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# *Committee Meeting*

of

## NEW JERSEY LEGISLATIVE SELECT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

*“The Committee will take testimony from invited guests”*

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**LOCATION:** Committee Room 4  
State House Annex  
Trenton, New Jersey

**DATE:** December 4, 2018  
10:30 a.m.

### **MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Senator Loretta Weinberg, Co-Chair  
Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin, Co-Chair  
Senator Kristin M. Corrado, Co-Vice Chair  
Assemblywoman Nancy F. Muñoz, Co-Vice Chair  
Senator Sandra B. Cunningham  
Senator Fred H. Madden, Jr.  
Senator M. Teresa Ruiz  
Senator Steven V. Oroho  
Assemblyman Gordon M. Johnson  
Assemblywoman Pamela R. Lampitt  
Assemblywoman Angela V. McKnight  
Assemblywoman Nancy J. Pinkin  
Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson  
Assemblywoman BettyLou DeCroce  
Assemblywoman Holly T. Schepisi



### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Rosemary Alito, Esq.  
Michael Critchley, Sr., Esq.  
Joseph A. Hayden, Jr., Esq.  
*Special Counsels*

Stephanie M. Wozunk  
*Office of Legislative Services  
Committee Aide*

Alison Accettola  
*Senate Majority  
Brian Quigley  
Assembly Majority  
Committee Aides*

Michael R. Molimock  
*Senate Republican  
Kevin Logan  
Assembly Republican  
Committee Aides*

*Meeting Recorded and Transcribed by  
The Office of Legislative Services, Public Information Office,  
Hearing Unit, State House Annex, PO 068, Trenton, New Jersey*

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LORETTA WEINBERG  
Co-Chairwoman  
ELIANA PINTOR MARIN  
Co-Chairwoman

KRISTIN M. CORRADO  
Co-Vice Chairwoman  
NANCY F. MUNOZ  
Co-Vice Chairwoman

SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM  
FRED H. MADDEN JR.  
M. TERESA RUIZ  
STEVEN V. OROHO

GORDON M. JOHNSON  
PAMELA R. LAMPITT  
ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT  
NANCY J. PINKIN  
VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON  
BETTYLOU DECROCE  
HOLLY T. SCHEPISI



**New Jersey State Legislature**  
**NEW JERSEY LEGISLATIVE SELECT OVERSIGHT**  
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**COMMITTEE NOTICE**

**TO:** MEMBERS OF THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATIVE SELECT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

**FROM:** SENATOR LORETTA WEINBERG, CO-CHAIR AND ASSEMBLYWOMAN ELIANA PINTOR MARIN, CO-CHAIR

**SUBJECT:** COMMITTEE MEETING - DECEMBER 4, 2018

*The public may address comments and questions to Stephanie M. Wozunk, Committee Aide, or make bill status and scheduling inquiries to Kristi L. Cannella, Secretary, at (609)847-3890, fax (609)777-2998 or e-mail: [OLSAideLSOC@njleg.org](mailto:OLSAideLSOC@njleg.org). Written and electronic comments, questions and testimony submitted to the committee by the public, as well as recordings and transcripts, if any, of oral testimony, are government records and will be available to the public upon request.*

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The New Jersey Legislative Select Oversight Committee will meet on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 at 10:30 AM in Committee Room 4, 1st Floor, State House Annex, Trenton, New Jersey.

The committee will take testimony from invited guests.

Issued 11/29/18

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
Katherine Brennan Chief of Staff New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency	3
Alan L. Zegas, Esq. Representing The Offices of Alan L. Zegas and Associates	5
Kathryn K. McClure, Esq. Partner Smith, Eibeler, LLC	5
pnf:1-133	

ASSEMBLYWOMAN ELIANA PINTOR MARIN (Co-Chair): Good morning, everyone.

It's officially 10:30, so we can start the meeting.

If we can first start with our roll call, please.

MS. WOZUNK (Committee Aide): Assemblywoman Schepisi.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SCHEPISI: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblywoman DeCroce.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN REYNOLDS-JACKSON: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblywoman Pinkin.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINKIN: Present.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblywoman McKnight.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN McKNIGHT: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblywoman Lampitt.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Assemblyman Johnson.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Senator Oroho.

SENATOR OROHO: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Senator Ruiz.

SENATOR RUIZ: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Senator Madden.

SENATOR MADDEN: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Senator Cunningham.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Co-Vice Chair Muñoz.

**ASSEMBLYWOMAN NANCY F. MUÑOZ (Co-Vice Chair):** Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Co-Vice Chair Corrado.

**SENATOR KRISTIN M. CORRADO (Co-Vice Chair):** Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Co-Chair Pintor Marin.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Here.

MS. WOZUNK: Co-Chair Weinberg.

**SENATOR LORETTA WEINBERG (Co-Chair):** Here.

MS. WOZUNK: We have a quorum.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you, everyone.

If everyone could please remember to silence their phones for today. It's important that this hearing not be interrupted.

I would like to welcome everyone to this public meeting of the Legislative Select Oversight Committee.

We are pleased to have Ms. Katie Brennan, who has agreed to appear and give testimony which touches on the justice system, and screening and hiring practices within the State government.

I fully expect a meaningful discussion today, within the scope of the Committee's charge. And I trust that everybody in this room will be respectful to the end.

At the conclusion of our hearings, we will prepare a report regarding whether there is a need for improvements in employee screening and hiring practices.

I turn it over now to my Co-Chair, Senator Weinberg.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Good morning, everyone.

I would like to take a moment to welcome all of you, and to again remind everybody that we are going to extend every courtesy that we can to Ms. Brennan; that this is probably a little bit of a difficult moment for her. But we are going to allow her to testify uninterrupted. And if we have any questions, we will save them for after the break, at which point the Co-Chair and I will ask whatever appropriate questions we find at that time.

And with this, I would like to ask Ms. Brennan to come forward with her attorneys, if she so chooses, and take their seats at the table.

And again, as you are sitting down, the red button here-- This is Trenton; so the red button means "go" (laughter) -- that the microphone is on.

And with that, I will turn it back to the Assemblywoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Good morning, Ms. Brennan.

Do you wish to make an opening statement -- is that correct -- for today?

KATHERINE BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: If you need to take a break, please let us know, at any moment.

And at this moment, I'll take the opportunity to swear you in.

The Committee calls Katie Brennan to testify.

Ms. Brennan, thank you for appearing here today.

I am Assemblywoman Pintor Marin, and this is Senator Loretta Weinberg. We are the Co-Chairs of this Committee.

We understand that you're accompanied by your attorneys today. Is that correct?

MS. BRENNAN: It is.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: As you can see, we have a Hearing Reporter from the Office of Legislative Services' Hearing Unit present. Your testimony is being recorded; and that it may be transcribed for the Committee, and it may be used in other proceedings.

Do you understand that, Ms. Brennan?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes I do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Please know all of your responses should be verbal; we cannot record a head shake or a nod. If you do not understand a question, please ask for clarification. Otherwise, I am going to assume that you understand the question, and that your answers are responsive to that question.

Do you understand those directions?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Ms. Brennan, do you understand that if the statements you make today are willfully false; if you fail to answer a pertinent question or commit perjury, you may be subject to penalties under the law?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Do you understand that you have certain rights under the Code of Fair Procedure, including the right to have your Counsel submit proposed questions on your behalf?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Does your Counsel have any questions to submit today?

ALAN L. ZEGAS, Esq.: No.

KATHRYN K. McCLURE, Esq.: No, thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: You are entitled to a copy of the transcript of your testimony, at your expense, when such copy is available.

Do you understand that?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: You have the right to file a brief, sworn statement relevant to your testimony, for the record, at the conclusion of your appearance today.

Do you understand that?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Before I proceed with the oath, do you have any questions?

MS. BRENNAN: No, not at this time.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you, Ms. Brennan.

Please stand and raise your right hand.

Ms. Brennan, do you swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is true, correct, and complete to the best of your information, knowledge, and belief?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Please be seated and state your name for the record, and we will begin.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Just before you do, please turn off the other microphones that are not used.

Thanks.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you, Ms. Brennan.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

My name is Kathrine Brennan, commonly referred to as “Katie.”

Thank you to the Committee Co-Chairs, Senator Weinberg and Assemblywoman Pintor Marin; Vice Chairs Kristin Corrado and Assemblywoman Nancy Muñoz; and members of the Legislative Select Oversight Committee for inviting me to testify before you today.

I am here today, at the request of this Committee, to provide my testimony as part of your investigation regarding “the policies and procedures regarding the screening of prospective employees and continued employment in the public sector of persons with questionable backgrounds, including any operations or practices concerning the handling of claims of sexual assault, abuse, or harassment.”

I will not be discussing any aspects of my criminal case because, to the best of my knowledge, the Middlesex County Prosecutor’s Office’s review of the Hudson County Prosecutor’s Office’s actions with regard to my complaint of sexual assault against Albert Alvarez is ongoing. Therefore, I refer you to my account of Mr. Alvarez’s sexual assault of me as reported in Kate King’s October 14, 2018, article in the *Wall Street Journal*.

After I was sexually assaulted in the early hours of Saturday, April 8, 2017, I immediately contacted my husband, Travis Miles, who was

in Sweden on a three-month Fulbright Scholarship; and my good friend, Katy Baldwin, who came and stayed with me for several days while Travis returned, having to leave Sweden early to return home to me.

On the evening of Sunday, April 9, 2017, I reported the sexual assault to the Jersey City Police Department. But before I did, I called my friend, Justin Braz. Mr. Braz is not only a professional colleague, but a personal friend. I asked Mr. Braz to come over to my apartment so that I could tell him, in person, about something important.

At the time, Mr. Braz was becoming involved with Governor Murphy's campaign, and I needed someone who knew Mr. Alvarez to know what happened. I knew that if I were to continue to pursue my career in Housing and government in New Jersey, continue to be involved in the Murphy campaign for Governor, I would inevitably cross paths with Mr. Alvarez, who was then working as the Director of Latino and Muslim Outreach for the campaign. I needed support and protection.

I told Mr. Braz that Mr. Alvarez had raped me the night before. Mr. Braz is presently Governor Murphy's Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative Affairs.

At that time, I was employed as Program Director with the Hudson County Division of Housing and Community Development.

On Monday, I tried to have a normal work day, but was unable to function. I called a rape crisis hotline. I called a therapist's office, asking to become a client immediately. I left work to go to Jersey City Medical Center Emergency Department for a rape kit.

On April 17, 2017, I wrote a letter to Mr. Alvarez to confront him and tell him that what he did to me on April 8 was a sexual assault. I

have provided a copy of my letter to this Committee, so you can see that I asked Mr. Alvarez to refrain from contacting me ever again. I sent my letter to Mr. Alvarez, via Federal Express, to Governor Murphy's campaign headquarters in the Gateway Center in Newark.

After I sent the letter to Mr. Alvarez, I felt emotionally prepared to report the sexual assault to the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office to pursue a criminal investigation.

In August 2017, I was invited to work as a policy advisor with the campaign on the Economy, Jobs, and Anti-Poverty Working Group. Mr. Alvarez was still working for the Murphy campaign as the Director of Latino and Muslim Outreach.

I continued with the Murphy campaign, because I did not want to let the assault stand in the way of me working for the campaign and Governor Murphy's Administration. As a victim of sexual assault, I should not be the one to give up my career goals in favor of the career goals of my rapist.

And although I wasn't in the office every day, I feared running into Mr. Alvarez, and I did see him repeatedly. The first time I saw him following the assault was in May 2017, a little more than a month after the rape, at the Murphy for Governor Campaign Office.

In October 2017, I saw Mr. Alvarez at a gubernatorial debate at William Paterson University. At that time, Mr. Braz -- whom I had told about the sexual assault the day after it happened -- was working for the Murphy campaign in a paid staff position, Labor Director. Mr. Braz was present at the debate. I observed him actively engage Mr. Alvarez in

conversation to allow me to walk past Mr. Alvarez without having to speak with him.

On October 19, 2017, I saw Mr. Alvarez at President Obama's event in Newark to support Murphy for Governor. Later, I saw him at a volunteer event for getting out the vote.

In early November 2017, following Governor Murphy's election, Mr. Alvarez was appointed Deputy Director of Personnel on the Transition Committee. In this position, Mr. Alvarez reported directly to the Director of Personnel, Lynn Haynes. In this role, Mr. Alvarez was responsible for making personnel and hiring decisions on behalf of the Murphy Administration. I was working on the Transition Committee in the role of Policy Director for the Housing Committee.

However, I was also in the process of contending for the position I now hold with the Administration, Chief Of Staff at New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency. Mr. Alvarez held the authority to hire for my position.

As a result, my attorney sent Mr. Alvarez a letter requesting that he recuse himself from the hiring process. I do not know what, if any, role he played in my hiring.

Throughout this whole time, I was waiting on the Hudson County Prosecutor's decision. In late November 2017, I believed that the Hudson County Prosecutors Office, that told me a decision was near, was preparing to charge Mr. Alvarez.

Believing that his arrest would generate news coverage, on December 1, 2017, I allowed my friend on the Transition Team, Mr. Braz, to alert Transition Counsel about Mr. Alvarez's potential arrest. It is my

understanding that Mr. Braz conveyed the substance of my allegations without conveying my name. I do not know the identity of the Transition Counsel who Mr. Braz contacted. No one asked me for additional information or advised me if any action would be taken on my behalf.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Braz became Governor Murphy's Chief of Staff for Legislative Affairs.

Later that very same day, December 1, 2017, I was advised that the Hudson County Prosecutors Office had declined to take my case. There are no words to describe the hollowness and the disappointment I felt. The trauma, the invasive tests, the questioning, the waiting were all for nothing. They said they didn't believe a jury would convict, so it would be irresponsible to arrest. In other words, they didn't think that people would believe me.

I told Mr. Braz that the criminal case was not moving forward. But now Transition Counsel knew that Mr. Alvarez had sexually assaulted someone. I hoped for action; I hoped for justice in another form. It never came.

Just a few days later, on December 5, 2017, I had to pass Mr. Alvarez in a doorway to attend a Transition Committee Meeting. A month later, on January 16, 2018, I saw him again at the Governor's Inaugural Ball.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, members of Governor's Murphy's Transition Team, including Chief of Staff Pete Cammarano, were aware of my sexual assault allegation against Mr. Alvarez, but reportedly did not know the victim was me. However, just the knowledge that there was an allegation of sexual assault by one Transition Team member against one

of the Transition Team's senior staffers should have been enough to trigger action. Yet still, nothing.

I officially became employed as Chief of Staff at the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency on February 20, 2018. The Murphy Administration gave Mr. Alvarez the position Chief of Staff at the School Development Authority. And although we did not see each other every day, I live with the constant threat of seeing Mr. Alvarez at joint meetings of the Administration's Chiefs of Staff or around Trenton.

I wanted to stop Al Alvarez from ever attacking another woman again. I wanted survivors to receive justice. I wanted New Jersey to do better. I wanted survivors to be heard, so I kept working to be heard.

And though I was nervous to tell my employer, in order to prevent any future issues I determined that I must directly alert the Administration. And on March 20, 2018, I met with Governor Murphy's Chief Counsel, Matt Platkin, in Jersey City. I told Mr. Platkin that Mr. Alvarez had raped me.

Mr. Platkin was horrified, and told me that he would contact the Attorney General's office to see if anything could be done. So I was filled with hope. I was optimistic that the Administration would help me pursue justice and protect me in my workplace.

On March 22, 2018, at a separate meeting in Princeton, I additionally told Governor Murphy's Deputy Chief Counsel, Parimal Garg, that Mr. Alvarez had raped me. As a friend, Mr. Garg was disheartened. He said he was sorry.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, in April 2018, Mr. Platkin told Mr. Alvarez's then-boss, New Jersey Schools Development Authority

Chief Executive Charles McKenna, that it would be good for Alvarez to “separate himself” from State employment. No one told me what, if any, action the State was taking regarding Mr. Alvarez in response to my complaints to Mr. Braz, Mr. Platkin, and Mr. Garg. No one told me whether Mr. Alvarez had been asked to leave State employment, and I do not know what, if anything, was actually communicated to Mr. Alvarez at that time. But I do know that he continued working for the State until October 2, 2018, when he resigned after Kate King, from the *Wall Street Journal*, contacted him about my story.

The next communication I had with anyone at the State regarding Mr. Alvarez occurred on April 24, 2018. Heather Taylor, Chief Ethics Officer for the State, told me that the State could not take any action because Mr. Alvarez and I were not State employees at the time of the sexual assault. The Administration took this position even though I continued to have to work in Mr. Alvarez’s presence, both during the campaign and after, when he was employed first by the Transition Team and later by the Administration. Once again, no action; once again, my voice went unheard.

I heard nothing further, and I still sought justice, and I still wanted to stop Al Alvarez from assaulting again, and I still wanted more for the survivors of New Jersey. I thought that if any Administration could make progressive reforms, it would be this one.

So on the evening of Friday, June 1, 2018, I e-mailed the Governor and First Lady Tammy Murphy. I asked to have a meeting with one or both of them about a “sensitive matter” that occurred during the campaign. I did not indicate that my sensitive matter involved Mr. Alvarez.

