, that's a normal 6 7 part of the way companies operate. Is there anything improper about it? 8 Ο. 9 Α. There's nothing improper about it. As a 10 matter of fact, it's -- it's, you know, something 11 that you would want to do. 12 Is there anything illegal about it? Q. 13 Α. There's nothing illegal about it. 14 Is there anything fraudulent about it? Ο. 15 Α. No, sir. 16 MR. BARBER: Okay. I have no more 17 questions. 18 CROSS-EXAMINATION 19 BY MR. CHEELEY: 20 Good morning, Mr. Costello. Q. 21 Good morning, Mr. Cheeley. Α. 2.2 Ο. We've met before; right? 23 Yes, sir. Α. 2.4 Ο. When I took your deposition. Do you remember that? 2.5

- A. I do, yes, sir.
- Q. It was back March 18, a year ago.
 - A. That's correct, yes, sir.
 - Q. All right. Have you reread that deposition in preparation --
 - A. I have.

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- Q. -- for your testimony today?
- A. Yes, sir, I have.
- Q. You were hired to serve as an expert witness in not just Megan Richards' case, but in cases for the five young women who lost their lives?
 - A. I believe that's correct, yes, sir.
- Q. And also for the case for Brittney

 McDaniel, who was severely injured in this wreck;

 correct?
 - A. I believe that's correct, yes, sir.
 - Q. Okay. Do you have an idea -- well, first of all, how much do you charge for your time?
 - A. \$500 an hour.
 - Q. And how much have you billed, approximately, and been paid for all these -- for your work in all these cases?
 - A. I don't know. And the reason I don't is because the firm that I work with has a billing department that handles all that and then there are

Page 923 1 other people who take care of that process so I don't have to deal with it. So I've not reviewed 3 that in preparation for this. O. How many hours have you spent? 5 Α. I don't know. 6 Ο. 50? 7 Α. I've spent a substantial number of hours. A hundred hours? Ο. 8 9 I could have, yes, sir. I mean, I just --Α. 10 I don't know. 11 \$50,000 or more? Ο. 12 It could be, yes, sir. I believe that's Α. right. 13 14 And that was all to come in here and say Ο. that these were two separate companies, correct, 15 16 standing on their own? 17 Α. Well, no, not --18 Ο. That Total Transportation is a separate 19 company and it alone should be --2.0 Judge, I object. MR. BARBER: Не 21 interrupted the witness before the witness was 2.2 finished answering. 23 MR. CHEELEY: I'm sorry. 24 Ο. (By Mr. Cheeley) If I did, go ahead.

THE COURT: Finish your answer.

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THE WITNESS: What I was going to say is what I was hired to do is look -- Mr. Gingras had written a report, he had a report that he had reduced to writing -- I think he called it a preliminary report -- and so I was asked to review that report to see if I had any comments or criticisms or agreement or disagreement with it.

- Q. (By Mr. Cheeley) Now, you know -- you know Mr. Max Fuller through some sort of club in Chattanooga; right?
- A. I've met Max Fuller one time through the UC Foundation board, which is an organization that provides scholarships and grants to students at UTC and then also, you know, professorships and that type thing for professors there at the University.
 - Q. And how long have you known him?
- A. I might have met him a year or two ago, something like that. I've only been on that board now maybe two years.
- Q. But you knew him before you got hired in these cases; correct?
- A. I did. I met him. I mean, I don't really know him; I sat next to him at lunch one day.
 - Q. Okay.

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A. So as far as you can get to know somebody, that's how I know him.

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Q. All right. So you're not coming into this courtroom, are you, and telling this jury that Total Transportation of Mississippi had the assets sufficient to cover the deaths of these five young women and the injuries of these two young women, are you?

MR. BARBER: Object to the form of that question, Judge.

THE COURT: Well, specifically what's your objection?

MR. BARBER: Well, I think that he's asking this man to start speculating about the value of a lost life. I don't think that's a proper question for a forensic accountant.

THE COURT: What's your response, Mr. Cheeley?

MR. CHEELEY: Well, he said -- the whole point of their direct examination was Total Transportation was sufficient to stand on its own, it wasn't insolvent, and that insolvency or not also depends upon whether TTM has the ability to handle the, quote, normal obligations of operating a trucking company.

THE COURT: That's fair game on cross.

I'll allow it.

Q. (By Mr. Cheeley) All right, sir. So you spent a lot of time with Mr. Barber talking about solvency.

Do you remember those questions --

A. Yes, sir.

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- Q. -- and your answers?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And you talked about normal obligations to pay its bills and to stay in business; correct?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Now, you know that part of the risk of operating a trucking company of some 700, 800 trucks is that those trucks can be involved out on the road in major wrecks and cause major injuries and deaths; correct?
 - A. Correct, yes, sir.
- Q. All right. And you're not telling this jury, are you, that Total Transportation of Mississippi, just looking at it by itself, was capable of handling and resolving, as Mr. Dial said in his opening statement, those five wrongful death cases and the case for Brittney McDaniel, are you?
 - A. I'm not -- I did no analysis on that, sir,

- so I -- in other words, the question --
- Q. I don't want you to -- excuse me.
 - A. May I please answer the question?
 - O. Yes. I'm sorry.

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A. Okay. What I was asked to do and what I was asked to look at was what Mr. Gingras opined on, and I don't believe Mr. Gingras had any opinion about that.

And so what I was doing was looking at just was this -- Total Transportation of Mississippi solvent from an accounting perspective, which is the question I was asked. So that's all I did.

- Q. I don't want you to tell the amounts that those other cases resolved at, but are you aware of those amounts?
- A. I did see a news release about them, but I didn't commit it to memory. But I know those are significant amounts, yes, sir.
- Q. Okay. Now, you agree, sir, that Total Transportation of Mississippi on its own did not have the wherewithal to resolve those amounts on its own, based on your review of their financial statements; correct?
 - MR. BARBER: Judge, I object to the form of the question.

THE COURT: Let's come to the bench, please.

(The following proceedings were held at the bench, outside the hearing of the jury.)

MR. BARBER: Judge, I object to getting into insurance amounts because the insurance is asset to pay claims, and that is completely improper.

THE COURT: I think we need to go past this. This is not from the ordinary course of business of the trucking business. They've got insurance to cover this. There could be excess.

MR. CHEELEY: He testified in his deposition, Your Honor, that there's no way that Total Transportation of Mississippi could have afforded that much coverage. I'm not going to go into it past this one question. I just want to know, based on his review of the financial statements, were they capable. I'm not asking about the amount of insurance, because this kind of thing, if they did not have insurance, would put that company out of business.

MR. BARBER: So the insurance has to be

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1	in. We can't have that.
2	MR. D. DIAL: The next mention of
3	insurance, I will move for a mistrial, Judge.
4	MR. CHEELEY: I'm not mentioning it.
5	MR. D. DIAL: You're trying to get the
6	witness to say it.
7	MR. CHEELEY: No, I'm not.
8	THE COURT: I'm going to sustain the
9	objection at this point. I think it's
L O	dangerous to go any further with regard to
L1	that, because it does possibly bring in the
L2	insurance. Anything regarding their inability
L 3	to, you know, pay the normal day-to-day
L4	operation, I think that's all fair game, but
L5	this is getting into a dangerous area.
L6	MR. CHEELEY: All right. Thank you.
L7	(The following proceedings were held in
L8	open court, in the hearing of the jury.)
L9	MR. CHEELEY: May I proceed, Your Honor?
20	THE COURT: Yes, sir.
21	Q. (By Mr. Cheeley) Mr. Costello, U.S.
22	Xpress Enterprises is directly underneath New
23	Mountain Lake Holdings, correct
24	A. Yes, sir.

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-- on the corporate org chart?

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Q.

Page 930 1 You've seen this; correct? Α. I have, yes, sir. So this is the entity, New Mountain Lake 3 Ο. 4 Holdings, that files one tax return for all these 5 companies underneath it; correct? 6 Α. Well, I didn't memorize that, but I know 7 that they file --8 Ο. Just "yes" or "no." 9 Α. Well, I don't know. 10 Okay. And if you remember, I asked you at Ο. 11 your deposition this question: 12 "If the IRS had a problem with the tax 13 return, and specifically with Total Transportation 14 of Mississippi's portion of the tax return, who do 15 you think they would call, U.S. Xpress or Total 16 Transportation of Mississippi?" 17 And what was your answer? 18 They would contact New Mountain Lake Α. 19 Holdings. 2.0 Ο. Correct. 21 And that's because they're the ones with 2.2 control of the subsidiaries; correct? 23 Α. For tax purposes, yes, sir. MR. CHEELEY: That's all I have, Your 24 2.5 Honor.

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1	THE COURT: Anything else?
2	MR. BARBER: No further questions, Judge.
3	THE COURT: All right. Thank you, sir.
4	You can step down.
5	Your next witness, please?
6	MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, the defense
7	rests.
8	THE COURT: Anything in rebuttal?
9	MR. CHEELEY: No, Your Honor.
10	THE COURT: All right. Gentlemen, we
11	still haven't addressed the stipulations. Do
12	we need to do that outside the presence of the
13	jury?
14	MR. JONES: I think we need to, Your
15	Honor.
16	MR. D. DIAL: I'm not sure. We agree with
17	ours.
18	THE COURT: All right. Ladies and
19	gentlemen, we have a number of things that we
20	have to discuss outside your presence, so I'm
21	going to go ahead and release you for lunch,
22	ask that you come back at 1:00. You are
23	excused until 1:00.
24	(The following proceedings were held
25	outside the presence of the jury.)

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THE COURT: Everyone in the audience, we're taking a break, but I am going to take up some matters with the lawyers.

MR. PITTMAN: There are two sets of stipulations that are part of the pretrial order, one set made by the U.S. Xpress defendants and one by the Greywolf defendants. They've each separately stipulated to certain facts, and we just wanted what they've agreed to stipulate to to be published to the jury.

And, Billy, we're okay if -- at this point if that's just a part of your charge, but at some point --

THE COURT: I'm not charging them any more. I've already got about an hour-long charge.

MR. PITTMAN: Okay. Well, then --

MR. JONES: Then the stipulations need to be read to the jury.

THE COURT: That's fine.

MR. D. DIAL: Now, here's going to be the issue, Your Honor. I'm so sorry. I was wondering why everybody was saying we disagree when I didn't disagree.

But the -- we're going to have to read

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them and send the jury back out to make my motion again to preserve the record. I mean, it's -- I hate it that it happened this way, but I just want to alert Your Honor we're going to have to do that.

THE COURT: That's fine. So what are the stipulations? I think on page 18?

MR. D. DIAL: Yes, Your Honor.

MR. JONES: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: So y'all want to read the stipulations that are on page 18 and go into page 19; is that right? So you want to read those stipulations that appear on page 18 and go over into page 19?

MR. JONES: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: And then what sort of motion are you going to make after that?

MR. D. DIAL: I'm going to renew my motion for directed verdict, Your Honor. I think I have to be extra careful.

THE COURT: All right. That's fine.

MR. D. DIAL: Because it's at the close of all -- that would be the close of all the evidence, I believe.

I'm sorry. Go ahead.

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Page 934 1 MR. JONES: I just want to say and we want to finally, once and for all, put these Plaintiff's exhibits into the record: 3 Plaintiff's Exhibit 302, 303, 304, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, and 320. 5 6 Are there any others? 7 MR. PITTMAN: We'll do that in front of the jury, as well. 8 THE COURT: That's fine. 9 10 MR. JONES: And Plaintiff's 301, 305, 306, 11 307, 308, 309, 310, and 311 also tendered. 12 MR. PITTMAN: And, Your Honor, as per our 13 earlier discussion, we're still working on 14 getting pictures of all so that there's a small 15 copy for the record. 16

THE COURT: That's fine. That's fine.

I'm going to get into the charges and the verdict form in just a moment.

MR. D. DIAL: As to those exhibits, we have no objection, Your Honor, other than our objection regarding the impact rule.

THE COURT: Okay. So the exhibits are in order?

MR. JONES: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: We have the exhibits.

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Page 935 1 (Plaintiff's Exhibits 301 through 320 were admitted into evidence.) 3 THE COURT: All right. If y'all would take a seat, we're going to get into some of 5 these charges. 6 All right. I do have a proposed verdict 7 form. Does everyone have the verdict form? MR. BARR: Judge, for what it's worth, 8 9 I've reviewed the form. 10 THE COURT: Have you looked at the 11 plaintiff's form. 12 MR. HILL: We just got it. 13 THE COURT: I guess, Mr. Varnedoe, why 14 don't you look at their proposed form and see 15 if you have any objections to that verdict 16 form. 17 MR. VARNEDOE: Your Honor, hopefully, to 18 answer your question, taking them in reverse 19 order, but the punitive, the Phase 2 --2.0 THE COURT: Yes, sir. 21 MR. VARNEDOE: -- do you have a copy of 2.2 the defendants' proposed verdict form? 23 THE COURT: T do.

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MR. VARNEDOE: Okay. Plaintiffs --

THE COURT: I will say as far as the

apportionment part of it, I like the plaintiff's portion better because it sets it out in detail. I just see a blank after the -- I mean, "If you answered 'yes' to Question 1, please apportion fault among the following defendants," and I like the way the plaintiffs have specifically allowed for apportionment.

MR. BARBER: That part of it I don't have a problem with, Judge. I think the problem is they -- they've lumped all of their theories into this one question and they're not all necessarily that simple.

MR. VARNEDOE: Well, your Honor, if the jury finds that there's a common enterprise under any of the alternative theories -- and we may only present a Charge 1 theory -- it doesn't matter if they decide that they're all one. It's the same question.

THE COURT: I don't think it matters either.

MR. VARNEDOE: Thank you.

MR. BARBER: Except for each defendant has to have the ability to say that they didn't prove it as to them.

THE COURT: You are correct about that.

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What he's saying is in Question 1, 1 Mr. Varnedoe, in your verdict form, you lump 3 all the separate corporate defendants together. MR. VARNEDOE: In an attempt to avoid a 4 5 seven-page verdict form. 6 THE COURT: Yeah. 7 MR. D. DIAL: But --8 THE COURT: We can separate it out like 9 they did in theirs. 10 MR. BARBER: Maybe combining the two would 11 be --12 THE COURT: Combining the two. 13 MR. BARBER: That would probably be the 14 best thing. Because I do like the percentage 15 thing, Judge. I think that's probably a good 16 idea. 17 THE COURT: Okay. So we can take page 1 18 of the defendants' verdict form. I think y'all 19 know where we're going, so why don't you just collaborate and... 2.0 MR. BARBER: Do it on a Word doc instead 21 2.2 of trying to -- rather than marking it up. 23 THE COURT: Yeah, Rather than 24 piecemealing it here in open court, I think the 25 two of you can get together and get a proposed

verdict form.

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And I'm going to go ahead and just read to you what I'm going to charge the jury. There is no pattern jury charge on alter ego or joint venture or any of these theories, but here's what I propose and I think this conveys to them in a succinct fashion what the issue is, and then they'll have the verdict form. And I have taken portions of the various defense charges and some of the plaintiff's charges and tried to mesh them together.

Here's what I intend to tell the jury:

Plaintiff claims that Total was a mere
instrument or tool, what the law refers to as
the alter ego of its parent and affiliated
corporations, so that the corporations were
acting as one entity. The defendants deny this
claim and maintain that the companies were
separate corporate entities and acted
independently of each other.

For the plaintiff to prove that one company is the alter ego of another company, she must show by a preponderance of the evidence that there is such unity of interest of ownership that the separate personalities of

the corporation no longer exist.

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In considering this -- these issues, the following factors are relevant in making this determination:

Whether the corporation maintained adequate observation of corporate formalities, separate records, accounts, minutes, ledgers.

Whether the corporate officers actually functioned as corporate officers.

Whether there exists commingling of control, property, employees, and records.

Whether generally one corporation operates as the mere shadow of another corporation.

Whether the corporation was solvent or insolvent;

And, lastly, whether one corporation had the right to direct and control the conduct of the other party in the activity causing the injury.

And then I would go on to give the charge on general agency principles: Under general agency principles, a parent corporation may be held liable for the activities of its subsidiary.

I know that's a condensed version. I

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think it conveys to them what they need to decide. It gives them a host of factors that not individually are controlling, but they can consider in arriving at their verdict.

Does either side have any --

MR. VARNEDOE: Your Honor, the plaintiffs fully accept the proposed charge.

MR. BARBER: And, Judge, I think the last statement is -- I've got two problems with the charge.

One is I think solvency is a condition of giving a charge on alter ego, so I would object to that part of it. But the last sentence that said a corporate --

THE COURT: That's taken.

MR. BARBER: -- a corporate parent is always liable for the actions of its subsidiary I don't think is the law.

THE COURT: I think you -- I think you both submitted the general agency charge.

Under general agency principles -- well, first of all, before we get to general agency, do you have any objection to the charge the Court's going to give?

MR. BARBER: Yes. Again, I think the --

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my issue is I think under the Fallon case that I argued on summary judgment --

THE COURT: Yes.

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MR. BARBER: -- insolvency is the stepping stone for the remedy.

THE COURT: I've given it as a factor. You're saying that they have to prove that they're totally insolvent?

MR. BARBER: Right.

THE COURT: Okay. I'll deny your request with regard to that. I'm going to give the charge I just read.

Then going on to general agency --

MR. BARBER: Judge, the other thing I think that is problematic about the charge is the way the charge is written, it says they have the right to control, which is just an ownership-based concept, and I think that is not -- what the law says is that you have to exercise improper control and mere ownership is not enough, because otherwise every parent would always be liable for the subsidiary. I think there has to be improper levels of control on the corporate --

MR. VARNEDOE: Your Honor, that's for the

jury. He's arguing degree.

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THE COURT: I don't know how I can possibly satisfy you, Mr. Barber. The jury's got to make a determination. I've got to give them a list of factors to consider. If that's an objection, it's noted. It's overruled.

MR. BARBER: Okay.

THE COURT: But I do want to hear your point on the general agency principles, because this is something I think you both submitted.

Under general agency principles -- I'll agree not to give the agency charge if -- we don't even have to go there.

MR. BARBER: Well, the principal is liable for an agent and a corporation can be liable for --

THE COURT: Do you want me to give a charge or not?

MR. BARBER: Well, not the way it was stated.

THE COURT: Then what charge do you want me to give, Counsel?

MR. BARBER: Well, I thought we had an agency charge. We submitted one, Judge, and that's not it.

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THE COURT: Okay. Well, please refer me to your -- the charge you want me to read. They don't listen to these anyway, but we can spend a lot of time talking about them.

MR. BARBER: The Court of Appeals does.

THE COURT: Yes.

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MR. BARBER: Okay. Starting at 32,
Defendants' 32 is our submitted agency charges.

THE COURT: All right. For plaintiff's counsel's edification, that would be Defense Charge No. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 -- no, 36.

All right. So the relationship with principal and agent arises whenever one person or principal expressly or implicitly authorizes another, the agent, to act for the principal.

A business entity such as a corporation like Total is regarded as a person in this instance.

I don't have a problem with that.

MR. VARNEDOE: The only problem is that a business entity such as a corporation like Total or U.S. Xpress or any of the other defendants. Their whole objective is to limit everything to Total because they've admitted liability.

THE COURT: I understand that.

1 MR. VARNEDOE: You either need to eliminate "Total" or add all of the defendants, 3 corporate defendants. THE COURT: I'll just take out the -- I'll 5 take "Total" out. 6 MR. VARNEDOE: Okay. Thank you, Your 7 Honor. And on Defendants' Request 33, it's only 8 9 part of the statute and it's not adjusted to 10 the evidence. There was no testimony that 11 Johnson exceeded the scope of his authority. 12 MR. D. DIAL: We stipulated to that. 13 MR. MARCOVITCH: It's in the charge. 14 We've admitted that Total is vicariously 15 liable. 16 MR. VARNEDOE: Trying to separate Johnson 17 from Total? 18 MR. MARCOVITCH: No. 19 MR. VARNEDOE: Okay. Well, it's not 2.0 adjusted to the evidence, in my opinion, Your 21 Honor, and it's certainly not a complete 2.2 statement of the law. I mean, there's no evidence that Johnson 23 exceeded or violated his instructions so that 24 he stands alone at his own risk.

MR. BARBER: Well, I thought the argument was that he had been told not to drive fatigued and you-all are arguing that he exceeded that or didn't follow it.

Isn't that your argument?

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MR. VARNEDOE: I don't think so. And I'll remind everyone argument isn't evidence.

THE COURT: Let me get back and read the shorter version.

