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1 2	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA					
3	KALSHIEX LLC, Civil Action					
4	Plaintiff, No. 1:23-cv-03257-JMC					
5	vs. September 12, 2024 10:30 a.m.					
6	COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION,					
7	Defendant.					
8						
9	TRANSCRIPT OF THE MOTIONS HEARING					
10	VIA ZOOM BEFORE THE HONORABLE JIA M. COBB					
11	UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE APPEARANCES:					
12	For the Plaintiff					
13	JACOB M. ROTH, ESQ. Jones Day 51 Louisiana Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20001					
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15						
16	For the Defendant					
17	RAAGNEE BERI, ESQ. ANNE WHITFORD STUKES, ESQ. Commodity Futures Trading Commission Office of the General Counsel 1155 21st Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20581					
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21	Court Reporter: Stacy Johns, RPR, RCR Official Court Reporter					
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23	Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript produced by computer-aided transcription					
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# PROCEEDINGS

DEPUTY CLERK: Good morning, Your Honor. We are on the record in civil case 23-3257, KalshiEX LLC.

Please state your name for the record.

MR. ROTH: Good morning, Your Honor. This is Yaakov Roth from Jones Day, on behalf of Kalshi. I also have on the line Amanda Rice, John Henry Thompson, Sam Lioi from Jones Day and Joshua Sterling from Milbank.

THE COURT: Good morning.

MS. STUKES: Good morning, Your Honor. This is Anne Stukes on behalf of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. With me today is Raagnee Beri, and also in the room with us is Conor Daly.

THE COURT: Can you-all hear me okay? Your microphones --

MS. STUKES: No, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I can't hear myself. Is that better?

MS. STUKES: In the microphone it's better. Can you hear us?

THE COURT: I can hear you just fine. I'm not able -I don't have the view that you have, Erica, on my screen. I
have that view but I don't have that view. It's okay. This is
weird. I don't know where I'm supposed to be looking or
anything.

All right. I called this hearing in response to the

motion that was filed. I'm sure everyone saw that I posted my memorandum opinion. My first inclination was that that mooted the motion, but then I noticed that there was a request for 14-day stay following the opinion. So I wanted to bring us in just to kind of wrap everything up.

So it was my inclination to deny the motion. I think now that the opinion has issued, everyone's in the position, given the administrative stay, as if everything came out today. So you had a heads up as to what my ruling would be. I've now issued my decision.

So I don't see a basis for certainly an administrative stay because there's nothing that I'm the considering or any other stay that hasn't been requested. But I'll hear from defendant on kind of what you're asking for from me at this juncture.

MS. BERI: Good morning, Your Honor. Raagnee Beri for the CFTC. Thank you for taking the time to hear this motion today. We've received the Court's opinion this morning and the relief we're requesting essentially remains the same. We're asking for an administrative stay to maintain the status quo so that -- in order to allow this Court or the Court of Appeals adequate time to consider the CFTC's forthcoming motion for stay pending appeal.

As Your Honor noted, we initially proposed 14 days so that the CFTC could expeditiously file its motion and to allow

Kalshi time to respond and the Court to deliberate and decide whether this case should be stayed pending appeal. We're open to modifying that period of time and can represent that the CFTC will seek a stay pending appeal promptly.

We know that before this Court issued its summary judgment order, Kalshi itself emphasized the time for appellate review was needed, even after September 6th, and that that was in their interests. We similarly assert that it is in the CFTC's interests.

The purpose of our request is so that the election contracts do not begin trading. If they begin trading and a stay is later issued, the halting of the trading would be a disruptive market event. We also note that even if the contracts trade for a short period, they are susceptible to manipulation in that period, which could translate to risks to election integrity.

We note that the risk is not isolated to the Congressional control contracts that Kalshi plans to list imminently, but also appears to apply to presidential elections. Kalshi's website now boasts, under pictures of former President Trump and current Vice President Harris, quote, "The first legal way to trade the election," end quote.

If the Court is not inclined to grant our motion, we move in the alternative for a brief stay so that we can seek expedited appellate review.

As noted, we're seeking an administrative stay, which is commonly granted to give courts and parties an opportunity to deliberate while maintaining the status quo. Although the Nken factors are not controlling, they may be instructive here.

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Courts look to four factors. The first is the likelihood of success. The second is whether, absent a stay, there will be irreparable harm to the movant, here, the CFTC. Third, whether a stay will cause injury to other parties involved. And fourth, the public interests.

When the government is involved, as is the case here, irreparable harm and public interest are considered together because the public's interest is the government's interest.