Within the hour, Governor Murphy responded, “We know you well. Hang in. We are on it.” I felt a glimmer of hope. Governor Murphy included his scheduling team on his reply, and invited me to contact him or Ms. Murphy if they proved not fast enough in scheduling a meeting. Governor Murphy did not ask what I was referring to when I said “sensitive matter.”

No meeting with the Governor or First Lady Murphy was scheduled. But rather, that weekend, Jonathan Berkon, an attorney from Perkins, Coie, LLP, who served as counsel to the campaign, contacted me and advised that Mr. Alvarez would be leaving the Administration and State employment. I asked why. Was Mr. Alvarez being fired? Was he voluntarily leaving for another position? In a follow-up call, Mr. Berkon would only say that he can’t reveal the reason for Mr. Alvarez’s departure because it’s “an HR matter.”

Based upon Mr. Berkon’s representation, I believed that Mr. Alvarez was leaving employment with the State of New Jersey in June 2018. However, in early September 2018, two months later, I learned that Mr. Alvarez was still actively employed with the State of New Jersey. As a result, believing that I had exhausted all options of reporting Mr. Alvarez’s sexual assault to members of Governor Murphy’s campaign, Transition Committee, and Administration, my only power left was my voice. I told my story to the *Wall Street Journal*.

In response to my story, in a joint statement provided to the *Wall Street Journal*, Governor and Ms. Murphy stated, “We are confident that this allegation was handled appropriately by the Administration, and policies and procedures were properly and promptly followed. However, it

is clear the process during the transition was inconsistent with our values, and the hire should not have happened.” Why did I have to tell my story to the *Wall Street Journal* for the Administration to acknowledge that it should not have hired Mr. Alvarez?

I should not have to be here today. I should not have been attacked. I reported my attack to police and the Hudson County Prosecutor’s Office, and my report went unheard. I reported my attack to the campaign, Transition Committee, and Administration, it went unheard. I asked to report my attack to the Governor and First Lady, and my request went unheard. I, and no survivor, should have to tell my story to the newspaper to be heard.

I had access to people in the highest positions of power in the State of New Jersey. And at each turn, my pleas for help went unanswered. Somehow, it wasn’t a priority to address my sexual assault and working with my rapist, until it impacted them.

We all have a lot of work to do. It’s not about one bad actor. This isn’t about one incident. It isn’t about one hiring. This is about a pervasive culture of assault and violence. It is every person who looked the other way instead of acting. It is the millions of survivors in New Jersey before me whose attackers never saw conviction. It is the survivors before me whose employers kept perpetrators of violence and harassment. It’s the millions of survivors who are only able to come forward years later, to find out that it’s too late.

We can work to prevent sexual assault. We won’t be able to change the entire country’s culture overnight, but we can each play a part.

We can believe survivors. We can stop “he said, she said” from always becoming “he said.” We can improve the justice system. Prosecutors, judges, and juries can receive training and remove bias. This, honorable members of the Legislature, this is your role.

We can enact laws, like Maryland and Michigan, that make it easier to pursue justice for survivors of sexual assault, such as allowing prior and additional accusations to be used at trial. This is your role.

We can remove the two-year statute of limitations on sexual assault claims so that when all else fails, survivors can pursue a civil case when they are ready. This is your role.

We can improve workplace hiring and employment practices. Since I came forward, two other women have said Al Alvarez attacked them before me, but his record showed no trace. Character reports matter. This is your role.

These reforms did not exist for me or for the million survivors before me, but they can exist for the next survivor. Because, unfortunately, there will be a next one. It is our role to ensure that when they report, they get the justice that they deserve.

Thank you, and I welcome any questions that you have at this time.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Ms. Brennan, at this time I think that we all just need to collect ourselves a little bit. And why don't you take a break and we will -- the Committee will take a break as well.

MS. BRENNAN: Okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: You are more than welcome to come use our Committee Room behind here, if you would like to.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Assemblywoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you.

**(Committee recesses at 11:10 a.m.)**

**(Committee reconvenes at 11:37 a.m.)**

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you, Ms. Brennan, for allowing us a couple of moments to get our thoughts together.

Are you okay to continue?

MS. BRENNAN: I am; thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: You're welcome.

Ms. Brennan, just a quick reminder that, obviously, you are still under oath.

MS. BRENNAN: Understood.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So how we worked this out is that the Co-Chairs would be asking a few questions; and then we would pass it down to our Vice-Chairs, and so on.

And at any moment, if you need a break, please let us know.

MS. BRENNAN: Will do; thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Ms. Brennan, could you describe, in detail, where you believe the system failed you? I know you talked a little bit about this at the end of your testimony. But going

through the some of the timelines, where you felt that there was pertinent instances where the system failed you, can you point those out to us?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I do believe there are certain instances where the system failed me. Starting at the beginning, I think that we need reform to make it easier for survivors of sexual assault to pursue justice in the criminal justice system. I know that that is not the purview of the Committee hearing today, but I do believe that we need reform there.

I believe that we need additional training in that respect, as well, for prosecutors, judges, and juries to remove bias.

I believe that we need additional policies, and procedures, and structures, so that when an incident does occur, particularly in a work place, you know who to go to and who is responsible for caring for that investigation and that incident.

And I believe, foremost, that we need to believe survivors. So few people report, so few people are able to go pursue a criminal investigation -- that you have to believe survivors; you have to believe them at their word.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Is there, at any point, within some of the timelines that you described -- you know, specifically, that you felt that there was, at that moment, if things were a little different, that the outcome might have changed?

MS. BRENNAN: At each point I thought that I had reached my conclusion. I thought that when I reported and pursued the investigation, that that would be enough. When they determined not to take my case and I decided to report to people in positions of power, at each turn that I told an official, I thought that that would be enough. I

thought that this was the person and the avenue that was going to pursue justice with me.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: I want to go back to the specific incident of when you had the conversation with Ms. Heather Taylor.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So when Heather Taylor told you that the State could not do anything; that she told you that you had the option of filing an-- Did she give you the option of filing an internal complaint, or no?

So at the point she just told you, "This happened during the campaign; and now you are employed, so there's really nothing that I can do at this point, because it happened before your employment."

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

I do not recall whether she offered me an internal investigation. That's not something I remember.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Did you ever tell Ms. Taylor that in your line of work that there might be many instances where you would be running into Mr. Alvarez? So, therefore, you would like to have something on file, anything in writing, that at least would have raised a red flag?

MS. BRENNAN: I had believed that it was on file. I did not explicitly request that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay. So at that conversation, at no point did she offer you--

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: --any type of anything that you could have in writing to offer a complaint?

MS. BRENNAN: No, she did not.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: How did you walk away from there feeling, after you told Ms. Taylor that there was this incident; and now in your current workplace, both of you were going to continuously have contact? Did you bring that up to her? Or maybe if you could clarify the conversation a little bit. We're just trying to understand if her knowing what obviously had happened to you, what you reported to her -- besides it preceding your employment, obviously now this is bringing it into your employment status.

MS. BRENNAN: It was a somewhat brief conversation in which she described that, because at the time of the incident we were not both State employees, that it was outside of the purview of their ability to act. And, you know, that pretty much concluded our conversation

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay. And since you began working as part of the Administration, either as part of the Transition Team -- right? -- because you are State employees at that time, were you ever given a copy of the State's policies of workplace violence and sexual harassment, or any other type of procedures for internal complaints?

MS. BRENNAN: I was not given any policies or procedures during the transition; no. I have received policies as an employee of the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay. And during the transition process, was there ever a meeting with everyone to discuss any of those types of policies? So not only were you not handed any type

of documentation that, kind of, talked about what the procedures would be, but were there any verbal conversations?

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I recall, no.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: And so at your current employment, you did receive the rules and regulations of how to formulate a complaint, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Have you received training as well? Or was that just a manual that's given to you?

MS. BRENNAN: There's a manual that's given to you; and then, my understanding is that all State employees -- I, certainly, at the Agency, conducted an online ethics training.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: But that, to date, is thus far all that you've received, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: And I'm sure that-- Is it mandatory for everyone who's employed to take that online training? And I'm sure you have to sign off that you've done--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: We have to do that too, but-- (laughter)

Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; there are several online trainings. And the policies and procedures, which I was given, are specific to the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Were you ever personally contacted by the AG's Office, or no?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't believe so; I believe that it was just Heather Taylor. There was a call where they asked to affirm what Matt had relayed to them, and I don't know from whom it came.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay.

Thank you, Ms. Brennan.

At this time, that's all I have for you.

Thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Senator Weinberg.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Thank you; and again, thank you for your testimony and your willingness to answer many questions I think we will have for you.

Let me just ask a general question. How is your work environment now; or how has this affected what you have to do in your daily assignments?

MS. BRENNAN: It is truly an honor to work as Chief of Staff of the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, and I'm lucky to be there.

This process has not made things particularly easy. My most immediate work environment is supportive; but as part of my position, I do

interact with a number of other departments and members of the Governor's Office.

SENATOR WEINBERG: And do you find that difficult in some way? Or is it just because of your understandable discomfort -- not something that's coming out at you.

MS. BRENNAN: There's been some strain there -- previous existing relationships, and new relationships, and understanding about whom I should or should not contact. And avenues that I had prior; or people reaching or not reaching out to me to conduct various business of the Agency since I've reported.

SENATOR WEINBERG: So you feel that some of the work that you have to do in your daily job responsibilities, some of your relationships, or your ability to work with people in the Governor's Office, have been compromised? I just want to make sure--

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct, Senator.

SENATOR WEINBERG: --I understand that.

Okay.

I want to clarify a couple of things for myself, really. Did you tell Heather Taylor about this incident, or was it reported to her from somebody else and she reached out to you?

MS. BRENNAN: It was reported to her from someone else.

SENATOR WEINBERG: So that would have been through Matt Platkin, probably.

MS. BRENNAN: That was my understanding

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

And so then she reached out to you.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Is that correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR WEINBERG: And when she reached out to you, it was just to tell you that there was nothing they could do about it?

MS. BRENNAN: I did affirm that it was correct what Matt had relayed to them. And then, yes, they told me that there was nothing that they could do. And it was -- that they tried, but there's not an avenue to pursue any action because we were not State employees at the time of the incident.

SENATOR WEINBERG: And at that point, she did not offer you any internal complaint form or anything of that sort?

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I'm aware of.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

As the Chief of Staff now -- you touched on this, and I just had to make sure it's clarified -- you were given copies of the State anti-harassment policies, or copies of policies that just have to do with the Housing Finance and Mortgage?

MS. BRENNAN: I believe they are our policies at the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency. And then I took a State online ethics training course and harassment prevention.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay; the ethics -- yes. But you weren't given the statewide policies.

MS. BRENNAN: Unless they're incorporated into the Agency's, no, not that I'm aware of.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

And I want to, again, clarify -- the Hudson County Prosecutor. Who in the Prosecutor's office-- Or did you testify -- let me rephrase that -- did you testify that someone in the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office led you to believe that there was going to be some criminal action against Mr. Alvarez?

MS. BRENNAN: I understood that a decision was pending and imminent, and that's when I alerted Mr. Braz. Given my ongoing conversations with them, given the length of time, given various interactions I had with them -- which I am not testifying on today -- I was optimistic that they were moving forward.

SENATOR WEINBERG: So they said the decision was imminent, but they didn't lead you to believe one way or the other what that decision might be.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

When you made your report to the Jersey City Police Department, did they take a written report from you?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, they did.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. And you said that was the day after?

MS. BRENNAN: Correct; it was April 9.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

You testified that it was Justin Braz who you called that very evening?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, early that day, and he came over in the afternoon.

SENATOR WEINBERG: The day after.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, April 9; yes.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. So he came over and spoke to you in person.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. And did you ask him to keep your name confidential in whatever avenues he was going to pursue?

MS. BRENNAN: At that time I was letting him know, as a friend, to be a support for me; because I knew, as part of the campaign, that I would see Mr. Alvarez again. And Justin, knowing him as well, I knew that if I were to see Mr. Alvarez, Justin very likely may be there as well and that he could assist me.

SENATOR WEINBERG: So you kind of asked him just to act as a go-between or a shield for you.

MS. BRENNAN: I said that I needed him to know; I said that I needed him to know, and someone who knew Mr. Alvarez to know, so that they could help me

SENATOR WEINBERG: And you don't know-- Well, are you aware of any action that Mr. Braz took?

MS. BRENNAN: I am not, until he alerted Transition Counsel.

SENATOR WEINBERG: And so did Mr. Braz tell you that he alerted the Transition Counsel?

MS. BRENNAN: He did. So when I believed that the Prosecutor's decision was imminent, I spoke with Mr. Braz and said that I believed the decision was imminent. And that if they moved forward, it was

likely to generate news coverage and that I wanted to alert them; I wanted them to know. And so he suggested Transition Counsel, and I agreed that he could tell Transition Counsel.

SENATOR WEINBERG: And did the Transition Counsel then contact you?

MS. BRENNAN: They did not.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

Just for the record, can we have the name of the Transition Counsel to whom this was referred, if you know?

MS. BRENNAN: I do not know whom Justin Braz alerted on Transition Counsel. He simply said that he was going to call Transition Counsel.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

**(confers with Committee Counsel)**

Did Mr. Braz mention at all that there was a Chief Transition Counsel, or whom he might be dealing with?

MS. BRENNAN: I do not know who he told.

SENATOR WEINBERG: And when you were working on the Transition Committee, did you deal with any of the attorneys for the Transition Committee?

MS. BRENNAN: I met several of them in passing.

SENATOR WEINBERG: But you didn't have any business relationship at that point.

MS. BRENNAN: No, not particularly.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Do you know who the Counsel were who you were dealing with, or that you were saying "hello" to?

MS. BRENNAN: I know there were several, several I had known prior, so I'm not sure I could speak to that.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

Let me go to -- when you went to the County Prosecutor-- Well, first of all, you went to Jersey City Medical Center.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct

SENATOR WEINBERG: How many days after? When did you go to the--

MS. BRENNAN: I went in the late morning, early afternoon, on Monday. And the incident occurred in the early hours that Saturday. So a day, a day-and-a-half.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

Did the Jersey City Medical Center offer you any kind of services, services of a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner; anything of that sort?

MS. BRENNAN: I requested one, and one was present.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. And that is when you did the rape kit?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. Then you went to the Hudson County Prosecutor, or did the Jersey City Police Department refer it to the Hudson County Prosecutor?

MS. BRENNAN: The Jersey City Medical Center triggered it. And so then the Prosecutor left a -- not the Prosecutor, the detective left a message with me, and that's whom I knew who to contact when I went forward to them.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay; they left you with a contact name at that point.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, it was the SANE nurse and the medical examination that triggered alerting the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. So did they then contact you for a report?

MS. BRENNAN: They did.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. All right, I don't want to get into that any further.

Yes, I think we will turn it over to the Vice Chairs.

MS. BRENNAN: Okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Vice Chair Muñoz, do you have any questions?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Yes, please.

Thank you.

And thank you; and may we call you Katie, or should we call you Ms. Brennan?

MS. BRENNAN: Sure, you can call me Katie; that's okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Thank you.

It's awfully familiar, so I just wanted to get your permission.

And I want to thank you for coming here today. I think it's-- I can imagine it's extraordinarily difficult and it's not something that you would have chosen to do, obviously.

And I want to thank you for your dedication to see this come before us, and see what changes can be made and what policies can be made.

I just want to follow up a little bit on what the Senator said regarding-- When you contacted the local police and you made a report, did they tell you what to expect or did they contact you? Was there any sense of what to expect from them?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I don't want to get too far into the details of that. But I-- There was not a lot of sense of what to do next, but I knew that I was not emotionally ready to move forward at that time.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: So did they ever contact you again after that date, on the 9th?

MS. BRENNAN: No, they did not.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: So as far as-- There was no follow-up whatsoever with the Jersey City Police.

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I'm aware.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: All right; thank you.

And to go back to the-- The decision to contact the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office -- that was the decision that was made for you by the protocols at the hospital because of the rape initiation?

MS. BRENNAN: My understanding is that when you receive a sexual assault examination, that they alert the -- that they do alert SVU. But it doesn't move forward without your consent. But then I chose to go report to them and move the criminal investigation forward.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: And you contacted them that same day or the next day? Or--

MS. BRENNAN: It was not that same day.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: It was--

MS. BRENNAN: As I testified, I wrote a letter to Mr. Alvarez--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Right; okay, yes.

MS. BRENNAN: --and then I felt prepared after I did that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Okay. And did you meet directly with the Hudson County Prosecutor herself?

MS. BRENNAN: With Prosecutor Suarez? No.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: No. So did the office tell you what to expect when you met with them? Or did you simply report? We're trying to get a sense of what the process, how the process went forward, and what possible problems there were with the process. And that's what we're looking at here -- the process.

MS. BRENNAN: *Expect* in what regard?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Well, did they say that they would follow up with you? Did they ask you -- did they tell you what to expect going forward in the immediate future?

MS. BRENNAN: They never gave me a particular timeline; but I did give my statement under oath.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Under oath.

MS. BRENNAN: And I knew that there would be additional follow-up. But I didn't know all the timeframes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: How much later did they contact you?

MS. BRENNAN: I was in contact with them several times over the course of the -- April to December.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: So they contacted you.

MS. BRENNAN: That's-- And I also reached out repeatedly.  
(laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Well, because it sounds like you're a strong advocate for yourself, obviously. And you've had to make these contacts yourself.

