1 IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES 2 - - - - - - - - - - - - x MICHAEL J. KNIGHT, TRUSTEE : 3 4 OF THE WILLIAM L. RUDKIN : 5 TESTAMENTARY TRUST, : 6 Petitioner : 7 : No. 06-1286 v. COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL 8 : 9 REVENUE. : 10 - - - - - - - - - - - - x 11 Washington, D.C. Tuesday, November 27, 2007 12 13 14 The above-entitled matter came on for oral 15 argument before the Supreme Court of the United States 16 at 10:02 a.m. 17 APPEARANCES: 18 PETER J. RUBIN, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; on behalf of 19 the Petitioner. 20 ERIC D. MILLER, ESQ., Assistant to the Solicitor 21 General, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.; on 22 behalf of the Respondent. 23 24 25

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:02 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	first this morning in case 06-1286, Michael Knight,
5	Trustee, v. the Commissioner of Internal Revenue.
6	Mr. Rubin.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF PETER J. RUBIN
8	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
9	MR. RUBIN: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
10	please the Court:
11	The question in this case is the meaning of
12	a statute that provides that, in arriving at a trust or
13	estate's adjusted gross income, amounts are allowable in
14	full if they are and I quote here from 26 U.S.C.
15	section 67(e), which you can find at the bottom of page
16	3a of the appendix to the blue brief "costs which are
17	paid or incurred in connection with the administration
18	of the estate or trust and which would not have been
19	incurred if the property were not held in such trust or
20	estate."
21	I'd like to make three broad points.
22	First, when one applies the judicial tools
23	of statutory interpretation, the statute can mean only
24	one thing. Second, "would not" does not mean "could
25	not." The Commissioner's current reading of the statute

1 and the Commissioner's previous readings of the statute 2 are wrong. Indeed, the logic of the Commissioner's 3 position supports us. It acknowledges the distinctive 4 nature of trusts and fiduciary obligations. Finally, 5 our reading makes sense. It is consistent with the treatment of trusts and estates elsewhere in the Code. б 7 It puts in place an administrable rule that draws a 8 clear line, and by contrast the Commissioner has provided no reason at all why Congress would have wanted 9 10 to subject the fees at issue here to the 2 percent 11 floor.

12 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I think those three points 13 are certainly what would help me. Could I ask just two 14 preliminary questions? They don't necessarily have to 15 do with this case, just to get something straight. Ι 16 take it that you couldn't have claimed this deduction 17 under 162 without getting into an argument that it 18 should be capitalized and that's why 212 is in the Code? 19 MR. RUBIN: Well, 212 and 162 are really sort of two sides of the same coin. 162 is for costs 20 21 incurred in a trade or business, and there's no -- the 22 trust isn't engaged in a trade or business any more than 23 an individual who invests for the protection of property 24 is in a trade or business. 212, by contrast -- and the 25 text of 212 can be found in the governor's -- the

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1 government's brief appendix at 5a -- 212 is about 2 expenditures for the preservation of property and for 3 income in that context. So that's why this is a 212, 4 not a 162.

5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: My other question is 6 background only. Perhaps I should ask the government. 7 Are 162 expenses subject to the 2 percent ceiling? 8 MR. RUBIN: My recollection is that 162 --9 162 expenses are not subject to the -- they're not 10 miscellaneous itemized deductions.

11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Counsel, you agree 12 that as a taxpayer seeking an exception to a general 13 rule, you have the burden of proof in this case? 14 MR. RUBIN: No, Your Honor. We think that 15 -- well, there are really two things built into your 16 question, Mr. Chief Justice.

17 First is the question of who bears the 18 burden of proof in tax cases specifically, and as this 19 court has made clear, this was litigated below on a 20 slightly different theory. The government's theory has 21 changed during the pendency of the litigation. And 22 below they argued that this was a common expense for 23 individuals; yet they introduced no evidence of that. 24 And under the United States v. Janis, this Court's 25 decision in that case, they can't -- the government is

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1	required to come forward with something before assessing
2	tax. But in terms of exceptions and rules, we can
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We can't take I
4	guess it's not judicial notice, but we can't assume that
5	individual investors with several million dollars of
6	liquid assets might hire investment advisors?
7	MR. RUBIN: They might hire investment
8	advisors, Your Honor, but we don't think that
9	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Do they usually hire
10	investment advisors?
11	MR. RUBIN: I don't think it's clear that
12	they usually hire investment advisors, but I think the
13	important point here, in a way, is the premise of your
14	question, which is that only certain trusts with certain
15	assets, under a test that looked at what the
16	Commissioner used to argue, which is commonality or
17	customariness of a particular expense, only the
18	Commissioner herself now argues that, that this test is
19	unmanageable because there's difficulty in figuring out
20	what the denominator of the fraction is. Do you mean
21	all people? Is it common among everyone, among
22	taxpayers, among taxpayers with certain assets? Would a
23	\$100,000 trust have to be treated differently than a
24	million dollar trust? Then there's the question of what
25	do you mean by "common." You suggested "usually" or

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1 "sometimes," "might." That's not clear either. And 2 then ultimately there would have to be a trial somewhere 3 to determine whether costs like this are indeed common 4 to whatever standard was articulated. And I think this 5 is why --

6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I quess you'd 7 concede, wouldn't you, that you're not entitled to all 8 of the investment advice that you receive but perhaps only that that is related to the trust status? In other 9 10 words, if your investment advisor charges you \$50,000 11 and, you know, 10,000 of it is unique to the trust, but 12 40,000 is the same sort of advice he'd give an 13 individual, you'd only be able to get the 10,000 outside 14 of the 2 percent limit?

15 MR. RUBIN: We think, Your Honor, that all 16 trust investment fees are distinctive, that what renders 17 them distinctive and renders them fully deductible under 18 the statute is that they are incurred as a result of 19 distinctive fiduciary obligations. We think the statute 20 draws a line between costs like that, that are incurred 21 as a result of distinctive fiduciary obligation, which 22 would include all investment management or advice fees, 23 and by contrast costs that inhere in ownership of a particular piece of property and that any owner of that 24 25 property would have to pay.

