STATE OF NEW MEXICO ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OIL CONSERVATION COMMISSION

APPLICATION OF GOODNIGHT MIDSTREAM PERMIAN, LLC TO AMEND ORDER NO. R-7765, AS AMENDED TO EXCLUDE THE SAN ANDRES FORMATION FROM THE UNITIZED INTERVAL OF THE	
EUNICE MONUMENT SOUTH UNIT	CASE NO. 24278
LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO	CASE NU. 24278
APPLICATION OF GOODNIGHT	
MIDSTREAM PERMIAN, LLC TO AMEND	
ORDER NO. R-7767 TO EXCLUDE THE SAN	
ANDRES FORMATION FROM THE EUNICE	
MONUMENT OIL POOL WITHIN THE	
EUNICE MONUMENT SOUT UNIT AREA,	
LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO	CASE NO. 24277
APPLICATION OF GOODNIGHT PERMIAN	
MIDSTREAM, LLC FOR APPROVAL OF A	
SALTWATER DISPOSAL WELL, LEA COUNTY,	
NEW MEXICO AND, AS A PARTY ADVERSELY	
AFFECTED BY ORDER R-22869-A, FOR A	
HEARING DE NOVO BEFORE THE FULL	
COMMISSION, PURSUANT TO NMSA 1978,	
SECTION 70-2-13.	CASE NO. 24123
APPLICATION OF GOODNIGHT MIDSTREAM	
PERMIAN, LLC TO AMEND ORDER	
NO. R-22026/SWD-2403 TO INCREASE THE	
APPROVED INJECTION RATE IN ITS ANDRE	
DAWSON SWD #1, LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO	CASE NO. 23775
APPLICATIONS OF GOODNIGHT MIDSTREAM	
PERMIAN, LLC FOR APPROVAL OF A	
SALTWATER DISPOSAL WELL, LEA COUNTY,	
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APPLICATION OF EMPIRE NEW MEXICO TO	
REVOKE THE INJECTION AUTHORITY	
GRANTED UNDER ORDER NO. R22026 FOR	
THE ANDRE DAWSON SWD #001, LEA COUNTY,	
NEW MEXICO	CASE NOS. 24018-24027

OIL CONSERVATION DIVISION'S PRE-HEARING STATEMENT

The New Mexico Oil Conservation Division ("OCD") submits this Pre-Hearing Statement pursuant to 19.15.4.13(B) NMAC.

I. IDENTIFICATION OF PARTY AND COUNSEL

OCD has intervened in this matter and is represented by undersigned counsel.

II. OCD'S POSITION ON PARTY APPLICATIONS

Because OCD's sought relief does not require either Goodnight or Empire to prevail in any sense, OCD does not have a position on the merits of the applications filed by either operator. OCD avers that, ultimately, it does not matter to OCD which party prevails, provided the OCC grant OCD authority to proceed with the direction to implement a monitoring project to assess and characterize the hydrologic relationship of the Capitan Reef and the San Andres formation.

III. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

The pending hearing arises from several matters originating at the Division level. Empire filed Applications seeking to revoke Goodnight's Injection authority for violating the permit condition, specifically for exceeding injection pressures. Goodnight filed its own Applications against Empire, seeking to amend unitization OCD Order Nos. R-7765 and 7767 to remove the San Andres from the underlying unit in OCC Case Nos. 24277 and 24278, which were subsequently stayed by the Commission, leaving only Goodnight's SWD application at issue.

Despite the straightforward claims for relief found in the cases referenced above and which form the caption of this case, OCD's position, in some ways, comes in out of left field in that OCD's sought relief is, at its core, a monitoring program to determine whether injection in the EMSU has or is impacting the Capitan Reef. OCD's position is a third-rail, one that does not directly address the relief sought by Goodnight and Empire; rather, OCD's sought relief looks beneath the issues of injection pressure, the existence of a ROZ, and analysis of aged orders.

