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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2011
BOB CARR PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
ORLANDO, FL

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 PRECOURT:

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Good afternoon,
4 ladies and gentlemen. Can we go ahead and take
5 our seats, members? Would you go ahead and
6 take your seats, please?

7 Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Joint
8 Senate House Redistricting Committee meeting.
9 We are now called to order, so everyone would
10 take their seats, members as well as the
11 general public. We appreciate you being here
12 this afternoon.

13 First, let me go ahead and say at the
14 outset that because we have got such a great
15 turn out here today, well over 100, closing at
16 150 requests, we are going to have to
17 abbreviate some of the script here that we have
18 got here on our side in order to allow as many
19 of you as possible the opportunity to share
20 your thoughts on redistricting.

21 That said, we are pleased to be joined
22 today by several members of the Florida House
23 and Florida Senate from throughout the state.

24 Since we do have a lot to do today we are
25 going to have, give them the opportunity to

1 introduce themselves, everybody up here on the
2 dais after the meeting, if we have a few
3 minutes of extra time.

4 First of all, we want to express our
5 thanks to the City of Orlando and Mayor Dyer in
6 particular for his office allowing us to use
7 this facility.

8 Thank you to all of the members of the
9 public for being here and coming to share your
10 comments and recommendations to help shape the
11 Congressional Districts, the State House
12 Districts and the State Senate Districts.

13 With that I believe the Mayor would like
14 to use one or two minutes to introduce -- here
15 he is, Mayor Dyer, we appreciate you being
16 here.

17 MAYOR DYER: Thank you. Wow, this is a
18 pretty impressive group here, and Senators and
19 Representatives. Well, on behalf of all of
20 those citizens that call Orlando home I want to
21 welcome you to the city beautiful.

22 A number of you represent the city and we
23 are proud of what you do. This is a process
24 that happens once every ten years. I had the
25 pleasure of participating in redistricting

1 matters twice. Once when I was running for
2 election the very first time and then when I
3 was leaving. I had much more interest the time
4 I was going to run for a seat than when I was
5 leaving to go do something else.

6 Just a little bit about the facility.
7 This building was built in 1926, and the last
8 major renovation was done in, about 33 years
9 ago, but we just broke ground on a brand new
10 Performing Arts Center which is up near City
11 Hall, and there is some State funding in that
12 that was allocated to UCF when Tony Jennings
13 was President and I was the Minority Leader in
14 the Senate. So that money has been sitting
15 there that long and now we are finally going to
16 be able to use it.

17 So hopefully in ten years if any of you
18 are on the Redistricting Committee you can come
19 back and use that fine facility instead of the
20 Bob Carr, and then secondly, hopefully you will
21 just be able to take the Sunrail from wherever
22 you are and come right downtown.

23 And let me thank you guys for the
24 legislation that you passed a couple of
25 December's ago in special session that led to

1 clearing the path for us be able to get
2 Sunrail.

3 The last thing I would like to mention is
4 the City is also going through a redistricting
5 process. We have grown significantly and
6 population has shifted. So we will be doing
7 our boundaries and we have a Redistricting
8 Advisory Board that meets and I would invite
9 the members of the public to come join us at
10 our meetings as well and if you go to City of
11 Orlando dot net you can get all of the
12 information on the meetings. So thank you for
13 coming to downtown for your meeting.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Mayor
15 Dyer. We appreciate you being here, too, as
16 well, and what a great job of helping to keep
17 our comments abbreviated so that we can get to
18 your input on this, but I will say that one
19 redistricting process is enough at a time for
20 me.

21 My name is Steve Precourt by the way,
22 Representative from House District 41, just
23 immediately west of the City of Orlando and I
24 will be chairing today's meeting along with my
25 colleagues that chair the Redistricting

1 Committees, themselves, Senator Don Gaetz and
2 Representative Will Weatherford, who is Speaker
3 Designate in the House and President Designate
4 in the Senate.

5 This hearing is also being webcast
6 statewide by the Florida Channel over the
7 Internet. So welcome to all of you out there
8 in cyber world that are listening in.

9 Our sole purpose here today is to hear
10 from the public about how you believe the legal
11 standards and all of the other requirements
12 that need to be applied to redistricting should
13 be required.

14 Now, we want to make sure that we apply
15 them and follow the law, not only to the
16 Congressional Districts, but to the House and
17 Senate Districts, fairly, equitably and
18 sensibly. That is our objective here today.

19 So we have got some procedures that we
20 have put in place to assure that we move
21 through that. They are fairly simple but they
22 are very important.

23 The first one is, it is really important
24 that we sign in, especially if you wish to
25 speak so we can create an accurate public

1 record and give you the opportunity to get up
2 to speak.

3 Also, please think about joining our
4 e-mail list so we can keep you informed about
5 how the redistricting process moves forward
6 over the next several months. If you have not
7 signed in, please see one of our staff. We
8 have got a bunch of folks floating around here
9 that can help you sign in, get more information
10 or fill out an attendance card.

11 For the details of what we are doing here
12 today, I am going to recognize Senator Gaetz to
13 explain how today's hearing fits into the
14 overall redistricting process. Senator Gaetz?

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Mr. Chairman. Every ten years the Legislature
17 is required by the Constitution to redistrict
18 the state based on increases or decreases or
19 movements of population within the state, and
20 because Florida has grown more than other
21 states in the last ten years, we get two more
22 members of Congress, two more U. S.
23 Congressmen.

24 We go up from 25 to 27, and because some
25 parts of the state have increased or decreased

1 disproportionately in population, many State
2 Senate and State House Districts will change,
3 either by adding or losing population and here
4 is the numbers that are important.

5 When redistricting is completed,
6 Congressional Districts by Federal law must be
7 equal in population, equal in population, and
8 must contain 696,345 people.

9 Now, the 40 Senate Districts, there are 40
10 Senators, the 40 Senate Districts must also be
11 nearly equal at about 470,000 people, and our
12 120 State House Districts must also be nearly
13 equal at about 156,700 people.

14 The laws and the Court cases governing
15 redistricting are explained in detail on the
16 House and Senate websites. It is not as simple
17 as sitting down with colored markers and
18 drawing maps or using an arithmetic or computer
19 program.

20 There are laws and requirements from the
21 Federal level and the State level that must be
22 followed and those are available so you can see
23 them on the House and Senate website and those
24 websites are listed on the Redistricting 2012
25 brochure that was available to you when you

1 came in.

2 I see a number of you have it. If you
3 don't have it and want it, you can get it on
4 the way out.

5 Now, before, during and after this
6 hearing, Senate and House professional staff
7 are available to show anybody the simple steps
8 to getting online so that you can see the same
9 data that members of the Legislature and
10 ultimately the members of the Court will see,
11 and you will be able to use the same computer
12 programs and software that members of the
13 Legislature and members of the Court would use
14 in drawing districts.

15 It is pretty simple to do. I am techo
16 stupid and it took staff about 15 minutes to
17 teach me. So I know you will be able to figure
18 it out in much less time. And then if you want
19 to, and only if you want to, you can submit
20 your ideas for how you believe districts ought
21 to be drawn in your part of the state.

22 Any recommendations from citizens, from
23 Legislators, or from special interest groups
24 will be made publicly available for everybody
25 to see.

1 In fact, there have already been 17 maps
2 drawn. There are already maps drawn of partial
3 or complete districts around the state, and
4 there are about six dozen written proposals for
5 how districts ought to be drawn.

6 Some of those have come from individual
7 citizens, some from interest groups. I have
8 looked at some of them and some of them really
9 show a lot of thought that have gone into them.

10 On your way into the theater you passed by
11 some of those submissions that are on display.
12 You can see all of them on the websites. We
13 are finding that we are getting more
14 submissions all of the time. We may get more
15 today.

16 If you want to see the maps, if you want
17 to see maps that the Legislature is
18 considering, then look at maps that are on
19 display in the building today and you will see
20 the maps that we are considering now, although
21 there are certainly going to be more maps that
22 are going to be created by Legislators, by
23 interest groups and by individual citizens as
24 we go through the process.

25 If you need any assistance with reviewing

1 the maps that are outside or on the Internet,
2 our staff at the display tables can help you
3 with that information. They will be available
4 to you after this hearing.

5 Now, it has been suggested by some folks
6 that only the Legislature should draw maps,
7 that only those sitting up here ought to draw
8 maps and we ought to not get any input from
9 people who are really our bosses, the public.