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1	JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, I don't I don't
2	really see that line. I mean, let's let's take, you
3	know, fixing the roof on a house that's in the trust.
4	Aren't there distinctive trustee obligations with
5	respect to preservation of property, just as there are
6	with respect to preservation of financial assets?
7	MR. RUBIN: Yes, Your Honor.
8	JUSTICE SCALIA: I think that's a very hard
9	line to draw.
10	MR. RUBIN: Yes, Your Honor. I think the
11	line is is actually easier to draw than your question
12	suggests. I think that fixing a roof on a house might
13	be a cost that is close to the line. It may be that
14	some for example, if there were an ordinance in the
15	community that required upkeep of a house, we think that
16	it would be subject to the 2 percent floor.
17	The archetypal example of a cost that we
18	think Congress intended and by this language we believe
19	Congress rendered subject to the 2 percent floor are the
20	costs of pass-through entities that might be owned by
21	the trust or estate. So, for example, if there's an S
22	corporation and its management incurs an expense, that's
23	reported back because the S corporation has no
24	independent existence, that's reported back to the
25	owner, individual or trustee, and is reported as an

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1 administrative expense. It would be subject to the 2 2 percent floor from the individual who incurred it, and 3 it would have been incurred, which is the language of 4 the statute, whether or not --5 JUSTICE SCALIA: I'm still --6 MR. RUBIN: -- it was held in such trust or 7 _ _ 8 JUSTICE SCALIA: I'm still trying to get 9 back to my original question. I -- I would like to know 10 what you think is not an expense that's distinctive to 11 -- to a trust, other than fixing the roof, because you 12 haven't persuaded me on that. 13 MR. RUBIN: The --14 JUSTICE SCALIA: I think fixing a roof is 15 fixing a roof. 16 MR. RUBIN: The cost of -- not distinctive 17 costs would be the costs incurred by an S corporation 18 owned by the trustee. 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: Anything else? MR. RUBIN: A condo fee, for example, that 20 21 simply essentially runs with the property. Whoever owns 22 this land is going to have to pay the condo fee. 23 Required insurance on a vehicle. 24 JUSTICE SCALIA: Isn't there a trustee 25 obligation to pay all -- all expenses which if not paid

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1	will would cause a depletion of the assets?
2	MR. RUBIN: It's a question of
3	JUSTICE SCALIA: Can't you say that that's a
4	trustee response I mean, if the criterion is he paid
5	this money only to discharge an obligation as a trustee,
6	it seems to me all of his expenses are in that category,
7	with the possible exception of the S corporations you're
8	talking about.
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9 MR. RUBIN: Well, Your Honor, the costs are 10 distinctive in the case of -- of those things that are caused by fiduciary obligation in the sense that we 11 describe because that's how they are caused. 12 These 13 costs are incurred without regard to that fiduciary 14 obligation. They're paid perhaps because of fiduciary 15 obligation, but they are incurred through ownership of 16 the property.

And there is a hint in the text. If you look at the text, you'll note that costs that are paid or incurred are deductible. But this asks about whether they would have been incurred if the property were not held in such trust or estate.

JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Rubin, you were not willing to agree with the Chief when he said: Well, maybe there are some investment expenses that are special because this is a trust. But there must be some

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that any investor would incur. But you say it's got to
 be all one way.

3 MR. RUBIN: Yes, Justice Ginsburg. Trustees 4 cannot under law, and do not, invest as individuals do. 5 To begin with, they always have to keep their eye on 6 current, future, contingent and remainder beneficiaries 7 and treat them with equal fairness.

8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But they don't have 9 to hire investment advisors. There is a standard that 10 they may think they can meet on their own. They may --11 you know, it may be an investment advisor that is the 12 trustee. He doesn't have to hire somebody else.

So it's not something that necessarilyinheres in the nature of the trust.

MR. RUBIN: Whenever a trustee hires an investment advisor, it is to fulfill this fiduciary obligation. It is true that there may be a trustee who is expert in this.

19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Why -- if I could 20 pause you on that, why is that the case? Let's say it's 21 a -- the trustee understands perfectly his obligations 22 under the law. Let's just say he is supposed to 23 preserve capital and invest conservatively, but he wants 24 advice on which is the best conservative investment. 25 You know, is it railroads or is it

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1 utilities? And that's the investment advice he seeks -2 just that. He says: I know how I'm supposed to invest
3 as a fiduciary, but there are options in there, and I
4 just want advice on the options.

5 MR. RUBIN: Yes, Your Honor. I think that 6 that is actually quite a typical situation. The 7 trustee, of course, knows his or her obligations. It's 8 his or her inability to figure out how to fulfill them 9 that --

10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, isn't that 11 just like an individual investor? If you have an 12 individual investor with \$10 million in liquid assets, 13 he or she might know what he wants to do, either capital 14 appreciation or preservation, you know, whatever the option is, but just wants some advice on how best to go 15 16 about that. That sounds exactly like the trustee in our 17 hypothetical.

18 MR. RUBIN: Well, Your Honor, there are unique obligations. Some of these are set out in 19 This is in our brief at page 7 of 20 Connecticut statutes. 21 the blue brief. There are ten considerations that 22 Connecticut law requires trustees to examine, including 23 things unique to trusts: the nature of the trust, its duration. The need for liquidity or income versus 24 25 capital, which is principal growth versus income, is a

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1 uniquely trustlike concern.

2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No. No. No. You 3 see, that's my difficulty with your position. It's not 4 uniquely trust because you certainly have individuals 5 who may want income rather than capital appreciation or, 6 you know, preservation of capital. They may have 7 exactly the same objectives as a trustee. It's not 8 unique to the trust.

9 MR. RUBIN: It -- I quess I have two answers 10 to that, Your Honor. It may, by happenstance, be that 11 out of the black box of investment advice an individual, 12 by happenstance, gets the same advice as a trust 13 somewhere; but it would be by happenstance. The 14 decisional process leading to obtaining the advice, 15 incurring the cost, is distinct for trust, and indeed the advice they receive is distinct. 16

17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, it seems to me that 18 that just simply couldn't have been Congress's purpose 19 in passing this statute because now you have a recipe 20 for avoidance. In most States -- California has a rule 21 that the trustee has to make prudent business 22 investments. I assume a great number of businessmen 23 outside the trust context think that they have their principal objective of making prudent business 24 25 investments. But under your theory all expenses for

1 that objective would fall within this exclusion. I just 2 don't think that's what the Congress could possibly have 3 intended.

4 MR. RUBIN: Well, Your Honor, to begin with, 5 there is no risk here of tax avoidance through creation 6 of a trust. These are non-grantor trusts. There are 7 substantial costs involved in creating them, but, among 8 other things, the top bracket of 35 percent --

9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, is that true just in 10 your case?

11 MR. RUBIN: No --

JUSTICE KENNEDY: Universally, there is never a danger of tax avoidance? You want us to write the decision on the assumption that tax avoidance is never a problem in the creation of a trust?

MR. RUBIN: Well, the Commissioner concedes at page 37 of her brief that there is no substantial problem of income- splitting through the use of non-grantor trusts; and, indeed, throughout --JUSTICE GINSBURG: Is that true? And I'm

21 looking at testimony given by J. Roger Mintz in 1986 22 when this measure was before Congress, and in that 23 written testimony is the statement: "First, the 24 treatment of trusts as separate taxpayers with a 25 separate, graduated rate schedule can cause income to be

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1 taxed at a rate lower than if the grantor had retained 2 direct ownership of the trust assets or given the assets 3 outright to the beneficiaries."

4 So apparently the Treasury was telling the5 Congress that there is a problem.

MR. RUBIN: Yes, Justice Ginsburg. 6 That 7 problem was solved in Section 1 of 26 U.S. Code -- and this is described at page 37 of our brief -- by a 8 compression of the tax brackets. The 35 percent bracket 9 10 kicks in for non-grantor trusts at \$10,500. For an 11 individual it kicks in at \$349,000. As a consequence, 12 there is no incentive to move money into a trust in 13 order to avoid taxation at a -- at a lower rate.