As to the first factor, likelihood of success. While the CFTC has not had the opportunity to meet and fully address the likelihood of its success in challenging the merits of the Court's summary judgment order, this factor should not weigh against a stay.

We note that the CFTC is not required to show absolute certainty of success. It is enough that the case presents questions so serious that there are fair grounds for litigation. This case does.

The parties have raised serious questions of statutory interpretation and agency policymaking, which ultimately determine whether election gambling contracts can be listed on federally-regulated exchanges. The Court's reasoned decision

did not treat the statutory questions of interpretations as simple or straightforward.

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Looking to the second and fourth factors, irreparable harm and public interest. The election gambling contracts pose significant public interest risks, as outlined in findings by the Commission, which this Court did not disturb. The Commission noted serious concerns about potential adverse effects on election integrity or the perception of election integrity.

At a time where confidence in election integrity is incredibly low, these contracts would give market participants a \$100 million incentive to influence either the market or the election, which could very certainly undermine confidence in election integrity. This is a very serious public interest threat. We can easily imagine this playing out in the form of misinformation.

There are also real risks even in the short term.

Kalshi has admitted that the contracts are subject to short-term manipulation, like other contracts. We submit that any short-term impact on election integrity or the perception of election integrity which could alter voter behavior is uniquely concerning.

Kalshi has downplayed the risks, asserting that if the Commission prevails in a stay pending appeal, or ultimately prevails in winning a reversal of the summary judgment order,

the Commission can halt or unwind trades. However, as the Commission noted in its briefing, this is not easy to do and it would be a disruptive market event. Moreover, halting trading will not remediate effects on election integrity.

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Looking at the third and, for our purposes, final factor here, injury to other parties involved. Kalshi has made some questionable claims of harm from a brief stay. Kalshi argues it's delayed by the -- it's harmed by the CFTC's delay tactics, but what it fails to note is that the timeline in this case has largely been driven by Kalshi.

Kalshi determined when to submit its first contract, when to seek extensions of the Commission's review, when to withdraw that contract. Kalshi determined, once this present contract was prohibited by the Commission, to file this lawsuit. Kalshi sought expedited briefing in this case and this -- and the CFTC agreed to that briefing and this Court entered the expedited scheduling order.

While the CFTC agreed, it did not give up its rights to seek appellate review or protect the government's interest. Thus, Kalshi's claim of delay is not supported.

Kalshi also argues harm because it supposedly staked its business on political event contracts. The claim is unsubstantiated and also questionable in light of Kalshi's robust nonpolitical offerings.

Kalshi cites Polymarket, another exchange, and laments

that it has had to sit back and wait while Polymarket dominates the market. This claim is misleading. Polymarket is prohibited from offering contracts to U.S. persons, including election contracts, as Kalshi seeks to do.

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For this reason, Kalshi's asserted claims of harm do not weigh against the stay. The balance of factors weigh in favor of the stay, which will allow the courts and the parties to deliberate while maintaining status quo and minimizing risks to the public interest.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that this Court grant the Commission's request for a stay of the summary judgment order for at least a period of 14 days from today and continuing until the resolution by this Court and, where necessary, the Court of Appeals, a forthcoming motion for stay pending appeal. Thank you for your time, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thanks. Can I just ask you a couple of questions?

MS. BERI: Yes, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I'm sorry if I'm not looking at you.

We're having a technical issue in the court and I can't see

myself. So if I am not looking at you, it's because I don't

know what's going on with the Zoom technology.

A couple of things. One is, we're no longer in administrative stay land, I don't think, because now I've issued my opinion. Everyone is in the same position as if --

arguably, in a little better position because you got a heads up of where my ruling was going.

So I'm wondering whether, since you've made a robust argument and I don't think that a request for a stay pending appeal needs to be in writing, and also because under the rules of appellate procedure you have to ask the District Court first, I'm wondering if we can just deal with your request for a stay pending appeal substantively today, so that if I grant it then Kalshi can take its appellate rights. And if I deny it, then you can go right to the Circuit instead of briefing another round of briefing before me.

Is there any reason why we can't proceed that way? That feels most efficient, given that it seems like you're ready to address the merits of the stay pending appeal.

MS. BERI: Your Honor, can we now at this time orally move for a motion for stay pending appeal, and then we will --

THE COURT: I'll ask plaintiff if they disagree. I'm just trying to be as efficient as possible. I don't see any reason why it has to be in writing. Certainly, if you're not prepared to talk about it, I didn't let you-all know this was coming. But it seems to me that I just resolve an oral request for a stay pending appeal now, so that anyone who wants to go to the Circuit can. Does that make sense or is there something procedurally wrong with what?

