or clear and convincing so I just want you to keep that in mind. And I want to thank you, thank you, thank you for your time and attention here today. Um, I'm sure jury service isn't where everybody wants to be today with jobs and families and other things going on with your lives, so I want to make sure I take the opportunity to thank you, because this case, as you can see, is, is an older case it's been from June 26 of 2009. And, one behalf of myself and my Co-Counsel, John Bratt, and my client, and our paralegal Samantha, I want to just thank you and I look forward to spending the next couple of days with you.

MR. GILLCRIST: May it please the Court?

THE COURT: Certainly.

MR. GILLCRIST: Your Honor, could we --

THE COURT: Absolutely.

MR. GILLCRIST: -- move this?

THE COURT: Mm-hmm.

MR. GILLCRIST: (Unclear - two words) the screen

(unclear - two words). (Unclear - four words), Your Honor?

THE COURT: Sure.

MR. GILLCRIST: I don't want to trip over (unclear - five words)

(Unclear - lots of interference.)

MR. GILLCRIST: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, thank you. Um, I represent Kirsten Sapp along with, uh, Anne

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Howard, and, uh, we're going to be involved in this case, you're gonna' to hear from us over the next two or three days. Um, and like Counsel, um, for the Plaintiff in this case, I'd like to thank you for your participation in the case. It is an important case. Um, it's an important case to, uh, Ms. Exline-Hassler, it's an important case to Kirsten Sapp, uh, and you can only look at the medical bills alone that they are saying that Ms. Sapp caused this nice lady, uh, you know that it is a very important and significant case if you find against my client.

So, during the course of this trial you'll hear witnesses, you'll hear, see documents, you'll see photographs, um, you will hear from expert witnesses including doctors that, um, Counsel here have paid to give testimony, uh, in (sic), on behalf of their clients. You'll hear that testimony. Ultimately, your job will be to sort it all out, decide what happened, what didn't happen, decide what's the truth, what's not the truth, and make a decision based on all the evidence.

And, I'm gonna' say it now, and I promise you I (unclear - one word), I promise you I'll say it at the end of the trial, if your verdict is against Ms. Sapp we will respect your verdict, and, uh, move on with our lives. By the same token, if your verdict is in favor of Ms. Sapp, um, then of course, um, we will be pleased with that, but your

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job is not to go with what one of says because of what we're saying. Your job is to listen very carefully to the evidence and make a decision based on the evidence, obviously, uh, that's why you're here.

Now, uh, in a case like this ordinarily there are questions of liability and questions of damages. You got to hear Counsel, uh, play up on this video screen, a hearing that took place on a traffic ticket that was issued to Kirsten Sapp. We don't dispute that she did that when she went to Court, uh, we don't dispute what she said. Uh, one of the things that, I think it either trailed off at the end or they didn't play it was, at the end she said, Ms. Sapp said to the, the traffic judge, it all happened very quickly, I don't know what happened. And, and, essentially, that's what she's gonna' tell you when she takes the witness stand, it all happened quickly, and I can't tell you 100 percent what happened. She's being truth, she's being truthful she's being honest to you. Um, she is a young lady who, uh, contrary to the suggestion, I think, with all due respect to Counsel, says, Counsel says she took her mother's keys, well, she called up her mother and got permission from her mother to drive her car, that's what happened. Um, and her mother gave her permission, she was driving her sister and two friends, they were going to an Outback Steakhouse. Um, Ms. Sapp was driving the car carefully, um, she was travelling

CIRCUIT COURT FOR FREDERICK COUNTY COURT HOUSE REDERICK, MARYLAND

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just like, um, the Plaintiff on 70 West, and, uh, there was an accident. And if you decide that because there was an accident that's Ms. Sapp's fault then you should find against her. We hope that you look a little bit deeper into the evidence, uh, consider a little bit more than what Counsel's indicated to you, and really judge for yourself whether she was negligent in the operation of her vehicle.

Now, um, Ms. Zois, at the very end of her opening statement, uh, said that, you know, keep in mind that the burden of proof is on her client. Well, it is on her client. Um, Ms. Sapp does not have a burden of proof to show that she was not negligent, nor, does she have the burden of proof to show that she did not cause damages or injuries to Ms. Zois' That burden of proof rests with Ms. Zois during the entire trial.