10 We think that puts the answer ahead of the
11 question. There should be no preconceptions
12 created by politicians in our view, but rather
13 public testimony should be free and
14 unrestricted and should come first.

15 In fact, the Chairperson for the Fair
16 Districts campaign, Helen Freidin, testified
17 before the House and Senate Redistricting
18 Committees that she felt that it would be
19 absolutely impossible to draw maps before
20 public comment was taken and we certainly agree
21 with Ms. Freidin with respect to that and are
22 following that advice.

23 Now, because our purpose today is to hear
24 from you, all of the time between now and 4:00,
25 and then later from 6:00 until 8:00 tonight, we

1 are dividing the hearing into two to be
2 accommodating to people who could come in the
3 afternoon and then some who could come this
4 evening, all of the time after these
5 introductory comments will be used to ensure
6 that members of the public who are here and
7 wish to speak will have time to present their
8 testimony.

9 If after every citizen has had his or her
10 say, if there is any time remaining and given
11 the large number of people who signed up, there
12 may not be time remaining, but if there is,
13 then any member of the Committee, Republican,
14 Democrat, House members, Senators, can respond
15 to any questions, can offer any opinions, or
16 can propose any plans today other than those
17 that have already been proposed that are on
18 display outside.

19 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
20 our schedule and process helps set the stage
21 for a successful hearing.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Chair
23 Gaetz, appreciate that. Okay, folks, we are
24 going to adjourn promptly at 4:00 from this
25 afternoon's session and then we are going to

1 have a second session from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

2 Now, there are almost 150 people signed up
3 already to speak, and if you are just signing
4 up now, please note that it is likely you will
5 be heard in the 6:00 to 8:00 block tonight.

6 We want to assure that each person is
7 given the opportunity to be heard. So we ask
8 that you limit your comments to two minutes,
9 and if you have some prepared remarks, please
10 just go ahead and give them to our staff as
11 well.

12 We have to do this as a courtesy to all of
13 the people who want to speak. We want to hear
14 from as many folks as possible, and of course,
15 we will use our discretion of that if there are
16 some key pieces of information that you are
17 bringing to the table.

18 If you feel that your thoughts have
19 already been conveyed you can opt to waive your
20 time and mention that you feel just like so and
21 so that may have already spoken and you can
22 still submit your prepared remarks to our staff
23 and they will definitely get in the record for
24 being utilized in drawing the maps and
25 throughout the entire process.

1 So with that our first speaker is going to
2 be Michele Levy, and I am going to go ahead and
3 name off two or three people at a time so you
4 can be working your way down here and getting
5 in line to speak, and we don't lose any time
6 with people working their way to the microphone
7 as well.

8 Following Ms. Levy will be Ann Hellmuth,
9 and after Ann, we will have Zorida Rios-Andino.
10 So if you three could start working your way up
11 to the front, we will go ahead and have Ann,
12 have Michele Levy kick off with her
13 contribution to our redistricting hearings.

14 Ms. Levy, the floor is yours. You are
15 recognized for two minutes.

16 MS. LEVY: Thank you. Hello, ladies and
17 gentlemen, my name is Michele Levy, and I am
18 the Vice-President of the Orange County League
19 of Women Voters.

20 I am very concerned that the Legislature
21 is holding these 26 hearings around the state
22 in an attempt to get useful feedback and
23 comments from the citizens, but no maps are
24 being provided by the Legislature for citizens
25 to comment on.

1 As it is now, this exercise is a total
2 waste of time and money. Other states have had
3 public hearings to allow citizens the
4 opportunity to comment and provide feedback on
5 the proposed maps.

6 Have Legislators drawn these maps yet, and
7 if so, where are they, and if not, what are
8 they waiting for? When do they plan to draw
9 them or have they already drawn them in some
10 back room in Tallahassee with the intent of
11 springing them on the public during the last
12 weeks of the session, leaving only three days
13 for statewide public comment.

14 This timeline is going to create chaos.
15 As it stands now these hearings have no purpose
16 other than to make Legislators appear to be
17 listening, but they are not giving the public
18 an opportunity for meaningful comment on real
19 maps.

20 Many states, including Arkansas, Colorado,
21 Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri,
22 Nebraska and Oklahoma have already completed or
23 almost completed redistricting in an open and
24 accessible process. What are we waiting for in
25 Florida?

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
2 Ms. Levy, and if you could leave those prepared
3 comments with our staff we will have them
4 accurately reflected in the record.

5 For those of you in the audience, please
6 note that we have got a lot of people to get
7 to. If you clap, we are just using up the time
8 so somebody's opportunity to speak will be
9 limited later on.

10 So thank you for representing the League
11 of Women Voters. Also from the League of Women
12 Voters we have Ms. Michele Levy and if Dennis
13 Freytes could also start working his way down
14 here, I would appreciate that. Ms. Hellmuth.

15 MS. HELLMUTH: Thank you, yes, we are out
16 in force today. My name is Ann Hellmuth. I am
17 President of the League of Women Voters of
18 Orange County.

19 My first question is to you, is why won't
20 you show us your maps? Are you still sticking
21 to the excuse that the Constitution requires
22 you to draw the districts during the 2012
23 regular session, because that is not true.

24 You may not vote on the maps before 2012,
25 but there is not legally stopping you from

1 drawing the maps now. By drawing the proposals
2 now you would give the public time to provide
3 meaningful informed input and the maps would be
4 brought to the floor as a first order of
5 business when the Legislature convenes in
6 January.

7 The Legislature would then be able to vote
8 on them by the end of the first week of the
9 session, January 13th. This would double the
10 90-day period time of review by the Courts and
11 the Department of Justice.

12 As it stands, it is highly unlikely that
13 districts will finally be approved before
14 June 8th, the filing deadline for candidates.
15 Is it even conceivable that districts may not
16 be finalized until August? Yes, it is.

17 The result of such a late finalization
18 would in the words of the Legislature's own
19 lawyer, be massive voter confusion. Is it your
20 intention to delay the maps until the last
21 moment to make it harder to challenge them? It
22 seems as if it is.

23 Is it your plan to give Election
24 Supervisors insufficient time to prepare for
25 elections, thereby affecting absentee and

1 overseas ballots, including those to the
2 military? It seems as if it is.

3 Is it your plan to give challengers or new
4 candidates little if any time to mount
5 campaigns, thus forcing voters to vote for
6 candidates they have had little opportunity to
7 get to know. It seems as if it is.

8 You promised a three-day public viewing
9 period before any notes are taken on the map
10 proposals. May I say, ladies and gentlemen,
11 your generosity is perfect nonsense.

12 Three days to absorb the details and then
13 give input on a compact subject like drawing
14 maps is ridiculous. Florida's Election
15 Supervisors and other officials have worked
16 hard to raise the memory of the 2000 hanging
17 chads debacle.

18 Don't set them up to fail in 2012 by
19 resorting to back room politics. Keep faith
20 with Florida voters.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
22 ma'am. Next up we have Zoraida Rios-Andino and
23 if Mr. Curt Levine would start working his way
24 down here as well.

25 Just as an aside, Senator Gaetz is taking

1 notes on a lot of the questions that are being
2 asked of us and at the end he will have a few
3 minutes to respond in general, but we want to
4 make sure that we move this along and give
5 everyone the opportunity to speak,
6 Ms. Hellmuth.

7 MS. RIOS-ANDINO: Good afternoon, my name
8 is Zoraida Rios-Andino. I am a member of the
9 Central Florida Redistricting Council which is
10 a bipartisan group organized to promote fair
11 districting within the Hispanic community of
12 Florida.

13 I am also Vice-President of the United
14 Front 436 which is a local community activist
15 organization fighting for the civil rights of
16 the Puerto Rican and Hispanic community in the
17 many issues that our people face, such as
18 discrimination in housing, education, and a
19 number of other issues.

20 I belong to more organizations, but I
21 didn't come here to talk to you about that.
22 What I did come to talk to you about is that as
23 a United States citizens and our people have
24 been citizens since 1917, it is very insulting
25 for me to see the atrocities taking place

1 because of the lack of our representation in
2 our community.

3 Recently my 15-year-old son lost a friend
4 who was walking to a bus stop locally here just
5 a few minutes away from where we are at this
6 moment. He was walking with his 15-year-old
7 brother to the bus stop and a reckless driver
8 killed him.