JUSTICE SCALIA: Excuse me. I am not sure what you mean by "non-grantor trusts." What is a non-grantor trust"?

MR. RUBIN: A non-grantor trust is a real trust with economic substance. A grantor trust is a trust in which the grantor retains certain powers, for example it's revocable, or whatever; and it's treated as -- people set them up for estate- planning purposes, but 2 --JUSTICE SCALIA: Every trust has a grantor,

24 I assume.

MR. RUBIN: Yes, yes, yes.

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1	JUSTICE SCALIA: So a "non-grantor trust"
2	MR. RUBIN: But this is I guess this is a
3	term of art.
4	JUSTICE SCALIA: is a trust without any
5	money.
6	MR. RUBIN: Yes.
7	JUSTICE GINSBURG: A grantor trust would be
8	one of those pass-throughs.
9	MR. RUBIN: Yes. And, indeed, this, I think
10	and part of the answer to Justice Kennedy's question:
11	The problem of tax avoidance was dealt with in section
12	67)(c), where entities like that were were said to be
13	treated as pass-through entities with no independent
14	existence. But trusts and estates were excepted
15	specifically from that because of this absence of risk
16	of income-splitting. And, indeed, we think that the
17	the structure of the statute, not merely its text, but
18	the structure of the statute, indicates that this is
19	what Congress intended.
20	It's not it's not written the way I would
21	have written it, Your Honor. But none of the other
22	readings are textually even supportable, and this
23	JUSTICE STEVENS: May I ask this sort of
24	elementary question, and it may reveal my stupidity.
25	But actually sometimes these costs are incurred by

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individuals, and sometimes they're not. But -- so that
 you would normally think there's going to be a
 case-by-case analysis of what happened in the particular
 case.

5 But do I understand correctly that both you 6 and the government take the position that we should 7 apply the same rule across the board regardless of the 8 actual facts?

9 MR. RUBIN: I wouldn't say "regardless of 10 the actual facts," Your Honor. But I would say this: 11 We believe it's a categorical test.

The first of what the Commissioner calls her 12 13 textually plausible readings is literally a case-by-case 14 examination of what would have happened with this 15 property if it were held by whomever, the beneficiary, 16 the grantor, it's not clear whom. And, as they 17 described, Congress can't have meant that. And this 18 would be an imponderable. How would you ever --19 JUSTICE STEVENS: That's the most normal

20 reading of the language, it's a case-by-case test. It 21 seems to me the -- probably the most unwise reading, 22 also.

23 MR. RUBIN: Well, Your Honor, I think -- I 24 see your point. And I think this is why, if you look at 25 the structure of Section 67, which treats pass-through

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1 entities but not trusts and estates as presenting a risk 2 of income-splitting; if you look at the Code more 3 broadly, which permits deductions by trusts and estates 4 in many circumstances -- section 68 does; section 154 5 does -- when they're not permitted by individuals and 6 especially when you look at the statutory history 7 here --

8 Both houses of Congress -- well, this was 9 preexisting law, I should begin by saying. And then 10 both houses of Congress passed in the '86 Act this 11 statute without the second clause.

JUSTICE BREYER: I've read the legislative history, which shows to me, anyway, precisely no light whatsoever. It's -- the only relevant sentence, which is the third sentence, simply repeats the statute. And, therefore, I thought that what Congress is trying to do is say, treat trusts like individuals, except in respect to special expenses.

What are special expenses? Those that are related to the trust and that an individual wouldn't have occurred -- incurred. I can't say it much clearly than that. But I have an absolutely clear idea what it means. To me it means that if this is an expense that the trust is saying is special, I would say, would a reasonable person who did not hold these assets in

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1 trust, would such a person be likely to make that kind 2 of expenditure? 3 And if the answer to that question is yes, 4 well, then I would say it's not a special expense. And 5 if the answer is no, I would say it was. 6 And then the IRS and you will come and say 7 that isn't precise enough. And I'd say the IRS has 8 plenty of authority in its regs to give lists of examples which they do in such instances. 9 10 Now, I'm posing that, not because I bought 11 into it, though I'm tempted to, but I'd like to know 12 what your response is. 13 MR. RUBIN: Well, Your Honor, I guess my 14 response is severalfold. To begin with, the statute 15 doesn't ask what usually happens on the outside or 16 commonly or customarily, and indeed the Commissioner has 17 abandoned this reading of the statute precisely because 18 it presents the kind of imponderables that I was 19 discussing with the Chief Justice: What is usually 20 done? Do trusts of different sizes have different 21 rules? When a trust's assets come below a certain 22 point, what about that? And most importantly, it's not in the text of the statute. 23 24 Now, the Commissioner concedes the 25 distinctive nature of trusts. And if you look at the

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1 examples that she gives on page 23 of her brief of what 2 it is that, that is deductible in full, it's the same as 3 this: Fiduciary income tax preparation. Well, 4 people -- many people get income tax preparation for 5 individual income tax returns. The only difference is it's a Form 1040 or a Form 1041. 6 7 Our case is much further from the line than 8 that because the investment advice must be tailored to these, to these rules under Connecticut law. 9 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Okav. Well, then 11 let's take that. Let's suppose that the trustee goes to 12 an investment advisor, doesn't tell him that he is a 13 trustee, just says, I need to know, I can't decide, 14 should I invest in Union Pacific or CSX? I'm going to 15 invest in a railroad; which one do you like better? He 16 doesn't tell him he's a trustee, gets some advice and 17 gets a bill. Is that subject to the 2 percent floor, 18 because presumably the advice has got nothing to do with 19 fiduciary responsibilities? 20 MR. RUBIN: If it has nothing to do with 21 fiduciary responsibilities, Your Honor, we think it 22 would be a breach of fiduciary obligation to get --

23 waste the trust money paying for the advice and to act 24 upon it.

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CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Oh, no. It's a

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1 reasonable -- let's say a railroad stock is a reasonable
2 investment for a trust. He just wants to know which one
3 is the best one.

4 MR. RUBIN: We think that this is intended as a categorical rule. And we think that asking that 5 question is in furtherance of these unique obligations 6 and the prudent investor standard, which is not -- this 7 is a new standard that's developed in the United States 8 9 over the next decade or so. It is not merely what a 10 prudent man would do under the old Harvard College v. 11 Amory common law test.

12 Investments that individuals can and do 13 invest in are not open to trustees who have a series of 14 rules, some of which are counterintuitive, in fact, 15 about what they can do. And these are listed at pages 7 16 to 10 of our brief. But that -- what you're describing 17 we think is investment advice and if it's properly 18 obtained it is distinctive.

