

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
Alexandria Division**

)	
RAI STRATEGIC HOLDINGS, INC. and)	
R.J. REYNOLDS VAPOR COMPANY,)	
)	
Plaintiffs/Counterclaim)	
Defendants,)	
)	
v.)	Civil Action No. 1:20-cv-393 (LO/TCB)
)	
ALTRIA CLIENT SERVICES LLC; PHILIP)	
MORRIS USA INC. and PHILIP MORRIS)	
PRODUCTS S.A.,)	
)	
Defendants/Counterclaim)	
Plaintiffs)	
)	

ORDER

This matter is before the Court on the parties’ Joint Motion to Redact Portions of the March 18, 2022 Hearing Transcript and supporting memorandum. (Dkts. 1178, 1179.) The parties request leave to redact certain portions of the transcript of the hearing held before the Court on March 18, 2022. The redactions proposed in exhibit A to the supporting memorandum reflect confidential business information under the protective order. (Dkt. 1179-1.)

District courts have authority to seal court documents “if the public’s right of access is outweighed by competing interests.” *Ashcraft v. Conoco, Inc.*, 218 F.3d 288, 302 (4th Cir. 2000). This Court has considered less drastic alternatives in redacting the transcript. This selective protection of information constitutes the least drastic measure of sealing confidential material. *See Adams v. Object Innovation, Inc.*, No. 3:11cv272-REP-DWD, 2011 WL 7042224, at *4 (E.D. Va. Dec. 5, 2011) “[The] proposal to redact only the proprietary and confidential information, rather than seal the entirety of [the document], constitutes the least drastic method

of shielding the information at issue.”), *report and recommendation adopted*, 2012 WL 135428 (E.D. Va. Jan. 17, 2012).

Finally, the Court finds reason to seal the unredacted transcript. The public has no legitimate interest in information that is confidential to the parties. *See id.* (“[T]here is no legitimate public interest in disclosing the proprietary and confidential information of [the defendant] . . . and disclosure to the public could result in significant damage to the company.”). The information that the parties seek to redact includes confidential, proprietary, and competitively sensitive business information of the parties and/or third parties, each of which could face harm if such information were released publicly.

Accordingly, it is hereby

ORDERED that the parties’ motion (Dkt. 1178) is **GRANTED**; and it is further

ORDERED that the March 18, 2022 hearing transcript be filed under seal; and it is further

ORDERED that the parties file on the public docket a redacted copy of the transcript as proposed in Exhibit A. (Dkt. 1179-1.)

ENTERED this 6th day of April, 2021.



THERESA CARROLL BUCHANAN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Alexandria, Virginia