MS. BRENNAN: I did reach out to them, probably almost weekly. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: And you said you never spoke to the Attorney General?

MS. BRENNAN: I did not speak to the Attorney General. Perhaps in the confirmation call was someone from the Attorney General's Office; I really can't speak to that. I definitely never spoke to the Attorney General himself.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: What would you have said if you had an opportunity to speak to the Attorney General?

MS. BRENNAN: Now, or regarding the investigation?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Well, at that point. So, if you had a chance to speak to the Hudson County Prosecutor -- did you feel that you weren't getting an adequate response from them?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know that I should speak to that today.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Understood.

Why did you decide to send that e-mail to the Governor and Ms. Murphy?

MS. BRENNAN: I sent the e-mail to the Governor because I was running out of options. I had told several friends, several friends who were in the highest positions of power in the State. And I had thought that that was going to be enough. And when it wasn't, when no action came of

that, I still wanted justice. And I still believed that the Governor, the Administration, could also seek to enact some of these policy reforms that I'm calling for. So I wanted to let them know that, one, this was still an issue in their campaign and in their Administration; and two, that we need to do better going forward.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Can you give us a sense of what you believed the Governor meant when he said to "hang in there," and "we're on it"?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know -- that a response was imminent.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Did that give you hope?

MS. BRENNAN: Of course, of course. I was incredibly-- It's nice to have the Governor e-mail you back. (laughter) I was very -- I was optimistic.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: And do you believe that the Governor knew what the issue was that you wanted to speak to him about?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know. I said "sensitive matter," and I did not clarify what the sensitive matter was.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MUÑOZ: Well, again, Katie, if I may, thank you very much. We really appreciate you coming here today, and we thank you so much.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Thank you.

I will call on Vice Chair Corrado for any questions that she might have.

But let me just clarify something before I do that.

When the attorney for the campaign called you, that was, roughly, at what point in the timeline?

MS. BRENNAN: That was that same weekend. So I e-mailed the Governor and the First Lady on Friday evening, and--

SENATOR WEINBERG: Oh, so that was already several months after the--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, it was in June.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. And what did that attorney lead you to believe?

MS. BRENNAN: As I stated in the testimony, I had a phone call with Jonathan Berkon. I said nothing; and he told me that Mr. Alvarez was leaving the Administration.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay, so it was really just a conversation so that you felt comfortable, because under--

MS. BRENNAN: I did not tell him what the sensitive matter was. I never mentioned Mr. Alvarez. And when Jonathan Berkon called me he said directly, "Mr. Alvarez is leaving the Administration."

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay, so you had to assume that he knew what the issues were.

MS. BRENNAN: Someone told him what the issue was.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

All right, thank you.

I'd like to call on Ms. Corrado.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: I apologize, Ms. Corrado.

Just one quick follow up to that.

When you e-mailed the Governor -- in your e-mail, by any chance, did you make a statement as to that this was-- You said it was a “sensitive matter.” But you didn’t refer to that it was anything to do with the campaign, did you?

MS. BRENNAN: I said “during the campaign.”

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Oh, during the campaign.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay, thank you.

SENATOR CORRADO: Thank you.

Thank you for being here today, Ms. Brennan.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR CORRADO: I’m sorry you’re here.

But at different points you’ve said -- either in an article or your testimony today -- that you felt like your voice was your last power. I’m here to tell you that your power and your voice are incredibly strong; and we did hear you, and that’s why we’re here today.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR CORRADO: So thank you.

I have a few questions for you.

I’m just following up on what Senator Weinberg asked.

When you got the phone call from Mr. Berkon, what was the first thing he said to you? Was it that Mr. Alvarez would be leaving?

MS. BRENNAN: I can’t remember the very first words that he said to me; but our conversation was very brief.

SENATOR CORRADO: And he knew why you had e-mailed the Governor. Did you get the impression that he knew what the “sensitive matter” was?

MS. BRENNAN: That Jonathan Berkon knew?

SENATOR CORRADO: Mr. Berkon, yes.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, because I picked up the phone at our arranged time. I did not tell Jonathan Berkon anything at all. He told me that he had an update, and that we should get on the phone. So I got on the phone to listen to the update, and that’s when he told me.

SENATOR CORRADO: Do you have any idea who told Mr. Berkon what the subject matter was or why you wanted to talk to the Governor?

MS. BRENNAN: I do not.

SENATOR CORRADO: Can we go back to December, when you asked your friend, Justin Braz, to let the transition attorney know that charges could be imminent. Do you know if he told anyone else?

MS. BRENNAN: I don’t know.

SENATOR CORRADO: Do you know if Justin ever told anybody specifically -- whether it be the campaign, or the transition, or the Administration -- about your story?

MS. BRENNAN: I don’t know.

SENATOR CORRADO: There was, in the *Wall Street Journal* article and several others -- there mentioned that Transition officials knew that Mr. Alvarez had an allegation against him, and that it had been investigated, and there were no charges -- right before he was hired. Do you have any idea who those top Transition officials were?

MS. BRENNAN: I do not, except as reported.

SENATOR CORRADO: Okay.

You referred to Mr. Platkin, I believe, as a *friend*.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, that's correct.

SENATOR CORRADO: When you had your conversation with him when you were at dinner, he said he would follow up with the AG?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did he ever tell you that he did do that?

MS. BRENNAN: At a certain point, I had told him that I didn't -- I hadn't heard anything; and then I received a call.

SENATOR CORRADO: You received a call from--

MS. BRENNAN: I received the -- where they confirmed that they were aware, and that the State was not able to pursue.

SENATOR CORRADO: And that phone call was from the Chief Ethics Officer, I believe.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, the -- at least, the second call was from Heather Taylor, the Chief Ethics Officer.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did you know that Mr. Platkin had recused himself from the matter?

MS. BRENNAN: I did not.

SENATOR CORRADO: Until you read it in the paper?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did you know that he had a conversation with Charlie McKenna at SDA?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I did not.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did he ever tell you that Mr. Alvarez would be leaving the Administration at some point?

MS. BRENNAN: No; only Jonathan Berkon told me that.

SENATOR CORRADO: And then the same question with the Deputy Chief Counsel, Parimal Garg. Did you ever have a conversation with him after your initial conversation? Was there any follow-up?

MS. BRENNAN: No, there was not.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did he ever tell you he would reach out to anybody, or he would take some action?

MS. BRENNAN: He did not.

SENATOR CORRADO: Okay. And these are all people who you consider friends in the Administration that knew about your story.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

SENATOR CORRADO: When the Hudson County Assistant Prosecutor called you, did they ever tell you who made the decision not to charge Mr. Alvarez within the Administration?

MS. BRENNAN: No.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did you ever fear that when your name became public there would be retribution against you?

MS. BRENNAN: By whom?

SENATOR CORRADO: Anybody in the Administration.

MS. BRENNAN: Of course; that was-- I knew that this would not make things easy for me in my career in Housing and government. And certainly there have been times that I have felt ostracized, and things have not been the same that they were prior to October.

SENATOR CORRADO: Can you tell me a little bit about your experience on the campaign; what was the environment like, who did you answer to, what were your duties?

MS. BRENNAN: On the campaign, I was a volunteer. And then on the Working Group -- my working group was professionals around the state in different industries and community development, generally. And we reported to Dennis Zeveloff and Matt Platkin.

SENATOR CORRADO: And when you became part of the-- Let me go back. When you formally joined the campaign, were you ever given a pamphlet of rules, personnel policies, code of conduct?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I was not.

SENATOR CORRADO: And can you tell me about your experience on the Transition; what was your job on the transition -- same thing -- who did you answer to, what were your duties?

MS. BRENNAN: I was the Policy Director for the Housing Committee, and I reported to Jose Fernandez.

SENATOR CORRADO: And when did you -- at what point in the process did you find out that you were going to have a job in the Administration?

MS. BRENNAN: I was aware that it was an option, and I had expressed that it was something that I was interested in. And by January I knew that it was likely to occur. Just shortly -- a couple of days after inauguration, I was formally offered the position.

SENATOR CORRADO: And did you pick the position that you wanted? Was it offered to you?

MS. BRENNAN: I had expressed that I wanted to be in a position involving housing.

SENATOR CORRADO: And did you ever have to interview with anybody for that position?

MS. BRENNAN: I did not.

SENATOR CORRADO: Okay.

At different points you had contacted Mr. Alvarez, back in April of 2017, by FedEx; and then I believe your attorney also sent a letter. Did he ever respond to you?

MS. BRENNAN: He did not. I had requested that he not contact me.

SENATOR CORRADO: Okay. Did he ever -- when you would run into each other at different functions as part of your job description, would he ever try to speak with you?

MS. BRENNAN: No, he did not try and speak with me.

SENATOR CORRADO: There was a story in one of the articles that he tried to offer you \$15,000 to, I assume, keep silent. I don't know if that's something you can speak about.

MS. BRENNAN: I think we're not going to discuss the -- that matter today.

SENATOR CORRADO: Okay.

When you e-mailed the Governor, and he responded to you in 41 minutes, he also added on his scheduling people. At that point, did you think you were going to have a scheduled meeting with the Governor?

MS. BRENNAN: I did.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did you ever get that meeting?

MS. BRENNAN: I did not.

SENATOR CORRADO: Do you know why you didn't get that meeting?

MS. BRENNAN: No. Jonathan Berkon reached out to me, and then I thought they thought it was resolved.

SENATOR CORRADO: After you talked to Mr. Berkon and he told you that Mr. Alvarez would be leaving the Administration and his job at SDA, did you ever have any more contact with him?

MS. BRENNAN: With Jonathan Berkon?

SENATOR CORRADO: Mr. Berkon.

MS. BRENNAN: No.

SENATOR CORRADO: Did anybody from that period, in June until October -- did anybody in the Administration reach out to you to see how you were doing, find out if everything was okay?

MS. BRENNAN: Not in a formal capacity, no.

SENATOR CORRADO: Okay. And can you tell me how you found out that Mr. Alvarez was still working at SDA?

MS. BRENNAN: I had heard things, swirling about, that he was still there; and then he was on the website and, you know, some friends confirmed.

SENATOR CORRADO: After you e-mailed the Governor in June, and after October when the *Wall Street Journal* article came out, has the Governor ever reached out and spoken to you?

MS. BRENNAN: As the Governor said in his press conference the day that it was in print -- that he was going to call me that afternoon.

He did; he, and the First Lady, and Chief Ethics Officer Heather Taylor did speak with me and my attorney, briefly, to express their condolences.

SENATOR CORRADO: Okay.

And I think this is a bit of a follow-up question, but what point do you believe the greatest breakdown in communication was? Every single point throughout the process?

MS. BRENNAN: The first time should have been enough.

SENATOR CORRADO: Thank you.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Before we open it up, I have a couple of--

MS. McCLURE: Senator, excuse me.

SENATOR WEINBERG: --and then--

I'm sorry?

MS. McCLURE: Could I just have a moment to confer with Ms. Brennan?

SENATOR WEINBERG: Yes.

**(witness confers with her attorneys)**

MS. BRENNAN: We have a couple of points of clarification.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Sure.

MS. BRENNAN: First, is that I spoke with Jonathan Berkon more than once. The first time was just me on the phone; he said he had an update. He told me that Mr. Alvarez was leaving the Administration. And then we'd asked, with an attorney, why and what's happening. And that's when he told us that it was an HR matter, and that he could not tell me why Mr. Alvarez was leaving the Administration.

I also-- To your question about the \$15,000 and the NDA -- I was sensitive about discussing the settlement matter. But yes, we-- When a criminal case is closed, there's only so many options you have. And when an attorney had reached out to his attorney, that's when they offered \$15,000 and a nondisclosure agreement, which I declined. I can't imagine not being able to speak about what occurred.

And the process with the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office -- it was, just, as a point of clarification, it was long. You know, I went in, I gave my statement, and then they were doing their work. Mostly it was me contacting them, following up, seeing where it was. It's hard to wait that many months without a lot -- knowing what they're doing, what they're considering. And I went in, maybe, one more time formally. Other than that, it was over the phone. And many, many months later, that's when they had indicated -- at my persistent request for an update -- that it was coming any day now. And that's when, perhaps, I was hopelessly optimistic; I really believed that they were going to charge him, and I told Mr. Braz.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. You said that you gave Mr. Braz permission on-- That was back on December 1 of 2017. Do I understand you gave him permission, at that point, to use your name and speak to--

MS. BRENNAN: He did not use my name when he told Transition Counsel.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay, but on -- if my note here is correct -- so it was at that point, on December 1, that you allowed him to convey information--

MS. BRENNAN: That is correct.

SENATOR WEINBERG: --but not use your name as yet.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. I was concerned -- I was concerned what would happen if they knew that it was me. I was on the Transition; I was hoping to be employed by the Administration. And at that time I had an open criminal investigation. So I don't know if he used my name or not, but the way that I conveyed it to him, and allowed him to move forward, my understanding was that he was going to leave my name off.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Did you actually fill out an application for the job that you were assigned to?

MS. BRENNAN: No. I signed paperwork upon my arrival; and some of that I believe constitutes an application. But I did not--

SENATOR WEINBERG: Do you know -- was there some formal application process? How did you let anybody know that you were interested in a job in Housing?

MS. BRENNAN: It was conversations that I had had with various campaign and Transition officials.

SENATOR WEINBERG: So I think this has become somewhat important, as we review our own policies and procedures. When would you have been considered an applicant for the position? Is there some place in that timeline -- after the election, obviously -- during Transition or before the new Administration actually took office?

MS. BRENNAN: In my mind, the whole time. I was a Transition official, and that's a position; but I was also an applicant. It was concurrent. I would consider myself an applicant during the campaign.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Well, I point that out because we do have policies and procedures that current applicants for State jobs -- whether they were considered part of the policies and procedures of the Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency Authority, I'm not certain. I think that's one of the things we need to clarify, as to whether their policies and procedures differ in any manner from those that were statewide.

MS. BRENNAN: I filled out their application upon my acceptance of the position, and their paperwork--

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: --at the Agency.

SENATOR WEINBERG: So that was after you accepted--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR WEINBERG: --the position.

Okay, thank you. Those were my follow-up questions.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Katie, in that packet that you filled out with the application for the Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, was there also a background check in there?

MS. BRENNAN: I believe so, yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Do you believe that was part of the application for-- So a background check; maybe, a résumé; and an application that you filled out?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; and then there's the State forms and the various State disclosures.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: And an acknowledgement that you've received the policies, when I started at HMFA.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay. Because I know for other levels of government, depending on what department you're going to be in, there are different types of background checks.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. There was a background check, and I don't know of what type.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay -- authorizing permission for them to run a check on you, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, correct.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay.

At this point, Katie, I think it's good for everyone-- And also, you've been on for about almost an hour or so. So we would like to be fair to you and break for lunch, if possible. And we'll break as well, and then we'll come back.

MS. BRENNAN: Okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: You can use the room that you initially used, which is Senator Sarlo's room in the back -- okay? -- if that would be easy.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; thank you, Chairwoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So Ms. Brennan, why don't you stand up and leave first, so that you can have your moment.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: You're welcome.

Katie, before you leave, how long would you like the lunch break; half-hour or an hour?

MS. BRENNAN: Half-hour is fine.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Half-hour is fine?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay; we'll meet back in a half-hour.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

**(Committee recesses at 12:17 p.m.)**

**(Committee reconvenes at 1:20 p.m.)**

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you, everyone.

Ms. Brennan, thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: We'll be ready to begin.

Once again, just a reminder -- you're still under oath, Ms. Brennan.

MS. BRENNAN: Understood; thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you.

Continuing on the Assembly side, Assemblywoman Pam Lampitt.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Thank you, Chairwoman.

Katie, I'm Assemblywoman Pam Lampitt.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: I hail from the southern part of the state.

Months ago, when the Assembly and the Senate took the policies of harassment up, we felt we needed to move forward with new policies; and I think you agree, based upon these sort of situations.

MS. BRENNAN: I do.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: And I stood on the floor and had my *me too* moment. So I can sit here, looking at you, and say, “I feel exactly what you’re going through.” And I’m sorry it happened to you.

Our voices, as you said, are meaningful here. I know that Senator Weinberg shared as well, as did Assemblywoman Schepisi, and many others as well. And our voices are here, and they are loud. We’ve been told that many times. (laughter)

SENATOR WEINBERG: I rolled my eyes at that one.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: I just have a few questions for you. I’m a very systematic person; I’m a very timeline-sort of person as well.

After the incident occurred, and you wrote the letter and sent it by FedEx to Mr. Alvarez, at any point in time did you feel that you needed to obtain any type of restraining order as well?

MS. BRENNAN: First, I support you, and I believe you. So thank you for having me here today.

And I-- When I sent the letter, certainly I considered that. And while I was preparing, while I was getting myself emotionally ready to press charges and go to the Hudson County Prosecutor, I didn’t, at first, request one because I, at that time, was nervous about putting myself out

there. And I knew that when I started taking steps -- not public in the way that I am now --- but I was nervous to take actions that would be so public against people who were potentially my employers; who I was working with.

And so I didn't, at that time, and hoped that he would understand the severity of the letter that I sent.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Thank you.

During the transition time, were you a paid employee as well?

MS. BRENNAN: On the Transition, I was not paid.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Okay, thank you.