Let me ask counsel for plaintiff. Is there something

procedurally wrong with what I proposed?

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MR. ROTH: Not at all, Your Honor, and it was going to be the first thing I said when it was my turn to stand. That would make a lot more sense. They've already briefed it. It's the same arguments as they briefed before. So I fully agree with that, of course.

THE COURT: Quite frankly, I think it's what you just argued. You argued the factors. And so I will entertain an oral motion for stay pending appeal. I'll deny the pending motion as moot and I'll entertain now a motion for stay pending appeal, and then I'll resolve it now. And then the parties can go and proceed as they will. I think that's the most efficient way to do it.

Knowing that, are there any other arguments that you would have made that you didn't make before I turn to plaintiff to respond?

MS. BERI: No, Your Honor. We would note that in the event that this Court denies the motion for stay pending appeal, we would still like a brief administrative stay to take that stay motion up with the appellate court.

THE COURT: Is there authority for that?

MS. BERI: Yes, because the Court would then be deliberating the motion. So in order to maintain status quo --

THE COURT: Well, I'm not -- I mean, I guess I'm not deliberating a motion if I rule on the motion to stay. So I

don't know what I'm staying administratively because there's nothing before me. It seems to me that would be a request of the Circuit to stay pending resolution of your request to stay before the Circuit, right? I don't know what I would be staying.

If you have some authority that suggests that I can do that, but I think once I rule then -- if I rule against you, then you've satisfied Rule 8's requirements that you asked me first. You go to the Circuit and then I think they would be in the position to entertain any requests for a stay pending their consideration of your more fulsome motion to stay.

I'm assuming they'll want a briefing schedule and they may entertain a request to stay pending the logistics of getting that in place.

But if there's some authority that once I rule on the motion then I would have authority to stay -- I don't even know what I would be staying. There would be nothing before me at that point.

MR. ROTH: Your Honor.

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THE COURT: Go ahead.

MR. ROTH: I'm just going to say that I think what Your Honor is contemplating is exactly what the D.C. Circuit's internal operating procedures and rules contemplate. There's a whole section about emergency motions and asking for an administrative stay pending resolution of an emergency motion.

So that's, I think, the right way to handle this.

If this Court were to deny the stay pending appeal, Commission files its notice of appeal, calls the circuit clerk's office and we work out a briefing schedule. And if the D.C. Circuit panel wants to issue an administrative stay pending resolution of that, they know how to do that and they do that sometimes.

MS. BERI: We would ask Your Honor for some time to be able to address the question as to whether this Court can issue an administrative stay while the parties are seeking -- while the CFTC is seeking a stay pending appeal with the D.C. Circuit. And we could certainly get that authority to you, if any, within an hour of this hearing.

THE COURT: You're well -- whatever the ruling is, you're welcome to send me authority if you think that there's some additional relief that you would be entitled to. I won't prohibit you from doing that.

Let's deal with the merits. Just so the record is clear, I am denying as -- I don't know if it's completely moot, but the basis for the administrative stay was so that the CFTC could get the benefit of the opinion. I administratively stayed it -- well, I was considering that motion -- I'm denying the motion given the change in circumstances, and I'm now entertaining an oral request for a stay pending appeal.

If I could just ask you two clarifying things before I

turn it over to plaintiff to respond. In terms of -- this is more of a factual question. My understanding is that Kalshi had initially self-certified these contracts, and then under the rules, regulations, they're permitted to begin trading within one business day of that. Did they begin trading within one business day of self-certification of these contracts?

MS. BERI: They have not.

THE COURT: Okay. So when the CFTC sent the review letter to them a couple weeks later, there had been no transactions that were listed at that point?

MS. BERI: That's correct.

THE COURT: Okay. That was my first question. And then the question I have about irreparable harm, and I didn't -- just to correct the record, it's not -- I didn't reach the issue of public interest. So I haven't made a decision about that one way or the other.

Yes, I didn't disturb the order. It's just because I didn't reach that part. It's not that I endorsed it or didn't endorse it.

But it's a little interesting in this context to think about irreparable harm because I understand that it has to be more than speculative. And if you recall from oral argument, I had a lot of questions and concerns about this product and kind of how it might affect things.

But when I'm drilling down as to what is the

irreparable harm that you can identify that's not kind of a what might or could happen, but a what will happen, what's your best argument as to something irreparable -- not might happen, could happen, reasonable minds can debate. And I'm not minimizing the importance of these issues. But what's the what will happen? Can you just articulate for me, if I don't stay my order pending your appeal, what will happen that will be irreparable?

