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JOINT MEETING ON REAPPORTIONMENT

HOUSE CHAMBER

MAY 6, 2011

Transcribed by:

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Court Reporter

1 T A P E D P R O C E E D I N G S

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay,
3 members, we have a long day ahead of us.
4 Let's go ahead and get this thing started, if
5 we could, everybody grab a seat.

6 This is an official Joint Select Committee
7 meeting, and so what I am going to do is ask
8 for the administrative assistant to call the
9 roll.

10 THE CLERK: Senator Margolis.

11 SENATOR MARGOLIS: Here.

12 THE CLERK: Benacquisto.

13 SENATOR BENACQUISTO: Here.

14 THE CLERK: Brannon?

15 SENATOR BRANNON: Here.

16 THE CLERK: Bullard?

17 SENATOR BULLARD: Here.

18 THE CLERK: Dean.

19 SENATOR DEAN: Here.

20 THE CLERK: Detert.

21 SENATOR DETERT: Here.

22 THE CLERK: Diaz de la Portilla?

23 SENATOR DIAZ DE LA PORTILLA: Here.

24 THE CLERK: Evers.

25 SENATOR EVERS: Here.

1 THE CLERK: Florez.
2 SENATOR FLORES: Here.
3 THE CLERK: Garcia.
4 REPRESENTATIVE GARCIA: Here.
5 THE CLERK: Gardiner.
6 SENATOR GARDINER: Here.
7 THE CLERK: Hays.
8 SENATOR HAYS: Here.
9 THE CLERK: Bogdanoff.
10 SENATOR BOGDANOFF: Here.
11 THE CLERK: Lynn.
12 SENATOR LYNN: Here.
13 THE CLERK: Montford.
14 SENATOR MONTFORD: Here.
15 THE CLERK: Negron.
16 SENATOR NEGRON: Here.
17 THE CLERK: Rich.
18 SENATOR RICH: Here.
19 THE CLERK: Sachs.
20 SENATOR SACHS: Here.
21 THE CLERK: Siplin.
22 SENATOR SIPLIN: Here.
23 THE CLERK: Sobel.
24 SENATOR SOBEL: Here.
25 THE CLERK: Storms.

1 SENATOR STORMS: Here.

2 THE CLERK: Thrasher.

3 SENATOR THRASHER: Here.

4 THE CLERK: Chairman Gaetz.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Here.

6 THE CLERK: Representatives, Atkins.

7 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Here.

8 THE CLERK: Bernard.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Here.

10 THE CLERK: Chestnut.

11 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Here.

12 THE CLERK: Dorworth.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH: Here.

14 THE CLERK: Eisgnaugle.

15 REPRESENTATIVE EISGNAUGLE: Here.

16 THE CLERK: Fresen.

17 REPRESENTATIVE FRESEN: Here.

18 THE CLERK: Frishe.

19 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Here.

20 THE CLERK: Holder.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Here.

22 THE CLERK: Horner.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Here.

24 THE CLERK: Hukill.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Here.

1 THE CLERK: Jenne.
2 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: Here.
3 THE CLERK: Jones.
4 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Here.
5 THE CLERK: Kiar.
6 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Here.
7 THE CLERK: Legg.
8 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Here.
9 THE CLERK: Nehr.
10 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Here.
11 THE CLERK: Precourt.
12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Here.
13 THE CLERK: Rogers.?
14 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Here.
15 THE CLERK: Rouson.
16 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Here.
17 THE CLERK: Schenck.
18 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Here.
19 THE CLERK: Workman.
20 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Here.
21 THE CLERK: Chairman Weatherford.
22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Here. I
23 believe we have a quorum. Mr. Taylor was here.
24 We will mark you present, Mr. Taylor.
25 Members, thank you so much for being here.

1 Before we get started on kind of the meat and
2 potatoes of this meeting, first of all, I want
3 to thank everyone for taking the time to be
4 here this morning.

