1 IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES 2 - - - - - - - - - - - - x 3 LUIS E. MELENDEZ-DIAZ, : 4 Petitioner : : No. 07-591 5 v. 6 MASSACHUSETTS. : 7 - - - - - - - - - - - - x 8 Washington, D.C. 9 Monday, November 10, 2008 10 The above-entitled matter came on for oral 11 12 argument before the Supreme Court of the United States 13 at 1:00 p.m. 14 **APPEARANCES:** JEFFREY L. FISHER, ESQ., Stanford, Cal.; on behalf of 15 16 the Petitioner. 17 MARTHA COAKLEY, ESQ., Attorney General, Boston, Mass.; 18 on behalf of the Respondent. 19 LISA H. SCHERTLER, ESQ., Assistant to the Solicitor 20 General, Department of Justice, Washington, 21 D.C.; on behalf of the United States, as amicus curiae, supporting the Respondent. 22 23 24 25

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(1:00 p.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument
4	next in Case 07-591, Melendez-Diaz v. Massachusetts.
5	Mr. Fisher.
6	ORAL ARGUMENT OF JEFFREY L. FISHER
7	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
8	MR. FISHER: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
9	please the Court:
10	In Crawford v. Washington, this Court made
11	clear that the right to confrontation, at its core, is a
12	protection against a system of trial by affidavit. It
13	is an ancient procedural guarantee that requires the
14	prosecution to prove its case through live witnesses who
15	testify before the jury and who are subject to
16	cross-examination.
17	Introducing forensic laboratory reports,
18	such as the certificates at issue in this case, is the
19	modern equivalent of trial by affidavit. The documents
20	are sworn formal statements. They are crafted
21	purposefully for the express purpose of proving a fact
22	that is an element of a criminal offense, and, as the
23	State forthrightly admits in its brief, they are
24	introduced in lieu of having the analyst called as a
25	witness to the stand. They are therefore

1 quintessentially testimonial evidence.

2 Massachusetts --

CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You say -- you say "the analyst." I suppose it doesn't have to be the analyst but whoever they decide to call. So if you had a supervisor who runs the cocaine testing lab and he is the one whose report is submitted, I take it he is the one who would have to show up.

9 MR. FISHER: That's right. Our position --10 our position is that whoever the Commonwealth wants to 11 use to prove the fact that they are trying to prove is 12 the person that needs to take the stand. In this case, 13 it would be the analyst.

14 JUSTICE SCALIA: But -- but you would ask --15 if a supervisor did it, what would you ask the 16 supervisor? You'd say, you know, did you -- did you do 17 this? Can you testify to your own knowledge that this 18 is what the analysis showed? And he would have to say, 19 no, it was one of my subordinates who did it, but I can 20 tell you he was a very reliable person. How would that 21 -- I don't understand how that would work.

22 MR. FISHER: I took the Chief Justice's 23 hypothetical to be that the supervisor had actually done 24 the testing, but if the supervisor had not --

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CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: No. No. No. No.

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I I'm saying that he would testify, I guess: I run the lab, these are the people I hire, they know you how to do these tests, and this guy did the test. And since he was the one that the Government decided to -- on whose affidavit they decided to rely, that's the only person you could get.

Now, you could -- to impeach him, you say, well, did you do the test? No. But you say, well -but I mean you don't have a right to an analyst at a particular level.

11 MR. FISHER: That's right. There is no 12 substantive right. I think everything you've said is 13 right as far as it goes. It just depends what the 14 Commonwealth wants to put in in terms of evidence. JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, suppose --15 16 MR. FISHER: If they want to put in --17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Suppose the tests were by 18 John Smith, assistant lab technician, and you call John 19 Smith, and you say, "Is this your signature?" "Yes." 20 "Do you remember doing this test?" And he says, "I do thousands of tests. I don't remember. I'll tell you 21 22 the way I always do them." I mean, is that what you 23 want?

24 MR. FISHER: Well, if that's what -- at a 25 minimum, that's what we want, Justice Kennedy. This

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1 Court has made clear in California --2 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, that's what you're 3 usually going to get, isn't it? 4 MR. FISHER: Well, we don't know what we are 5 going to get. In some cases, unquestionably --JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, you know what you're 6 7 going to get by looking, number one, at the States which allow this, where this happens all the time. You know 8 9 what you're going to get in the States where the 10 defendant -- where the defense can subpoen athe witness. 11 Now, if there are new tests, complex DNA 12 tests and so forth, I suppose there is a lot to ask 13 about. Standard blood alcohol, not much to ask about. 14 MR. FISHER: But even in a test where the 15 analyst doesn't remember and, as you put it, it's a 16 standardized test, there are still plenty of questions 17 the defendant might want to ask, such as what test was 18 performed? We don't even know from the record what test 19 was performed in this case. What's the error rate on 20 that test? How do your protocols work? What are your 21 experience and credentials in analyzing those? There's 22 plenty of questions the defendant might ask. 23 JUSTICE KENNEDY: You can raise all those questions from the fact of the -- from the document. 24 25 Tell the jury, "This doesn't show what tests were

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1 performed." It's there on the document.

2 MR. FISHER: Well, I think that's a choice 3 that defense counsel could make, as the defense counsel 4 always has a choice in a criminal case to decide whether 5 to press the prosecution's evidence or to simply stay 6 silent and then later argue at closing the prosecution 7 hasn't given you enough to prove the case.

8 But to the extent the Commonwealth is taking 9 the position that cross-examining would be fruitless in 10 a situation like this, the very basis of this Court's 11 Crawford decision is that's not for courts to decide. 12 It is up to the defense counsel to -- if he wishes, to 13 insist on live testimony that he can cross-examine and 14 then --

JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, then why -- why isn't it an adequate substitute to say that, if the defendant wants this testimony, the defendant can call the analyst and cross-examine the analyst as an adverse witness?

20 MR. FISHER: Well, three reasons, Justice 21 Ginsburg: First, if that were correct, then I don't see 22 anything that would stop the prosecution in every 23 criminal case simply from putting a pile of affidavits 24 on a judge's desk and saying it's up to the defense to 25 call whatever witnesses he wants and cross-examine them.

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1 But even as a matter of text and structure 2 of the Constitution, as a textual matter, the right to 3 confrontation is a passive right in the defendant's 4 hands. It requires the prosecution to arrange for the 5 confrontation, and that's bolstered structurally by the Compulsory Process Clause. Remember, the Compulsory б 7 Process Clause gives the defendant the very right that 8 you just explained, that the defendant can subpoena witnesses into court and ask them questions. And surely 9 10 the Confrontation Clause adds something on top of that. 11 And I think this Court's decision in Taylor 12 against Illinois is the best explanation of the 13 difference between the two clauses. This Court said 14 that the Confrontation Clause arises simply by the 15 nature of adversary proceedings, and it's a -- it's a 16 rule that governs the way the prosecution must introduce 17 its case. As I said at the opening here, it's a 18 requirement that the prosecution put its live witnesses 19 on the stand for the jury to observe them. The defense, of course, has the decision whether to cross-examine 20 21 those witnesses, or if witnesses are not called by the 22 prosecution that he would wish to be part of the case, 23 he can subpoen athem. But we would vigorously oppose 24 any attempt to shift the burden on the defense to call 25 witnesses like this.

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JUSTICE GINSBURG: But you would say that what they call the notice-and-demand type statute, that that's all right?

4 MR. FISHER: There is a variety of 5 notice-and-demand type statutes, Justice Ginsburg, and I think the law professors' brief lays it out the best of б 7 what we have before you. We agree with the Solicitor General that a plain notice-and-demand statute that 8 requires the defense to do nothing more than assert his 9 10 right in advance of trial to have the prosecution put a 11 live witness on the stand would be constitutional, I think, under this Court's jurisprudence. Under the 12 13 Compulsory Process Clause, under the jury right, there 14 are plenty of constitutional rights that, with fair 15 notice, a Defendant can be required to assert in advance 16 of trial.

17 Now, there are other types of statutes that other States call "notice and demand" that require 18 19 something more of the defendant, whether it be that the defendant himself call the witness, whether it be the 20 21 defendant himself make some kind of good faith or prima 22 facie showing in order to have the prosecution call the 23 witness. Those types of statutes, I think this Court, to the extent in this opinion it would mention 24 notice-and-demand statutes, it would want to be careful 25

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to leave for another day, because, again, we would agree
 with the Solicitor General that those would raise more
 difficult constitutional guestions.