MS. BERI: So, Your Honor, I apologize if I misspoke earlier about the Court's decision.

To answer your question, the Commission, under case law, was allowed to use its predictive judgment based on its experience and expertise. Based on that experience and expertise, we see manipulation in our markets, including short-term manipulation of contracts. There's no reason to believe that the election contracts would be any different.

THE COURT: Can you be real specific? I've educated myself on all of this for the purpose of this case. But when you say manipulation, talk to me as if I don't know what that means in real terms and what will happen.

MS. BERI: So, for example, on any contract there are two positions, a yes or a no. Right?

THE COURT: Right.

MS. BERI: Let's say we're talking about corn. And somebody puts out -- somebody holds a position in corn one way

or another and puts out misinformation about a drought, a drought is coming. And that could move the market on the price of corn because there may be a lower supply.

So the same thing could happen here. There's avenues for misinformation about which way the election is going to go. Kalshi has cited a couple other prediction markets that have wildly different predictions. So there's this incentive to move the market.

Whether it's in elections, we cannot know what will happen with elections without the contract listing, but the Commission is not required to suffer the flood before building a dam. The Commission could use its predictive judgments to see what is possible and likely in terms of manipulation in this market.

THE COURT: Okay. And then if I could just ask another factual question. You mentioned, I believe it's Polymarket. Is that the entity that we're talking about? Let me just understand. I know they're, obviously, not regulated by the CFTC. Did you say that they are not permitted to offer their product in the U.S. at all? So --

MS. BERI: That's correct. Under the terms of the settlement with the Commission, they are prohibited from offering any product, any event contracts, to people in the United States.

THE COURT: But the subject of their contracts are

U.S. elections? 1 2 MS. BERI: We understand that they do have some of 3 those. 4 THE COURT: So some people overseas can purchase event 5 contracts or whatever their product is based on U.S. elections; 6 it's just that they can't offer it in the States, is 7 essentially what it is? 8 MS. BERI: That's right. 9 THE COURT: Again, they can't offer it in the States but the same issues with misinformation and other problems 10 11 would be apparent, I think, even if people overseas, which 12 obviously you don't have any control over. Do you have any kind of stories or anecdotes about issues that have arisen as a 13 14 result of that product? 15 MS. BERI: Yes. And I believe --16 THE COURT: In terms -- I'm sorry, go ahead. 17 MS. BERI: We may have included this in our last filing. 18 19 THE COURT: I'll pull it up. Okay. And then is there 20 another entity that is offering event contracts on a CFTC 21 exchange or as a DCM on elections? 22 MS. BERI: No, there is not. 23 THE COURT: PredictIt is not --MS. BERI: PredictIt is offering election contracts 24 25 but not on a DCM.

THE COURT: But they're offering election contracts in the U.S.?

MS. BERI: Yes. And as Your Honor may be aware, the CFTC -- I want to use my words -- choose my words carefully, withdrew a no action letter. CFTC staff withdrew a no action letter and the CFTC is now the subject of an injunction.

THE COURT: Right. Okay. I will hear from whoever is speaking for counsel for plaintiff.

MR. ROTH: Thank you, Your Honor. Yaakov Roth for Kalshi. I'm going to go through the stay factors, given where we are now and what's been decided in the first little bit procedurally and explain why this Commission is not entitled to a stay pending appeal under any of the factors.

The first one and the one that really drives the train in most cases is the merits and the likelihood of success on the merits.

Of course, if the Court thought the Commission was likely to prevail on merits, it would not have issued the opinion it issued today. So at least for purposes of this Court, I think the success on the merits prong has already been resolved.

Of course, if the Commission goes up to the Circuit, it could argue that the Court got it wrong and then they'll make their assessment of likelihood of success. But for purposes of this Court, the opinion is clear about the

reasoning and rationale.

I want to emphasize, we really wanted the Court to be able to be in a position to make a fully informed judgment with confidence in the outcome. And that's why we gave the Commission -- we agreed to the time they wanted for their briefing. We agreed to the extra pages they wanted for their briefing. We withdrew our opposition to their supplemental brief following oral argument. We wanted everything to be in front of this Court, so it could really dig in, understand this and make the judgment. And that's the judgment we got with the full reasons today.

So likelihood, discuss on the merits is easy.

In terms of the harm to Kalshi, I think it's fairily self-evident. The election is now 50-some-odd days away.