5 I know we were up late last night. There
6 is a lot to get achieved today, but there are
7 two people that both myself and Chairman Gaetz
8 wanted to make sure that were here and were a
9 part of this historic day, which is to kind of
10 kick off the joint meetings we will be having
11 across the state.

12 And the first person I wanted you to hear
13 from is no stranger to this Chamber. He is the
14 person who has allowed me to serve as Chair,
15 Redistricting in the Florida House and has been
16 a tremendous leader for the Florida House and
17 for the state over the last 60 days and that is
18 Speaker Dean Cannon. Speaker.

19 SPEAKER CANNON: Thank you. Welcome to
20 President Haridopolos, Chairman Gaetz and the
21 other Senators on the committee, and obviously
22 to Speaker Designate Weatherford and our House
23 members, welcome on day 60.

24 Thank you for taking time on what will
25 otherwise promise to be a fairly intense day,

1 but the Lord willing, the last day of session,
2 and I know that Chairman Weatherford and
3 Chairman Gaetz have some information that they
4 want to share with the committees in a moment
5 regarding our summer meetings on redistricting.

6 But I wanted to take the opportunity to
7 reiterate a basic point which we have
8 emphasized and which I know Chair Weatherford
9 is going to emphasize as you begin the public
10 outreach phase of the reapportionment process,
11 and that is this.

12 This process will only be successful if we
13 let the public start the conversation about the
14 communities of interest and the districts and
15 where these lines are ultimately drawn.

16 And your task this summer will be much
17 more about listening than talking, which for
18 those of us in public office is sometimes hard.
19 I am guilty of that, and it is about
20 understanding the feedback you get in context
21 of the geography and the demography of the
22 areas you go and visit.

23 And then use the wisdom of the public,
24 engage them, seek their input. They may be
25 reluctant, but draw it out of them because that

1 is very important, and give it your full
2 commitment.

3 This happens once in a decade, it is a
4 special process. We have a constitutional
5 obligation to do this right, and as Chair
6 Weatherford has outlined, and as President
7 Haridopolos and I may have made our task and
8 our charge to you, to make it the most open,
9 transparent and publicly participatory
10 reapportionment process in Florida's history,
11 and I know you will do that.

12 Be ready for the public meetings. Tend to
13 take a lot of notes and keep a lot of good
14 information so that when we return to
15 Tallahassee for our interim committee meetings
16 we can incorporate that into our work.

17 And I would ask you also, and I know this
18 is going to be difficult, particularly given
19 the importance of complying with our
20 Constitution and our laws and the Federal
21 Voting Rights Act.

22 I take very seriously your thoughtfulness
23 in putting your political aspirations aside as
24 you make legally appropriate decisions in the
25 upcoming redistricting process.

1 Please remember in doing this right is our
2 task, it is our charge, and it is our
3 constitutional legal obligation.

4 Thank you very much. I want to introduce
5 someone now without whom we would not be
6 adjourning today, and we would have not gotten
7 as many successful Bills passed, that is my
8 good friend, Mike Haridopolos, Mr. Haridopolos
9 -- hold on, President Haridopolos, I saw the
10 jump, that is good hold.

11 President Haridopolos has exercised
12 leadership along with me over what is the
13 toughest budget year in modern history, and
14 there is men and women in this Chamber who have
15 been a lot longer than he or I, and he has been
16 here longer than I have.

17 But his friendship, Mr. President, your
18 leadership, your courage in the face of a very
19 brutal session has helped make us in the
20 position now to land the plane, and I just want
21 to say thank you, and I want you to all join me
22 in welcoming Senate President Mike Haridopolos.

23 SENATOR HARIDOPOLOS: Thank you. Thank
24 you very much. It is also great to be in the
25 Florida House with my friends, especially my

1 good friend, Dean Cannon.

2 I am glad this is our final morning, and I
3 wasn't sure on Monday night if it would be. So
4 we are grateful to be here as always, and an
5 exciting time for everyone to get home with
6 their friends and family, and most importantly,
7 to report back to the people of Florida that we
8 have a balanced budget with no new taxes, and
9 reforming huge programs. So with the work of
10 Senator Negron, Representative Schenck and
11 others on Medicaid, on pension, and, of course,
12 already on education.