How about if I just said this: Generally, an agency relationship arises whenever one entity expressly or by implication authorizes another entity to act for it or subsequently ratifies the act of the other entity on its behalf. Once a principal/agent relationship has been created, the principal is bound to the care, diligence, and fidelity of its agent and its business, and hence the principal is also bound for the neglect of its agent in the transaction of its business. In other words, the negligence of one entity could be imputed to another entity if the first entity was acting as an agent.

Can we just do that?

MR. BARBER: Well, we can except I need

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Page 946 1 the limitation piece to it, because you can be an agent for a limited purpose. 3 THE COURT: All right. So we do that, and give me the language. 4 5 MR. BARBER: I think it's in my charge, 6 Judge. 7 MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, you have my copy of the charge. I don't know if Mr. Barber 8 9 has a copy. 10 THE COURT: Yeah. I'm sorry. 11 MR. MARCOVITCH: That's all right. But I 12 think we've covered it in the respondeat 13 superior charge, which is earlier than agency. 14 MR. BARBER: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, 15 Judge. 16 So I can probably find it MR. MARCOVITCH: 17 if I just look at the charge real quick. 18 THE COURT: Sure. Sure. You're the defendant in that case. 19 2.0 MR. MARCOVITCH: That's all right. 21 THE COURT: By the way, both sides -- this 2.2 is just a random thought -- both sides 23 submitted the charge on medical expenses. 24 There have been no medical expenses.

I agree, Your Honor.

MR. VARNEDOE:

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	Page 947
1	can be withdrawn.
2	THE COURT: Okay.
3	MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, for the
4	record, I was referring to do you have a
5	copy of our charge or not?
6	THE COURT: It's in separate pieces, so
7	MR. MARCOVITCH: Does anybody have a copy
8	of our charge? Well, I'll hand it to you.
9	Defendants' Request No. 23 is respondeat
10	superior, and it includes the admission of
11	liability with respect to Johnson at the bottom
12	line there.
13	THE COURT: Okay.
14	MR. JONES: Which one?
15	MR. VARNEDOE: 23.
16	That's entirely confusing. There's no
17	reason to set forward paragraph 1 or 2 when
18	they've admitted it. All the jury has to be
19	instructed on is what their admission of
20	liability is. The prerequisite doesn't matter.
21	It's confusing.
22	MR. MARCOVITCH: That's fine.
23	THE COURT: Okay.
24	MR. VARNEDOE: So I think the last
25	sentence, Your Honor, that says, "I instruct

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you that Total, the USX defendants, and Johnson admit that Mr. Johnson was working within the scope of his employment with Total, because that's what they've admitted, when the accident occurred."

But it is still for the jury to decide if Mr. Johnson was also acting within the scope of his employment with the USX defendants because of this common enterprise theory. So their charge is not adjusted to the evidence and it's incomplete.

MR. MARCOVITCH: This charge was submitted, as Mr. Varnedoe stated, with respect to Total's vicarious liability for Johnson. It was not intended to cover the USX defendants, which is really within Mr. Barber's bailiwick.

So I'm sorry to not be able to help with that score, but it's absolutely fine with respect to Total to skip over the vicarious liability issue, because I just submitted it in case the Court wanted to instruct the jury on it.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. MARCOVITCH: But we're fine to say we've admitted as we've written it here --

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THE COURT: Okay.

MR. MARCOVITCH: -- which is in 23, Your Honor, last line.

MR. VARNEDOE: And, Your Honor, I think in that regard, the only suggestion I would make is that the third sentence be moved to the front of the charge to say, "Jury, Total has admitted liability, but you still have to decide if he was working within the scope and course of his employment for U.S. Xpress," da da da da da.

THE COURT: Do you have the ability to revise that and get it to me in hard fashion?

MR. VARNEDOE: I do.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, I think I actually included that. I just repeated that line from one of the introductory patterns, but I've got no problems doing what Mr. Varnedoe suggests.

THE COURT: Okay. All right. So I think we're through that. You know what I'm going to charge as far as the alter ego, commonality of interest issue, and we're going to collaborate on the verdict form.

MR. VARNEDOE: Yes, Your Honor.

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THE COURT: All right. You know what my agency charge is going to be.

Some of the other issues I wanted to talk about are the plaintiffs have submitted a host of CFR regs and the texting statute.

And, I mean, are you still asking the Court charge those to the jury?

MR. VARNEDOE: I think it's important,
Your Honor. I think that evidence has been
introduced to at least give the jury the
opportunity to decide if any of the conduct is
negligence per se under those various
regulations or statutes.

THE COURT: But how would there be negligence per se if none of this occurred at the -- well, there is the statute about communication --

MR. VARNEDOE: Yeah, he can't touch a phone while he's driving.

THE COURT: Yeah, that can --

MR. VARNEDOE: He did a lot of that.

But --

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MR. J. DIAL: But it has to cause the accident to be negligence per se, which he couldn't --

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THE COURT: Well, it's up to the jury to decide what caused the accident.

MR. J. DIAL: Yeah, but it couldn't have been texting. He wasn't texting.

THE COURT: And I agree with you there's no evidence that he was texting, but there may be evidence that he had access to, may have used a communication device, which is what the statute says.

MR. VARNEDOE: And it's also relevant to the determination of punitives.

THE COURT: It's the second statute from the texting statute.

MR. MARCOVITCH: For the record, Your Honor, we do object to Plaintiffs' 51, 52, and 54, because we believe they do not conform to the evidence. There is no evidence that he was texting anywhere close to the time of the accident and he did not -- there's no evidence that he was holding the phone in his hand, which is a violation of O.C.G.A. 40-6-241 and 54 and the CFR, 49 CFR 392.82.

THE COURT: I don't intend to give any of the CFR regs, but as far as the Georgia law, I don't see any reason -- you can argue to the

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jury that he was texting. There's evidence that he was texting a couple hours prior to it. It sort of dovetails into your argument that he was preoccupied, he was tired, he'd spent all this time in the last 24 hours prior to the event.

So, I mean -- but to charge the jury -- they know that texting is illegal, but this occurred some two-and-a-half hours prior to the accident.

MR. VARNEDOE: But under 49 CFR 392.3, an ill or fatigued operator, if you don't charge that CFR, then we don't have any hanger to hang the evidence on. He cannot operate a commercial motor vehicle. And Mr. Dial stood up in his opening and said, "It's up to John Wayne Johnson to decide if he's fatigued or not." There is a federal regulation that says you cannot drive if you're fatigued.

THE COURT: I can give that.

What about the texting statute?

MR. VARNEDOE: 49 CFR 392.8, "Prohibition against texting. (a) No driver shall engage in texting while driving." And that's obviously talking about a commercial motor vehicle

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operator.

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He did that. He did that on this trip.

He wasn't texting at the time, but it shows a pattern, which speaks directly to punitive damages and him violating the law.

THE COURT: I'll give that charge.

MR. MARCOVITCH: For the record, Your Honor, we object to that charge.

THE COURT: I understand. I understand.

MR. VARNEDOE: 49 CFR 392.82(a)(1), "No driver," again talking about a commercial motor vehicle driver like Mr. Johnson, "shall use a hand-held mobile telephone while driving a CMV." There's evidence that he did. It doesn't have to be at the time of the wreck, it shows a pattern of him being totally ignorant or willfully disregarding the law.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, I don't think there's any evidence that he had that phone in his hand at all during this trip.

MR. VARNEDOE: Well, how in the hell does he text if he's not holding his phone?

MR. MARCOVITCH: You can do it. Would have had to have been voice'ting.

THE COURT: I'll let you-all argue that to

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the jury, but I'll give the charge.

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MR. MARCOVITCH: All right.

THE COURT: I'm still a little confused about --

MR. VARNEDOE: O.C.G.A. 40-6-180 you said Your Honor would give, basic speed rules.

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. VARNEDOE: O.C.G.A. 40-6-241 by reference implicates O.C.G.A. 40-6-241.2, which speaks directly to a commercial motor vehicle driver in subsection (c) that prohibits a commercial motor vehicle operator from operating that commercial motor vehicle on any public road or highway in the state (a) holding a wireless telecommunications device to conduct voice communication. It's basically the Georgia equivalent of the CFR that Your Honor said you're going to charge.

THE COURT: Why would I give both? Aren't they somewhat redundant?

MR. VARNEDOE: Why does a federal jury -why does a federal case get tried when the
guy's already convicted in State Court for
murder? I mean, they're two independent
sovereign entities that have both set

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(inaudible) over this issue. He is in violation of the federal rules and he's in violation of state law. We ought to be able to tell the jury that.

THE COURT: I take it you want to respond to that?

MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, we believe, again, that the evidence does not conform and that those charges do not conform to the evidence. So just for the record, one more time --

THE COURT: Understood.

MR. MARCOVITCH: -- we object to

Plaintiff's 51, which relates to 49 CFR 392.80;

we object to Plaintiff's 52, which relates to

49 CFR 392.82; and we object to Plaintiff's 54,

which relates to O.C.G.A. 40-6-241.

THE COURT: All right. Those objections are noted.

All right. I don't recall there being any other out-of-the-ordinary requests.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, I believe the plaintiffs made some requests. I don't know whether --

THE COURT: Oh, there's one request on the

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Page 956 1 insurance, the liability coverage. 2 Is there any objection to that? 3 MR. MARCOVITCH: What was the charge? MR. VARNEDOE: Let's see. 5 MR. MARCOVITCH: That's really more of a Mountain Risk issue, I believe. 6 7 MR. VARNEDOE: And, Your Honor, the requested charges made by the defense about 8 9 note taking and all that, I know they're not 10 being charged. 11 THE COURT: Those are all preliminary 12 charges. We're way past that. 13 MR. VARNEDOE: Yes, sir. Your Honor, while he's 14 MR. MARCOVITCH: 15 looking at the direct liability, there's a 16 couple of other charges here that we just don't 17 think are warranted by the way the case was 18 presented. 19 We believe Plaintiff's 63, 64, and 65 all 2.0 relate to claims that have been dismissed, the 21 negligent entrustment and negligent hiring 2.2 claims. 23 THE COURT: Yeah, those are. 24 MR. MARCOVITCH: 73 and 74 all relate to

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THE COURT: Those are all out. Those are obviously out.

MR. MARCOVITCH: The -- 91, voluntary assumption of duty by breaking corporate rules, which is the final paragraph of 91 --

THE COURT: That's not in the case.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Okay. And we're not there yet, but on the punitive damages, 92, we've got an objection.

THE COURT: We'll have another charge conference if we get there.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Okay. Your Honor, we also take issue -- and I haven't heard any argument on it yet -- on the spoliation charges that they've submitted, 26 and 27, any and all spoliation charges that they may have submitted. We believe that no spoliation charge is warranted. The code -- the evidence showed the pass code was available and that they --

THE COURT: To me, that's more a matter for argument to the jury than it is the Court being involved in that.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Right. So we are seeking no adverse inference charge, and it sounds like

Page 958 the Court's not going to do that. 1 THE COURT: Yeah, I don't intend to go 3 there. MR. MARCOVITCH: Okay. We also have to 5 talk about how we're going to charge the jury on emotional distress, but we're not there yet. 6 7 THE COURT: At this point, I haven't seen anything other than -- I just going to give the 8 9 standard charge and have a physical injury 10 requirement in there. 11 MR. VARNEDOE: We're fine with that, Your 12 Honor. 13 THE COURT: Okay. MR. MARCOVITCH: Well, that's okay. I 14 15 mean, that's the law, that's our belief, but, 16 of course, we're going to be arguing 17 accordingly, Your Honor. 18 And we also -- Mr. Dial's already moved for a mistrial based on all the evidence that's 19

come in --

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

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MR. MARCOVITCH: -- that completely lacks any relation to the impact rule.

THE COURT: I mean, it's a one-line charge on mental pain and suffering, that she can

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recover as long as there's a physical injury.

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MR. MARCOVITCH: Well, Your Honor, we've submitted --

MR. VARNEDOE: It's pretty innocuous, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I saw what she submitted about
I'm supposed to tell them -- you want me to
tell them that she can't recover specifically
for the deaths of the other --

MR. MARCOVITCH: That's directly from Bennett versus Moore, Your Honor, almost verbatim.

MR. VARNEDOE: With the --

THE COURT: Yes, it is.

MR. VARNEDOE: -- exception of -- that's what Your Honor has ruled.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Well, but if we're going to give the impact rule charge, then we've got to give the impact rule charge.

THE COURT: I would be giving the impact rule charge that is in pattern charge that's been accepted time and time again. You know, to go further and start telling them what they can't recover for, they'll have to decide. You can argue that to the jury.

MR. MARCOVITCH: All right. So, Your

Honor, just so the record's clear, we except to
the Court not giving our submitted Defendants'

26.

THE COURT: All right. The Court's going to give the pattern charge in lieu thereof and your objection's noted.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Okay.

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THE COURT: But then you can argue to the jury that, you know, that doesn't flow from her physical injuries and they shouldn't recover for that.

So I don't think I've handicapped you in any way as far as making that argument; I'm simply going to give the pattern charge that requires a physical injury to recover for mental pain and suffering.

MR. MARCOVITCH: And on the Mountain, on the direct liability for the insurer, Judge -THE COURT: Yes.

MR. BARBER: Judge, the last sentence I have a problem with the liability insurance --

THE COURT: See if you can get Carl to agree to take that out.

MR. BARBER: You know there's going to be

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Page 961 a judgment against U.S. Xpress, but the way 1 this reads you can find two judgments. 3 MR. VARNEDOE: I'll take a look at that, Your Honor. 4 5 THE COURT: All right. Can you take a 6 look at it now? It's just one sentence. 7 MR. BARBER: The last sentence is the only the thing I have a problem with. 8 9 MR. VARNEDOE: My esteemed colleague. 10 Defendants' 18, sympathy, we would request 11 the pattern as we have. Their charge as 12 submitted is argumentative. 13 THE COURT: I'll give the pattern on 14 sympathy. 15 MR. JONES: So your objection is to what? 16 MR. BARBER: Just the last sentence. 17 MR. JONES: We're fine. We will -- we 18 will agree to delete the last sentence of 19 Plaintiff's requested Charge No. 87, which they 2.0 objected to. 21 THE COURT: All right. 87, delete last 2.2 sentence. 23 MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, we except to 24 their objection to No. 18, just for the record. 2.5 THE COURT: All right. I appreciate that.

MR. VARNEDOE: We take, sir, exception, Your Honor, to their exception to my objection to your ruling.

THE COURT: Don't confuse my court reporter. She's had a long week.

MR. VARNEDOE: Your Honor, defendants requested Charge No. 20. We would request, as we have, the pattern charge on ordinary negligence. They go further and set forth from a case duty, breach, causation -- I mean, the pattern charge is more appropriate and it's safer.

THE COURT: I'll give the pattern charge.

MR. MARCOVITCH: We're excepting to the omission of our Charge No. 20.

MR. VARNEDOE: And Defendants' 21, it's the same issue that I think I am going to look at it at lunch to see if we can figure out proximate cause, how we deal with the admission of liability for Total and then the remaining issue of liability for the USX defendants.

THE COURT: All right. And, again, it would be very helpful if you could reduce that to a hard copy.

MR. VARNEDOE: Yes, Your Honor.

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Page 963 MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, when I say 1 our concession of liability was earlier in the 3 charge, it's in 21. MR. VARNEDOE: And I'll look at it, but 5 it's a lengthy --MR. MARCOVITCH: I believe it's also 6 7 earlier in the instruction. THE COURT: Okay. 8 9 MR. VARNEDOE: And I believe you're not 10 giving Defendants' 26? This is their impact 11 rule charge. 12 THE COURT: No, I'm not. 13 MR. VARNEDOE: Thank you, Your Honor. 14 MR. MARCOVITCH: We've already excepted to 15 that. 16 THE COURT: Yes, you have. 17 MR. VARNEDOE: And you said we'll come 18 back for punitives. 19 THE COURT: Yes. 2.0 MR. MARCOVITCH: Well, wait a second. 21 There is a charge about the jury checking the box for punitive damages, not the amount. 2.2 23 THE COURT: Yeah. 24 MR. MARCOVITCH: We're just going to give 25 the patterns; right?

All I'm going to do is give 1 THE COURT: them a standard on the definition of punitive 3 damages, the requirement for there to be clear and convincing evidence, right out of the 5 pattern charge book. MR. VARNEDOE: And there is the issue of 6 7 respondeat superior liability for Johnson's negligence. Are you going to charge that in 8 9 Phase 1? 10 THE COURT: Yeah, I think I have to. 11 MR. VARNEDOE: I think you do, too, and 12 we've submitted a request on that, Your Honor. 13 THE COURT: What number is that? 14 Let's see. It's in our MR. VARNEDOE: 15 non-pattern charge as Exhibit A to the charge. 16 MR. MARCOVITCH: That's my copy. 17 MR. VARNEDOE: Can I borrow it? 18 MR. MARCOVITCH: Well, what charge are you 19 talking about? 2.0 MR. VARNEDOE: The Georgia liability --21 yes, sir, it's Plaintiff's 93, Your Honor. 2.2 (Thereupon, there was an interruption in 23 the proceedings.) 24 MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, we -- our 23, 25 I believe, is the pattern for respondeat.

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just added the last line and Mr. Varnedoe earlier objected to including paragraphs 1 and 2 in our 23. I'm almost certain that's the pattern instruction.

MR. VARNEDOE: I'm talking about punitive damages and derivative liability for punitive damages. I was talking about compensatory with respect to Defendants' 23.

This is a direct quote from a 2013 Court of Appeals case. I mean, it says -- it clearly lays out accurately the law in the state of Georgia.

THE COURT: You're referring to your 93?

MR. VARNEDOE: Our 93, yes, sir.

MR. MARCOVITCH: But, Your Honor, the jury is not making a find- -- all the finding is whether to check the box for punitive damages.

It's a matter of law --

THE COURT: Let me take a look at 93. I don't have it in front of me.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Yeah. Just so I can finish my point, Your Honor, as a matter of law, Total is responsible for those punitive damages and the Court would just so order.

It's not a determination for the jury.

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Page 966 Vicarious liability, as we just discussed 1 earlier, isn't even being presented to the 3 jury, so... MR. VARNEDOE: Sir, are you saying that 5 Total has stipulated to their responsibility 6 for punitive damages awarded against Johnson? 7 MR. MARCOVITCH: Total is responsible for -- they're vicariously liability for the 8 9 liability of Johnson. 10 THE COURT: Regardless of what the damages 11 are, whether they're compensatory or punitive? 12 MR. MARCOVITCH: I believe it's the law, 13 Your Honor. THE COURT: Yeah, I think it is. 14 15 MR. VARNEDOE: Well, I want to know are 16 y'all saying that? Because if not, the jury 17 has to decide it. 18 THE COURT: He just said it. 19 MR. MARCOVITCH: Total is responsible for 2.0 the liability, including punitive, of Johnson. 21 MR. VARNEDOE: Okay. 2.2 THE COURT: Then I wouldn't need to give 23 93. 24 MR. VARNEDOE: That's correct, Your Honor.

Thank you.

Page 967 I think I'm almost done, Your Honor. 1 THE COURT: So I won't give a respondeat 3 superior charge, although there are references in the charge that Total admits that they are 5 liable for the actions of the driver. MR. VARNEDOE: I mean, I think it's fair 6 7 to read that stipulation to the jury. THE COURT: Sure. 8 9 MR. MARCOVITCH: That's fine. 10 THE COURT: Yeah. Okay. 11 Judge, would it be possible MR. BARBER: 12 for me to get a photocopy of your proposed 13 charge on the alter ego stuff, take a look at Because it hasn't been submitted. 14 it? 15 THE COURT: I just read it to you. 16 MR. BARBER: Oh, you mean -- is it like in 17 your handwriting? 18 THE COURT: It's in my handwriting. Good luck with that. 19 2.0 MR. VARNEDOE: Subject to the right to 21 have a subsequent charge conference on 2.2 punitives --23 THE COURT: I'm sure we will. I'm sure we 24 will. 2.5 MR. VARNEDOE: -- we're okay.

THE COURT: I think we made a little progress. That's all I wanted to do.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, if I could just add one more on 28, Defendants' Request 28.

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

MR. MARCOVITCH: I believe there's a line in there that does not conform to the pattern, which comes out of Carter versus Spells. I just want to bring it to the Court's attention.

THE COURT: This is Defense 28?

MR. MARCOVITCH: This is Defense 28. "In a traffic collision such as this case" -- sorry. "In a traffic collision case such as this, punitive damages are not recoverable where the driver at fault simply violated a rule of the road," which is a quote from Carter versus Spells. That's in the authority down there below.