Now, as a practical matter, we are gonna' put on evidence, we are gonna' present the case to you, and we are gonna' show you why we contend that she was not injured or injured to alleged, to the extent that she says she was Um, but please do not lose sight during this trial that the burden of proof rests with the Plaintiff in this She is the one that's suing my client, and you saw the case. numbers there, for medical bills, for wage losses or hundreds of thousands of dollars apparently. So, please keep in mind if she doesn't proof those damages to your satisfaction by a

preponderance of the evidence then those damages should not be awarded to Ms. Zois' client, Ms., um, Exline-Hassler.

Now, in terms of how this accident happened. Um, you are going to hear from the Plaintiff in this case, uh, about what happened, and there, there is a lot more than what you've heard. And please keep an open mind, you're gonna' hear a string of witnesses, and just because you hear from Ms. Exline-Hassler first, for example, if that's the case, doesn't mean that that's the whole story. The whole story will hopefully be known to you by the time you go back and give your, and do your deliberations.

But, uh, the Plaintiff gave a deposition in this case, and she explained what happened in the accident, the Plaintiff did, uh, and we ask you to consider that, and I'm just gonna' give you a little bit of a, an oversight of what she said. She, like my client, was travelling in the far left lane of 70. It was raining, or it had been raining and the roads were wet, uh, it wasn't ideal driving conditions.

The Plaintiff will testify that she was going 6 (sic), 65 to 70 miles per hour with the flow of traffic just like Ms. Sapp was driving. Ms. Sapp was apparently behind her, and then all of a sudden, uh, the Plaintiff hit her brakes, came to an abrupt stop. Again, when you hear the tape of the traffic hearing you'll understand that my client doesn't know really what happened. She remembers it being

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wet, she remembers sort of a foggy, misty thing on the road, because it was hot, and she remembers applying her brakes and sliding or hydroplaning in her vehicle. Uh, but what the Plaintiff said sort of opens up the picture or completes the picture if you will. And, as the Plaintiff said in her deposition, she came to an abrupt stop. Why? Because the car in front of her came to an abrupt stop. There was a sudden stop. In fact, even Ms. Exline-Hassler later said that there was an accident up ahead. When she came to this abrupt stop it wasn't a normal controlled stop, like you would hope for on 70, and I know, I suspect that all of you have driven on 70 or 270 or 495 or 95 or different highways that this happens on occasionally. You hope to avoid it, but it happened in this case. And what the Plaintiff testified is that she applied her brakes, and she didn't come to a controlled stop in front of, in behind the car. Rather, she had to turn her vehicle. She had to turn her nose of the vehicle to the side.

Now, she says she went to the left, actually she went to the right, but not that that's a big deal, but she went to left and she had to turn the nose of her vehicle. Why? We submit because she had to, she wanted to avoid striking that vehicle in front of her. That's the only thing that makes sense. She will testify that she has a tendency to do that every time she stops behind a vehicle, and I

submit to that that just doesn't make sense.

Ms. Exline-Hassler will testify well, yes, I pulled my vehicle a little bit to the left, not for any reason other than that's how I always bring my car to a stop behind a vehicle. She called it tucking the vehicle, and she says she has a tendency to do that people have gotten mad at her for doing that on prior occasions.

Well, I'd submit to you that that, with all due respect to her, she's an extremely nice lady, you're gonna' love her, hopefully you'll love Ms. Sapp as well, as people, but we'd submit to you that that's a convenient testimony or compen (sic), convenient version. The reality is, we submit is that she moved her vehicle to the left because she was afraid that she might hit the vehicle in front of her. Why? Because these vehicles were coming to a sudden stop. Was it due to weather? Was it due to the accident ahead? We really don't know.

But the reality is that Ms. Exline-Hassler then looked into her rearview mirror, she will testify, and this is all going to come from her, she will testify that upon looking in her rearview mirror there was a dark colored car that darted around her, and we asked in her deposition, well, was this Ms. Sapp that darted around you, and she said no, this was a different car.

So, the first thing she apparently observed is a

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car darting around her, a dark color car darting around her. She also observed a white truck, she also observed an 18wheel tractor-trailer that slid by her, was her words. then she felt an impact apparently by Ms. Sapp. Now, we don't dispute that Ms. Sapp's vehicle struck her, that's not, and we don't want to, to get things sidetracked here, but the reality is there's a lot more to the picture of this accident then meets the eye. This accident was the result of cars coming to a sudden, unexpected stop on I-70, and cars were going every which way, but loose, and that's in fact what Ms. Exline-Hassler says in her deposition, there were cars She saw this, again, tractor-trailer sliding by everywhere. The driver of the tractor-trailer even pulled off to the side of the road, approached her, wondering whether he had hit her. So, this was not a simple rear end accident as you might gather.

