

# Exhibit 11



Deposition of:  
**Dale Folwell**

*August 12, 2021*

In the Matter of:

**Kadel, et al vs. Folwell**

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	No. 1:19-cv-272-LCB-LPA
v.	)	
	)	
DALE FOLWELL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
_____	)	

DEPOSITION  
OF  
DALE FOLWELL

AUGUST 12, 2021

THIS TRANSCRIPT IS NOT COMPLETE  
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AFTER REVIEW OF TRANSCRIPT BY ATTORNEYS WITHIN 30  
DAYS OF DATE OF DEPOSITION PER PROTECTIVE ORDER

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HEALTH PLAN  
3200 Atlantic Avenue, First Floor  
Raleigh, North Carolina

Reported by: Michelle Maar, RDR, RMR, FCRR

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18 NORTH CAROLINA STATE HEALTH PLAN/NORTH CAROLINA

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On behalf of Defendant State of North Carolina  
Department of Public Safety:

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
By: Alan McInnes (via teleconference)  
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1                   And so according to the United States Department  
2                   of Labor, not only were we broke and those, the brokenness  
3                   resulted in every employer in this state having to pay FUTA,  
4                   federal and state unemployment surcharges for the entire  
5                   century -- because the plan had gone into deficit after 911.

6                   As it was crawling its way back, it hit the Great  
7                   Financial Crisis.

8                   So the two major responsibilities were to fix the  
9                   broke and the brokenness.

10                  Q.    Okay.  How long did you serve as Assistant  
11                  Secretary?

12                  A.    Until December 1, 2015.

13                  Q.    And did you resign from that role?

14                  A.    I did.

15                  Q.    Okay.  Why?

16                  A.    Because I don't think that I should be the  
17                  Assistant Secretary of Commerce and applying for the job to  
18                  be the keeper of the public purse.  So I resigned that  
19                  morning, and I filed that afternoon.

20                  Q.    And when you say filed, filed for the job as  
21                  State Treasurer of North Carolina?

22                  A.    Correct.

23                  Q.    My understanding is you were elected on November  
24                  8, 2016 for State Treasurer of North Carolina?

25                  A.    Yes.

1 Q. And sworn in January 1, 2017?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. And then you were recently reelected on November  
4 3, 2020?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Do you still believe that the North Carolina  
7 State Treasurer has more constitutional and statutory  
8 responsibilities and duties than any other elected official  
9 in the state except for the governor?

10 A. That is a quote from Page 143 of Harlan Boyles'  
11 book Keeper of the Public Purse, who is by many people  
12 considered to be the best state treasurer of the 20th  
13 Century, not just in North Carolina but the entire United  
14 States.

15 Q. Do you still believe that, what I just read to  
16 you?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. How long did he serve as North Carolina  
19 treasurer, do you know?

20 A. You can look at the name plates outside. But he  
21 was Assistant Treasurer under Edwin Gill and then became  
22 the Treasurer of North Carolina. And then he did not seek  
23 reelection.

24 So in January of 2001, Treasurer Moore took over  
25 from Treasurer Boyles.

1           And so that is what my definition of unfunded  
2 liabilities are.

3           I will say to you that the people of this state  
4 probably really don't know who the treasurer is or a lot of  
5 other elected officials, but I know who they are. They  
6 don't have to know who I am, I know who they are.

7           And the fact is when you earn a benefit from the  
8 State of North Carolina, either on the pension or healthcare  
9 side -- that you may not understand OPEB, GasB, life  
10 expectancies, you may not understand any of that stuff --  
11 what you do understand is that you want the ability to  
12 ensure your family, both as an active employee and a retired  
13 employee, you want the ability to take that insurance card  
14 and you want the ability to access healthcare.

15           And the fact is when these liabilities are ramping  
16 up like this, as they get steeper and steeper and steeper,  
17 the ability for that not to happen is a real threat.

18           Q.    I think you mentioned that you serve as the Chair  
19 of the Board of Trustees for the State Health Plan?

20           A.    Correct.

21           Q.    And is part of your role that you approve the  
22 final agenda for each meeting of the Board of Trustees?

23           A.    Yes.

24           Q.    Okay. As State Treasurer, what is your role in  
25 the process by which the Plan determines each year what

1 benefits the plan will cover?

2 A. My role is that, is that I approve the agenda.

3 The process for benefits that are covered and not  
4 covered has been sort of a work in progress.

5 I can't tell you what the, what went on before I  
6 was here in any way, shape, or form.

7 But at the end of the day, the, the benefit  
8 structure is determined which, somewhat in terms of Plan  
9 design.

10 And we were on a course for the State Health Plan  
11 to run out of money when I became the State Treasurer in  
12 North Carolina.

13 And when our healthcare costs are going up at  
14 double digits, our pharmaceutical costs are going up at  
15 double digits, and then the General Assembly has decided  
16 that they're only going to fund us at a 4 percent increase,  
17 you don't have to be a CPA to understand that if your costs  
18 are going up double digits and your funding is only coming  
19 in at 4 percent, eventually you're going to run out of  
20 reserves.

21 And that's why the need to really change the  
22 culture and the mindset of where we need to focus as a State  
23 Health Plan in order to ensure the solvency on behalf of  
24 those who teach, protect, and serve. That has always really  
25 been my number one focus.

1 Q. Okay. So what is your role in that process?

2 A. The role in the process is that an agenda -- like  
3 in many other parts of my duties and responsibilities that  
4 I mentioned to you -- an agenda is presented to me.

5 And then in the process of that, you have the  
6 agendas, it's presented to me by the executive director of  
7 the Plan, and I ultimately approve it.

8 Q. Do you have input on what goes on the final  
9 agenda?

10 A. I think the, that the chair of most boards has  
11 input on what goes on the final agenda.

12 Especially in a COVID world, I've tried to be as  
13 sensitive to what is discussed in closed session and what  
14 isn't.

15 It's not a concern of yours, but going in and out  
16 of open meetings into closed meetings with the technology  
17 challenges that we're facing, and some of the technology  
18 challenges that some of our board members face when they try  
19 to dial in, I try to keep that as less fussy as possible.

20 And then I try to make announcements, when that  
21 occurs, that when we come back into open session, all we're  
22 going to do is gavel out -- just to be courteous of other  
23 people's times.

24 Q. So was that a yes, that you do have input into  
25 the agenda for the State Health Plan board meetings?

1           A.    Yes.

2                   MR. WEAVER:   Okay.  We've been going probably a  
3           little over an hour, would now be a good time for a break?

4                   (Off the record)

5           BY MR. WEAVER:

6                   Q.    Treasurer Folwell, I want to talk a little bit  
7           about the State Health Plan and sort of get into what  
8           brings us here today.

9                   So can you, in your words, define for me your  
10          understanding of what gender dysphoria is?

11                  A.    Gender dysphoria is a term that's used to  
12          describe individuals who want to change their sexual  
13          orientation.

14                  Q.    Okay.  What do you mean by sexual orientation?

15                  A.    I'm not a medical doctor.

16                  Q.    Understood.  I'm just asking your thoughts and  
17          your view based on --

18                  A.    People who, who, individuals who want to go from  
19          being identified as one sex to another.

20                  Q.    Okay.  And I know you weren't treasurer at the  
21          time, but in, at least in 2016, was it your understanding  
22          that the Plan had a blanket exclusion for the treatment of  
23          gender dysphoria?

24                  A.    It's my understanding that for not, that for  
25          possibly years and decades, that there had been several

1 A. I'm not a medical doctor, so I don't know.

2 Q. I'm not asking a medical opinion. I'm trying to  
3 figure out -- you mentioned those three exclusions.

4 And I'm trying to figure out in your mind do  
5 those three exclusions match either of the two exclusions  
6 that I just read to you on Exhibit 2?

7 A. I cannot foresee how the second exclusion  
8 regarding experimental drugs would be completely connected  
9 to the topic that you asked me about.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. And I would say that I would need more  
12 information to say that the first one was completely  
13 connected, but I can't say that it wasn't.

14 And I would say that if any one of those three  
15 exclusions more closely matched what you're asking me  
16 about, it would be the third one.

17 Q. Okay. If you could look back at Exhibit 2, at  
18 the second to the last bullet point, under Implications for  
19 the State Health Plan, where that reads cannot deny or  
20 limit coverage based solely on the fact that the person  
21 identifies as belonging to a gender different from the sex  
22 assigned at birth.

23 Do you see that, sir?

24 A. I do.

25 Q. Was it your understanding in November of 2016



1 whether the Health Plan was denying or limiting coverage  
2 based solely on the fact that the person identifies as  
3 belonging to a gender different from the sex assigned at  
4 birth?

5 A. I became aware of that somewhere toward the end  
6 of November or on the first day of December.

7 Q. And we'll get to it in a moment -- my  
8 understanding for the 2017 Health Plan is that the, what I  
9 refer to as the exclusions were lifted for that Health  
10 Plan, but then they came back into force starting with the  
11 2018 State Health Plan.

12 Is that your understanding?

13 A. My understanding is that the previous treasurer  
14 and the previous board on a tie vote broken by the  
15 treasurer elected to remove the exclusion for just one  
16 calendar year.

17 Q. Okay. Is it your understanding today, in 2021,  
18 whether the Health Plan is denying or limiting coverage  
19 based solely on the fact that the person identifies as  
20 belonging to a gender different from the sex assigned at  
21 birth?

22 MR. WILLIAMS: Objection to the form of the  
23 question.

24 THE WITNESS: Could you restate the question?

25 MR. WEAVER: Of course.

1 BY MR. WEAVER:

2 Q. In, in 2021, the Health Plan that's in effect for  
3 the 2021 year, is it your understanding that the Plan is  
4 denying or limiting coverage based solely on the fact that  
5 the person identifies as belonging to a gender different  
6 from the sex assigned at birth?

7 MR. WILLIAMS: Same objection.

8 THE WITNESS: What you asked me is if I'm aware  
9 in 2021, if the State Health Plan is denying medical  
10 coverage or treatment based on a gender identity different  
11 than what they were born with?

12 MR. WEAVER: Correct.

13 THE WITNESS: I would say that I'm not a medical  
14 doctor. But I'm not sure that for some types of treatments  
15 that people of both genders are afflicted with, that we're  
16 denying any coverage for, based on the fact that somebody  
17 wants to identify as a sex other than what they were born  
18 with.

19 So an example of that would be if a person needs  
20 their gallbladder removed, and just because they want to be  
21 chosen or identified as a person of a different sex than  
22 what they were born with, we do not deny that coverage.

23 If a person needed a hysterectomy and that need is  
24 necessary, we do not deny the medical treatment -- period --  
25 based on the fact that somebody just wants to identify as a

1 BY MR. WEAVER:

2 Q. I'm going to show you Exhibit 14.

3 (Exhibit 14 is marked for identification.)

4 BY MR. WEAVER:

5 Q. And these are -- this is PLAN DEF0154431.

6 It's titled Board of Trustees Meeting, Monday,  
7 October 22, 2018.

8 Do you see that, sir?

9 A. I do.

10 Q. Okay. And feel free to look through this and --

11 A. Okay.

12 Q. And just to, go to the back, I think it's --

13 (Brief pause in the proceeding)

14 BY MR. WEAVER:

15 Q. So if we can turn to, I think it's the third to  
16 last page in this packet, and it starts with the bates  
17 154491, and it's Board of Trustees Meeting, October 22,  
18 2018 Minutes.

19 A. Okay. I see that.

20 Q. And if we go to the last page, Page 5 of this  
21 document, of the Minutes, that's your signature, right,  
22 sir?

23 A. It is.

24 Q. Okay. So these are the official minutes from the  
25 October 22, 2018 Board Meeting, right?

1 A. To the best of our minute-taking ability.

2 Q. Okay. Do you remember this board meeting?

3 A. Not specifically.

4 Q. Okay. Is it still the case that the Board of  
5 Trustees meets approximately four times a year?

6 A. Except when we need to go into closed session to  
7 discuss contract negotiations or other issues.

8 Q. Now, if we look at the first page here, the Board  
9 of Trustees Meeting, and the second bolded I'll say agenda  
10 item, first one is Board Approval and the second one is  
11 Public Comments.

12 A. I see that.

13 Q. Do you see that?

14 And then do you recall a number of Plan members  
15 or their dependents talking at this board meeting about the  
16 request to lift the exclusion for the 2019 Plan Year?

17 A. I recall in the latter half of 2018 having folks  
18 come in asking for the lifting of the exclusion, and  
19 remember hearing those comments at the public hearing, and  
20 then walking out with those individuals and personally  
21 greeting each one of them, thanking them for coming.

22 Q. Okay. And if we turn the page -- and it's  
23 double-sided -- so if we just turn to 154433, and the top  
24 is Testimony of Max Kadel.

25 A. Yes.

1 letters, did you have an opportunity to read those?

2 A. Generally.

3 Q. Do you remember anything from, from those written  
4 comments or letters?

5 A. I don't.

6 Q. At the Public Comment section, session, do you  
7 remember anyone speaking against lifting the exclusion?

8 A. Against lifting the exclusion? I do not. But  
9 that doesn't mean it didn't happen.

10 Q. Okay. You just don't have a memory right now?

11 A. Of somebody opposing reinstating the exclusion?  
12 Would that be a -- excuse me, I'm sorry.

13 Q. No, no, you're right. You're right. You're  
14 good.

15 If you're not understanding what I'm saying and  
16 if you need to clarify it in your words, please do so, sir.

17 A. At some point in this process, I have a vague  
18 recollection of somebody speaking against lifting the  
19 exclusion, but I can't tell you when or where that  
20 happened.

21 Q. Okay. If we can stick with Exhibit 14, and if we  
22 go to, it looks like a PowerPoint presentation, Financials  
23 Update, Board of Trustees Meeting, October 22, 2018. The  
24 bates is 154481.

25 A. Got it.

1 Q. So you have this front page?

2 A. I do.

3 Q. If we could turn over to where it says Financial  
4 Results: Actual vs. Budgeted, Calendar Year to Date August  
5 2018.

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. Can you explain to me what this chart shows?

8 A. This chart represents what people my age would  
9 refer to as a Polaroid. It's a shot in time of the  
10 financial condition of the State Health Plan versus what  
11 our forecast of what our budgets were.

12 Q. And what does this Polaroid shot show in terms of  
13 how the Plan was performing against its expected budget?

14 A. Document ending in 83 or 81?

15 Q. 82.

16 A. 82, okay. What this shows is that the Plan  
17 variance was .79 million dollars to the good versus budget.

18 Q. And so the, as of through August 2018, the ending  
19 cash balance was what for the plan?

20 A. 1 billion.

21 Q. Do you know at the end of December 2018, you  
22 probably wouldn't have gotten the numbers until January  
23 2019, what the, was the ending cash balance around 1  
24 billion?

25 A. I can't recall that. What I would add is that

1 exclusions. But I would say that they more mirror this  
2 language than they do gender transition or gender  
3 dysphoria.

4 Q. Okay. And when you say sex change operations,  
5 are you only talking about physical surgery? Or are you  
6 talking about other medical practices such as hormone  
7 therapy?