And at the point in time where Mr. Alvarez, you know, became a project manager in November -- the end of November-- swiftly after that, can you tell me when the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office came back with a firm decision to you? What was the date?

MS. BRENNAN: It was December 1, 2017.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Okay.

After that, you were hired. You filled out your application; you did your background check. And at that point in time, you realized that there was an HR Department to look towards if there were any sort of situations that you felt that you needed any sort of personnel support.

MS. BRENNAN: The HR Department is specific to our Agency, the Housing Mortgage Finance Agency. And so I did not discuss with them.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Can you just expand upon, you know, what defines the HR Department within the Housing Authority? Is it a number of individuals; is it one individual?

MS. BRENNAN: It is; it's a number of individuals. I believe we have 8 to 10 staff in the HR Department, but they are specific to our Agency.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: And within their policies -- because we have not seen their policies and, obviously, you've read their policies -- are there any sort of further statements about harassment within the workplace that you could expand upon, and tell us what are the policies within the Housing department?

MS. BRENNAN: The policies are more about conduct, and conduct that is threatening or violent to staff in general. And sexual harassment and harassment is expounded upon in greater detail in the online trainings that we all take.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Thank you.

At the point in time where you describe the fact that you've had some continual, sort of, interactions with Mr. Alvarez, I'm pretty sure that, you know, you're in the room with him--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: --heart's beating; you try to stay away, you try not to make eye contact. How many times did that occur after you had been hired within the Housing department?

MS. BRENNAN: After I started at HMFA, I-- After I started at HMFA, we have -- I have not seen him in person that I'm aware of.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Okay.

And just one final question. Do you feel that, based upon the current policies that are enacted within State government, within the HMFA, do you believe that there -- within the current policies, do you feel

that there are any current policies that were not followed to the furthest degree possible?

MS. BRENNAN: I do feel that, because I have been engaged with the same people through the campaign, the Transition, the Administration. It was surprising to me that they took the position that it was outside of their purview.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: So at this point in time you don't know any specific policy that wasn't followed.

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know which one that would point to, specifically.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: All right.

MS. BRENNAN: But their decision that their office could not pursue my complaint because we were not State employees at the time -- that was surprising to me.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: After you were hired then -- so go back to one of my first questions -- so after you were hired, and you knew that Mr. Alvarez was still going to be present among State government, did you feel, at that point in time, to further think about doing a restraining order?

MS. BRENNAN: I didn't. It certainly-- It occurred to me, but I think going back to what I said, I was-- Until I was ready to talk about it in front of everybody--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Right.

MS. BRENNAN: --that felt very public to me. It felt very public to me, and I had to ensure that I was never going to be in the situation where we'd be alone.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Right.

MS. BRENNAN: And I knew that, hopefully, any time I saw him would be a workplace environment, and that I would, hopefully, have allies there.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LAMPITT: Thank you.

And we are-- There's a kinship, and I'm giving you my strength through my power. And I wish you the best through this process.

So thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Assemblywoman.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Senator Cunningham.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Thank you.

I admire you; and this is the first time I think that I've met you. But I admire your composure today to deal with what you have been dealing with.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: I wanted to say that to you first of all.

I only have two questions, and one is more of a statement -- and that is, you know, you've given a lot of information today; a lot of information. And from the very beginning, one of the things that you said that has stuck with me all day long, and as we go forward as Legislators into what we need to do to make this system better, you talked about *believe the survivor*.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: And that was very impactful for me, because so many times when victims come forward, especially women,

they're not taken seriously, or they're treated as though they caused the situation to happen to them.

So I wanted to know, in looking at all the things on the timeline, there were some things that just looked like some things were done or started, but there didn't appear to be follow-up.

So I wonder: Do you think that lack of follow-up, that lack of doing something to actually help you, had anything to do with the fact that, perhaps, they didn't believe you, or they just didn't care?

MS. BRENNAN: I think they didn't take it seriously enough. The people who I told, outside of the formal law enforcement officials, were my friends; they're my friends. And so I think that it's just that the action -- it didn't go far enough. It wasn't taken to its conclusion. And I think that that's at each turn; there are things that we can do to make sure that survivors are more heard.

You know, I was thinking during the recess -- Middlesex County had offered a Victim Witness Unit Liaison. It's now my understanding that all counties have that, but I wasn't offered that in Hudson. And, you know, I think that, kind of, what that represents is something that's important -- is, who was the person who's going to be with you? And at each stage, you tell people, and you hope that they believe you, and you hope that they take action. And I do think that at each step I thought it was the conclusion; I thought that telling the Prosecutor was going to be it; I thought that was end of the road. And then each official who I told -- I thought that that was it, and that would be the end.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Yes, I can understand that, because at each step you have a little bit more hope. And then there was just disappointment on top of that hope.

I don't know how we legislate that, but we will certainly have to find a way to do that.

The last thing I have to say is, you know, we've heard so much about the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office today. And I know this is one of those places that you thought you had hope. And I just wanted to know -- I know it was a long process; I think it was from April to December--

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: --the investigative part of this. So I'm just wondering, was there any point that you were led to believe by anyone there that they were going to go forward with the situation of Mr. Alvarez?

MS. BRENNAN: They had indicated to me, along the way, when I would check in, things that did give me hope. You know, they-- I had done the kit; they were looking at the DNA. I had all these steps; I had a lot of documentation. And at one point they indicated something along the lines of something contradictory he had said -- I don't have any details on that -- but it was each moment like that, that I thought, "Okay, they're looking at it, and they have what they need." And, you know, fortunately I don't have prior experience with pressing charges, and so this took a long time. So I thought that they had -- it was because they had prepared to move forward.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Okay; thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Senator Ruiz.

SENATOR RUIZ: Thank you, Chairwomen; and thank you, Katie, for being here today and giving power to voices.

And I just want to follow up on a little bit of Senator Cunningham.

MS. BRENNAN: Sure.

SENATOR RUIZ: You have been a champion in courage throughout this whole process. Because I think for many women, or many survivors, they would have stopped along many of the pathways.

When you tell the police department-- There isn't a follow-up phone call after you make the complaint -- is that correct? -- from the Department to you?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I don't remember receiving a call.

SENATOR RUIZ: Okay. At any point between-- And I'm asking these questions because I'm just thinking of broad policy.

MS. BRENNAN: Of course.

SENATOR RUIZ: At any point in time, within the levels of the public safety arena, between the Police Department and the Prosecutor's Office, are you kind of given a systemic guideline, right? Because it's -- you've gone through this event; it's an emotional experience. And it seems like you have to govern this whole system on your own. And so the first time you're told "no," anyone else would say, "Forget it. There isn't anywhere else that I can turn to." Whether it was the hospital, or the Police Department, or the Prosecutor's Office, did anyone kind of give you some kind of nurturing advice as to what next steps should be, what things

you should do? I'm just thinking long-term. It's specifically for women, too, in areas where, perhaps, English is not even their first language, and you find yourself not knowing who to turn to. Even an advocate perhaps, right? Or a hotline for an advocacy line that could help an individual walk through this kind of process.

I know that's global. (laughter)

From your recollection, if you--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I certainly feel that there are things that could be improved at every stage. I know that, most recently, there was some legislation passed, I believe last year, about training for police officers. I certainly, in my experience -- I still think there's bias there. I think additional training; you know, I've mentioned in my statement that I think training for prosecutors and judges so that if it does move forward, you know, the judges are prepared so that juries-- You know, it's you and me sitting up there, so that they know (indiscernible) informed care and how to listen to survivors.

But no; you know, I reported it to the police. And as I mentioned, it was when I went to Jersey City Medical Center that they had said, "This is what's going to happen," and that it's going to alert Hudson County. And there was not a formal-- I guess that was to my point about the Victim-Witness. It's my understanding that that does exist in New Jersey, but there was -- besides friends and family, there was not a formal guide throughout the process.

SENATOR RUIZ: Thank you; thank you very much.

Thank you.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Senator Oroho.

SENATOR OROHO: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair.

Katie, I want to thank you very much for your courage. It's been -- it was 18 months until something actually -- there was a resignation. It's been 20 months since then, and you've testified that things are not the same. So obviously, you've had personal relationships, and I'm sure it's been extremely difficult for you and your husband.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR OROHO: So I want to thank you for your courage.

The first question I have -- and I'll try not to repeat any of the ones that have occurred, but just to make sure for the record -- so as early as April 9, 2017, you informed the person who you thought would have direct contact with the candidate and, subsequently, the Governor. And I think, you said, you used the words, "He raped me." And I think you identified the *he* being Mr. Alvarez. Is that correct?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct. And as I stated, Mr. Braz was not on the campaign, technically, at that time. But I knew that he knew him already, and that he was heading in the direction of being on the campaign.

SENATOR OROHO: And did you ask Mr. Braz not to speak about it to anyone?

MS. BRENNAN: I think that that was understood. It was the day after it happened and, at that moment, I was shell-shocked still.

SENATOR OROHO: So it wasn't your expectation that by talking to Mr. Braz that next day, that he would mention it to other people?

MS. BRENNAN: Not on April 9; no, no.

SENATOR OROHO: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: But he's someone who I have consistent contact with.

SENATOR OROHO: Do you believe, or know if-- The timeline that you went through, and also the *Wall Street Journal* article had a lot of detail as well--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR OROHO: Do you believe or know, with respect to -- we've seen some of the e-mails and text messages -- that there were ongoing conversations? Do you have any knowledge of any ongoing conversations that occurred, other than the text messages or e-mails?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; but with whom? Text messages between--

SENATOR OROHO: Actually, between people saying that there would be -- that would either have direct contact with the Governor or his--

MS. BRENNAN: Oh, I don't know. Yes, I--

SENATOR OROHO: Do you believe, or do you-- It's been -- it was 18 months before anything finally happened; and all throughout the process you tried to get people to step up and do the right thing, or to ask the questions. Do you believe at all, or do feel that there was any intention to delay, in hoping that you would just forget it?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know their intentions; I can't speak to their intentions. But I think I've demonstrated that I'm pretty persistent. (laughter)

SENATOR OROHO: Yes, you have; and good for you.

With respect to -- there was an offer in the discussion about a “settlement.”

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR OROHO: And I know -- and I guess this was after the decision had come from the Hudson County Prosecutor’s Office that there would not be a charge.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR OROHO: So your attorney sent a letter to Mr. Alvarez, in which -- “our client is open to negotiating a settlement.” You rejected a monetary settlement.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR OROHO: So was your hope there that this would be another avenue that hopefully -- to create a voice that Mr. Alvarez would have to admit to what had happened, or that he would give you another avenue to have your voice heard?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. You know, I never-- I went in telling her I was never going to sign something that would silence me. But, you know, we-- Once they close a criminal case, there are extremely few avenues you have; and some of them are very expensive. But I -- it’s not an option for most people, or myself, really. So no, I think it was trying to -- we were trying to suss out our options at that time.

SENATOR OROHO: Okay

MS. BRENNAN: That’s what we were doing.

SENATOR OROHO: Thank you,

I just actually have two more questions.

But now, October 2018, 18 months after this thing had started. You went to Kate King of the *Wall Street Journal*.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR OROHO: And then Mr. Alvarez resigned that day.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, the day she contacted him.

SENATOR OROHO: The day she contacted him; yes, thank you.

Do you believe that he would still be employed had you not taken that step?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know if he would be there or not. You know, as-- All I have is that Jonathan Berkon told me that he was leaving. You know, as reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, he had been asked to start separating himself -- or his boss, his prior boss, who is no longer there, had been asked that he separate himself. But I don't know what was communicated to him; and I really can't say.

SENATOR OROHO: You gave me another segue right into my last question. I promise you, the last one.

But in June of 2018, just after your e-mail chain with the Governor, Mr. Berkon of the campaign Counsel -- he did contact you, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR OROHO: And I think your testimony was that he didn't mention specifically "a sensitive matter." Was it your testimony that he actually mentioned Mr. Alvarez's name directly to you?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. I said "sensitive matter" in my e-mail, and did not say Mr. Alvarez's name. When I picked up the phone he,

without explaining anything, without saying at all what my matter was, he said, “Mr. Alvarez will be leaving the Administration and State employment.”

SENATOR OROHO: Thank you very much.

MS. BRENNAN: You’re welcome.

SENATOR OROHO: And once again, thank you very much for your courage.

Thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR OROHO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you, Senator.

Assemblyman Gordon Johnson.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair, or *Chairs*, in this case.

Ms. Brennan--

MS. BRENNAN: Hi. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: I’ll echo what we’ve all heard -- that you’re a brave woman to come before us and tell us this story.

I’d like to go back to the Jersey City Police Department. You went there on April 9 to report the sexual assault. And a report was taken you said, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, they took a report.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Did you get a chance to review your statement on that report? Did they show you your report to say -- to ensure that what they wrote down was accurate?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I did not.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: When you first went to the Police Department, you spoke to a uniformed person first, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, there were four people present.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: And then, initially, when you first walked in; then you were assigned to a detective?

MS. BRENNAN: They came to my apartment.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Oh, they came to you, into your apartment. Okay, all right.

After the report was taken, did they say to you that you should go to the hospital as part of the procedure?

MS. BRENNAN: I believe they asked if I had been, or if I was going to go. But I don't remember.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Yes, I'm asking-- As part of their procedure, did they say you should go to the hospital for further medical investigative evidence to be collected?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't recall them instructing me to go. I think that they had asked if I had already been.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay. And the *Assault Nurse Examiner* -- is that the correct term?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, the SANE nurses; although I believe that name is being changed.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Yes, okay. The nurse examiner is an employee of the hospital or an employee of the Prosecutor's Office? Do we know?

SENATOR WEINBERG: I think they're employees of the Prosecutor's Office.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay; the Chair seems to think--

SENATOR WEINBERG: Yes, I think they serve at the hospital. But because they're collecting evidence, perhaps, they're actually employed by the Prosecutor's Office.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: For the chain of evidence; okay, all right.

And after the examination, you heard nothing further from them, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: From the nurse?

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: From the hospital or from the Prosecutor's Office, regarding the--

MS. BRENNAN: No, they did. Detective Mikulac left me a message on my phone.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: All right.

Do you feel that the process that you went through could be improved on the -- your relationship between the police and you as a victim coming in? Could that be improved?

MS. BRENNAN: With the police officers?

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Right.

MS. BRENNAN: I do; I do. You know, Katy Baldwin, who is here today, was there with me that night. It was not pleasant.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: They clearly had not had any recent training on how to talk to survivors. It was very fresh and it was, frankly, very difficult.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Now, during the campaign -- and I'm using the military term, a *chain of command* -- is there a person, a supervisor, who you reported to during the campaign?

MS. BRENNAN: During the campaign, when I served on the--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Very structured.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, when I served on the Working Group, those policy working groups, it was mostly policy staff that we reported to. And the people who I had the most direct interaction with were Dennis Zeveloff, Parimal Garg, and Matt Platkin.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: And if you had an issue with a fellow employee in this environment, who would you report this to if you feel like another -- to your supervisor? Who would you report this to, if there was an incident or, in this case, there was one.

MS. BRENNAN: Currently?

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: No, during the campaign.

MS. BRENNAN: During the campaign?

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Was there a process in place?

MS. BRENNAN: No; no, there was not, to the best of my knowledge, a personnel or HR staff, really, that I was aware of.

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHNSON: Okay; all right.

Madam Chair, that's all I have.

And thank you for coming.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Just a quick follow up from Assemblyman Johnson's question.

Even though there wasn't a personnel person, or-- Who would you, then, have maybe reported to; who was in charge of the-- You said that you were working mostly on the policy aspect during the campaign?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So who was the head person for the policy--

MS. BRENNAN: Matt Platkin.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: And there was-- Again, it was Matt Platkin who was the point of contact on the policy.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay. So we're assuming within different realms of campaign work, there was, probably, different heads for each -- I want to say *thing* -- between policy, or whether it's "go get votes," or vote by mails, or whatever it is. Everyone kind of had a different hierarchy.

MS. BRENNAN: Right. Yes, that was my supervisor; but I told him, as I testified, in March.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Later on.

MS. BRENNAN: So at that time he was not aware. But there was no, kind of, carryover from the campaign, or Transition, or into my current employment of, "We know that this happened," you know. To one of the questions earlier about, you know, I'm a Chief of Staff; he was a Chief of Staff. I've been to, now, Chiefs of Staff meetings with other departments. And so that was a constant threat of seeing him there. And

nobody had ever, you know, either during the campaign, or Transition, or now-- As I mentioned, I have a very specific HR Department, but nobody who knew, as sort of a thread throughout this, ever said, "Okay, you know, he's still in employment; this is what you should do," or, "This is who you should tell," or, "This is how we'll make sure that you don't end up in the same room as him." That was not a process in place.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay; thank you, Katie.

MS. BRENNAN: No problem.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Can I have Assemblywoman DeCrocce?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Thank you, Chair. Both Chairs, thank you very much.

Thank you, Katie, for being here today.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: I give you a lot of respect. You're definitely a woman of courage and an inspiration to all women.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Assemblywoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: A few questions; just three.

I'm going to follow up a little bit on Assemblyman Johnson's question, pertaining to the Jersey City report. You said there was a written report taken, but you had never reviewed it.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, there was a written report taken. I had not reviewed it until later, when I pulled the report--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: --from the final report.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: That was-- Thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: I've seen it now.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: I wanted to make sure that you saw that report.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Thank you.