THE COURT: Okay. Yeah, I mean there's no question that's what it says. I don't know -- I don't think that's in the pattern charge.

MR. VARNEDOE: It's not in the pattern charge, and I thought Your Honor was going to --

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Page 969 1 THE COURT: I'm going to give the pattern charge. 3 MR. VARNEDOE: Thank you. MR. MARCOVITCH: Okay. So we except to 5 the omission of that sentence. 6 THE COURT: I understand. 7 Judge, I have one more MR. BARR: 8 question. I assume --9 THE COURT: Now you again. 10 MR. BARR: Absolutely. Just to make sure 11 you didn't forget I was here. 12 I assume Your Honor's going to give the 13 chain reaction pattern charge that was 14 requested by both myself and codefendant? 15 THE COURT: Yeah, I looked at that. 16 MR. BARR: The only thing I wanted to 17 point out is there's actually a difference 18 between the one that we requested, which is the 19 pattern, and the one that the codefendants 2.0 requested, which is their No. 22, because their 21 No. 22 adds a paragraph. 2.2 THE COURT: I'm going to give the pattern. 23 MR. BARR: Okay. That's what I wanted to 24 know. 2.5 MR. JONES: Judge, one other thing.

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we address the order of closing arguments?

Mr. Cheeley and I would expect to split the plaintiff's close, I would go first and he would go last. I assume they're sandwiched all in between, and can we find out what order they'll be arguing so that we can figure out our strategy?

MR. BARR: I assume I'm last.

THE COURT: Just let them know after lunch.

MR. MARCOVITCH: One more thing, because I, unfortunately, wasn't listening close enough to Mr. Barr.

But to the extent the Court is not giving Defendants' Requested Charge No. 22, we would like to object to that.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you. All right. Enjoy your lunch.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken from 12:16 p.m. to 1:23 p.m. and the following proceedings were held outside the presence of the jury.)

THE COURT: All right. Gentlemen, just so we have a clear understanding, when they come out, we're going to read the stipulations and then let them go back and then return for the

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	Page 971			
1	arguments?			
2	MR. PITTMAN: Your Honor, I proposed to			
3	Mr. Dial that instead of having to send them			
4	back, he can just renew his motion up to the			
5	Court.			
6	THE COURT: Yeah, we can do it at side			
7	bar.			
8	MR. D. DIAL: That's fine, Your Honor.			
9	THE COURT: Okay. All right. Let's bring			
10	the jury out, please.			
11	(The following proceedings were held in			
12	the presence of the jury.)			
13	THE COURT: All right. Everyone please be			
14	seated.			
15	All right. Counsel, you may proceed.			
16	MR. JONES: I thought you were going to			
17	read the stipulations, Your Honor.			
18	THE COURT: I'm going to let y'all read			
19	those to the jury.			
20	MR. JONES: Oh, okay. I apologize. I			
21	thought you were doing it. My bad.			
22	THE COURT: I can do it.			
23	Starting on page 18, and if counsel would			
24	read along with me.			
25	Ladies and gentlemen, at this point, I am			

reading to you certain stipulations that both sides have agreed to.

No. 1, Mr. Johnson was negligent in his operation of his tractor-trailer on April the 22nd, 2015; Mr. Johnson's negligence was the proximate cause of the second accident; Mr. Johnson's negligence was the proximate cause of Ms. Richards' injuries occurring in the accident to the extent her injuries are proven at trial; Mr. Johnson was acting within the scope and course of his employment with Total Transportation at the time of the second accident; and Total is liable to Ms. Richards under the doctrine of respondeat superior for the negligence of Mrs. Johnson -- Mr. Johnson.

Further stipulations: Defendant Greywolf
Logistics, Inc., hereafter referred to as
Defendant Greywolf, is engaged in business as
an interstate motor carrier transporting goods
for compensation. On April 22, 2015, Defendant
Robert Gordon Tayloe, hereinafter referred to
as Defendant Tayloe, was operating a
tractor-trailer in furtherance of Defendant
Greywolf's business. During the early morning
of April 22, 2015, a wreck occurred on I-16

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eastbound near Mile Marker 143 in Bryan County, Georgia, involving the tractor-trailer driven by Defendant Tayloe and a Winnebago motor home. Defendant Tayloe negligently caused the April 22, 2015, wreck involving the tractor-trailer he was driving in the scope of his employment with Greywolf and the motor As a result of this collision, both the home. tractor-trailer Defendant Tayloe was driving and the Winnebago motor home rolled over and slid along the roadway, coming to a rest on or near the roadway, blocking all or part of I-16 eastbound. Eastbound traffic on I-16 was backed up following this collision while emergency crews worked to clean up and remove the large overturned vehicles from the roadway. Defendant Arch Insurance Company provides liability insurance coverage to Defendant Greywolf for this collision.

Again, those are stipulations agreed upon by counsel and should be accepted by you as evidence in this case.

Anything else from either side?

MR. JONES: No, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I understand counsel wants to

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MR. D. DIAL: Yes, Your Honor.

(The following proceedings were held at the bench, outside the hearing of the jury.)

MR. D. DIAL: A couple of things, Your Honor. We renew our motion for directed verdict on the same grounds we argued at the close of our case and incorporate also our motion for summary judgment briefs on those same issues.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you, and those motions are respectfully denied and preserved for the record.

MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, I'm sorry. Can
I do the same thing regarding my previous
motion for directed verdict?

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, I just want to note for the record -- I understand the charge you decided on with respect to the impact rule and what your decision is, but you also said I would be open to argue that she can only recover for emotional distress.

THE COURT: Sure.

MR. D. DIAL: I want to note that I think,

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that boxes me in and doesn't given me a viable option because I won't be able to argue to the jury that that's the law and point to an instruction so saying.

Thank you.

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THE COURT: All right. You're welcome.

(The following proceedings were held in open court, in the hearing of the jury.)

THE COURT: All right. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, at this time you will hear the closing arguments made by the attorneys. Like the opening statements, the arguments made at this point are not evidence, but they are the summations made by the attorneys. It is their view of the evidence. It's an attempt on their part to persuade you to see the case in a light most favorable to their position. However, I ask that you give them your attention as they make those arguments.

The plaintiff would have the right to open and conclude.

MR. JONES: Your Honor, we're going to split our opening. I will do the opening part of closing and Mr. Cheeley will do the closing

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part of the plaintiff's close.

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THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Jones. You may proceed.

MR. JONES: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, it's my pleasure to address you once again in what is without a doubt the most horrific and the most horrible wreck and loss of life to have ever occurred in Bryan County. We all hope and pray that something like this never happens again.

There's been a lot of talk and a lot of discussion about it, but we do not want to lose sight of what happened here on that night, in that early morning hours of April 22, 2015.

Emily Clark lost her life; Catherine Pittman lost her life; Caitlyn Baggett lost her life;

Abbie Deloach, the driver of the Ford Escape, lost her life; Brittney McDaniel was badly injured and survived; Morgan Bass lost her life; and Megan Richards is what this case is all about.

Now, Tuesday morning when we started the case, Mr. Dial used the word "evidence" some 35 times in his opening statement. He harped on the fact that he wanted y'all to get your

evidence in this case from this witness stand, and I totally and 100 percent agree with him. The evidence doesn't come from anywhere else, nothing that I say or nothing anybody else says.

And remember this, there are 12 of y'all with the 2 alternates and there's one of me, and I may not remember everything that you think is important. So when y'all go in the jury room, if there's something you think important, you discuss that. You have the right as a juror to do that and to mention that.

The system we have is not perfect. I can't remember -- and y'all would be bored to death if I went over every little thing. I'm just going to talk about some matters that I think are important to our case.

Now, when Mr. Cheeley and I first got involved in these cases -- and we were involved in some of these other -- the majority of these other cases, as well -- why did we sue Greywolf and Tayloe, who caused the first wreck way down the road? We sued them so that if somebody were trying to point at liability as to them,

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they would have to be in this courtroom and a jury would have to decide. Not us, not these defendants -- we didn't want these defendants pointing at somebody else that wasn't here, so we wanted one jury to hear it all.

Under the law that Judge Rose will give you and under the facts that you've heard, you'll make the decision and not somebody else about Greywolf and Tayloe's liability in this case.

But we put all of the facts before you because we wanted you to hear everything. We did not want to hide anything from you. We didn't want to mislead you in any way.

Now, as to the evidence, I don't think

I've ever heard any evidence and any testimony
any more compelling and any more dramatic than
the testimony of Sergeant Robenolt, an American
hero. I mean, I don't know what most people
who have done under those circumstances that
he's found himself in, but to get out of his
car and run towards this danger -- most people
run away from danger. Most people run away
from a fire, a burning automobile. Most people
try to escape something like that. But what a

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brave man and what a wonderful man that went to the car and got Megan Richards out of that car.

Sergeant Garrett, Sergeant Cason, Officer Wheeler, all of those State Patrol that came in and laid out for you exactly what happened in this case, who was at fault, who caused this, what he said to them.

We played for you the testimony -- the oral testimony of Mr. Johnson, which was taken in Mr. Cason's patrol car on the morning that this thing happened.

Now, one of the things that he said in there -- and I'll come back to this in a minute but I want to mention it while I was talking -- I want to mention it while I'm thinking about it -- one of the things he said in there that was so important in this case was when he asked him who his employer was, if you'll remember -- and if you don't remember, you can ask the judge to play that video -- or to play that audiotape again, which is part of the record -- but he said -- when asked who his employer was, he said, "Total Transportation, but everything goes to U.S. Xpress." Even the driver, even the company driver for Total Transportation,

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knew everything goes through U.S. Xpress. Even he knew that. So when you're considering this issue about U.S. Xpress, I ask you to remember that.

Now, Mr. Johnson, let's talk about him for a little bit. And I'm not talking about him to embarrass him; I'm not talking about him to single him out; I'm not talking about him to make him feel bad, because he's sitting in this courtroom, but the facts and the truth sometimes are harsh things.

Mr. Cheeley was finally able to elicit from him that when he was driving for another company, driving a tractor-trailer rig like the one he was driving in this case in November of 2011, he fell asleep and that vehicle did a complete 180, which means it went halfway around and went off the road and turned up against -- turned over against the guardrail, and that vehicle was totaled.

Now, that's relevant. That's relevant in this case. It's relevant to your determination of the harm caused by this man in this case, because he's back out on the road again, company driver, working for Total

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Transportation, back out on the road again.

And what are the circumstances and the facts in which he found himself in? Now, we all get sleepy and I understand that. Some of us work long hours. But if you're driving a tractor-trailer, you simply can't make that mistake. You can't take lives into your own hands. The people of Bryan County and the people of Georgia and all of the motoring public deserve better. We don't deserve to have drivers falling asleep operating their vehicle.

Now, there was a lot of back and forth about all this texting, and we agree totally that he was not texting at the time of the wreck. That gets confusing, because there's so much back and forth and arguing and then the judge has to decide certain issues, and we say to you now we've got the records, they went into evidence, he was not texting at the time.

But the reason we put all those texts in is to show you that from the time he got up in Shreveport, Louisiana, some 50 hours prior to this wreck, and he says, "I'm sleeping," he's riding on a bus, he's texting.

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He goes from Shreveport, Louisiana to

Jackson, Mississippi to the bus station. He

gets to the bus station at 5:00 in the morning.

He's still texting. He says he's sleeping.

He goes from the bus station to the terminal and he's there all day long. He says he's sleeping. You'll have the records out, and it's one of the exhibits where we -- where we show all the texts. He's not sleeping, he's texting. He's in a driver's lounge, there's noise, there's TVs, there's other people coming in and out. He's going back and forth to check on his truck. He didn't get any sleep.

And then at 5:00 in the afternoon, they finally get his truck ready. They put him on the road over there in Jackson, Mississippi, and they send him through the night to Savannah.

Now, that's a long time to be up and awake and intermittently texting and intermittently doing things on your phone, intermittently making phone calls, from the time he left Shreveport, Louisiana until the time he got to this accident scene.

Now, Mr. Johnson, no explanation, no

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reasonable or plausible explanation for what happened here. I listened to it and I know y'all listened to it. I have no understanding of what his testimony was, as hard as I tried to listen to it, as many times as I tried to listen to it.

And if he fell asleep, why didn't he just say he fell asleep? Why doesn't he tell this jury what really happened, if he knows what happened? He even said that he hoped one day that somebody, some other expert or some other person or somebody else -- remember, we put Mr. Buckner up as a mechanical expert to go through precisely what happened in the collision, but Mr. Johnson still said -- he still said to y'all, "I wish I knew what happened. I wish someday somebody would figure out for me what happened. I wish some expert one day would give me an answer as to what happened."

Now, is there anybody here in this courtroom or anybody who has listened to any of this evidence who believes for one minute that Megan Richards would not go back to the night before, early morning hours before this

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horrific accident, this horrific wreck that caused all of her injuries.

She didn't ask for it, she didn't want it, she didn't look for it. She doesn't want to be here and she certainly never wanted to lose the lives of her friends.

In Mr. Dial's opening to you, he says,
"It's false that we are saying that Megan is
faking." He says, "It's false that we say
she's faking." And then they go get some guy
from Denver that they didn't even have when we
started the trial Tuesday morning, they run
around and they get him and they fly him all
the way from Denver on Wednesday to testify
here yesterday before y'all to tell y'all that
there's no correlation between a traumatic
brain injury and the problems she's having or
there's no correlation between finding blood on
an MRI in somebody's brain and the injuries she
described. Y'all heard his testimony,
Dr. Wortzel.

Now, what the plaintiffs are seeking in this case is not a prize and it's not an award. And the judge will charge you on the law regarding what Ms. Richards is entitled to.

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What we're asking you to do and what we're giving you help in determining is to make a -- is what is called a determination as to the value of the harm that she's incurred, the level of money that is equal to the level of harm that she has suffered. It is one of the oldest ways that we have ever valued anything in our lives. People have always had to put money value on something.

This is a jury trial and this is the only way -- this is the -- it may not be a perfect system, but it is the best system of justice that we have. If we couldn't come in cases like this to a jury and let a jury make these decisions, we would have absolute chaos in society. While this is not a perfect solution, it is the only solution that Americans have been able to come up with, and it is the best solution.

You remember when we were doing what is called voir dire and I asked each and every one of you to place a value on human lives and you-all said you did, and it's the difference between our countries and others.

And this compensation for her is not a

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reward and it is not a prize. You're the only ones that have the power -- the judge doesn't have the power, I don't have the power, nobody else in America has the power -- that is the power vested in the 12 of you, chosen randomly here in Bryan County and sitting where you're sitting now. It is an awesome responsibility.

You can hold these defendants responsible where they don't want to evade -- where they don't want to accept responsibility. They want to evade responsibility.

Now, they'll tell you, "Oh, no, we're responsible and we're liable, but be fair to us. Be fair to us." What they're really saying is don't award Megan sufficient money damages to properly and adequate award her.

Make no mistake about it, when Mr. Dial uses the word "fair" to Mr. Johnson and Total

Transportation, that's code for don't award her the money damages that she's entitled to.

MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, I object.

Mr. Jones is misstating the law. The law requires that the jury be fair to both parties.

THE COURT: The Court will instruct on the law.

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MR. JONES: Now, it's okay to have all these corporations acting jointly. All these corporations are all huddled up over here together, they've got all the same lawyers, but when it comes to taking responsibility, they pile mountains and mountains and mountains of documents and bring in this accountant -- who's a nice fella, by the way, I like him -- but he cannot escape their exhibits. He can't escape and get away from what they did.

And remember the lady that sat up here, nice lady, Mrs. Pate? I asked her about Plaintiff's Exhibit 81, the management presentation they made to the banks in New York. That will be out in evidence with you.

In other words, these companies, all acting together as one, go to New York City and want to borrow a bunch of money from bankers in New York as one and tell the bankers in New York, "We're a one-stop shopping center. We can provide everything. We work together, and this includes Total Transportation, a 90 percent owned company, medium-haul carrier operating 700 tractors." That's part of the presentation they made to the bankers, but they

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want y'all not to hold them liable for Megan Richards. We're one when we go to New York, but we're all separate when we're sitting here in Bryan County, and I don't believe a one of you buy that.

We heard that these companies are managed and owned and operated by those two families.

The evidence went in as to who those families were. I'm not even going to call their names.

It's not okay to evade responsibility.

They can't evade the responsibility like that in this case, and I urge you not to let them do that.

These defendants don't want to fix what's happened, they don't want to help Ms. Richards, and they don't want to make up for anything.

So you are the ultimate judges. You will decide how far one can go in balancing what has happened here.

And as I mentioned earlier, one of the best ways to do that is to put all of the harm they've caused Megan Richards on one scale of justice and then y'all have to put enough money on the other scale to balance the harm.

And you've got to look at these harms.

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You've got to look at what she's been through.
You've got to look at what -- how her life has been changed. And to do that, you've got look at three things: How bad was it, how long will it last, and how will it interfere with her life. Three things: How bad, how long, and how does it interfere with her life.

As I said when I first stood up, I cannot imagine a more horrific thing to live through than what she lived through. I don't think it could be any worse. So how bad? It's pretty bad. So where on the scales does that intensity of harm lie? How bad?

How long will that conduct affect her?

How long will it affect her? Is there any one of us who doesn't believe that until the good Lord takes her away, that she will live with what happened that morning?

Is there any one of us -- we've got -that's why we have such a mix of jurors, is
each and every one of you bring to this
courtroom your own experiences in life, what
you've lived through in life, what you've seen,
what's happened to you.

I know as I've gotten older, my opinions

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and my attitudes and things that I believe have changed, and all of that helps us, as we mature, make decisions. And we all know because we're older that she's going to live with that for the rest of her life, for a long, long time.

And how much will it interfere with her life? Now, to her credit -- and, golly, I love her for this -- she says, "I'm a fighter. I'm not going to quit. I'm going to do everything I possibly can to continue with my life. I want to go to work."

I think the defendants -- you know, they can't have it both ways. If we say she's going to go to work and she's going to do as much as she possibly can, then they say she's not hurt. If she stayed home and didn't try to do anything, they would say she's faking. So y'all got to decide that. Y'all have to decide that. Think about how bad she'll be affected. Your verdict has to touch all these issues, how long she'll be affected and how it will interfere with her.

Now, she was honest. She says, "There's some days I have good days. There's some days

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I have good days. There's some days that are absolutely awful. Not every day is my worst day. Not every hour is my worst hour. Not every minute is my worst minute."

But there are times when she is at the bottom of her spirit, her life, everything she's ever worked for.

And God bless nurses. I know we've got two of them on the jury. We thank you for what y'all do for all of us and what you do for society. But that's what she wanted to do and that's what we hope that she can do, but we don't know that. Going forward, we don't know that.

Now, the judge will charge you that there's different facets or different parts of what she's entitled to recover. She's entitled to recover for her physical pain and for her mental pain.

And what -- I mean, we all know in this case the mental pain vastly outweighs the physical pain. She certainly has had tremendous mental pain and mental suffering that will -- that will continue throughout the rest of her life.

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Is there any one of us, as I said earlier, who doubts that she would go back to where she was before if she possibly could?

And just because we aren't trying this case in Atlanta doesn't mean that it's any less important. Just because we're not trying this case in New York or some big city doesn't mean that it's any less important. It's just as important here, and the lives of people in Bryan County and Bulloch County and Liberty County and Chatham County are just as important as the lives of people elsewhere around the country. So don't hold your verdict down because somebody might think that we live in South Georgia and we're not as good or we're not as important as folks that live in some of these big cities.

And so when you think about your damages, think about just the event itself. What is fair compensation for going through that event that morning, being in that wreck, being in that car, which was totally destroyed? Seeing the death and destruction all around her and understanding what happened.

Now, with respect to your award, your

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finding in favor of the plaintiff -- and they've admitted they're liable, Total Transportation has and John Wayne Johnson has -- you've got to decide about physical harm, you've got to decide about mental harm, and you've got to decide about what she's been through in the past, the present, and the future. You've got to think about the next 10 years, the next 15 years, the next 18 years, the next 30 years, because she can't come back This is her only shot at a jury. can't come back -- or y'all can't come back either. You can't come back next week, next month, next year, and say, "Gee, I wish I'd done something different." When you leave here today if you reach your verdict today, or tonight or tomorrow, whenever you do, leave with the comfort in your heart that you know you've made the right decision and one that you can live with the rest of your life like she'll have to live with the rest of her life.