8 A. I'm not a doctor.

9 Q. Uh-huh.

10 A. I'm not a subject matter expert in what all these  
11 terms mean. I don't have a deep understanding of those  
12 therapies in relation to these other surgeries and what the  
13 timelines of those are. So --

14 Q. The second paragraph says the legal and medical  
15 uncertainty of this elective procedure has never been  
16 greater.

17 What did you mean by medical uncertainty?

18 A. I think just the word uncertainty is what I'm  
19 keying in on.

20 The person that I've most relied on for decades  
21 on issues related to medicine is Dr. Peter Robie, who is  
22 also a member of this board.

23 And I think that is his relaying to me his  
24 concerns about the uncertainty about the permanency of these  
25 operations and the ultimate impact that it could or would

1 have on the health and well-being of these members or their  
2 dependents is what I meant by that.

3 Q. You mentioned Dr. Robie, right?

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. Dr. Robie, you've known him for decades?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. How did you first meet Dr. Robie?

8 A. As a primary care physician.

9 Q. Was he your primary care physician?

10 A. He was.

11 Q. Okay. When did you first start seeing Dr. Robie?

12 A. When the other guy retired. I'm sorry, it's just  
13 the answer.

14 Q. Let me ask you this way to try to --

15 A. 1988, '90.

16 Q. Okay. So you were at --

17 A. I was at Alex. Brown.

18 Q. Okay. And Dr. Robie is in the Winston-Salem  
19 area?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. Okay. Is Dr. Robie's primary practice as a  
22 primary care physician?

23 A. That is his official title. But it does not  
24 begin to describe his medical common sense.

25 Q. Okay. Tell me about his medical common sense.



1           A.     Without notes or without charts, when you go in  
2           and you're getting a physical, he says do you still have  
3           that dog?  And are you changing the filters on your  
4           furnace?

5                     This is all [fingers snap snap snap].

6                     You know, I saw you going down Robin Hood Road  
7           the other day and you didn't have the helmet strapped on  
8           your motorcycle, what's that all about?

9                     Just -- have there been any additional medical  
10          conditions that you have become aware of with any of your  
11          parents -- just that intuition that we would hope that every  
12          primary care physician would have as we focus, as they try  
13          to focus on the health of their patient.

14                    Q.    Is Dr. Robie still your primary care physician?

15                    A.    No.

16                    Q.    Has he retired from the practice?

17                    A.    Yes.

18                    Q.    How long ago did he stop being your primary care  
19          physician?

20                    A.    I would say five to seven years ago.

21                            He is still very much involved in the, in our  
22          Winston-Salem Physicians, which provides healthcare to needy  
23          folks in parts of our community.  I think he still does some  
24          part-time work for the VA Hospital in Salisbury.

25                    Q.    Has he ever treated a transgender individual?

1 A. I don't have specific knowledge of that.

2 Q. Okay. Have you and Dr. Robie ever talked about  
3 him treating a transgender individual?

4 A. I don't have any specific knowledge of that.

5 Q. Do you know if Dr. Robie has any specialized  
6 training in treating transgender individuals?

7 A. I do not have any knowledge of that.

8 Q. So getting back to the medical uncertainty in the  
9 statement --

10 A. Sure.

11 Q. -- my understanding, and correct me if I'm wrong,  
12 that your belief that there was medical uncertainty of this  
13 elective procedure was based on conversation you had with  
14 Dr. Robie?

15 A. Generally speaking. And obviously other types  
16 of, not, you know, specific conversations, but just trying  
17 to be generally aware of the topic.

18 And the, as I said in the earlier remarks, the  
19 people who desire these type of procedures, this is very  
20 important to them.

21 And I am constantly trying to pick up new  
22 information and a better way of looking at information  
23 regarding any of these topics.

24 Q. Do you recall what Dr. Robie specifically told  
25 you about the medical uncertainty of this elective

1 procedure?

2 A. I don't specifically, no.

3 Q. And you mentioned other folks. And were those  
4 other medical professionals?

5 A. Not folks, just, you know, reading magazines and  
6 listening to the news and watching, you know, shows on PBS  
7 about all kinds of subjects, that type of, what I refer to  
8 as mental stimulation on this topic.

9 Q. Okay. And it says, in the second paragraph, it  
10 says medical uncertainty of this elective procedure.

11 Do you know why -- why did you use this elective  
12 procedure as opposed to another terminology?

13 Because it seems like you're narrowing it to a  
14 procedure which implies a surgery.

15 Again, I know you're not a medical doctor. So  
16 I'm just trying to understand the phraseology that you used  
17 in that sentence.

18 A. Versus what happened a few hours ago, this is a  
19 distinction without a difference. I didn't mean anything  
20 by that.

21 I think that actually when it says the word  
22 elective, I think that I, that the word uncovered could have  
23 been a better choice of words.

24 We have lots of uncovered procedures, some of  
25 which happen to be elective, in the State Health Plan.

1 the future and trying to estimate an inflation rate, part of  
2 that is based on the risk-free rate that is quoted in the  
3 Wall Street Journal on June 30th of every year.

4 And the other aspect of that is that the -- that's  
5 it.

6 Q. How does the unfunded liability impact, if it  
7 does, the Board of Trustees' decision to maintain the  
8 exclusion?

9 A. I'm not sure there's a direct correlation between  
10 the unfunded liability and the exclusion.

11 There's a direct correlation between the unfunded  
12 liability and the overall solvency of the plan for all  
13 members.

14 Q. The next topic -- I'm basically going sentence by  
15 sentence is sort of how I visualize your disclosure -- it  
16 says that you will testify about policies, both those  
17 adopted and those not yet adopted, to address this unfunded  
18 liability.

19 Anything else you want to add as an expert on this  
20 area?

21 A. Just to recap -- started years ago with the  
22 change in the vesting period, so that people had to work  
23 longer than five years and one day to get lifetime  
24 benefits. And I was responsible for that in the General  
25 Assembly, and carry forward to getting the plan on the

# **Exhibit 11(a)**



**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Monday, October 22, 2018**  
**10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

1. Welcome Dale R. Folwell, Chair

2. Conflict of Interest Statement Dale R. Folwell, Chair

**Board Approval**

1. Minutes August 30, 2018 Meeting *(Requires Vote)* Dale R. Folwell, Chair

**Public Comment**

Dale R. Folwell, Chair

**Recognition of Departing Board Member**

Dale R. Folwell, Chair

**Operations Updates**

1. Health Information Exchange Dee Jones  
*Executive Director*

2. Provider Reimbursement Strategy Resolution Dee Jones

3. Financial Update - CYTD 1/1/2018 – 8/31/2018 Matthew Rish  
*Sr. Dir., Finance, Planning & Analytics*

4. Open Enrollment Update Beth Horner  
*Dir., Customer Experience/ Communications*

**Executive Session (Board members and required staff only)**

*Pursuant to: G.S. 143-318.11 and Chapter 132*

Dale R. Folwell, Chair

1. RFP Recommendation – Pharmacy Benefit Manager Auditing Services  
**(Requires Vote)** G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1), G.S. 132-1.2 Sharon Smith  
*Manager, Contracts*

2. Consultation with Legal Counsel Andrew Norton  
G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1), (3), G.S. 132-1.1, G.S. 132-1.9, G.S. 135-48.10  
G.S. 132-1.9 *Deputy General Counsel*

**Return to Open Session**

1. Next Board Meeting Dee Jones

2. Adjournment Dale R. Folwell, Chair



*Our mission is to improve the health and health care of North Carolina teachers, state employees, retirees, and their dependents, in a financially sustainable manner, thereby serving as a model to the people of North Carolina for improving their health and well-being.*





*North Carolina*  
**State Health Plan**  
 FOR TEACHERS AND STATE EMPLOYEES  
 A Division of the Department of State Treasurer



*Dale R. Folwell, CPA*

STATE TREASURER OF NORTH CAROLINA  
 DALE R. FOLWELL, CPA



# Financials Update

*Board of Trustees Meeting*

October 22, 2018

*A Division of the Department of State Treasurer*



# Financial Results: Actual vs. Budgeted Calendar Year to Date August 2018

Calendar Year 2018	Actual thru AUG 2018	Authorized Budget (per Segal 5-30-18)	Variance Fav/(Unfav) Budget
<b>Beginning Cash Balance</b>	<b>\$1.010 b</b>	<b>\$1.010 b</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Plan Revenue</b>	<b>\$2.382 b</b>	<b>\$2.361 b</b>	<b>\$0.021 b</b>
Net Claims Payments	\$2.034 b	\$2.039 b	\$0.005 b
Medicare Advantage Premiums	\$0.151 b	\$0.151 b	\$0.000 b
Net Administrative Expenses	\$0.089 b	\$0.142 b	\$0.053 b
<b>Total Plan Expenses</b>	<b>\$2.274 b</b>	<b>\$2.332 b</b>	<b>\$0.058 b</b>
<b>Net Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>\$108.4 m</b>	<b>\$29.2m</b>	<b>\$0.79 m</b>
<b>Ending Cash Balance</b>	<b>\$1.118 b</b>	<b>\$1.039 b</b>	<b>\$0.79 m</b>



# Exhibit 12



Deposition of:

**Dee Jones**

*August 3, 2021*

In the Matter of:

**Kadel, et al vs. Folwell**

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	No. 1:19-cv-272-LCB-LPA
V.	)	
	)	
DALE FOLWELL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
_____	)	

DEPOSITION  
OF  
DEE JONES

IN HER INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY  
and  
30(b)(6) DESIGNEE FOR NC STATE HEALTH PLAN

AUGUST 3, 2021

THIS TRANSCRIPT IS NOT COMPLETE  
PORTIONS OF THIS TRANSCRIPT AND/OR EXHIBITS  
MAY BE DESIGNATED CONFIDENTIAL/ATTORNEYS EYES ONLY  
AFTER REVIEW OF TRANSCRIPT BY ATTORNEYS WITHIN 30  
DAYS OF DATE OF DEPOSITION PER PROTECTIVE ORDER

PNC PLAZA DOWNTOWN  
301 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1700  
Raleigh, North Carolina

Reported by: Michelle Maar, RDR, RMR, FCRR

1 APPEARANCES:

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14 State Health Plan for Teachers and State Employees:

15 BELL, DAVIS & PITT

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APPEARANCES CONTINUED:

On behalf of Defendant State of North Carolina Department  
of Public Safety:

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

By: Alan McInnes (via teleconference)

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On behalf of Defendants UNC at Chapel Hill, NC State  
University, and UNC at Greensboro:

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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P R O C E E D I N G S

DEE JONES,

called as a witness and having been first duly sworn,  
was examined and testified as follows:

\* \* \*

MS. RAVI: All right. Before we begin, will  
counsel for the State Health Plan Defendants stipulate that  
Ms. Jones' answers during today's deposition will be  
binding on the State Health Plan?

MR. JONES: So stipulated.

MS. RAVI: And will counsel for the State Health  
Plan Defendants stipulate to the authenticity of all  
documents produced by Ms. Jones, the State Health Plan, and  
Mr. Folwell?

MR. JONES: So stipulated as to authenticity.

MS. RAVI: Thank you.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. RAVI:

Q. Good morning, Ms. Jones. My name is Deepika  
Ravi. I represent the plaintiffs in this matter.

Have you ever had your deposition taken before?

A. Yes.

Q. And are you able to hear me okay --

A. Yes.

1 A. Seven months.

2 Q. Where did you work after that?

3 A. Department of State Treasurer.

4 Q. Is that where you currently work?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What is your current title?

7 A. Executive Administrator or Executive Director,  
8 used interchangeably.

9 Q. All right. If I refer to the North Carolina  
10 State Health Plan for Teachers and State Employees as the  
11 Plan today, will you know what I'm talking about?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Apart from the title of Executive Administrator,  
14 used interchangeably with Executive Director, have you held  
15 any other roles in this current job?

16 A. No.

17 Q. And how long have you held the role of Executive  
18 Administrator?

19 A. Four years and one month.

20 Q. Okay. What are your responsibilities in that  
21 role?

22 A. At a high level, it's to operationalize the  
23 policies as directed by the Treasurer and the Board of  
24 Directors or Board of Trustees.

25 Q. Okay. That's at a high level?

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. Any other responsibilities at a high level?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. What does it mean for you to  
5 operationalize those policies at a more granular level?

6 A. So under my responsibility, I have the Plan  
7 Integration, which is all the technology integration  
8 between our vendors.

9 And then we have a Finance and Data Analytics  
10 Group. We have a Contracting and Compliance Group,  
11 Communications. We have Legal.

12 And let's see, who am I missing here? I think  
13 that's it.

14 Q. Are you familiar with the operation of the Plan?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Are you familiar with the design of the Plan?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Are you responsible for management of the Plan?

19 A. Please define management of the Plan. It's a  
20 broad term.

21 Q. Is it fair to say, would you describe yourself as  
22 responsible for management of the Plan?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. All right. Is the Plan self-funding?

25 A. Yes.



1           And then if there are requests for changes, then  
2 we evaluate them in a different, in a manner that is in  
3 keeping with those overarching goals.

4           Q.    Where do those requests for changes come from?

5           A.    Members of the public.  It can come from a board  
6 member.  And it can come from Blue Cross, our TPA.  And it  
7 can come from a staffer.

8           Q.    Anyone else?

9           A.    That's generally where it comes from.

10          Q.    How are those requests evaluated?

11          A.    Again, it starts with the overarching goal of  
12 providing public health for the most number, the biggest  
13 number of people.

14                We serve 740,000 plus members.  And we don't take  
15 that responsibility lightly.

16                I'm a fiduciary.  So when I walk through the  
17 door, I don't get to pick and choose who I cover.  I cover  
18 everybody.  And we evaluate those benefits in that light.

19          Q.    What criteria are used to evaluate proposed  
20 benefit changes?

21          A.    We'll look at the cost of the benefit, what is  
22 the size of the population that the benefit might cover,  
23 and what is the efficacy of the benefit, how much, how much  
24 success is there with the treatment or how much health does  
25 it improve.

1           And, again, we don't have a big clinical staff.  
2           We use a lot of research from Blue Cross or CVS or our  
3           actuary or our board. And we'll get information from a  
4           variety of sources. And then we'll propose a  
5           recommendation.

6           Q.    Okay. Any other criteria used to evaluate  
7           proposed changes?

8           A.    Those are the primary criteria. But if something  
9           else were to come up and be relevant, then we would use  
10          that criteria as well.

11          Q.    Can you think of an example of a time when  
12          something else has come up and been relevant?

13          A.    Yes. I think probably the easiest to explain  
14          would be digital mammography. That was instituted I  
15          believe in early '17. And digital mammography was not  
16          covered without a member having to pay out of pocket for it  
17          prior to that.