4 JUSTICE KENNEDY: In your answer, you said, 5 well, there would be this stack of affidavits and that's all the State would have to do. I think, Mr. Fisher, 6 7 that was not quite responsive because the question here 8 is whether or not there is an exception for business records. Nobody is talking about affidavits, witnesses, 9 10 and so forth. We are talking about business records 11 done in the ordinary course.

12 It's true that it -- that the core principle 13 is whether that confrontation is required, but the 14 question is whether or not business records should be 15 treated as something that are not testimony because they 16 are done based on other protocols with other procedures 17 where there is substantial insulation from the facts of 18 the particular case because it's a routine scientific 19 exercise.

20 So I think your answer, I would agree, is 21 responsive based on your theory of the case, but as a 22 matter of practice and as a matter of the issue that's 23 before the Court, I don't think it addresses it.

25 I -- I took Justice Ginsburg's question to

MR. FISHER: Okay.

24

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Thank you.

1 be asking whether giving the defendant the right to 2 subpoena the witness would be adequate under the Confrontation Clause if these documents were 3 4 testimonial. 5 Now, your question is whether they might not be testimonial at all viewed through the lens of whether 6 7 they are a business record. 8 So, as a historical matter, I think it's plain that no documents prepared in contemplation of 9 litigation were ever considered to be business records. 10 And this Court's decision in Palmer v. Hoffman in 1943 I 11 12 think lays that out very, very clearly. 13 So there is no historical argument that 14 business records would fit -- would be exempted from the 15 testimonial rule as a class. And, of course, this Court 16 said in Crawford v. Washington that even if a State 17 under a modern hearsay exception, whether it be a 18 business-record rule or in the State of Massachusetts's 19 case a special, brand-new hearsay rule -- just because 20 that might be okay in the run-of-the-mill cases doesn't 21 exempt it from the right to confrontation. JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, but the railroad 2.2 case was an accident report. This is a scientific 23 24 analysis. MR. FISHER: Well, I think that is best 25

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1 characterized, with all due respect, as an argument for 2 its reliability. And it may well be that judges and 3 juries think that certain scientific processes yield 4 more reliable results in terms of reports and testimony 5 and assertions. But we think, again -- and this Court's decision in Crawford says quite strongly -- that a judge б 7 cannot decide just on the basis of reliability to exempt 8 a given record or a class of records from the Confrontation Clause. 9

10 And I think, Justice Kennedy, another 11 analogy that makes it even more clear is police reports. 12 Police reports, just like the lab report in this case, 13 are -- are sworn documents created by public servants 14 who are sworn to tell the truth, sworn to find evidence 15 whether it exonerates, whether it incriminates, and to 16 write up a report. And I don't think anyone has ever 17 suggested that police reports describing a crime scene 18 -- for example, no matter how objective the facts 19 relayed, such as there is a blood stain on the carpet, 20 there is -- the door was wide open when I got there --21 those kinds of assertions would be exempted from the Confrontation Clause. 22

It may well be that they are likely to be correct, that they are assertions of fact that can be verified, but we've never understood that to fall

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outside of the ambit of the Confrontation Clause. JUSTICE KENNEDY: But if you had what we can call an independent lab, that certainly-- you certainly can distinguish that from a police report. It's a line-drawing question, I'll admit, but I think it's easily distinguished.

7 MR. FISHER: Well, I think if you had -- in 8 contrast to this case, if you had a laboratory that was 9 a private lab being used by the police, that would raise 10 the question whether police agents who are private 11 individuals but -- but asked by the police to create 12 something like this, would generate testimonial evidence 13 just as well. And I think the answer would be yes.

In fact, in Davis this Court already addressed the situation, although it reserved in the footnote, but it assumed that the 911 operator in that case, who was a private individual working for a private company hired by the -- by the police --

JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Fisher, how many States do things the way -- the way you would have them done? I mean, how many States don't have these -- these notice laws, but in fact bring in the analyst to -- to give the information?

24 MR. FISHER: Well, let me give you a few25 categories, Justice Scalia.

13

1	There are six States, it is our
2	understanding, including big populous States like
3	California, Illinois and Georgia, that have no special
4	hearsay law whatsoever, that bring in witnesses if
5	defendants demand it.
6	There is another category of States
7	JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, they bring in
8	witnesses if if defendants demand, but
9	MR. FISHER: I'm sorry, I misspoke. I
10	misspoke. That in the ordinary course need to bring in
11	witnesses. Now, that wasgetting ahead to my next
12	my next category, there are at least nine or ten other
13	States that have the kind of bland notice-and-demand
14	regime that I was discussing with Justice Ginsburg. And
15	so that's another category.
16	And then you have since Crawford there is
17	another, I believe, five additional States where their
18	State supreme courts have held that Crawford applies to
19	lab reports like this. So at least for the past couple
20	of years they have been doing it the way that we would
21	urge.
22	JUSTICE KENNEDY: I wonder and correct me
23	if I'm wrong if you if you didn't state your case
24	strongly enough with reference to California. I thought
25	California followed the rule that you advocate here.

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MR. FISHER: That's what I meant to say if I
 didn't say it that way. Yes.

JUSTICE BREYER: Is there anything else? I -- I think you're quite right that -- that, look, I can't find anything in the history that suggest lab reports would be admitted because they would be considered being prepared for trial. But business records are kept out.

9 So we have here a source that's unlikely to 10 be particularly biased, the University of Massachusetts 11 labs. And we have the checks of the discipline, the 12 scientific discipline. On the other hand, it's being 13 prepared for this trial.

So it seems to me some things go one way; some things go the other way. I don't know exactly what the predominant things are. That's what I'd like you to address as much as possible.

18 And when I look at the definition of 19 "business records hearsay exception" today, it seems to me that the "hearsay exception" does cover today some of 20 21 the things under "business records" that would be prepared particularly for trial. You could have a 22 23 company that goes and measures lines on the street, or 24 tread marks, or a variety of things. And I guess they 25 come in under the "business records exception." Do

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1 they? I mean, is that right? 2 MR. FISHER: They might, Justice Breyer, and 3 I'd -- I'd be willing to assume for purposes of argument 4 that they would. But to the extent that they would be 5 offered by the prosecution in a criminal case, the fact 6 that they were a business record would not answer the 7 confrontation question as to whether --8 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, of course, it 9 wouldn't. 10 MR. FISHER: Yes. 11 JUSTICE BREYER: And that's why -- and maybe you have nothing else you want to say on this point. 12 13 It's the same as Justice Kennedy raised. 14 MR. FISHER: I think I do, Justice --15 JUSTICE BREYER: It seems like there are 16 some things going one way, and some things going the 17 other on the issue of whether to call it "testimonial." 18 MR. FISHER: But I do want to -- with all 19 respect, I did want to add something to what you said about the rigors of the lab or of science. It may well 20 21 be that those add to the truth, the reliability of 22 reports. Let me say two things about that. 23 First of all, the Confrontation Clause doesn't exempt bishops and nuns, or -- or anyone who we 24 25 know or who we would think just as well would obviously

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be telling the truth. It's, again, for the defendant to
 decide and not for the court to decide whether
 cross-examination would be useful.

But let me add to that, Justice Breyer, that the Innocence Project brief in this case and plenty of other sources widely available I think very, very, very persuasively explain that lab reports are not quite as reliable as we might want to think they are, and not --JUSTICE BREYER: There have been bad instances. You are absolutely right.

11 MR. FISHER: Yes.

12 JUSTICE BREYER: But what -- what I'm trying 13 to work out in my mind is not necessarily what happened 14 in the year 1084. I'd -- I'd be quite interested in 15 your views on what's a workable rule. And when I look 16 across the country on this, it seems most States have 17 worked with a rule that has allowed the defendant to 18 call the witness if he wants. There is not a particular 19 unfairness to that. If he can get ahold of the witness, 20 no problem. But they said: We are not going to make 21 the State do this because it's a waste of time, for the 22 most part. It just delays the trial, and there is 23 really nothing at issue.