And I'm going to suggest some numbers to you. We were talking about physical pain and mental pain. You'll have to break those down as you think through your verdict, and as you

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work your way through it, you'll think about past, link the event and the two years that she's lived through to get here, the mental anguish that she's been through just to get to this trial and have the courage to come to this trial, her past physical and mental pain and suffering, her present physical and mental pain and suffering, and her future physical and mental pain and suffering.

Now, I wrote up here, "Paid Wortzel."

Now, when he flew from Denver all the way to Savannah, how many neuropsychiatrists did he fly across to get here? Do y'all not think they couldn't find somebody in Savannah or Dublin or Statesboro or somewhere else?

MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, I object. It's not a proper measure of damages. He's arguing. It's not about the cost you pay a witness, it's about the harm suffered by Ms. Richards.

THE COURT: I'll overrule the objection.

MR. JONES: Paid him \$500 an hour to get here, to come from Denver -- to come from Denver, Colorado, to tell y'all a bunch of lies because they couldn't find somebody closer.

That's exactly why he came and he testified.

We've got plenty of those types of doctors around here.

Now, she's 24 years -- 22? I'm sorry. I apologize -- 22 years old. If she lives to 82, that's another 60 years. So when you're thinking of future physical and mental pain, at least break it down into each year when you put a number on it and then multiply it out times 60 so you come to a number that fairly balances these scales of justice.

You've got the harms over here done by these defendants to her, you've got her over here on this side, and you have the right and you have the power to do that. You can do it a hundred dollars an hour, you can do it at \$50 an hour, you can do it at \$10 an hour. You can do it at any number you want to do it at, but you have to assign numbers to it.

You have to figure out as a juror what is her future mental pain and suffering going to be. You've got to put a number on it.

We suggest 5 million for what she's been through up until today; we suggest something in the range of 5 million for what she's going through now; and y'all can break it down into

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so much per year -- I suggest \$500,000 a year for the next 60 years -- but something within the range of all of that to properly and adequately compensate her.

There's nobody who would not go back and nobody would believe -- or nobody would take the position that if Megan Richards could go back to the day before this happened and be herself with all of her friends, that she would not do it. We ask you for an award that reflects what these defendants have put her through and what she's been through.

Thank you.

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THE COURT: Mr. Dial.

MR. BARR: Your Honor, we discussed that I would go first unless you --

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. BARR: Is that still okay, Dave?

MR. D. DIAL: Yeah, that's fine.

MR. BARR: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Typically, by this point in the trial, you're completely sick of the lawyers talking. You.

May remember I really haven't done anything in this trial.

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I did address you at the end of the day on Monday. It was like 6:20 or something. I represent the Greywolf defendants, Greywolf, its driver, Robert Gordon Tayloe, and Arch Insurance.

First thing I'm going to do -- the reason why I'm going first, as opposed to last, is I'm going to be short and we know Mr. Dial is going to take some time to review anything.

But I know on behalf of all of the parties, we want to thank you for your attention. You guys have been one of the most attentive juries I've ever seen, and that's good, and that's good particularly for my client, Greywolf.

And I hope that what Mr. Jones just said, the importance of what he said about my clients, was not lost on you. What he said was that the reason they brought us into the case is to prevent the codefendants from pointing the finger; right? Not because there's some strong reason or some legal basis that they're asking you to award money against us, it's just to have somebody there to make sure that Mr. — the other parties in the case aren't pointing a

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finger at some empty chair. Okay? So we're here.

So after hearing that, my first inclination is just to sit down and say, "Okay, you guys get it," but I do want to take a couple minutes just to explain why that's the case, why is there no valid legal reason for Greywolf to be in this case?

Mr. Tayloe, you may have noticed, he did not testify. He was not called by the plaintiffs and, frankly, how the first accident happened really isn't important. It's not an issue that y'all need to decide in the case, and there's no claim that he was overtired or texting or any of that kind of stuff that he needed to be here to address.

As you heard, Mr. Tayloe, by causing the first wreck -- and, by the way, as I said at the opening, he did cause the first accident. We're not hiding from that. We have accepted responsibility and resolved the claims that were brought by the folks in the Winnebago. Those are the harms that Mr. Tayloe proximately caused or directly caused.

One thing y'all heard in openings from

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both sides is that these other cases involving the other nurses -- nursing students were all resolved. And that's true, but just so you don't get the wrong idea, my clients did not participate in those resolutions. Okay? We were never asked to. All those cases are done. We believe that is what should happen here.

This is about two distinct wrecks that happened over a mile apart, six hours apart.

And, you know, you haven't heard, really, any evidence as to Greywolf. It's clear, even from Mr. Jones' statements, that Greywolf is not the focus in this case. Again, we're kind of a placeholder, if you will, just to prevent finger pointing.

To their credit, Total and Mr. Johnson have accepted responsibility. Mr. Johnson pled guilty, as you heard, to the criminal charges and, as the Judge just read to you, a stipulation.

And the stipulation says that the codefendants, Mr. Johnson and Total, stipulate or agree that his negligence was the proximate cause of Megan's injuries. Okay? The proximate cause, not a proximate cause or one

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of the proximate causes, the proximate cause.

So I want to spend just a second explaining what that means. You know, things happen during the day, a lots of things happen to put us at a particular point at a particular time.

It is true that this accident that happened that was caused by my client led to the fact that these vehicles were slowed down at the back of the line, but if you think about it, a million things happened to put us in that situation in terms of which wrecker service was called and what equipment they brought out. Nobody's claiming that anybody did anything wrong during the cleanup, but all of those things are factors.

The reason why we have, under the law, proximate cause is it limits that, and it limits the ability to recover to only the things that were proximate causes of the harm.

"Proximate" means "close." "Direct" is another way to say it. And so, obviously, you can see why Mr. Johnson and Total agree that his actions were the proximate cause of Megan's injuries.

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My client's actions some six hours before, a mile up the road, were not the proximate cause of Megan's injuries. They were of the injuries of the people in the Winnebago, and we've accepted responsibility for that and resolved that.

One of the things that the Judge is going to do is read you the standard, and it's the standard for what -- how -- if you cause an accident at the front of the line, how you might be liable for the negligence at the back of the line. And so I want to spend a couple minutes on this and then I think I'll be done.

Here's the standard that Judge Rose will read to you in a few minutes once the lawyers are done. The question is whether the injuries were natural, reasonable, and a probable result of the first accident. Okay? So my clients can't be liable in this case unless the injuries were natural, reasonable, and probable. "Probable," of course, means "likely." Okay?

So -- and that's why we're only in the case to avoid finger pointing, not because there's a valid claim here, because who could

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possibly think that the injuries here were reasonable or that this was likely going to happen?

And so just -- you remember the evidence and I just want to run through a few things.

Mr. Johnson had virtually unlimited sight. Remember the testimony is as he came up the road, he could see for almost -- what was it? -- 4,000 feet or something. It was basically .8 miles. There's evidence that he saw the lights and I'm not sure why he didn't stop. I'm not sure if you remember his explanation for that.

Hundreds of cars ahead of him were able to stop without incident including about 70 tractor-trailers. Remember his testimony about how many tractor-trailers stopped behind the first accident without plowing into anybody.

Also, the speed in terms of the speed of the impact. All those things are not reasonable and they're not claiming that they are. They've admitted that what -- Mr. Johnson admitted what he did was not reasonable.

If they're not reasonable, then there can't be a connection between the first wreck

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and the second wreck. And that's the point.

And, again, remember Mr. Johnson did plead guilty to criminal charges, and criminal conduct is not reasonable by definition. It's not foreseeable.

So that's basically it. I just would ask -- and that's -- again, you can see why I'm going first, is just to kind of get the lay of the land. Mr. Dial's going to address his client's contentions and the damages. I'm not even going to talk about the damages in the case because, frankly, I'm confident that you guys will agree that there should be no liability as to my clients, Greywolf and Mr. Tayloe.

Certainly, you know, it's a difficult case and Megan is certainly a wonderful person. I'm married to a nurse. I know how special nurses are and I know that we all hope that she moves forward, and perhaps the conclusion of this trial and having this case over with will help her somewhat and I know that's what we all hope.

On the verdict form that you'll get -- I left it over there -- there is a question. And

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where you deal with my client, Greywolf, is the third question.

Thanks, Dave.

It's Question No. 3. And the other attorneys may go after this, but basically you return a number for damages and then there's a bunch of questions about U.S. Xpress, and they can address that.

But where you address my client's role,

Greywolf, is Question No. 3, and it says -- it

asks you to put percentages for what happened

here between Mr. Johnson and Mr. Tayloe. Okay?

Again, Mr. Johnson, the guy for Total

Transportation, and my client, Mr. Tayloe.

What I would ask you to do -- and I'm sure the plaintiffs aren't asking you to do any different -- is to put a zero there, and so assign 100 percent of what happened to the person who was the direct cause of Megan's injuries. So I would ask that you put a hundred percent on the codefendants and zero percent as to my clients for all the reasons that I've outlined. But that's where you address it and that's how you do what I'm respectfully asking you to do.

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That's it. I don't know what anybody else is going to say. I've tried to be thorough. I didn't want to spend a few minutes and explain to you what the law is and why the law requires that there be a verdict in my client's favor because the actions of the second accident were not probable or reasonable or foreseeable.

Okay?

That's it. Thank you very much.

THE COURT: Thank you, Counsel.

MR. D. DIAL: Thank you, Your Honor. May it please the Court.

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

MR. D. DIAL: Good afternoon, members of the jury. It's been since, I guess, Tuesday morning or maybe it was Tuesday afternoon that I got to speak to you directly last. It seems like it's been about a month, frankly. It's been a long, hard week and that's what I want to do on behalf of my clients, Total Transportation, Mr. Johnson, U.S. Xpress, is thank you for your hard work. There were some long trial days here and I appreciate it. It's difficult to sit and listen to lawyers talk and witnesses testify, documents being introduced

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into evidence, and it's a real job and it's a very important job.

And all of you have paid attention. I've watched you and we very much appreciate it, and we're depending on you to do what you took an oath to do and I know you will do, and that is to make this decision -- and I'm not embarrassed to say it -- based on the evidence and based on the law.

And the decisions you're going to be making, generally -- and the verdict form will have these on them -- but, generally, to me the primary focus of your attention today would be what is fair compensation for Megan Richards.

I told you that in my opening and I'm repeating it today, what is fair compensation to her.

And, again, I'm not apologetically asking you to follow the law, and the law the Judge will read to you will tell you that when making that decision, it is to be a decision that is fair to all parties.

I don't apologize for asking you to do what the law requires, because you want to abide by your oath, I'm certain, and you will, and that is what the law requires when deciding

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that number: Fair to Mr. Johnson, fair to Megan Richards, fair to Total Transportation, fair to U.S. Xpress and their companies.

The other question you'll be asked about -- and I'm going to talk about each of these -- is whether John Johnson -- there's a claim for punitive damages made by plaintiff's counsel in this case, and the question will be whether John Johnson acted maliciously, wantonly, oppressively, or with an entire want of care. And it's more than negligence and it's more than even gross negligence. It is a very difficult standard to meet and it has to be met by clear and convincing evidence. something more than having a wreck. something more than having a tragic, horrific wreck. You have to show that he, essentially, was acting willfully to cause this crash, wantonly to cause this crash, and you will be asked to make that decision.

Next, you'll also be asked -- and I know this is probably the most scintillating part of the case for you -- but you'll be asked to decide whether these companies are independent and acting independently, although they

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cooperate from time to time, but are independent companies, separate from each other, and that they're controlled by different folks and they operate independently, although since they're a member of the family, there are instances with how they cooperate to make them all more efficient. That was another question you'll be asked -- or line of questions asked, actually, you'll see on the verdict form when you get it, you have to answer that question about a number of different companies.

So as we go forward in answering those questions, it is my hope that I can go over the evidence with you and provide with you what you need, the ammunition you need to fairly answer those questions.

But before I go through that, I want to talk about a few other things that you should consider while you're making that decision.

In the beginning of this case,

Mr. Cheeley, the plaintiff's counsel, said to
you in opening, "Your duty is to sift through
and decide if we, as Megan's lawyers, are
shooting straight with you or if the defendants
are." I accept that challenge and I want to

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talk to you about that.

He also said, "My job and Billy's job is to lead you on a diligent search for the truth and I will not mislead you." I want to talk about whether that promise was fulfilled and whether there were attempts by the plaintiff's counsel to get you off course and to divert your attention and your consideration to something other than what your job is, and that is deciding the questions that I just put forward.

The first example of this is that -- and they said it, I think, again today -- the plaintiffs said repeatedly during the opening statement that we, the defendants, believe Megan is faking or grossly exaggerating her emotional and mental trauma. I said it in the opening, that that was false, and I'll say it again. We have never said that and did not say this.

Recall that when witnesses testified about Megan and the problems she was experiencing, including Ms. Richards herself, we didn't cross-examine Ms. Coon, we didn't cross-examine Dr. Lane, we didn't cross-examine Mr. Richards,

her father. We asked some questions to Megan Richards, but we didn't challenge that she was faking. Nobody has said she is faking.

They tried to point to, and they did today, that we had a doctor come in here and say that her injuries weren't real, but if you recall, he absolutely said that he wasn't taking issue with the fact that she had been diagnosed with PTSD and he was not taking issue with the fact that she suffered a concussion, which is a form of a mild brain injury. He said that and we weren't challenging that. So that's yet again of -- an absolute misrepresentation about what a witness said. He did not say that. Now, I'm going to go back over what he actually said a little bit later, but that simply is not true.

We do challenge certain things, but it's not that. What we challenge is whether

Ms. Richards' injuries are permanent or whether she will recover in order to live a productive life. We think the evidence is that she will.

Now, will she ever forget this incident?
Will she ever get over the grief? Will there
always be some grief because of this event that

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certainly was a life-changing event? Of course there will be. In all aspects of life, reasonable people experience things that go with them for the rest of their life.

So we're not saying that somehow miraculously this accident and the memory of it is going to go away; what we're saying is her injuries, the PTSD and any effects of the concussion, will recover. She will get better. That's what the evidence will show and has shown. That's what we are challenging.

We believe that she will recover from those injuries and she will move forward and be able to be what she always wanted to be, and that is a good nurse. We strongly believe that that's what will happen, that it will not be a permanent thing and that she will not be exposed to dementia, another diagnosis that someone made mention of. It wasn't an actual diagnosis, but it was a mention that some folks get dementia. They didn't tie it to Ms. Richards, it was just thrown out, but I wanted to address that.

What we also said to you was, in the opening -- and I stand here today -- we said we

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were prepared to pay for the cost of her medical expenses to treat her, both past and future. No question. I said, "Whatever number they tell you that is, pay it." We don't dispute it. We owe her that. We caused the harm. We caused the injury. Now, you didn't hear that. That was not a number that was put before you. There's no claim for those.

There's not a lost wages claim. We heard a lot about concerns of whether or not Megan would be able to proceed and go forward as a nurse, but yet they didn't tell you and didn't tell you today that that's going to cause a loss of income or earning capacity. They didn't claim that.

So usually those types of numbers, past medical costs, future medical costs, and a lost wages claim, gives the jury some guidance about what would be fair compensation. It's something you can enter into the formula to consider, "We know it's going to cost this; what, in addition to that, do we give for pain and suffering or emotional distress," as Mr. Jones talked about. But you don't have those for guidance. I'll leave it to you to

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conclude why you don't have those numbers. I don't know.

The next thing that we heard plaintiff's counsel do in opening statement was make a vicious attack on Mr. Johnson. And I understand Mr. Johnson's at fault. He's always said he was. He's a man that made a mistake and you saw when they were playing his statement, he sobbed throughout. It torments him.

You saw when he was on the stand and he was talking to you about what he did after the accident, he teared up and broke down and had a difficult time.

But they want to vilify him even more.

He's a man that took -- accepted the responsibility and gave up his liberty in doing it. He is in jail, this fine Marine of 21 years, sitting in jail because he stood up and did what was right. Did what was right.

The attacks on him have been based on falsehoods. Let's recall some that were gone over by Mr. Stone.

At first, the theory was, "Well, he must have been looking at his computer. We want to

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do a forensic analysis of his computer. He was looking at his computer when he caused this accident."

Well, you know what? That didn't work out. He was not. The analysis that their own expert did proved without any doubt that he was not on any computer.

The next thing we heard forever was, "He had to be texting when this happened." Well, that proved to be wrong, as well, and for the first time today, I think I finally heard the plaintiff's counsel say, "We agree he wasn't texting at the time of the accident."

Then there was a theory maybe he was distracted because he was on his phone. Well, we knew that, based on the phone records, that wasn't true either. He wasn't on his phone.

So when all of those fell through, what did we hear about in opening? What did we hear on Tuesday that Mr. Johnson surely was doing at the time of this accident? Mr. Cheeley said -- and I'm reading from the transcript -- "The driver was more interested in watching something on his smart phone than he is watching the road ahead."

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He went on to talk about how that was based upon his expert, Mr. Stone, who they flew all the way from, I think, Wichita across the country here to testify about this, that he based it on the fact -- the size of the download and upload and the period of time.

And I'll talk more specifically about it here in just a second.

But in talking about that, Mr. Cheeley said, "We know that he was looking at his cell phone. He had to be, and he's going to be given the chance to tell you what he was doing, because up until now he has not told us." He went on.

"Driving while watching movies or
Facebooking or whatever is unconscionable. It
displays a conscious indifference to the
consequences." And then he went on and said,
"Seven young women paid dearly for what John
Johnson was doing on his cell phone."

That's what he told you. That's the latest theory of what John Johnson was doing that makes him so willfully and wantonly cause this accident.

Well, we all know how that turned out.

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Mr. Stone came in here and he said, "Yeah, I can tell that Mr. Johnson had to be streaming a video or he had to be on some sort of interactive game or he had to be on some interactive site, because when I looked at his cell phone records, " which he had for quite some time, by the way, "I see that" -- he used the size of the download of 291 megabytes download and 47 megabytes upload -- "is consistent with the amount of data you would use, particularly over a 42-minute period, which takes him 42 minutes or so from the wreck up and through the wreck, those two things tell me, " and they obviously must have convinced Mr. Cheeley, "that he had to be watching a video or a game, " and they vilified him for that.

Well, unfortunately, Mr. Stone made his opinion based upon the fact that 1 megabyte is equal to 1,000 bytes. Well, he was only a thousand times wrong. 1 megabyte is a million bytes, not a thousand.

And so when you did the correct formula, those downloads were not even big enough to be an e-mail happening over 42 minutes. They were

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nothing, and he agreed. Mr. Stone agreed.

"No, that size over those minutes certainly is not a video and certainly is not indicative of playing a game."

So he told you he knew for certain that he had to be watching a video or he had to be playing a game, and that turned out to be wrong. And not just a little wrong, it turned out to be really wrong and misleading and not a search for the truth.

I think this is evidence that you should consider when you're considering the credibility of other positions that plaintiff's counsel takes -- not the plaintiff herself, but plaintiff's counsel. When they make arguments to you, when they make allegations, make sure you harken back to can I believe those allegations? Are they really supported by the evidence or are they supported only by argument?

Once the plaintiff figured out that that incredibly incorrect assertion, no matter how certain Mr. Cheeley was about it, was wrong, they changed course and they said, "Well, he was fatigued. He had not slept." And I think

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they said he hadn't slept for something like 24 to -- 36 to 24 hours before the accident, he didn't sleep.

Well, how would they know that?

Mr. Johnson informed everyone he was resting during the day when he testified.

They said, "Well, that can't be true because you were on your phone texting during that entire period of time," and that was their proof. They were going to show you that he couldn't have been resting because there were no period of time where he wasn't texting.

They just repeated that a few minutes ago.

Well, let's take a look at that. Let's see if that's supported by the evidence.

Let's pull up Plaintiff's Exhibit 216, please.

This is an exhibit that was referenced on numerous occasions. They mentioned, and they liked to mention often, that it was prepared by defense counsel, and it was prepared and we provided it to the plaintiff to try to assist them in being able to understand what the records said and they didn't say, but apparently we weren't that successful.

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If you look at a part of that exhibit at the top where I have that 12:23 a.m. is when he's in Shreveport, if you look at the top when you get the whole thing. He gets on the bus and departs for Jackson around 12:30, so the last text before he gets on that bus -- and it's a duplicate from the one above it but the time is right -- is 12:23.

Now, when is his next? When does

Mr. Johnson do anything on his phone, his

texting on his phone? Not until 3:18. That's

a three-hour period of time with no texting

activity. That doesn't show he's constantly on

his phone and unable to rest or nap when he's

taking this ride on the bus.