18                And the efficacy with digital mammography is it  
19                serves -- women make up more than 50 percent of the Plan's  
20                population. So, therefore, a benefit that serves that many  
21                people and has a long-term trajectory of lowering costs  
22                because of catching breast cancer earlier -- which it does  
23                because it's targeted at women with dense breast issue and  
24                it can catch that, that millimeter size much earlier than  
25                the traditional mammography -- and so that's a benefit that

1 A. They're an actuary and consulting firm.

2 Q. And was Segal retained by the Plan?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. When was that?

5 A. Segal has worked for the Plan for quite a number  
6 of years. I'm not -- certainly back in 2016 they were.  
7 And prior to that, I'm not sure how many years.

8 Q. Okay. In 2016, did the Plan ask Segal for a  
9 financial estimate for the annual cost to the Plan of  
10 covering treatment and services for gender dysphoria  
11 beginning with Plan Year 2017?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And to whom did the Plan make that request at  
14 Segal?

15 A. It would have been to the leading, the  
16 management, Segal management.

17 Q. Do you know who was in Segal management at the  
18 time?

19 A. I do not. Currently, it's Stu Wall. He might  
20 have been the person back then as well.

21 Q. When did the Plan make that request of Segal?

22 A. I would imagine in June or July of 2016.

23 Q. I'm handing you what has been marked as  
24 Plaintiffs' Exhibit 2.

25 (Exhibit 2 is marked for identification.)

1 Horner, Lotta Crabtree. Mona Moon would have had  
2 substantial influence on this. Mark Collins probably had  
3 substantial influence on this document.

4 Q. Anyone else?

5 A. Beyond that, I don't know.

6 Q. And who received a copy of this presentation deck  
7 at the time, around the December 2016 board meeting?

8 A. At the time, the board members would have  
9 received a copy of it.

10 Q. Anyone else?

11 A. Plan staff.

12 Q. Who in Plan staff would have gotten a copy?

13 A. The leaders. Beyond that, I wouldn't know.

14 Q. And when you say the leaders, the individuals you  
15 just mentioned as having influence over this document?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Did the Plan's Board of Trustees meet on December  
18 1, 2016?

19 A. The 1st and 2nd.

20 Q. All right. And was the Plan's Executive  
21 Administrator at the time present at those board meetings?

22 A. I don't know for sure. But, yes, I believe she  
23 was.

24 Q. Could you flip to the end, which is PLAN DEF6988.

25 Is it correct that Plan staff recommended removing

1 the blanket exclusions for coverage of gender dysphoria  
2 treatment?

3 A. Yes, for the Plan Year 2017.

4 Q. And is it correct that Plan staff stated that  
5 removing those blanket exclusions would result in provision  
6 of medically necessary services for treatment of gender  
7 dysphoria?

8 A. That's what the document says.

9 Q. Is that what Plan staff recommended?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Did Plan staff ever retract that position  
12 regarding medical necessity?

13 A. Not that I'm aware of.

14 Q. If you could flip back to Page PLAN DEF6968.

15 This slide sets forth the DSM-5 criteria for a  
16 diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria.

17 Is that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Is the Plan familiar with the DSM-5?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Is it right that Plan staff relied on the DSM-5  
22 in making its recommendation to the Board of Trustees?

23 A. It appears that was what was used for this  
24 presentation.

25 Q. Does the Plan challenge the DSM-5 criteria for a

1 diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria?

2 A. It doesn't appear so.

3 Q. It doesn't appear so from this document?

4 A. From this document, yes.

5 Q. Today, does the Plan challenge those criteria?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Does the Plan today have a position on the  
8 validity of the DSM-5?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Has the Plan ever withdrawn its reliance on the  
11 DSM-5 set forth in this presentation?

12 A. No.

13 Q. If you could turn to the next page, which is PLAN  
14 DEF6969.

15 This slide references the World Professional  
16 Association for Transgender Health Standards of Care for  
17 Medical Treatment of Gender Identification Disorder.

18 Is that right?

19 A. That is correct.

20 Q. And if I refer to this as the WPATH Standards of  
21 Care, will you know what I'm talking about?

22 A. I will.

23 Q. So this slide sets forth the WPATH Standards of  
24 Care criteria for gender confirmation surgery.

25 Is that right?

1           A.    Yes.

2           Q.    And turning to the next page, PLAN DEF6970, does  
3 this set forth the WPATH Standards of Care criteria for  
4 gender confirmation surgery?

5           A.    Yes.

6           Q.    Is the Plan familiar with the WPATH Standards of  
7 Care?

8           A.    Yes.

9           Q.    And is it correct that the Plan staff relied on  
10 the WPATH Standards of Care in making its recommendation to  
11 lift the exclusion?

12          A.    Yes.

13          Q.    Does the Plan challenge the WPATH Standards of  
14 Care?

15          A.    No.

16          Q.    And today does the Plan have a position on the  
17 validity of the WPATH Standards of Care?

18          A.    No.

19          Q.    Has the Plan ever withdrawn its reliance on the  
20 WPATH Standards of Care?

21          A.    No.

22          Q.    If you could turn to the next slide, which is  
23 PLAN DEF6971. This slide describes the American Medical  
24 Association Resolution 122.

25                Is that right?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And the slide states that the AMA Resolution was  
3 issued in 2008.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And it states that the AMA Resolution describes  
6 the WPATH Standards of Care, elements of care for  
7 transgender people as a medical necessity.

8 Is that right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. Is the Plan familiar with AMA Resolution  
11 122?

12 A. To the extent it's listed here for gender  
13 dysphoria, yes.

14 Q. Is the Plan otherwise familiar with the AMA  
15 Resolution 122 outside of this presentation?

16 A. Not that I'm aware of.

17 Q. And Plan staff relied on AMA Resolution 122 in  
18 making its recommendation to lift the exclusion.

19 Is that right?

20 A. It's clear that it was part of a recommendation.

21 Q. Did they rely on it in making their  
22 recommendation?

23 A. I can't say for sure.

24 Q. And it's cited in this presentation to the board?

25 A. Yes.



1 Q. Does the Plan challenge AMA Resolution 122?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Does the Plan have a position on its validity?

4 A. No.

5 Q. And has the Plan ever withdrawn its reliance on  
6 AMA Resolution 122?

7 A. No.

8 Q. If you could turn to the page marked PLAN  
9 DEF6985.

10 Does this slide accurately describe the State  
11 Health Plan's blanket exclusions for coverage of gender  
12 dysphoria in effect for the 2016 Plan Year?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And if you turn to the next slide, this slide  
15 reflects the Segal company's estimate that adding coverage  
16 for gender dysphoria will cost approximately 350,000 to  
17 850,000 annually.

18 Is that right?

19 A. Yes.

20 MS. RAVI: Can we go off the record?

21 (Off the record)

22 MS. RAVI: Back on the record.

23 BY MS. RAVI:

24 Q. Other than your attorney, did you speak with  
25 anyone during the break?

1 transgender patients?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And did she report to the board that the American  
4 College of Physicians and American College of Obstetricians  
5 and Gynecologists Committee have also endorsed coverage for  
6 transgender healthcare services?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I'm now at the bottom of PLAN DEF12815 to 12816,  
9 under Proposed Benefit Change.

10 Who is Lotta Crabtree?

11 A. She was the Plan's Deputy Executive Administrator  
12 and Legal Counsel at the time.

13 Q. Did Ms. Crabtree present to the board at its  
14 December 2nd meeting?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Did she report that the Plan's current benefit  
17 provides blanket exclusions for the treatment of gender  
18 dysphoria, including treatment or studies regarding sex  
19 changes or modifications, psychological assessments, and  
20 psychotherapy treatment?

21 A. Where are you?

22 Q. If you turn to PLAN DEF12816, at the top of the  
23 page.

24 A. Can you repeat the question?

25 Q. Yes. Did Ms. Crabtree report that the Plan's

1 current benefit provides blanket exclusions for the  
2 treatment of gender dysphoria, including treatment or  
3 studies regarding sex changes or modifications,  
4 psychological assessments, and psychotherapy treatment?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And did she report that the annual cost of  
7 coverage provided by the Plan's actuarial consultant is  
8 approximately 350,000 to 850,000?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And is that the Segal company's estimate?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Did she report that the Plan would adopt the Blue  
13 Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina's medical policy, which  
14 includes the requirement in support of medical necessity?

15 A. She did.

16 Q. And did Ms. Crabtree report that the Plan  
17 recommend approval of coverage for the treatment of gender  
18 dysphoria by removing the blanket exclusions resulting in  
19 the provision of medically necessary services for the  
20 treatment of gender dysphoria?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. How did the board act on the Plan's  
23 recommendation to approve coverage for treatment of gender  
24 dysphoria?

25 A. The board removed the exclusion for one year, for

1 Plan Year 2017.

2 Q. Who is Dr. Paul Cunningham?

3 A. He's a former board member and physician.

4 Q. Did Dr. Cunningham move to recommend that the  
5 State Health Plan remove the blanket exclusions?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And who is Dr. Aaron McKethan?

8 A. He is an actuary, a data-analytics person, a  
9 former board member.

10 Q. Did Dr. McKethan offer a resolution to Dr.  
11 Cunningham's motion?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. I'm now on PLAN DEF12817, the second full  
14 paragraph.

15 Does this paragraph accurately reflect Dr.  
16 McKethan's proposed resolution, the paragraph starting Dr.  
17 McKethan offered a resolution to?

18 A. Sorry, what was the question?

19 Q. Does this text here -- starting with paragraph  
20 Dr. McKethan offered a resolution to -- does this  
21 accurately reflect the text of that proposed resolution?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And does this accurately reflect the reason that  
24 Dr. McKethan requested that the exclusion be suspended for  
25 Plan Year 2017 only?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Was this resolution the reason that the exclusion  
3 was suspended for the 2017 Plan Year only?

4 A. Can you repeat, rephrase your question?

5 Q. Was this resolution the reason that the exclusion  
6 was lifted for only the 2017 Plan Year?

7 A. Yes. The board voted on this resolution  
8 language.

9 Q. Okay. And what was the outcome of that vote?

10 A. The outcome was in favor of removing the  
11 exclusion for the Plan Year 2017.

12 Q. And following this recommendation from Plan  
13 staff, were Plan staff ever subsequently asked to make a  
14 recommendation as to coverage for treatment of gender  
15 dysphoria?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Why not?

18 A. Staff did not -- they notified me that it was  
19 supposed to come up, right, per the previous document. And  
20 that was their reminder that we should look at it for 2018.

21 Q. Did Plan staff ever make another recommendation  
22 as to coverage for treatment of gender dysphoria?

23 A. No.

24 Q. And did Plan staff ever retract their  
25 recommendation reflected in this Crabtree presentation at

1 paragraph.

2 As to payment requests from medical providers, the  
3 Plan states that information provided from Blue Cross Blue  
4 Shield of North Carolina for the 2017 Plan Year indicates  
5 that 784,923.28 was billed to the State Health Plan for  
6 medical treatment that Blue Cross Blue Shield indicated  
7 would have been excluded had the coverage exclusion remained  
8 in effect.

9 Is that right?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So is it correct that in Plan Year 2017, the Plan  
12 received this amount, 784,923.28, in payment requests from  
13 medical providers?

14 A. No.

15 Q. What does this statement mean?

16 A. It means the provider charges were 785,000  
17 dollars.

18 Q. And how do provider charges differ from provider  
19 requests?

20 A. Provider charges have no basis particularly  
21 because they're always well overstated.

22 The Plan incurred 504,000 dollars, rounded, in  
23 allowed expenses.

24 Q. What is the difference between allowed expenses  
25 and the amount listed above, 784,000?

1 A. The discount that Blue Cross provides.

2 Q. So after discounts negotiated, the amount in  
3 allowed expenses was 504,406.04?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And that was for treatment that would have been  
6 excluded had the coverage exclusion remained in effect?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And after reductions, I'm sorry, after Plan  
9 participants or other insureds paid their portion, the Plan  
10 paid 404,609.26.

11 Is that right?

12 A. That is correct.

13 Q. All right. And other Plan participants and other  
14 insurers paid the balance of that difference between  
15 404,000 and 504,000?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. To the Plan's knowledge, other than this amount  
18 of 404,609.26, did it incur any other costs for coverage of  
19 treatment of gender dysphoria in 2017?

20 A. I think that could be difficult to assess because  
21 there were some coverages that have been covered all along,  
22 like counseling, that may or may not have been incorporated  
23 into these numbers, which could have been, so that would  
24 inflate the cost if they were, you know, using diagnosis  
25 codes, et cetera. But counseling has generally not been

1 prohibited.

2 Q. As a result of lifting the exclusion for the 2017  
3 Plan Year, are there any other costs that were incurred  
4 that the Plan is aware of?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Other than what I just mentioned.

8 Q. Was counseling covered before the Plan lifted the  
9 exclusion for the 2017 Plan Year?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So as a result of lifting the exclusion for the  
12 2017 Plan Year, was approximately 404,000 dollars what the  
13 Plan incurred in costs as a result of lifting that  
14 exclusion?

15 A. That which was specifically designated for gender  
16 dysphoria, yes. But there were counseling, probably there  
17 were counseling charges that were not listed as gender  
18 dysphoria. So there could have been a higher cost.

19 Q. Were those counseling charges covered prior to  
20 the lifting of the exclusion?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And they are still covered today.

24 Q. Was Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina  
25 tracking gender dysphoria claim activity in 2017?



1 A. No.

2 Q. Other than the ones we've talked about, did the  
3 Plan's Board of Trustees hold any other meetings in 2017?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Did the Board of Trustees ever take up a vote in  
6 2017 to continue lifting the exclusion for the 2018 Plan  
7 Year?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. Was there any board meeting from January  
10 2018 to the present where this issue has been discussed?

11 A. It's been discussed in public comment numerous  
12 times, along with people who want hearing aids and other  
13 such benefits.

14 Q. Is Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina the  
15 Plan's third-party administrator?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. In anticipation of the sunseting of the gender  
18 dysphoria coverage at the end of 2017, did the Plan provide  
19 Blue Cross Blue Shield with revisions to the 2018 Plan  
20 Benefits Booklets?

21 A. The Plan updated its own benefits booklets and  
22 provided Blue Cross with a decision memo on the fact that  
23 they needed to put the exclusions back in play.

24 Q. What was that decision memo?

25 A. It's an called an ADM.

1           But the people we work with, and as I already  
2 mentioned the journals or whatever that I have reviewed and  
3 discussions we've had with current and former board  
4 members, there's a lot of uncertainty on whether or not the  
5 treatments are effective. And in some cases, maybe they  
6 are. But there's discussion in the space of the, more the  
7 psychological effects and how much it's important there  
8 versus the surgery, the transition surgery.

9           Q.    And what was the basis for Treasurer Folwell's  
10 statement regarding the medical uncertainty?

11           MR. RULEY:  Objection, form.

12           THE WITNESS:  I don't know.

13 BY MS. RAVI:

14           Q.    Did Treasurer Folwell discuss this statement with  
15 you?

16           A.    No.

17           Q.    Did Treasurer Folwell discuss this statement with  
18 anyone at the Plan?

19           A.    I'm not aware of any conversations he had with  
20 anybody at the Plan.

21           Q.    And does this statement from October 25th reflect  
22 the views of the State Health Plan?

23           A.    Parts of it might, such as the legal and medical  
24 uncertainty.

25           The Franciscan Alliance opinion came out in

1 benefits and any benefits that might apply to a broad swath  
2 of the population with a not guaranteed but a strong  
3 proponent of lower costs in the future.