13 So it has been I think a remarkable
14 session. I am grateful for the hard work that
15 everybody member, not only here, but across the
16 Capitol today has put in, just this morning
17 working with Attorney General Bondi. We were
18 able to work out some issues with pill mills,
19 so that was a very good success and we
20 appreciate it very much.

21 But today is also a special day. We have
22 prided ourselves on the idea of transparency,
23 making this the most open Florida government
24 ever.

25 And there is a few veterans in the room

1 who were actually here back in 2002, who drew
2 those lines, which today, of course, you
3 occupy.

4 But starting this summer we are going to
5 be embarking on a new mission, making sure this
6 is the most open transparent system ever. Ten
7 years ago when we last worked on
8 reapportionment, we literally had to have a CD
9 ROM in order to work the system.

10 Now it is available online for all
11 Floridians to participate and make sure they
12 have that opportunity, and with the leadership
13 of Chairman Gaetz and Chairman Weatherford who
14 will be traveling across the state of Florida,
15 to listen to people before we create the
16 policies that will change the lines in the
17 state of Florida, given the challenges that are
18 before us with Amendments 5 and 6.

19 And so I am excited today to participate
20 in this endeavor in making sure that we give
21 citizens the direct say, literally the ability
22 to send in their plans so that we can draw the
23 lines that best reflect the communities that we
24 all represent.

25 And so with that I just want to say thank

1 you very much for this opportunity to be here,
2 and let's turn it back over to Chairman
3 Weatherford, and proceed to what I think will
4 be a thoughtful, methodical, open, transparent
5 system and make sure when we draw the lines
6 next year that will be done with the best
7 interest of all Floridians in mind.

8 Thank you very much.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
10 very much, Mr. President, and thank you for
11 being here this morning.

12 Before I turn it over to my partner,
13 Chairman Gaetz, there is a few comments I would
14 I like to make.

15 The first is just to reiterate what has
16 been said by the Senate President and the
17 Speaker, that our goal is to make this the most
18 transparent and open process it has ever been,
19 and not just in Florida, but across the
20 country.

21 We want this to be a model for
22 reapportionment and redistricting in the
23 nation, and I think we can do that, and that is
24 the leadership and that is what we have been
25 given from our presiding officers.

1 In front of every member who is on the
2 Redistricting Committee, you should have a
3 packet in front of you.

4 That packet basically breaks down the
5 meetings and the hearings that we have planned
6 out thus far.

7 In the very first slide or the second
8 slide, I should say, in the meetings that will
9 start right here in Tallahassee. That will be
10 the very first meeting. We will then be moving
11 on to Milton, Florida, Ft. Walton and Panama
12 City.

13 Looking at slide three, if you turn it
14 over, you will see a second round of meetings,
15 starting in mid-July, with meetings in
16 Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Daytona Beach, The
17 Villages, and finally in Gainesville.

18 If you turn to slide four you will see a
19 general outline for the third, fourth and fifth
20 weeks of meetings in central Florida, southeast
21 Florida, and southwest Florida.

22 Our staff is currently working with Senate
23 staff to nail down the exact locations of
24 those, but we have dates that I want to be very
25 direct in telling you are tentative.

1 There certainly could be changes in the
2 last two dates that we have set forth, but we
3 wanted to give you as much certainty as we
4 possibly could, but those dates are tentative.

5 We hope that those will be the final
6 dates. You will know that very, very quickly,
7 and we hope to have locations, specific
8 locations for each and every one of you in the
9 very near future.

10 With that being said, this is going to be
11 a fun process, and as I tell my House members,
12 if you look to your right and you look to your
13 left and you see the Senator sitting next to
14 you, get to know them, because you will be on a
15 long tour with them for the next four or five
16 months, and it is going to it be a good time,
17 but it is a very serious time.