24 MR. FISHER: Well, to the extent that is the 25 prominent practice, it's one that grew up under this

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1 Court's Roberts jurisprudence. 2 JUSTICE BREYER: That's true. 3 MR. FISHER: I think --4 JUSTICE BREYER: But if I assume -- I'm 5 really uncertain as to whether it has covered 6 "testimonial" or not. And also, I'm not enamored 7 particularly of seeing on a close question what happened 8 in ancient history. 9 MR. FISHER: I understand. 10 JUSTICE BREYER: All right. Now, is there 11 anything else you want to add to me on those 12 assumptions? 13 MR. FISHER: Yes, that -- that, again, it is 14 -- it is not for the court; it's for the defendant to decide. We think the definition of "testimonial" 15 16 generally speaking ought to be that when a document is 17 prepared in contemplation of prosecution, or more 18 specifically in this case to prove a fact that is an 19 element of a criminal case, because that's what these 20 reports say, then they should fall under the 21 Confrontation Clause. 22 And to the extent that these are in some 23 realms and in some places reliable pieces of evidence, 24 there is every reason to believe it's not going to cause 25 any problem, because defendants aren't going to want to

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1 challenge them very often. If you look at the 2 statistics in the law professors' brief, they say in 3 States like California that -- first of all, we have a 4 huge category of cases that go away in plea bargains. 5 And then even within the category of cases that go to trial, it's 10 percent of the time or less -б 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, a good defense lawyer would love to have the guy there. The first 8 thing you say is: Do you remember testing Mr. Diaz's 9 10 sample? The guy is going to say no. Just as was 11 pointed out, I, you know, test thousands of samples. 12 Well, how long have you been working with the lab? You 13 know, just what -- what was your scientific background? 14 When did you -- how does this test work? You put three 15 drops of the acid in there. It turns color, whatever it 16 does. How do you know that? What is the chemical? I 17 mean, you spend three hours with the quy until the jury 18 just doesn't think there is anything to the case at all. 19 MR. FISHER: Well, the best I can do to answer that, Mr. Chief Justice, is to say that 20 21 empirically apparently that just doesn't happen. And I 22 think the reason why is explained in some of the defense 23 manuals that we have cited in our brief, which say that 24 if your theory of the case has nothing to do with 25 whether the scientific report being introduced by the

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1 prosecution is correct or not, very often the defense 2 isn't going to do itself any favors by -- by insisting 3 that that person take the stand, recite his credentials, 4 recite the testing, and recite the damning evidence. 5 JUSTICE ALITO: What does that fact support -- why does that fact support your argument, that in all б 7 of those cases you're arguing for what's going to be an 8 empty exercise? MR. FISHER: No, I would very much resist 9 10 that it will always be an empty exercise. JUSTICE ALITO: No. But in -- in the 11 instance where the defendant doesn't think it would be 12 13 worthwhile to subpoen the -- the recordkeeper, the 14 person who performed the test, but simply wants to put 15 the prosecution through the effort of getting the person 16 there to testify, it's -- what is achieved? 17 MR. FISHER: Well, as I said, I think that 18 through notice-and-demand regimes and stipulations, 19 often that is not going to happen. But if it is 20 achieved, what is achieved is the same thing that is 21 achieved in any criminal trial where a defendant insists 22 periodically that the prosecution be put to its proof. 23 After all, we are talking about putting somebody away for many years in a typical --24 25 JUSTICE BREYER: I absolutely see that

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 bargaining, which is your first thing, which makes me a little nervous for the reason that I see this bargaining system as a system where the prosecutor makes a charge, the prosecutor controls the sentence, then the defense bar would like to have an added weapon, and this added weapon is if you actually go to trial, I'm going to insist that you call these people. You don't even know where they are. I'm not going to accept the lab report. And then maybe the prosecutor will lower the requirement or maybe the prosecutor raised it in the first place because he thought you would say something like that. So I'm not is there anything you can say about how this works in the presence of plea bargaining? Do we know any do we have any information on that? MR. FISHER: I don't know of any empirical study where you might say what the price of this is. Of course, it happens already every day with other witnesses. You're going to have to bring in other witnesses, and this is one more witness. But again, even in a case where that's all that's going on, it's no different than all the other legal rights the defendant has. 	1	point. So that - all right, go back to the plea
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23 has.	21	even in a case where that's all that's going on, it's no
	22	different than all the other legal rights the defendant
24 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I'm not sure it's one more	23	has.
	24	JUSTICE KENNEDY: I'm not sure it's one more

25 witness. Labs are backed up with DNA. You know, the

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Federal budget for the courts, for the Federal courts, is \$6 billion. Well, \$1 billion of that is spent under the Criminal Justice Act for experts and translators and counsels. This -- this is a very, very substantial burden if we tell every State in the country that every -- in every drug case you are -- the State must produce the expert.

8 MR. FISHER: Remember, Justice Kennedy, 9 that -- that if you look at the States where this 10 exists, that's not what happens and that's not what we 11 are insisting on. All we are insisting is that the prosecution in a case where the defendant demands it, 12 13 whether it be through a notice and demand regime or 14 whether it be because the prosecution simply calls the 15 defense on the phone two weeks before trial and says, 16 I'd like to do this through documentary evidence -- and 17 then these repeat players remember who -- who -- one 18 thing I think it's worth keeping in mind in all this, is that in the criminal justice system, by and large, 19 20 especially in drug cases like this, we are talking about 21 repeat players. 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You're talking about 23 the defendants or the lawyers?

24 MR. FISHER: I'm talking about the 25 lawyers --

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1	(Laughter.)
2	MR. FISHER: by and large, Your Honor.
3	They have every they have incentives not to, as you
4	might say, yank the chain of the other side.
5	JUSTICE SCALIA: Mr. Fisher, I am interested
6	in the history since that's what the Court held in
7	Crawford, that the content of the Confrontation Clause
8	is not what we would like it to be, but what it
9	historically was when it was enshrined in the
10	Constitution. As a matter of history, was there a
11	business records exception, not from the hearsay rule
12	but from the Confrontation Clause?
13	MR. FISHER: Not that I'm aware of. The
14	best the best source that I believe exists is the
15	Wigmore treatise, which both sides have cited. It says
16	there was a shop-book rule that allowed shop-book
17	ledgers and entries at the common law. But there is
18	no there's no suggestion that that was
19	JUSTICE SCALIA: Why isn't that a business
20	records exception? I don't
21	MR. FISHER: It is a business records
22	exception, but it's not an exception to the right to
23	confrontation because no one would have considered
24	ordinary business records created without contemplation
25	of litigation to be to be testimonial evidence. What

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1 we have here --2 JUSTICE SCALIA: Oh, wait. You say it's --3 that business records would often or usually not be 4 testimonial? 5 MR. FISHER: I think all of the business records that were admissible at the time of the founding 6 7 would have been nontestimonial. JUSTICE SCALIA: Would have been 8 9 nontestimonial. So they'd come in on that basis, not 10 because they were business records? MR. FISHER: In a criminal case -- well, the 11 12 typical regime -- and I'm going to assume that it exists 13 at the time of founding, but you need some evidentiary 14 rule to get a piece of evidence in in the first place, 15 whether it be business records or whether it be just an 16 ordinary rule of relevance. But, yes, they would have 17 been admissible at the time of -- ordinary business 18 record like a shop book would have been admissible at 19 the time of the founding, but would have not raised a confrontation problem even in a criminal cause because 20 21 it would have been nontestimonial. 22 JUSTICE STEVENS: Mr. Fisher, I just want to 23 be about -- clear about one thing. We are talking about drug cases primarily. But the rule that we are fighting 24 25 about is not limited to drugs. Doesn't it apply to

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1 laboratory reports on DNA, blood tests, all sorts of 2 evidence? Isn't that correct?

MR. FISHER: That's right, Justice Stevens. 3 4 And you can you look at the Massachusetts own decisions. 5 The State courts in Massachusetts already extended their rule in their day to ballistics tests, for example, б 7 which are notoriously unreliable in terms of empirical 8 studies that have been -- that have been conducted about them. And my understanding -- I think you're right --9 10 is that nothing in the Commonwealth's rule distinguishes 11 one kind of forensic report from another.