4 And so that's where legal and medical uncertainty  
5 -- I don't have to cover medically necessary treatment. We  
6 cover a lot of it. But in this case, we don't.

7 Q. Prior to this statement coming out on October 25,  
8 2018, did Plan staff discuss the legal uncertainty that's  
9 referenced here?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Did Plan staff discuss the medical uncertainty  
12 that's referenced here?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Let's turn back to Exhibit 5. And if you can  
15 turn to Page 10 of this document.

16 Plaintiffs' Interrogatory Number 3 asks the Plan  
17 to discuss the factual basis for each governmental interest  
18 that the Plan contends supports the exclusion.

19 Is that right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And is it correct, turning to the next page, the  
22 Plan states that the Plan has not identified any valid,  
23 reliable, peer-reviewed longitudinal studies that support  
24 the efficacy of the plaintiffs' desired treatment?

25 A. I'm sorry -- where are you?

1 Q. I am at the bottom of Page 11, last paragraph.

2 A. Okay.

3 That would be true.

4 Q. Is a peer-reviewed, longitudinal study that  
5 supports the efficacy of treatment a prerequisite for the  
6 Plan to cover a proposed benefit?

7 A. Not necessarily. When we evaluate, as I think we  
8 said earlier, it's a holistic review. There's no single  
9 pathway to coverage. It has to be a broad swath of  
10 membership, that there's a benefit for multiple people.

11 There's a cost component to it. There's a  
12 downstream cost component to it. There's got to be some  
13 common -- not experimental for sure.

14 There's got to be some common understanding in  
15 the medical community that it is a treatment that will  
16 produce a downstream effect that's positive.

17 So, you know, it's very difficult to come back  
18 and say well, peer-reviewed, longitudinal studies -- I'm  
19 not a clinician and I'm not a researcher, so it's, you  
20 know -- but to the extent that we have not found any real  
21 evidence that it's absolutely black and white, this  
22 particular issue.

23 You know, I think it goes, well, it should go  
24 without saying this is not a personal issue for me. I  
25 don't get, I have no personal opinion about this.

1 of really healthy people for an app that was, I think we  
2 paid 4000 dollars a person. It was the healthy people who  
3 were doing it. It wasn't achieving anything for health.  
4 So we canceled the benefit. It was a small, very small  
5 population, health management benefit.

6 But that is what we do every day. And I have to  
7 make choices that are awful sometimes. And it gives me no  
8 great pleasure, but it is my responsibility.

9 Q. Turning back to the peer-reviewed studies we  
10 discussed, did the Plan conduct a search for those studies?

11 A. I did not. I don't believe the Plan did.

12 Q. Okay. The Plan's response also states that  
13 during the pendency of this case, the American Journal of  
14 Psychiatry issued a correction to an article.

15 Do you see that here?

16 A. I do.

17 Q. What was that article?

18 A. I don't know -- not right this moment.

19 Q. To the Plan's knowledge, has Treasurer Folwell  
20 reviewed that article and the correction referenced here?

21 A. I do not know.

22 Q. Has Plan staff reviewed the article?

23 A. Possibly, but I do not know.

24 Q. And has the Board of Trustees reviewed that  
25 article?

1           A.   Possibly, but I do not know.

2           Q.   All right.

3           A.   If you'll recall, though, this says the Plan has  
4 not identified any valid or reliable -- so to the extent  
5 that we are reviewing articles, as I mentioned earlier,  
6 when I'm reviewing the journal, the New England Journal of  
7 Medicine and Kaiser and Milliman, those types of reviews,  
8 there's been nothing that makes this in my mind 100 percent  
9 clear.

10          Q.   Going back to the paragraph that starts with  
11 Second on the same page, the Plan states that it remains  
12 unaware of any objective test to identify individuals  
13 suffering from gender dysphoria who will benefit from the  
14 hormonal and surgical treatments sought here.

15                   Is that right?

16          A.   That is correct. The Plan remains unaware of any  
17 objective test -- yes.

18          Q.   Is an objective test to identify individuals who  
19 will benefit from the proposed treatment a prerequisite for  
20 the Plan to cover a proposed benefit?

21          A.   As I've stated before, it's a holistic review.

22                   And so if there are, in fact, objective tests,  
23 then that might be taken into consideration.

24          Q.   Has the Plan conducted a search for such  
25 objective tests?

1           A.    If it were to become necessary, then the Plan  
2 would make a search.

3                    But we do not find it necessary because of the  
4 things I've already discussed -- about the small volume of  
5 patients being a niche group, that we wouldn't be able to  
6 afford to offer the benefit.

7           Q.    So to the Plan's knowledge today, has the Plan  
8 conducted a search in the past for such tests?

9           A.    No.

10          Q.    And the Plan states that for minors, the Plan is  
11 unaware of any methodology to reliably distinguish between  
12 children for whom gender dysphoria will resolve without  
13 hormonal therapy or surgical intervention and those for  
14 whom it will not.

15                    Is that right?

16          A.    Yes.

17          Q.    Was the Plan's unawareness of this methodology  
18 for children also its justification for excluding this care  
19 for adults?

20          A.    I can't say.

21          Q.    Is the Plan aware?

22          A.    Of?

23          Q.    Of this methodology.

24          A.    For minors?

25          Q.    Uh-huh.

1 Q. Are there any governmental interests identified  
2 in response to this interrogatory?

3 A. So other than FDA, is that what you're asking  
4 for?

5 Q. Other than the statement made in response to  
6 Interrogatory Number 3.

7 A. Then --

8 MR. RULEY: Objection, form.

9 THE WITNESS: Again, I don't -- no, I don't know.

10 BY MS. RAVI:

11 Q. Okay. Let's turn back to Page 10, actually Pages  
12 9 to 10 of this document.

13 Plaintiffs' Interrogatory 2 asks the Plan to  
14 describe the financial sustainability of the State Health  
15 Plan.

16 Is that right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And turning over to Page 10, the Plan references  
19 several policies or decisions to improve the Plan's  
20 long-term sustainability that have been proposed, adopted,  
21 or implemented since 2017.

22 Is that right?

23 A. That is correct.

24 Q. Listed under Response (a), the Plan references an  
25 increased use of a Medicare Advantage plan.



1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And it states that this change is expected to  
3 generate 590 million dollars in savings over three years.

4 Is that right?

5 A. I don't see the 590 -- oh, right there. Thank  
6 you. Appreciate that.

7 Yes, that is correct.

8 Q. And under (b), it states elimination of the  
9 subsidy for retiree healthcare benefits for members hired  
10 after January 2021.

11 Is that right?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. How much is that expected to save?

14 A. Well, out of the OPEB liability, it will be  
15 billions. But it is not calculable without that.

16 It's probably in the 300, for the retirees,  
17 again, probably 300 dollars per member per month. But,  
18 again, it's pretty difficult to calculate that.

19 Q. Under (c), the Plan references competitive  
20 bidding for third-party administration services for the  
21 Plan.

22 Is that right?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. And the Plan estimates that this will save at  
25 least 20 million dollars per year.

1 Is that right?

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. And under (d), the Plan references the Clear  
4 Pricing Project.

5 Is that correct?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. How much is that expected to save?

8 A. In its full state of, of action, if we were to  
9 achieve the full goal, we would save probably 300 million  
10 dollars.

11 Q. All right. I'll hand you what I've marked as  
12 Exhibit 10.

13 (Exhibit 10 is marked for identification.)

14 BY MS. RAVI:

15 Q. Are you familiar with this document?

16 A. I am.

17 Q. What is this?

18 A. It is a Disclosure of Expert Witnesses Who Do Not  
19 Provide a Written Report Pursuant to -- a citation -- by  
20 Defendants Dale Folwell, Dee Jones, and the North Carolina  
21 State Health Plan for Teachers and State Employees.

22 Q. As of December 2017, what was the amount of the  
23 Plan's unfunded liability?

24 A. December 2017? It's not calculated as of the end  
25 of the year. It's more as of 6-30. I want to say that was

1 booklet is laid out and given to every new employee. And  
2 they can make a choice as to whether or not they want the  
3 benefit, can afford the benefit, or if the benefit covers  
4 what they need to have covered.

5 Q. Is it correct that individuals cannot receive  
6 coverage under the Plan unless they are employed by a state  
7 agency or participating local agency?

8 A. They could be a dependent of someone on the State  
9 Health Plan.

10 Q. So an individual to receive coverage must either  
11 be employed by a state agency or be a dependent of somebody  
12 who is?

13 A. Correct. And that dependency would be validated  
14 through a qualifying documentation.

15 Q. How is an individual's eligibility for  
16 participating in the Plan determined?

17 A. First of all, it's laid out in statute. But,  
18 again, it's just be an employee of an employing unit that  
19 is participating in the Plan is the simplest way to put it.

20 Q. And who makes that determination?

21 A. General Assembly.

22 Q. Does someone review an enrollee's request to  
23 participate in the Plan to confirm that they are, in fact,  
24 employed by a state agency?

25 A. Yes. We have what we call Health Benefit

1 Representatives that are at every employing unit and/or  
2 agency office. And they assist any new member, new  
3 employee with the benefits enrollment.

4 Q. And how are eligible employees enrolled in the  
5 Plan?

6 A. Again, they can go into the system either on  
7 their own or call in and be enrolled by a call center  
8 representative.

9 Q. Do participating employers play a role in getting  
10 eligible employees enrolled in the Plan?

11 A. Yes. The HBR is very much responsible for  
12 helping the member. But it's still on the member or the  
13 employee to enroll in a timely fashion. There's a 30-day  
14 window for which a new employee has to be enrolled. That's  
15 the window. And that's in statute.

16 Q. And you said that a Health Benefits  
17 Representative can provide assistance in that process.

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. What about participating employers, do they play  
20 a role in this process?

21 A. In what way?

22 Q. Do participating employers play a role in the  
23 process of getting an eligible --

24 A. Only through the fact that they have an HBR  
25 available.

1 Q. Do participating employers have any role in  
2 determining eligibility?

3 A. To the extent that it's either a new hire and  
4 they're working more than 30 hours a week as a full-time  
5 employee, but other than that, no.

6 Q. Do participating employers provide enrollment  
7 forms?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Do they transmit those enrollment forms to the  
10 Plan?

11 A. If there's, if it's -- first of all, we do mostly  
12 electronic enrollment. So they might provide a computer  
13 for someone to enroll. I'm not -- we don't manage what the  
14 employers do as to how exactly they do it.

15 But I know of some that will provide a computer  
16 for an employee who does not necessarily work in a desk  
17 job. But they are, they help them get enrolled. But  
18 that's, again, on the HBR and the agency or the employer.

19 Q. Okay. And do participating employers deduct  
20 premiums from their employees' salary?

21 A. The State Controller deducts the premiums from  
22 the salary. But it's the local HR people who are  
23 responsible for getting it right into the system, the HR  
24 payroll system.

25 There are 408 employing units, for example, that

1 after 2018, the Plan is not aware of any specific time when  
2 the medical uncertainty of gender dysphoria treatment was  
3 discussed?

4 A. That may be fair.

5 Q. And you mentioned that the Plan has resources  
6 that it can reach out to for information on this topic.  
7 You said that Blue Cross Blue Shield is one of those  
8 resources and CVS.

9 Are there any other resources?

10 A. Those are our main go-tos. Segal, we talk to  
11 Segal. They have consulting staff that includes  
12 clinicians.

13 Q. Any other resources for the topic of gender  
14 dysphoria treatment?

15 A. No.

16 Q. All right. And you testified earlier that you,  
17 yourself, did some research into the medical necessity of  
18 gender dysphoria treatment.

19 Is that right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You said that you researched Kaiser, Milliman,  
22 and the New England Journal of Medicine.

23 Is that right?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. How did you decide to look at those resources?

1           A.    I reached out to Segal, Blue Cross, and CVS.  
2           They are our partners. They all have clinical staff. And  
3           that's where we get our, a lot of our clinical feedback.

4           Q.    Did you save your research?

5           A.    What's that?

6           Q.    Did you save your research?

7           A.    No.

8           Q.    Why not?

9           A.    Because I wasn't researching to write a white  
10          paper.

11          Q.    So is it correct that that research has not been  
12          produced to the plaintiffs at this point?

13          A.    Right. General curiosity.

14          Q.    In the fall of 2017, how long did you spend  
15          researching these issues?

16          A.    Several hours maybe.

17          Q.    And you said maybe again in 2018. How long did  
18          you spend in 2018?

19          A.    Probably less.

20          Q.    Did you share your research with anyone?

21          A.    The staff discussed it. They may have researched  
22          as well. And, again, it was more general conversation.

23          Q.    Who at the, in the staff did you share your  
24          research with?

25          A.    Caroline, Ted, Beth. It's my leadership team, we

1 not personal. This is not something that I get to make a  
2 choice about. Because if I had every single group that  
3 comes in to ask for a benefit, if I covered that, then I  
4 would be completely, completely avoiding my fiduciary  
5 responsibility to cover basic health. That's what the Plan  
6 Benefits Booklet says, right?

7 The Plan Benefits Booklet identifies every single  
8 thing I cover. And it provides healthcare. We want every  
9 member of the Plan to have good healthcare. We want the --  
10 and the reality is we have a lot of members who have  
11 diabetes. We have a lot of members who have orthopedic  
12 issues. We have a lot of members who have RA. We have  
13 really a lot of members who have cancer. And they want to  
14 be, they want to be covered.

15 And so it's really difficult for me to just say,  
16 you know, I can take this group of 25 and this group of 10  
17 and these -- if you add all that up -- I'll, I'll totally  
18 admit that the cost of this benefit is not going to break  
19 the Plan, never was, never will.

20 But it -- I can't do it for that group and not do  
21 it for the group that wants it for their infants, for, you  
22 know, for a certain feeding formula for that infant group,  
23 and I can't do it for the hearing aid group, and I can't do  
24 it for the group that really wants acupuncture.

25 Because once you start adding those, then I have



1           And it may sound big and like we can get all this  
2           buying power. We don't have all the buying power. The  
3           hospitals and the providers that work in the hospitals are  
4           killing us all from a cost standpoint.

5           And so it's, you know, my focus is to be able to  
6           reduce family premiums 100 bucks. That's my, that is one of  
7           my biggest goals right now. And that is the only way I'm  
8           going to get an uptick -- to bill 100 dollars -- I'm paying  
9           right now 720 dollars for three people. That's a lot of  
10          money. And I am grateful that I can afford it. But for  
11          your average teacher, they can't afford that.

12          And I'm going to have to reduce the family premium  
13          100 bucks at a minimum to make somebody take it up.

14          And so until I can take that kind of money out of  
15          the Plan and at the same time shore up the Retiree Health  
16          Benefit Trust Fund for the unfunded liability and make up  
17          trend -- oh, by the way, they're not covering COVID costs  
18          right now. The General Assembly is not interested in giving  
19          us back our money for COVID.