19 I should say also in response -20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: How can it be
21 distinctive if the advisor doesn't even know that the
22 person's a trustee?
23 MR. RUBIN: Well, the question is the

24 decisional process of the trustee. When the trustee 25 calls up anyone, the income tax preparer, and says I'd

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1 like to hire you, he doesn't have to say at the moment 2 of hiring it's for a trust. 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, when it's 4 filled out --5 MR. RUBIN: He'll figure it out --6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- he knows it's on 7 Form 1041 rather than 1040. 8 MR. RUBIN: He will eventually come to know that the form is different, Your Honor, yes. But I 9 10 don't think the subjective knowledge of the person from 11 whom one gets the advice is the question. The question, 12 I think, is textually directed to the incurment of the 13 cost.

14 And I should say also in part of response to part of Justice Breyer's question, the statutory history 15 16 isn't merely the legislative history. It's the fact 17 that, despite having just the first prong in it when it 18 was passed by both houses of Congress, there was a floor 19 amendment in the Senate on the day that it passed the 20 Senate that dealt with pass-throughs. The first part of 21 67(c), and the changes made in the conference committee, 22 again as the Commissioner acknowledges at page 37 of her 23 brief, the changes made in conference, including the addition of this, were to deal precisely with how should 24 25 we deal with pass-throughs and trusts, and trust

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1 ownership of pass-throughs --

2 JUSTICE BREYER: There's nothing that I 3 could find anywhere that talked about pass-throughs in 4 respect to the special situation of trusts and estates. 5 In the first sentence it speaks to it in respect to individuals. It all makes sense. And what they seem to б 7 be saying is just what I said initially. We do agree 8 trusts do have a special claim, but only in respect to special trust expenses. And which are they? They're 9 10 the ones an individual wouldn't have incurred. 11 And I'll put a gloss on it, like we do in 12 law. I say a reasonable individual. I say wouldn't 13 reasonably have incurred. And then I leave it up to the 14 IRS to say which are the expenses that an individual 15 would likely incur and which ones he wouldn't likely 16 incur. 17 Now, that runs throughout tax law, doesn't 18 it, that kind of list, what's a necessary expenditure, 19 what isn't. I mean, they do that all the time, don't 20 they? 21 MR. RUBIN: Yes, Your Honor. Regulations, 22 however, have to be both reasonable --23 JUSTICE BREYER: Not buying into they're 24 thing with "could." I mean, that isn't my problem. 25 MR. RUBIN: Okay. If they drew a list of

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1 what are the distinct trust costs, it would have to 2 include, if it includes fiduciary, income tax 3 preparation or, better yet, judicial accounting, 4 individual duties in the case of guardianships and so 5 on. This is of the same caliber and at the same level of generality we think would have to be covered. 6 JUSTICE ALITO: But have they issued a 7 8 regulation drawing up this list at this point? 9 MR. RUBIN: There's only a proposed regulation, Your Honor. And we believe that because 10 11 their readings are not textually supportable, are 12 unadministratable and aren't what Congress intended, 13 that after applying the ordinary tools of statutory 14 construction, there is only one meaning that this text 15 can have. 16 I'd like to respond to --17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Why is it not 18 administerable? Whether you think it's a faithful 19 rendition of the statute is one thing, but this is 20 exactly what Justice Breyer was talking about. It says 21 these are the things that are special to the trust, and 22 then these are the things that are not. That's what the 23 proposed reg does, right? 24 MR. RUBIN: Yes, Your Honor. It is -- it's 25 a little bit of a moving target but it does say that.

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1	If those are nonexhaustive lists and the difficulty of
2	allocating these costs of attributing them to one thing
3	or another, putting in place systems that trustees that
4	charge unitary fees, which is what corporate trustees
5	do, is enormous. And some of this can be seen in the
6	comments, the public comments to the regulation, some
7	excerpts of which are included in the appendix to our
8	reply brief.
9	But this is not a simple test. And indeed,
10	the Commissioner essentially concedes that, saying that
11	she would need to have safe harbors or some other
12	unprincipled line because of the difficulty.
13	I'd like to reserve the balance of my time.
14	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
15	Mr. Rubin.
16	Mr. Miller.
17	ORAL ARGUMENT OF ERIC D. MILLER
18	ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
19	MR. MILLER: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
20	please the Court:
21	Section 67(e) creates a narrow exception to
22	the 2 percent floor for costs which would not have not
23	have been incurred if the property were not held in
24	trust.
25	JUSTICE GINSBURG: It wasn't narrow in the

25

1 beginning, right?

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2	MR. MILLER: Well, that's correct, Your
3	Honor. The second clause was added in a floor
4	amendment. Initially Congress had drafted just the
5	"which are paid" "which are incurred or paid in
6	connection with the administration of the estate or
7	trust." Then the second clause was added. And that
8	clause demands that the costs would not have been
9	incurred if the property were not held
10	JUSTICE GINSBURG: This is somewhat of a
11	mystery, the wording of that clause. And since it came
12	in at the very last minute, isn't it appropriate to give
13	it a limited reading, rather than, in your suggestion,
14	that this provision that up until the very end read just
15	administration, "costs paid or incurred in connection
16	with the administration of the estate or trust,"
17	period? And then there was this add-on. Why should we
18	give that an expansive meaning?
19	MR. MILLER: I think, regardless of the
20	timing, Your Honor, Congress chose to enact it and that
21	choice has to be given effect. And I think when you
22	look at the way that the section as a whole is set up,
23	67(e), the first introductory clause creates the general

25 gross income of an estate shall be computed in the same

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principle that for purposes of this section the adjusted

1 manner as in the case of an individual, except that, and 2 then there is clause one.

3 So in the context of this section, we have a 4 general rule and then an exception. And that ought to 5 be interpreted in light of the usual principle that 6 exceptions, particularly ambiguous exceptions, should 7 not be construed so as to swallow up the entirety of the 8 rule, which is essentially what Petitioner's

9 interpretation would do.

JUSTICE SCALIA: Why do you think that the only instances where the expense would not have occurred are those instances where it could not have occurred? That doesn't strike me as self-evident.

I mean, I understand why you do it, so that can you have a nice clear line, which I am all for. But the line given by your colleague is just as clear. I don't know why I should accept yours when -- I mean, would" just does not mean "could." I mean, would have, could have, should have, it's -- they're different words.

21 MR. MILLER: Well, they are -- they're 22 certainly different words. We're not suggesting that 23 they are synonyms. But we are suggesting that there are 24 contexts in which the word "would" can carry the same 25 meaning that is also expressed through the word "could."