12 The United States is offering a slightly 13 different analysis that appears to ask, to some degree, 14 the degree of interpretation involved in a given 15 forensic laboratory report. I don't know how you would 16 administer that rule, but I can say that to whatever 17 extent interpretation would be required, this is clearly 18 on the interpretive side of the ledger.

And again, if I could point the Court to a source for that, the Scientific Evidence treatise by Giannelli and Imwinkelried that the both parties cite at section 23.030(c) lays out the mass spectrometry way of testing for drugs that the Commonwealth tells you was the test used in this case and describes in great detail the amount of expertise, care, skill and interpretive

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1 methods that need to be brought in that kind of a test. 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: How do we know that 3 this was prepared in contemplation of litigation? I 4 mean, let's suppose the lab occasionally does analyses 5 for other -- research purposes. They get a sample, they want to know what it's -- they want to test it, however б 7 they do it. Are we just assuming that it's prepared in 8 contemplation of litigation because it usually is, or -you can imagine a situation where the analyst really has 9 10 no idea, other than perhaps supposition, why he is being 11 asked to test the sample. 12 MR. FISHER: The easiest answer in this 13 case, Mr. Chief Justice, is it's required by 14 Massachusetts law that -- that these tests be done in 15 contemplation of prosecution. The law itself says that 16 the police officer can give it to an analyst, and the 17 analyst can certify a report if it's to be used for law 18 enforcement purposes. So there is a statutory 19 requirement. Now, you --20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, the question 21 is it could be law enforcement purposes to test it for 22 the police to use and educational programs that want the rookies to know what the cocaine looks like. 23 24 MR. FISHER: Well, to the degree it's not 25 answer ed in this case by statute, undoubtedly this

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1 Court as it works through this jurisprudence will need 2 to ask a question of common sense, whether the actors involved -- as this Court did in Davis -- whether the 3 4 actors involved would understand what they are doing is 5 creating evidence for a criminal case? 6 If there are no more questions --7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So -- I'm sorry. Go 8 ahead. 9 MR. FISHER: Okay. I'll reserve my time. 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you. 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: May I -- may I just ask, 12 you would extend this to a -- a breath test, a blood 13 test, fingerprints, urinalysis? All of those would be 14 covered by your position? 15 MR. FISHER: To the extent that the prosecution wanted to introduce a report certifying a 16 17 reporting result of a test, yes, it would be covered by 18 ours. 19 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And you answered the 20 question that a supervisor wouldn't be an adequate 21 substitute for the analyst. But suppose the lab says: 22 We are very busy in this place; could we schedule a 23 deposition; we'll present the analyst at a time mutually 24 agreeable to both sides, rather than have the analyst on 25 the hook to show up on a trial date?

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1	MR. FISHER: That would work to preserve the
2	evidence in case the analyst became unavailable at the
3	time of trial. And then under this Court's
4	jurisprudence that deposition would be admissible.
5	JUSTICE GINSBURG: But only if the analyst
б	wasn't there on the day of trial?
7	MR. FISHER: Then you then I don't think
8	it would substitute for live testimony.
9	But let me say one other way that this
10	problem can be addressed by States is that they could
11	have a supervisor take the stand and rely on raw data
12	on raw data and give his or her explanation of raw data.
13	It's just that the person cannot take the stand and
14	relay somebody else's conclusion to the jury.
15	And if there are no more questions, I'll
16	reserve.
17	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
18	Mr. Fisher. We'll give you your full rebuttal time.
19	General Coakley.
20	ORAL ARGUMENT OF MARTHA COAKLEY
21	ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
22	MS. COAKLEY: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
23	please the Court:
24	The drug analysis certificates at issue in
25	this case are not testimonial statements that have been

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1	covered by the Confrontation Clause. That is, they are
2	not the statement of a percipient witness who has
3	observed past behavior of the defendant.
4	Indeed, what they are are official records
5	of objective identified it's independently verifiable
б	facts that are that were admissible at common law.
7	JUSTICE SOUTER: What is your answer to
8	Mr. Fisher's argument that if that proposition of yours
9	is is is, in fact, sound in response to this case,
10	the State can put in its entire case by in a
11	circumstantial evidence case, by way of affidavit and,
12	in effect, satisfy the Confrontation Clause by saying,
13	well, you can call the witness as part of the defense
14	case and cross-examine there?
15	MS. COAKLEY: Because clearly, the kinds of
16	affidavits that are the subject of Confrontation Clause
17	analysis could not be submitted by that. I think this
18	is an exception to that. And so
19	JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, then that's what you
20	have got to explain to me. Why is it an exception?
21	MS. COAKLEY: Because first of all, although
22	the Court has not addressed it so far with Mr. Fisher,
23	these are really not testimonial statements. None of
24	the cases that have dealt with Confrontation Clause
25	analysis before Ohio, through Ohio, through in fact

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Giles -- deal with the kind of statement that we are
 talking about here. It's really a report of a scientist
 test.

JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, what about the -- the blue car going down the street statement? In a circumstantial evidence case the witness comes in and says yes, I saw a blue car go down the street at 10 o'clock. Is that testimonial?

9 MS. COAKLEY: It is, Your Honor.

JUSTICE SOUTER: And the distinction between that and the lab report saying the substance that was shown to me which I analyzed was cocaine, what's the -what's the distinction?

MS. COAKLEY: In the first instance you have a witness to an event in a particular case that can be tied to, perhaps, behavior of the defendant that's deemed to be criminal. It's -- it's classic hearsay and subject to confrontation, if it's, you know, is going to be used by the prosecution.

In this instance, though, we have a protocol set up by a State statute that indeed does test substances other than those definitely headed for litigation.

JUSTICE SCALIA: I don't see the difference between the two. I mean, the one, he saw the blue car

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1 going down the street, which through other evidence can 2 be connected to the defendant; and here the witness says 3 this is cocaine, which through other evidence is going 4 to be connected to the defendant. And in both cases 5 that -- that connected fact is deemed essential by the prosecution for the conviction. I don't see the 6 7 difference between the two. 8 MS. COAKLEY: Well, I think there are several differences, Your Honor, but one of which is 9 that it is identifiable and it can be verified outside 10 11 of what the scope of the Confrontation Clause is. In 12 other words, the defendant has a chance to test it ahead 13 of time, have his own independent witness. This doesn't 14 change. Whether it is cocaine before, during or after the trial is testable. 15 JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, why --16 17 MS. COAKLEY: And it's not true of a witness 18 statement. 19 JUSTICE SOUTER: Why does that make a difference? In other words, the -- Justice Scalia said 20 21 a moment ago, you know, the -- the statement about the 22 blue car is -- is tied in in the hypothetical case by 23 another witness who said yes, at -- at 10:01 when I heard the gun go off there was a blue car there. 24 In 25 this case the cocaine is tied in by saying, yes, the

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cocaine which I delivered to X, about which he has
 testified, is cocaine that I took out of the pocket of
 the defendant.

4 There is -- there is a temporal and physical 5 path worked out in both cases. And it seems to me your attempt to distinguish them is to say well, the temporal б 7 path can be extended by one more step in the cocaine 8 case because you can take the cocaine or take something from the cocaine sample and let the defense expert 9 10 testify to it; which of course is true, but I don't see 11 what that has got to do with the Confrontation Clause or the definition of testimonial evidence. 12

MS. COAKLEY: I -- I think that that's significant, Your Honor, because it can be tested and verified and isn't dependent upon a cross examination at trial.

17 JUSTICE SOUTER: But aren't you really 18 saying that the confrontation right is therefore not so 19 important because you have a greater opportunity in the cocaine case of coming up with -- with rebutting 20 21 evidence, if indeed rebutting evidence can be found. In other words, if -- if -- if the State's 22 23 witness is wrong, you've got a better shot at proving him wrong than in the blue car case. But if that is 24 25 your argument, I don't see what it's got to do with --

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1 with the basic confrontation right.

2 MR. FISHER: Well, I think I go back, Your 3 Honor, to looking at all the kinds of statements that 4 this Court has looked at within the scope of the 5 Confrontation Clause. This kind of public record, 6 official record, laboratory report, has never been the 7 subject of this kind of analysis and indeed it's not 8 sufficient.