Under EPA regulations and agreement, the OCD possesses primacy to regulate underground injection through OCD's Underground Injection Control ("UIC") Program, which enforces the federal Safe Drinking Water Act ("SDWA") within New Mexico. Under the Primacy Agreement with the EPA, OCD enforces EPA standards for drinking water quality and to oversee the implementation of those standards across state and local government, including supplies of drinking water such as aquifers. To do so, the UIC provides a permitting system for injection in the oil and gas arena to ensure injected water does not ultimately impact drinking water supplies. The key issue faced by OCD in enforcing the SDWA is that OCD does not have the financial resources nor the labor pool to effectively monitor all aspects of the oil field for compliance, which is in part why a permitting process is necessary – however, OCD's efforts are only as good as the information and volume of information it receives from operators. In some cases, though, OCD needs more than what is required from Operators via the UIC Permitting Program. Such is the case before the Commission. OCD also notes that failure to comply with the EPA's requirements would put the OCD's primacy standing at risk such that the EPA would overtake the entire UIC program and remove it from local consideration, likely to the detriment of oil and gas operators in New Mexico.

Thus, OCD faces the classic regulatory information problem: OCD doesn't know what it doesn't know about potential impacts to the Capitan Reef *via* the Hobbs Channel. Therefore, the OCD cannot comply with the SDWA and EPA regs until and unless it obtains a current understanding of the hydrologic relationship by the establishment of a monitoring network system in this area to obtain field measurements, subsurface information, and analytical sampling to either support or refute that injection in the San Andres formation has any impact on the Reef. OCD foresees an initial effort to obtain readily assessable data through existing wells followed by the installation of secondary wells at critical locations. In addition to the well system, OCD anticipates the development of subsurface information through the use of geophysical surveys, remote sensing tools such as InSAR, and the use of geochemistry (including isotope samples) with the intent to provide a timely assessment and then identify any need for long-term monitoring. OCD provides this plan in Exhibit 14.

In support of its plan, OCD addresses the history of development of the San Andres and the EMSU, which abuts the Hobbs Channel, a bathymetric low in the Permian Basin, connected to the Delaware and Midland Basins. *See* OCD Exhibits 1-5. The Capitan Reef is described as a freshwater aquifer that is the principal source of fresh water for the communities surrounding the Reef. *See* OCD Exhibits 3-4, 5-5D. It is OCD's position that some kind of underground water event is occurring that ties together the EMSU, the Hobbs Channel, and the Capitan Reef, but what precisely that event has remained unclear. OCD's basis for this claim centers on whether the waterflood in the EMSU is communicating, in one way or another, with the Hobbs Channel and thus the Capitan Reef. *Id. See also* OCD Exhibits 8-8A, 10, 13. That OCD lacks clarity on the

hydrogeologic state of affairs in and around the Reef and the EMSU is outlined in OCD Exhibits 17 through 19. Exhibit 17 provides analysis by two experienced professionals who discuss the aquifer exemption process as contemplated by the EPA, providing their conclusion that the Capitan Reef should be exempted based on the Hiss paper and the data found within it. OCD contends that such a conclusion reveals the need for additional data, through OCD's proposed monitoring project, that is updated and likely of better quality than the Hiss paper.

OCD maintains it has legal authority to not only ask this question, but also to seek proper regulatory resolution of the question. §70-2-12(B) NMSA, particularly subsections (2), (4), (7), (11), (14), and (15). But the New Mexico Statutes are not the only relevant laws in play, as noted at the outset of this Prehearing Statement. The Federal UIC Program, developed under the EPA, seeks to protect existing and potential sources of underground drinking water from contamination, which in this case centers on the underground injection of produced water, water that does not have much use outside injection and pressurization operations. *See* OCD 4-5D. Through the Federal to New Mexico UIC Programs, the Capitan Reef was identified as a source of underground fresh drinking water that merited protection.

OCD Exhibit 5, the "Hiss Paper," formed a key pillar supporting the EPA and OCD's UIC efforts. The Hiss Paper provides both a substantive discussion on the issue of communication between the Hobbs Channel and the Capitan Reef and visual guides to show proximity of each to one another. Just as importantly, the Hiss Paper provides data on chloride levels used to delineate the Hobbs Channel to assist in defining the hydrologic relationship between the Capitan Reef and the San Andres formation that forms the basis of the dispute between Goodnight and Empire.