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1	JUSTICE SCALIA: Give me a context where
2	where other than this statute, where in common
3	parlance people use "would" to mean "could."
4	MR. MILLER: Another example would be if I
5	were to say that that glass would not hold more than 8
6	ounces of water, that would mean that it could not hold
7	more than 8 ounces of water.
8	JUSTICE SCALIA: No, I don't think it would
9	mean that.
10	JUSTICE BREYER: A glass
11	JUSTICE SCALIA: Anything that could not be
12	done of course would not be done. But that doesn't mean
13	that the that the two words mean the same thing.
14	MR. MILLER: But
15	JUSTICE SCALIA: It's true that one is
16	included within the other, but they don't mean the same
17	thing.
18	MR. MILLER: Would I think that the
19	unadorned use of the word "would" here
20	JUSTICE SCALIA: What could not happen would
21	not happen, of course. But it doesn't mean that the
22	two concepts are not the same.
23	MR. MILLER: I think, when when you have
24	the word "would," as we have in this statute, that's not
25	qualified in any way, it's ambiguous in the sense that

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it can mean definitely would not have been incurred, 1 2 probably would not have been incurred, customarily, 3 ordinarily would not have been incurred, which is the 4 meaning --5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You didn't think much of this argument before the Second Circuit adopted б 7 it, did you? You didn't argue this before the Court of 8 Appeals? 9 (Laughter.) 10 MR. MILLER: We did not argue it before --11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So you have a 12 fallback argument. 13 MR. MILLER: Well, that -- that's right. 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, now might be a 15 good time to fall back. 16 (Laughter.) 17 JUSTICE BREYER: Before -- I mean, we have 18 lots of good examples. I mean, I could have colored my 19 room at home, painted it with light green plastic, but I 20 wouldn't have done it. I mean, endless examples. 21 MR. MILLER: Right. And certainly the 22 statute also admits of the reading given to it by the 23 Fourth and Federal Circuits, which is that "would not 24 have been incurred" means customarily or ordinarily 25 would not have been incurred by individuals.

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1	JUSTICE KENNEDY: If we can rush to the
2	fallback position, is it acceptable to have a test that
3	says would the expense have been incurred if the
4	nontrust business wanted to achieve an objective that
5	the trust wanted to achieve here, fixing the roof?
6	MR. MILLER: I I think that that raises
7	the question of what is the relevant comparison group
8	for for individuals outside of the trust side of it.
9	JUSTICE KENNEDY: And I think the structure
10	of the statute requires us to to do that.
11	MR. MILLER: That's right. And and we
12	would suggest that the relevant comparison is
13	individuals with with similar assets, right, because
14	it's in the absence of a trust, not if the property did
15	not exist. So you have to look at an individual who
16	held those assets outright, and an individual with those
17	assets trying to achieve those goals might well seek
18	investment advice.
19	JUSTICE ALITO: Will, you give as an example
20	of something that wouldn't fall within the 2 percent
21	floor the cost of preparing and filing a fiduciary
22	income tax return. What is the difference between that
23	and getting fiduciary investment advice?

24 MR. MILLER: The -- the difference is -25 JUSTICE ALITO: Just because it's a

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1	different form that's filled out?
2	MR. MILLER: What
3	JUSTICE ALITO: Is it more expensive to
4	to fill out a 1041 than to fill out the 1040?
5	MR. MILLER: It's more expensive because
б	it's an additional cost. If an individual were to hold
7	the property outright, he or she would simply put the
8	income from that property on his own 1040. If in
9	addition there is a trust, then the trust has to fill
10	out a 1041, the trust also has to prepare Form K-1s and
11	send them out both to the beneficiaries and to the IRS,
12	showing the beneficiaries' share of the trust income,
13	and then the individual still has to file a 1040. So
14	the existence of the trust has created this whole
15	additional set of filing and reporting obligations.
16	JUSTICE SOUTER: Yes, but it's the
17	individual who has to file the 1040. What the trustee
18	is filing is the 1041. And and why do you place I
19	was going to ask the same question that Justice Alito
20	did, and that is why do you place so much significance
21	either in the label, i.e., it's fiduciary return, or in
22	the peculiar fact that it is a fiduciary who is filing
23	that return?
24	It's a tax return and and I think your

25 the government's argument is that with respect to -- to

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1 other items that may be disputed, you should regard them 2 at a fairly general level, i.e., investment advice, not 3 fiduciary investment advice. But when you come to the 4 tax return, you don't regard it as a general -- at a 5 general level; you regard it at a very specific level, i.e., a fiduciary tax return. It seems to me that the б 7 government with respect to the tax return is doing 8 exactly what it criticizes the taxpayer for doing with respect to investment advice. And I don't understand 9 10 the distinction. 11 MR. MILLER: With respect to the tax return, 12 it's not that it's a fiduciary tax return as opposed to 13 an individual tax return; it's that it's an extra tax 14 return that has to be filed. JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, it's the only tax 15 16 return that the fiduciary has to file; isn't that 17 correct? The fiduciary files that tax return and the 18 beneficiary files a 1040. 19 MR. MILLER: That's right, but if the 20 beneficiary --21 JUSTICE SOUTER: But the only return the fiduciary's filing is the 1041; isn't that right? 22 23 MR. MILLER: That's the only -- but in that -- in the system of the beneficiary and the fiduciary 24 there are two tax returns that have to be filed, whereas 25

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1 --

2 JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay; I understand that that is a factual difference, but I don't understand 3 4 what it is that makes that a difference in principle. 5 MR. MILLER: I think that -- that's an extra 6 obligation that would not have been incurred in the 7 absence of the trust. And I think, turning to the case 8 of investment advice, I think there is really no level 9 of generality or particularity at which one can look at 10 investment advice such that there is anything unique 11 about trust investment advice.

JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, can't you ask it --12 13 can't -- can't you ask this question pointing towards 14 something unique: If the individual investor does a 15 very poor job of managing his investments, all he can 16 ultimately do is cry about it. But if the trustee does 17 a very poor job, the trustee is going to get sued. So 18 that when the trustee asks for an investment advisor's 19 advice, the trustee is addressing an issue that the individual does not have. The trustee wants to be 20 21 covered. He also, I presume, wants to be a good 22 trustee. But he is in fact doing something which is, to 23 use your phrase, in addition to what the individual investor would do. He is looking out for somebody else 24 25 and he is looking out for himself if the investment goes

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1 south. Why isn't that a sufficient difference that is 2 at least comparable to the difference that you talk 3 about in the filing of a fiduciary tax return? 4 MR. MILLER: It's not a difference, because 5 if the individual invests poorly he'll lose money. And if the -- and he'll lose his own money. б If the 7 fiduciary invests poorly he may get sued and the measure of damages in that suit will be the amount of money he 8 lost. So they're both facing the possibility of losing. 9 JUSTICE SOUTER: Yes, but whether -- whether 10 11 he gets socked with damages or not is going to depend in 12 part whether he is covered by an investment advisor's bit of advice; and that is -- that is a different item 13 14 in the calculus of liability. He is providing for 15 something that the individual investor does not provide 16 for or need to provide for. 17 MR. MILLER: Well, the -- the standard of 18 conduct that is supposed to govern the fiduciary is the 19 prudent investor rule, which looks at what a reasonable 20 prudent individual would do in managing his own money so 21 I think that --JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, I have the same 22 23 problem. You know, I -- it seems to me that it is 24 entirely reasonable to say only a trustee can seek 25 investment advice concerning what he should do to

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1 fulfill his responsibilities under the trust. Only a 2 trustee can do that. A private individual might seek 3 investment advice as to how he could maximize the income 4 or -- or the growth of the funds that he has, but 5 only -- only a trustee seeks advice as to how he can fulfill his responsibilities under the trust. And you б 7 could say that's distinctive. No individual would do 8 that because he's not a trustee.