These markets are time bound. They're going to disappear in a matter of weeks. So there's obviously the loss of the business over the next period of time.

And it's important to remember, Kalshi is a startup. It invested significantly in the prospect of these markets. Kalshi has spent millions of dollars preparing to list these contracts, in terms of the engineering costs, the compliance costs, election lawyers to make sure all the terms were appropriate, marketing, hiring staff. And that's in addition to just thousands of hours of work over the past three years that have gone into this.

And Kalshi did that, Kalshi made those investments because it was confident that when the Court ultimately did reach the merits it would reach the conclusion it did. So I think it would be perverse if all of that investment now went up in smoke, notwithstanding that Kalshi was right about that and was right about the law.

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And what makes it extra perverse is that, as we noted in the opposition, in the meantime, unregulated markets like Polymarket have been growing exponentially. We are the ones who were trying to comply with the law and the beneficiaries of the delay are the actors who don't want to comply with the law, the actors who are not subject to Commission oversight or regulation at all.

And that really brings me to the last factor, the harm to the Commission, which does merge here with the public interest. And so I emphasize two points, really, maybe three points.

First, given the Court's decision on the merits, the Supreme Court has said there is no public interest in allowing agencies to act unlawfully, even if they do so for desirable ends. That's the Alabama Realtors decision. So the merits and the public interest sort of are linked here.

The agency's predictive judgment may have been a legitimate argument when they were defending their order against our APA challenge, but the dynamics are different now.

Now the Commission bears the burden to prove that a stay pending appeal is necessary to advance the public interest. And so they cannot just say, well, we made a predictive judgment. We can't really point to anything but you should defer to us. That's not how it works at the stay stage, certainly.

The final point, and I think this one is actually dispositive. Whether the agency or the Court or anyone else thinks the contracts are good or bad for the public interest, they are already happening right now.

As the Commission just acknowledged, PredictIt does offer election contracts. That's been going on for a decade. Polymarket is now trading hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. election contracts. If you go on their website, they have it right there. It's the lead item. You can see how much has been invested in each contract.

They say they're not allowed to sell to U.S. traders.

I'm not sure that's really relevant for the public interest
question; it's still happening. But I'll just note, there's
widespread public reporting that -- this is a Bloomberg article
from last month. Headline: "U.S. traders flock to an
election-betting site they're banned from." Subheading:
"Users can resort to virtual private networks to evade
blockade."

So it's in the public domain that this trading is

happening in significant volumes in the U.S. and outside the U.S. And the consequence of that fact is that the only thing a stay of this order would do is ensure that all of that trading activity stays on Polymarket, outside the reach of any regulation or oversight, instead of being done, at least in part, on a regulated DCM that is bound by all sorts of rules and regulations and subject to Commission oversight. And I just cannot see how that result possibly advances the public interest.

The Court asked about any evidence of manipulation and the Commission pointed to -- they cited in their reply brief.

I took a look at that. The Court can take a look at that.

What it says is there was an attempt to engage in manipulation on Polymarket and it failed, and they lost the money they tried because the market worked.

So it's not a very good example of how this is going to be devastating to the public interest, that somebody who tried to manipulate the market failed.

And, of course, if this was being done subject to the Commission oversight, there would be enforcement authority, which would provide a deterrent against that type of behavior, which does not happen if the trading is happening in this offshore, unregulated exchange.

So, Your Honor, at the end of the day, the Court has concluded that we're legally entitled to list these contracts.

Staying that judgment would wipe out our investment, while
allowing the same trading activity to continue outside the
confines of any CFTC regulation. That would amount to
punishing the one party that has tried to play by the rules.
don't think that's right. I don't think the Court should do
it.

We would ask the Court to deny the stay and direct the Commission to seek relief from the Court of Appeals if it wants further view.

Last Friday, it filed in a matter of hours after this Court's judgment and it's had six days since then to get its ducks in a row. The Commission has already authorized an appeal. They voted on Monday. We know that because a dissenting statement was posted on the Commission's website. So that's already happened. There's nothing standing in the way of them going up to the Court of Appeals, and we're happy to brief the stay factors again for the D.C. Circuit.

Happy to answer any questions the Court may have.

THE COURT: I don't have any further questions.

Anything in rebuttal? And there's already been an appeal authorized. So you're not waiting to decide whether or not you're going to take an appeal. You're going to be ready to move expeditiously on that front, correct?

MS. BERI: Your Honor, if I may just phrase it this way.

THE COURT: Sure.

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MS. BERI: We cannot -- we cannot seek appeal without Commission authorization. We could not have done it until they authorized. We intend to file our notice of appeal and stay pending appeal.