Pertaining to your employment with HMFA.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: So the election is over, and now the Transition Team is in place. And you are being considered for the job at HMFA.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: You talked about the fact that you didn't have to fill out an application for the position, but did they require you to send them your résumé to the Transition Team?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, they did; yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Okay, thank you. That's important.

As we're here, looking and talking about everything that took place, something that I read from everything that I've seen so far that's near and dear to your heart, is policy and procedures, going forward.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: So I'm going to ask you this question. In the policy procedures, do you feel any perspective State employee being hired should go through a complete background check in which any alleged crime -- alleged crime, being investigated, should not be

considered for employment in a government position until the matter is settled? Do you think that's a fair place for us to be here in New Jersey?

MS. BRENNAN: First, I want to clarify your previous question.

I sent in a résumé; and also it had been indicated to me that people would be reaching out about the hiring process. I know that -- I want to be more specific about that -- that I knew that they were bringing people in and that they were working through the hiring process. And I had been told that people were going to reach out to me.

As to the background checks -- I don't know the answer, in terms of the full ramifications of what a blanket change would mean. But yes, to your question-- And when I testified, what I meant at the end is, I have reported that Al Alvarez had attacked me; that Al Alvarez had raped me. And later it came out that two other women had similar experiences to mine. And as was reported -- not told directly to me, but was as reported -- they ran a background check, and it was clean.

But if so few of these cases are first reported, and then if so few of them move to trial, and then if so few of them ever get convicted -- you know, it's just a minuscule percent of sexual assault cases where people even see a day in court; and smaller than that, that people are convicted. Because it's *he said, she said*. And if that's going to be the case, and if people are not going to be convicted, then there's not going to be something on their background check.

And so that's what I meant when I said that these kinds of reports matter. If I told them that I was raped, then they know that. It's not a trial, it's a hiring process. And they chose to move forward.

And so I do think that there's something that we need to do to address that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: I agree with you. There's no mystery of what happened. Many have heard about it, but just kept their eyes a little shut, or a lot shut.

And I think these are -- this is one of the areas that needs to be discussed more with this Committee.

So thank you very much for being here today.

Thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Assemblywoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Assemblywoman McKnight.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN McKNIGHT: I just have a statement.

Katie, thank you for being here today. Thank you for advocating for yourself and for others.

I listened.

Thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Assemblywoman.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Senator Madden.

SENATOR MADDEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome, Katie.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR MADDEN: You're doing a great job; long day.

(laughter)

But I want to thank you for your strength. I have a former background in policing, and I've dealt with victims, such as yourself, along

the way. And I am puzzled with some of the answers that you're giving, and your experiences you've had with some of the law enforcement operations. But that's why we're here -- to try to help ensure things go as they should, at least for future victims.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

SENATOR MADDEN: I really have -- it's very easy. It's two -- I have two, quick questions.

When you reported your incident to Justin Braz on April 9, how did he record that? Did he take notes; did he jot something down--

MS. BRENNAN: No.

SENATOR MADDEN: --did he type something into his phone?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't -- not that I'm aware of. It was a conversation at my apartment.

SENATOR MADDEN: There was a period of time when you believed that Justin said he was going to report your incident to the Transition Team.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR MADDEN: Do you have confirmation that he actually did that?

MS. BRENNAN: He told me as much; he told me that he called them. He called me back after he did that. I asked, "Do they have any questions? Do they need any further information?" And he said, "No, not right now."

SENATOR MADDEN: Is there-- When he called you and said he called them, were you aware if he reported your complaint to the

Transition Team verbally, or did he do that in writing? Do you know what mechanism he may have used?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know; I don't know, yes.

SENATOR MADDEN: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: It was my understanding that he was going to make a call, but I don't know for certain.

SENATOR MADDEN: Okay; well, thank you.

And I just want to drift over now to the criminal -- the background checks.

MS. BRENNAN: Okay.

SENATOR MADDEN: It's in the notes that Mr. Alvarez was appointed after he completed a background check, or that he passed a background check. Can you discuss what goes on in the background check of an individual who is seeking a position as a Chief of Staff?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know. When I filled out my paperwork for the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, I consented to have a background check. I've also since hired people at the Agency, and I just know that it's a part of the process that they're conducting before someone comes on board. But I don't actually know what they look for or what HR is reviewing during that process. I'm not sure.

SENATOR MADDEN: Were you -- did you have a background check done on yourself--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I believe so.

SENATOR MADDEN: --for your position? You believe so?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR MADDEN: But you're not sure?

MS. BRENNAN: I mean, I -- it's in some of the paperwork that you say, "Yes, you can move forward with a background check."

SENATOR MADDEN: You would sign a release form.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR MADDEN: Did you recall--

MS. BRENNAN: Part of the kind of general onboarding packet.

SENATOR MADDEN: Do you recall whether or not you were fingerprinted during the background check process?

MS. BRENNAN: I was not fingerprinted; no.

SENATOR MADDEN: I believe that's all I have.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Katie.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Katie, before we move on, in your process during your hiring you said that, obviously, they knew you were interested in the position that you were -- within Housing.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Did you have any other real formal type of interview with whom it is that you were going to be working for as a Chief of Staff?

MS. BRENNAN: With Executive Director Chuck Richman?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: No, I did not. I had had a series of meetings and conversations throughout the campaign and transition with various

people, including most closely Matt Platkin, about the position. But I did not-- You know, I've worked in Housing for a while, and so I knew who Charles -- Chuck Richman was, but I did not sit down with him prior to him-- He was the one who called and made me the offer. I knew that it was coming at that point, and he called and made it official.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay. And the reason why I'm asking you is just for - as we move on to looking into policies. Obviously, just like you know, certain Cabinet members -- they go through a little bit more of a grilling process when they're going to be offered a position, or they're vying for a position. So I just wanted to know if, maybe, the Chiefs of Staff had some sort of interview process as well.

MS. BRENNAN: I--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Do you think that, maybe, because you were part of the Transition Team -- a lot of those individuals--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; what I was going to say is that I think that I was interviewing, if you know what I mean--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: --through working on various policy memos for months and months.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So it might have been different if--

MS. BRENNAN: And then-- Yes, and then with my work on the Transition; yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So it might have been different if, maybe, it was someone who was hired as a Chief of Staff who wasn't part of the Transition Team? Could that be possible, maybe?

MS. BRENNAN: That's possible; certainly, yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Okay, thank you.

Assemblywoman Schepisi.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Hi, Katie.

MS. BRENNAN: Hi.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: And as Assemblywoman Lampitt said, she and I both have been victims of a sexual assault ourselves. Mine was 30 years ago; and I thank you for, one, having the intestinal fortitude to be here today, for never giving up and fighting to have your voice be heard. And I know personally, over the years, one of my biggest regrets was wondering whether or not other women may have been assaulted because of my fear in coming forward.

So what you're doing today is huge; and you should, regardless of anything else, take comfort in knowing that you are an advocate for women and for victims, and we thank you for being here.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: I have a couple of, kind of, follow-up questions; what everybody has asked today.

And starting with -- prior to the weekend of June, 2018, when you got the phone call from Jonathan Berkon, had you ever spoken to him prior to that?

MS. BRENNAN: Jonathan Berkon?

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I'm aware of. If he was Counsel on the campaign, perhaps he was around, but not that I'm aware.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Do you remember where he called you? Was it your cell, your home?

MS. BRENNAN: It was my cell phone.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: And you don't know how he had gotten that number, or who may have given it to him?

MS. BRENNAN: I may have, but I would have to look at the e-mails.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: And the e-mail that you sent to the Governor and the First Lady -- there was a distinct e-mail address on that. Do you recall why you sent your request to have a conversation to that e-mail address, as opposed to another one? Is that one that you used during the campaign?

MS. BRENNAN: I wanted it to go to a more personal address.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Right.

MS. BRENNAN: I wanted to make sure it would go right to him to the best of my ability.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: And did you CC anybody else on the original e-mail, or was it just to the Governor and the First Lady?

MS. BRENNAN: No. My e-mail was just to the Governor and the First Lady. And then when he responded, there was some schedulers copied.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay.

Now, going back to March 20, when you met with Matt Platkin. When you spoke with him, did he give you any indication that he was somehow already aware of your assault, or that he had heard any allegations against Alvarez prior to you speaking with him?

MS. BRENNAN: No, it seemed like a surprise; it seemed like I was the first one telling him. You know, I can't know that, but he did seem upset and--

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: And when you met with Mr. Garg, it was a day or two after that.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Did he give you any indication that he was aware of what you were speaking to him about, or that he had heard anything about it?

MS. BRENNAN: He did not give any indication that he knew what we were speaking about. I had told him that I -- that there was something I might want to talk to him about. But, I mean, he was someone who I saw somewhat regularly, and so I decided to tell him that day and did indicate to him that I had told Matt as well.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay.

And Senator Madden touched on this, but I just want to confirm. Justin never conveyed to you that he had prepared a memo or had provided anything in writing to the Transition Team regarding your allegations as part of the Transition Team?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know if he did that.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay.

Now, between you sitting down with Matt Platkin and Mr. Garg, and receiving a call from Heather Taylor on April 24, other than that one confirmation call that you had received, did anyone else follow up with you in any sort of capacity?

MS. BRENNAN: No, no, there was no one else. I think, as I mentioned earlier, when I hadn't heard anything from them yet, I kind of pinged Matt on it; and that's when I received the final phone call -- the April 24 phone call from Heather Taylor. But no, there was no discussion of the matter, otherwise, with any--

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay. And as part of the materials that we've received as part of discovery, we were given the New Jersey State Procedures for Internal Complaints alleging discrimination or any of that sort of stuff in the workplace. And there are standard operating procedures, and I am just going to walk you through a couple to confirm--

MS. BRENNAN: Sure.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: --whether or not any of these steps ever took place.

Did you ever receive notice from anybody that an internal investigation about your allegations was taking place?

MS. BRENNAN: After I told Matt?

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: No, just that they were going to look into it. You know, they were going to explore what they could do; and I didn't really know what that would mean or what they would conduct.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: So on-- Do you know whether a copy of your complaint was ever submitted to the Civil Service Commission, the Division of EEO?

MS. BRENNAN: If there was one, I have not received a copy.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay.

Did you ever receive an acknowledgement letter from anybody regarding your complaint?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I did not receive any written correspondence.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay. So you never received an investigatory report?

MS. BRENNAN: No, no.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: To your knowledge, was Alvarez ever interviewed by anybody in the Administration regarding your allegations?

MS. BRENNAN: I can't say; I don't know if he went through an interview process. I don't know.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay.

Do you know if he was ever interviewed by the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, they spoke to him, and--

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: He was?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: With respect to-- Bringing you back to December 1 of 2017, prior to that date, in your communications with the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, you said you

were kind of hopeful that an arrest was impending, and that they had said that it was coming, kind of, to fruition. In any of your discussions was there ever an indication that they were not going to press charges?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know what that indication would be, necessarily. I know that-- No, I don't know what that would be -- what an indication would be. I know that they -- I know that he said it was consensual, and so it's-- But I felt that I had a lot of evidence, so--

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: And prior to you speaking with Justin on December 1, did they say that they were going to get back to you on December 1? Or did you think it was coming that imminently?

MS. BRENNAN: I did. I think it was the last days of November that they said it was -- that's when I -- that's when we were going back-and-forth of, "It's coming, it's coming, it's coming." And that's when I talked to Justin, and then on the December 1; yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Do you recall what time of day you spoke to Justin?

MS. BRENNAN: It was the morning; I think it was-- I think we spoke a little bit about it the day prior; and then in the morning, and he called me back and said -- that he said that he spoke with somebody. And then I think I remember being on my commute, and then it was when I was in the office later that day that I received the call. But, I mean, afternoon, mid-morning, afternoon -- I don't quite remember the exact time, but that's when I received the call that they were not taking the case.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Did you ever wonder whether or not you putting forth to Transition Counsel, or the team, or

through Justin -- that there was any possibility that anybody tried to prevent charges from moving forward?

MS. BRENNAN: I've tried not to think about that. I would certainly hope that that's not the case.

ASSEMBLYWOMEN SCHEPISI: Okay.

Thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thanks.

SENATOR WEINBERG: You mentioned in an answer to Assemblywoman Schepisi's question that you knew that the Hudson County Prosecutor did question Al Alvarez.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, they did.

SENATOR WEINBERG: How did you know that?

MS. BRENNAN: They told me.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Did they, at any point, share with you what he said, or give you an opportunity to answer any questions that might have arisen?

MS. BRENNAN: Not particularly. They had given me a kind of small hint over the phone that was contradictory. But it was one of the things that fed into my optimism of, "Oh, you know, because there was some DNA found, that seems contradictory to what he said." But then they later told me that he said it was consensual, so--

But yes, they did share that with me when I called.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay, thank you for that.

Again, just in order to clarify the timeline in my own mind, you spoke to Justin Braz who was involved with the Transition. You spoke to Matt Platkin; he had been your supervisor on the Transition Team. And

then you got the telephone call from Mr. Berkon, which seemed to indicate to you that he knew what your issue was, because he began, at the conversation, by saying, "Al Alvarez is going to be leaving." Correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Did I miss anybody in that chain who reported--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Yes?

MS. BRENNAN: After Matt, two days later was Parimal Garg.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay. And his position was --

MS. BRENNAN: He's Deputy Chief Counsel.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: And then-- So that was March 22. And then on April 24 is when I get the definitive call from Heather Taylor that it was outside of their purview -- the Chief Ethics Officer -- and that was the end of April; yes.

And then, on June 1, I e-mailed the Governor; and then Jonathan Berkon called me.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Oh, right; I forgot there was--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. (laughter)

SENATOR WEINBERG: --an e-mail in between that and Mr. Berkon's call; okay.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Thank you.

Senator Madden.

SENATOR MADDEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hi, Katie.

As a follow up to Senator Weinberg's Hudson County Prosecutor question, if we can, Mr. Critchley? Stay with me, if-- (laughter)

Were either you or Mr. Alvarez offered a polygraph test?

MS. BRENNAN: No; well, I don't know what they offered him.

SENATOR MADDEN: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: I don't think-- I certainly didn't partake in one.

SENATOR MADDEN: During the discussions with the Prosecutor's Office, and they were talking -- they said they did interview Mr. Alvarez. Could you--

MS. BRENNAN: Actually, I want to take that back.

SENATOR MADDEN: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: There may have been something that was along those lines for me, but I don't really remember. But I kind of remember some discussion about it; so I just don't want to say that definitively for me.

SENATOR MADDEN: Okay.

When you said -- well, at least in the original statement, you were saying that he was interviewed, I was wondering if they were aware that Mr. Alvarez -- you claimed that Mr. Alvarez had offered you \$15,000 not to--

MS. BRENNAN: That was after the investigation.

SENATOR MADDEN: It was after--

SENATOR WEINBERG: That was after *what*? I'm sorry.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: After the investigation.

SENATOR OROHO: After the investigation.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Okay.

SENATOR MADDEN: He offered you the money--

MS. BRENNAN: The settlement was after the investigation was closed; after the Hudson County Prosecutor's investigation was closed.

SENATOR MADDEN: As of today, their case is closed; then the offer for the \$15,000 came to you. And the purpose of that \$15,000 -- the offering was for what?

MS. BRENNAN: To settle; to make me go away.

SENATOR MADDEN: Okay. And has the Prosecutor's Office been advised of that offer, even though the case was closed?

MS. BRENNAN: I do not believe so, no.

SENATOR MADDEN: Okay; thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Are there any further questions from Committee members?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Yes; one short one, one short one.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Assemblywoman DeCroce; and then we want to get to the attorneys.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Yes, I appreciate it.

This will just be short, Katie.

I'm sorry, but I just want to redirect--

MS. BRENNAN: That's okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: --back to what I was talking about earlier, with the Jersey City Police report.

When you did receive that report, did you agree with what was written in the report, as to what took place? Or was it not complete?

MS. BRENNAN: I felt that it was biased.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I felt that it was -- I felt that it was biased, and just clearly somebody who had not had a lot of training working with survivors. And, you know, at that moment, right then, I wasn't ready to move forward. And I think that they called me -- at wasn't *difficult*, but something like that, because I wasn't willing to press charges at that exact moment. I didn't press charges until I contacted Hudson County.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DeCROCE: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Yes; Mr. Critchley.

MR. CRITCHLEY (Committee Special Counsel): Good afternoon, Ms. Brennan; Counselors Mr. Zegas, Ms. McClure.

Good afternoon.

Katie, I've been reading documents, and I know you have expressed concern that in this journey that began on April 9, 2017 -- and we're now December 4, 2018 -- you were concerned along the way that your voice wasn't being heard.

I want you to know, by large measure, your voice is the inspiration that gave rise to this bipartisan Committee. So you should be assured that your voice is being heard, and your voice is being listened to.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, sir.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And along with those -- and it may be a question that you may think is silly, from a lawyer asking you this question -- but to make sure that this Committee fully airs your complaints, and has a full understanding of what took place -- if you could, excluding law enforcement, who would you expect that this Committee should call as witnesses to give a full hearing to your complaint?

MS. BRENNAN: I believe we've provided a witness list; and I think that everybody who I've mentioned today, who along my journey I talked to about it. Because I can't say who they told, or what exactly they did, or what the responses were, or who talked to Mr. Alvarez and who didn't. And so I think we need to hear from them what, on their end, as officials, took place.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And when you say *them*, would you exclude any of the names you've mentioned today as being part of those people who we should call?