9 This is something that we see commonly
10 here in our community, and the reason I am
11 bringing this up is because -- because we don't
12 have any representation in Congress. We don't
13 have representation in the State Senate, the
14 State Representative and our Orange County
15 Commission, in our School Board.

16 The person who killed this, my son's
17 friend only got a \$1,000 bond. He is out loose
18 like nothing had happened. This is
19 unacceptable.

20 We Puerto Ricans here are contributing
21 millions of dollars in taxes and we should have
22 representation. Taxation without
23 representation is not acceptable.

24 Creating Puerto Rican Hispanic districts
25 is not only fair, it is the right thing to do.

1 Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
3 much. Next we have Mr. Dennis Freytes and if
4 Sheri Morton would also start working here way
5 down. Mr. Freytes.

6 MR. FREYTES: Hi. Thanks for selfishly
7 serving, working for beloved Florida. We all
8 love Florida here.

9 I am Colonel Dennis Freytes, U.S. Army
10 retired and community servant. I served on Jeb
11 Bush's transition team and I am here to say, we
12 need to support the Florida Civil Rights
13 Association and support the Central Florida
14 Redistricting Council, because American,
15 Hispanics, blacks and other minorities face
16 unfair political district lines that minimize
17 election opportunities, result in under
18 representation at the Congress, State, County
19 and City levels.

20 This inequality must end and it must end
21 now. District lines must be fairly drawn to
22 reflect the U.S. Census facts appeared in 1965
23 Voting Rights law and other laws. In Florida
24 we have 18.8 million population.

25 Minorities are 42 percent or about eight

1 million Americans and growing. Orange, Osceola
2 Florida counties are now minority majority.
3 This means why non Hispanic residents are less
4 than 50 percent of the county population,
5 minority, but they hold a super majority in
6 elected positions with little or no minority
7 representation.

8 We must advance a properly balanced
9 representative democracy with protected
10 individual civil rights, ensure political
11 empowerment opportunity with little or no, for
12 all citizens, not just for a privileged group
13 and abide by the laws that are for fair play.

14 Government officials should listen and
15 draw compact districts, but also proper
16 minority access districts, don't support bail
17 retrogression but fairly let lines fall where
18 they may.

19 Now, what we want is to, in the
20 redistricting and here in central Florida, we
21 want a Congressional Seat that is a minority
22 majority Congressional Seat, because we are a
23 minority majority Orange County and minority
24 majority Osceola County and we like to have
25 Hispanics represented there no less than

1 45 percent.

2 In the Redistricting Council has a great
3 proposal that we support. This is an American
4 Floridian bipartisan fairness issue. Support
5 the Central Florida Redistricting Council,
6 citizens' proposal, support the Florida Civil
7 Rights Association.

8 Work together for the good of all, family,
9 community, Florida, USA, and humanity. Thank
10 you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
12 Mr. Freytes, and please be sure to submit those
13 prepared remarks to our staff.

14 Next we have Mr. Curt Levine and would
15 Nancy Smith also start working her way down.
16 Mr. Levine.

17 MR. LEVINE: Thank you, good afternoon,
18 Mr. Chairman and members, my name is Curt
19 Levine. I am an attorney in Orlando and I am a
20 former House member.

21 It is my understanding that the My
22 District Builder and the District Builder
23 software the state is using is modeled after a
24 national standard program called Aishwarya
25 Cicero District Builder that I understand also

1 talking to John Guthrie earlier today, he was
2 part of developing that original software.

3 The components of the Aishwarya Cicero
4 District Builder program included evaluational
5 programs that for compactness and also for
6 spacial analysis which generated a numerical
7 weight for compliance with fair districts'
8 requirements, such as not favoring incumbents
9 or a political party and containment within a
10 geographical county and city line area.

11 In other words, the Aishwarya Cicero
12 District Builder had an analysis tool that gave
13 a numerical rating for districts showing the
14 relative level of compliance with the Fair
15 Districts Amendment.

16 It is also my understanding that the State
17 Redistricting staff, both staffs, the House and
18 the Senate staffs have not included that
19 compactness and spacial analysis components
20 that are available online through the State
21 House and Senate websites.

22 On May 24th of this year, I contacted the
23 Redistricting staff for an answer and received
24 a return e-mail from the Speaker's office
25 saying the Speaker's office had its doubts that

1 it would implement those statistical evaluation
2 tools into the final software plans they were
3 using.

4 I was told that the staff members could
5 not comment to me and invited me today to
6 attend this hearing and ask the Committee about
7 this. So I am here, Mr. Chairman, and I have
8 got two questions today.

9 The first is, why are the compactness and
10 spacial analysis components which are already
11 existing and available in the original District
12 Builder software not contained in Florida's
13 District Builder and My District Builder
14 programs, and the second question, why not?

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
16 those comments, Mr. Levine, appreciate that.

17 Also, would Mignon Kostamo start working
18 down. Representative Weatherford, you are
19 recognized.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman. I just want to take a brief
22 minute, Representative Levine, just to make a
23 comment in regard to that question.

24 There was a column that was written to the
25 Sun Sentinel and you may or may not be aware

1 but the Sun Sentinel has already ran a
2 correction to that column, and there were some
3 facts about the My District Builder that were
4 not accurate.

5 And basically what that is, is that there
6 have been no compactness requirements removed
7 from My District Builder.

8 In fact, what the Committee is going to
9 have is a report of the eight different types
10 of compactness. There are eight different
11 forms of compactness that the Courts have
12 created.

13 Every member of this Committee as a map is
14 drawn will have the ability to look at that,
15 but I believe there has been some confusion
16 about the District Builder that is from
17 Professor McDonald at George Mason and the My
18 District Builder which is not based off of his,
19 it is a product of the House of Representatives
20 and the Senate which has a separate program
21 called District Builder.

22 So the names may be the same. They are
23 different softwares and different programs and
24 the Sun Sentinel has already written a report
25 that their original language in that article

1 was not accurate. So I just wanted to point
2 that out, Mr. Chairman.

3 MR. LEVINE: Thank you for that comment,
4 sir. It is not fair to throw that out and
5 leave it open if it is not true.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Mr.
7 Levine, and please see our staff and we will
8 work this issue through.

9 Next I have Sheri Morton, and you are
10 recognized, Ms. Morton, and if Mignon Kostamo
11 would start working his way down here as well,
12 I would appreciate it. Thank you. You are
13 recognized, Ms. Morton.

14 MS. MORTON: Thank you, I am Sheri Morton
15 and I live in Unincorporated West Osceola
16 County, a suburb of Orlando near Kissimmee.

17 Osceola County is currently divided into
18 three Congressional Districts with much of
19 Osceola, including where I live in District 15.
20 Most of the population of Congressional
21 District 15 is from Brevard and Indian River
22 Counties which are far away from where I live
23 and with which Osceola shares little in common.

24 Brevard and Indian River Counties are
25 focused on NASA. In contrast, the focus in

1 Osceola is on metropolitan Orlando, including
2 both Osceola and Orange Counties.

3 Osceola is a majority minority county with
4 over a quarter of a million people, high
5 unemployment and urban problems, including
6 transportation, gangs, grid lock on Interstate
7 4. People in Osceola generally work in the
8 tourism industry, including theme parks and
9 hotels.

10 Having a Congressman from far away on the
11 east coast who is focused on NASA, I-95 and the
12 beaches doesn't give my community the
13 representation we need.

14 With Osceola County broken into three
15 Congressional Districts, the needs of Osceola's
16 largely Hispanic population are easily ignored
17 by central Florida's Congressmen.

18 Please follow the Fair District Amendments
19 of Florida's Constitution and keep Osceola
20 County intact in one Congressional District.

21 Please combine Osceola with Orange County
22 into a Congressional District together that has
23 similar community interests and populations.

24 Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,

1 Ms. Morton. Very well said. Next we have
2 Ms. Nancy Smith and if Jack Jordan would also
3 start working his way down. Ms. Smith.

4 MS. SMITH: Ladies and gentlemen. Thank
5 you for the opportunity to speak. There are
6 many people who are not here today because they
7 don't think it would make a difference and they
8 may be right, but it never hurts to try.

9 I am a native Floridian and a resident of
10 Osceola County. At the outset let me tell you
11 how many people believe about our Fair
12 Districts. Over 60 percent of Floridians
13 passed the Fair Districts Amendment and we
14 recent the attempt by some Legislators using
15 our tax dollars to force its nullification.