9 MR. MILLER: But there's no distinction in 10 that case in the -- in the fee that's charged or in the 11 advice that's given by the investment advisor. In 12 either case somebody goes to the advisor and says, I 13 have the following goals that I want to achieve with 14 this money. It may be my money; it may be a trust's 15 money. And the advisor thinks about those goals and 16 comes up with -- with investment advice. And those 17 qoals --

18 JUSTICE SCALIA: It may -- it may well be 19 the same advice, but in -- but in one case it is -- it 20 is advice sought by and given to a trustee, a unique 21 kind of advice. In -- in substance, it may turn out to 22 be the same; but it's not the same advice you're giving to a private individual. You're saying here's the trust 23 instrument and here are the objects to be achieved by 24 25 the trust instrument and this is the -- the advice that

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will best do that. That doesn't happen with an
 individual.

3 MR. MILLER: I mean, but for the fact that 4 the word "trust" is in there, I think the substance of 5 the interaction with the investment advisor is exactly 6 the same.

JUSTICE ALITO: But doesn't your proposed regulation concede that there is investment advisory advice that is unique to -- to estates and trusts? Isn't that what subparagraph C says?

MR. MILLER: No. Subparagraph C has two lists, both of which are nonexclusive: a list of items that are unique to trusts and a list of items that are not unique to trusts. In the list of items that are not unique to trusts is investing for total return. There is no type of investment advice --

JUSTICE GINSBURG: Why that limitation? Why wouldn't it say just "investment advice," but it's -investing for total return is more limited?

20 MR. MILLER: I think perhaps because that's 21 most obviously the type of advice that is not unique to 22 trusts. But the -- the proposed regulation does not 23 identify any kind of advice that is unique to trusts. 24 JUSTICE GINSBURG: It doesn't say it's one 25 or the other. So it's not so sure, right? It's sure

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1 about advice on investing for total return. 2 MR. MILLER: And --3 JUSTICE GINSBURG: In other words, the 4 regulation, the proposed regulation, doesn't answer this 5 case of investment advice in general as opposed to advice on investing for total return. б 7 MR. MILLER: You're right that the 8 regulation in terms of the enumeration in subsection (b) is silent on the question of other types of --9 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: Can you really spice up 11 advice that way? You ask the advisor, say, which --12 what percentage of your advice was the advice that went 13 to maximizing total return and what percentage went to 14 this other thing? I mean, gee, I don't want to get 15 courts into trying to figure that out, or private 16 individuals or financial advisors in trying to figure 17 that out. That's just a crazy way to run a tax system, 18 it seems to me. 19 MR. MILLER: I think that's right, and that's why I think that the -- despite the fact that 20 21 investing for total return is the only example given in the list, which, again, is described as not exclusive. 22 23 I think the best reading of the proposed regulation is 24

JUSTICE SCALIA: But that's not all advice.

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1	That's just some of the advice, right?
2	MR. MILLER: Yes.
3	JUSTICE SCALIA: Now, what about the rest of
4	it? How do you slice up, you know now, investment
5	advisor, tell me what percentage of your advice went to
6	the total return and what percentage went to other
7	things. I don't think the investment advisor is going
8	to be able to tell you.
9	MR. MILLER: I think the best reading of the
10	proposed regulation, and perhaps the Service may well
11	clarify this during the rule-making process, is that all
12	advice is not unique to trusts because there's no type
13	of advice that a trustee could seek that an individual
14	could not
15	JUSTICE GINSBURG: They certainly weren't
16	sure about it when they drafted this regulation,
17	proposed regulation.
18	MR. MILLER: Well, it is it's just a
19	proposal, again, and I think they picked what's perhaps
20	the most obvious.
21	JUSTICE GINSBURG: But in other categories,
22	they express no such limitation. Custody or management
23	of property, not qualified. And they but when you
24	get to investing, it has that total return. Everything
25	else has got maintenance, repair, insurance.

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MR. MILLER: That's right. And there's also a fairly extensive list of nonexclusive -- of nonunique products or services, and that does not include any other type of investment advice. So I think what one can draw the opposite inference from that list, but in any event, that's something that could be clarified in the rule-making process.

8 Returning to --

9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So how does your 10 customary or commonly incurred test work? Let's say you 11 have two trusts, one \$10 million, the other 10,000. I think an individual with \$10 million might well seek 12 investment advice, but an individual with only 10,000 13 14 might decide it's not worth it. Would you have a 15 different application of the 2 percent rule for those two trusts? 16

MR. MILLER: I think if the test is whether -- whether the individuals would have -- would commonly ordinarily incur that cost, I think one might well look at that because the comparison would be individuals with similar assets, and, as Your Honor knows, there might be a difference depending on the size.

23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: How many -- how many 24 individuals do you need? Let's say it's \$3 million in 25 the trust, and we think maybe 60 percent of people would

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1 hire an investment advisor; 40 percent would think they 2 can do just as well on their own. Is that customarily 3 incurred by individuals? 4 MR. MILLER: I think it might well be enough 5 that -- for something that the Service could clarify through --6 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Your answer to both questions is "might well be," and that's a fairly vague 8 line when it comes to taxes. 9 10 MR. MILLER: The --11 JUSTICE SCALIA: And whatever line you --12 you pick, I guarantee you, trusts are going to break 13 themselves up into mini-trusts that fall under the line. 14 I mean people aren't stupid. 15 (Laughter.) 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Or, even worse, 17 advisors are going to break themselves up into different 18 advisors. There's going to be somebody who says I'm a 19 fiduciary advisor whenever a trustee calls, but, I'm a 20 normal advisor, when it's an individual. 21 MR. MILLER: I think the difficulty in 22 applying that test is one of the reasons why we suggest 23 that the categorical -- the more categorical approach, 24 which we think is also a permissible reading of the 25 statute, is the preferable one. But, in either event,

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if the test is customarily or ordinarily incurred, it was Petitioner's obligation in the tax court to show that they qualified for the exemption from the 2 percent floor. And so it would be Petitioner's burden to show that this is a cost not that's customarily or ordinarily incurred by individuals.

7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What's your best 8 case for that proposition? Your colleague resisted the 9 notion that he had the burden and what's your best case 10 for that?

11 MR. MILLER: It's not a case, but it's the 12 rule. Tax Court Rule 142 places the burden of proof on 13 the taxpayer. Petitioner sites --

14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But I thought that 15 rule applied to the applicability of individual 16 exemptions. Here we have a different question. It's 17 how to read an exception to the general rule. Do you 18 have a case for a proposition that the taxpayer has the 19 burden in those cases? You said that in your brief, but 20 it didn't have a case cite with it.

21 MR. MILLER: No. We don't have a case, but 22 the rule is unqualified in terms of its applicability. 23 It doesn't say only on particular issues. And the case 24 that Petitioner cites is United States against Janis, 25 which is about a "naked" assessment, which is far

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1 removed from what we have here.