OCD acknowledges that the Hiss Paper is not recent (published in 1975), but it remains the best large-scale research available to the OCD on the topic of the relationship between the Reef and injection into the Permian and remains a key part of both OCD's and the EPA's UIC programs. When combined with OCD's most recent data on primary, secondary, and tertiary recovery in the EMSU, with the latter two of particular importance, OCD seeks to clarify the hydrologic realities underlying the EMSU down and into the Capitan Reef to determine whether the Capitan Reef is now contaminated. To date, OCD has received no direct opposition to the Hiss analysis or OCD's analysis, leaving it undisputed as a matter of fact at the time of the filing of this Prehearing Statement; OCD suspects that will not remain the case once rebuttal testimony is filed.

To provide a deeper understanding of OCD's permitting program, Exhibit 7 provides for an abbreviated history of underground injection permits into the San Andres, which reflect a history of production first, then usage of the San Andres as a disposal zone, in some cases as wholesale waterfloods. OCD notes that the San Andres appears, overall, to be a preferred zone for disposal which is why Goodnight and Empire are currently at loggerheads. The Rassenfoss paper (OCD Exhibit 8) reveals that, given the billions of gallons of produced water injected by oil and gas operators into the Permian Basin (which includes the San Andres formation in dispute in the above-captioned matters), water production from drilling and extraction activities have driven produced water volumes (as opposed to oil volumes) up to 80 to 90% of what is produced – such volumes of water indicate again that "something is wrong" in the San Andres and the EMSU. And, again, what that "something" is remains OCD's primary concern. As proof of this concern, OCD Order No. R-22869-A expressed reservations about using the EMSU San Andres as a

disposal interval because doing so could result in injected water encroachment. *See* OCD Exhibit 9.

OCD provides further evidence of its concern through Exhibit 10, a 2020 update to the EPA from OCD UIC Manager Goetze, which reiterates that industry is interested in using the San Andres as a disposal zone while providing the EPA evidence that Capitan Reef volumes decreased into the 1970's but then abruptly began increasing, coinciding with increased injection in the region around the Reef as 2016. Such a shift in the Capitan Reef was indicative, absent proof of recharge of the Reef, that a connection between injection, the Hobbs Channel, and the Capitan Reef was responsible for the increase. The logical implication is that injected water *may be* the contributing factor to the Reef's increased volume with the injected water posing a real risk of Reef contamination in violation of the SDWA.

A secondary, but important, concern of OCD is the potential need to label the Capitan Reef as an exempt aquifer – "exempt aquifer" means that the EPA and OCD determined that the Capitan Reef is no longer a source of underground drinking water (in this case potentially due to contamination stemming from injection activities in the surrounding area) and thus may be used for oil extraction operations. While this may sound wonderful to industry, OCD suspects that exempting the Capitan Reef will have significant implications for the citizens of Southeastern New Mexico but cannot speculate as to precisely what those implications would look like. OCD further contends that *any* impact that results in exemption of an underground drinking water source in the Permian Basin is inherently a problem. Parts of the Capitan Reef have already been exempted in Texas in favor of oil and gas development but that finding was limited due to the integrity of the

Reef inside New Mexico's borders. *See* Exhibit 11E. OCD maintains that exemption does not serve New Mexico given the dearth of water sources in the Basin.

Others outside the oil and gas realm voiced concern about the status of the Capitan Reef. Dr. Lewis Land, former karst hydrogeologist of the Nation Cave and Karst Research Institute and liaison with the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, posited concern that indications that the Capitan Reef had become brackish (and therefor unsuited for drinking water purposes). See Exhibit 13. Dr. Land's concern was based on the data at hand (Hiss) being fifty years old and therefore outdated. OCD Exhibit 18, a slideshow created by Dr. Land, reiterates concerns presented in Exhibit 13 but provides further emphasis that the causal factor for the increase in water level in Lea County remains unclear - OCD would like to know the answer to that question, as well. Exhibit 19 provides yet another example about the lacunae in not just OCD's understanding of what's occurring, hydrologically speaking, in and around the EMSU and Reef, but also that of Texas, which has also noticed increased water level in Texas wells near the Reef. Further, the paper also notes that there may be hydrological connection between the Reef and the San Andres formation, going right to the heart of OCD's concerns. OCD contends that the current picture of hydrogeology in the Permian Basin, including the EMSU, is up for question thereby necessitating the imposition of the monitoring plan proposed by OCD.