16 Fair Districts -- Fair Districts must be
17 contiguous, share some commonality and
18 recognize existing geographic lines when
19 possible. We have nothing in common with
20 Okeechobee County and I want to tell you that I
21 go up and down there all of the time, because I
22 am a fisher person, an angler, and I have gone
23 all over all of these counties, and I know what
24 we have in common and where we have it.

25 We have one thing in common with

1 Okeechobee County and that is a river that runs
2 through it. We have nothing in common with
3 Brevard County where we are stuck with, that we
4 never see those people, except the need for
5 fresh water which we have to fight over, and we
6 have little in common with Polk County because
7 their rural lands are used for mining much more
8 than ours.

9 Most of Osceola County has already been
10 approved for development for the next 1,000
11 years, so we are developed. Osceola and Orange
12 Counties together meet the needs of the Fair
13 Districts criteria perfectly.

14 We share the same major employers. We
15 share the same environment and environmental
16 concerns. We are the head waters of the
17 Kissimmee River, Orange and Osceola. We share
18 the same diverse populations and most of us are
19 very, very proud of our diversity and support
20 our diversity.

21 We share the same judicial circuit. We
22 share transportation money and problems. We
23 share tourism as our major industry. We share
24 I-4 and its problems. We even are sharing the
25 Lake Nona community in Osceola County and the

1 traffic and development that comes with that.

2 We share so much that our county lines are
3 blurred and when I came here at 5:35 today I
4 saw a big sign that said Embassy Suites,
5 Orlando. It is on Osceola County land right
6 outside Kissimmee, not close to Orlando, but
7 that is us, we are Orlando a lot of the time.

8 We should be in the same district as
9 Orlando if you all follow the rules. I know it
10 may have to be divided according to numbers and
11 I haven't had an opportunity to divide the
12 numbers, but if we need additional population,
13 the next most common people with us is the
14 southwest side of Seminole County who has
15 similar demographics.

16 If you cut off Poinciana, which I have
17 seen proposed, or if you cut Buenaventura
18 Lakes, both in Osceola County mainly, then you
19 will be intentionally diluting our proud
20 Hispanic and African-American populations that
21 now together create almost a majority in
22 Osceola and Orange Counties, and we don't think
23 that is equitable or fair districting.

24 If you do that, it will be seen as the
25 gerrymandering that will be continuing and

1 which we voted against and hopefully will be
2 struck. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
4 those comments. If you would leave that with
5 our staff that will help us with the record.

6 Mignon Kostamo is next and if Mr. Charles
7 Bibber would start working his way down, I
8 would appreciate that.

9 MS. KOSTAMO: Hi, I am Mignon Kostamo. I
10 am only here to say one thing. I hate to be a
11 one person issue, because that is really
12 against everything I have grown up with. Oh, I
13 am an old Floridian, too, an old Floridian, but
14 our issue right now is the little, what used to
15 be City of Orlovista.

16 It has been cut in pieces, it is cut in
17 half. Hopefully, and I am going to the meeting
18 that they are having at 6:00, hopefully the
19 county will keep Orlovista in one district, not
20 split them down the middle with Perkman Road
21 which is really high traffic.

22 We would like it in one district and that
23 is my concern for you today. Thank you for
24 being here. I know this is an awful job for
25 you, but I appreciate it very much and what

1 time I have left I will give to Charlie Bibber.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

3 MS. KOSTAMO: Thank you very much.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

5 Mr. Bibber, you are recognized.

6 MR. BIBBER: I am going to yield my time.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay, thank you
8 very much. Appreciate the comments. Jack
9 Jordan is up next and would Eddie Moorer and
10 Emilio Perez start working their way down?
11 Mr. Jordan, thank you.

12 MR. JORDAN: Thank you. I am a -- I am
13 representing, here on behalf of the Board of
14 the Central Florida Chapter of the American
15 Civil Liberties Union and I am also -- and I am
16 also a professional story teller, and I think
17 in this case the story telling part may be the
18 most germane.

19 This plot actually has a story line that,
20 in spite of the money that was put in to oppose
21 Amendments 5 and 6, 63 percent of Floridians
22 saw the problems with gerrymandering,
23 Independents, Republicans and Democrats and
24 voted to end the practice.

25 Now, what has happened since then? Some

1 of the issues have been identified. We are
2 here appearing at hearings with no maps to
3 actually look at. That is pretty
4 unprecedented.

5 There is a lawsuit that this Legislature
6 has joined in and it is not simply to clarify
7 the Amendments. You are seeking to strike
8 Amendment 6, and that should not be tolerated,
9 and any denials to the contrary are just not
10 credible.

11 And I have another comment. There is also
12 in Amendment 6, apparently it is well known
13 that the districts, the purpose of these
14 Amendments are to create fair district lines,
15 including minority districts to achieve greater
16 diversity.

17 It is not part of the Voting Rights Act
18 and Corrine Brown is apparently confused. It
19 is not a part of the Voting Rights Act that she
20 would be guaranteed a Congressional Seat for
21 life.

22 So I would urge the Legislature, if you
23 really want to show good faith, is to
24 disassociate yourself from this lawsuit, stop
25 spending \$30 million of our money which

1 particularly in a time of budget cuts and state
2 deficits. Thank you very much.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
4 Next we are going to have Mr. Eddie Moorer and
5 if Juan Cartagena and the Reverend Randolph
6 Bracy would start working their way down,
7 Bracy, if they would both start working their
8 way down, I would appreciate it.

9 Eddie Moorer is up next. Mr. Moorer, are
10 you working your way over here? Thank you,
11 sir. Mr. Moorer will go, then Mr. Perez and
12 then Mr. Cartagena.

13 MR. MOORER: Good evening, gentlemen. The
14 reason why I am here is basically because I saw
15 the redistricting information that came across
16 my computer and I thought it would be something
17 interesting to find out what the state is
18 actually doing for minorities as far as
19 redistricting is concerned with the State of
20 Florida.

21 So many times I agree with some of the
22 speakers that had come before me. We have a
23 situation whereas we have a lot of minority in
24 place in central Florida, but we don't have the
25 representation that goes with the people that

1 we have in the area.

2 You know, another problem that I see with
3 the problem that we have here now like the lady
4 spoke of earlier, was the fact that, you know,
5 these hearings are good, but really does it
6 really make any opinion to have one now when we
7 really don't have anything to base our
8 redistricting on.

9 We have to wait to see what you guys got
10 for us as far as redistricting, because you
11 apparently are supposed to be putting two more
12 Senators in or two more districts in, whatever
13 the case may be.

14 It would be nice if we had a map or
15 something to go on, something to look at that
16 we can do something constructive with. Then if
17 we had that then we could vote on that and come
18 back and give our favorable opinion of what we
19 would like to see done for our communities,
20 because as it stands right now we don't know,
21 you know, based on what I have been seeing out
22 there, it is all Greek to me.

23 So it is something that we are going to
24 have to come up with. If we put something
25 down, you know, it might sound good to us, but

1 are we going to get what we put down or are we
2 just going to be swept under the rug like so
3 many other opportunities?

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
5 Mr. Moorer. Next we have Emilio Perez,
6 followed by Mr. Cartagena and Reverend Bracy
7 and then Cathy Kerns.

8 MR. PEREZ: Thank you, and hello,
9 everyone, welcome to Orlando. My name is
10 Emilio Perez and I am the Chairman of the
11 Central Florida Redistricting Council.

12 We are a not for profit bipartisan
13 organization, who's purpose is to create new
14 districts based on the 2010 Census.

15 Can we pass this slide? I have a slide, I
16 was hoping that you will see it, but
17 unfortunately it is in your backs.

18 But anyways, as we all know, the 2010
19 Census, can you pass --

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Yes, we have the
21 slide up on there.

22 MR. PEREZ: All right, but they need to
23 click it.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Click it.

25 MR. PEREZ: All right. As we all know --

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Hopefully
2 somebody back there has a clicker.

3 MR. PEREZ: There you go. Let's go to the
4 next one, please, there you go. As we all
5 know, the 2010 Census showed us that the reason
6 of the addition of two new Congressional
7 Districts for the State of Florida are due
8 mostly of the growth of the Latino community.