And then if we continue down, you'll see he got off -- that trip ended somewhere around 4:30, so there was essentially another hour or more where there was no text activity.

So during that bus trip, as opposed to him manipulating that phone the entire time as plaintiff's counsel has told you repeatedly, four of the hours were available to nap, as Mr. Johnson consistently stated he did. He was resting during that trip when he was coming

across.

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The next thing they told you was while he was at the terminal in Richland, that he was constantly texting and there's no way he could be resting. They just said it a couple of -- a few minutes ago, reiterated that allegation.

Well, what did the actual records show and this exhibit that they put into evidence show? Well, when he got to Shreveport, he got there -- if we go to the bottom part here, he got to the facility -- excuse me. When he got to the facility in Richland, Mississippi, he got there about 7:00 a.m. He told the police that in his interview.

And so if you look what was going on from 7:00 a.m. -- I put it there, it's item 32 -- and you go down, he doesn't get any kind of text message until 2:32 p.m. That's about seven-and-a-half hours, plenty of time to be in that lounge that's provided for drivers to rest and sleep and be rested up when they start their trip.

So this position that he couldn't have been rested and therefore was fatigued, the part of their fatigue case is that he was

constantly texting before he started his trip. He had seven-and-a-half hours, uninterrupted by text, to rest, because we know that he eventually did get up and checked on the truck and he ended up leaving that facility around 5:00. So that's 11 hours available to get rest and he was just coming off a vacation, where he said he relaxed during that vacation.

There's no evidence that he was up all the time before he started this trip. He had 11 hours available to him to rest and be fresh and ready to take this load if he so decided.

That's what the actual evidence is about that, not what plaintiff's lawyers told you in the opening statement that for 24 -- or 36 to 24 hours this gentleman didn't sleep and, therefore, that's why he was fatigued.

And they say since he was fatigued here, it's similar to what he was fatigued about way back in -- four years ago or three-and-a-half years ago, when he admitted that he fell asleep and had an accident. But they're trying to do that because they want you to use that accident that happened three-and-a-half years ago as a basis to say that Mr. Johnson acted willfully

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and to punish him even further by awarding punitive damages. That's the whole purpose of that. It doesn't make sense. It doesn't follow through and it's not consistent with the evidence. Just because the plaintiff's lawyers say it with passion doesn't make it so. Look at the evidence.

Another thing that was said on a number of occasions was that the defendant wouldn't bring in a single doctor to testify. They said,

"Defendant will bring -- will not bring even one doctor to challenge the facts which Megan's doctors have testified. You will be presented with undisputed testimony about the permanency of her brain injury, critical issue. The defendants have no medical experts to disagree with or deny our medical proof." He said that on several occasions.

Well, you know, prior to Monday evening,
January the 16th, when we got new reports from
Dr. Sass and Dr. Lacy flip-flopping on their
earlier opinions, he was exactly right, we did
not intend to bring a doctor in to testify
because we did not disagree with what Dr. Lacy
and Dr. Sass were saying at that time when they

rendered their opinions and held those opinions for many, many months. So he was correct.

I assume the tactic of delay until literally hours before the case was going to begin and we were going to be picking a jury, to tell me that now these people who had been treating Megan for many months have decided to change their opinions.

And they were big changes. They were important changes. Dr. Sass previously had said he saw no evidence of any traumatic brain injury. That's not a defense witness saying that, that's not David Dial saying that, that's not anyone from Total Transportation saying that; that's the paid-for expert by the plaintiff saying that, Dr. Sass, for many months.

He issued that report in October of 2015 and never changed it until hours before this trial was to start, and in that report, he clearly said -- and he confirmed it when he testified -- I found no evidence of a traumatic brain injury, I found no evidence that her cognitive problems were related to a traumatic brain injury. So we agree. We didn't have any

reason to bring in a doctor.

Dr. Lacy at that time said she was treating her for a concussion and the aftereffects of a concussion, which is a form of a brain injury. We agreed. That's exactly what we believe, it was a concussion that would eventually alleviate, like most concussions do.

We didn't have any reason to come in and have a doctor disagree with Dr. Lacy. We, too, agreed with that. There would be no need. And believe me, y'all didn't need me to bring in doctors and say, "Amen, I agree with what Dr. Sass said."

So it wasn't until they changed and all of a sudden out of nowhere, Dr. Sass says, "I think she has not just a brain injury, but a complicated mild traumatic brain injury," and Dr. Lacy all of a sudden says, "I think she has a complicated mild traumatic brain injury."

And they base it all on an MRI that was done months after the accident.

Now, when we got those, you better believe we said, "We need to get a doctor here," because we don't think that -- that change doesn't make sense to us. So we consulted with

people, with this -- a doctor that happens to be in Denver.

You know, last time I checked, Denver was still part of the good ol' U.S. of A, and so is Atlanta, by the way. And I'm a South Georgia boy anyway, so I know all about Bulloch County and Bryan County and all these other counties down here. I've hunted and fished and gone out down here. I love South Georgia, so don't hold it against me. In fact, I wish I didn't live in Metro Atlanta a lot of the time.

But Dr. -- yes, he's from Denver and, yes, he came here, and, yes, we paid him good money. He charged a high rate.

He looked at it and he said, "That's not the way neuropsychologists and other folks make a change in diagnosis. They don't rely on an MRI that's done many months after the accident. That's not the basis of classifying. You look at the immediate available information," and that's what Dr. Lacy and Dr. Sass did originally and that's why they came up with their conclusion, but then they changed it. He said, "That's not clinically sound, that's not supported by science, that's not supported by

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medicine, that's not supported by anything.

That's an incorrect diagnosis. It's not
justified."

And then he did also agree that their now more dire projection of future problems was also not justified because the diagnosis wasn't justified.

He didn't say -- again, he did not say she doesn't have PTSD, he did not say she didn't have a concussion and a mild brain injury; he said, "I agree with their other discussions of what her future would be."

He agreed with Sass 1, where Sass 1 said,
"She won't have any problems being a nurse."

He didn't raise any concerns with that until
the Monday before we started trial. Dr. Lacy,
while raising some concerns, never said that
she would not be able to be a nurse.

So of course we now had a doctor here, and we did get him here because we had a reason to get him here. Before, we didn't plan on it.

And I will say this about Dr. Wortzel. He came here and he gave that opinion. The plaintiffs knew what the opinion was. They cross-examined him about everything but his

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opinion. They didn't ask him -- they didn't challenge the opinion in cross-examination.

And you know what else they didn't do?

They didn't call back Dr. Sass or Dr. Lacy,
which they had every right to do in rebuttal,
and say, "He was wrong and we were right."

So the person that didn't bring you a doctor to talk about the final issue was the plaintiffs, and the reason they didn't bring those doctors back is because they know Dr. Wortzel was correct. They had every right to bring in those doctors and say, "We disagree," so the unrefuted testimony is that of Dr. Wortzel. That's the unrefuted testimony.

And while he agrees she suffered these injuries, he does not agree that they are going to prohibit her from proceeding and going forward to be a nurse.

Excuse me while I catch back up.

Now I want to talk to you about the issue of the award of compensatory damages that you're going to be making. And the reason you're going to just be making that, as I've said enough and you understand it by now, is

because Total does not contest and Mr. Johnson does not contest that he was liable and responsible for causing these injuries. So we owe damages, we do.

I think you probably know now why we're here. \$40 million. A lot of money. That's a lot of money. It doesn't mean Megan -- by disputing that that's a reasonable sum doesn't mean I don't think Megan was injured. Again, I do. \$40 million.

Before we specifically address it again, I do want to remind you of a few things. Your decision is to be based on the evidence and the law and it's not to be based on the following. And this is sometimes difficult for jurors to do and this is when people like me, whose clients depend on you, depend on good folk like you for doing exactly what I know you're going to do, and that's abiding by your oath and listening to the judge.

The judge is going to tell you that when doing this, your award of damages cannot be based on speculation. There was a lot of discussion about what might happen, what could happen, but that's not -- that's speculation.

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That's not giving you -- testifying with the amount or certainty necessary to tell you it's going to happen. So you can't base your award on speculation. Don't do that.

You can't base your decision on anger or passion -- we saw a little bit of that today -- or prejudice or bias, when there was -- for some reason a lot of mention was made that somehow maybe Total doesn't think lives in Bryan County matter. Well, they matter, absolutely. Just because folks are from Mississippi and folks are from Atlanta doesn't mean that we don't think lives down here matter. He's trying to get you to somehow react in some prejudice fashion when you're making your award rather than based on the evidence and the law.

That's why I think we heard a lot of the evidence about Mr. Johnson. I think they were just trying desperately to cook up something to make you mad so that it would influence your award for compensatory damages, and they failed miserably on that.

So when thinking about compensatory damages -- and I must say this, there is

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absolutely something that is very important here. When you're awarding and thinking about what Megan's injuries deserve as compensation, you cannot be awarding because other people were killed and injured in this wreck. They had their own cases. Those are done. It's — this is Megan's case. These are Megan's injuries. These are not awarding for the horrific event caused these other things. You have to remove that, these other fine young women, Brittney McDaniel and those ladies, from the equation. Difficult to do, but I'm confident you will and I'm confident you'll be fair.

So if we can't consider those things,

Mr. Dial, why don't you tell us what you think

we ought to consider. Here is what I believe

the undisputed facts say. And in relating to

you these undisputed facts, don't fall prey to

the ploy that because I bring out additional

facts, it automatically means that I think

Megan is exaggerating. That's not correct.

I'm simply providing you with facts and

evidence for you to consider when making the

decision.

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Plaintiff's lawyers have a habit of doing that. They get up here and they say, "When the defense lawyer comes up here and he comes up here and challenges the amount of damages I'm seeking, this \$40 million that I'm seeking," he's essentially telling you, "It's code for he thinks Megan's faking."

Well, that's just not true. That's not true. I'm not. I won't. My client won't, and they made sure they told me many times. "You make sure that girl understands we want her to be fairly compensated."

What do I think is the facts that are relevant to? And we heard the doctor say that looking at someone's functioning is probably sometimes the best evidence to see how the injuries are proceeding, how they're healing, how they're going forward.

Here's some facts. Immediately after the accident -- you heard this, but I remind you -- two different EMT units did Glasgow Score ratings on Ms. Richards and she scored 15 both times, which means she's functioning at the highest level. She did not have a low Glasgow Coma Scale. That's something for you to

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consider.

Two CT scans were run, one in Savannah and one in Augusta, of her brain. None of those scans showed any structural damage to her brain, none, no lesions, no bleeding, no hemorrhages, no edema, nothing. That's something for you to consider, and those -- these are not disputed facts. We're not arguing about this.

Ms. Richards was able to return to school in June, a few months after the accident, in June of 2015, and take her finals that had left over from April, and she did quite well. She had a GPA of 3.41. Now, because she's doing well in school doesn't mean she wasn't injured, but it is relevant to determine the permanency and the healing process she's going through.

She returned to school full time in August of 2015. In October of 2015, she saw Dr. Sass and he ran a battery of tests on her, and at the end of those tests, I think you'll recall he showed this page of the results of all that test and some were higher and some were lower.

But the average, her average score, she was in the 75th percentile, meaning that she's

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in the -- she's functioning better than
75 percent of the population of the same age
and education. She's in the top 25 percent,
and that's after the injury and before -Dr. Sass confirmed it was before the concussion
would have necessarily been healed and it was
before she was being treated or very early in
her treatment for PTSD. But even then, those
tests showed she's still functioning in the top
25 percent of similarly situated people.

When she gets back to school, which was essentially her occupation at that time, we heard her say -- and she's to be congratulated for it and I absolutely agree she should be congratulated for it -- I know it took hard work and courage. She did very well. Her grades got better and better. Her cumulative GPA went up and up and she's on the dean's list every semester and, upon graduating, she graduated with honors.

That is relevant to see how her injuries are healing, how she's functioning. It doesn't mean she wasn't injured, but it means -- it's very relevant to the permanency and ability to recover.

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"recover" -- and I probably have it later in here -- but there wasn't a single doctor who said she was not going to recover. Dr. Lacy, who probably had the most negative outlook of anyone -- in fact, I frankly was astounded by some of the things she said -- but she even said that her recovery may be longer, but she's going to recover. It could be longer -- she said because of the combination of the PTSD and the mild brain injury, she would be longer, but she did not say she was not going to recover.

Dr. Wortzel said based upon what he saw from the other folks, that she was going to recover.

Dr. Sass, although he said she may be at incrised reas -- increased risk for some things -- talk this long and this fast, you get dry -- that even then he would not say that she was certainly going to experience these, that it was just -- it wouldn't be real whether she would or she wouldn't have these increased risks. So he didn't say that she was not going to recover.

No doctor has come in here and told you

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based on a reasonable degree of medical certainty Megan Richards is not going to be able to be employed as a nurse, and that, I say, is the reason we don't have a lost wages claim or a lost increased earning capacity, because no one would say that. No one believes that.

The -- I think perhaps to me -- you may think differently -- the most persuasive evidence about Megan and her future came from Dr. Lane, someone who genuinely loves and cares for Megan, someone who testified that she hopes Megan marries Jacob.

So -- and I will tell you something, I got -- I have two sons and I know how mamas are about picking daughter-in-laws. So for Dr. Lane to say that she would be happy for Megan to marry Jacob I think speaks volumes for Megan.

She also said -- when there was an effort made by Mr. Cheeley to sort of push her into saying that her anxiety was worsening and wasn't relieving, she said something to the extent, "No, time is healing wounds, as it always does." She wouldn't get pushed into

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that, that she was more anxious than she was a month ago. She wouldn't go that route, even though she was being shoved in that direction.

She then testified about her -- and I hope I say this right, once you get over four of five syllables I have have trouble -- that her preceptorship that she did in Augusta or her clinicals, I'll call it from this point forward, in Augusta in the neuro ICU unit, she talked about that and she talked about how that's hard. You work 12-hour shifts, it's stressful, it's hard, it's difficult, and she talked about the fact that maybe Megan's situation was even more stressful because she would drive often from Statesboro to Augusta to do that, participate in that shift. Sometimes she would drive back; sometimes she would stay at Dr. Lane's house for the night. So she had a combination of being on the road for that drive and long shifts, and what did she tell How did Megan do? This is recent now. This isn't in the past, we're talking about the very last semester here. She said the reports she got back from friends that she knew is that Megan did well, performed well under those

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stressful circumstances, and that's also played out by the fact that Megan made an A in that class that semester.

So that, to me, is very credible evidence of what we can look to to see how Megan -- how she's recovering and how she's going forward.

The other thing Dr. Lane said was -- and I think Mr. Cheeley asked this about everyone -- he said, "Was" -- asked Dr. Lane, "Were you worried, in view of the issues and the injuries that Megan has suffered, are you worried about her ability to perform as a nurse?" And Dr. Lane, if I recall it -- I wish I could have the quote exactly because I liked it, but I didn't get that transcript in time -- she said something to the effect, "Well, we in the medical community all come with some issues.

We all come with issues," and she said, "and we just work through them and we get over them."

And she indicated that, of course, Megan would be able to do the same thing. Yes, she's coming with some issues, but she's confident, like others in the community, to work through it and continue to be successful. And I believe that, too, and I believe that's what

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the evidence is.

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Another piece of evidence is something that Megan shared with us yesterday in talking about her job. She described the interview process she has to go through to get the job that she got.

She selected that she wanted to be in ICU and pediatrics and that she had to go through a very strenuous and stressful interview process with panels. You would go from panel to panel and be quizzed. She obviously performed very well in that, because she was offered employment in both of her chosen fields, so it shows that Megan is progressing in very stressful environments.

And, finally, she has moved to Savannah, she let us know, to prepare for taking her job and she's also studying for the boards.

So those are some objective data that are not in dispute in this case for you to consider when making your award. It doesn't mean that she wasn't suffered -- doesn't mean she doesn't have incredible grief and sorrow about this incident, but it's very relevant to what her future holds.

I should mention that in Sass 1, before he changed, he offered no opinions -- he said there was nothing about what he saw that would prohibit Megan from being a nurse. His concerns that he raised -- and they were just raised -- about being increased risk came later, and there was nothing in Dr. Lacy's first report that indicated that Megan wouldn't become a nurse.

So that's the things for you to consider when you're making your award, and I know that you will consider it.

I'm going to argue a little bit about the corporate issues very shortly.

Some of the evidence you heard today when the folks testified was that there is an agreement between the companies about services that would be provided by U.S. Xpress or U.S. Enterprise and that that agreement specifically said, "Just because we're providing these services doesn't mean that we're joint venture partners, we're not agents with each other, we're not partners with each other," set forth as clear as it could. That's the document that set forth to control their relationship.

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You saw that each and every one of the entities was its own legal entity, and under the law that means they're all a person, just like each of us is a person. Doesn't mean they can't be part of a family just because they're a person. We all are parts of a family.

There was no evidence that anyone controls

Total but John Stomps, and that was confirmed

today by Lisa Pate. And I think you probably

saw, from Mr. Stomps' personality when he

testified, that he can be forceful, and he

controls and operates that company. There's no

question about that, and he does nothing, as

they said today, to control or exert any

influence or control the operations of the USX

entities.

So there's no control of Total, there's no control by Total and John Stomps of USX, there's no mutual control; therefore, they can't be joint venture partners.

They compete for the same customers.

Wouldn't make sense, if they're all just the same, why you'd go compete against one another, and they gave examples of several companies they do that with and both have contracts with,

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which have different terms and different rates.

They also said something today. They said, "Well, here's some evidence of it," during cross-examination of Ms. Pate. They said, "Here's the bill of lading." The bill of lading has to do with, you know, what goods you're carrying to what location. It's a document you have to have as a trucker coming across the U.S. He said, "The bill of lading in this case shows U.S. Xpress." That's what it showed.

Well, we had to go get the document and actually put Ms. Pate back up here, because that just wasn't right. It shows Total was the carrier that was listed on the bill of lading. Another mistake being made.

There simply is no evidence that the things that were pointed to by Mr. Gingras about what he believes makes these companies all one are things that are done in corporate life every single day, consolidated financial statements, consolidated tax returns, the consolidation perhaps into one unit to do G&A work, general and administrative work, for the other operating companies. That's common in

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almost every corporate tree in America, because it drives efficiency, it keeps down costs, it makes their products more affordable, and it makes them probably more profitable. I was saying a bad word there, but that's true.

So that's not unusual. If that were the test that was used, then every corporation and almost every corporate family would all be one and people wouldn't have been going through a lot of difficulty to set up different corporations and operate them independently.

There simply is no evidence that you can rely on to hold that that corporate structure is not effective, is not real, and that these folks are just one and the same. They are not.

And there's no question, despite the fact that one of the services that is provided by U.S. Xpress for its subsidiaries is that it does the W-2 filings, which is perfectly legal and valid under the tax laws. Rather than having several different companies do it, they have -- they do it and so it's going to show U.S. Xpress. That's who. That doesn't mean that's actually who Mr. Johnson works for; that's just an accounting function that's done

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on behalf of everyone.

So listen closely, and I think the evidence is overwhelming that even though Mr. Gingras talked about control, he never -- he never would have answered the question, frankly, but he never would tell you of any instance where he saw U.S. Xpress exerting control over Total.

He admitted that they could and we admitted that they could, but they don't, and that's what's important and he gave you no evidence of them doing that.

I'm going to wrap up now and I want to say to you all thanks again. This is a very difficult time for trial lawyers, particularly defense lawyers, because I'm done and I can't do anything else. This case is about to get out of my hands and that's a feeling that you don't like. It's a feeling of a lack of control.

I've got to sit down and shut up, and I know you'll be happy for that to happen, but let me say what makes it easier is that I know when it leaves these hands, it's going to go into your hands, and you're good, fair-minded,

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law-abiding citizens and we have perfect confidence that you're going to return a fair verdict to the parties.

Thank you very much.

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THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Dial.

Ladies and gentlemen, we've gone about an hour-and-a-half, so we'll give you a break.

You can step out with the bailiffs.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken from 2:54 p.m. to 3:13 p.m. and the following proceedings were held outside the presence of the jury.)

MR. D. DIAL: I think we had -- I know we had one exception, Your Honor, that in the percentages, when allocating percentages, rather than just having Defendant John Wayne Johnson, it also has Defendant Total Transportation.

There's no independent claim against

Total, and the law is -- and I have a case for

Your Honor -- that when you have vicarious

liability, you only put on the verdict form the
entity who's the active tortfeasor.

THE COURT: Does the case state that?

MR. D. DIAL: Yeah.

THE COURT: Let me look at that case.