MS. BRENNAN: I can't see why; I think that, you know, each person may have spoken to others, and each person may have taken steps. And it's worth exploring.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Sure.

Now, Katie, could you please give us the benefit of your educational background.

MS. BRENNAN: My educational background?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: Sure. I went to undergrad in Cincinnati, Ohio. I was an English major; I had three minors. (laughter) I moved to

Chicago, and then I moved to New Jersey to get my Master's in City and Regional Planning at the Bloustein School.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. And could you give us the benefit a little bit of your work experience prior to working with the Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.

MS. BRENNAN: Sure. I've always worked in affordable housing. In Chicago, I worked for, essentially, the equivalent of the Network that we have here in New Jersey -- the Housing and Community Development Network -- but for Chicago. In graduate school I worked for various professors in internships; Enterprise, which is a tax credit syndicator.

I then, actually, worked for HMFA right out of grad school; so I worked for the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency in a position called Management Associate. Upon graduating with my Master's, I then went to Monarch Housing, where I was a Development Consultant. So, you know, whether it's a housing authority, or a nonprofit, or even a private developer that needs additional staff assistance, I was their development staff.

Then I went to Hudson County, where I ran the affordable housing programs for the County of Hudson. And now I'm here, back at the State.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Yes, the reason I asked that question-- Because, in response to some of the questions, you used a couple of words that I kind of feel are -- the use of the word interesting. You felt, in your present employment -- you said, sometimes, you felt some *strain*. And on another occasion, you said you felt *ostracized*. Now, based upon your prior

work experience, you know what it means when you're ostracized; you know what it means when you feel strain. Can you give us some understanding as to what you meant when you felt you were *ostracized*? And a follow-up, is there an event or a person who caused you to feel ostracized after you went public with these complaints?

MS. BRENNAN: I know that there are certain people who, now, are not really supposed to speak with me directly. There are people who I used to call, who now I don't really feel like I can call to conduct my work business. You know, there have been invites and e-mails that seem like they should have come to me, and they didn't. There's been concern about elected officials who I have been speaking to, which is part of my daily job. Things of that nature.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, have you expressed concerns over this *ostracization*, as you described, to anyone?

MS. BRENNAN: My boss is aware of it; Executive Director Chuck Richman is aware of what has occurred. But besides that, you know, just friends.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Can you tell us the substance -- not exactly what you told Mr. Richman -- about this environment, and how many times you've told him?

MS. BRENNAN: Gosh, I mean, some of it he's just very aware of and involved with, you know? It would come to him -- that people were concerned that I was speaking to people. And he just -- and he told me, "Just keep doing your job."

MR. CRITCHLEY: Have you ever felt this type of environment, ostracizing, or strain in any of your other prior employment history?

MS. BRENNAN: No; not of this nature, no.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And I may have misheard, but I believe you said in your answer that you thought some people were told not to talk to you. And I don't want to put words in your mouth; if I misspoke, please clarify it. And Counsel, if I misspoke, please clarify it.

MS. BRENNAN: It's my understanding, though I have not been told explicitly, that, I think, during the course of these investigations, at the very least, that, you know, there are some people who I used to have regular contact with that I just don't anymore; yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And Katie, excluding law enforcement -- that's a whole piece I don't want to get into -- approximately how many people have you told about the experience that you went through on the evening of April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: I've told quite a few friends. I don't know that I could -- I don't know that I could tally that--

MR. CRITCHLEY: Right.

MS. BRENNAN: --here.

MR. CRITCHLEY: So you told a number of friends?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And you told co-workers, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: I did not tell any co-workers at my present employment, except for my boss, who I did-- I did tell Executive Director Richman. I told Executive Director Richman when I knew that Kate King

was going to be contacting people, because I wanted him to hear it from me. So I told him first, privately, and he's been supportive.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And he's been supportive.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct; yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, it seems like as your testimony was given today, the events could be broken down into three silos. One silo would be what took place during the campaign; another silo would be what took place during the transition; and another silo would be what took place after you were working as an employee for the State of New Jersey. And all during those periods of time, you have told people about what took place on the evening of April 8, 2017, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, that's correct.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And I believe in your statement -- if I could read it -- and if I misread it, please tell me, because I want to ask a question about it.

MS. BRENNAN: Of course.

MR. CRITCHLEY: A statement attributed to you is, "Several senior-level members of the Administration were aware of my assault and failed to take meaningful action." And then I'm going to go to another sentence. "The failure of members of Governor's staff to respond in an aggressive and proactive fashion is unacceptable."

Now, this conclusion that you gave, in terms of *meaningful action* -- what was your expectation as to what you would want to meet your definition of what *meaningful action* should be after you told these senior officials?

That's a long-winded question; do you understand it?

MS. BRENNAN: I do.

I think there are many actions. I do not think that he should have been employed; I don't think that he should have stayed in employment. But I also, from the very beginning, have wanted nobody else to ever be in this situation again, and have been very vocal about how I felt that at each step that should have been my last. Well, it never should have happened in the first place; but at each step, I think there are reforms that can happen so that is a survivor's last step. You report, and it's over, and you receive the justice you deserve.

So that's what I mean. I think there is a whole series of meaningful actions that could have occurred.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And I'm going to ask you about events that you testified to. Not to be repetitive, but just to try to put some meat onto the skeleton of the outline of the information you provided.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, the Chair has mentioned a number of individuals who you have spoken to. And I just want to just dwell on a few of those conversations.

The first person you spoke to about this matter, obviously, was Justin Braz; and he's Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative Affairs, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And he was a lawyer when you spoke to him.

MS. BRENNAN: A lawyer?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Is he a lawyer?

MS. BRENNAN: No, he is not a lawyer.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay, he is not. Now, how many times did you speak to Mr. Braz about what took place on the evening of April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: I mean, I was very explicit on April 9, when I spoke to him. But as I said, I mean, Justin Braz and I are friends; and so, occasionally, you know, it was not as detailed of a conversation. But in between that time and when he spoke to Transition Counsel in December, you know, he'd ask me how I was.

MR. CRITCHLEY: So from the period of time -- April 9, 2017, until, I believe, it was December 1, 2017 -- it is safe to say you had two conversations with Justin Braz about this?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; he was working in the Legislature.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Sorry?

MS. BRENNAN: He was working in the Legislature in April; and then, you know, he became employed in the campaign and -- yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did Mr. Braz, during that period of time, before December 1, 2017, ever suggest that he bring to the attention of high-ranking officials the allegations you made as to what took place on April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I don't think so. You know, we spoke about it, again, in terms of alerting people on and around December 1.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. Now, one of the reasons I asked you about your work experience is to get some understanding of how you felt a meaningful action was not taken, based upon the allegations you made. Are you familiar with, for example, in the work life of many people,

when allegations of a serious nature like this are made, there's an internal investigation conducted to determine the merits of the allegation?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I'm familiar.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Was there any suggestion of an internal investigation being conducted to find out what took place here?

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I'm aware of. Nobody asked me about it. I guess I thought that that was probably what would happen after, you know, I said, "Yes, you can tell Transition Counsel." But, to the best of my knowledge, it didn't happen.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now -- and I don't want to-- So when you told Mr. Braz on December 1, 2017, that he could tell Transition Counsel, you fully understood that he was going to say to the Transition Counsel that, on April 8, 2017, you were raped by someone associated with the campaign, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: I think that he was not going to use my name. But yes, he was going to convey exactly the severity and the actions to somebody on Transition Counsel; and explicitly that it was Al Alvarez; yes, yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Right. He was not going to report someone saying, "Someone told me an off-color joke."

MS. BRENNAN: Right; yes, yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: After you told him it was okay -- to Mr. Braz -- that he could report that someone had raped you -- did you expect him to come back with a response as to what Transition Counsel said or did?

MS. BRENNAN: He did call me back, and he said that Transition Counsel didn't request any additional information.

MR. CRITCHLEY: On December 1, 2017, when you first told him, how long was it before Mr. Braz called you back and said he told Transition Counsel, and Transition Counsel didn't want any other information?

MS. BRENNAN: He called me back right away.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Were you shocked?

MS. BRENNAN: I was certainly surprised, I, you know, if not in that moment, thought that something would come later of, you know, maybe they would go decide what to do and then come back to me and ask more questions. They knew that -- I assume that they knew that Justin knew who was reporting. But, I mean, yes, no one ever came back to me.

MR. CRITCHLEY: You said you assumed you knew Justin-- Could you please state-- I don't want to put words in your mouth.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. I don't want to sound speculative.

Justin reported that Al Alvarez had raped somebody. That's my understanding, is that that's what he did. I guess what I was trying to say is that if they had wanted to ask me questions, if Transition Counsel had wanted to follow up, I think that they could have found me.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did Justin Braz ever tell you that when he mentioned the fact that you had been raped -- not you, that *someone* had been raped -- by another member of the campaign, did he say that the Transition Counsel wanted to know the identity of the person who was raped?

MS. BRENNAN: No.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did Justin tell you anything about what Transition Counsel said during the conversation that Justin Braz had with them about the fact that you had been raped?

MS. BRENNAN: No; just that there wasn't anything further.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Nothing further?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And after December 1, 2017, you said a few days thereafter Justin told you that Transition Counsel didn't want to follow up -- my words, not yours. So I'm not suggesting you adopt those, but in substance. Did Justin ever follow up again after that, regarding any conversations he may have had with people in the Administration about the fact that a campaign worker had been raped?

MS. BRENNAN: Not to my knowledge. I see, you know-- I know that Justin was concerned about me, but we didn't talk about it from kind of an official standpoint; no.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Not that it makes any difference in terms of the level of employment, but do you know if Justin Braz, when he reported to Transition Counsel, said that a high-ranking official of the campaign had been raped?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know what he-- I don't know. My understanding is that they knew that it was somebody on the inside, but I don't know exactly what he said.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay.

Now, did you have any follow-up conversations -- if you did, but don't recall, that's okay -- with Justin Braz about this?

MS. BRENNAN: About specifically reporting to Transition?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: I called him when the Prosecutor's Office called me, and I said, "They're not moving it forward."

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. So now if we could understand -- you've gone to the Prosecutor's Office -- my words, not yours -- the door is shut. You go to Justin Braz, who goes to Transition Counsel -- my words, not yours -- the door is shut. Now, the next person you speak to -- as I understand the timeline -- is Matthew Platkin, correct? I wouldn't say the *next* person; I don't mean that -- you may have spoken to other people in between. But in terms of someone from the Administration who you spoke to about the allegations of what took place on April 8, 2017, that would be Matthew Platkin, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, that's correct.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And Matthew Platkin is who, please?

MS. BRENNAN: Matt Platkin is Chief Counsel.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And I think I'm right with this question. He's a lawyer, right?

MS. BRENNAN: He's a lawyer. (laughter)

MR. CRITCHLEY: All right, okay. I knew we'd get a lawyer here somehow.

MS. BRENNAN: There are plenty. (laughter)

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, at this point in time, obviously, I cannot live your trauma. But you went through a traumatic experience on April 8. And the rejection, I guess, has caused you to relive this event.

Now, it comes to a point in time where December 1 goes by; Transition Counsel says they don't want to follow up, or whatever they say. Then you feel -- would you say you feel frustrated at this point in time?

MS. BRENNAN: I mean, I was devastated. It's being told that, "Your case isn't moving forward." It's what? It's not worth it? I don't believe you? It's not -- you're not going to get formal justice?

So in that time, I was figuring out my other options, of which there are not many. And I was gearing myself up when I decided that I -- as I testified, that I needed to tell -- I needed to directly alert the Administration. That's a hard thing to do. It's hard to tell people about your trauma; it's hard to talk about it; it's hard to let people into that part of your life, and people who you work with. And so I was preparing myself to do so, and had decided that the next opportunity that I got to tell Matt, I was going to tell him.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And when you say *Matt*, that's Matt Platkin.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, Mr. Platkin.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And that next opportunity took place, as I understand it, on March 20?

MS. BRENNAN: That's right.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, where did this opportunity to talk to Mr. Platkin take place?

MS. BRENNAN: Jersey City.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And where did you-- Was it at a room, an office?

MS. BRENNAN: It was at Third and Vine.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And what is that? Is that--

MS. BRENNAN: It's a cheese restaurant. (laughter)

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. So how long did you meet with Mr. Platkin that day?

MS. BRENNAN: We were together a few hours.

MR. CRITCHLEY: A few hours.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And during the course of these few hours, did you discuss a number of events that-- And I'm not going to get into what else you discussed.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; Matt and I are friendly. We chat about policy issues; you know, wonky things. Also, we know a lot of similar people, and we talked about other things; yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: So when you say you're *friendly*, you knew Mr. Platkin prior to the campaign?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I did.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And you felt comfortable enough, at this point in time, to go. Was Mr. Platkin Chief Counsel at this time?

MS. BRENNAN: He was, yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: So you felt comfortable enough, now, to go to one of the highest-ranking members of the Administration, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: It was certainly not easy, but I-- Yes, I felt that I trusted Matt.

MR. CRITCHLEY: You took a big swallow, and you took a big chance--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: --and you told him. What did you tell Mr. Platkin?

MS. BRENNAN: I told Mr. Platkin that, on April 8, Al Alvarez raped me. I told him, too, that's why I was so nervous during the hiring process.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And, obviously, he knew -- Mr. Platkin knew who Mr. Alvarez was, obviously.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did he express surprise, Mr. Platkin, when you told him you were raped?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: What did he say?

MS. BRENNAN: I mean, he was-- I don't remember exact words, but he was disgusted; he was horrified; and just so sorry that I had had to go through that, and continue to go through that.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And did he give you any advice as to what you should do, or any recommendations as to what you should do?

MS. BRENNAN: He volunteered that he would try and see if there was anything that they could do.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. And did he tell you what he would attempt to do, if anything, as a result of you telling Mr. Platkin you were raped on April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: It must have been in that conversation that he had said that he was going to try and see if the Attorney General could do anything.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you have a follow-up conversation with Matt Platkin after that March 20, 2017 (*sic*), conversation about this?

MS. BRENNAN: If we did, it was very brief. Maybe it was-- I know that he said he was going to see what he could do, and then, or perhaps in a follow-up conversation, he said the Attorney General was going to look at it. But it would have been in a matter of hours, or just the next day.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you and/or Matt Platkin exchange any e-mails or texts over the conversation you had with him on March 20, 2017 (*sic*)?

MS. BRENNAN: There are texts indicating that we were going to get together. And there's a text where I said something along the lines of, "I haven't heard anything." But there are no texts that explicitly talk about the matter.

MR. CRITCHLEY: When you say there are texts saying, "I haven't heard anything," meaning, "I have not heard anything about the complaint I made to you on March 20, 2017"?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, that I had not received the response. And then that's -- I believe it was that same day that I received a follow-up call from Heather Taylor.

MR. CRITCHLEY: I'm sorry; I said *2017*. That's why you're the Chair (laughter).

MS. BRENNAN: Eighteen, eighteen; we're in 2018 now, yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: It's 2018.

Now, from the time you tell Mr. Platkin on March 20, 2018--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: --how much times passes before someone contacts you about the allegations you made about what took place on April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't have the exact date in front of me about the confirmation call that I've referenced. But then it was -- when I told Matt Platkin, "I haven't heard anything," and then I got the call from Heather Taylor, that was April 24.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. And Katie, this is not meant to be a memory contest; I'm not expecting you to know. I'm just giving you approximate dates. If you don't have the dates, that's fine.

MS. BRENNAN: Okay.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, when you speak to Ms. Taylor, did you know who she was when she contacted you?

MS. BRENNAN: Not personally, no. And I don't believe that I had met her before. And I don't think that I was aware that that was a position. But no, that was-- I didn't know her.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And what position did you understand that Ms. Taylor held?

MS. BRENNAN: At the time I thought it was the Attorney General's Office. I thought she was someone from the AG's Office, but I've since come to understand that she's the -- that that was, I guess, a misunderstanding on my part. But it's the Chief Ethics Officer.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Sorry?

MS. BRENNAN: She's the Chief Ethics Officer. At the time, I think that I thought that she was from the Attorney General's Office.

MR. CRITCHLEY: She's an attorney?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know, but it-- I don't know.  
(laughter)

MR. CRITCHLEY: What -- if you recall, as best as you recall -- did she say to you, Ms. Heather Taylor?

MS. BRENNAN: She said that because we were not both State employees at the time of the attack, it was outside of their jurisdiction.

MR. CRITCHLEY: I'm sorry; did she say anything else?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know; I don't think so. Not that I--

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you have any conversations--

MS. BRENNAN: --that I remember.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you have any follow-up conversations with Ms. Taylor?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I did not.

MR. CRITCHLEY: How long was this conversation with Ms. Taylor, as best as you can recall?

MS. BRENNAN: Just a couple of minutes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: That's it?

MS. BRENNAN: I think so.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you ask her any questions when she told you that it was outside their jurisdiction?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't remember.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. So now you've gone to the Chief Counsel's Office; you spoke to the Chief Counsel; he refers you to Heather Taylor; Heather Taylor contacts you, and says there's nothing they can do about it.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: How do feel now?