18 And the charge that we have to redraw
19 these seats is very important to the future of
20 the state of Florida.

21 It is going to define what the map is
22 going to look like for our state for the next
23 decade and we take it very seriously and I know
24 you do as well.

25 But I am most excited about the fact that

1 I am going to get to work with my partner in
2 this process, and that is Chairman Gaetz, and
3 Chairman Gaetz has been a personal friend of
4 mine for many years.

5 He is a tremendous leader in the Senate.
6 He takes this process very seriously as well,
7 and I have just enjoyed our friendship growing
8 over the years, Chairman, and I look forward to
9 working with you to make sure that this process
10 is the best it has ever been, not only in
11 Florida, but across the United States of
12 America. Chairman.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Speaker Designate and Mr. Speaker,
15 Mr. President, thank you for being with us this
16 morning.

17 I am privileged to work with Will
18 Weatherford in this process. As he indicated,
19 we have developed a close friendship, one that
20 I think will deepen as we work together in this
21 process.

22 This is a once in a decade responsibility
23 that we take very, very seriously. Florida has
24 been honored and recognized nationally for the
25 accuracy and professionalism of our

1 reapportionment and redistricting process.

2 And this year, as President Haridopolos
3 and Speaker Cannon has said, we intend to take
4 it a step further.

5 We have already placed on the Internet all
6 of the demographic data gathered by the Bureau
7 of the Census and relevant to our redistricting
8 process. That is on the Internet.

9 And now today, President Haridopolos has
10 thrown the switch, along with Speaker Cannon so
11 that 19 million Floridians will also have
12 access to the same software in redistricting
13 that all of us will have access to.

14 That means 19 million Floridians can
15 actually draw maps, can submit their proposals
16 and can be online, hard wired auditors of what
17 we do.

18 This has never happened before in Florida.
19 This has never happened before in America, and
20 we look forward to this kind of an interactive
21 process.

22 But as the Speaker Designate had
23 indicated, between June 20th and September 1st,
24 we will hold a series of 26 public hearings
25 across the state of Florida.

1 Our mission, as Speaker Cannon indicated,
2 is not to talk, but to listen. That will be
3 hard for some of us, especially hard for me,
4 although I am losing my voice and at least half
5 of the Senate is deeply grateful.

6 But when somebody asks you what you have
7 done on your summer vacation, you will really
8 have a story to tell them, because you will
9 have been able to hear the views and meet the
10 faces and understand the concerns of Floridians
11 all over the state.

12 The Speaker Designate and I would urge you
13 to urge your constituents to attend these
14 public hearings. This is one where the losers
15 are the ones who don't show up. The winners
16 are the ones who suit up and share their views,
17 share their concerns.

18 So please, through your e-mails, through
19 your reports, through your Town Hall meetings
20 after the session, encourage your constituents
21 to come to these public meetings and to express
22 their concerns and how they believe lines
23 should be drawn to benefit their communities,
24 and to be accurate and to reflect the realities
25 of their communities.

1 I would point out to my Senate colleagues
2 that we have broken the Senate Reapportionment
3 Committee into hearing groups.

4 And so there is a handout that all of you
5 ha have in front of you. You will see which
6 hearing groups you are a member of, and each
7 Senator is being asked to attend two hearings
8 and also the kick off hearing in Tallahassee
9 which will be on the 20th of June.

10 There we hope to invite groups who have
11 expressed an interest in this process to come
12 and give us their plans so that we will have
13 the opportunity to get the benefit of their
14 wisdom.

15 I also want to thank President Margolis,
16 who is the Senate Vice-Chair who has been
17 through this process before, and her steady
18 hand will help guide us as we move through the
19 process.

20 And Mr. Speaker Designate, that is all of
21 the business that the Senate has. I know you
22 are going to break up into hearing groups as
23 well.

24 The main point here is we are holding a
25 joint series of meetings. This is not the

1 Senate Reapportionment Committee or the House
2 Reapportionment Committee. This is the
3 Legislative Reapportionment Committee.