Now, the truth is that the police officer came to the scene of the accident, um, Officer Chicarelli I think his And the officer didn't witness the accident, but the officers are paid to go out there, and they serve very important public role, and we, we honor them for that, we admire them for that, but the reality is is that the officer did not witness the accident, and he issued my client a ticket, okay, for failing to control her vehicle to avoid a collision.

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REDERICK, MARYLAND

Now, Ms. Sapp got this ticket, she got notice of the hearing, went to Court and she said what you heard, or at least parts of what you heard, but again, something that said that was maybe cut off or, or not played for you was that this all happened so quickly, and she didn't know what happened. Um, she was with friends at the time, they weren't doing anything (unclear - one word), she was driving her vehicle with her mother's permission, they were going out for a nice, uh, dinner at the Outback Steakhouse. She didn't try and cause this accident, it was an unfortunate accident.

If, when you go back to the jury room, you decide that what Ms. Sapp did was negligence then you should find against her, and we're not gonna' hide from that. On the other hand, if you go back to the jury room and think to yourself, you know, this is something that really all these cars going back and forth, cars dodging around Ms. Exline-Hassler's vehicle to avoid striking her apparently. A tractor-trailer sliding by her so there's something big going on here. My client was caught up in that mess. If that's what your analysis is then we submit that the proper verdict is that she was not negligent.

Now, the fact that she went to court, paid whatever it was, tried to plead guilty, with explanation, uh, doesn't mean that she's negligence (sic). If that was the case, you wouldn't be here and I wouldn't be here. The Court's going

CIRCUIT COURT FOR FREDERICK COUNTY COURT HOUSE FREDERICK, MARYLAND

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to instruct you on the law of negligence. If that was the case, the Court wouldn't be instructing you on the law of negligence. That's for your decision.

And, please, when you go back to the jury, regardless of what decision you make, when you go back to the jury make up your own minds about how this accident happened. Don't make up your mind simply because the police officer had an opinion on what happened, don't make up your mind simply because the traffic judge had an opinion about what happened, make up your minds on what happened in this accident, and that's all we can ask for. And, again, if your verdict is against Ms. Sapp, so be it. That's the negligence theory that, that they are espousing that they are going to try prove to you.

Um, I'm gonna' speak a moment now about damages. And, again, please keep in mind that Ms. Exline-Hassla (sic), has the, has the burden of proof to show that she damaged in this accident, she was injured in this accident, and to what injuries she had. If you go back to the jury and you decide that 10,000 of her \$80,000 in medical bills were caused by Ms. Sapp then that's what your verdict should be. doesn't carry her burden of proof on any particular issue, whether it's wages, whether it's medical expenses, whether it's pain and suffering or other things, and even, as Ms. Zois indicated, gardening or riding motorcycles, if that's

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what your verdict is, if she, if you feel that they have carried their burden of proof and to you, to your satisfaction then it would be appropriate for you to award damages.

But the most important thing I can say about damages is only those damages that this young lady sitting over here caused are damages that you should award in this This lady sitting over here is the Defendant in this case, she's getting sued for a lot of money by the lady sitting over here. They're both very nice people. them is mistaken. We submit to you that Ms. Exline-Hassler is mistaken about the injuries that she is claiming in this But, please, through all this evidence, and you're going to hear hours of doctors' testimony, and I apologize, lawyers like me, you know, we ask too many questions we know that it's one our flaws, because we're always worried that we're not doing our client's best interest if we don't ask that next question. So, you're going to be nauseated by the time this trial is over with, with, in all likelihood with some of the things that we do. Please bear with us, we're both, and I speak for all of us, in saying that we're trying to do what in our client's best interest. But you're going hear hours of testimony from doctors and other witnesses in What it all really comes down to is what did this the case. lady over here cause the Plaintiff in this case? And if she

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REDERICK, 15 caused her damages she is entitled to compensation for it, we don't hide from that.