9 We go to the next slide. Specifically,
10 the growth of our community, central Florida,
11 as you can see, the state population grew
12 55 percent of the total growth of the state was
13 the Latinos of central Florida and that is very
14 important.

15 What we are requesting is simple. We are
16 requesting that you consider the creation of a
17 new Congressional District for central Florida
18 with minority Latinos. As you all know, we are
19 driven by our common bonds of language,
20 culture, businesses and economic growth among
21 many other common bonds.

22 We can go to the next slides. All of them
23 reflect that in central Florida, only someone
24 that understand this culture or ties will be
25 able to properly represent us. Nobody else.

1 We, the Central Florida Redistricting
2 Council are the voice for all Latinos. We are
3 demanding that one of these new Congressional
4 Districts assigned to Florida rewards the
5 community that made it happen.

6 Let me repeat that again. One of this new
7 Congressional Districts assigned to Florida
8 rewards the community that made it happen. Not
9 awarding us with a Congressional District will
10 be like penalizing us for the growth that
11 landed the state with two new Congressional
12 Districts.

13 Can we go to the next slide, please. For
14 this reason we join by many national
15 organizations, but mostly importantly is our
16 partnership with Latino Justice. Latino
17 Justice is a civil right league organization
18 who will next introduce this new Congressional
19 District. Thank you very much.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
21 Mr. Cartagena. And a if Nelson Pinder and
22 Diane Rambo can start working their way down, I
23 would appreciate it. Mr. Cartagena.

24 MR. CARTAGENA: Good afternoon, members of
25 the Florida State Senate and House. Thank you

1 very much. My name is Juan Cartagena. I am
2 the President and General Counsel of Latino
3 Justice Pearl Death, formerly known as the
4 Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund,
5 a National Civil Rights organization that is
6 based in New York.

7 I am here to introduce you as Emilio Perez
8 said, to the proposal that we want to advance
9 and it has already been accepted and on your
10 website and submitted according to your
11 protocols for a Latino anchored, central
12 Florida anchored new Congressional District.

13 This is my fourth round of redistricting.
14 I may not look it, gentlemen and ladies, but
15 this is my fourth round of this redistricting,
16 I have done it all over the country.

17 Florida is in a unique position. The
18 strong economic climate that you have built in
19 this state, the improvements to your
20 infrastructure, the public sector, the private
21 sector improvements have made Florida a very
22 important place and a very attractive place to
23 live.

24 You are very lucky. We work in
25 communities in which we lose Congressional

1 Seats, and we have to fight to save what we
2 have. You have the opportunity now to create
3 new opportunities.

4 So I speak to you about the important
5 topics of politics, demographics and political
6 opportunity. All of it is embroiled in what we
7 call redistricting, and it happens only once
8 every ten years.

9 Redistricting by definition reflects
10 demographic change and that change --

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Mr. Cartagena --

12 MR. CARTAGENA: I am almost finished.
13 Redistricting reflects demographic change and
14 that change as you have heard from the previous
15 speaker is pretty significant in central
16 Florida.

17 But redistricting also requires you to
18 comply with various laws. I will not get into
19 those laws because that is what I specialize
20 in, we could talk about that for hours.

21 However, the proposal that we give you for
22 you to consider is a proposal only. It will
23 have to be tweaked as we go, map the entire
24 state for Congressional Districts. The
25 preliminarily proposal would have a

1 Congressional District of 46.2 percent Latino,
2 12.3 percent black, about 34.8 white and about
3 4.2 percent Asian. We ask you to consider it
4 and consider it seriously. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
6 much. We greatly appreciate that. Next we
7 have the Reverend Randolph Bracy, and he will
8 be followed by Cathy Kerns, and if Mr. Mike
9 Ketchum and John Quinones could start working
10 their way down as well. Reverend Bracy.

11 REVEREND BRACY: I am Reverend Randolph
12 Bracy, senior Pastor and founder of the New
13 Covenant Baptist Church of Orlando, a native
14 Floridian, born and reared in Duval County.

15 I am a graduate of three Florida schools,
16 the Great Bethune Cookman University, Florida
17 A&M University, and the University of Florida.

18 So I come as one who is now 66, going on
19 67 years. I know Florida and I love Florida.
20 I thank God for this privilege because I am
21 known locally as a Civil Rights activist.

22 We in Florida have the opportunity now to
23 do something that has not been done before, and
24 that is to respond to the very explosive growth
25 on the I-4 corridor. This going right now in

1 the center of the I-4 corridor happens to be
2 right here in Orlando.

3 Orlando, and I have heard about Osceola
4 County, deserves, deserves, because of the
5 burgeoning explosive population growth,
6 deserves the new Congressional Seat.

7 It should be a minority, i.e.,
8 African-American seat. I implore you, I
9 beseech you by the mercies of God, that you do
10 the right thing and give us a seat that has an
11 African-American Congressman.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
13 Reverend. Next we have Ms. Cathy Kerns, and
14 she will be followed by Nelson Pinder.

15 Ms. Kerns, thank you, and you can go ahead
16 and adjust that as well.

17 MS. KERNS: Thank you. Good afternoon,
18 Chairman and members. My name is Cathy
19 Williams-Kerns, and I am a resident of Orange
20 County, Florida, and today I am honored to
21 speak to you on behalf of AARP, a wonderful
22 organization, a bipartisan organization
23 dedicated to protecting seniors.

24 Transparency, timeliness and trust. These
25 principle elements of the redistricting process

1 must be adhered to. The voters of Florida have
2 spoken about fair districts, and we are
3 concerned the project is going to proceed
4 without full disclosure and public
5 presentation.

6 This openness must be achieved before
7 Legislators, you folks, make your decisions.
8 The public needs the opportunity to comment and
9 I thank you for giving us an opportunity today
10 to do that, and to have those comments be
11 meaningfully considered and not cast aside.

12 The timeliness of the process is crucial.
13 The Legislator owes Florida residents and
14 voters professionalism and timely completion of
15 this redistricting process.

16 All procedural steps, both legislative and
17 non legislative must be achieved in order for
18 there to be timely qualification of 2012
19 candidates under new districts, and for
20 campaigns prior to voters casting their
21 ballots.

22 We need to complete this project sooner
23 rather than later. We ask you to insulate the
24 process. Please avoid the appearance of
25 conflict of interest.

1 Negative voter perceptions of conflict can
2 only drag on and drag down the progress of this
3 important redistricting project. We ask you to
4 post the proposed map designs so they can be
5 reviewed by all and do so sooner than later.

6 On a personal note, I ask you not to tear
7 apart contiguous neighborhoods and establish
8 communities within the district lines. Please
9 respect the unique qualities of communities of
10 interest.

11 Uphold fair districts and maintain your
12 integrity in the process. I have reviewed the
13 current citizen map proposals on file and urge
14 you to strongly consider logic and the reason
15 for clean contiguous district lines so that the
16 entire state of Florida will benefit and not
17 just a few. Thank you very much for your time
18 and attention.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
20 ma'am, appreciate that. Next we have Nelson
21 Pinder, who will be followed by Diane Rambo and
22 if Stephen Cullum and Timothy Murray can start
23 working their way down as well, we would
24 appreciate that. Sir, you have the mike.

25 MR. PINDER: Honorable ladies and

1 gentlemen, my name is the Reverend Nelson W.
2 Pinder. I am an Episcopal Priest retired three
3 times. The Lord never lets you retire.

4 I woke up this morning in the greatest
5 country in the world, but in the greatest
6 country, I woke up in the greatest state in the
7 world, Florida, to celebrate my 79th birthday.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Congratulations.

9 MR. PINDER: But I come here today to tell
10 you that this is the time for us to speak up,
11 to work up, and to be able to be honest among
12 ourselves so that we can sleep at night.

13 Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that you,
14 with this new Congressional District, don't
15 play the game of minority against minority.

16 I don't want you to fence me out. I want
17 you to fence me in. I want you to be able to
18 look at this whole picture and think what is
19 best for Florida and what is best for America.

20 This is a land of we the people, we the
21 people, all nationalities, all races, all
22 languages, make up this great Mosaic piece. I
23 hope and trust that when you go back to draw
24 your redistricting that you give us both, an
25 Hispanic district and a black district.

1 It can be done. It can be done, because
2 Florida has done it before and we can do it
3 again. I know we could, because you are
4 honorable and gentle people, with honorable and
5 gentle ways to carry out the state of Florida.
6 Thank you very much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
8 much, Reverend. Next we have Diane Rambo
9 followed by Mike Ketchum and if Mable Butler
10 and the Reverend Ohara Black can start working
11 their way down. Madam, you have the mike.