9 JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, have we ever had -10 have we ever had a -- a kind of lab report, public
11 record kind of case in -- in which the record was
12 prepared expressly for trial?

MS. COAKLEY: I think that if you look at Dutton, for instance, and the concurring opinion by Justice Harlan talking about laboratory reports deemed to be whatever the analysis was, a business record, that would have been --

JUSTICE SOUTER: Yes, but Justice Harlan did not take the majority view. I mean you -- I don't know where you get authority for the proposition that the public record prepared for the purpose of litigation would have come in under the, in effect, the founding era -- or would have been outside the founding era definition of testimonial.

MS. COAKLEY: Except the public record, for

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1 instance of a coroner's result -- not the coroner's 2 verdict that involves Marian-type depositions, but the 3 results of a coroner's verdict that says somebody is 4 dead and this is the cause and manner and means of 5 death -- would have been admissible at the time with -that kind of --6 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: For the indictment, not --8 not as -- not as independent evidence in the 9 prosecution. It would form the basis for the 10 indictment, as I understand what the history is. Ιt would not be introduced and -- and -- and shown to the 11 jury as evidence that -- that indeed the cause of death 12 13 was thus and so. 14 MR. FISHER: But autopsy results -- my 15 understanding, Your Honor, is that autopsy results --16 again not a coroner's verdict, which -- in the reply 17 brief we believe that counsel has conflated what would 18 be a verdict between the fact of an official record, an 19 autopsy report of the death, manner and means of 20 death -- have been and still admissible. 21 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It seems to me -- and tell 22 me if this is not the way you want to argue. It seems 23 to me to make your case you have to say of course this

24 is hearsay; and the question is whether it's

25 testimonial.

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1	MS. COAKLEY: Yes, Your Honor.
2	JUSTICE KENNEDY: And it's not testimonial
3	because these are laboratory protocols, subject to
4	ongoing, objective, repeated standards; that's different
5	from testimony that it was a blue car, which is specific
6	to the case. That's the kind of framework of the
7	argument you have to make.
8	MS. COAKLEY: That's
9	JUSTICE KENNEDY: And that as a result of
10	that it is not testimonial because "testimonial" is a
11	legal term that's subject to interpretation. I I
12	guess that's the argument you're making and that you
13	have to make.
14	MS. COAKLEY: Well, that's correct, Your
15	Honor.
16	JUSTICE KENNEDY: As I see it.
17	MS. COAKLEY: And I think that that is
18	certainly consistent with the way in which this Court in
19	looking at the series of cases from Crawford since, have
20	looked at what a testimonial statement is. Admittedly,
21	you haven't addressed this kind of statement, and I
22	would argue because it doesn't fall within the principal
23	evil that the Confrontation Clause is designed to
24	prevent.
25	JUSTICE KENNEDY: Of course the problem was

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in -- I think it was Hammond was the companion case to
 David.

3 MS. COAKLEY: Yes. 4 JUSTICE KENNEDY: The -- the 911 call was 5 done for other -- really other purposes. It wasn't testimonial because it wasn't really directed to trial. 6 7 This does seem more directed to trial, so then you have 8 to tell us why even if it is, there are some independent quarantees of -- of reliability that means that we 9 10 should say it's not testimonial as a legal matter. MS. COAKLEY: Well, I agree, Your Honor. I 11 12 think that you cannot pull one of these qualities out 13 and say that because it's prepared in anticipation of 14 trial means that therefore it is testimonial. There have been several criteria that this Court has looked 15 16 at, including -- there are other kinds of analogies to 17 this that are akin to this kind of record. For 18 instance, in an assault case, a gun which is the real 19 evidence -- remember the cocaine is the real evidence 20 here -- the Commonwealth would introduce a certificate 21 saying this is a working gun, and that is in lieu of the 22 analyst coming in. When we have to prove public way, 23 when we have to prove school zone, when we have to prove 24 in some instances --

JUSTICE SCALIA: Ballistics as well? You

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1 would extend this to ballistic tests? 2 MS. COAKLEY: If --3 JUSTICE SCALIA: You -- you don't have to 4 bring in the ballistic expert? You can just --5 MS. COAKLEY: Not to prove it's a working firearm, Your Honor. In order to make a comparison -- I 6 7 would agree with counsel that once you get into the 8 discretionary areas that you need to make comparisons and analysis, but this is not that case. 9 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: I don't understand that 11 difference. CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I'm looking at 12 13 footnote 10 in your brief on page 30. And you concede 14 that some interpretation of the machine-generated data 15 ordinarily is required. Now why isn't that a suggestion 16 that there is some leeway and subjective interpretation, 17 and you might have different analysts coming out 18 differently and so you need to get the fellow there and 19 ask him well, how often do you -- how often do one of 20 your fellow analysts disagree with your conclusion? 21 Or this is subjective; I guess some people 22 read it one way or the other one way; which way do you 23 always read it? That kind of stuff. 24 MS. COAKLEY: Well, interestingly, Your 25 Honor, that argument wasn't raised in this case below

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1 and really hasn't been raised in this case before the 2 Court. In fact this is one of the straightforward 3 objective tests that says you put this material into the 4 machine, and the Solicitor General also deals with this. 5 The 100 percent accuracy by and large from that result says this is cocaine; this is heroin, this is --6 7 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I didn't -- I 8 didn't go back and read the scientific treatise you 9 cite, but you say some interpretation is required. So 10 what type of interpretation? 11 MS. COAKLEY: The interpretation that 12 because of the way that the machine works, the chemicals 13 are separated out. And so a chemist, if properly 14 trained, can say by the separation of the chemicals 15 these three, or four or whatever the elements are, equal 16 cocaine. 17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, do you have to have 18 a machine? I mean, what about -- what about ballistics? 19 "This bullet came from that qun." Does that involve sufficient discretion, sufficient judgment that the 20 21 expert has to be there, while the blood -- blood or drug 22 testing doesn't? 23 It seems to me that's where you have to draw the line. 24 MS. COAKLEY: Well, I believe that that's --25

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1	JUSTICE KENNEDY: And to say that that					
2	wasn't raised in the case, this is precisely the					
3	question we are going to have to decide if you're going					
4	to prevail. I don't think it helps to say it wasn't					
5	raised in the case.					
6	MS. COAKLEY: Well, I					
7	JUSTICE KENNEDY: We are raising it.					
8	MS. COAKLEY: I agree, Your Honor. But that					
9	has to do with how satisfied the Court is whether here					
10	or in other jurisdictions that is a reliable result, and					
11	I hesitate to use the word "reliable." I don't mean it					
12	in the Ohio v. Roberts sense. We are talking about the					
13	scientific test that is or is not reliable, and					
14	therefore does it require some other test, whether					
15	Confrontation Clause or not?					
16	JUSTICE BREYER: How can we administer					
17	something like that? His point I think is, look, you					
18	can't make any distinction either of something that is					
19	evidence was prepared with an eye towards trial or it					
20	wasn't. And if it was prepared with an eye towards					
21	trial, well, then call the person and have him testify.					
22	That's it. And if that encompasses every test under the					
23	sun, so be it, because there is no way to draw a					
24	reasonable line.					
25	You start talking about reliability and					

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1 their amicus brief is filled with horror stories of how 2 police labs or other labs have really been way off base 3 and moreover really wrong. And you say, oh, distinguish 4 between a police lab and University of Massachusetts? 5 Try going down that road of which one is reliable, which one isn't reliable. How do we know? 6 7 MS. COAKLEY: Well, Your Honor --8 JUSTICE BREYER: That's his point. No workable way to do it. There can be horrors on both --9 10 in both areas, and so follow what the history was where 11 there was no history on this being admissible. 12 MS. COAKLEY: Your Honor, I disagree because 13 the issues around many of those wrongful convictions 14 related to suggestive identification procedures, other 15 kinds of issues. I'm not aware of any wrongful 16 convictions that came about because --17 JUSTICE BREYER: Aren't there some things I 18 read in the paper all the time, about these laboratories 19 in various places, and they lost the results, they got 20 it all wrong? That just doesn't happen? 21 MS. COAKLEY: I'm not saying that, Your 22 Honor, but I'm saying there are certain evils that the 23 Confrontation Clause is designed to prevent. Either abuse at the laboratory stage or misconduct by 24 25 prosecutors prior to trial or analysts is not one that

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the Confrontation Clause is either designed to or is
 specifically very good at getting at.