4 We have been directed by our presiding
5 officers to work together. We will work
6 together, and our goal is to bring home a
7 product that all of you and all of Florida can
8 look at and say it has integrity, it has
9 accuracy and it is effective in accomplishing
10 the Voting Rights Act in carrying out the laws
11 and Constitution of the State of Florida.

12 So thanks, Mr. Speaker D, and I really
13 look forward to spending my summer vacation
14 with you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I as well, I
16 as well. Members, are there any questions? We
17 have a few questions.

18 Representative Chestnut, you are
19 recognized for a question.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Yes, sir, will
21 these meetings be televised or be on the
22 webcast?

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: That is a
24 freight question. They will be. We are
25 working with the Florida Channel as we speak.

1 Our staffs have been working.

2 We are hoping that they will be able to
3 televise every single one.

4 There will be at least audio for every
5 meeting, but we hope that the Florida Channel
6 will be able to televise every single meeting
7 that we have. That is a good question.

8 Representative Bernard.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Week one, I see
10 that we didn't choose Pensacola. Were there
11 any considerations made to including Pensacola?

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: The question
13 is about whether or not Pensacola was included.

14 The problem we have is obviously we have
15 more than 24 cities across the state of
16 Florida, and so we are trying to include as
17 many as we possibly can.

18 This is the dates and the locations that
19 we came up with in negotiations with the
20 Senate. Members, if you see a city or if you
21 see a location that you feel like should be on
22 this list that is not on this list, I would
23 encourage you to get with the Chairs, both in
24 the House and in the Senate and we will work
25 with you on that.

1 We cannot guarantee you that we can go
2 everywhere, but we certainly want to be
3 accommodating in that light.

4 I don't know, Mr. Chairman, if you have
5 anything to add to that.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: That is one of the thing,
7 that happens to be Senator Evers and my neck of
8 the woods, and we think it is important to make
9 sure that our rural communities have an
10 opportunity to have hearings in their venues.
11 Milton is fairly close to Pensacola.

12 We hope to broadly publicize this hearing
13 in the Pensacola area. I wish we could have
14 one in Pensacola and in Milton, but we also
15 have to bear in mind that there is a whole
16 series of rural communities across north
17 Florida, and those folks need to have at least
18 some opportunity to have us come to their
19 communities.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Any other
21 questions? Representative Cruz, you are
22 recognized.

23 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: My question is,
24 first, my comment, and that is thank you very
25 much for creating meetings that are from 6:00

1 to 9:00 p.m. so that we can include the working
2 families.

3 I did see that there are some meetings
4 that only have morning meetings. Is there a
5 chance that they will be adding evening
6 meetings to some of those locations?

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: The reason
8 that we have some mornings and some evenings,
9 because we will sometimes do two meetings in
10 one day.

11 And so it is kind of, if we did every
12 meeting in the evening we would spend twice as
13 many days out on the road, and we tried to make
14 this as user friendly so to speak for the
15 membership and the members of the Committee,
16 but also for the public.

17 There are some folks who do work at night
18 and would need to come in the mornings. It is
19 a balance, but again, if you have suggestions
20 or any input we would love to hear from you,
21 and if you have any specific areas that you
22 think we should be having hearings in the
23 evening as opposed to the morning, we would
24 love to hear that as well.

25 I know we are running very short on time.

1 I think we have one minute left. If there is
2 any burning questions, please ask them now,
3 otherwise you can get with myself or the
4 Senator and we will work with you, but thank
5 you very much for being a part of this.

6 We look forward to working with you,
7 Mr. Chairman and I think -- Senator Gaetz moves
8 we rise.

9 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
10 concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF LEON)

I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is of a tape-recording taken down by the undersigned, and the contents thereof were reduced to typewriting under my direction;

That the foregoing pages 2 through 23 represent a true, correct, and complete transcript of the tape-recording;

And I further certify that I am not of kin or counsel to the parties in the case; am not in the regular employ of counsel for any of said parties; nor am I in anywise interested in the result of said case.

Dated this 14th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014