2 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Are you saying --3 MR. MILLER: A "naked" assessment is --4 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Are we saying, as a 5 question of law, the taxpayer has the burden of proof? If it isn't a question of proof, it isn't a question of б 7 evidence? 8 MR. MILLER: No. I was referring to questions of fact. I understood the question to be if 9 10 the legal test turns on the factual question of what is 11 it, what is customary or ordinary for individuals to incur, then on that fact, that would be a factual issue. 12 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, what would -- that's 13 14 why I made the suggestion I had earlier. I was doubtful 15 about the wisdom of trying to turn this matter into a purely factual one. And so suppose you said, which 16 17 would come to about the same thing, that expenditure 18 would be incurred in this instance by someone who didn't 19 hold these assets in trust. What that means is would a 20 -- an investor not in the trust, not holding it in 21 trust, reasonably have been, or a reasonable investor 22 have been likely to make this expenditure? That turns 23 it into a more quasi-legal question where people -- and 24 then it's a matter of judgment, which these things do 25 come down to. That's what judges are there for, to

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1 judge. And thereby we avoid the burden-of-proof 2 problem. It comes to about the same thing. Is there 3 any objection to it? What's the reason not to do it? 4 MR. MILLER: If that is the test, then it's 5 very easy to apply to the case of investment advice, because we know that the trustee's obligation is to act б 7 as a reasonable and prudent individual would. And so we 8 know that if -- to the extent that the trustee seeks investment advice in pursuance of that obligation --9 10 JUSTICE BREYER: But are you --11 MR. MILLER: -- that would --12 JUSTICE BREYER: You would be, of course, 13 exactly right, that there could be trusts, very big 14 trusts. Children get into fights trying to split up the 15 assets. Millions is paid on lawyers and investment 16 advisors to see if each share, figured 14 different 17 ways, is going to earn this money or that money. And 18 that kind of thing exists. And there the investment 19 advisors are likely to be special. So you can't say 20 investment advice is always special or never special. 21 Now, again, this seems to me not unknown, 22 this kind of problem, to the Internal Revenue law, and 23 therefore there tend to be methods of allowing 24 exceptions, of putting burdens. I mean, is this case somehow -- am I wrong about that? 25

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1	MR. MILLER: I think that to the extent that
2	you're suggesting that the Service could be could
3	clarify the statute through the use of regulations, we
4	certainly agree with that. The service has the ability
5	to resolve some of the ambiguities.
б	JUSTICE BREYER: I'm looking really for a
7	form of words to write that does not use the word
8	"could" but which gets at what I think the statute was
9	after, which is: Let them have this no floor for their
10	special stuff but not for ordinary stuff that others
11	would have incurred regardless. I want to know what
12	form of words. I find it difficult to go beyond the
13	statute, frankly.
14	JUSTICE SCALIA: I think "would not have
15	occurred" is pretty good
16	JUSTICE BREYER: Yes.
17	JUSTICE SCALIA: actually.
18	JUSTICE BREYER: That's right. That's
19	right.
20	(Laughter.)
21	MR. MILLER: The the formulation that the
22	Service has proposed of course is to look at costs that
23	are unique to
24	JUSTICE BREYER: If I reject this word
25	"could" and "uniqueness," now what form of word should I

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1 write? 2 MR. MILLER: I think "ordinarily" or "customarily" is also a permissible interpretation of --3 4 JUSTICE BREYER: If had you to choose 5 between that and getting the idea of the reasonable taxpayer who didn't hold this in trust, which would you б 7 choose? 8 MR. MILLER: I think they are actually very 9 similar inquiries, because we expect that the reasonable 10 person is the ordinary person. So I think in practice, those formulations get you to the --11 12 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It almost sounds like 13 ordinary and necessary under 162? 14 MR. MILLER: Well, ordinary and necessary 15 under -- I mean here we are talking about -- as Mr. Rubin said, it's under 212. 16 17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: 212. I understand that. 18 MR. MILLER: It's not in connection with a 19 trade or business. Ordinary and necessary in that context means simply that it's a legitimately connected 20 21 to the production of income. That's a requirement for it to be deductible at all. 22 23 JUSTICE ALITO: It seems to me the difficulty is in characterizing the level of generality 24 25 at which you describe the cost, not whether it's

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ordinary or customary or unique. You run into the same problem no matter how you do that, but you have to decide whether you're talking about investment advice or fiduciary investment advice, tax preparation costs or fiduciary tax preparation costs. And what is the formula for making that distinction?

7 MR. MILLER: I think what the Service is 8 trying to do in the proposed regulation and what we have 9 suggested is appropriate is simply a common sense 10 practical approach to that. And there may be some 11 difficult cases at the margin. And that's one of the 12 things that the service will try to --

JUSTICE GINSBURG: And this must be one. The Service must think this is one because it was certain about the tax return. It says tax return that doesn't get the subject to the 2 percent but only this kind of investment advice for total return. So that the Service didn't see this as a clear and certain category.

MR. MILLER: Again, I think what the Service was doing there was picking out just the most obvious example. But there simply is no such thing as fiduciary investment advice that is distinct from --

JUSTICE ALITO: How do we deal with this problem until there is a regulation? It may be that if the Service issues a regulation and says that these fall

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1 into one category and these fall into the other, that 2 would be entitled to a deference. But right now we 3 don't have a regulation, right? So what do we do? 4 MR. MILLER: I think what we have suggested 5 is there are two -- there are a couple of possible 6 readings of the statute based on the ambiguity in the 7 word "would." And in the absence of a regulation, we 8 are not suggesting that the Service's position is entitled to deference under Chevron. But I think some 9 10 deference to the consistent position of the Service 11 since the statute was enacted that the investment advice 12 be subject to the 2 percent floor. 13 JUSTICE STEVENS: May I ask you the same 14 question I asked your adversary? Whether you use the 15 term "could" or "customarily" or whatever you're formulating, the bottom line, as I understand your 16 17 position, is that these costs will never be deductible? 18 MR. MILLER: They will -- they will be 19 deductible but they will be subject to the floor. 20 JUSTICE STEVENS: But they will never -- you 21 would not say some trusts yes, and some trusts no? MR. MILLER: Well, under -- I mean, if the 22 23 test were customarily or ordinarily, it might be the 24 case that a trust could show that given the nature of 25 the assets in it, if it were --

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1	JUSTICE STEVENS: Would you have to have a
2	case-by-case analysis of the facts as to whether the
3	particular advice would have been sought, whether the
4	advice was by a trustee or by an individual?
5	MR. MILLER: It's not we are not
6	suggesting that it's at the level of that particular
7	advice. The question would be
8	JUSTICE SCALIA: The cost of the advice?
9	What percentage of the costs incurred by a trust do you
10	think the investment advice consists of? I mean, it
11	seems to me the main thing a trustee ordinarily does, at
12	least if he is a trustee of just cash, is to invest it.
13	It seems to me his major expense must be getting
14	financial advice, isn't that right?
15	MR. MILLER: I don't know the answer to
16	that. The Service
17	JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, imagine something
18	else. Guess. What other, what other expense could even
19	approximate that?
20	MR. MILLER: One
21	JUSTICE SCALIA: And then my follow-up is,
22	is there any I don't care about legislative history
23	but some of my colleagues do. Is there any is there
24	any indication that Congress thought it was, it was
25	whacking trusts with this immense new tax with respect

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to their major expenditure? I expect it must be their
 major expenditure.