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1 MR. D. DIAL: I have to give you the cite, Your Honor. I tried to get them to pull it up 3 on the computer for you. That would be great. THE COURT: 5 MR. D. DIAL: Bob, can you pull up the 6 corporation case? 7 Now, that's just some notes here, Judge. I hope I'm not sending you anything --8 THE COURT: I understand. 9 10 MR. D. DIAL: -- I didn't say anything bad 11 about you in there. 12 THE COURT: Hey, listen, you can say 13 whatever you like. I've been called a lot of 14 things over the years. My skin's getting 15 thicker. As I approach retirement, it's 16 getting real thick. 17 MR. D. DIAL: Don't blame you. Me, too. 18 THE COURT: If it says that, that I'm not 19 supposed to put that in the verdict form, we'll 2.0 change it. 21 MR. D. DIAL: If it doesn't say that, I'm

blaming him, Your Honor. I depend on him to give me the right law.

MR. BARBER: While we're doing that, Judge, I'd like to just also reiterate my

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objection to Question No. 2. It says, "Do you find that one or more of the following defendants had a unity of interest and ownership," and then just lists them.

But there are three different theories, and I think as to each theory, the defendants need to be separately represented on a jury verdict form. There is no common enterprise liability theory in Georgia. That's a theory in other states.

THE COURT: What do you suggest -- and I've asked you before -- what do you suggest the jury question should say?

MR. BARBER: Same question except just three times for each theory. The joint venture, "We do agree there was a joint venture between Total Transportation and one of the USX defendants." If they answer "yes," here they are. And there's no percentage, remember -THE COURT: Right.

MR. BARBER: -- this is just a "yes" and they owe it.

THE COURT: Right.

MR. BARBER: Same thing with alter ego, "Do you believe that they're alter egos," and

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the third one would be, "Do you believe the acts of John Wayne Johnson was acting as an agent for one of the USX entities?" "Yes" or "no." "If so, list them."

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. BARBER: So it's not that much different than this; it's just I think we need to break out each of the three theories.

MR. VARNEDOE: In light of Your Honor's sort of hybrid charge that we, I think, all are good with, I think the verdict form reflects what the instruction to the jury is going to be.

THE COURT: Well, that -- I respect your position on that. I'll overrule it. It's preserved for the record.

MR. BARBER: Okay. Thank you, Judge.

MR. BARR: Judge, just for the record, I was just -- except to the extent we didn't use the defense version, which had a preliminary question that they would ask "yes" or "no" whether they found proximate cause as to my client, Mr. Tayloe, and only if they did would they then move down to the percentages, No. 3. I was able to explain to them to put a zero --

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THE COURT: You did a great job in front 1 of the jury and I'm sure you've cured any error 3 I might have committed. MR. BARR: Just wanted to state that. 4 5 Thank you. 6 MR. VARNEDOE: Okay. That case doesn't 7 speak to a verdict form --THE COURT: It doesn't. 8 9 MR. VARNEDOE: -- all it does is say if 10 you -- I mean, it's just the standard law about 11 respondeat superior liability. But, I mean, 12 for the jury -- for the jury to sit there --13 THE COURT: I just don't see the harm --I don't, either. 14 MR. VARNEDOE: 15 THE COURT: -- because you've admitted 16 that. It's actually been entered as a 17 stipulation, so I'll allow it to go out as is. 18 But your objection's noted for the record. 19 Thank you, Your Honor. MR. VARNEDOE: 2.0 THE COURT: Yes, sir. 21 All right. Bring the jury in, please. 2.2 (The following proceedings were held in 23 the presence of the jury.) THE COURT: Everyone please be seated. 24 2.5 Mr. Cheeley, you may now conclude for the

plaintiff.

MR. CHEELEY: Thank you, Your Honor, and I want to thank each and every one of you members of the jury on behalf of Megan and Billy and Keith and Carl.

You know, we've been working on this since shortly after this wreck happened, and the first question that came to our minds was, "Why did this happen?" You know, we've all been wondering, "Why did this happen? Why did a -- why did a truck driver not see that traffic was stopped up ahead and he had 4,000 feet to see it?" I mean, that just doesn't happen. It's just not a random wreck.

We knew that he had to be distracted. He had to be distracted in one of two ways:

Either he was fatigued and he caused a wreck like he did before back in 2011, when he worked for the only other tractor-trailer commercial company and he totaled the truck there and then immediately got fired and they said, "Don't even bother applying for a job here again, you're not eligible for rehire." Then he gets hired by Total Transportation of Mississippi, takes it back out on the road.

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You know, we get his cell phone records.

We see that he's been up a lot. You don't get restful sleep on a bus, ladies and gentlemen, you know that. You don't park your common sense at the courthouse steps when you walk in this building and listen to the smooth lawyer talk. He was either fatigued or he was looking at his cell phone, something on that cell phone.

And we made a mistake relying upon Randy Stone. He came up with this idea that -- and he miscalculated and we own it. We apologize for his mistake. It's not a mistake from the heart, it was from his head.

But we do know this: Mr. Johnson's own cell phone records showed that he was not getting the rest that he needed before he got on the -- a long trip from Richland,
Mississippi, to Savannah, Georgia.

You know, there's lives at stake along the way. A truck driver's got to ensure that he gets proper rest. He's driving what is equivalent to an 80- -- 70-, 80,000-pound missile at 68 to 70 miles an hour.

So that's one explanation, possibly, he

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was fatigued. But, you know, even that didn't set well with us as we continued to talk about it and wrestle with it, because how could he keep his truck in the lane, in the right-hand lane, all that distance if he was asleep?

Surely, you know, Mr. Robenolt -- or Sergeant Robenolt, who passed him some distance back, would have seen him weaving off the road, but, no, none of that. He was staying in his lane.

So we believe that he had to be distracted looking at something, and most likely it was some of those pictures that Anastasia had sent him. We didn't get into the details of what those pictures might be, but he's a 57-year-old man and she's a 26-year-old woman. You can figure that out on your own.

If he was looking at his cell phone or if he was fatigued and driving at 68 miles an hour, that is unconscionable in my book where I come from. I don't care what Mr. Dial has to say about trying to sugarcoat it, it's unconscionable that a man would drive a tractor-trailer, knowing that he's had a problem falling asleep in the past.

It may just not be a good idea to be

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riding a bus the very night that you're supposed to leave on the trip the next morning at 7:00 a.m. You don't get good sleep on a bus. Maybe he should have gone to Richland, Mississippi, the day before and got a hotel and got a really good night's sleep before he gets on the road with this load.

And, you know, and then to make matters worse, when he gets there at 7:00 a.m. in the morning, his truck's not even ready. He has to go sit and cool his heels for nine or ten hours in a driver's lounge, of all places, where there are no beds, TV's going, other drivers are talking. I'm sure they're, you know, cutting up in there. You can't sleep in a truck terminal driver's lounge.

Then he hits the road to Savannah,

Georgia, and that's where, at Mile Marker 141,

Megan's world and five other young women who

lost their lives and Brittney McDaniel, that's

where their world changed.

I told you in opening statement -- I read you a note that Megan wanted me to read to y'all, and I'm going to read it again because I think it bears emphasis of what she's going

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through. It sums it up.

When she looks at this car that she was in and the mangled mess that it's in, here's what she had to say. "When I look at this picture, I see a picture of me. Even though I look normal on the outside, I really feel like damaged goods on the inside. So when I look at this picture, instead of seeing the totally destroyed car, which I am amazed that I did not die in, I see a picture of what happened to my body, to my back, to my brain, my memory, my emotions, my confidence, my relationships, my career, my hopes, my dreams, my future, my everything. I know that each one of you see a picture of a horribly mangled SUV, but I see a picture of my whole life cracked and not put together, smashed and damaged from the inside out. But when people look at me now, they see a Megan who is different from the Megan who enjoyed everything about life and looked forward to my future with enthusiasm. before April 22, 2015. That day changed my life forever. When people see me, the Megan on the outside, they have absolutely no idea just how much things have changed on the inside."

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You know, Mr. Dial, I don't know if he was hearing the same evidence that you and I were hearing, but they, Mr. Johnson, Total Transportation of Mississippi, and the parent company that controls them, they have taken away Megan's fullness of life and all of the good that she was going to do for other people as a nurse. They've taken away the fullness of what she was going to give to her community, and it's a loss to every one of us.

How have they done that? Well, you know, they criticize us for bringing in the best medical evidence of a brain injury that you could possibly have.

Chip, would you put that up on the screen, the MRI, please?

You heard Dr. Forseen, who is a neuroradiologist. There's not very many of those. He's a neuroradiologist in Augusta. He did an MRI at the request of Megan's neurosurgeon because Megan was still having problems in November 2016. A year-and-a-half after this wreck, she was still having the same problems. She was having forgetfulness. She was having to take notes.

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You heard her roommate talk about how she used to have a photographic memory before this wreck. She was the one on easy street in school. She was helping others make good grades in school.

And then after this wreck, everything up here changed, and we wanted to know why. Why did it change? Why is Megan still having all these problems with memory?

She went back to see her neurologist,

Dr. Shaver in Augusta, who treated her

initially when this wreck occurred. Dr. Shaver

was concerned, so she sends her to have another

MRI done -- or to have the first MRI done.

You'll remember the first two scans that were

done were CT scans, one at Memorial in Savannah

and then one in Augusta.

And you heard what Dr. Forseen said, and even their expert, who -- Johnny-come-lately expert who they flew in from Denver yesterday, he didn't refute this. He can't because he's a neuropsychiatrist, he's not a neuroradiologist. He doesn't know about MRIs and susceptibility-weighted imaging MRIs, SWIs. It's probably the most sophisticated MRI you

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can do. Not every hospital in Georgia has that kind of equipment. It's very high tech and very expensive. It takes a trained person, very particularly skillful, trained person like Dr. Forseen, to even read them.

He counted 8 to 10 hemosiderins in Megan's brain in the left frontal lobe. That's where all the executive function of the human body is concentrated.

Now, I guess Mr. Dial thinks that I guess that just happened somehow. The defendants would have you believe that that didn't happen in this wreck. They've known -- they've known since back in early December -- when we first got notice that she had this mild traumatic brain injury from doing that MRI, we told them immediately about it.

And you know what? We didn't know until yesterday that they were talking to Dr. Wortzel, even back in mid December, about it. We didn't find out about Dr. Wortzel until yesterday or the night before, when they said they were going to bring him.

So, yeah, I was able to stand in front of each one of you on Tuesday during opening

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statements and say, "They're not going to bring a single medical person to refute our medical evidence," because I didn't even know about Dr. Wortzel until two nights ago.

You know, I really -- I feel like the defendants are attacking me because they know they can't attack Megan. I wanted and Billy wanted to get the best medical proof, the most up-to-date information. We knew this case was coming to trial. We wanted to get you the best medical proof and evidence available to explain why is Megan still having problems if she just had a concussion. That didn't make sense to us, and I'm thankful that we took the time to get the answers for you.

I am burdened, Billy is burdened, for Megan. We feel like she is carrying a millstone around her neck, and it's a millstone that was placed on her by the corporate defendants over here and their corporate driver. She didn't ask for any of this. She didn't volunteer for this.

And now it sounds like they're wanting you, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, to give them a pass, to just treat this as a, "Oh, it's

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not a mild traumatic brain injury, it's just a concussion. She'll get over it." Well, it's been 19 months since this wreck happened and she's not over it.

You know what Dr. Lacy had to say.

Dr. Lacy has seen Megan, I think she said, 16

to 18 times. Isn't it -- by contrast, isn't it

amazing that in the 19 months that this case

has been pending, that the defendants have not

asked one time for Megan to be evaluated by a

doctor of their own choosing? That tells you

something. They could have done that. It's

called an independent medical examination.

They could have asked for it, but they didn't

do it because they knew that what we were

claiming about her injuries were true.

And it's also telling that when we put Dr. Lacy on the stand the other day, they didn't ask her a single question. They didn't challenge her at all. You need to take that into account, ladies and gentlemen.

And I'm going to tell you, I want to remind you, what Dr. Lacy had to say about Megan. Dr. Lacy is a neuropsychologist. She treats people with brain injuries for a living.

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She doesn't fly around the country at a moment's notice and give some jackleg opinion to some defense group that needs her and bail them out of a problem.

I'm reading from Dr. Lacy's notes that she testified from on the stand. She says, "Megan Richards has been diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder, and initially she was diagnosed with post-concussive syndrome as a result of her injuries secondary to a multiple motor vehicle collision on 4/22/2015. She was initially diagnosed with acute stress disorder, often a precursor to PTSD, within one month after this wreck and continued to have symptoms that met the criteria for PTSD after one month. She met not only one, but three possible precipitating events that are required for a diagnostic -- or a diagnosis of PTSD:

Number one, experience a life-threatening event. Well, I think we all can agree with that, that she did experience a life-threatening event.

Number two, she witnessed a serious injury or death to others. Yeah, she sure did.

And then, number three, she learned about

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the violent deaths of her friends.

So she didn't meet just one, but she met all three of the criteria of PTSD. And that's within a month of this wreck.

So this is not a situation where she can just get over it, that this is going to clear up. What explains the sweating in the bed every night if she can just get over it?

What explains the horror that is filled in her heart when she's driving on the interstate and sees a tractor-trailer in her rearview mirror, if she can just get over it?

What explains the 150 milligrams of Zoloft every day to battle depression if she can just get over it?

What explains the necessity of having to take a prescription medication just to try to sleep at night if she can just get over it?

Dr. Lacy said she is very concerned about Megan. She has significant depression -- I'm reading from her notes -- she has significant depression, anxiety, and survivor's guilt as a result of the traumatic experience that was perpetrated on her by these corporate defendants and their corporate driver.

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I'm reading on. Dr. Lacy says, "To what degree a person may recover or experience residual symptoms is unknown. Some patients have symptoms for the rest of their lives.

There is a study that suggests increased risk of dementia" -- and, Megan, I'm sorry I have to read this in front of you.

MS. RICHARDS: It's okay.

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MR. CHEELEY: "There is a study that suggests increased risk of dementia with PTSD and substantial additional evidence that there are both structural and chemical changes in the brain in patients with PTSD."

You remember the study Dr. Lacy talked about? 50,000 people were studied and there was a substantial increased risk of people developing dementia after sustaining a traumatic brain injury?

"TBI" -- she goes on to say, "TBI causes permanent changes to the brain structure. The fact that she has both PTSD and complicated mild traumatic brain injury suggests that her need -- or her road to recovery will be more prolonged and difficult, with the final outcome being difficult to determine in any single

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individual."

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Listen to this part. "I have serious concerns about her ability to work in a pediatric or neonatal ICU unit, as she may struggle with memory, multitasking, and accuracy in her work, as well as the emotional component of the position and the physical demands that may aggravate and maintain her pain condition."

That's what Dr. Lacy, who is -- who knows Megan, said, not what some out-of-town expert who's willing to say whatever for \$500 an hour says about her.

I also want to refer you to what -- remind you of what Dr. Sass testified about. He says -- and, remember, Dr. Sass took the time not only to give Megan a neurological -- neuropsychological exam that lasted over eight hours, something that Dr. Wortzel didn't even do. Dr. Sass has met with Megan. He met her as recently as last November and he saw that she was still having the same problems. He was concerned. This doesn't make sense if the diagnosis is a concussion. She shouldn't still be having these symptoms.

So he was relieved when he learned in early December that an MRI was being done on Megan, and it was a sophisticated MRI that would show conclusively whether or not she had a brain injury or whether she ought to just be getting over it.

And here's what Dr. Sass had to say. By the way, he called -- before he did any additional report, he called and spoke to Dr. Forseen. You remember him saying that? He didn't want to just read some, you know, report; he wanted to talk to Dr. Forseen and understand this susceptibility-weighted imaging MRI and its results and what Dr. Forseen was gleaning from those MRI slides showing brain damage, deposits of hemosiderin.

So Dr. Sass concluded as follows: "An MRI involving susceptibility-weighted imaging was performed by Dr. Scott Forseen on December 2, 2016, which revealed," -- and pardon me if I don't pronounce these medical terms correctly, but he says, "which revealed numerous punctate foci of magnetic susceptibility artifact at the corticomedullary junction of the left superior frontal gyrus, suspicious for shear injury in

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the setting of previous closed head injury. In light of these neuro imaging findings,

Ms. Richards appears to have sustained a more complicated mild traumatic brain injury versus a concussion, along with comorbid posttraumatic stress disorder secondary to this motor vehicle collision of 4/22/2015.

"Moreover, the deficits described in the neuropsychological evaluation performed with Ms. Richards on October the 12th, 2015, by myself, the undersigned neuropsychologist, involving disruption in working memory, sustained visual attention, and aspects of verbal/visual learning are consistent -- are consistent with disruption to areas of frontal executive functioning. Disruption of attention, working memory, and executive functioning is also seen in PTSD, which causes structural changes in the brain involving the prefrontal cortex amygdala" --A-M-Y-G-D-A-L-A -- "and the hippocampus. However, the combination of physical and psychological insult appears to be particularly detrimental to cognitive functioning, " and he cites a study done by Bryant and Harvey in

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He goes on to say, "The presence of MRI-identified hemosiderin is considered a distinct marker of brain injury and likely axonal damage," and he cites a study done by Gean, G-E-A-N, and Fishdine in 2010.

"Ms. Richards' left-sided impact with bleeding above the left eye, bruising to the left temporal area, and injury to the left scapula and knee are also consistent with greater trauma to the left side of her body, including the left frontal area of her brain. She was treated for closed-head injury with unspecified loss of consciousness and evidence of confusion and repetitive speech.

"Thus, to a reasonable degree of medical certainty, this changes her previous diagnosis of post-concussive syndrome to a mild neurogenitive [sic] disorder due to TBI" -- that stands for traumatic brain injury -- "along with her existing diagnosis of PTSD.

"The previous rule-out of somatic symptom disorder with predominant pain has also been eliminated based on the fact that Ms. Richards is not making excessive complaints, but rather

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the combination of cognitive, physical, and physiological issues increases her symptomatology beyond the typical psychiatric samples that measures such as the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-III or norm deposit.

"Finally, on a functional basis, the combination of mild TBI," traumatic brain injury, "PTSD, and chronic pain place her at increased risk for psychosocial problems and difficulties in her profession as a pediatric ICU nurse. These include increased vulnerability to emotional distress, problems with focus or sustained attention and/or working memory, and physical pain due to lifting, standing, and stooping. Signed John R. Sass, Ph.D, board certified in clinical neuropsychology."

We wanted to bring you the truth, we wanted to bring you the facts, and so we did.

You remember -- I'm sure you will -- I guess to hear the defendants tell it, you know, "Yeah, this was a bad wreck. Yeah, there was loss of life, but Megan was fortunate. She only had a concussion. Forces weren't all that

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great." We're the only party in this case that brought an expert to tell you how -- what those forces were in this wreck. They didn't bring anybody to refute Bryant Buckner.

And here's what Mr. Buckner had to say.

You'll remember this. I think he was standing right here when he was drawing on this exhibit. This is Exhibit 306. This is the crush pulse. If you remember, he was talking about how fast this car that Megan was in accelerated from zero to 47 miles per hour, and he said when that happens, when you get hit in the rear by a truck this big, it is no whiplash kind of crash; it's equivalent to a car, with Megan in it and her friends, being pushed off -- I think he said it was a seven-story building.

And then he said right after that, you know, a nanosecond later, you get slammed into the rear of a tanker truck, and so your body's speeding up, your brain's sloshing around inside your skull, and then it's like falling off a four-story building, I think he said, the other way.

And then on top of that, then you've got two pounding rollovers after that that results

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in this kind of damage. It's amazing. But for the quick actions of the driver of that vehicle, I think we wouldn't be here today because this one would have been resolved, too, I guess, by now. I'm sorry, Megan.

You know, instead of focusing on trying to make things right by Megan, the defendants -- let's look at the defendants' conduct. What did they do?

After this wreck, instead of securing
Mr. Johnson's cell phone and password
immediately from him so that they could do -- I
mean, you know, if they were interested in what
caused this wreck, the natural thing to do
would be to get his cell phone and see if there
was anything on there that he might have been
looking at so that we can make sure this
doesn't happen again. But that wasn't done.

What did they do? Well, they went out and hired a PR firm and sent lawyers to the scene of this wreck on the very day that it happened and lawyered up.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, these defendants, except for Greywolf, these defendants have robbed Megan of the enjoyment

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of the fullness of life.

You heard Kellie Lane, Dr. Lane. She was the admitting physician for Megan in Augusta. She said that she had a flat demeanor. I think she still has some of that.