To show the OCC what happens when an aquifer is deemed exempted, the OCD directs the OCC's attention to the state of California, which faced its own exempt aquifer issues despite the state's primacy under the EPA. California permitted use of underground drinking water aquifers in oil and gas development that ultimately led to the EPA imposing an onerous reporting and application program to exempt the impacted aquifers. OCD's UIC group imposed upon operators a permitting requirement of formation water sampling in and around the Hobbs Channel to assist in avoiding exemption through identification of appropriate injection intervals. Should the OCC elect to deny OCD's request for a monitoring program, there is every reason to expect that New Mexico would suffer under an EPA reporting process as well as a possible loss of the Capitan Reef as a source of drinking water, should Reef contamination be revealed.

In summation, OCD's case is quite simple: OCD, under its obligations under the EPA, must protect underground sources of drinking water that would be best accomplished by imposition of a monitoring program to determine whether injection into the EMSU, among other places, contaminated the Capitan Reef. As noted previously, to date neither Goodnight nor Empire have provided evidence indicating OCD's objective is specious, wasteful, misdirected, or flawed in any way, nor has either operator initiated a monitoring program on its own accord, based on information and belief. OCD also again notes that it expects that status to change upon filing of rebuttal testimony and will respond accordingly.

IV. PROPOSED EVIDENCE

WITNESSES:

1. Phillip Goetze, Phillip Goetze, Engineering Bureau, UIC Permitting Group Manager.

Mr. Goetze has been employed by the Oil Conservation Division (OCD) for 11 years and is currently the manager of the UIC Group within the Engineering Bureau. He has extensive background in the administrative permitting for development and management of oil and gas resources under the New Mexico Oil and Gas Act. He is a technical reviewer of applications for Class II wells (including saltwater disposal wells and enhanced oil recovery (EOR) projects) under the New Mexico primacy agreement with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for its Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program of the Safe Drinking Water Act. During his tenure, Mr. Goetze has been a qualified hearing examiner for the OCD for cases ranging from compulsory pooling to protested applications for injection authority. Additional assignments related to his manager position include the development of practices and recommended guidance for UIC related subjects such as induced seismicity, exempted aquifers and Class II disposal impacts on producing intervals. He is responsible for preparing periodic reports for submission to the USEPA to demonstrate compliance with the SDWA and to respond to specific subject matters requests identified by the USEPA. In his capacity within the UIC Group, Mr. Goetze provides recommendations to management for modification of permitting and compliance practices which reflect new technology or processes that impact UIC functions. Mr. Goetze has also authored over 350 hearing orders in his capacity as an examiner.

Mr. Goetze has qualified as an expert witness for the OCD for cases before the Oil Conservation Commission involving UIC permit applications and in support of rulemaking (e.g. acid gas injection well applications, oil and gas casing requirements in the Roswell Artesian Basin, and reporting requirements for fracturing fluids). Mr. Goetze has also provided expert testimony before the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission in support of rulemaking (e.g. expanded authority for UIC Class I hazardous disposal wells).

Prior experience to employment with the OCD, Mr. Goetze has over thirty years of experience developing and implementing a variety of projects with environmental, hydrologic, or regulatory

applications. His prior government experiences include field mapping of mineral occurrences in wilderness areas for the U. S. Bureau of Mines as well as oil and gas leasing and mineral assessment for both the U. S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Land Management. His employment with the private sector included supervision of numerous investigations of contaminated sites, the implementation and management of remediation projects, oversight of groundwater drilling projects, and project manager for the resolution of environmental compliance issues at private, tribal, state and federal properties.

Mr. Goetze graduated from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology with a Bachelor of Science degree in geology and is currently a registered or licensed geologist in the states of Alaska, Arizona, and Texas. Mr. Goetze is also a Certified Professional Geologist, American Institute of Professional Geologist, and is Certified Hazardous Materials Manager through the Alliance of Hazardous Materials Professionals.