3 MR. MILLER: To take your second question 4 first, the legislative history is silent on specifically 5 what Congress's objective was in section 67(e). 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: The dog didn't bark. 7 MR. MILLER: But I think -- but I think what one can infer from legislative history of the '86 Act 8 and more broadly and from the text of the statute is 9 10 that Congress wanted property to be treated the same, 11 regardless of whether it was held by an individual 12 outright or held by a trust. So if an individual would 13 incur certain costs if he held the property outright, 14 those costs shouldn't be able to escape the 2 percent 15 floor simply because the property is placed into a 16 trust. But if the trust -- the existence of the trust 17 relationship creates some new or additional costs that 18 would not have existed otherwise, then those are not 19 subjected to the 2 percent clause.

JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, you know a trust is sort of like a business. And deductions that an individual could not take if he were not in a business are perfectly okay for a business. And I don't know why trusts wouldn't be treated the same way. A trust has to get investment advice. True? When it's -- when it's an

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individual getting it, you wouldn't allow a deduction,
 but a trust is different.

And unless Congress is clearer than this statute, I -- it seems to me that no individual would get trust investment advice. Only a trust can get trust investment advice.

7 MR. MILLER: Well, individuals could get --8 could and do get investment advice that is no different 9 in substance from the advice the trust might get. And a 10 trustee might decide that he didn't need investment 11 advice if the trustee is financially sophisticated and 12 doesn't need an advisor. To go --

13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What if you get a bill from the investor advisor, and it's \$50,000 and 14 15 it's broken up, 30,000 is general stock picking advice, 16 and 20 percent is specialized fiduciary advice? In 17 other words, they figure out what good stocks are they 18 pushing these days and they go down and say, well, 19 you're a trustee, you can't buy this you can't buy that. 20 You would -- would you agree that the \$20,000 is not 21 subject to the 2 percent floor but the 30,000 is? 22 MR. MILLER: Yes. As we acknowledged in our 23 brief, if the advisor -- or another example would be if 24 the advisor imposed some extra charge on the fiduciary 25 accounts for whatever reason, that would be an expense

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1 that an individual going to that same advisor could not 2 incur or ordinarily would not incur. 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: But the individual who 4 wanted to maximize income, for example, if the trustee 5 has to maximize income for some of the life beneficiaries or something, an individual could seek 6 7 that same advice if he wanted that particular result 8 from the investment, couldn't he? MR. MILLER: That's right. I understood the 9 10 question to refer to the case where the advisor charges some extra fee because the client is a trust. 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: Oh, I didn't understand it 12 13 to be that. I thought it was going to be, you know, the 14 advisor had to figure out we need so much for the, for the remainder man and so much for the life beneficiaries 15 16 and so forth. You don't think that would be enough? 17 MR. MILLER: No. No. It wouldn't be. 18 Thank you. 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, 20 Mr. Miller. 21 Mr. Rubin, you have four minutes remaining. REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF PETER J. RUBIN 2.2 23 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER MR. RUBIN: Trust investment advice is 24 25 always distinct from the investment advice that's given

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1 to individuals, both because of the demanding legal 2 obligations specifying certain factors that have to be 3 taken into account by the trustee in investing and 4 because of the risk of personal liability. 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What do you have to support that? I resist accepting that broad б 7 proposition, and I don't know where to look or who to 8 ask in order to determine its -- its truth or falsity. MR. RUBIN: Well, I think, Your Honor, if 9 10 you look at, at our brief, at pages 7 through 10, there 11 is a discussion of the specific legal factors that are codified in Connecticut law in the Uniform Prudent 12 13 Investor Act, which does not, as the Commissioner 14 suggested, require people to invest as a prudent 15 individual, but it's a different standard. 16 So, for example, safe investments, 17 conservative investments are not permitted any more in 18 many circumstances to trustees when an individual could 19 well engage in that kind of investment. Investment in areas that the trustee is familiar with is not adequate 20 21 to meet this obligation. So the advice really is tailored as a matter of state law in the trust 22 23 instrument in every case to the trust. 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But it could also be tailored to an individual with particular circumstances 25

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1 that are similar to that of the trust. So an individual 2 could incur it. An individual with the same amount of 3 money involved probably would incur it.

4 MR. RUBIN: No trust, Your Honor, has 5 exactly the same circumstances as a trust, because 6 trusts always have, by definition, more than one 7 beneficiary. There is always a remainder beneficiary, 8 at least. Ordinarily there will be --

9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So an individual 10 might have more than one child he wants to provide for 11 and as far as a remainder, there may be more than one 12 grandchild. It could be exactly the same -- an 13 individual could have exactly the same objectives as a 14 trustee.

MR. RUBIN: The decision process for the investments will be different in the case of a trustee, though, than for an individual. And a trust, of course, could be multigenerational. This trust will probably last for about a hundred years from the time that it was initially adopted.

21 I should also say --

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JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Rubin, is it the advice that's different or is it -- is it the inquiry that's different.

MR. RUBIN: Both. The decision -- the

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1	decision to hire the investment advisor is an exercise
2	of fiduciary judgment taking into account these these
3	factors; and the advice that you're paying for is a
4	different service that's tailored to the trust. This,
5	therefore the Commissioner acknowledges that that
6	the that trusts are distinct. But but resists
7	the the analogy between, for example, fiduciary
8	income tax returns or judicial accountings and other tax
9	returns.
10	JUSTICE STEVENS: Mr. Rubin, is there a
11	subcategory of investment advisors who hold themselves
12	out to be fiduciary investment advisors?
13	MR. RUBIN: I believe, Your Honor, there may
14	be specific fees for trust investments that are offered
15	by firms that that provide investment advice.
16	Whether there are specific advisors who will take only
17	fiduciary clients, I don't
18	JUSTICE STEVENS: Or even those who
19	advertise themselves as specialists in fiduciary advice?
20	I never heard of them. Maybe there are.
21	MR. RUBIN: Well, I think that this actually
22	points out, Justice Stevens, part of the problem with
23	the Commissioner's position, which is it relies on
24	labels. The Commissioner has said it's a common
25	JUSTICE GINSBURG: As far as a tax return,

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1	are there accountants this specialize in trust tax
2	returns as opposed to individual or corporate returns?
3	MR. RUBIN: Not that I know of, Your Honor.
4	My sense is that an income tax preparer will be willing
5	to prepare an income tax return for a fiduciary or an
6	individual. I see that my time has expired.
7	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
8	Mr. Rubin. The case is submitted.
9	(Whereupon, at 11:03 a.m., the case in the
10	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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