20          So people ask me why carry a billion dollar  
21          budget, cash, cash balance? It's to make up for things like  
22          that. Like a bad flu season, which we're going to have,  
23          we're going to have it if we're not careful about vaccines  
24          and COVID's still raging.

25          I mean that's what I have to live with every day

1           A.     Surgical procedures for psychological or  
2 emotional reasons.

3           Q.     And would those exclusions also potentially apply  
4 to coverage for gender dysphoria?

5           A.     Yes.

6           Q.     Earlier, you mentioned HBRs.  What are they again  
7 please?

8           A.     Health Benefit Representatives.  They are  
9 actually defined in statute.  And they work at the various  
10 employing units.  I mentioned there are 408.  They are  
11 liaisons to the Plan.  So the Plan teaches them, keeps them  
12 apprised of the benefits being offered.  But they're  
13 responsible for their employer's employees and getting them  
14 enrolled and making sure they understand the processes.

15          Q.     So are they employed by the State Health Plan or  
16 by others?

17          A.     By the others.

18          Q.     All right.  Thank you.

19                 On costs -- would you get Exhibits 6 and 7 please.

20                 Looking at Exhibit 6, for example, look at the  
21 first e-mail on Exhibit 6, Page DEF61647, the January 22,  
22 2017 e-mail.

23          A.     Yes.

24          Q.     And that reports, as of 1-21, a total paid of  
25 287.57.

# Exhibit 13



Deposition of:  
**Peter Robie , M.D.**

*September 22, 2021*

In the Matter of:  
**Kadel, et al vs. Folwell**

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1           IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
2           FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
3           Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-00272

4           MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,  
5                                 Plaintiffs,

6                         vs.

7           DALE FOLWELL, in his official  
8           capacity as State Treasurer of  
9           North Carolina, et al.,  
                               Defendants.

10  
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12  
13                         VIRTUAL ZOOM VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION OF  
   PETER ROBIE, M.D.

14                                 (Taken by Plaintiffs)

15                                 Winston-Salem, North Carolina  
16                                 Wednesday, September 22, 2021

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21           Reported by Andrea L. Kingsley, RPR  
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A P P E A R A N C E S

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1 VIRTUAL ZOOM VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION  
2 OF PETER ROBIE, M.D., a witness called on  
3 behalf of the Plaintiffs pursuant to the  
4 Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, before  
5 Andrea L. Kingsley, Notary Public, in and for  
6 the State of North Carolina, at Winston-Salem,  
7 North Carolina, on Wednesday, September 22,  
8 2021, commencing at 10:05 a.m.

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1 Q. When you retired in 2016, did you stop  
2 practicing medicine at that time?

3 A. For six months.

4 Q. Are you currently practicing medicine?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What is your area of practice?

7 A. Internal medicine.

8 Q. Do you have any other specializations?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Any other areas of practice?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Are you an expert in the diagnosis of  
13 gender dysphoria?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Have you ever diagnosed a patient with  
16 gender dysphoria?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Are you an expert in the treatment of  
19 gender dysphoria?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Have you ever treated a patient for  
22 gender dysphoria?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Are you an expert in the cost of  
25 treatment for gender dysphoria?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Have you ever submitted a request for  
3 pre-authorization for insurance coverage for gender  
4 concerning care?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Have you ever communicated with an  
7 insurer regarding a denial of coverage for gender  
8 confirming care?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Have you ever taught medicine?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Where did you teach?

13 A. Baylor College of Medicine, Wake Forest  
14 Baptist Medical Center.

15 Q. At Baylor what were you teaching?

16 A. General internal medicine.

17 Q. Did you teach anything else at Baylor?

18 A. No.

19 Q. What about at Wake Forest?

20 A. General internal medicine.

21 Q. Either at Baylor or at Wake Forest did  
22 you teach on the subject of gender dysphoria?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Have you ever taught on that subject?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Apart from the statement itself, did you  
2 discuss any of the content of the statement with  
3 Treasurer Folwell?

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Objection to the  
5 form.

6 A. No.

7 Q. Have you ever had a conversation with  
8 Treasurer Folwell regarding the medical necessity of  
9 gender confirming care?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Can gender confirming care ever be  
12 medically necessary for a patient?

13 A. That decision is made by the provider,  
14 patient's physician, and the patient together. The  
15 medical necessity is determined really at that  
16 level. To me, when the guidelines are issued by  
17 organizations such as the American Medical  
18 Association and the Society and so on, they are  
19 guidelines. The medical necessity is not  
20 determined by the guidelines, it's determined by  
21 the provider and the patient.

22 Q. Is there ever a circumstance where a  
23 provider and patient together could determine that  
24 gender confirming care is medically necessary?

25 MR. WILLIAMS: Objection to the

1 form.

2 A. I don't know.

3 Q. Going back to Exhibit 3, other than  
4 Treasurer Folwell, did you discuss the contents of  
5 this statement with anyone else?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Are you familiar with the Segal Company?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Are you aware of the total cost that the  
10 plan incurred for covering gender confirming care in  
11 2017?

12 A. No.

13 Q. I will ask you to take a look at what's  
14 been marked as Exhibit 4.

15 (Exhibit 4, PLAN DEF0038905, marked  
16 for identification, as of this date.)

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. Are you familiar with this document,  
19 Dr. Robie?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. What is this document?

22 A. It's an e-mail on our last board meeting  
23 sharing my thoughts about several e-mails that plan  
24 members had sent to the board since their last  
25 meeting.

# Exhibit 14



Deposition of:  
**Becki Johnson 30(b)(6) North Carolina  
Department of Public Safety**

*September 15, 2021*

In the Matter of:  
**Kadel, et al vs. Folwell**

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	No. 1:19-cv-272-LCB-LPA
V.	)	
	)	
DALE FOLWELL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
_____	)	

VIDEOCONFERENCE DEPOSITION  
OF  
BECKI JOHNSON  
30(b)(6) DESIGNEE FOR NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

THIS TRANSCRIPT IS NOT COMPLETE  
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AFTER REVIEW OF TRANSCRIPT BY ATTORNEYS WITHIN 30  
DAYS OF DATE OF DEPOSITION PER PROTECTIVE ORDER

WAKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

Reported by: Michelle Maar, RDR, RMR, FCRR

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DEPOSITION EXHIBITS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

BECKI JOHNSON,

called as a witness and having been first duly sworn  
remotely, pursuant to NC Session Law 2021-3,  
was examined and testified as follows:

\* \* \* \* \*

MR. MAROLF: I'm Evan Marolf, representing the  
Plaintiffs in this matter. I'm with Harris, Wiltshire &  
Grannis.

Also here on behalf of Plaintiffs are Amy  
Richardson, with Harris, Wiltshire & Grannis, and Tara  
Borelli, with Lambda Legal.

MR. KNEPPER: And my name is John Knepper. I  
represent Co-Defendants, the State Health Plan, Treasurer  
Dale Folwell, and the Administrator of the Health Plan Dee  
Jones.

And with me is Mark Jones, who is with Bell,  
Davis, Pitt.

And we may be joined later by Kevin Williams,  
another attorney from Bell, Davis, Pitt, or Joel Heimbach,  
who is one of the in-house counsel for the North Carolina  
Treasurer's Office.

MR. MCINNIS: And my name is Alan McInnis. I  
represent the North Carolina Department of Public Safety.

I'm in the room with the witness, Becki Johnson.

1                   That's all that's appearing on behalf of DPS.

2

3

EXAMINATION

4

BY MR. MAROLF:

5

Q. All right. Good morning, Ms. Johnson.

6

A. Good morning.

7

Q. Would you start by just stating your full name

8

for the record please.

9

A. Becki Johnson.

10

Q. Have you ever had your deposition taken before?

11

A. No.

12

Q. Okay. So I just want to quickly go over a few

13

ground rules just to make sure that we're on the same page.

14

So the court reporter is going to be transcribing

15

my questions and your answers. So if you could, please give

16

a verbal response to my questions so that she can correctly

17

transcribe them. That would be helpful.

18

And then I'll also ask that you let me finish my

19

questions, you know, before you start answering. And I'll

20

do my best to avoid interrupting you.

21

That might be a little more difficult with being

22

remote. And so, hopefully, we don't have too many

23

connection issues.

24

We'll both do our best. Is that fair?

25

A. Yes.

1 Q. And if I ask you a question that you don't  
2 understand, please just ask me to rephrase it.

3 And if you don't, I'll assume that you did  
4 understand. Is that fair?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is there anything inhibiting your ability to give  
7 complete, honest answers today?

8 A. No.

9 Q. All right. Do you understand that you're  
10 testifying as a designated representative of the North  
11 Carolina Department of Public Safety today?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. What did you do to prepare for your deposition  
14 today?

15 A. I just read over some of the stuff that Mr.  
16 McInnis had sent me.

17 Q. What documents did you review?

18 A. The, it was the personnel file and the medical  
19 file for the plaintiff and the interrogatories that DPS had  
20 already submitted, and an expert witness, and expert  
21 witness stuff too.

22 Q. I'm going to show you an exhibit.

23 MR. MAROLF: Well, actually, Alan, sorry, if you  
24 would, if you could pull up Exhibit 1.

25 (Exhibit 1 is marked for identification.)

1 MR. MCINNIS: Okay. We're looking at it.

2 BY MR. MAROLF:

3 Q. And I'll give you a chance if you want to review  
4 it before I ask you any questions about it.

5 A. (Witness reviews the document.)

6 Okay.

7 Q. Have you seen this document before?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Could you just read the bold, underlined text  
10 near the, in the bottom third or so of the first page of  
11 the document.

12 A. Hold on.

13 The Notice of Rule 30(b)(6) Deposition of North  
14 Carolina Department of Public Safety.

15 Q. Yes. Thank you.

16 And did you review this document as you prepared  
17 for the deposition today?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And I'm going to direct you to page, it's the  
20 third page of the document, it doesn't have a page number  
21 on it, but the third page of the document near the bottom  
22 says in bold, underlined, it says Deposition Topics.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. And on the next couple of pages or so, there are  
25 17 numbered paragraphs.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Are you prepared to testify on the topics listed  
3 in those paragraphs?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. Aside from your attorney, did you speak  
6 with anyone else to develop your knowledge on these topics?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Okay. Ms. Johnson, do you currently work at the  
9 Department of Public Safety?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And if I refer to it as DPS, would that be  
12 confusing? Or will that make sense to you?

13 A. No. That's fine.

14 Q. Okay. How long have you been working with DPS?

15 A. This, this stint I came back in 2018. I  
16 previously worked for them in 2006 to 2014.

17 Q. And what's your current job title?

18 A. HR Benefits Manager.

19 Q. And was that the same job that you held in your  
20 first stint?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. What, what was your, what positions did  
23 you hold previously to this one?

24 A. I was the Disability and Retirement Program  
25 Manager prior.

1 Q. Okay. And any other positions before that?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Or in between the two?

4 A. Not for DPS.

5 Q. Okay. Yeah.

6 What are your, what are your responsibilities?

7 A. I oversee the benefits programs for the  
8 department, which include insurance benefits, leave  
9 benefits, retirement and disability benefits, as well as  
10 leave of absence and separations.

11 Q. And what were your, what were your  
12 responsibilities as disability -- was it Disability  
13 Benefits Manager? Was that the previous position?

14 A. It was Disability and Retirement Program Manager.  
15 And my responsibilities were to oversee the  
16 retirement program for the agency, as well as the  
17 disability benefits for the agency, and process disability  
18 payments monthly for employees out on short-term  
19 disability.

20 Q. Ms. Johnson, does the Department of Public Safety  
21 offer health insurance to its employees?

22 A. Yes. Through the State Health Plan.

23 Q. Sorry -- you said through the State Health Plan?

24 A. Yes. Yes.

25 Q. And does DPS pay money into the State Health Plan

1 to contribute for its employees' health insurance premiums?

2 A. Yes. We pay a monthly employee, employer portion  
3 for each employee.

4 Q. And how is the amount that DPS pays into the  
5 State Health Plan each month determined?

6 A. The State Health Plan determines it each year and  
7 provides it to us.

8 Q. And so DPS doesn't play a role in making that  
9 determination. It's purely the State Health Plan, and DPS  
10 just goes along with that.

11 Is that right?

12 A. Yes. That's correct.

13 Q. And so if the amount changes at any point, that  
14 would all be determined by the State Health Plan?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Approximately how many DPS employees qualify for  
17 health insurance through the State Health Plan?

18 A. We have about 21,000 employees.

19 Q. And all of them are on the State Health Plan?

20 There aren't any who don't qualify for insurance  
21 or --

22 A. Well, depending on their hours worked, some  
23 probably don't qualify, or some that have declined coverage  
24 because they have other coverage.

25 Q. Right. Can you estimate of how many of those



1 21,000 employees would be on the State Health Plan?

2 A. I would say maybe about 18 or 19,000.

3 Q. And again approximately, how much does DPS pay  
4 the State Health Plan each year in total for all these  
5 employees?

6 A. We don't pay it directly, the Office of the State  
7 Controller pays it. I can give you the monthly amount per  
8 employee.

9 Q. Sure. That's fine.

10 A. It's 521.96 currently.

11 Q. And so just to make sure I'm understanding -- so  
12 that's, it's 521 or so for each of those employees.

13 And that's for all of those employees who are on  
14 the Health Plan, correct?

15 A. Correct. Yes.

16 Q. So if I were doing the math, I could just  
17 multiply that by 18 or 19,000 and that would be the total?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Does the Department of Public Safety have any  
20 control over the health insurance that its employees  
21 receive?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Okay. And I'm actually going to pull up -- well,  
24 I'm going to send another, put another exhibit into the  
25 folder, if you'll bear with me for a minute.

1 (Exhibit 2 is marked for identification.)

2 THE WITNESS: Okay.

3 BY MR. MAROLF:

4 Q. Do you have Exhibit 2 in front of you?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Do you recognize this document?

7 A. Looks a lot like the other document -- so, no. I  
8 don't think so.

9 Q. Okay. Could you just read what it says in the  
10 upper, the right half in bold text on Page 1?

11 A. Defendant State of North Carolina Department of  
12 Public Safety's Answers to Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint.

13 Q. Thank you. And I'll give you a chance to review  
14 this if you want.

15 I just have one spot in it that I want to ask you  
16 about. But please go ahead and review it for as much time  
17 as you want.

18 A. (Witness reviews the document.)

19 Okay. Go ahead.

20 Q. So I want to direct you to the bottom of Page  
21 Number 27.

22 And it's going to be, the paragraphs are  
23 numbered, it's going to be paragraph numbered 179 at the  
24 very bottom of that page.

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. Are you there?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So it says there that NCSHP, the State Health  
4 Plan, determines what health benefits are available to  
5 state employees through their employment.

6 Is that your understanding of what is true for  
7 the Department of Public Safety?

8 A. Yes. That's correct.

9 Q. And so just not to belabor the point -- so is it  
10 true then that DPS does, plays no role in determining what  
11 health benefits are available to its employees?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. Does DPS play any role in determining the number  
14 of health plan options that are offered to its employees?