12 MS. RAMBO: Good afternoon, my name is
13 Diane Rambo. I live in east Orlando or east
14 Orange County. I live in State Representative
15 District 32. My Representative lives in
16 Merritt Island.

17 My State Senator District is 24. My
18 Representative, excuse me, my Senator, he lives
19 in Melbourne. Melbourne is an hour away in
20 another county, Brevard County.

21 Neither of these two has ever come to
22 Union Park and had a town meeting. None of
23 them has ever knocked on my door. None of them
24 has ever represented me in Union Park or
25 Hispanic east Orange County in any way that we

1 can tell.

2 Our question today is will you draw us a
3 district that is east Orange County only? We
4 do not need to be lumped in with Brevard County
5 an hour away on the other side of the swamp.

6 Could you make this district follow
7 geographic areas and like stop at the swamp at
8 the St. Johns River?

9 And would you please give us six months to
10 raise up time to have candidates ready for the
11 new districts? This shouldn't effect the
12 incumbent, Mr. Crisafulli and Mr. Altman, they
13 can keep those districts over there, but we
14 just want representation over here. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
16 ma'am. Okay, next we have Mr. Mike Ketchum and
17 he will be followed by John Quinones, and if I
18 could also have Jessica Hewkin and Chuck O'Neal
19 start working their way down. Mr. Ketchum.

20 MR. KETCHUM: Thank you, Mr. Vice
21 Chairman. I am Mike Ketchum and I serve as
22 Vice-President of the Orlando Regional Chamber
23 of Commerce.

24 While it may be my distinct pleasure to
25 welcome you today as the Chamber of Commerce,

1 it is also an even greater pleasure for me to
2 welcome and congratulate you on the
3 redistricting process you have put in place
4 which I am confident will result eventually in
5 a fair and equitable plan.

6 You have devised a transparent open
7 process unprecedented in our state's history
8 that is designed to encourage and solicit
9 important citizen input on how our political
10 boundaries should be drawn for the next decade.

11 I want to particularly commend you on the
12 innovative website you have created to enable
13 Floridians to propose their redistricting
14 recommendations for your consideration, and
15 also in your willingness to conduct numerous
16 public hearings throughout our state by this
17 diverse and bipartisan committee.

18 Members, it wasn't always done this way.
19 At your Daytona Beach hearing recently I had
20 the chance to reminisce with Senator Thrasher
21 about the redistricting process. We were both
22 young Florida Senate staffers many years ago.

23 Back then there were secret maps,
24 concocted in back room corridors, later tucked
25 away in coat pockets or filed away in the

1 basement of the Capitol, only to reappear at
2 the last possible moment and without any
3 appropriate public scrutiny.

4 I must also observe that some we are
5 hearing from on this process seem to have no
6 problem with that process at that time and, in
7 fact, were quite content with the previous
8 redistricting efforts, but today it appears
9 they want you to return to that discredited
10 process without -- and by producing
11 predetermined maps without the benefits of any
12 public input so as to invite and encourage the
13 litigation that they are seeking.

14 The reality is we have come so very far
15 from those days long ago and you are to be
16 congratulated for bringing the process into the
17 sunshine.

18 You have correctly taken a common sense
19 approach by seeking public input before the
20 maps are drawn and not afterwards.

21 Now, with respect to the redistricting
22 process to be undertaken and without
23 elaborating on the population numbers and the
24 trends before you, suffice it to say with the
25 Orlando metropolitan area and its surrounding

1 region have enjoyed substantial and significant
2 population growth in the last decade, which
3 clearly must be reflected in your forthcoming
4 recommendations and should result in an
5 enhanced Congressional and legislative
6 representation.

7 Additionally, the lines that are to be
8 drawn must unquestionably reflect and adhere to
9 represent Court decisions, requirements of the
10 Federal Voting Rights Act, as well as recently
11 approved Amendments to the Florida
12 Constitution.

13 As you proceed ahead there should be no
14 impediment to your granting a top priority in
15 redistricting to well-established communities
16 of interest as opposed to solely arbitrary
17 geographical boundaries.

18 Furthermore, as there is unique
19 opportunity and obligation in the Orlando area
20 as well as in other areas of the state to
21 properly recognize and protect the community
22 interests of minority groups in the
23 redistricting process in a manner that fully
24 satisfies Federal, as well as State
25 requirements.

1 Going forward, I am confident that a
2 redistricting plan can and will be drafted that
3 will reflect well on this Legislature and will
4 not result in unelected Judges, who are often
5 times not familiar with or fully appreciative
6 of the expressed wishes of the citizenry and
7 their duly elected representatives, imposing
8 their wishes on Florida by judicial decree.

9 Thank you very much for the opportunity to
10 appear today.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
12 Mr. Ketchum. Next, ladies and gentlemen, if we
13 would provide the, as a courtesy to other
14 speakers, not have that kind of commentary on
15 their presentations.

16 Everyone here is a citizen of the state of
17 Florida and we want to hear from all of them.
18 Mr. Quinones, thank you for being here.

19 MR. QUINONES: Well, thank you, and first
20 I must commend you because your pronunciation
21 of the Spanish last name is impeccable, and it
22 is a great honor to be here and also to see
23 some friends that I served in the past and
24 believe me, I do have a new found a
25 appreciation of the work that you do and it

1 certainly is appreciated.

2 I am John Quinones, I am a County
3 Commissioner in Osceola County. It was really
4 refreshing to hear from residents of Osceola
5 who I respect, like Nancy Smith and her points
6 are really well taken.

7 I think the commonalities between Osceola
8 and Orange are various and I am not going to
9 repeat them.

10 I will tell you that as you look at the
11 intent of our founders and as you look at the
12 great opportunity that Florida has of
13 redistricting, I would just hope that you keep
14 in mind the reason for the redistricting
15 process and how we may be blessed with the
16 opportunity to have more representation at the
17 Federal level.

18 And that you also look at what particular
19 groups actually helped with that increase in
20 population and representation.

21 I certainly appreciate the work that has
22 been done here locally by groups like the
23 Central Florida Redistricting Council, by
24 Nalaya, Latino Justice and others, and
25 certainly it may not be a perfect map, but I

1 would certainly ask you to at least consider
2 that the compact nature.

3 We just finished doing our own
4 redistricting in Osceola and certainly that was
5 a big consideration to make sure that it was
6 compact.

7 So I appreciate your efforts and certainly
8 hope that you as Abraham Lincoln told us,
9 provide the equality of opportunities for our
10 residents here in central Florida. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
12 being here, Commissioner, great in-sights.

13 Next we have Mr. Stephen Cullum, who will
14 be followed by Timothy Murray.

15 Mr. Cullum, you worked your way down. The
16 microphone is yours. You will be followed,
17 again, by Timothy Murray and then Mable Butler.

18 MR. CULLUM: Good afternoon, my name is
19 Stephen Cullum, and I found out about this on
20 the Internet. I read a lot of newspapers on
21 the Internet and books and things like that.

22 I am one of the citizens that voted for
23 Fair Districts. I believe, you know, that it
24 would make the government more inclusive. I
25 want to have an aggregative representation,

1 every group of people here, you know, will be
2 represented, and also I believe that our
3 government, both locally and even on the state
4 and a national level is dysfunctional right now
5 because you have two extreme groups and the
6 reason why is because of gerrymandering in my
7 opinion.

8 I want to have politicians that are
9 elected from a more representation slice of
10 society so that they can be more moderate and
11 actually can come together and compromise and
12 get stuff done.

13 That was my thoughts when I voted, you
14 know, for those two Amendments and that is
15 really what I want this body of officials to
16 do, is to go ahead and create maps that will be
17 inclusive and put people together.

18 And also I know a lot of minorities want
19 to have representation, but you have to realize
20 that, you know, what we have been doing is
21 putting you in kind of like together in one
22 single district and diluting your voting power.
23 So you don't want every minority just in their
24 own separate district.

25 You all have a lot of influence, a lot of

1 voting power, but not when they do that to you,
2 it is actually, you know, it is actually not
3 doing you right, and I don't like that either.
4 That is really about all I have to say, sir.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
6 much, sir. Next we have Timothy Murray, who
7 will be followed by Mable Butler and then the
8 Reverend Ohara black. Mr. Murray.