Mr. Goetze will provide expert testimony regarding the practices and operation of the UIC program within the OCD, including the historical aspects of current UIC operations as they relate to the primacy agreement and past approvals of injection authority for various projects. Mr. Goetze will also provide testimony regarding groundwater occurrences, hydrologic issues and the current OCD exempted aquifer program. Mr. Goetze also has direct experience with many of the original permit applications for the disposal wells involved in the cases as well as the original hearing between two principal parties in this matter. Additionally, Mr. Goetze has reviewed and will continue to review documentation from the Parties, including anticipated exhibits and discovery disclosures, to which he will apply his background, training, and experience. Therefore, Mr.

Goetze is qualified as an expert in hydrogeology, petroleum geology, and in all matters regarding the functions of the UIC program for the OCD.

2. Brandon Powell, Deputy Director

OCD Deputy Director Powell manages the OCD's Engineering Bureau which contains the UIC Group. He has served with OCD in various positions for more than 18 years, including engineering bureau chief, district supervisor, staff manager, inspection/enforcement supervisor, and environmental specialist. Mr. Powell's UIC experience has ranged from field implementation to policy oversight for the OCD. Mr. Powell in his various OCD capacities has testified in various OCD rule makings and other hearings as an OCD process expert. Prior to joining OCD, Mr. Powell was a facility manager and environmental technician for an environmental services company.

EXHIBITS:

- Exhibit 1: General Site Map Showing Area of Interest and Locations of Wells Including UIC Class II Disposal Wells
- b. Exhibit 2: Map Showing Locations of Goodnight's UIC Class II Disposal Wells and Empire East Monument South Unit Within the Hobbs Channel
- c. Exhibit 3: UIC Program: New Mexico Oil and Gas Act
- d. Exhibit 3A: Enumeration of Powers excerpt from the New Mexico Oil and Gas Act
- e. Exhibit 3B: Statutory Unit Act excerpt from the New Mexico Oil and Gas Act
- f. Exhibit 4: UIC Program: Appendix II from the New Mexico Primacy Demonstration

- g. Exhibit 5: Permian Guadalupian Ground Water References by W. L. Hiss
- h. Exhibit 5A: Movement of Ground Water in Permian Guadalupian Aquifer Systems, Southeastern New Mexico and Western Texas from the New Mexico Geological Society Guidebook, 31st Field Conference, Trans-Pecos Region, 1980
- Exhibit 5B: Stratigraphy and Ground-Water Hydrology of the Capitan Aquifer, Southeastern New Mexico and Western Texas by William L. Hiss, Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, 1975 [text only]
- j. Exhibit 5C: Figure 19 from W. L. Hiss Doctor of Philosophy Thesis
- k. Exhibit 5D: Figure 26 from W. L. Hiss Doctor of Philosophy Thesis
- Exhibit 6: Summary of Permian Production in the Area of Interest
 Exhibit 7: Summary of Disposal Operations into Permian Formations in the Area of Interest
- m. Exhibit 7A: Chronology of UIC Class II Disposal Permits and Disposal
 Operations
- n. Exhibit 7B: Excerpts of Testimony from Cases Involving Disposal Well
 Applications
- o. Exhibit 7C: Summary of Injection Volumes by UIC Class II Disposal Wells
- p. Exhibit 7D: Summary of Form C-108 Applications for the Area of Interest
 Exhibit 8: Current Issues Regarding Disposal in San Andres formation
- **q.** Exhibit 8A: *Permian Operators Squeezed by Growing Water Pressure*; Journal of Petroleum Technology, April 2019

- r. Exhibit 8B: Well completion forms from the Well File for E M E Well No. 8 (API No. 30-025-06017)
- s. Exhibit 8C: OCD E-mail communications regarding cement work for the N-11
 SWD Well No.1 dated July 13, 2020
- Exhibit 8D: OCD E-mail communications regarding cement work for the Andre Dawson SWD Well No.1 dated December 21, 2022
- u. Exhibit 9: Division Order No. R-22869-A
- v. Exhibit 10: Update of Underground Injection Control Class II Activities within the State of New Mexico for Possible Injection into Underground Sources of Drinking Water: The Capitan Reef Aquifer System, Oil Conservation Division correspondence to the United States Environmental Protection Agency dated May 28, 2020
- w. Exhibit 11: Safe Drinking Water Act Aquifer Exemption Program
- x. Exhibit 11A: Enhancing Coordination and Communication with States on Review and Approval of Aquifer Exemption Requests Under SWDA, United States Environmental Protection Agency Memorandum dated July 24, 2014
- y. Exhibit 11B: Review of Underground Injection Control Class II Activities within the State of New Mexico for Possible Injection into Underground Sources of Drinking Water, Oil Conservation Division correspondence to the United States Environmental Protection Agency dated October 24, 2016