15 A. Not to my knowledge. My understanding is that  
16 we're only allowed to offer the State Health Plan for  
17 medical coverage.

18 Q. Right. Is there more than one health insurance  
19 plan that employees can choose between to sign up for?

20 A. So the State Health Plan currently offers two  
21 plans for active employees, the 70/30 and the 80/20 Plan.

22 Q. Okay. Thanks.

23 And so you're saying that the State Health Plan  
24 determines those, and DPS doesn't choose whether to  
25 offer --

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. -- one or the other, that's determined by the  
3 State Health Plan?

4 A. That's correct. The employee chooses between the  
5 70/30 or the 80/20. But those plans are determined by the  
6 State Health Plan.

7 Q. Okay. And does DPS play any role in determining  
8 the terms of those health plans?

9 A. No. We don't.

10 Q. Does DPS play any role in determining which  
11 third-party administrator is selected to offer the health  
12 insurance coverage?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Does DPS play any role in determining which  
15 third-party administrator is selected to administer  
16 pharmaceutical coverage?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Are DPS employees allowed to change their health  
19 coverage outside of the open enrollment period if they have  
20 a qualifying life event?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And in that event, who would an employee notify  
23 of the qualifying life event?

24 A. The employee would log into the system online and  
25 create a qualifying life event and make their changes.

1 Q. And when you say the system online, what is that  
2 system?

3 A. It's the Integrated HR Payroll System, formerly  
4 known as Beacon.

5 Q. Okay. And is that system, is that, is that  
6 provided by the Department of Public Safety? Or is that  
7 run by the State Health Plan?

8 A. It's run by the Office of the State Controller.

9 Q. And does DPS play any role in managing that  
10 system or monitoring what its employees, what information  
11 its employees put into the system?

12 A. Can you repeat that please?

13 Q. Does DPS play any role in monitoring what its  
14 employees put into that payroll system?

15 A. So when employees put in a qualifying life event,  
16 that has to be approved by the Central HR Insurance  
17 Section. So we do review the documents and the event, and  
18 approve it if we can.

19 Q. And so that Central, you said Central HR  
20 Insurance, is that an office within the Department of  
21 Public Safety?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And so that office determines whether the  
24 employee has a qualifying life event, is that what you're  
25 testifying to?

1           A.    Yes.  That's correct.

2           Q.    Okay.  And would that office also decide whether  
3 to approve the request to change health coverage for a  
4 qualifying life event?

5           A.    I'm not sure what you mean by change health  
6 insurance.

7           Q.    So if the employee has a qualifying life event,  
8 does that office, is that the end of it, that office  
9 approves the request to change the employee's health  
10 coverage?

11                   Or does that office make any other determinations  
12 to decide whether the employee is allowed to make that  
13 change in their insurance coverage?

14           A.    So we would make that determination.  We would  
15 need the documentation, view the dates -- because they have  
16 to do it within 30 days of the qualifying life event.  And  
17 they have to provide documentation for the event.

18                   And if they're adding dependents, they have to  
19 add documentation to verify that they're legitimate  
20 dependents.

21                   And we would review those documents and approve  
22 it.

23           Q.    And if an employee, say an employee doesn't know  
24 how to access the website, would that employee come to  
25 someone in your office to ask for a form to fill out?  Or

1 would they have to ask a question about how to access the  
2 website?

3 A. So, yeah, generally they would go to the HBR at  
4 their facility to ask questions, for help.

5 There is no form. It has to be done through the  
6 system.

7 But if they can't get up with the HBR, they would  
8 reach out to the Insurance Section in our office.

9 Q. Okay. And HBR, is that Health Benefits  
10 Representative?

11 A. Yes. It is.

12 Q. Does DPS offer any type of health insurance apart  
13 from what is offered through the State Health Plan?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Are DPS employees required to sign up for health  
16 insurance?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Does DPS provide insurance, health insurance for  
19 employees' qualifying dependents?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And does DPS offer health insurance for anyone  
22 other than the employees and their qualifying dependents?

23 A. No.

24 Q. I'm going to pull up another exhibit here.

25 MR. MAROLF: Give me one second, Alan.

1 (Exhibit 3 is marked for identification.)

2 MR. MAROLF: Okay. Alan, there should be an  
3 Exhibit 3 in that folder now.

4 MR. MCINNIS: Okay.

5 BY MR. MAROLF:

6 Q. Do you have Exhibit 3 pulled up?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Have you seen this document before?

9 A. Let me see -- I've seen one set of the  
10 interrogatories. I'm not sure -- this says it's the first  
11 set. So --

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. I'll give you a chance -- you have seen it  
15 before?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And could you just read what is in the top right  
18 in bold text on the first page?

19 A. Defendant NC Department of Public Safety's  
20 Responses to Plaintiffs' First Set of Interrogatories.

21 Q. Thank you. And are -- Ms. Johnson, I'll give you  
22 a chance to review this if you want.

23 But my first question is just going to be if you  
24 helped put these responses together.

25 A. Yes.



1 Q. Which ones did you help put together?

2 A. I believe my, my insurance manager and myself and  
3 the deputy director met and went over them, so we did them  
4 all.

5 Q. Okay. And I'm going to direct you to the bottom  
6 of Page 3 in this document.

7 And it's, there's a Paragraph 3, and then there's  
8 a Subparagraph marked A.

9 And then there's, in bold text, an answer to that,  
10 which is DPS's response to that interrogatory.

11 A. Okay.

12 Q. And that answer goes onto the next page.

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. So I think we were talking about this earlier a  
15 little bit -- but the answer to Interrogatory Number 3A  
16 states that employees can enroll online through the  
17 Integrated HR Payroll System formerly known as Beacon.

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. And so, again, we talked about this a little bit  
20 -- but this is the same HR payroll system that you  
21 mentioned earlier that has a website that employees go  
22 onto.

23 Is that right?

24 A. Yes. That's correct.

25 Q. And could you remind me who maintains the

1 Integrated HR Payroll System?

2 A. The Office of the State Controller.

3 Q. Thank you.

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. So if an employee goes onto that system to make  
6 any changes to their health plan -- well, is there ever a  
7 time when they can do that -- we talked about qualifying  
8 life events.

9 Is there a time when employees can go onto that  
10 website without some intervention from DPS or without any  
11 oversight from DPS?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And when would that be?

14 A. Employees can go on there to upload any  
15 documentation that they want to unrelated to a QLE.

16 They update beneficiaries to some of the plans,  
17 update Social Security numbers, the birth dates for their  
18 dependents or beneficiaries. And they can also update  
19 their primary care physician at any time.

20 Q. And would DPS have access to all of that  
21 information when an employee makes those changes?

22 A. So we're not notified when they make them. But,  
23 yes, we would have access to see them after they've been  
24 made -- if we were to go in and look at it for some reason.

25 Q. Does the State Health Plan have access to that

1 information?

2 A. I believe so.

3 Q. Who -- so do employees have log-in credentials to  
4 access that HR system?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Who provides those log-in credentials to  
7 employees?

8 A. They're given an NCID. I believe it's given when  
9 they're hired by the agency.

10 Q. And what is an NCID?

11 A. North Carolina Identification.

12 Q. And did you say that's provided by the agency?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. If an employee has a technical issue with the HR  
15 website, who would they contact for assistance with that?

16 A. Generally, they would contact Best Shared  
17 Services at the Office of the State Controller.

18 They may also go to their HRB at their facility  
19 or contact our office.

20 Q. I want to ask a little bit more about the HBRs,  
21 the Health Benefits Representatives.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. Who are they employed by? Are they Department of  
24 Public Safety employees?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And what are their job responsibilities?

2 A. To my knowledge, they have separate  
3 responsibilities, but for whatever reason they have been  
4 designated as the HBR for that particular work location.

5 And in that role, they have to provide  
6 information about benefits, benefit changes. They're there  
7 to help them with any enrollments and stuff that they might  
8 do and show them where all the documentation is.

9 I think they also do like new hire stuff with  
10 them and new hire orientation. I think they have several  
11 duties.

12 But the one that our office is involved with them  
13 in is the insurance piece and benefits.

14 Q. And you said there's one HBR for each work  
15 location?

16 A. There may be more than one. We ask them to  
17 designate two, so we have a back-up. If it's a larger  
18 facility, they may have three or four.

19 Q. And so you said you designate them.

20 So is the HBR, is that their entire job? Or do  
21 they have other, is it someone with another job and then  
22 they're also designated as the HBR, so they have these  
23 additional duties?

24 A. Yes. They have another job. And then their work  
25 location has designated them as the HBR.

1 Q. And then so does your office or does DPS train  
2 the Health Benefits Representatives on their roles?

3 A. We do provide some training occasionally for the  
4 HBRs. We also provide them information from the State  
5 Health Plan or NCFlex about benefits trainings that they  
6 offer. And we have them attend those.

7 Q. And does -- so the State Health Plan participates  
8 in training them. Does it also supervise them at all in  
9 their HBR roles?

10 A. Not to my knowledge.

11 Q. Does your office or does DPS supervise them in  
12 that role?

13 A. So we, you know, we help them. They don't report  
14 to us, and we're not supervisors over them. But, yes, we  
15 do provide them the information.

16 And if they need help and they're reaching out to  
17 the Central Insurance Section, yes.

18 Q. So you said the HBRs provide, you know, certain  
19 information to employees.

20 And did I also hear you say that that information  
21 comes from the State Health Plan that they provide to the  
22 employees?

23 A. Yes. Usually we'll get the information from the  
24 State Health Plan, and then we disseminate it to the HBRs.

25 Q. Does any information not come from the State

1 Health Plan? Does any information just come from DPS?

2 A. So, yes, we will send out, you know, reminders  
3 about things. Or, you know, if we're seeing issues with  
4 something, we might send out reminders.

5 So, yes, the Insurance Office also sends them  
6 information.

7 Q. If an employee has a question during the open  
8 enrollment period, are they allowed to talk to the Health  
9 Benefits Representatives?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And is that, in fact, who they're supposed to  
12 talk to if they have questions about their insurance?

13 A. That's their first line of contact, yes.

14 Q. And so if they have, if an employee has a  
15 question, aside from the open enrollment period, would they  
16 also go to the HBR in that case as well?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. How do employees contact their HBR?

19 A. They're onsite. So I mean they could call them.  
20 They could e-mail them. I'm not sure because I'm not  
21 there. But they're onsite, so they could go to their  
22 office as well. I'm sure they do all three.

23 Q. And you said they can also potentially e-mail  
24 them in some cases?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Is there any, is there any website for employees  
2 to interface with the HBRs? Or would it just be through  
3 e-mail if they're doing it online?

4 A. To my knowledge, it would just be through e-mail  
5 -- unless a certain facility has set something up that  
6 we're not aware of.

7 Q. And does DPS provide contact information to  
8 employees for their HBRs?

9 A. To my knowledge, yes. I mean they should be  
10 because they're meeting with them when they hire them. So  
11 they're being told who that contact is from, you know, the  
12 initial employment.

13 Q. You said they meet with them. So when a new  
14 employee starts work at DPS, the HBR is one of the people  
15 they would meet with to discuss their health insurance?

16 A. Yes. They do a new hire orientation.

17 Q. And by new hire orientation, do you mean  
18 specifically to insurance and benefits? Or is it more than  
19 that?

20 A. It's more than that.

21 Q. So what else is included in that orientation?

22 A. It covers the whole department, you know, the  
23 divisions, all sorts of things, disciplinary stuff.

24 There is a benefit section that covers leave,  
25 covers some policies .

1 Q. So it covers all of the typical new employee  
2 stuff. It's not limited to just the bare health benefits.

3 Even though these are Health Benefits  
4 Representatives, they provide this training that covers  
5 basically all new employee training?

6 A. Yes. Because they do other things than just the  
7 health benefits, yes.

8 Q. Right. I want to look back at Exhibit 3.

9 And on Page 4 of that exhibit, it's a  
10 continuation of Interrogatory Number 3, and it's Number 3B.

11 A. Okay.

12 Q. And I'll give you a chance to review it if you  
13 would like to.

14 A. (Witness reviews the document.)

15 Okay.

16 Q. So this response says that DPS would get involved  
17 in certain cases where an employee loses coverage.

18 And without just reading the whole text to you --  
19 when an employee loses coverage because the employee goes  
20 on leave without pay and there's no monthly paycheck to,  
21 for DPS to deduct the employee's monthly insurance premium  
22 from -- and it says that if an employee wants to have their  
23 coverage reinstated, DPS would work with the employee and  
24 submit an exception request to the State Health Plan.

25 So when an employee loses their insurance coverage



1 in a case like this, when does DPS first become involved?

2 Is it immediately when the employee goes on leave?

3 A. So when the employee first goes on leave, the HBR  
4 at the facility provides them with a continuation of  
5 benefits while on leave of absence letter.

6 That will explain what is going to happen with  
7 their benefits, whether they're exhausting leave or on  
8 leave without pay.

9 Q. Okay. And when the employee's monthly paychecks  
10 eventually stop and the premiums can no longer be paid,  
11 does DPS notify the State Health Plan of that?

12 Or does it just remove that employee's, you know,  
13 521 dollar monthly payment from its payments to the State  
14 Health Plan?

15 A. So the Office of the State Controller, who all  
16 receives the Integrated HR Payroll System, runs reports --  
17 they call it a deduction not taken report.

18 When the employee shows up on that report and  
19 when there's not enough funds in a paycheck to cover their  
20 State Health Plan deduction, then they go in the system and  
21 set them to direct bill with a third-party vendor that the  
22 State Health Plan uses.

23 Q. So does DPS have any role in any of that?

24 Or is that all handled through the Office of the  
25 State Controller and the State Health Plan?

1           A.    It's all handled through the Office of the State  
2           Controller and the State Health Plan.

3           Q.    And so going back to the second half of the  
4           second piece of this response in Number 3B, it says that  
5           when an employee wants coverage reinstated, DPS would work  
6           with the employee to submit an exception request to the  
7           State Health Plan.

8                   How does that process work?

9           A.    So if the employee's benefits were termed because  
10           they were not making premium payments to the third-party  
11           vendor and they would like that insurance back, we can  
12           submit an exception request to the State Health Plan.

13                   So that employee generally just starts with their  
14           HBRs. They might come directly to the Insurance Section at  
15           Central HR. All exception requests have to be submitted  
16           through our Insurance Section.

17                   So if the HBR is contacted, then they would send  
18           that information up to the Central Office.

19                   And basically the employee has to, you know,  
20           indicate what happened, why they didn't make the payment,  
21           and what was going on so that it can be determined if an  
22           exception request can be submitted based on the State  
23           Health Plan's guidelines for what they'll review.

24           Q.    And so to kind of look at that process from the  
25           other side -- what does DPS do with the State Health Plan

1 to process those exception requests?

2 A. So if our Insurance Section determines that we  
3 can submit an exception request, we type up that exception  
4 request and submit it through an online form to the State  
5 Health Plan.

6 And then the State Health Plan reviews that and  
7 makes the final determination as to whether they'll  
8 reinstate the coverage or not.