Let me talk for a moment more specifically about the damages again. Ms. Exline-Hassler contends that she sustained a very serious back injury from this case. Zois talked to you about these prior records, these prior back problems, and, obviously, my client did not cause her, her prior back problems that existed before this accident.

Um, Ms. Exline-Hasson (sic) had a history of low back problems, it's in the medical records. They are going to try to tell you that those medical records are wrong, but Um, in 2005 she had a car accident and they are not wrong. she injured her low back in that accident, and as a result of that low back she (sic) continued to bother her, as the medical records will show, she had a three year history of low back problems when she went into her doctor in March of Now, this accident was the next year, granted, but in 2008. March of 2008 she goes in to the doctor, you'll see the record, and it says, "Motor vehicle accident three years ago, continuous low back problems since then." We didn't make up that record, Ms. Sapp didn't make up this record somewhere and present it to you. This is Ms. Exline-Hasson's (sic) own medical record. She had gone in in January with low back She had a couple more visits then she goes to this problems. doctor, the doctors prescribe medicine, they give her

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REDERICK, 15 physical therapy. She has a chronic low back condition for three years, at least.

Now, they say that there's a mistake in the record, that she didn't injure her low back for that long from this 2005 accident. Well, ask yourself why then is there a reference in this medical record to a motor vehicle three years ago? In fact, she did have an accident three years ago So, the medical record is consistent, not inconsistent, but consistent with the facts of this case. Three years ago she did have a car accident and three years ago she did injure her low back. This is not something that we're making up, you'll see the medical record.

So, when Counsel tries to tell you that this history is wrong, please don't buy that for a second if you are convinced that it is not wrong, and we submit to you that you will be convinced that it is not wrong. The medical record references an accident three years ago, and indeed she had an accident three years ago that resulted in low back injury.

Now, if you have any doubt about that, we submit, then we're gonna' ask you to look at the pharmacy records. And the pharmacy records show this was not a low back condition that magically resolved within a couple weeks, and then never bothered her again until the subject accident a We know that, because the pharmacy records show year later.

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that in July of 2008, remember this was a March 2008 reference to her three years of chronic low back pain. July, specifically July 3rd, 2008 she gets a prescription filled for Tramadol, which is a pain medication. She was only taking it because of the low back issue, the problem she Then, in September, she get went in for the doctor for. Skelaxin, which is a muscle relaxer. Again, these were medications prescribed to her in March or around March of 2008 because of her low back.

And then in January, January 12th of '09, specifically, she refills her prescriptions with, and she had two more refills after that that she was allowed to use, refills her prescription for Skelaxin, again, a muscle And the Plaintiff, I think, will hear these records and hopefully honestly tell you that yes, I filled that muscle relaxant in January of 2009. Now, here we're only a few months before the accident. And her prescriptions would have extended to her about the time of the accident, and she refilled those medications, why? Because she still needed the muscle relaxers. She didn't go and refill these medications because she wanted to run up a medical bill or do anything like that, or she wanted to go to a CVS store, she went to refill these medications because she needed it and she needed a muscle relaxer. Why? In January of '08, January of '09, excuse me, again, just months before

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accident, because she needed it, she was having ongoing low back pain. So, yes, we don't have her having a neurosurgeon tell her that she needs surgery in 2008, we don't have an orthopedic spine specialist telling her that she's got a herniated disc or anything like that. What we have though are records from her own providers that show that she did, in fact, have ongoing problems with her low back, uh, before this accident, it's borne out by the medical reports, and they are gonna' try and prove to you otherwise. We submit to you that the proof is in the pudding, namely, the records that you'll be able to see here about during the course of this trial.

Now, this was a relatively minor accident. get to see photographs of her car, and there didn't appear from these photographs to be much evidence, you'll be the judge of how significant an impact this was to Ms. Exline-Hassline's (sic) vehicle.

Um, fortunately, no one got really seriously In fact, Ms. Exline-Hassline (sic) injured in this accident. was given the opportunity to go in an ambulance afterwards. There was even suggestion that the ambulance was actually on the scene, because it was going to the next accident right up the road. Uh, she was given an opportunity to go in the ambulance, didn't go to an am (sic), didn't go in an ambulance. She, uh, uh, went to, uh, her, an urgent care

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center, uh, I think it was the next day, didn't mention anything about her low back, there was no treatment to her low back, there was no suggestion that she was having spasm in her low back, she was having some wish (sic), whiplash symptoms, um, and she had a headache as well. Um, but she wasn't having low back symptoms the day after the accident whenever she went to this urgent care center. But then she subsequently went to her primary care doctor and started getting treatment for her low back.