9 MR. MURRAY: Hi, how are you doing today?
10 Timothy Murray, District 8. Real quick, I just
11 want everyone who voted for Fair Districts,
12 could you stand up real quick?

13 That is a pretty good majority in this
14 room and I just want to ask that during these
15 sessions you please address the fact and tell
16 these people why our state is, the taxpayer
17 dollars are being used to sue themselves and
18 defend themselves when 63 percent of the state
19 of Florida voted for these fair districts, why
20 are we here?

21 Real quickly, right on, people. Touching
22 on what Diane Rambo said, like I said, I am in
23 District 8. I would like you to draw me a
24 district for the City of Orlando so that my
25 Congressman doesn't have the chance to hide out

1 in Winter Garden and not come to see the people
2 that he is supposed to represent.

3 I believe we had one Town Hall meeting
4 kind of near Orlando downtown area, and it was
5 at noon, you know, it was pretty far to get to.
6 So just, you know, draw a district that is fair
7 for these people right here. Thanks, guys.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
9 Mr. Murray. Next we have Ms. Mable Butler, and
10 she will be followed by the Reverend Ohara
11 Black. Ms. Butler.

12 MS. BUTLER: Good afternoon, my name is
13 Mable Butler, and I want to talk about minority
14 access districts, if is a must.

15 In 1990, I was elected to Orange County,
16 the Board of County Commissioners. The first
17 black in the history of the county.

18 I was elected from a district, but I
19 served the whole county, all of Orange County
20 citizens, along with Osceola, Seminole, Lake
21 and Brevard, because I was black and they had
22 accessibility to me.

23 I did want you to know that some of those
24 counties still don't have representation. In
25 1992, because of minority access districts, the

1 citizens of Florida sent three blacks to
2 Congress. The first in my lifetime, which is
3 85 years.

4 So please, and I want you to remember, in
5 access districts you are allowing minorities to
6 have representation throughout the state and
7 have an option to choose. That is the word,
8 choose a Representative of their choice. Thank
9 you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
11 Ms. Butler. Okay, next, we have the Reverend
12 Ohara Black, followed by Jessica Hewkin, and
13 Chuck O'Neal, and if Ida Escamoni, John Hoyt
14 and Allisha Douglas can start working their way
15 down, I would appreciate it. Mr. Black.

16 REVEREND BLACK: Good afternoon. My name
17 is Reverend Ohara C. Black. I am the Senior
18 Pastor at Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist
19 Church here in Orlando. I am also a native
20 Floridian.

21 I was born and raised in Gadsden County,
22 amen, Representative Williams. I had the
23 fortunate opportunity also of teaching our
24 young people Civics, American History, American
25 Government in Gadsden County schools.

1 One of the things I share with my Civics
2 students is that our government is about having
3 a voice. You have a republican form of
4 government, not necessarily that we are
5 Republicans, but we believe in a representative
6 voice, and you all know that when you go to
7 Tallahassee you do not speak for yourselves,
8 but you speak for the people you represent.

9 And as you redraw these districts, redraw
10 them in such a way that everyone regardless of
11 race and so forth has a voice. We want our
12 African-Americans to have a voice. That is all
13 I have to say.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
15 Next Ms. Jessica Hewkin and she will be
16 followed by Chuck O'Neal.

17 Ms. Hewkin, are you working your way over?
18 And Mr. O'Neal would be followed by Ida
19 Escamoni. So Ms. Hewkin, you have the floor.

20 And folks, when you work your way down, if
21 you could come closer to the mike so that you
22 can get right to it as soon as we call your
23 name, I would appreciate it. Thank your,
24 Ms. Hewkin.

25 MS. HEWKIN: Hi, my name is Jessica

1 Hewkin, and I am a recent graduate at the
2 University of Central Florida. When speaking
3 to other politically active students across the
4 country it is unbelievable to them that Florida
5 is taking so long to draw our districts.

6 We voted for Fair Districts, and to leave
7 us with little or no time to prep our
8 candidates and voters inside districts is
9 simply not there.

10 I am an intern for an organization that
11 works to get women elected and the rights of
12 women represented, and this incumbent
13 protection plan that is created by this
14 unreasonable timeline of possibly August of
15 next year, is not what is best for women, and
16 therefore, not what is best for Florida.

17 Please take this into consideration and
18 please if nothing else think of the
19 repercussions for 2012. We want fair and
20 competitive elections, and most importantly, we
21 want Legislators who are not afraid of that.

22 Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
24 ma'am. Mr. Chuck O'Neal is up next, followed
25 by Ida Escamoni. Mr. O'Neal.

1 MR. O'NEAL: Yes, my name is Chuck O'Neal.
2 I have a question for Senator Gaetz.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: We are going --
4 please ask it, but again we are going to answer
5 questions at the end of the meeting.

6 MR. O'NEAL: I will wait around. If, as
7 you have said, this is a partially arithmetic
8 process and 51 percent of the registered voters
9 in the state are Democrat, will 51 percent of
10 the districts be predominantly Democrat?

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
12 much, sir. Next we will have Ida Escamoni and
13 she will be followed by John Hoyt, and then
14 Allisha Douglas. And if also Kevin Cobaris and
15 Chester Glover can start working their way
16 down, I would appreciate it. Ma'am.

17 MS. ESCAMONI: Hello. My name is Ida
18 Escamoni, I am a student at the University of
19 Central Florida. I was born and raised in
20 Orlando, Florida, in my short 21 years of life.

21 I am here to send one word to many of our
22 Representatives and Senators in front of us,
23 and that is shame, shame for preventing us from
24 having our fair districts.

25 Shame from hiding these maps and shame for

1 trying to suppress the votes of students and
2 minorities. I go to a University with 60,000
3 students, voting age constituents, and we
4 deserve the right to be represented. You will
5 not split the student vote no more. Please,
6 let students vote, thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
8 ma'am. Next we will have Mr. John Hoyt, and he
9 will be followed by Allisha Douglas, and if
10 also Michael Ertel and Bobby Olszewski can work
11 their way down to the front row, I would
12 appreciate it. Mr. Hoyt.

13 MR. HOYT: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman
14 and members of the Committee. My name is John
15 Hoyt, and I am a resident of 7425 Barnacle
16 Court in Winter Park, and the zip is 32792,
17 which we will discuss a little bit in a minute.

18 First of all, I want to thank you for this
19 opportunity to appear before this Committee and
20 I appreciate the fact that you have been
21 meeting all over the state and are now about
22 half through, have about 13 more to go. Bless
23 you.

24 I think -- I think on my registration to
25 speak before you I indicated that I belong to

1 AARP and, in fact, I am a trained volunteer
2 AARP advocate, but today I speak on behalf of
3 myself and a resident living in zip code 32792.

4 Unfortunately, that doesn't tell you much,
5 because zip code 32792 is one of those many
6 throughout the state that crosses county lines
7 and has split legislative district.

8 I live in Congressional District 24, which
9 if you walk a little bit west of where I live
10 you practically have to walk sideways in order
11 to get through it before it opens back up
12 again.

13 I live in State Senate District 22 and
14 House District 34 and so on. I live in that
15 southwest corner of Seminole County that does
16 have a Winter Park mailing address, but it is
17 represented by eastern Florida Congressional
18 District and so on.

19 Different from my neighbors who I am
20 within walking distance of the county line with
21 the county of Orlando.

22 Hopefully redistricting will correct some
23 of that so that populations are fairly much
24 contingent geographically.

25 My neighborhood is probably one of the

1 most diverse in the county area with one of the
2 lowest crime rates, too. We are very
3 diversified with white, Latin, black,
4 nationality of different races and religions.
5 It is truly an American melting pot and we all
6 get along beautifully.

7 I have seen some of the proposed
8 redistricting efforts and the people are to be
9 commended for taking a very difficult task of
10 trying to suggest them.

11 I have yet to see one that fulfills
12 redistricting that gives contingent geographic
13 preferences, not a district that I would be in
14 that is represented by Jacksonville. Not a
15 district that I would be in that is represented
16 by Flagler Beach. Not a district that I am in
17 that as is currently represented by Melbourne
18 and the east coast of Florida.

19 I believe that geographic contingency is
20 important as population balance and both need
21 to be considered along with the other factors
22 that have been brought out here today.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Mr. Hoyt, I am
24 going to have to ask you to finish up so that
25 we can get to our next speakers.