But what I would note is that even if we are authorized to file a notice of appeal earlier, that would have deprived this Court of jurisdiction to enter the opinion that you did this morning. And so it's not quite as simple as Mr. Roth says.

I would like to respond to a couple of other -THE COURT: Sure. Of course.

MS. BERI: Kalshi referenced a loss of trading fees for the duration of the stay, whether that's a couple days or a couple weeks. And the D.C. Circuit has noted that it's well settled that economic loss does not in and of itself constitute irreparable harm. That case is John Doe versus CFPB, 849 F.3d 1129, in the D.C. Circuit 2017. Now, I will note that that addressed irreparable harm to the movant as opposed to the respondent.

We want to note that we cited the documented attempted manipulation in Polymarket and PredictIt. And counsel said that it was attempted and not perfected manipulation. But the fact that attempted manipulation occurs evidences that it is happening.

Kalshi, again, complains that other markets are doing
election contracts, but the difference here is that what they
are seeking to do is get the veneer of legitimacy that would be
offered with being able to trade on a federally-regulated
exchange. And that's a big difference.

Your Honor, what we would ask is a short stay pending
appeal, even if it's not for the duration of the appeal, just

Your Honor, what we would ask is a short stay pending appeal, even if it's not for the duration of the appeal, just to enable a stay while we ask the D.C. Circuit to issue an administrative stay.

Our concern is that Kalshi may trade while our motion is pending in the D.C. Circuit, even before that Court has decided the administrative stay issue. We are prepared to move forward expeditiously seeking appellate relief, and to answer your question at the outset of this. And for those reasons, we again request this Court stay its judgment.

THE COURT: Can you give me, again, the cite and name for the case you cited, the CFPB case?

MS. BERI: Yes. It's 849 F3d 1129, and that's D.C. Circuit 2017. The name is John Doe versus CFPB.

THE COURT: So it was an APA case?

MS. BERI: Yes.

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MR. ROTH: Your Honor, can I offer a counterstatement?

THE COURT: Yes, of course.

MR. ROTH: Generally speaking, it's true that economic loss is not irreparable because you can get it back at the end

of the case.

THE COURT: Well, you can't get it back.

MR. ROTH: We can't. That's the point. The D.C. Circuit has said more recently, it's irreparable where no adequate compensatory or other corrective relief will be available at a later date. That's 26 F4th at 990 to -91. That's a 2022 decision from the D.C. Circuit. Economic injury caused by federal agency action is unrecoverable because the APA's waiver of sovereign immunity does not extend to damages claims. That's a decision from this Court, 444 F. Supp. 3d 1 at Page 24.

THE COURT: All right. I'm prepared to rule. And again, I think this is an important case because it involves elections and elections are important, but I'm going to deny the motion for a stay. And I understand that the CFTC will seek relief in the D.C. Circuit, and so I'll just briefly discuss the factors.

A stay pending appeal, as the parties know, is an extraordinary remedy. It is an intrusion into the ordinary processes of administration and judicial review and is not a matter of right, even if irreparable injury might otherwise result to an appellant. That's a Supreme Court case, Nken v. Holder, 556 U.S. 418 at 2009. And the party seeking a stay, here, the CFTC, bears the stringent requirements of a stay pending appeal.

The parties have indicated what the factors are, likelihood success on the merits. The stay applicant has to make a strong showing of likelihood of success. Two, whether the applicant will be irreparably injured.

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And three and four, which I will consider together, is whether the issuance of the stay will substantially injure the other parties interested in the public proceeding and where the public interest lies. The first two factors, of course, are critical and require more than a mere possibility of relief and more than some possibility of irreparable injury.

I also note from long-standing Circuit precedent that irreparable harm must be both certain and great, and the harms to each party are tested for substantial likelihood of occurrence and adequacy of proof.

And so with those factors, again, as plaintiff pointed out, it's a little bit odd for me to be assessing likelihood of success, given that I made a decision. I think I'm right. I could be wrong but I think the Circuit is in the best position to tell me if I'm wrong. So if you ask me, I think I'm right and I don't think that that factor has been satisfied.

In terms of irreparable harm, again, I'm not at all minimizing general concerns about election integrity. But I don't think that anything that's been put forth during this hearing or in the briefs establishes any substantial likelihood of irreparable injury.

I asked some questions. It looks like, although not on CFTC exchanges, this type of activity is happening in an unregulated way, and I'm not sure that I have any evidence in the record to make that finding.