MS. BRENNAN: You know, I think when I've said things publicly -- that if I can't receive justice, I don't know who can. That's what I mean. I had incredible access.

MR. CRITCHLEY: What do you mean you had *incredible access*?

MS. BRENNAN: Not every woman is able to call the Chief Counsel to the State of New Jersey. Not every woman is able to report, let alone go through all the steps that I did. And so I just-- When you watch door after door close, and doors that you never even thought that you would get to, or would have to get to, it's really demoralizing. That if someone in my position who is able to keep going, and keep pursuing, and keep alerting people, and does, yes, have access to a number of people in very high positions -- I don't know who can get justice.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Interesting question.

Now, just go back-- And I'm going to come-- Did you know Esther Suarez, the Prosecutor, the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, while the matter was being investigated by Hudson County?

MS. BRENNAN: No; I have met her once. It was on August 30, 2018, in a group of people.

MR. CRITCHLEY: So you had no relationship? I say no relationship.

MS. BRENNAN: No.

MR. CRITCHLEY: You just met her once?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. I did not know her during the investigation.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, as we're going up the hierarchal ladder, we have Justin Braz; then we have Matthew Platkin. And you also spoke to someone -- I believe you identified him as -- I'm going to mispronounce his name--

MS. BRENNAN: Parimal Garg.

MR. CRITCHLEY: That's it; for the record, it's P-A-R-I-M-A-L G-A-R-G.

MS. BRENNAN: Correct.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And what's his title?

MS. BRENNAN: Deputy Chief Counsel.

SENATOR WEINBERG: And is he a lawyer?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Is he a lawyer? (laughter)

MS. BRENNAN: He is a lawyer, yes. (laughter)

MR. CRITCHLEY: So you spoke with the Chief Counsel about this matter; then you spoke with the Deputy Chief Counsel about it.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And you said you spoke to the Deputy Chief Counsel on March 22, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And that's two days after you spoke to the Chief Counsel.

MS. BRENNAN: Correct, yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And what did you tell Mr. Garg, the Deputy Chief Counsel, about what took place on April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: I told him the same; I told him what happened, I told him what Al did to me.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And where did you tell him this?

MS. BRENNAN: In Princeton.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And it was just you and he during the conversation about this event?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And when you told him this, what was his reaction?

MS. BRENNAN: He was upset too. He was certainly sorry.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did he give you any recommendations, any advice?

MS. BRENNAN: No.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you tell Mr. Garg that, two days prior, you had told his boss, Mr. Platkin?

MS. BRENNAN: I did.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And when you told Mr. Garg that you had told Matt Platkin about what took place on April 8, 2017, what did Mr. Garg say, or do, or respond?

MS. BRENNAN: I think that he thought that was good that I had done that.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Do you know -- if you do know -- whether Matt Platkin and Mr. Garg ever talked about what you told them on March 20?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay.

Now we're-- Did you talk to Mr. Garg at any time other -- any time other than March 22, 2018, about what took place on April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I don't think so; not explicitly. I see him socially in groups of friends.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay, so we go up the hierarchal ladder; we're going up.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: You still have not stopped in your pursuit of having your voice heard, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: You've gone to law enforcement; you punched that button. You've gone to the hospital, you got a rape kit; you touched that button. You contacted Justin Braz to tell him; hit that button. You told your friends, some assistants, your husband; you hit that button. Then you told the Deputy Chief Counsel; you hit that button. You told the Chief Counsel about that; and nothing has happened.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. CRITCHLEY: No one is saying, "Hey, we're going to do an internal investigation; we're going to do a review; were going to follow up on what you've told us."

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I'm aware.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you ever feel you wanted to jump out a window and start screaming? (laughter)

MS. BRENNAN: I-- Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now it comes to a point in time where, after you've gone to the Chief Counsel's Office, where do you go from there?

MS. BRENNAN: After the Chief Counsel's Office?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Who's higher than that?

MS. BRENNAN: The Governor.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Now, you've contacted the Governor, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And I'm not going to refer to the e-mail -- was it a personal e-mail, or a work e-mail?

MS. BRENNAN: From my e-mail address. A personal e-mail address.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And to the Governor, was it a personal or work e-mail?

MS. BRENNAN: It was a personal e-mail address.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And how did you get the Governor's personal e-mail?

MS. BRENNAN: A friend gave it to me.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Who?

MS. BRENNAN: A friend gave it to me.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Who's that?

MS. BRENNAN: Julie Roginsky.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you have a conversation with Julie Roginsky about this?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: What did you tell Julie Roginsky?

MS. BRENNAN: I had told her what I was going through. I knew that she knew Mr. Alvarez, because she had worked on the campaign; I knew her through a nonprofit that I had met her through. But I knew

that she had gone through, very publicly, a personal experience with assault, and so I decided that I was going to ask her for some advice.

And I had gone everywhere else, and so I wanted to tell the Governor. I wanted to tell the Governor; and, you know, First Lady Tammy Murphy had been public about her assault. And I wanted to tell them that this was happening during the campaign. That, you know, this person is in their Administration-- Even then I wanted to tell him and ask him to enact changes; that I thought this is a progressive Governor, and let's see some real changes. And so I thought that-- That's why I wanted to contact them.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Understand.

Now, do you know approximately when you contacted Ms. Roginsky?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't recall, no.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Do you know how many times you contacted her?

MS. BRENNAN: I talked to her a few times.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. Did you tell her you had been raped on April 8, 2017?

MS. BRENNAN: I did, yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And what was her reaction?

MS. BRENNAN: I mean, she was so upset. You know, when she had -- when I found out about what had happened to her, I had said that I was sorry for her; and she was sorry for me, and she was so sorry to hear that I was going through it. And further still, just extremely upset that it was somebody that she knew.

MR. CRITCHLEY: How soon after you received the Governor's personal e-mail did you contact the Governor?

MS. BRENNAN: I thought about it for a few days.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Understand.

And then, ultimately you came to a decision, yay or nay, as to whether you were going to contact him?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And you contacted him, via your personal e-mail. And if I can, just so I may ask some questions, it was sent on Friday, June 1, 2018, at approximately 7 p.m. And I'll read it; I'll read it slow, and I'll read it again if I have to.

"Dear Governor and Mrs. Murphy, I would like to reintroduce myself. By way of background, I had the pleasure to volunteer for the campaign, serve on the Economic Working Group, lead the Housing Transition Committee, and currently have the honor of serving as Chief of Staff at the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.

"Reluctantly, I am coming to you today to discuss something that happened during the campaign. If possible, I would like to meet with either of you, one-on-one, for this sensitive matter.

"Thank you for your consideration. Katie Brennan."

And then, a quick response, on that same night -- the e-mail you sent went out at 7 p.m. and the response was at 7:41 p.m., same night, Friday, June 1, 2018, from the Governor.

"Katie, we know you well. Adding our respective teams to get on with scheduling something. Hang in; we're on it.

“If we prove not to be fast enough, don’t hesitate to come back to Tammy or me directly.

“Many thanks, Phil and Tammy.”

And then you respond the next day, June 2, to the Governor and other people, “Thank you very much for your quick response. I truly appreciate your care. Michelle and Shannon, thank you for scheduling. I am, of course, happy to be flexible to the Governor and First Lady’s schedules. Best.”

Before-- Are you okay? Do you need a break, Katie?

MS. BRENNAN: I’m okay.

MR. CRITCHLEY: You’re okay.

Now-- And if you do, please, Katie, if I ask you questions, you want to stop, just stop, okay?

Now, when the Governor responded, “Hang in; we’re on it,” do you have an understanding what the *it* meant?

MS. BRENNAN: No; I-- No. Scheduling a meeting--

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay.

MS. BRENNAN: --helping me out.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay, all right.

Now, obviously, I understand, you don’t speak to the Governor -- correct? -- until, as you refer to the article that the *Wall Street Journal* -- that came out some time in, I think it was, October? You don’t speak to the Governor, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; not until the *Wall Street Journal* story came out.

MR. CRITCHLEY: But you send an e-mail to the Governor, and you get a response from the campaign's attorney; I think his title is the campaign attorney, Jonathan Berkon.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And you don't have contact with Jonathan-- You attempt to have contact with him, back and forth. You exchange efforts, but you don't really speak with him, via text message, until June 10, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't have it in front of me. There was an initial, very brief, phone call that was just where -- I hadn't responded to his e-mail when he reached out. I was contacting an attorney, who was out of town. And he gets back to me and says, as I remember, "I have an update." And so she advised me, "Get on the phone; don't say anything. Just hear his updates. And then we'll have another call when I'm in town and we can get on the phone together," with my representation.

And so, yes, and I thought that that was earlier. And then we had a second call with him, with my attorney.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay.

I'm referring now to -- and Counsel, if you have it in front of you -- a text message from you, sent June 14, 2018, to Jonathan Berkon. "Subject: Re: Your Friday e-mail, sensitive matter."

It says, "Jonathan, thank you for speaking with me on Sunday (June 10, 2018). Would you have a moment for a very brief call sometime in the next few days or early next week?"

Now, reading that text message-- Oh, Counsel, I'll wait until you get it.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MS. McCLURE: Mr. Critchley, could you kindly tell me what document number you're referring to?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Yes, please. Date stamp number-- What I did, Counsel, I could give you a copy of mine. Because as you recall, the text messages that you sent us were in a format that-- Eighteen.

MS. BRENNAN: He reached out to me right away; but perhaps it was June 10 when we actually spoke.

MR. CRITCHLEY: When I said *text*, I meant an *e-mail*; I'm sorry.

MS. McCLURE: You're referring to the lengthy e-mail thread with Mr. Berkon?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Yes.

And I could give you, Counsel, if you want it-- Can I just give you a copy, Counsel? Can someone pass this down?

And just for the record, I'm passing down to Counsel a copy of the e-mails that we received from Counsel in a format that was difficult to read -- not because of anything Counsel did; just because the way they come out. And we reformatted it so it could be legible.

MS. McCLURE: Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: On June 7, he had said that he has the update.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay. And I'm giving it to you; and also you have it on page 18.

Did I read it correctly, where it said, "Jonathan, thank you for speaking with me on Sunday. Would you have a moment for a very brief

call sometime in the next few days, or early next week?" Was that Sunday the Sunday he told you that Mr. Alvarez will be leaving?

MS. McCLURE: Mr. Critchley, could you just give us a moment to look at these two documents?

MR. CRITCHLEY: Take your time. Do you want a break?

MS. McCLURE: Not at the moment. We're just trying to compare your document with the document we have.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Yes, the thing I put in parenthesis is the date, June 10. Just see if that's -- see if I'm correct, when I say that.

**(witness confers with attorneys)**

SENATOR WEINBERG: Yes, I think you should turn your microphones off while-- Turn the mikes off while you're--

MS. McCLURE: Okay; Mr. Critchley, if I could.

I think that we're looking at the document that you -- the first page of the document that you provided us. And there's a June 7 e-mail that you repeat that begins on the document that we gave you, date stamped *Brennan 23*. So I think that we have lined up your document with the document that we provided.

And Ms. Brennan can answer your question.

MR. CRITCHLEY: I think we wasted more time than the question is worth. (laughter) ‘

MS. BRENNAN: It was earlier than June 14 that I spoke to him.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Right.

MS. BRENNAN: So he had sent me an e-mail on Saturday, June 2, as you can see. I said, on June 4, that I was awaiting a response from my attorney. I was going back-and-forth with her to schedule a date. That's when he says, on June 7, that he has an update. And my attorney had said, "Okay, get on the phone call with him." And then you can see the series of back-and-forth about, "Yes, let's talk today; crazy day" on his-- And so then we spoke -- yes, on June 10, I say, "If possible, let's do today." And yes, we connected on June 10.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And that's when he told--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, it was in the initial phone call.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And how long was that conversation with Mr. Berkon?

MS. BRENNAN: Very brief.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And what did Mr. Berkon-- I apologize, as you recall, what did he say? It's not a memory contest; in substance, what do you recall him saying?

MS. BRENNAN: He told me that Mr. Alvarez was leaving the State.

MR. CRITCHLEY: And did you say anything to him when he told you that?

MS. BRENNAN: "Thank you." (laughter) I just said, "Thank you for letting me know."

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you tell anyone about what Mr. Berkon had told you? That Mr. Alvarez would be leaving?

MS. BRENNAN: You know, I know that I told my attorney; I know that I told my husband, some friends.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Did you talk to Mr. Platkin, or Mr. Braz, or Mr. Garg about that?

MS. BRENNAN: No.

MR. CRITCHLEY: Okay.

Thank you very much, Katie.

MS. BRENNAN: You're welcome.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Mr. Hayden.

MR. HAYDEN (Committee Special Counsel): Good afternoon, Katie.

MS. BRENNAN: Hi.

MR. HAYDEN: Thank you for your candor, and I thank you for your patience during your ordeal in this process.

And I ask if you will be patient with me just a little bit, because I have some pick-and-shovel work that I think we need so that our Committee can have a viable report.

MS. BRENNAN: Okay.

MR. HAYDEN: Before I get into the pick-and-shovel work, I was struck, as was Senator Cunningham, by your words when you said that for things to change, society has to believe the survivors. And what I would like to know is, when you talked to people in the campaign, when you talked to people in the Transition, when you talked to people in government, did anybody say to your face they did not believe you?

MS. BRENNAN: No, they didn't. But when a rapist stays in a position of power, then you're choosing that that's more important--

MR. HAYDEN: So you're saying--

MS. BRENNAN: --than serving justice for the survivor.

MR. HAYDEN: It was not their words, it was their actions.

MS. BRENNAN: Correct.

MR. HAYDEN: But to your face, nobody seemed to question the accuracy, the truthfulness, the integrity of what you said.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct. In fact, at every step along the way, people said that they believed and supported me, including all of the officials and law enforcement.

MR. HAYDEN: And at every step along the way you say that people said they felt sorry for you. But then, looking back, you have to judge things by the actions of people, as opposed to their words.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: What I would like to do, very quickly -- because a number of the members of our Committee have asked me to do this -- is to do a quick timeline so we have a full record. But I'm not going to go into the substantive discussions as much, but I'd like us to leave here with a timeline.

It was April 8, 2018 (*sic*), that the sexual assault occurred.

SENATOR WEINBERG: It was 2017.

MR. HAYDEN: It was 2017.

MS. BRENNAN: It was 2017, yes. April 8, 2017.

MR. HAYDEN: Thereafter that, you immediately called your husband, you called your friend Katy Baldwin; and you called your friend, Justin Braz, and told them about it within a couple of days.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I called my husband and Katy immediately; and I spoke to Justin--

MR. HAYDEN: Shortly thereafter.

MS. BRENNAN: --shortly thereafter.

MR. HAYDEN: Shortly thereafter you went for a medical exam.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. HAYDEN: And the process eventually started with law enforcement.

On April 17, 2017, you sent the letter to Mr. Alvarez, did you not?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: And the letter was very explicit, because it stated, "The event that occurred during the early morning hours of April 8, 2017, was sexual assault. I ask that you please refrain from contacting me again." And you sent that overnight mail Federal Express; and you have proof that it was delivered.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I do.

MR. HAYDEN: You then, in August, volunteered and got reengaged in the Governor's campaign.

MS. BRENNAN: I was formally on the Working Group.

MR. HAYDEN: We had the election in November; and then you played some role in the Transition, yourself.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. HAYDEN: Now, during that time period, you also had had some communication with the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office. I believe you said there was a sworn statement; there was at least one other meeting; and you were having constant phone calls to find out whether or not the charges were going to be, ultimately, agreed upon and voted upon.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: You decided, as of December, as you were getting closer to the Transition, that you almost owed it to the campaign to let them know that there might be an arrest of somebody who was involved in the campaign, Mr. Alvarez.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, that's correct. It was something I was involved with, and I wanted to warn them.

MR. HAYDEN: And at that point in time you authorized Mr. Braz to talk to the Counsel for the Transition and tell them there was a rape allegation--

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct

MR. HAYDEN: --against Mr. Alvarez. And it was, perhaps, the same day, or the next day, that you were advised by the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office that there was a decision made not to bring criminal charges.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, December 1.

MR. HAYDEN: At any time prior to that, when you indicated you were optimistic from your ongoing conversations, had anybody in the Prosecutor's Office asked you if you were willing to testify before a Grand Jury?

MS. BRENNAN: They had told me that the questioning is tough, because that's what it will be like when you're in front of a Grand Jury.

MR. HAYDEN: So there was some mention that there might also be required of you a Grand Jury appearance?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: But you did not make a Grand Jury appearance; you were told over the phone they were not going forward.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. HAYDEN: Did you find it wrenching that this news that the criminal charges were not going to be accepted was delivered to you over the phone?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, it was delivered to my attorney and over the phone.

MR. HAYDEN: Would you have preferred that there was a private meeting and an explanation, as opposed to being delivered this news over the phone?

MS. BRENNAN: I would have. They had called me in for other things. The detective had even said as much -- that she thought I was very -- that it seemed true. And so I was surprised that that was over the phone, and not in person.

MR. HAYDEN: Now, you've also mentioned having hired a civil attorney, because you felt like you were looking for another option after criminal charges, apparently, were not going to be accepted. Did you hire a civil attorney after you were told by the Prosecutor's Office that criminal charges were not going forward?