You've hard Ms. Zois explain to you or show you models of the spine. You'll hear all the medical evidence in this case, an important thing will be the lumbar MRI scans that were done for Ms. Exline-Hassler. The lumbar MRI scans were done, I think there were two after the accident, and what these MRI scans showed were Degenerative Disc Disease. Counsel says they show annular tears, that's how it was described by the radiologist that saw, uh, these films, but what's important is what her own treating doctors refer to them as, these are doctors that are treating not the MRI, but treating the clinical patient. They correlate the patient's findings examination with the study, and what do they come to the conclusion about? They came to the conclusion this was Degenerative Disc Disease. Dr. Michael Radley saw these films from Parkway Neuroscience, a neurosurgery center. Не referred them to as mild dehydration changes. And the

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doctor, even the doctor who's gonna' testify for, for Ms. Exline-Hasline (sic) is going to acknowledge that over time, as we get older, your body looses water (unclear - two words), and that's why people wrinkle, that's why people, uh, get arthritis, and one of the things that impacts is your disc, and as you discs get old guess what, they dry out. Some of the times it happens sooner in life that other times It just depends on your make up. for people. In this case what those MRI exchanges showed, as Dr. Radley said, were mild dehydration, dehydrate, loosing water content, changes. That's what was going on in her spine. But it wasn't just Dr. Radley, a pain specialist, Dr. Huong, also looked at those films, and he referred it to as Degenerative Disc It wasn't just Dr. Huong. Dr. Nisenfeld, a spine specialist she had been referred to, saw those films, looked at her condition and said that she had Degenerative Disc Disease. These doctors didn't refeer (sic), refer to any acute changes on the MRI, rather, the picture in this case, as the doctors will all acknowledge, we submit to you, is that she had a degenerative process in her spine. And that's what's reflected in those films, in those studies.

She had an EEMG, nerve conduction study. Why was that done? Because of these complaints that she had in her legs and had in her arms, and I'll get to that in a second. The EMG study was completely normal, it didn't explain what

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was going on with her. And, in fact, throughout the course of her medical treatment, as Counsel, acknowledged, she never had a neurologically adverse finding, neurologically intact. And that just doesn't mean you don't have a significant spine injury, that means that these doctors did neurological examinations of her every time they see her, and these neurologic examinations were normal. There wasn't anything there to explain what she was complaining about.

She was also complaining about pain in her hands and wrist, and at one point in this case, now, we're here now, but this case has been going on for guite a long time, a We get the process we have something called year longer. discovery in the case, and during the discovery phase of this case the parties are allowed to ask the other side what they're claiming was caused by their client. So, we propounded discovery on, on Ms. Exline-Hasson (sic) on behalf of Ms. Sapp to say what are you saying that I did to you? How did you, how do you contend I injured you? And, in fact, in discovery, which was signed by her and her attorneys, she said that she had developed carpal tunnel syndrome due to this accident. Now, she didn't phrase it exactly as carpal tunnel syndrome, because that's what her doctors called it, but she was complaining about problems in her hands and wrist that she says was related to the accident. She had surgery for carpal tunnel or ulnar neuropathy surgery, and contended

that that was related to what Ms. Sapp had caused. Now, they've now withdrawn, it's no longer something they're able to prove, but at one point in this case it was, they were attempting to prove that, that Ms. Sapp caused that as well. That's by the wayside now, it's not going to be for your consideration, but under oath the Plaintiff in this case did make such a contention.

MS. ZOIS: Objection, Your Honor. May we approach?
THE COURT: Sure

(Counsel approached the bench and the following occurred:)

(Husher turned on.)

MS. ZOIS: I let the carpal tunnel thing go until he said under oath. Here's how the deposition went, and I can pull up the transcript, and I'm pretty sure the other two attorneys that were actually at the deposition will back me up on this.

MR. GILLCRIST: I'm referring to the answers to interrogatories they were in.

MS. ZOIS: Well, you just said deposition.

MR. GILLCRIST: No, I said under oath.

THE COURT: No, he said under oath.

MS. ZOIS: Okay, either way, in her deposition what we said at the time, which was after the answers to interrogatories were executed it was before expert