I want to read something to you that Dr. Lane sent to me this morning. It's an e-mail. I can't --

MR. D. DIAL: Your Honor, I object. It's not in evidence. He's arguing outside.

MR. CHEELEY: All right. I'll make this my own. I'll make these my own words, Your Honor.

Megan might not have lost her life in this horrible wreck, while the other families did lose a daughter, but she did lose part of her soul and her inner peace died on that morning.

Physicians can stent a blocked artery, they can remove a cancer, they can stitch up a wound and give medications to treat diabetes and infections. We have not one thing that mends the soul. We have no x-ray to look for this, no blood test to measure how healthy it is, no stress test for the soul that tells us the status.

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Even sadder is that there is not a bandage or a cream or a concoction of pills or an expensive treatment that will fill the void, lessen the pain, or heal the soul.

We say time heals all things, but that is not always true. A damaged soul is not that easy. Megan is an example of this. She is beautiful when she smiles and goes through each day, but she will never be the same. I only hope through many years of love from her family and hopefully her children someday and a full life that her soul will be at peace.

The part of her that she lost that day is with her sweet dear friends who she lost, and I think that all of those girls are lucky to have had a friend like Megan.

Ladies and gentlemen, the word "verdict" means to speak the truth, and it's time these defendants heard the truth from a Bryan County jury.

Do you remember when Mr. Dial said in opening statement -- he said it again here just a little while ago -- that he wants you to be fair. But at whose expense? Don't make it at Megan's expense. She's already endured enough

of their misconduct.

What we have here between Megan on this side of the courtroom and that side of the courtroom is a failure to communicate about what she's been going through and the fair value of what amount of money it's going to take to at least recognize the harm that they inflicted on her.

Mr. Dial had the audacity to stand up here a while ago and tell you that he thought she's going to get over this. He said -- I wrote it down -- "The PTSD will recover and she'll recover from those injuries and she will not get dementia." How does he know that? He's not a medical doctor. They presented no proof.

And he accused me of trying to vilify John Wayne Johnson. I did not try to vilify him, I let him ramble on and on and on. You know, I wasn't mean to him. I just want to know, "Why did this happen, Mr. Johnson? Can you tell us? Can you now tell us what your four-digit code is to your phone?" He wouldn't even do that.

You know, you would have thought that if she just had a concussion, she wouldn't still be having nightmares. Mr. Dial didn't address

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that in his closing argument. Why is she still having nightmares if she just had a concussion?

Why did she break down and cry in a classroom at Georgia Southern last semester when EMTs come in and talk to the class about the horrors of a wreck scene and start showing pictures? Why did she have to get up and leave that classroom?

Doesn't that factor into Dr. Lacy's opinion and Dr. Sass's opinion that, you know, maybe it's not going to work out so well to try to be a pediatric ICU nurse. She's going to see a lot of that, and you need to take that into consideration when you bring back full justice for Megan. The defendants want you to bring back a portion of a cup of justice; we want you to bring a full cup of justice back for her.

I want to read you something in the Bible that I think sums up what Megan has gone through here. You know, you heard her say that her faith and her friends and her family has gotten her this far. Lord knows where she would be if she didn't have those three things, those people in her lives and her faith.

And I just want to -- I just want to -- when I talk about this, she's lost -- they have robbed her of the fullness of life, I want you to think about these words from the Book of Psalms.

Psalm 139:13. This is David writing a psalm, and he says to the Lord, "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was conceived in that secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth of my mother's bosom. Your eyes saw my uninformed body; all the days ordained for me have been written in your book before any of them came to be. "What God designed as a beautiful, full-of-life young woman has been radically changed by these defendants.

And so you saw the numbers that Billy spoke of. It's time for us to talk about numbers. I don't -- I feel uncomfortable just doing this, but I know this is the only thing that you can do to make things right.

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You know, Megan's 22 years old. If you take 365 days and multiply it by 60 years, that's 21,900 days. 24 hours in the day, that's 525,600 hours.

You -- ladies and gentlemen, we trust you to insert the right per-hour number for her suffering, because after you walk out of this courthouse today, as Billy said, this is it. There's no coming back in the future saying, "Well, that wasn't enough to compensate her," if she's still got a sound mind. I hope that she does. We all do. I pray for her that she will -- that God will make her path straight even though her world is wobbly. You remember I told you in opening statement, her world is wobbly and it's nothing that she chose.

But if you insert \$47 an hour for those years, it works out to a verdict of \$25 million. I think that's very reasonable. You may choose to do more, and we'll trust you with whatever you choose to award, but I would submit to you that your verdict should be no less than \$25 million.

Now, I feel like a burden's been lifted from my shoulders, but remember, it's now been

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passed to you. But Megan is the one that's going to be carrying the millstone for the rest of her life, and I know that you'll take that into consideration when you do justice by your verdict form.

I want to show you -- Chip, if you would, put the verdict form up on the screen, please.

I want to tell you -- I want to show you what this verdict form's going to look like and I want to tell you on behalf of Megan how we want you to fill it out.

You'll see here it says, "Megan Rebecca Richards, Plaintiff, versus Total Transportation of Mississippi, et al." We're trying to save space. We're not printing all the other names on there at the top. Civil Action File No. 2015 -- that means it was filed in 2015 -- and that's the number given to it.

Verdict. "Verdict" means to speak the truth. Read this verdict through in its entirety before answering any questions.

And this is the oath that you all took at the beginning of the trial. "We, the jury, make the following answers to the questions submitted by the Court."

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Question No. 1, "We, the jury, return a compensatory damages verdict for Megan Richards in the amount of," and that's where you'll write in the number.

Question No. 2. "Do you find that one or more of the following Defendants had a unity of interest and ownership with Defendant Total Transportation of Mississippi, LLC?" And then there you will write -- put the checkmark by the names of the defendants that you find have liability here for her damages, her injuries.

The first is New Mountain Lake Holdings, the mother ship. They owned it all. They controlled it all. You heard their own witness, Mr. Costello, say from here everything else is controlling.

The money comes in to Total Transportation of Mississippi's account. According to the bank flowchart right here, that money goes in every day; it goes out at the end of each day right into that account, U.S. Xpress Enterprises Depository Account, commingled funds.

They set the policies, even all the way down to approving the form for the driver

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applications that John Wayne Johnson filled out.

They are the ones -- U.S. Xpress

Enterprises, their wholly owned subsidiary,

Ms. Pate, the lawyer, her department approves

everything about policies and forms. I showed

you some of those a day or two ago.

Also, it's so amazing that they would stand here and make all these arguments that all these companies, the parent companies up here, don't have any responsibility for Total Transportation of Mississippi when John Wayne Johnson's W-2 -- what better proof could there be -- comes from U.S. Xpress Enterprises? What do they make us all out to be, ladies and gentlemen? We left our common sense at the front steps of the courthouse?

So I want you to check that and make quick work of it. Check U.S. Xpress Enterprises, yes; U.S. Xpress, Inc., yes; U.S. Xpress
Leasing, yes; Mountain Lake Risk Retention
Group, yes.

Question No. 3, "Assume that 100 represents the total fault that proximately caused Plaintiff Megan Richards' injuries and

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losses. What degree or percent of this

100 percent is attributable to, " and then here
you'll see the percentage attributed to

Defendant John Wayne Johnson and Defendant

Total Transportation of Mississippi, Defendant

Robert Gordon Tayloe and Defendants Greywolf

Logistics, and then it says, "100 percent."

Your total must equal 100 percent."

And I would ask you to fill in right there
100 percent for Defendant John Wayne Johnson
and Defendant Total Transportation of
Mississippi, LLC.

And then on the next page, you'll have one last question to answer, and that deals with punitive damages, our claim against

Mr. Johnson.

And this claim for punitive damages, because he was -- he knew that he shouldn't drive fatigued, he had already fallen asleep once before, out of the grace of God nobody was killed then when his tractor-trailer spun around on the interstate.

So here -- and this is going to be against him and, because his employer has admitted liability, that he is acting on their behalf,

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it will also -- whatever you award there is going to be attributed to his employer, Total Transportation of Mississippi.

And the question here is, "We, the jury, find that the Defendant John Wayne Johnson's actions showed willful misconduct, malice, fraud, wantonness" -- we're not contending that it was willful, we're not contending that it was malicious or fraudulent or wanton, but we do say that it was -- this last sentence, that it shows "an entire want of care which would raise the presumption of a conscious indifference to the consequences." And we would ask you to check "yes" and then date and sign it.

You'll elect a foreperson and bring it back, and let this community and let this entire state know that Megan has been made whole by this jury as best as the mind of man has been able to do. That's all you can do, is award money damages. We wish there was something more, but there's not.

So with that, Your Honor, I finish my remarks, and I thank you for your service on behalf of Megan Richards. Thank you.

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THE COURT: Thank you, Counsel. If someone could move those exhibits.

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All right. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, if you'll please bear with me. Hopefully in 10 or 15 minutes you'll have this case.

It is my duty to charge you on the law that applies to this case. You are bound by the law in this charge and you must apply that law to the facts as you find them to be.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have been considering the case of Megan Rebecca Richards versus Total Transportation of Mississippi,
LLC, U.S. Xpress Enterprises, Inc., U.S.
Xpress, Inc., U.S. Xpress Leasing, Inc., New
Mountain Lake Holdings, LLC, Mountain Lake Risk
Retention Group, Inc., John Wayne Johnson,
Greywolf Logistics, Inc., Arch Insurance
Company, and Robert Gordon Tayloe here in the
Superior Court of Bryan County, Georgia.

In this case, the plaintiff contends generally that she was injured as a result of the defendants' negligence in a motor vehicle collision.

I charge you that the plaintiff has the burden of proof, which means that she must

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prove whatever it takes to make her case except for any admissions by the defendant. The plaintiff must prove her case by what is known as a preponderance of the evidence; that is, evidence upon the issues involved, while not enough to wholly free the mind from a reasonable doubt, is yet sufficient to incline a reasonable and impartial mind to one side of the issue rather than to the other.

Total, the USX defendants, and Johnson have all admitted that: One, Mr. Johnson's conduct was negligent.

Number two, Mr. Johnson's conduct was a proximate cause of the accident involving the car in which plaintiff was a passenger and of certain physical injuries incurred by plaintiff, as well as emotional injuries directly caused by those physical injuries.

And also, number three, that Mr. Johnson was working within the scope of his employment with Total when the accident occurred and that Total is responsible for Mr. Johnson's negligence.

Plaintiff has also alleged a claim for punitive damages in this case against

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Mr. Johnson, about which I will later provide you more specific instructions. As to this claim, plaintiff must prove to a reasonable certainty by clear, convincing, and decisive evidence that she is entitled to an award of punitive damages.

This is a different and higher burden of proof than a mere preponderance of the evidence. Clear and convincing evidence is defined as evidence that will cause the jury to firmly believe each essential element of the claim to a high degree of probability.

Proof by clear and convincing evidence requires a level of proof greater than a preponderance of the evidence, but less than a reasonable doubt.

Now, evidence is the means by which any fact that is put into question is established or disproved. Evidence includes all the testimony of the witnesses, as well as the exhibits admitted during the course of the trial. Evidence may be either direct or circumstantial or both. In considering the evidence, you may use reasoning and common sense to make deductions and reach conclusions.

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Direct evidence is the testimony of a person who asserts that he or she has actual knowledge of a fact, such as personally observing or otherwise witnessing that fact. Circumstantial evidence is proof of facts and/or circumstances that tend to prove or disprove another fact by inference. There is no legal difference in the weight you may give to either direct or circumstantial evidence.

Testimony has been given in this case by certain witnesses who are termed experts.

Expert witnesses are those who, because of their training and experience, possess knowledge in a particular field that is not common knowledge or known to the average citizen. The law permits expert witnesses to give their opinions based upon their training and experience. You are not required to accept the testimony of any witness, expert or otherwise. Testimony of an expert, like that of all witnesses, is to be given only such weight and credit as you think it is properly entitled to receive.

Now, you, the jury, must determine the credibility of all the witnesses. In deciding

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this, you may consider all the facts and circumstances of the case, including the witness's manner of testifying, their intelligence, their means and opportunity for knowing the facts about which they testified, the nature of the facts about which they testified, their testified, the probability or improbability of their testimony, their interest or lack of interest in the outcome of the case, and their personal credibility as you observe it.

To impeach a witness is to show that a witness is unworthy of belief. A witness may be impeached by disproving the facts to which the witness testified.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, at this point
I'm going to talk to you about damages.

Damages are given as pay or compensation for injury done. When one party is required to pay damages to another, the law seeks to ensure that the damages awarded are fair to both parties.

If you believe from a preponderance of the evidence that the plaintiff is entitled to recover, you should award to the plaintiff such sums as you believe are reasonable and just in

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this case.

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Damages are given as compensation for an injury done, and generally the injury is the measure when the damages are of a character to be estimated in money. If the injury is small and mitigating circumstances are strong, only nominal damages are given.

Now, I charge you that pain and suffering is a legal item of damages. The measure is the enlightened conscience of fair and impartial jurors. Questions of whether, how much, and how long the plaintiff has suffered or will suffer are issues for you, the jury, to decide.

Pain and suffering includes mental suffering, but mental suffering is not a legal item of damage unless there is physical suffering also. In evaluating the plaintiff's pain and suffering, you may consider the following factors if proven:

Interference with normal living; interference with enjoyment of life; loss of capacity -- excuse me, impairment of bodily health and vigor; fear of extent of injury; shock of impact; actual pain and suffering, past and future; mental anguish, past and

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future; and the extent to which the plaintiff must limit activities.

I charge you that in order for the plaintiff to prevail for the negligent infliction of mental suffering, she must show that she suffered a physical impact, the physical impact caused her physical injury, and the physical injury caused her mental suffering and emotional distress.

In tort actions, there may be aggravating circumstances that may warrant the imposition of additional damages called punitive damages. In this case, the plaintiff has a claim for punitive damages against the defendant driver Johnson.

Before you may award punitive damages, the plaintiff must prove that Defendant Johnson's actions in causing harm to the plaintiff showed willful misconduct, malice, fraud, wantonness, oppression, or that entire want of care that would raise the presumption of conscious indifference to the consequences.

Plaintiff must prove that Defendant

Johnson is liable for punitive damages by a

higher standard than that for proof of other

damages; that is, by clear and convincing evidence.

If the plaintiff fails to prove as to Defendant Johnson by clear and convincing evidence that he was guilty of willful misconduct, malice, fraud, wantonness, oppression, or the entire want of care that would raise the presumption of conscious indifference to the consequences, then you would not be authorized to award punitive damages.

Mere negligence, although amounting to gross negligence, will not authorize an award of punitive damages. Punitive damages, when authorized, are awarded not as compensation to a plaintiff, but solely to punish, penalize, or deter a defendant.

As you've already seen in the verdict form, you will have to specify whether you do or you do not decide to impose punitive damages.

If you find that damages sustained by the plaintiff were caused by more than one defendant, in determining the total amount of damages to be awarded, you should apportion

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your award of damages among the parties who are liable according to the percentage of fault of each defendant. Again, you saw that on the verdict form and you will have to insert your answer in arriving at your verdict.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have heard a lot of evidence in this case about different companies and how they interrelate with each other. The plaintiff claims that Total Transportation was a mere instrument or tool, what the law refers to or calls the alter ego of its parent and affiliated corporations, so that the corporations were acting as one entity.

The defendants deny this claim and maintain that the companies were separate corporate entities and acted independently of each other.

For the plaintiff to prove that one company is the alter ego of another company, the plaintiff must show by a preponderance of the evidence that there is such a unity of interest and ownership that the separate personalities of the corporation no longer exist.

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In making this determination, you may consider the following factors:

Whether the corporation maintained adequate observation of corporate formalities, separate records, accounts, minutes, general ledgers;

Whether the corporate officers actually functioned as corporate officers;

Whether there exists commingling of control, property, employees, and records;

Whether generally one corporation operates as the mere shadow of another corporation;

Whether the corporation was solvent or insolvent; and

Whether one corporation had the right to direct and control the conduct of the other party in the activity causing the injury.

Ladies and gentlemen, I charge you that generally an agency relationship arises whenever one entity expressly or by implication authorizes another entity to act for it or subsequently ratifies the acts of the other entity on its behalf. Once a principal/agent relationship has been created, the principal is bound for the care, diligence, and fidelity of

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its agent in its business and, hence, the principal is also bound for the neglect of its agent in the transaction of its business. In other words, the negligence of one entity will be imputed to another entity if the first entity was acting as an agent of the second entity when it engaged in such negligent conduct.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you know, this is a tort case in which the plaintiff must prove by a preponderance of the evidence generally that the negligence of the defendant or defendants, if any, was the proximate cause of her injuries.

Ordinary negligence means the absence of or the failure to use that degree of care that is used by ordinarily, careful persons under the same or similar circumstances.

Before a plaintiff can recover damages from a defendant in a case such as this, there must be injury to the plaintiff resulting from the defendant's negligence.

In order for a plaintiff to prevail on a claim for ordinary negligence as plaintiff alleges here against the defendants, she must

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establish the following elements by a preponderance of the evidence:

Number one, a legal duty to conform to a standard of conduct raised by the law for the protection of others against unreasonable risk of harm.

Number two, a breach of this standard.

Number three, a legally attributable causal connection between the conduct and the resulting injury; that is, that the conduct was the proximate cause of the injury.

And, four, some loss or damage flowing to the plaintiff's legally protected interest as a result of the alleged breach of a legal duty.

I will now define to you what "proximate cause" is. "Proximate cause" means that cause which, in a natural and continuous sequence, produces an event and without which cause such event would not have occurred.

In order to be a proximate cause, the act or omission complained of must be such that a person using ordinary care would have foreseen that the event or some similar event might reasonably result therefrom.

There may be more than one proximate cause

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of an event, but if an act or omission of any person not a party to the suit -- I'm sorry, that does not apply, so to strike the last sentence. That does not apply in this case.

Ladies and gentlemen, I charge you that a defendant may be held liable for an injury when that person commits a negligent act that puts other forces in motion or operation resulting in the injury, when such other forces are the natural and probable result of the act that the defendant committed and that reasonably should have been foreseen by the defendant.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I will now charge you on certain laws that will apply in this case.

First of all, the Code of Federal

Regulations states that no driver shall operate
a commercial motor vehicle and a motor carrier
shall not require or permit a driver to operate
a commercial motor vehicle while the driver's
ability or alertness is so impaired or so
likely to become impaired through fatigue,
illness, or any other cause as to make it
unsafe for him to begin or continue to operate
the commercial motor vehicle.

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No driver shall engage in texting while driving. No motor carrier shall allow or require its driver to engage in texting while driving.

The law further states that no driver shall use a handheld mobile telephone while driving a CMV. No motor carrier shall allow or require its drivers to use a handheld mobile telephone device while driving a CMV.

I charge you that the Official Code of Georgia Annotated reads as follows: No person shall drive a vehicle at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the conditions and having regard for the actual and potential hazards then existing. Consistently with the foregoing, every person shall drive at a reasonable and prudent speed when approaching and crossing any intersection, et cetera.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the Georgia

Code also requires as follows: A driver shall exercise due care in operating a motor vehicle on the highways of this state and shall not engage in any actions which shall distract such driver from the safe operation of such vehicle.

The Georgia Code further requires and

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prohibits anyone from operating a commercial motor vehicle on any public road or highway of this state while holding a wireless telecommunications device to conduct a voice communication.

I charge you that under Georgia law, all drivers have a duty to exercise ordinary care with regard to other drivers or users of the roadway. Specifically, every driver is under a duty to keep a proper lookout for potential hazards. A driver has no right to assume that the road ahead is clear of traffic and it is his duty to maintain a diligent outlook ahead.

Ladies and gentlemen, I charge you that

Defendants Total Transportation of Mississippi,

LLC, and U.S. Xpress, Inc., are motor carriers

as defined by the laws of the State of Georgia.

I charge you further that there is a valid existing statute in the State of Georgia which requires a motor carrier to maintain a policy of indemnity insurance by an insurance company licensed to do business in this state, which policy must provide for the protection of the public against injury proximately caused by the negligence of such motor carrier, its servants,

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or its agents.

The statute also permits the plaintiff to join, in the same action as the motor carrier, the motor carrier's insurance company.

I charge you further in this regard that the Defendants Total Transportation and U.S.

Xpress, Inc. complied with this statute and maintain a policy of indemnity insurance issued by Defendant Mountain Lake Risk Retention

Group, which was in effect at the time of the wreck and, therefore, Defendant Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group, Inc. has been properly joined as a defendant in this case.