9 Q. And so that, that final determination is made by  
10 the State Health Plan.

11 Is that right?

12 A. Yes. That's correct.

13 Q. I want to ask about the State Health Plan's  
14 exclusion of coverage for gender confirming healthcare.

15 Does that exclusion apply to DPS employees?

16 A. Yes. It would apply, if it's a State Health Plan  
17 exclusion, it would apply to anybody enrolled in the State  
18 Health Plan.

19 Q. And does DPS have any control over whether that  
20 exclusion remains in the Plan?

21 A. We do not.

22 Q. Does DPS have any control over any terms of the  
23 Plan?

24 A. No. We do not.

25 Q. Has DPS ever received any complaints from

# Exhibit 15

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	No. 1:19-cv-272-LCB-LPA
V.	)	
	)	
DALE FOLWELL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
_____	)	

DEPOSITION  
OF  
MAXWELL KADEL

AUGUST 16, 2021

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DAYS OF DATE OF DEPOSITION PER PROTECTIVE ORDER

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NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
By: Alan McInnes (via teleconference)  
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1 A. Would you rephrase the question?

2 Q. Sure. Do you believe that the diagnosis of  
3 Gender Dysphoria is a significant medical condition from  
4 which you are suffering?

5 A. I believe in the past, I have felt a very strong  
6 sense of incongruence between my gender, or my sex assigned  
7 at birth and my gender identity, and that that has caused  
8 me a lot of distress.

9 By taking hormones and presenting in a way that  
10 I'm more comfortable with, that has alleviated a lot of  
11 that distress.

12 Q. Now, you previously testified -- but I just want  
13 to tie it in with what you've just said.

14 You testified before you're not a physician. Is  
15 that correct?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. You're not a scientist. Is that correct?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Do you have any specialized knowledge or training  
20 that would allow you to give an expert opinion on gender  
21 dysphoria?

22 A. No.

23 Q. You're a fact witness in this case. Is that  
24 correct?

25 A. According to my lawyers, that's my understanding,



# Exhibit 16

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

MAXWELL KADEL, et al., )

)

Plaintiffs, )

) No. 1:19-cv-272-LCB-LPA

V. )

)

DALE FOLWELL, et al., )

)

Defendants. )

)

DEPOSITION

OF

CONNOR THONEN-FLECK

AUGUST 6, 2021

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DAYS OF DATE OF DEPOSITION PER PROTECTIVE ORDER

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17 NORTH CAROLINA STATE HEALTH PLAN/NORTH CAROLINA

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6

7 Also Present:

8 Jason Fleck

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CONNOR THONEN-FLECK,

3 called as a witness and having been first duly sworn,  
4 was examined and testified as follows:

5  
6 EXAMINATION

7 BY MR. KNEPPER:

8 Q. Good morning. My name is John Knepper. And I'm  
9 an attorney who represents the State Health Plan.

10 We are here for the deposition of Connor  
11 Thonen-Fleck.

12 Mr. Fleck, do you understand why you're here  
13 today?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Why is that?

16 A. Concerning a lawsuit against the State Health  
17 Plan.

18 Q. And are you a plaintiff in that lawsuit?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. What as a plaintiff are you alleging?

21 A. That the State Health Plan has unfairly  
22 discriminated against me.

23 Q. How has the State Health Plan discriminated  
24 against you?

25 A. They have refused to pay for any of the care

1 related to transgender expenses.

2 Q. And do you have specific expenses that you, that  
3 have not been paid for you?

4 A. All medications, including my testosterone, and  
5 surgery I received.

6 Q. So you said all medications. Are there  
7 medications other than testosterone?

8 A. No.

9 Q. How about surgery, is it one surgery or are there  
10 multiple surgeries?

11 A. It was one.

12 Q. Okay. And how old are you, Mr. Thonen-Fleck?

13 A. I'm 19.

14 Q. And where are you -- are you in school now?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And where are you in school?

17 A. I'm in college at North Carolina State  
18 University.

19 Q. And what are you studying?

20 A. I'm doing a double major in Animal Science and  
21 Biochemistry.

22 Q. And what are your long-term career plans?

23 A. I hope to be a vet.

24 Q. Has that been a long-time interest of yours?

25 A. Yes.

1           A.    Not at this time.

2           Q.    Are there any other surgeries that you're aware  
3 of that might be something you intend to pursue in the  
4 future?

5           MR. WEAVER:  Objection to form.

6           THE WITNESS:  No.

7 BY MR. KNEPPER:

8           Q.    What benefits have you received from your hormone  
9 therapy?

10          MR. WEAVER:  Objection, form.

11          THE WITNESS:  Mentally I feel completely  
12 different than I did before starting.

13                We've read through multiple documents discussing  
14 the depression and suicidal ideation and anxiety I  
15 experienced prior to and at the very beginning of hormone  
16 therapy.

17                Since then, I'm no longer suicidal.  And I no  
18 longer experience depression.  I feel worlds better now that  
19 my body matches my brain.

20 BY MR. KNEPPER:

21          Q.    Do you continue to experience anxiety?

22          A.    In stressful situations, yes.

23          Q.    Did anyone tell you that hormonal therapy would  
24 reduce your anxiety?

25          A.    No.

EXAMINATION

1  
2 BY MR. WEAVER:

3 Q. So, Connor, my understanding is that since you've  
4 been on testosterone, Dr. Walsh has regularly checked your  
5 blood. Is that correct?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Do you know why Dr. Walsh does that?

8 A. She was monitoring for any changes in my  
9 testosterone levels, making sure they stayed within normal  
10 limits for a biological male, while also checking the other  
11 values.

12 Q. Okay. Has she expressed any concerns about any  
13 of your blood work since you've been on testosterone?

14 A. No. From my understanding, it's all been within  
15 normal limits.

16 Q. And overall, how would you compare your mood  
17 today or the last several weeks compared to a year ago, two  
18 years ago, three years ago?

19 A. Worlds better. I think my quality of life during  
20 2018, when my gender dysphoria was at its worse, was far  
21 worse than it is now.

22 Now I'm happy. I'm living on my own comfortably,  
23 at ease with myself.

24 Q. Do you have any suicidal thoughts anymore?

25 A. No.



# Exhibit 17

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-0027

MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,  
Plaintiffs,

vs.

DALE FOLWELL, in his official  
capacity as State Treasurer of  
North Carolina, et al.,  
Defendants.

\* CONFIDENTIAL ATTORNEYS' EYES ONLY \*

DEPOSITION OF JASON FLECK

(Taken by Defendants)

Raleigh, North Carolina

Friday, August 13, 2021

Reported by Andrea L. Kingsley, RPR

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A P P E A R A N C E S (Cont'd.)

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ALSO PRESENT: Joel Heibach, Esquire, NCSHP

1 DEPOSITION OF JASON FLECK, a  
2 witness called on behalf of the Defendants  
3 pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil  
4 Procedure, before Andrea L. Kingsley, Notary  
5 Public, in and for the State of North  
6 Carolina, at Williams Mullens, 301  
7 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1700, Raleigh,  
8 North Carolina, on Friday, August 13, 2021,  
9 commencing at 9:10 a.m.

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1 ceased to be suicidal in January of 2018?

2 A. My observation was he became a totally  
3 different person.

4 Q. How so?

5 A. His mood brightened. He started  
6 interacting with friends, being social, more  
7 social. He started thriving.

8 Q. What do you mean he started driving?

9 A. Thriving.

10 Q. Thriving.

11 Was that an instant change? I'm trying  
12 to understand --

13 A. As the treatment progressed. I would  
14 say over a series of a few months, there was a  
15 drastic change in his personality.

16 Q. So by the end of his 9th grade year, you  
17 weren't concerned about Connor's committing suicide?

18 A. No.

19 Q. But the beginning of the year, you were?

20 A. Before the treatment, we were very  
21 concerned.

22 Q. Do you remember discussing the  
23 connection between gender dysphoria and suicide with  
24 any of Connor's physicians?

25 A. Not specifically.

# Exhibit 18

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	No. 1:19-cv-272-LCB-LPA
V.	)	
	)	
DALE FOLWELL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
_____	)	

DEPOSITION  
OF  
JULIA MCKEOWN

AUGUST 5, 2021

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1 A. You want me to read the whole section?

2 Q. You don't need to read it out loud.

3 I just want to give you an opportunity to read  
4 it, just the bottom of that second page, and it continues  
5 onto the top.

6 (Brief pause in the proceeding)

7 THE WITNESS: Okay.

8 BY MR. KNEPPER:

9 Q. Are you ready?

10 A. Sure.

11 Q. Do you believe that you suffer from a marked or  
12 in the past have suffered from a marked incongruence  
13 between your experienced or expressed gender and your  
14 assigned gender?

15 A. I do believe so.

16 Q. Do you believe that was associated with  
17 clinically significant distress or impairment in social,  
18 occupational, or other important areas of functioning?

19 A. I do believe so with that, yes.

20 Q. Okay. What are, where does that clinically  
21 significant distress or impairment manifest itself in your  
22 life?

23 A. It's manifested in different ways. I think the  
24 biggest one would be the constant thinking about that  
25 inhibits like other activities cognitively because this is

1 always an incongruence you're having to apply.

2 So things like portraying myself as, when I was  
3 working and presenting as a male required a lot of  
4 cognitive load that wouldn't have otherwise been there.

5 Q. Do you think it -- did that impairment manifest  
6 in depression?

7 A. I've never been diagnosed with depression.

8 Q. In anxiety?

9 A. I've never been diagnosed with anxiety.

10 Q. Do you think it manifested itself in depression?  
11 You said you've never been diagnosed.

12 A. Again, I'm not a clinical psychologist, so I'm  
13 not going to self-diagnose myself.

14 Q. Okay. So earlier we looked at a couple of  
15 assessments by Dr. Barnhill and Dr. Yu that concluded you  
16 were not depressed.

17 You would attribute accuracy to those diagnoses?

18 A. My understanding is those are just the screener  
19 questions that would lead to more tests.

20 Q. But they said that you were not depressed.

21 Do you think that they were, they should have  
22 inquired more closely?

23 A. Again, I'm not a clinical psychologist. I'm not  
24 a medical doctor either.

25 Q. So yes or no or I don't know?

# Exhibit 19



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1 calm and happy?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. What can you tell me about those times?

4 MR. GONZALEZ-PAGAN: Objection, form.

5 THE WITNESS: I've always been a pretty anxious  
6 person. So I wasn't always calm and happy.

7 BY MR. KNEPPER:

8 Q. You said you've always been a pretty anxious  
9 person. Does that mean that for as long as you can  
10 remember, you've been anxious about something?

11 I'm trying to understand how you would describe  
12 it. Is it that you've always had a little anxiety or  
13 you've always felt anxious about things as long as you can  
14 remember?

15 I'm trying to get some sense of time.

16 MR. GONZALEZ-PAGAN: Objection, form.

17 THE WITNESS: I've always felt -- for as long as  
18 I can remember, I've always felt dysphoria which causes  
19 anxiety.

20 BY MR. KNEPPER:

21 Q. So you tie your anxiety to your gender dysphoria?

22 A. Some of it, yes.

23 Q. Do you think -- do you continue to be anxious now  
24 that your gender dysphoria is being treated?

25 A. Yes.



1 Q. Do you think the treatment of gender dysphoria  
2 has reduced your anxiety?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. When you told your mom you were a boy, did you  
5 tell her about your feelings of anxiety?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Had you told your parents before about your  
8 anxiety?

9 A. Well, I mean I was 11. I didn't know what  
10 anxiety was. But I definitely expressed the feeling of  
11 being anxious.

12 Q. So it was more of a sense than using the term  
13 anxiety?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. Is January 2017 about the time that you started  
16 to meet with [REDACTED]?

17 A. I don't remember.

18 Q. Okay. Do you remember -- your next visit is in  
19 March, involves a sore throat.

20 Do you remember going to a doctor for a sore  
21 throat in March of your 6th grade year?

22 A. What page is that?

23 Q. Sorry -- Page 7145.

24 A. Can you repeat the question?

25 Q. The next visit in the records is a visit for a

# Exhibit 20

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Plaintiffs,	)	
	)	No. 1:19-cv-272-LCB-LPA
V.	)	
	)	
DALE FOLWELL, et al.,	)	
	)	
Defendants.	)	
_____	)	

DEPOSITION  
OF  
MICHAEL D. BUNTING

AUGUST 9, 2021

THIS TRANSCRIPT IS NOT COMPLETE  
PORTIONS OF THIS TRANSCRIPT AND/OR EXHIBITS  
MAY BE DESIGNATED CONFIDENTIAL/ATTORNEYS EYES ONLY  
AFTER REVIEW OF TRANSCRIPT BY ATTORNEYS WITHIN 30  
DAYS OF DATE OF DEPOSITION PER PROTECTIVE ORDER

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20  
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22 NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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25

1 MS. EVANS: Object to form.

2 THE WITNESS: Because C B. had struggled with  
3 anxiety. And I don't know that he had been diagnosed at  
4 this point, but, but with depressive behavior, and this  
5 openness about his gender was very freeing.

6 This appeared to be, the knowledge of what his  
7 true gender was appeared to be the, a burden, if you will,  
8 that he alone had carried for many years. And he was only  
9 11.

10 BY MR. KNEPPER:

11 Q. And you had noticed anxiety and depressive  
12 behavior before he had told you that he was a boy?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And had you been seeking medical care for it at  
15 that time?

16 A. I don't recall the timeline for any treatment,  
17 whether there was any prior to.

18 Q. But you think, you believe he had symptoms of  
19 anxiety that caused you concern as his father?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. What, what kinds of behaviors indicated the  
22 anxiety at age 11?

23 A. As I recall, the behavior that was difficult for  
24 me to understand was low grade anger, short temper over  
25 what I would characterize as innocuous things, a general,

1 A. I see that, yes.

2 MS. EVANS: Object to form.

3 BY MR. KNEPPER:

4 Q. And there's also another insurance coverage  
5 there, identified as BLUECRO2.

6 This is 2019, was [C.B.] covered by two different  
7 insurance plans at that time?

8 A. I believe so, yes.

9 Q. What, what, what was the nature of [C.B.]'s  
10 insurance coverage in 2019?

11 A. Can you be more specific?

12 Q. Were you covered by two insurance plans in 2019?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Was your wife covered by two insurance plans in  
15 2019?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Was your other child covered by two insurance  
18 plans in 2019?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Did [C.B.] have a separate policy through Blue  
21 Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina in 2019?

22 A. He had supplemental insurance, additional  
23 insurance. I don't know that it was through Blue Cross  
24 Blue Shield.

25 Q. Do you remember signing [C.B.] up for that

1 insurance?

2 A. No. I don't specifically.

3 Q. Was that something your wife did?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Why did your wife sign up [REDACTED] for supplemental  
6 insurance?