MS. BRENNAN: I hired an attorney in the fall of 2017 to help me to see if she could follow up with the Prosecutor's Office as well. And that's what she did. And then to be able to -- when it didn't move forward, to be able to do things like send the letters to his attorney, and contact them, and ask him to recuse himself, etc. Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: And you -- you actually provided us with a letter sent by a prior civil attorney, dated January 3, 2018, talking about the potential of civil litigation; a possibility of settlement; but also of strictly warning Mr. Alvarez, "We expect you to recuse yourself from all involvement and decision-making relating to Ms. Brennan, pursuant to -- for the position within Governor Murphy's Administration, and that you abstain from speaking about her in any capacity."

That was a letter sent by your attorney, was it not?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, it is.

MR. HAYDEN: And that letter is dated, in terms of our timeline, January 3, 2018.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: And I believe you've told us, at least to your knowledge, you have no knowledge of Mr. Alvarez having interfered in your attempt to try to get employment.

MS. BRENNAN: I have no knowledge of what role, if any, he played.

MR. HAYDEN: In terms of background checks, when any background check was done of Mr. Alvarez, did anybody come to you and ask you for any information about Mr. Alvarez?

MS. BRENNAN: No, they did not.

MR. HAYDEN: Mr. Alvarez received a position in the State government; you received a position you've told us about. And then, I guess, it was in March that you decided that you wanted to talk to Matt Platkin, a gentleman who you knew from the campaign, and, at that point in time, was Counsel to the Governor.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. HAYDEN: And I believe you indicated, at one point, it was over dinner where a number of different topics were discussed, including your rape allegation.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct; but I had planned to tell him.

MR. HAYDEN: You had planned to tell him?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: And I take it there were no writings or documents, but you just indicated to Mr. Platkin the assault; and you indicated that it appeared to be the first time he was aware of it.

MS. BRENNAN: It appeared so, yes.

MR. HAYDEN: And he said he would see what he could do, in terms of the Attorney General, or going somewhere else?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: And I believe-- Now, we're in March of 2018; a couple of days later, you spoke at a separate meeting with Parimal Garg; and also, specifically told him of the rape allegation.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I told them both of the--

MR. HAYDEN: You told them both--

MS. BRENNAN: --separately, of the rape allegation.

MR. HAYDEN: Okay. Did Mr. Garg seem to indicate that he believed you, he felt sorry for you? Did he indicate he was going to do anything?

MS. BRENNAN: He did seem that he was sorry for me. He knew that I had told Mr. Platkin, so he did not indicate of any additional action.

MR. HAYDEN: Now, along the lines, at some point in time you spoke to Heather Taylor; and I believe the date you gave us for that was April 24, 2018.

MS. BRENNAN: Correct.

MR. HAYDEN: And did Heather Taylor just approach you, or did you -- did she just call you out of the blue, come see you? How did the conversation occur?

MS. BRENNAN: It was only a phone conversation.

MR. HAYDEN: Did you know the phone conversation was coming?

MS. BRENNAN: I did not know it was coming; I did not know it was coming. I had indicated to Matt, as I stated, that I hadn't heard anything yet, but there was no indication that it was coming, no.

MR. HAYDEN: Okay. So the phone conversation from Heather Taylor came after you had followed up with Mr. Platkin, indicating you hadn't heard anything. And then you heard from Heather Taylor who, I believe, was the Ethics Officer.

MS. BRENNAN: That's correct.

MR. HAYDEN: Did she indicate that she was aware that your allegation was that you were raped?

MS. BRENNAN: As I stated, I believe that I had a confirmation phone call, at some point, of what happened. But during that -- during April 24, I don't know that she explicitly brought up what it was again. But--

MR. HAYDEN: Was it your understanding she had some awareness how serious the matter was?

MS. BRENNAN: I thought that everyone was well aware. of what--

MR. HAYDEN: But that's-- Yes.

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MR. HAYDEN: That's the thrust of the question--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, yes.

MR. HAYDEN: --is how serious it--

MS. BRENNAN: I was -- it was my impression that everyone was aware of exactly what happened.

MR. HAYDEN: Now, the next person, in terms of our timeline, that you were in contact with was Governor Murphy. And I believe you told us that, prior to talking to -- e-mailing Governor Murphy, you spoke to Julie Roginsky?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes; I told several friends about what happened. And she is somebody who was in a high-profile assault; she was assaulted by somebody, and was public about that, you know, when she filed charges. And I just-- I think I just wanted to talk to somebody who had also been through something.

MR. HAYDEN: Certainly, that's natural enough, that somebody who is involved in the political world --

MS. BRENNAN: Exactly

MR. HAYDEN: Right; a person with some charisma.

But my question is, you told her the exact nature of the grievance--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I did.

MR. HAYDEN: --what your grievance was. And she was the one who gave you the personal e-mail of the Governor?

MS. BRENNAN: That's true, yes.

MR. HAYDEN: You then e-mailed the Governor -- and Mr. Critchley has gone through the language of your e-mail to the Governor, introducing yourself, in terms of your role in the campaign, and talking about a sensitive matter, asking to sit or meet with either the Governor or Mrs. Murphy. And then you got the Governor's e-mail back, indicating he's "on it," and indicating that, "If we're not fast enough, you can always get back to me."

And then how long after the Governor's responsive e-mail did you begin having the e-mail exchange with Jonathan Berkon? Within a couple of days?

MS. BRENNAN: It was the next day, June 2, he contacted me.

MR. HAYDEN: And that's -- as we go through the e-mail thread, it took a while for there to be -- a few days -- in order to have a conversation. Then it took a little bit more back-and-forth to have another conversation. And I guess within, maybe, a week or 10 days you were eventually advised that Mr. Alvarez, according to Mr. Berkon, was going to be let go from his position in State government.

MS. BRENNAN: I was not advised that he was going to be let go, which is why that was a follow-up question.

MR. HAYDEN: He was leaving?

MS. BRENNAN: He was leaving State employment.

MR. HAYDEN: Okay. And when you said he was leaving -- when you were told he was leaving, did you indicate -- did you ask directly,

“Why is he leaving?” Is that when they said to you, “Well, we can’t quite tell you why he was leaving.”

MS. BRENNAN: Yes. So on that first call, I just heard, “He’s leaving.” In the follow-up call that you can see being scheduled in the e-mail exchange -- that was for my attorney and I to ask explicitly those questions. Is he leaving voluntarily? Is he being asked to leave, etc.? Is it at cause, because of this matter? -- because that mattered to me. And his response was that he could not tell us, because it was an HR matter.

MR. HAYDEN: What was your reaction to that? Was it satisfactory, was it unsatisfactory, was it lukewarm? When, after you’ve had these complaints about this assault, you are told that, “Well, somebody’s leaving down the road.”

MS. BRENNAN: Well, I was glad that he was leaving State employment, because I certainly don’t think that we should harbor rapists. I was frustrated that I did not know why; because I thought, “Okay, is he going back to a law firm? Is he still going to be around?” You know, “Is he going to take a cushier job elsewhere?” And so I did want to know.

Because, again, I-- You know, he’s somebody who I knew prior. And so it was important to me if he was still going to be present in my life and around.

MR. HAYDEN: After you were advised by Mr. Berkon that Mr. Alvarez was leaving, did you have any more follow-up with the Governor’s Office?

MS. BRENNAN: No. We pressed on. When he said it was an HR matter on that phone call, we pressed and said, “Can you please try and

see?” And he did not get back to us. And then, no, there was not further correspondence.

MR. HAYDEN: Now, this takes us to the latest -- the middle of June. July, August, I take it September -- Mr. Alvarez is still in his job. And, I guess, although you probably were not surveilling, you wanted to know what was happening. Did there come a point in time that you decided, in your own mind, Mr. Alvarez was *not* leaving?

MS. BRENNAN: I was under the impression that he was leaving, or had left, until I heard otherwise. And I really thought he was gone; I thought he was leaving. And that's where I thought, you know, in between that conversation that I had with them, "Okay, is this end of the road for me? What's next? Where is he? I don't know." "Does this feel like justice? Has this stopped him from being able to do this again? No. Has it improved anything for survivors? No." And so I was thinking about what was left, and what was next; and then I found out that he was still there.

MR. HAYDEN: And when you found out he was still there, you decided you had to do something else, didn't you?

MS. BRENNAN: I was out of options, and I had not achieved anything that I just laid out. I had not stopped him from doing this again; I had not received any justice for myself; and I had not made any changes that would prevent this from happening again to another survivor.

So I -- it was an extremely difficult decision. But when I thought about how do we make sure that some or all of that happens, that's when I decided.

MR. HAYDEN: To go to the *Wall Street Journal*?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, to speak publicly.

MR. HAYDEN: To go to the media and see if the public would believe what other people hadn't believed.

MS. BRENNAN: To see if the public could -- to have him held accountable, and to also help drive these changes forward. I needed people to know. I think that it was quite the learning experience for me to go through this process; and at each step to have to figure out who do you talk to, what's next, what is-- There have been a lot of questions about process here tonight. You don't know that unless you've been through it. And, even then, it's very opaque -- what the steps are. And so, you know, I think people-- There was a lot of conversation, publicly -- ever since the *me too* movement really gained traction -- about reporting. And I think it's important for people to know that reporting is important; but also that there's so much more beyond that that we have to do. Because I did report, and it wasn't enough.

MR. HAYDEN: Thank you for your patience, and thank you for your persistence.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Mr. Hayden.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you, Mr. Hayden.

Ms. Alito.

MS. McCLURE: Excuse me. Would it be possible to take a brief break before we continue the questioning?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Absolutely.

And then, just for you to know as well, that Rosemary Alito is the last Counselor who has questions as well. But we can do that.

MS. McCLURE: Thank you.

**(Committee recesses at 2:50 p.m.)**

**(Committee reconvenes at 3:10 p.m.)**

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Ms. Brennan, are you okay to continue?

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, I'm okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Perfect; thank you.

This will be quick now.

Rosemary Alito.

MS. ALITO (Committee Special Counsel): Thank you.

Ms. Brennan, I know this has been a long day for you. But I have a very few follow-up questions for clarification.

MS. BRENNAN: Okay.

MS. ALITO: You testified that your contacts with Al Alvarez were during the period that you had both been employees of the State. And you mentioned Chief of Staff meetings. Are those regularly scheduled meetings?

MS. BRENNAN: There are meetings with departments; and then both, you know -- he and I were at agencies and authorities, which-- But I went to a Chief of Staff meeting just the other day.

MS. ALITO: Are those something that are on a regular schedule, or are they "as needed"?

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I attend. It's as needed.

MS. ALITO: And during the period that Mr. Alvarez and you were both Chiefs of Staff, did you never attend any meeting with him where he was in attendance?

MS. BRENNAN: I did not.

MS. ALITO: Did you anticipate that those meetings might be held in that period??

MS. BRENNAN: I did; I was aware that there was occasionally Chiefs of Staff meetings, and I did anticipate that it would occur.

MS. ALITO: Now, you mentioned a couple of times about what you referred to as a *confirmation call* with the Attorney General's Office. And I wanted to clarify -- you don't recall who that call was with, is that correct?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't. And it was -- it may have been Heather Taylor that first time; I don't remember. It was "Matt's relayed this information." That was the call.

MS. ALITO: And when you say it was a *confirmation call*, can you tell us a little bit more about what occurred during that call?

MS. BRENNAN: It was confirming what Al Alvarez had done to me.

MS. ALITO: Did the representative from the Attorney General's Office ask you to tell your story?

MS. BRENNAN: I did describe; yes.

MS. ALITO: Did they ask you, during that call, any questions about your then-current work circumstances?

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I recall.

MS. ALITO: So during this call, the Attorney General's Office did not ask you whether you came into contact with Al Alvarez during your work?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't know; I don't remember--

MS. ALITO: You don't remember.

MS. BRENNAN: --that; no.

MS. ALITO: Do you remember them asking you whether you feared coming into contact with Al Alvarez at your work?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't remember if they explicitly asked that. I share that pretty regularly, that--

MS. ALITO: Did you tell the representative from the Attorney General's Office during this call that you feared coming into contact with Al Alvarez?

MS. McCLURE: If I could, Ms. Alito, I believe that Ms. Brennan testified earlier that she wasn't sure that Ms. Taylor was affiliated, or this call was affiliated with the Attorney General's Office. So I'd only ask that she be able to clarify what she knows about the office that that contact came from.

MS. ALITO: Certainly.

Do you know whether it was the Attorney General's Office or Ms. Taylor?

MS. BRENNAN: I do not.

MS. ALITO: All right.

MS. BRENNAN: As I testified earlier, it was my impression that both the calls, including the one from Heather Taylor, were the

Attorney General's Office; and I've subsequently learned that that's not the case.

MS. ALITO: All right.

MS. BRENNAN: But no, I don't recall whether I said that to the representative or not.

MS. ALITO: All right. And you don't recall whether they asked you that?

MS. BRENNAN: I do not recall.

MS. ALITO: Okay.

If they had asked you how you felt about being in the same workplace with Mr. Alvarez, what would you have said?

MS. BRENNAN: I would have said that it's nerve-racking. I had heard his name come up at things that he did in previous Administrations. When I would be downtown and see the Schools Development Authority, I was-- When I was going around other meetings, I was so nervous. You know, there are the couple of hang-out spots in Trenton, and I feared that I'd see him when I popped into a building, or a Starbucks, or a whatever it may be.

And so I would have said that I was terrified of running into him, let alone being scheduled to be in a meeting with him.

MS. ALITO: Did you feel that it was affecting the terms of your employment?

MS. BRENNAN: More-- I guess, it clarified the terms.

MS. ALITO: That your work atmosphere--

MS. BRENNAN: Certainly my mental health.

MS. ALITO: Now, the call that you had with Heather Taylor--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes.

MS. ALITO: --during this call, did Ms. Taylor ask you any questions about your experience?

MS. BRENNAN: The one on April 24?

MS. ALITO: That's right.

MS. BRENNAN: That call was just telling me that it was outside of their jurisdiction.

MS. ALITO: All right. So during that call, Heather Taylor didn't ask you to tell your story.

MS. BRENNAN: No, I don't believe so.

MS. ALITO: And Heather Taylor didn't ask you any questions about how your work atmosphere was.

MS. BRENNAN: Not that I can remember, no.

MS. ALITO: Okay.

Now, you testified that Ms. Taylor told you that a determination had been made -- that no action could be taken because of the fact that you and Al Alvarez were not employees at the time of the incident. Is that right?

MS. BRENNAN: That we were not *State*.

MS. ALITO: State employees--

MS. BRENNAN: Yes, employees.

MS. ALITO: --at that time.

Did Ms. Taylor tell you, during that call, that you had means of appealing that determination?

MS. BRENNAN: I don't think so. I didn't have that impression.

MS. ALITO: Did Ms. Taylor tell you that you had the opportunity to go to outside agencies to file a complaint, such as the Division on Civil Rights?

MS. BRENNAN: No, I don't remember that.

MS. ALITO: And she didn't tell you that you had an opportunity to fill out a form with a formal internal complaint, correct?

MS. BRENNAN: No; I would have done so.

MS. ALITO: Thank you so much.

Those are my only questions.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, ma'am.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Ms. Brennan, thank you very much for today.

Thank you for being brave; thank you for engaging us, and allowing us to ask questions not only that pertain to, obviously, the case; but, you know, stepping outside and trying to figure out, maybe, what policies and procedures can come out of this. You gave us some great suggestions in the beginning as well.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So I just want to thank you and your attorneys; and, obviously, your friends and your family members who are here as well.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Chairwoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: I just want, for the record, before Senator Loretta makes her closing statement, that we will -- this Committee will convene on December 18.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Two thousand and eighteen, for those that kept getting the years confused. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: So we look forward to seeing everywhere here again.

Ms. Brennan, once again, thank you very much.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you, Chairwoman.

SENATOR WEINBERG: Ms. Brennan -- Katie -- thank you. You've been here the better part of five hours. I think that it probably feels a lot longer to you.

I think that you have been forthcoming, honest. And I know that some of my colleagues on this Committee have referred to the fact that several of us shared some of our own *me too* moments over the last number of months. And what occurred to me, when I had the ability to share my own personal moment, that I could do it by writing something; I didn't have to do it in a format like this. But what occurred to me is that -- and I'm going back many, many years; a lot longer than you've been alive, I would venture to guess -- that I didn't know at the time that I *should* do anything. And I didn't know, at the time, that I *could* do anything.

So if we've moved ahead, at least you know that you can; and you know, certainly, that you should. And I think the deliberations of this Committee are a tribute to that.

So I wanted to take that moment to share that with you across several generations. So thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Ms. Brennan, before you leave, you are more than welcome to leave out this way (indicates), if

you would like to. I know that you've been here a long time today; however, it is up to you if you would want to speak to anybody else. We just wanted to offer that moment of privacy for yourself and for your family.

MS. McCLURE: Thank you; thank you to the Committee; to you, Senator Weinberg, and to you, Assemblywoman Pintor Marin, for hearing Ms. Brennan's testimony today.

I think, at this time, it has been, as the Senator said, about five hours. And so we're going to conclude Katie's comments and testimony for the day.

But if you have, of course, any further questions or follow up, you are more than welcome to reach out to us, and we'll be happy to answer your questions.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Thank you.

MS. BRENNAN: Thank you all.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PINTOR MARIN: Meeting adjourned.  
We'll see each other on December 18.

**(MEETING CONCLUDED)**