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And, you know, again, I asked the question earlier about whether there was any lag time between Kalshi trading the contract and review, but I think -- and I've been told that there was not. But I think that if the Circuit -- if Kalshi begins trading and the Circuit stays it, there's a way to undo that, essentially.

So I just don't think on this record that I've been presented with information from which I can make the finding that I need to make.

I think those two factors are dispositive. I do think plaintiff has put forth evidence of injury that hasn't been rebutted. It is economic. But as plaintiff indicated, it's not as if they can recover that at the end of this litigation, even if they prevail. But that --

Again, these factors are on a sliding scale. That's not dispositive to my resolution. It's more the first two factors that I find strongly weigh in favor of denying the motion.

And again, three and four merge, but -- or are considered together. I shouldn't say merge. But I think that, on balance, the factors weigh strongly against staying my

order. I just don't find I have a record to do that. It's just plain and simple. I considered it carefully before this hearing and I've considered the parties' arguments carefully during this hearing, and I just don't see anything in the record from which I could make the finding that these factors warranted a stay.

So I did want to resolve that quickly and promptly, so that you can take whatever avenues you want to take to seek review of my decision.

I don't see a ground in which I can stay anything pending your filing of a motion for stay in the Circuit. It would be my understanding that any administrative stay would have to be presented to the Circuit, which I believe can be done on an emergency basis, and I'm sure that you're prepared to move quickly.

But to your point about needing time, of course, if you have authority that suggests I'm wrong on that point, you can submit it. And I guess what I will say is I will look at it and if I am convinced that the CFTC might be right about that, I will let Kalshi know that they can respond. But if I just determine, looking at it, that I disagree, then I won't have Kalshi waste resources responding to it.

But I will not prohibit you, obviously, from seeking that. But you might just decide that you're going to go to the Circuit and invest all of your energy in having the decision

and the stay pending appeal motion reviewed.

So leave it up to you how you want to proceed. But just wanted to let you know that, of course, there's no prohibition on you coming back to me for any reason if you have authority suggesting that my decision was incorrect.

Okay. I think I said this at the outset of the hearing, but because I denied the pending motion and I said the administrative stay would lift at the conclusion of the hearing, I don't see any basis, again, to continue that administrative stay, given that I issued my opinion.

So unless there's anything else, I'll let you-all go and take your next steps.

MS. BERI: Your Honor, may we briefly make a request?

THE COURT: Sure.

MS. BERI: We move the Court to reconsider its order and ask for a 24-hour stay to give us the opportunity to file an emergency motion in the D.C. Circuit. We note that under D.C. Circuit rules for emergency filings, we will need to submit this Court's transport. We have preemptively ordered two-hour transcripts, which we will receive this afternoon.

We also note the D.C. Circuit rules state a strong preference for seven days of consideration for emergency filings. And so for those reasons, we move that Your Honor reconsider its order denying our motion for stay.

THE COURT: Given my ruling on the factors, what would

be my basis? I know you disagree and, again, the Circuit might disagree with me. But given my ruling, what factor would I point to to warrant a stay? I issued my ruling that I don't think that the factors weigh in favor of a stay. In fact, I found that they weigh against a stay. So I don't know what basis I would issue a further stay.

2.2

MS. BERI: As Your Honor alluded, we do disagree with your ruling. But we note specifically the harms to public interest, even if these contracts are allowed to trade, say, this afternoon for a brief period of time. So we will note our disagreement on that. We will note our disagreement about economic harm.

Again, we've noted in our briefing Kalshi's robust markets. The economic harm that it may suffer by not collecting fees for 24 hours is minimal compared to the transactions that it lists. So we disagree on the economic harm finding.

Again, we disagree on the public interest injury finding, which we've extensively briefed and discussed. We also note that we can submit a more extensive argument to Your Honor in writing, as we have only orally moved for the motion for stay pending appeal.

THE COURT: Okay. And just --

MS. BERI: So we believe there are --

THE COURT: I'm sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off.

Go ahead.

MS. BERI: No problem.

THE COURT: I was going to say, I wanted to be clear, for the economic harm piece, that's not dispositive to my ruling. I think it was the first two factors. Again, the Circuit might disagree.

My understanding is this is a sliding scale, that the first two factors are of primary importance. I find that those two factors weigh strongly against staying the case. I did think that Kalshi articulated some harm. If that was all that they had and I thought there was a strong likelihood of success on the merits and irreparable injury to you absent a stay, I agree with you, their financial harm in a short time period would not have moved the scale.