- Exhibit 11C: Oil Conservation Division correspondence to the New Mexico State
 Engineer dated April 23, 1992
- aa. Exhibit 11D: Oil Conservation Division correspondence to the New Mexico State
 Engineer dated March 23, 1993
- **bb.** Exhibit 11E: Figure Showing Current Exempted Aquifer Designations for the Capitan Reef.
- cc. Exhibit 12: State of California Experience
- dd. Exhibit 12A: United States Environmental Protection Agency correspondence dated to the California Department of Conservation and California State Water Resources Control Board dated December 22, 2014
- ee. Exhibit 12B: California Department of Conservation and California State Water Resources Control Board correspondence to the United States Environmental Protection Agency dated February 6, 2015
- ff. Exhibit 12C: United States Environmental Protection Agency correspondence dated to the California Department of Conservation and California State Water Resources Control Board dated March 9, 2015
- gg. Exhibit 12D: California Department of Conservation and California State Water Resources Control Board correspondence to the United States Environmental Protection Agency dated March 3, 2017

- hh. Exhibit 13: Capitan Reef Excerpt from Overview of Fresh and Brackish Water Quality in New Mexico; New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources Open File Report 583; 2016
- ii. Exhibit 14: Proposed Investigation and Monitoring Plan Regarding the Capitan Reef Aquifer and Disposal in the San Andres Formation in the Area of Interest
- jj. Exhibit 15: Resume of Brandon Powell
- kk. Exhibit 16: Resume of Phillip Goetze
- II. Exhibit 17: Wilson, L. and Holland, M., 1984; Aquifer Classification for the UIC Program: Prototype Studies in New Mexico; Ground Water Volume 22, Number 6; November-December 184; pages 706-716
- mm. Exhibit 18: Land, Lewis, 2016; Using Brackish Water from Karstic
 Aquifers to Augment Freshwater Resources in the Semi-arid Southwest,
 Geological Society of America Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado, January
 2016
- nn. Exhibit 19: Jones, I., 2016; Conceptual Model: Capitan Reef Complex Aquifer of Texas; Texas Water Development Board; August 3, 2016; 184 p.
- **oo.** Any and all documents or exhibits disclosed in any capacity by any Party, including any such documents or exhibits relied-upon by the Parties in deposition or at any merits hearing in this matter.

V. ISSUES COMMON TO ALL APPLICATIONS/ISSUES UNIQUE TO ANY SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS

Insofar as OCD's case as presented above, OCD is not concerned about a single well or application. Rather, OCD is focused on the EMSU and Permian Basin in the context of overall injected water volumes and the impact of those volumes, which would envelop all wells at issue in the above-captioned matters and include the wells at issue in the stayed Goodnight matters. Therefore, OCD leaves to Goodnight and Empire a discussion of discrete issues per well and per application.

VI. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Due to the timing of filings in this case per the Third Amended Prehearing Order, as well as the nature of Discovery, OCD reserves the right to supplement this pleading. OCD has, to date, received little to no pushback on its case, a situation it expects to change upon the filing of rebuttal testimony by both Goodnight and Empire due contemporaneously with the filing of Prehearing Statements on February 10, 2025. OCD anticipates needing to amend this Prehearing Statement based on those factual and legal grounds. OCD counsel put the OCC, as well as counsel for all Parties in this case, on notice of this issue at the February 3, 2025 hearing on OCD's Motion to Compel and has retained this reservation of right to amend throughout the case in various pleadings. Therefore, OCD hereby reserves the right to supplement this pleading to address any opposition, which to date has been of extremely limited volume, posited by any other Party to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on February 10, 2024, this pleading was served by electronic mail on:

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