JUSTICE SCALIA: Why not? I know I prefer one thing, the custody. It's very important to know whether indeed this was the particular substance that was taken from the defendant. And to establish that, you have to establish a line of custody. And you can't do that without getting in the person who did the test.

9 MS. COAKLEY: Well, Your Honor, I agree the 10 chain of custody is crucial and it relates to the 11 careful procedure that a police officer used, who by the 12 way is the confrontation witness that you worry about 13 because the behavior is the buying, selling, possession 14 of drugs. The element of whether it is cocaine or not 15 really becomes almost secondary to the case. The issue 16 is was the behavior criminal? So the officer who seized 17 the drugs is available for confrontation. The drug is 18 then clearly marked so the Commonwealth has to create 19 that chain of custody for the court, and indeed if the 20 defendant, who is in the best position to think that 21 perhaps this is involving something other than cocaine 22 or heroin, has all the opportunities that he needs to 23 make sure that he gets a fair trial.

24JUSTICE SCALIA: He says -- the policeman25says, "And I gave it to the University of Massachusetts

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1 lab." 2 MS. COAKLEY: And they marked it in a 3 particular way that identified --4 JUSTICE SCALIA: "And I watched when they 5 marked it in a particular way." 6 MS. COAKLEY: And the --7 JUSTICE SCALIA: How do I know that that 8 thing is the one that got to the desk of the analyst who 9 wrote this report? 10 MS. COAKLEY: I think that whether you 11 brought the analyst in or not, you would have the same 12 establishment of the chain of custody and, indeed, that 13 piece of evidence as to whether it's the same drug 14 relates to the officer in this case testified the 15 packaging. He could identify it. It comes back --16 JUSTICE SCALIA: So you say you can require 17 witnesses to show that, right up to the analyst who did 18 the testing, you can require witnesses to testify? All 19 the way up to there but not the analyst himself? 20 MS. COAKLEY: I think, Your Honor, that the 21 issue between chain of custody and whether the Confrontation Clause is implicated are different issues 22 23 _ _ 24 JUSTICE SOUTER: No, but you say that, it 25 seems to me, because you are -- and I think consistently

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1	making a distinction between credibility issues and						
2	reliability issues. And I think you are implicitly						
3	saying the Confrontation Clause is there to test						
4	credibility but not reliability.						
5	MS. COAKLEY: I think						
6	JUSTICE SOUTER: The machine is reliable;						
7	therefore, it's outside of confrontation. And I don't						
8	understand the validity of this distinction that is						
9	implicit in your answers.						
10	MS. COAKLEY: I think perhaps if the Court						
11	looks at accuracy rather than reliability and gets						
12	outside the realm of the kinds of statements						
13	JUSTICE SOUTER: Well, accuracy						
14	MS. COAKLEY: that we looked at.						
15	JUSTICE SOUTER: is an aspect of it.						
16	MS. COAKLEY: But accuracy goes to what this						
17	Court has always allowed in referring to, for instance,						
18	a business records exception or a public records						
19	exception. The reason they are admissible is precisely						
20	because we believe them to be accurate, and more						
21	importantly in this case						
22	JUSTICE SCALIA: No. No. They are						
23	admissible in criminal cases as far as the Confrontation						
24	Clause is concerned because they are not testimonial.						
25	MS. COAKLEY: And they are related, however,						

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1 Your Honor, because the roots of whether it's hearsay or 2 not and the Confrontation Clause arguments come from the 3 same concern that somebody get a fair trial, that he or 4 she has the right to confront the witness --5 JUSTICE SCALIA: We are back to Roberts 6 then. 7 JUSTICE KENNEDY: I do wish you would 8 comment on the argument that the State of California --9 a huge state with many, many drug prosecutions -- seems 10 to get along all right under the rule that the 11 Petitioner proposes. 12 MS. COAKLEY: I did join the amicus brief, 13 Your Honor. I believe and -- though I think it's too 14 early to tell because I, certainly from my own 15 experience, know that the number of cases that go to 16 trial is not an indication of what the work is that is 17 involved, and I know that in Massachusetts it would --18 JUSTICE KENNEDY: If the State of California 19 and other populous States have for, I take it, some 20 number of years been able to function quite effectively 21 under the rule that the Petitioner proposes, it seems to 22 me that's something that you have to address. 23 MS. COAKLEY: And I address that, Your 24 Honor, by saying that for Massachusetts it would be an 25 undue burden with very little benefit to the defendant.

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1	JUSTICE KENNEDY: Why would it be undue for					
2	California and not for are you accepting the fact					
3	that in California it's a workable rule and it's caused					
4	no problems?					
5	MS. COAKLEY: I I can't disagree with					
6	that, Your Honor. I don't have enough information about					
7	the way California works or doesn't work. I know that					
8	as a practical matter					
9	JUSTICE STEVENS: Well, it seems to me it's					
10	a very important point.					
11	MS. COAKLEY: Well, as a practical matter in					
12	Massachusetts, it would mean that district court					
13	misdemeanor drug prosecutions would essentially grind to					
14	a halt, and the value to the defendant and this Court					
15	has looked at in Inadi and in other situations where					
16	there does not seem to be the real issue involved with					
17	Confrontation Clause.					
18	JUSTICE GINSBURG: Then you're predicting					
19	that grind to a halt, but there are going to be a large					
20	number that wash out because they are plea bargained.					
21	So they won't get into the picture at all. There will					
22	probably be a goodly number in which defense counsel					
23	will stipulate that the drug quantity the drug type					
24	was such and such and quantity such and such. So you					
25	don't know in how many cases the defendant would take					

1 advantage of this confrontation right?

2 MS. COAKLEY: No, and they often will not 3 stipulate, Your Honor, until the day of trial when they 4 realize that the chemist is there. That's from my own 5 experience and that's a commonsensical rule. The 6 question is --

JUSTICE SCALIA: Don't these people have to appear before the same judge again and again? The point made these are repeat attorneys, and I don't think you make friends and influence people among judges by insisting upon testimony in criminal cases where it is obviously not needed.

13 MS. COAKLEY: Well, two points, Your Honor: 14 In Massachusetts, we do have a circuit court and a 15 superior court so judges move around. And the second 16 thing is that -- my experience is that defendants, 17 whether appointed or otherwise, are extremely vigorous 18 in protecting their rights, and if I were defense 19 counsel and I had a strategic advantage, I would insist 20 on it.

JUSTICE SOUTER: Do you see any reason - CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I think California
 did not join the amicus brief.

24 MS. COAKLEY: Then I misspoke.

25 JUSTICE SOUTER: Do you see any reason why a

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1 notice-and-demand statute wouldn't satisfy your concern? MS. COAKLEY: Well, the -- the Petitioner 2 3 agreed that --4 JUSTICE SOUTER: A bland notice-and-demand 5 statute --6 MS. COAKLEY: We would argue that 7 Massachusetts' statute is the functional equivalent of a 8 notice-and-demand statute and complies with whatever 9 concerns the Court may have about the right to 10 confrontation. 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What if it's the 12 central issue in the case? The defense says, "That 13 stuff I was carrying was not cocaine. Either I was 14 trying -- you know, I was going to stiff the person I 15 was selling it to or whatever." That's the sole defense. That's not cocaine. All you've got to do is 16 17 submit an affidavit from the lab quy saying, "I tested 18 it; it is"? 19 MS. COAKLEY: Well, from the prosecution's point of view that would be a bad strategic decision. 20 21 That's an instance where you would bring in the analyst 22 because you want to --23 JUSTICE KENNEDY: That's a non-answer. We are asking what's the rule? 24 25 MS. COAKLEY: The rule --