I was just articulating that they've articulated some harm that's concrete and irreparable, even if not of great magnitude, as compared to what I think the agency has demonstrated. Which, again, on the record, I don't have anything specifically concrete that I can point to. So I just wanted to clarify that.

Again, I made my ruling. I did it this way because I thought it would enable you to take your next steps more quickly. Of course, if you want to put something in writing before me, I will look at it and consider it very quickly. I don't want to deprive you of the ability to do that.

But I did want to -- because I thought that the merits of the request had been briefed substantially, that the parties would be prepared and that this would be faster than requiring you to brief a motion.

But again, if you have authority for my ability to stay when there's no motion pending in front of me and the motion would be pending in front of the Circuit, if you have authority that I am in the position to consider a stay and that the analysis is different than the factors that I just outlined, I will accept your authority. And if you want to file that, that's fine.

But again, the question would be twofold. One, I've ruled -- I've denied the motion for stay pending appeal. So in my view, there's nothing before me to stay administratively. If I were considering a motion that was pending, I know that I could administratively stay while I consider a motion.

I could be wrong. I'm not familiar with a procedure where there's nothing pending before me and you're going to the Circuit and that I'm staying anything pending a forthcoming motion. I could be wrong. You'll give me authority if I am.

Then the second piece is would the analysis of that administrative stay or whatever you want to call it be different than the factors for a stay pending appeal because I've found those factors. And again, the Circuit may very well disagree with me and you'll ask them to.

But given my ruling, if it's just analyzing the same factors again, my ruling, unless you show me something new, is unlikely to change on that front. So again, you're free to file anything and I will look at it as soon as it comes in.

2.2

MS. BERI: Yes, Your Honor. Two things. We just wanted to get clarification about whether Kalshi will now trade these election contracts, after knowing that we are seeking relief in the D.C. Circuit. And we would submit that Your Honor has authority to manage your own docket and extend your administrative stay pending the order denying our motion.

THE COURT: I guess that's my point: It's not my docket -- it doesn't seem to be my docket anymore. But again, if I'm wrong -- I know it's my order but I don't have a motion pending before me that I'm considering.

If there was a motion pending before me that I hadn't ruled on, similar to the motion where I granted administrative stay earlier, I gave you that out of -- from a case management perspective, one, because I knew there was a short gap between my order and my opinion, and so I wanted to, just from a case management perspective, grant that stay. But there's nothing pending before me now. But again, you can show me authority.

Then, with respect to the other question, I think that's something you can communicate with plaintiff's counsel with after the hearing. I don't know that I need to be -- I don't know that that's relevant for me to be involved in that

conversation. If there's something that emerges from the conversation and you think that there's some relief that I can offer you, I'm happy to, again, hear from you.

2.2

MS. STUKES: Your Honor, if I may, this is Anne Stukes, here with Raagnee Beri. And I'll just make one more pitch to Your Honor, which is that of course the Court always has inherent authority to manage its own docket and the Court, in our view, has the inherent power to extend the administrative stay one more day, pending issuance of your ruling on the Commission's motion for stay pending appeal.

So, for instance, you could say the administrative stay is extended for 24 hours or until 5 p.m. tomorrow, and until such time as your order denying the motion for stay pending appeal is docketed on your docket. I think you have the inherent authority to do that.

THE COURT: I'm going to docket -- I made the ruling but I'm going to docket it as soon as this hearing is over.

You'll get a minute entry saying it was denied. So there's not going to be any lag time. I've issued the order and I think that's what's controlling. But just for your benefit, it will be docketed in a matter of minutes. You'll get a minute entry following this hearing.

MR. ROTH: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Hold on just one second, please.

Let me ask this -- I didn't ask this. Plaintiff,

would you oppose a 24-hour stay? MR. ROTH: We would. THE COURT: Okay. I should have asked that first. Again, for the CFTC, if there's anything that you --additional authority you want to give me or anything you want to file, you're welcome to do that. I will look at it immediately. I understand that time is of the essence in terms of your next steps. But I wanted to clear the path for you to be able to go to the Circuit as soon as possible. Okay. If there's nothing else, thank you all for your time. And like I said, if you file anything additional, I will look at it immediately. Thank you. MR. ROTH: Thank you, Your Honor. MS. BERI: Thank you, Your Honor. (Proceedings concluded at 11:31 AM) 

# CERTIFICATE

I, Stacy Johns, certify that the foregoing is an accurate transcription of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

Please note: This hearing occurred via Zoom and is therefore subject to the technological limitations of reporting remotely.

Stacy Johns, RPR, RCR Official Court Reporter

/s/ Stacy Johns Date: September 12, 2024

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