7 MS. EVANS: Object to form.

8 THE WITNESS: To get coverage for medically  
9 necessary treatment.

10 BY MR. KNEPPER:

11 Q. Is that treatment for [REDACTED]'s gender dysphoria?

12 A. Gender dysphoria.

13 Q. So did your wife explain to you that -- you  
14 mentioned earlier that the cost of the puberty blockers was  
15 around 29,000 dollars. Is that correct?

16 MS. EVANS: Object to form.

17 BY MR. KNEPPER:

18 Q. Is my memory correct?

19 MS. EVANS: Object to form.

20 THE WITNESS: That is what I recall, yes.

21 BY MR. KNEPPER:

22 Q. And you discussed how you and your wife didn't  
23 feel that you had the additional disposable income to be  
24 able to pay for a 28,000 or 29,000 dollar medical bill in  
25 the spring of 2019.



1     **C.B.** 's application and approval to buy a Marketplace  
2     plan?

3             A.    Yes.

4             Q.    And your understanding is that plan did not, or  
5     did cover gender dysphoria treatment for **C.B.** . Is that  
6     correct?

7             A.    It covered very specific medication.

8             Q.    Okay.

9             A.    Again, this goes back to it did not cover the  
10    implant, but it would cover the injections.

11            Q.    So this plan would not cover the implant either?

12            A.    That's my understanding, that it did not cover  
13    the implant.

14            Q.    But it does cover the Lupron injection that  
15    **C.B.** received?

16            A.    Correct.

17            Q.    Is **C.B.** still receiving the Lupron injection?

18            A.    I don't know when he received the last one. I  
19    think, I believe he has had his last one. I don't believe  
20    he will get another one.

21            Q.    But **C.B.** is still receiving testosterone  
22    therapy. Is that correct?

23            A.    Correct.

24            Q.    And to the best of your knowledge, he'll receive  
25    that for the rest of his life?



1 A. To the best of my knowledge, yes.

2 Q. Have you discussed surgery with [REDACTED] for the  
3 treatment of his gender dysphoria?

4 A. I don't believe he and I have discussed that, no.

5 Q. Have you discussed surgery for [REDACTED] with  
6 someone else?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Who?

9 A. His mother.

10 Q. Okay. What was that discussion?

11 A. The only discussion I can recall about that was  
12 about the, his chest. And [REDACTED] had expressed to her  
13 concern that his chest wasn't as flat as he would like it  
14 to be, as he believed it should be.

15 Q. Do you have a view about whether [REDACTED] needs to  
16 have surgery for that purpose?

17 MS. EVANS: Object to form.

18 THE WITNESS: My view is that I will likely  
19 support [REDACTED] in every way.

20 BY MR. KNEPPER:

21 Q. Would that extend to surgery on [REDACTED]'s face to  
22 make it appear more masculine?

23 A. I will participate in a conversation about that.  
24 I will be open-minded about that if that were to ever come  
25 up.

# Exhibit 21



A P P E A R A N C E S

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1 therapist. I provide support for life and mental  
2 health concerns and helping people process them.

3 Q. Are you a licensed counselor in North  
4 Carolina?

5 A. I am.

6 Q. What is the licensure regime you are  
7 licensed as?

8 A. I'm licensed clinical mental health  
9 counselor.

10 Q. And how long have you been a licensed  
11 clinical mental health counselor?

12 A. I have been licensed in some form since  
13 2015.

14 Q. You said "licensed in some form"?

15 A. There is provisional licensure that is  
16 required to get the full licensure.

17 Q. How long were you provisionally licensed?

18 A. About two and a half years. I was fully  
19 licensed in 2018, May.

20 Q. Are you covered by the State Health Plan  
21 at this time?

22 A. I'm not.

23 Q. When were you covered by the State Health  
24 Plan?

25 A. I was covered by the State Health Plan

1 from August 2016 through July 2018.

2 Q. Where were you working at the time?

3 A. I was working at the Counseling Center at  
4 North Carolina State University.

5 Q. What did you do there?

6 A. I was a post master's fellow, which is  
7 doing therapy but specifically also being trained  
8 at the same time.

9 Q. And you said you were covered until  
10 July 2018; did you leave North Carolina State at  
11 that time?

12 A. I did.

13 Q. And where did you go?

14 A. I moved to Syracuse, New York.

15 Q. And what did you do in Syracuse?

16 A. I was in a doctoral program at Syracuse  
17 University.

18 Q. What was the program;

19 A. Counselor of education, Ph.D.

20 Q. And how long were you a part of that  
21 program?

22 A. Two full semesters.

23 Q. So when did you -- so you were in  
24 Syracuse then from July or was it August of 2018?

25 A. Let me remember. I think it was early

1 Q. How about with other medical providers?

2 A. No, I don't believe so.

3 Q. When did you decide that you wanted to  
4 pursue having top surgery?

5 MS. WYNN: Objection.

6 A. I don't think I specifically decided that  
7 I wanted to pursue top surgery. Can you rephrase  
8 the question.

9 Q. When did you first begin investigating  
10 top surgery as a medical treatment for you?

11 MS. WYNN: Objection.

12 A. I experienced a lot of dysphoria around  
13 my chest and knew that was a potential medical  
14 option and began the process of consulting with  
15 medical professionals about whether or not that  
16 was recommended treatment.

17 Q. Who did you consult with?

18 A. Well, Dr. [REDACTED]. Dr. [REDACTED].

19 Q. Anyone else?

20 A. That's who comes to mind.

21 Q. At the time you began hormone replacement  
22 therapy with [REDACTED], was that covered  
23 by the State Health Plan?

24 A. It was.

25 Q. Did you ever have your testosterone

1 part of the procedure with the surgery as  
2 scheduled on March 1, 2018?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. If you hadn't signed this document, the  
5 surgeon wouldn't have done the surgery?

6 A. Correct.

7 MS. WYNN: When you reach a natural  
8 stopping point, maybe we can take a five-minute  
9 break?

10 MR. KNEPPER: We can take a five-minute  
11 break now.

12 (Recess)

13 (Exhibit No. 7, Financial History Document,  
14 so marked)

15 BY MR. KNEPPER:

16 Q. This is Exhibit 7. We had previously  
17 asked you about the cost of the surgery with  
18 Dr. Emerson; you said it was about 7,000. Does  
19 this refresh your memory?

20 A. Yes, it does.

21 Q. What was the total amount of surgery?

22 A. 7,100.

23 Q. Do you remember paying more than 7,100?

24 A. No, I don't remember doing that.

25 Q. This Exhibit 7 likely reflects the



1 entirety of the cost of Dr. [REDACTED]'s services?

2 A. For this specific surgery on this  
3 specific day.

4 Q. Do you remember other costs for  
5 Dr. [REDACTED]?

6 A. There might have been a consultation fee;  
7 I don't recall specifically. I can only say yes  
8 for this specific service.

9 Q. Now, I want to -- you said that you  
10 reached out to Dr. [REDACTED]'s office upon learning  
11 of the change in the State Health Plan; is that  
12 correct?

13 A. That's correct.

14 Q. Did Dr. [REDACTED]'s ever communicate with  
15 the State Health Plan, to the best of your  
16 knowledge?

17 A. I'm uncertain.

18 Q. Did you ever determine whether the prior  
19 preauthorization for this surgery would have been  
20 honored by the State Health Plan?

21 A. I'm not certain. I don't know what they  
22 did.

23 Q. Did anyone from the State Health Plan  
24 ever tell you that you needed to change the  
25 payment method for this surgery?

1 A. What do you mean by that?

2 Q. I'm trying to understand. You reached  
3 out to Dr. [REDACTED]'s office and said there has  
4 been a change in my insurance?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You suggested to Dr. [REDACTED] you needed  
7 to go from an insurance paid to self-paid service;  
8 is that correct?

9 A. They said that was my option.

10 Q. Did they ever verify that your insurance  
11 no longer covered the surgery?

12 A. I'm not sure. I have no idea.

13 Q. Were you ever denied coverage of this  
14 surgery by the State Health Plan?

15 A. When I spoke to somebody on the phone,  
16 they told me it would no longer be covered.

17 Q. Did you explain to that person you  
18 already had it set up?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Did you ever receive -- did you ever file  
21 it with insurance for denial?

22 A. Post?

23 Q. Either pre- or post-surgery?

24 A. Besides the August one?

25 Q. Did anyone ever file that claim with

1 Q. The letter says you report "Nonconforming  
2 gender behaviors throughout childhood and early  
3 adolescence;" can you describe those, please?

4 A. Yes. Traditionally, boyish things, I  
5 liked sports, you know, when I was really young,  
6 dinosaurs and cars and things like that, and I  
7 often wanted to be included in things more like  
8 than what was expected of me. I really wanted to  
9 be in Boy Scouts, for example.

10 Q. When did you first question the gender  
11 you were assigned at birth?

12 A. Consciously, I would say by late 2015 I  
13 really started thinking about it.

14 Q. Prior to that time, had you expressed  
15 dissatisfaction with your gender?

16 A. I knew that I felt some discomforts. I  
17 didn't have the language for it before then.

18 Q. What were the discomforts?

19 A. Being perceived as a woman. At the time,  
20 I was uncomfortable with -- I was uncomfortable  
21 with that. I didn't like the clothing I was  
22 expected to wear. I didn't like the things I was  
23 expected to be. I felt discomforts in my body.

24 (Exhibit No. 16, Letter by ██████████, so  
25 marked)

# Exhibit 22



Deposition of:  
**Dana Caraway**  
*September 17, 2021*

In the Matter of:  
**Kadel, et al vs. Folwell**

Veritext Legal Solutions  
800-734-5292 | [calendar-dmv@veritext.com](mailto:calendar-dmv@veritext.com) |

1       IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
2       FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
3       Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-00272

4       MAXWELL KADEL, et al.,  
5                               Plaintiffs,

6               vs.

7       DALE FOLWELL, in his official  
8       capacity as State Treasurer of  
9       North Carolina, et al.,  
10                              Defendants.

11  
12  
13                              \* CONFIDENTIAL ATTORNEY EYES ONLY \*

14  
15                              VIRTUAL ZOOM VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION OF  
16    SERGEANT DANA CARAWAY

17    (Taken by Defendants)

18    Morganton, North Carolina  
19    Friday, September 17, 2021

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23       Reported by Andrea L. Kingsley, RPR  
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A P P E A R A N C E S (Cont'd.)  
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VIDEOGRAPHER: Michael Kirby



1 VIRTUAL ZOOM VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION  
2 OF SERGEANT DANA CARAWAY, a witness called on  
3 behalf of the Defendants pursuant to the  
4 Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, before  
5 Andrea L. Kingsley, Notary Public, in and for  
6 the State of North Carolina, at Morganton,  
7 North Carolina, on Friday, September 17, 2021,  
8 commencing at 9:49 a.m.

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1 seeing physical therapists three days per week.

2 Q. Does the State Health Plan cover the  
3 cost of the physical therapy?

4 A. Yes. Except out-of-pockets and  
5 deductibles.

6 Q. Did you submit any of your bills for the  
7 surgical treatment to the State Health Plan?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What happened?

10 A. They denied everything.

11 Q. Did you attempt to get pre-authorization  
12 for the surgical procedures?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And they denied that?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Do you have plans for any other  
17 treatments in the future other than continuing the  
18 drug therapy and continuing the physical therapy?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. What is that?

21 A. Voice feminization surgery, facial  
22 feminization surgery and the completion of laser  
23 hair removal and electrolysis hair removal.

24 Q. Have you had any of these procedures or  
25 are any of these procedures scheduled?

1 insurance against us, against me.

2 Q. Were you diagnosed by anyone with gender  
3 dysphoria prior to 2018?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Can you describe the symptoms of gender  
6 dysphoria for me please, as you experience them?

7 A. As I experience them? I will give you  
8 the best answer I can. My desire to be in a proper  
9 body fitting what I was supposed to have been born  
10 as. I believe that I was -- I know that I was born  
11 into the wrong body. I should have been born into  
12 a body more consistent with female parts and  
13 anatomy, and I've known about that since early  
14 childhood.

15 Q. You testified that you've known that you  
16 were born into the wrong body since early childhood.  
17 What do you remember about the first time that you  
18 knew that you were born into the wrong body?

19 A. I had a childhood friend when I was real  
20 young, and probably at that point somewhere in  
21 my -- I don't know, somewhere around four, five,  
22 six, I was already cross dressing and wearing her  
23 clothes and until I got caught and was punished  
24 multiple times for wearing clothes not consistent  
25 with what I was assigned at birth. As it went

1 along, my older age comes in, the years, my  
2 dreams -- my desperations deepened knowing that I  
3 was born into a male -- with male parts and not  
4 what I should have been born as.

5 Q. So you used the phrase should have been  
6 born as.

7 A. I did.

8 Q. Why do you say you should have been born  
9 into a female body?

10 A. Because I'm a female that was born with  
11 male parts.

12 Q. Do you believe that you have two X  
13 chromosomes?

14 A. I'm not sure.

15 Q. Do you believe it's possible you have  
16 two X chromosomes?

17 A. I'm not sure.

18 Q. You mentioned dreams. When did you  
19 first experience dreams related to gender dysphoria?

20 A. Early age. As far back as I can  
21 remember dreaming.

22 Q. What do you remember about the dreams?

23 A. That I was a female and born with the  
24 wrong parts and knowing I should have been born  
25 with a female's body parts and not punished for

1 that by society later on realizing what it was.

2 Q. Later on realizing what --

3 A. As I grew older, I become more aware of  
4 what was going on.

5 Q. I'm sorry, could you repeat that last  
6 phrase?

7 A. As I grew older, I become more aware of  
8 what was going on with myself.

9 Q. Do you remember when you became more  
10 aware?

11 A. Gradually. I'm sure it was a graduation  
12 over time. To say that I can hit on one specific  
13 date would be impossible.

14 Q. Did you ever seek information about your  
15 feelings of gender dysphoria before the age of 18?

16 A. To be honest, Mr. Knepper, it was prior  
17 to the internet age. I lived in Morganton, North  
18 Carolina, and there was nowhere to turn to to look  
19 for that kind of help without being ridiculed or  
20 sent to a home for mental issues even though I  
21 wasn't facing mental issues. If I could have found  
22 a place that would have supported me and accepted  
23 me, absolutely, I would have years prior.

24 Q. When did you first find information?  
25 Was it the internet age?

1 consolidation of your gender identity with your  
2 expressed gender?

3 MR. BROWN: Objection to the form.

4 A. Same question you asked.

5 Q. Sergeant Caraway, what is your gender  
6 identity?

7 A. I don't have a gender identity. I am a  
8 female.

9 Q. Have you always expressed the female  
10 gender in your presentation to others?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Did that failure to express the female  
13 gender in your presentation to others cause you  
14 discomfort?

15 A. It caused me distress, mental anguish,  
16 hurt, harm, dysphoria, sleeplessness, restlessness,  
17 weight issues, relationship problems, career  
18 problems. Everything was centered around with me  
19 having to hide the fact that I was female and born  
20 in the wrong body.

21 Q. Do you believe that treatment for your  
22 gender dysphoria will resolve your concerns about  
23 sleeplessness?

24 A. I'm sorry, the last one one more time.

25 Q. Do you believe the treatment for your