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1	JUSTICE KENNEDY: Can you submit it on the						
2	affidavit, as the Chief Justice said under your theory						
3	of the case?						
4	MS. COAKLEY: Yes.						
5	JUSTICE KENNEDY: You'd try to have some						
6	different hypothesis?						
7	MS. COAKLEY: Yes, because the defendant has						
8	plenty of opportunity to both have an independent exam,						
9	to subpoena the witness in himself, to make sure that if						
10	that is a true issue at trial in many instances						
11	most instances it's not, but he will have the						
12	opportunity to cross-examine.						
13	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, General.						
14	Ms. Schertler.						
15	ORAL ARGUMENT OF LISA H. SCHERTLER						
16	ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES,						
17	AS AMICUS CURIAE,						
18	SUPPORTING THE RESPONDENT						
19	MS. SCHERTLER: Mr. Chief Justice, and may						
20	it please the Court:						
21	The Confrontation Clause is not implicated						
22	when a human being merely authenticates for trial the						
23	instruments-generated result of a scientific test. That						
24	is because the direct output of an instrument is not						
25	testimonial and human assertions that merely establish						

1	the foundation for admitting nontestimonial evidence do						
2	not themselves trigger Confrontation Clause rights.						
3	JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, maybe if you were						
4	just if you were just putting in the machine, the raw						
5	information from the machine. But here what speaks is						
б	the certification by the analyst, so you don't have						
7	simply a machine-generated result; you have a human						
8	person who seems to be testifying: I certify that this						
9	is an accurate report.						
10	MS. SCHERTLER: If I could draw an analogy,						
11	Justice Ginsburg, to a historical example that we think						
12	illustrates our point, historically records custodians						
13	public records custodians have been permitted to						
14	certify through, when they have express authority at the						
15	common law, and and into present day that they did a						
16	records search, that they found a document within the						
17	public records of an agency, and that the document that						
18	they are attaching is a true copy of what they found.						
19	Those are statements by humans that really						
20	set forth the conditions for under which the evidence						
21	is being presented to the jury.						
22	JUSTICE SCALIA: But						
23	MS. SCHERTLER: But those have always been						
24	accepted.						
25	JUSTICE SCALIA: It's not material prepared						

1 for trial. It's not material that was generated 2 precisely in order to prosecute an individual. 3 MS. SCHERTLER: The underlying material in 4 the public records case is not testimonial because it 5 was not prepared for trial. 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: Exactly. 7 MS. SCHERTLER: In this case, Justice Scalia, we would submit that the underlying material is 8 also not testimonial, albeit for a separate reason; and 9 10 that is that it is an instrument-generated result and therefore not the statement of a witness. 11 JUSTICE SCALIA: Let's, let's assume that 12 13 it's critical to a particular murder prosecution what 14 time the shot was fired, okay? And you mean to tell me 15 if -- if somebody says I heard the clock strike 12 at the time the shot was fired, that would not be 16 17 testimony? Yes, the clock is a machine, right? 18 MS. SCHERTLER: No. 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: He is just reciting what the clock said. 20 21 MS. SCHERTLER: My analogy would be, Justice 22 Scalia, if that clock had in itself a trigger mechanism 23 that would detect when a gunshot was fired; and if that clock delivered, as you have in the cases of a drug 24 25 analysis, a result, a reading that one could submit into

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1 court that says shot detected at 12 p.m., that that 2 nontestimonial evidence could be submitted consistently 3 with Confrontation Clause principles, but it would still 4 require authentication.

5 Some person may have to establish that this 6 clock was set up, it was operating properly, it was 7 calibrated the way it had to. Those all go to the same 8 sorts of foundational facts that are akin to the public 9 records certificate.

10 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, you make me think the 11 public certificate. Let's imagine birth and death records. There is a whole building full of them; they 12 13 are on microfiche. Now, I am not sure how Massachusetts 14 works, but I suppose if you want to introduce one you 15 call up the -- the keeper and the keeper looks it up, 16 produces it, and has a separate piece of paper or maybe 17 written beneath it which says: "This is a true copy of 18 the," and you don't call in the keeper.

19 Now that statement on a piece of paper,
20 "this is a true copy of the birth certificate of John
21 Smith," that was prepared specifically for this trial.
22 MS. SCHERTLER: Yes, Justice Breyer.
23 JUSTICE BREYER: So I take it that has
24 nothing -- I mean we'll find out, but if they win, every
25 one of those cases, every document you have to bring in

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1 the person to make clear that the document that says 2 that this is a copy of the document --3 MS. SCHERTLER: Our --4 JUSTICE BREYER: Is that what -- is that the 5 point? 6 MS. SCHERTLER: Well, that is -- that is our 7 point. That it is too -- it is too simplified to say, 8 as Petitioner does here, that if it's an affidavit or a certificate, and it's prepared for trial, that's the end 9 10 of the analysis. 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But you have to have some 12 boundaries, you have to have some framework, you have to 13 have some explanation. You started talking about a 14 There is no machine in Justice Breyer's machine. 15 hypothetical, so it seems to me you have two different 16 rationales floating around here and -- and neither are 17 tethered to a specific rule. 18 MS. SCHERTLER: Well, Justice Kennedy, this 19 is why I would bring those two rules together. In the 20 public records example, what you have is underlying 21 evidence going into the jury that is nontestimonial. In 22 that instance, it was because it was a public record not 23 prepared for trial but has always been accepted from --24 has always been viewed as nontestimonial.

Your Honor is correct. In this case we

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1 don't have that, but what we do have is an underlying 2 evidentiary item that is nontestimonial for a separate 3 purpose, and that is that it is a machine-generated 4 result.

5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well --

6 JUSTICE BREYER: You're going to work 7 either. Because the person -- Sir Walter Raleigh's accusers wanted to testify about something that was 8 9 nontestimonial: what happened on the day. So what we 10 are looking for -- I mean, I agree with you that it is a 11 very peculiar result that's going to have every public 12 document in the United States suddenly have the keeper 13 of that document having to come into court.

On the other hand, I'm having a hard time figuring out what the distinction is between that and all these other things.

17 MS. SCHERTLER: Well -- yes, Justice Breyer. 18 Let me just add that in the public records custodian 19 situation, there is always the possibility that the 20 public records custodian who is signing that certificate 21 was careless, is a liar; and those certificates yet have 22 always been viewed as simply foundational vehicles for 23 getting to the jury nontestimonial evidence. The 24 defense is not --

JUSTICE STEVENS: Ms. Schertler, please

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1	clarify one thing for me. Is the rule you're seeking					
2	one limited to tests performed by machines?					
3	MS. SCHERTLER: The rule that I have					
4	articulated so far, yes. It is it would be					
5	JUSTICE STEVENS: So would you agree the					
6	Confrontation Clause would apply if it were an					
7	independent expert's test test results and testimony.					
8	MS. SCHERTLER: Justice Stevens, we also					
9	have an alternative argument					
10	JUSTICE STEVENS: Just tell me yes or no.					
11	MS. SCHERTLER: No. I would not. Because					
12	we have an alternative					
13	JUSTICE STEVENS: Well, then we shouldn't					
14	talk about just machines.					
15	MS. SCHERTLER: Well, we hope to rely on one					
16	of the same arguments that Massachusetts does, which is					
17	that there was a broad exception at common law for					
18	official records, those created by public officers doing					
19	their duty.					
20	JUSTICE KENNEDY: It seems to me you have to					
21	do that because there is all sorts of machines that have					
22	to be interpreted. There a chromatic spectrum					
23	analysis; the person has to say what he saw there, what					
24	she saw there.					
25	MS. SCHERTLER: I					

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1	JUSTICE KENNEDY: So just because the					
2	machine is involved it seems to me we cannot make a					
3	sensible rule based on that.					
4	JUSTICE SCALIA: And there was not a broad					
5	exception at common law for public records created in					
6	anticipation of criminal litigation.					
7	MS. SCHERTLER: Well, we have I mean, we					
8	have looked for that limitation in the authorities and					
9	we simply have not found it.					
10	JUSTICE SCALIA: Have you found cases where					
11	the material was admitted as a public record despite the					
12	fact that it was a public record created for					
13	prosecution?					
14	MR. FISHER: The difficulty with that,					
15	Justice Scalia, is I don't know of equivalent or					
16	comparable records that were being created at that time					
17	for purposes of litigation.					
18	JUSTICE SCALIA: Well					
19	JUSTICE SOUTER: These other records, no,					
20	you haven't found them.					
21	MS. SCHERTLER: No. I have I have not.					
22	Yet, if I could go back to Justice Kennedy's					
23	question, there is no record here about how this test in					
24	particular was done, but there there I can tell					
25	the Court that actually technology in the controlled					

substance area is to the point where an instrument does
 in fact provide an answer to the analyst. It provides a
 mass spectrum of the unknown and a --

4 JUSTICE STEVENS: Yes but the rule, the 5 issue is not limited to drug cases. Murder cases, all sorts of cases where there is scientific evidence. 6 MS. SCHERTLER: Well, the -- the narrower 7 8 rule that we are discussing here would be limited to 9 those situations in which the underlying evidence to be 10 presented to the jury is nontestimonial because it is 11 instrument-generated and did not require human analysis. 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So is your -- what 13 is your answer to the question I posed to the Attorney 14 General? The only issue in the case is whether the 15 powder is or is not cocaine. You think you get by if 16 the law says you can admit this with an affidavit? 17 MS. SCHERTLER: Yes, Mr. Chief Justice for 18 the following reason. Just as in the case of the records custodians, a defendant may believe that that is 19 20 not an authentic record; and nothing about the rule we 21 propose would prevent the defense from challenging the 22 authenticity or the circumstances, the correctness of 23 the testing procedures that were used.