I charge you further that the liability of Defendant Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group is based upon the liability of Defendants Total and U.S. Xpress and they have admitted liability for the plaintiff's injuries and damages -- I'm sorry -- and Defendant Total Transportation has admitted liability injuries as I have already charged you.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, if you believe from a preponderance of the evidence and clear and convincing evidence with regard to the punitive damages, but again with regard to the

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compensatory damages, if you believe that they have been proven by a preponderance of the evidence, the form of your verdict would be, "We, the jury, find for the plaintiff," and you've already seen the form of that verdict.

I want to emphasize to you that -- I'm sorry. Let me go back.

Whatever your verdict is in this case, it must be agreed to by every juror. It must be in writing, dated and signed by your foreperson, and it must be returned and read aloud in open court.

You have the verdict form and you know what it consists of, but I do want to emphasize that anything that I did say during the course of this trial was not intended and did not intimate, hint, or suggest to you which of the parties should prevail in this case. Whichever of the parties is entitled to a verdict is a matter entirely for you to determine and whatever your verdict is, it must be agreed to by all of you. The Court's interest in this matter is that the case be fairly presented according to the law and that you, as honest, conscientious, impartial jurors, consider the

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case as the Court has instructed and return a verdict that speaks the truth as you find the truth to be in this case.

Your verdict should be a true verdict based upon your opinion of the evidence according to the law given you in this charge. You are not to show favor or sympathy to one party or the other, including, without limitation, the local or remote residence of the parties and the corporate status of any of the defendants. It is your duty to consider the facts objectively, without favor, affection, or sympathy to any party.

Your verdict, again, must be unanimous.

One of your first duties in the jury room will be to select one of your number to act as foreperson. He or she will preside over your deliberations and he or she will sign the verdict form to which all 12 of you freely and voluntarily agree.

You should start your deliberations with an open mind. You should consider all of the evidence in the case and deliberate with an aim toward reaching a unanimous verdict consistent with your consciences and the oath you took as

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a juror.

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You should avoid premature fixed opinions. Consult with one another and consider each other's point of view. Each of you must decide this case for yourself, but you should do so only after a discussion and consideration of the case with your fellow jurors.

Do not hesitate to change an opinion if convinced that it is wrong; however, you should never surrender an honest conviction or opinion in order to be congenial or to reach a verdict solely because of the opinions of other jurors.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you're going to go out in just a minute. You'll have this jury form. After you have a discussion of this case and you arrive at a verdict, you're going to go through the entire form. You have to read it in full before you begin to answer any of the questions.

Once you've reached a verdict and you have filled out the verdict form in its entirety and it's been dated and signed by your foreperson, then you would simply knock on the door, let the bailiffs know that you have arrived at a verdict, and we will then bring you back out,

where your verdict will be published in open court.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, at this point I'm going to go off script. You've been here all week. You've been here early in the morning until late in the evening. It is really unfair to you to give you this case at 4:35 on Friday afternoon.

I don't want you to feel that you're under any pressure to be in any hurry. You know how important this case is to everyone in this courtroom. So I'm going to leave it to you. I don't want you to be in a rush. I want you to take your time. I want you to consider all of the evidence in the case.

If you want to work for a few hours tonight, that's fine. We will abide by whatever your schedule is. If you work for a few hours and you decide you want to go home and you want to rest and you want to come back tomorrow, that's fine. Again, I don't want you to feel that you're under any pressure whatsoever. You go according to your own schedule.

So with those instructions, I'm going to

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excuse you at this time to go back to the jury room, but you cannot begin your deliberations until you receive all of the evidence that will be delivered to you by the bailiffs.

(The following proceedings were held outside the presence of the jury.)

THE COURT: All right. The jury is out. Everyone please be seated.

On behalf of the plaintiffs, can you state your objections to the charge.

MR. JONES: We don't have any.

THE COURT: All right. From the defendants, Counsel?

MR. MARCOVITCH: Your Honor, we renew our objections to the charge as stated and articulated at the charge conference.

I would like a second to review the -- our pattern, though, so if we have more exceptions, I'll bring it to the Court's attention before the jury comes back with a verdict.

And specifically we do -- well, Mr. Dial has something to say.

MR. D. DIAL: Yeah, Your Honor.

Based upon the charges that were given regarding the impact rule, which I -- I will

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move for a mistrial based on the fact that the instruction was given concerning the limitation to the recovery for physical injuries when that was not, my understanding, how this case was tried and then that instruction was given.

THE COURT: Mr. Dial, I'll tell you what, that was verbatim the request that you made. I gave your -- I gave the defense instruction.

MR. D. DIAL: But, Your Honor, you gave it contrary to the evidence that you allowed, so I move for a mistrial. In other words, the evidence isn't consistent with the instruction.

THE COURT: I think I understand your objection. It's based on your assertion early on that we should -- we should not have allowed any other evidence in the case.

MR. D. DIAL: Well, no, I don't think that was my position, but I think we're talking -- I think we understand it.

I don't think you should have allowed in evidence of mental anguish and suffering that was caused by something other than the physical injuries.

THE COURT: I take your point and it's preserved for the record.

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MR. MARCOVITCH: Just to clarify, my understanding from the charge conference was that the Court was not going to give Defense Requested 26, and we argued accordingly.

That's the basis for the motion for mistrial, Your Honor.

THE COURT: You know, we dealt with about 50 charges. I can't recall specifically, but I gave the exact defense request with regard to physical impact. We went through the three prongs. So, you know, it's --

MR. D. DIAL: We'll have to look at the charge conference, but I was not aware that charge was going to be given.

THE COURT: I don't recall you ever withdrawing that charge.

MR. MARCOVITCH: No, but we excepted to the Court not giving the charge, which I was -- my recollection was that the Court said you were not going to give. That was the impact rule charge --

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

MR. MARCOVITCH: -- that we specifically discussed, and the Court stated that you were not going to give it but that we're free to

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Page 1103 1 argue it. MR. D. DIAL: That's why I made the 3 comment to Your Honor before my argument, that I felt like it was unfair for you to say I 4 5 could argue something that there wasn't going to be a charge on. If I recall, I made that 6 statement. THE COURT: You did, you did. And, 8 9 gentlemen, you may be right, so it's preserved 10 for the record. 11 MR. D. DIAL: Thank you, Your Honor. 12 THE COURT: Anything else? 13 MR. D. DIAL: Is my motion denied, Your 14 Honor? THE COURT: Yes, sir. 15 16 MR. D. DIAL: Thank you. 17 MR. PITTMAN: Your Honor, the blowups can 18 qo back? 19 THE COURT: They can go back. 20 MR. PITTMAN: I'm going to check to make 21 sure there aren't any in here that are not 2.2 exhibits. THE COURT: Go ahead, Counsel. 23 2.4 MR. MARCOVITCH: I just want to make sure 2.5 Mr. Varnedoe can hear.

Your Honor, by my reading, I believe you 1 gave -- on our 26, Defense 26, you gave the 3 first four paragraphs, but not the last paragraph, which is based on Bennett versus 5 Moore. So you gave --6 THE COURT: Yeah, I didn't give that. 7 MR. MARCOVITCH: Okay. So we excepted to the admission of that aspect of 26 in any 8 9 event. 10 THE COURT: I saw that and I intentionally 11 did not give it. 12 MR. MARCOVITCH: I understand. 13 MR. VARNEDOE: That is it? 14 I just wanted it on the MR. MARCOVITCH: 15 record. 16 I didn't know if you had MR. VARNEDOE: 17 something else. 18 MR. MARCOVITCH: No, no, no. 19 THE COURT: Can I look at yours? 2.0 MR. MARCOVITCH: Sure. 21 THE COURT: Yeah, about the injuries to 2.2 her friends? 23 MR. MARCOVITCH: Yes. THE COURT: That's true. 24

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I just want it to be on

MR. MARCOVITCH:

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the record that we're excepting to that.

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THE COURT: I just tried to stick to the pattern and then the three prongs and read as you had requested.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Correct.

THE COURT: Which to me --

MR. VARNEDOE: And I do want the record to reflect that that charge was never withdrawn by the defense.

MR. MARCOVITCH: Absolutely, it wasn't withdrawn. We moved for a mistrial, however.

THE COURT: And to be honest with you, I don't understand the objection because all I did was flesh out even further what the pattern charge says, which is there has to be a physical injury to recover for mental pain and suffering.

So then I went further and went through the three prongs that they have to -- it made sense to me to go ahead and do that.

So I apologize if there was some confusion. I didn't see any harm in giving the defense charge, so that's what I did.

MR. MARCOVITCH: So in any event, we're on the record --

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1 THE COURT: Yes.

MR. MARCOVITCH: -- that we do not except to the Court having given 26, but to the omission of the last paragraph of 26, and we're on the record as to the mistrial in light of the circumstances of the evidence coming in, as Mr. Dial articulated.

THE COURT: Understood. Understood. Thank you.

MR. VARNEDOE: Thank you.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken from 4:48 p.m. to 5:55 p.m. and the following CONFIDENTIAL proceedings were held in chambers, outside the presence of the jury.)

THE COURT: All right. It's my understanding that the parties want to place something on the record. We have Mr. Cheeley and Mr. Jones for the plaintiff, we have Mr. Dial, and we also have a representative of --

MR. D. DIAL: AIG/Lexington of Lexington, Bob Ulrich.

THE COURT: Mr. Bob Ulrich, U-L-R-I-C-H. Gentlemen, you may proceed.

MR. CHEELEY: Your Honor, after the jury

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began its deliberation, Mr. Dial brought
Mr. Ulrich over and introduced him to me, and
Mr. Ulrich and I have been talking about a
high/low and we've reached an agreement on that
high/low. And I'll memorialize it at this
time, and we've got it written down. We'll
probably make this as an exhibit, as well.

You want to do that?

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MR. ULRICH: It's my sloppy handwriting.

MR. CHEELEY: Okay. So the high will be 14.5 million, the low will be 1 million, and this will conclude the case. There won't be a punitive damage phase 2.

THE COURT: And no appeals?

MR. CHEELEY: No appeals.

MR. ULRICH: Waive appeals.

MR. CHEELEY: Yeah, all the appeals are done. And this only applies if the jury's verdict is against -- no matter what the defendants it's against, even if it includes Greywolf, this is buying their peace and our peace.

MR. D. DIAL: In other words, we wouldn't pay any money associated -- the money that Greywolf might have wouldn't be figured into

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the calculation of the high and the low.

MR. ULRICH: They would pay their own share.

MR. CHEELEY: Right. Waive all appealable -- or appellate rights and also any rights under an offer of judgment under 9-11-68; waive all costs, fees, and interests, including Holt and time-limited demand.

They would pay the low within 30 days, and anything above that they'd pay within 90 days up to the 14-1/2 million; right?

MR. ULRICH: Correct.

MR. CHEELEY: And if there's any fines to be structured, it would be with an AIG-approved broker, with AIG-approved life company, and the terms would be confidential. We agree to that.

THE COURT: All right. Anything else that needs to be placed on record?

MR. D. DIAL: No. I'd just put -- state for the record that the Defendants Total and U.S. Xpress defendants and John Wayne Johnson agree, as well.

THE COURT: All right. Thank you. That will conclude the matter.

MR. CHEELEY: All right. You want to mark

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Page 1109 1 this as an exhibit? THE COURT: I will. I think that would be Court's Exhibit 2. 3 (Court's Exhibit 2 was marked for 5 identification.) (Whereupon, a recess was taken from 5:57 6 7 p.m. to 6:04 p.m. and the following proceedings were held outside the presence of the jury.) 8 9 THE COURT: Okay. Bring the jury in. 10 (The following proceedings were held in 11 the presence of the jury.) 12 THE COURT: All right. Everyone please be 13 seated. 14 All right. It's my understanding that 15 Brad Singer is our foreman. 16 MR. SINGER: Yes, Your Honor. 17 THE COURT: Mr. Singer, I have your 18 handwritten question, but before I address 19 that, I want to ask you a question, but I want 2.0 you to be very careful about your response. On the verdict form, has the jury reached 21 2.2 a decision -- and don't tell me what the 23 decision is -- but has the jury reached a 24 decision with regard to Question 1? 2.5 MR. SINGER: No, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right, sir. Has the jury reached any decision with regard to Question 2?

MR. SINGER: Yes, Your Honor.

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THE COURT: All right. Has the jury reached a decision with regard to Question 3?

MR. SINGER: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Your questions all pertain to Question 4?

MR. SINGER: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: All right. If you were to -- and let me read into the record exactly what your note says.

"Need more explanation of Question No. 4. What does answering 'yes' mean? What does answering 'no' mean? After 'or that entire want of care,' what does this mean?"

If you were to answer "yes" as to Question 4, you would come back before the Court, hear additional evidence, additional argument, and we would have another phase of the trial. If you answer "no" as to Question 4, there would be no additional evidence or argument.

As to the request as to what the "entire want of care" means, I cannot elaborate on that. They are words of common language and

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1	understanding, and I would ask you to refer to
2	the Court's previous charge with regard to
3	that.
4	MR. SINGER: Okay.
5	THE COURT: Does that answer your
6	questions?
7	MR. SINGER: I'm not sure, Your Honor.
8	May I?
9	THE COURT: You can confer, yes.
10	MR. SINGER: Your Honor, do we have a copy
11	of the charges you mentioned? Do we have a
12	copy of that, sir?
13	THE COURT: Unfortunately, I do not, but I
14	can confer with counsel and if there's a
15	particular charge that you want reread, I can
16	do that.
17	MR. SINGER: I think that would be helpful
18	to kind of clear up what exactly we're
19	answering on Question No. 4.
20	THE COURT: Okay. Counsel want to
21	approach the bench or do you want me to excuse
22	them for a few minutes?
23	(The following proceedings were held at
24	the bench, outside the hearing of the jury.)
25	MR. D. DIAL: Do we have a charge, Your

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Honor, that distinguishes between compensatory and punitive damages? I'm concerned that they will take into consideration the amount of 1 based on how they answer 4. That's what I'm concerned about, since we don't have a line for 4.

THE COURT: I understand. I just don't know how else to respond to their inquiry.

MR. D. DIAL: Could we respond -- I think you said that the -- if you find as to 4, the amount is decided later. It's not before you now.

MR. JONES: That might help. I agree, that might help.

(The following proceedings were held in open court, in the hearing of the jury.)

THE COURT: Okay. All right. Let me go back to your question with regard to Question No. 4.

If you were to answer "yes," we would come back, hear additional evidence and argument, and you would enter -- you would determine what that award would be. But you should not consider that in any way whatsoever in answering No. 1.

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	Page 1113
1	Does that help you?
2	MR. SINGER: Yes. So if I may, Your
3	Honor.
4	THE COURT: Yes.
5	MR. SINGER: So by answering "yes," that
6	would be that we're would then come back and
7	discuss awarding punitive damages?
8	THE COURT: Yes, sir. But you should not
9	consider that in arriving at your answer to
10	Question No. 1.
11	MR. SINGER: Okay. I believe that I
12	believe that resolves the question for us.
13	THE COURT: All right. Any objections
14	from the plaintiff?
15	MR. CHEELEY: No, Your Honor.
16	THE COURT: How about the defendant?
17	MR. D. DIAL: No, Your Honor.
18	THE COURT: All right. Then you may
19	resume your deliberations.
20	(Whereupon, a recess was taken from 6:10
21	p.m. to 8:02 p.m. and the following proceedings
22	were held outside the presence of the jury.)
23	THE COURT: All right. I think we have
24	everybody in place.
25	Okay. You can bring the jury in.

	Page 1114
1	(The following proceedings were held in
2	the presence of the jury.)
3	THE COURT: Everyone please be seated.
4	Mr. Singer, has the jury reached a
5	verdict?
6	MR. SINGER: We have, Your Honor.
7	THE COURT: Is it a unanimous verdict?
8	MR. SINGER: It is, Your Honor.
9	THE COURT: Has the verdict form been
10	completed in writing?
11	MR. SINGER: It has, Your Honor.
12	THE COURT: Have you dated and signed it
13	as the foreman of the jury?
14	MR. SINGER: Yes, Your Honor.
15	THE COURT: And, sir, if you would hand
16	the verdict form to the bailiff.
17	In the Superior Court of Bryan County,
18	State of Georgia, Megan Rebecca Richards,
19	plaintiff, versus Total Transportation of
20	Mississippi, LLC, et al., defendants.
21	We, the jury, make the following answers
22	to the questions submitted by the Court:
23	We, the jury, return a compensatory
24	damages verdict for Megan Richards in the
25	amount of \$15 million.

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Question No. 2, "Do you find that one or more of the following defendants had a unity of interest and ownership with Defendant Total Transportation of Mississippi, LLC?" As to New Mountain Lake Holdings, LLC, "yes"; as to U.S. Xpress Enterprises, Inc., "yes"; as to U.S. Xpress, Inc., "yes"; as to U.S. Xpress, Inc., "yes"; as to U.S. Xpress Leasing, Inc., "yes"; as to Mountain Lake Risk Retention Group, Inc., "yes."

As to Question No. 3, "Assume that 100 percent represents the total fault that proximately caused Plaintiff Megan Richards' injuries and losses. What degree or percent of this is attributable to: 100 percent Defendant John Wayne Johnson and Defendant Total Transportation of Mississippi, LLC."

Question No. 4, "We, the jury, find that Defendant John Wayne Johnson's actions showed willful misconduct, malice, fraud, wantonness, oppression, or that entire want of care which would raise the presumption of conscious indifference to consequences." The answer is "yes.

"So say we all this 20th day of January, 2017, Bradley A. Singer, Foreperson."

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From the plaintiff, any objections to the form of the verdict?

MR. CHEELEY: No, Your Honor.

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THE COURT: From the defense, any objection to the form of the verdict?

MR. D. DIAL: No, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Ladies and gentlemen, I've had previous discussions with counsel and even though you have checked "yes" as to Question No. 4, counsel for both sides have agreed that they would accept your verdict as is.

Is that correct, Counsel?

MR. CHEELEY: That is correct, Your Honor.

MR. D. DIAL: Correct, Your Honor.

THE COURT: So there is no need to go any further.

So, ladies and gentlemen, that completes your service in this case. I cannot express to you my feelings of gratitude for the hard work you've done. This has been a very difficult case for everybody involved. You've worked overtime, you're here at 8:00 on Friday night, but this, as I said at the outset, is one of the most important civic duties that you will

	Page 1117
1	ever undertake. I hope it's been a good
2	experience for you, but I cannot tell you how
3	much I appreciate your hard work.
4	So you are excused at this time with the
5	thanks and gratitude of this Court. Thank you
6	very much.
7	(Whereupon, the proceedings in this matter
8	concluded at 8:08 p.m.)
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Page 1118 1 CERTIFICATE 2 3 STATE OF GEORGIA: 4 COUNTY OF FULTON: 5 6 I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript was taken down, as stated in the caption, and the 7 questions and answers thereto were reduced to 8 typewriting under my direction; that the foregoing pages represent a true, complete, and correct 9 transcript of the evidence given upon said hearing, and I further certify that I am not of kin or 10 counsel to the parties in the case; am not in the regular employ of counsel for any of said parties; nor am I in anywise interested in the result of said 11 case. 12 13 14 Loo ana Barner 15 16 LEE ANN BARNES, CCR B-1852, RPR, CRR 17 18 19 2.0 2.1 2.2 2.3 24 25

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23 LEE ANN BARNES, CCR B-1852, RPR, CRR

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Veritext Legal Solutions

Georgia Code

Title 9, Chapter 11

Article 5, Section 9-11-30

(e) Review by witness; changes; signing.

If requested by the deponent or a party before completion of the deposition, the deponent shall have 30 days after being notified by the officer that the transcript or recording is available in which to review the transcript or recording and, if there are changes in form or substance, to sign a statement reciting such changes and the reasons given by the deponent for making them. The officer shall indicate in the certificate prescribed by paragraph (1) of subsection (f) of this Code section whether any review was requested and, if so, shall append any changes made by the deponent during the period allowed. If the deposition is not reviewed and signed by the witness within 30 days of its submission to him or her, the officer shall sign it and state on the record that the deposition was not reviewed and signed by the deponent within 30 days. The deposition may then be used as fully as though signed unless, on a motion to suppress under paragraph (4) of subsection (d) of Code

Section 9-11-32, the court holds that the reasons given for the refusal to sign require rejection of the deposition in whole or in part.

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ARE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY.

THE ABOVE RULES ARE CURRENT AS OF SEPTEMBER 1,

2016. PLEASE REFER TO THE APPLICABLE STATE RULES

OF CIVIL PROCEDURE FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION.

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