24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But you can't -25 MS. SCHERTLER: It's just a question of

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1	whether whether the Confrontation Clause requires					
2	that that challenge occur in the Government's case on					
3	cross-examination, or as in these record custodian's					
4	cases, if the defense wants to challenge the					
5	authenticity of the underlying nontestimonial evidence,					
6	he must do so in his case.					
7	JUSTICE KENNEDY: Could you comment on the					
8	California experience, please?					
9	MS. SCHERTLER: I would I would be happy					
10	to, Justice Kennedy.					
11	I I don't have information about					
12	California. I do have information about the District of					
13	Columbia. And I can tell the court that in the time					
14	period since the District of Columbia Court of Appeals					
15	held that these sorts of certificates of analysis were					
16	testimonial, that the court appearances that have been					
17	required of DEA chemists at the Mid-Atlantic laboratory					
18	have increased by 500 percent, from seven to 10					
19	appearances per month to routinely over 50 per month,					
20	and that the corresponding time that it takes to analyze					
21	substance has increased.					
22	Thank you, Your Honor.					
23	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you counsel.					
24	Five minutes, Mr. Fisher.					
25	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF JEFFREY L. FISHER					

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1	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER						
2	MR. FISHER: Let me start, Your Honors: If						
3	there is any doubt remaining about the machine-generated						
4	theory that the Solicitor General was putting forward						
5	today, again I would refer the court back to the						
б	scientific evidence treatise.						
7	The raw data of a mass spectrometer looks						
8	looks something like a heart monitor. It's a printout						
9	of the squiggly line across the page that a person needs						
10	to look at and then analyze as to what it shows about						
11	the molecular composite of the substance that the						
12	machine was operating. We have no objection if						
13	prosecutors in criminal cases want to introduce machine						
14	generated data. They can do that.						
15	But what they can't do is introduce						
16	introduce affidavits certifying as to their you know,						
17	their interpretation of what a machine did or simply						
18	what a machine says, because there is no difference						
19	JUSTICE SCALIA: So you say they could						
20	introduce the squiggly line and put on the stand an						
21	analyst who says what that squiggly line shows is that						
22	this was cocaine?						
23	MR. FISHER: They could do that, Justice						
24	Scalia.						
25	JUSTICE KENNEDY: What's your distinction						

1 with the recordkeeper? 2 MR. FISHER: Pardon me? 3 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What's your distinction 4 from your own theory of the recordkeeper? Does the 5 recordkeeper all have to -- do they all have to testify to testify that this is indeed the record? 6 7 MR. FISHER: My understanding of the common 8 law on that, as the solicitor general put it, is that that was a foundational requirement that was not 9 10 necessarily considered evidence. 11 JUSTICE BREYER: No, no, there's a 12 hearsay -- there is a hearsay aspect. I'm not saying it's the only thing. There is a chain and so forth but, 13 14 there is a hearsay aspect to that which you see, okay. 15 The certificate says this is Joe Jones' birth 16 certificate. That's what the -- now, that's that person 17 outside of court who made that little piece of paper for 18 purposes of this case. And moreover, the statement that 19 it certifies to is directly relevant; indeed, the whole 20 thing falls without it. 21 So, are you going to say the same thing 22 applies, your rule, and you have to call the 23 recordkeeper in or not? And I think you're going to say 24 And if you're going to say not, I want to know not. 25 what the distinction is?

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1	MR. FISHER: As a general matter, yes, our						
2	rule is consistent. Now, if you look at Wigmore,						
3	Wigmore						
4	JUSTICE BREYER: You are going to calling						
5	in you're going to						
6	MR. FISHER: I'm trying to answer. What						
7	Wigmore says is that something like a public						
8	recordkeeper's seal was not considered evidence, per se.						
9	It was a foundational requirement to put evidence in.						
10	And so, in this Court's words in the Dowdell case, it's						
11	something like a court reporter's transcript that goes						
12	up to a Court of Appeals and then is looked at. It's						
13	not considered evidence against a criminal defendant.						
14	Now, in stark contrast to this case where						
15	the document is expressly citing to a statute of						
16	Massachusetts law and saying this element of the						
17	criminal charge is satisfied. It is a very big						
18	difference.						
19	JUSTICE KENNEDY: The graph, spectrograph						
20	or or or the the chart is introduced. Chain of						
21	custody is either stipulated or established. Can a						
22	person who did not make the test testify as to what that						
23	line what that graph means, and would that be						
24	sufficient to convict?						
25	MR. FISHER: So long as chain of custody was						

1 satisfied, yes, Justice Kennedy, that someone could take 2 the stand and do that. But remember, the reports in 3 this case do not just report -- even if you accepted the 4 solicitor's general's version that they are reporting 5 what the machine said about the substance, they also have a paragraph before that, and this goes to Justice б 7 Scalia's question, say, these are -- these are the 8 substances that were taken from the defendant in this case and given to me by this officer, and so, that is 9 10 additional information that is being sworn to in the 11 affidavit in this case that is also testimony.

JUSTICE SOUTER: Why don't you insist, even in that case, on the confrontation right to examine the person who actually conducted the test itself and generated the papers that the later expert testifies on in order to determine the admissibility of the -- of the -- the test results themselves?

18 MR. FISHER: I think the defendant may have 19 that right. I understood Justice Kennedy's hypothetical 20 to suggest that that chain of custody was stipulated to 21 or otherwise agreed.

JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay. All I wanted to knowwas whether you were giving that away or not.

JUSTICE KENNEDY: No, but chain of custody
is -- is quite different from the quantitative analysis

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1 and the professional opinion. My question is only chain 2 of custody has been established, that's gone to the 3 laboratory, the paper is produced, an outside witness 4 testifies to what the paper means. I thought you said 5 that that suffices. 6 MR. FISHER: I did. So I think I'm --7 here's what I'm saying. 8 JUSTICE SOUTER: Let me ask you this. There 9 are -- there are -- there are three possibility 10 subjects: Chain of custody, conduct of test, 11 significance or meaning of the squiggles. As I 12 understand it, you have said if the chain of custody is 13 established and if the squiggles are admitted in 14 evidence, an expert who did not do the test can testify 15 about the significance of the squiggles. But that 16 leaves the question of the -- the evidence about the 17 conduct of the test itself. 18 And I understood you to say to me that you 19 were not conceding that you did not have a -- a confrontation right to examine the person who did the 20 21 test itself in order to determine admissibility. 22 MR. FISHER: I think what we are doing here 23 is disagreeing slightly over where chain of custody begins and ends. To the extent chain of custody gets 24 25 you to the point at which the substance is put into the

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1	machine, and that was stipulated to or otherwise not
2	thought about, then, yes, the printout could be
3	introduced into evidence and anyone could testify as to
4	what that printout means. But to the extent that there
5	was a gap between the drugs getting into the laboratory
6	and being put into the machine by somebody that the
7	defendant was not stipulating to, then whoever did
8	that if the State were going to assert this is who
9	did it and this is the drugs that we had that would
10	be something that would be subject to cross-examination.
11	JUSTICE SOUTER: Okay.
12	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
13	The case is submitted.
14	(Whereupon, at 2:04 p.m., the case in the
15	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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