1 MR. HOYT: I wanted to make a point that
2 is frequently brought out, but if your efforts
3 ensure transparency, ensure timeliness of the
4 decision-making, insulate the redistricting
5 process from the conflict of interest and you
6 all know what I am talking about, then the
7 redistricting efforts will be a success.

8 Put your personal feelings and political
9 feelings aside.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Mr. Hoyt, you
11 have got about ten seconds, and then I have to
12 move to the next speaker.

13 MR. HOYT: Do what the citizens of Florida
14 have dictated to you. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
16 much, sir. Next we have Allisha Douglas and
17 she will be followed by Kevin Cobaris.

18 Mr. DOUGLAS: Good afternoon, and
19 unfortunately, I believe my wife card was
20 pulled instead of mine. Her name is Allisha,
21 and unfortunately she could not be here today
22 so I will speak on her behalf.

23 But I want to thank you all for being here
24 today and serving this need of redistricting
25 and I want to echo the thoughts of the Florida

1 League of Women Voters where they gave the
2 dismay towards the fact that we don't have
3 maps.

4 I agree with not having one map, but I
5 would like to see workable maps like every
6 other redistricting community has had.

7 In addition to that I want to speak in
8 regards to the often politically forgotten area
9 of four corners Florida, which is the area of
10 Polk, Orange, Osceola and Lake County.

11 Those districts are often thrown apart in
12 many different ways and I would like you to
13 consider keeping them together when you do your
14 redistricting effort. Thank you very much,
15 have a great day.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
17 appreciate that. Next we have Kevin Cobaris,
18 and he will be followed by Chester Glover.
19 Kevin, are you not here, Mr. Cobaris? And if
20 Eugene Cloud and Bruce Mount could also start
21 working their way down, and when you come down,
22 please come and sit in the front row closer to
23 the microphone so we can go ahead and get to
24 each speaker as quickly as possible. We have
25 lots of folks. Sir.

1 MR. COBARIS: Good afternoon, ladies and
2 gentlemen of our legislation quorum, and good
3 afternoon to all of our constituents.

4 I stand, my name is Kevin Cobaris, Senior
5 Pastor and founder of Empowerment Ministries
6 Church of Orlando, Florida, in the Pine Hills
7 area, I am proud to say.

8 I stand today as a Pastor and I represent
9 the voice of God as it relates to ministering
10 to my congregation and the community.

11 Contrastingly, elected officials represent
12 the voice of their community. To lawmakers
13 without representation, how can change take
14 place? Be it from a spiritual or political
15 standpoint, representation is necessary, and I
16 stand this afternoon reiterating what has
17 before been said, standing on the shoulders of
18 Father Pinder and the other Pastors and others
19 who have got up to speak on behalf of
20 minorities.

21 And I don't stand for, to propose that we
22 should place minority against minority, but I
23 do stand to insist that this quorum of
24 legislation and our elected officials would
25 make a sensible decision to ensure that

1 minorities are represented properly, and we
2 send you back believing in you that after
3 hearing the voice of the constituency here
4 today, I believe a consensus would say that the
5 voice of the people need to be heard and we
6 need to respect that voice even with minorities
7 as well, and we ask you to do a fair job of
8 making sure that that is done. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your, sir.
10 Next we have Chester Glover who will be
11 followed by Michael Ertel. Chester, are you --
12 Mr. Glover, are you here? I am going to go
13 ahead and move on to Michael Ertel. He will be
14 followed by Bobby Olszewski, and if Eugene
15 Cloud and Bruce Mount could start working their
16 way down as well. Mr. Ertel.

17 MR. ERTEL: Thank you, Senators,
18 Representatives, thanks for having this
19 meeting. It is a very interactive event here
20 at the Bob Carr, which is pretty awesome
21 instead of us just looking there.

22 I do notice that you are having an event
23 here in Orange County, you are having one in
24 Brevard County and you are having one in
25 Volusia County. So please do not leave out

1 Seminole County.

2 As you leave here today, please stop by
3 Altamonte Springs and go to the, go to the
4 Moses in the Town Center there, in uptown
5 Altamonte where Representative Plakon lives,
6 maybe stay in Lake Mary in Representative
7 Dorworth's 's district, and tomorrow morning
8 when you wake up please go to the Townhouse
9 Restaurant in Oviedo in Representative
10 Brodeur's district.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: All right, let's
12 focus our comments on redistricting.

13 MR. ERTEL: I do tell my candidates in
14 every single election that half of the
15 candidates are going to lose, and it is kind of
16 interesting to say that here today, because
17 well over half of the people that are here in
18 the audience today are going to feel when this
19 whole process is over, as if they have lost.

20 The process may be the process, but just
21 because it is not exactly everything we all
22 want it doesn't mean that the process, itself,
23 is broken.

24 No one is going to be 100 percent
25 satisfied, and in fact, I promise you, I

1 promise you that every single one of you at
2 some point or another in this process will be
3 sued by some organization.

4 In our office it is our job to make sure
5 that we can, you know, compensate for that. We
6 have eight word mission statement in the
7 office, the first two words are efficient
8 elections, the last two words are voter
9 confidence, if you want to know the middle
10 words, go follow us at Vote Seminole on Twitter
11 or you can print us at Facebook dot Com slash
12 vote Seminole. I want to confirm here, get
13 back to the point.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: You are running
15 out of time.

16 MR. ERTEL: Our timeline does not start
17 the day that yours finishes, and this is
18 something that I want to assure the voters.
19 The Supervisors of Elections in the State of
20 Florida, our timeline will not start when your
21 timeline ends.

22 So the first map that is drawn, we are
23 going to get to work. We are going to start
24 rolling up our sleeves and we are going to make
25 it happen and then all are going to get sued

1 and there is going to be a tweak to the map and
2 then we are going to tweak the map.

3 So please rest assured for ya'll up there
4 that you are not going -- that our timeline
5 doesn't start when yours ends, and when you get
6 sued, your Supervisors of Elections in this
7 state, all 67 of us are not going to allow the
8 fear of the result of that lawsuit to paralyze
9 us into inactivity.

10 We are going to start and for the voters
11 who are watching us online or that are here
12 behind me right now, just recognize that your
13 Supervisors of Elections will work very hard,
14 we are going to make it happen.

15 It is going to work, it is going to be
16 fine, and then ya'll do your job, the courts
17 will do their job, we will do our job, the
18 voters will do their job and Jay Leno and Conan
19 O'Brien can start making fun of Hollywood again
20 next year instead of Florida elections. Thank
21 your, Representatives.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
23 Mr. Ertel. Next we have Bobby Olszewski, he
24 will be followed by Eugene Cloud, and if Bruce
25 Mount and Sue Jantz can start working their way

1 down.

2 MR. OLSZEWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
3 my name is Robert, Bobby Olszewski, and I am a
4 proud resident of the city of Winter Garden and
5 I have been a resident of southwest and west
6 Orange Counties for over 30 years.

7 I want to thank the Legislature for coming
8 to Orlando and listening to the citizens of
9 Florida before designing any maps. Your action
10 I believe is truly a testament to the
11 Constitution.

12 As a legislative branch, is a direct
13 connection to we the people. All Florida
14 residents should be proud of our Legislature
15 for this open and transparent process which
16 allows citizens to design their own maps before
17 submitting them online.

18 In the interest of serving the people of
19 the State of Florida I would encourage you to
20 consider having the cities of Winter Garden,
21 Ocoee, Oakland and Gotha together in a single
22 district as these communities share common
23 bonds, interests and history.

24 I fully support the government embracing
25 the will of the people, which is the hallmark

1 of our great democracy. However, I do have
2 some concerns regarding the language of
3 Amendments 5 and 6.

4 The requirement that incumbents cannot be
5 disfavored is confusing to me. Does that mean
6 if two incumbents in the same seat are in the
7 same seat they can even sue for being
8 disfavored?

9 Critical words of Amendments 5 and 6 are
10 undefined like compact, practicable, feasible
11 and existing political boundaries. I am not an
12 attorney but I would think that this ambiguity
13 would definitely lead to some great confusion
14 and then potentially lawsuits which would be
15 costly to the citizens of Florida.

16 Lastly I would like to ask what are
17 exactly existing political boundaries. Are
18 these boundaries current seats, because if
19 those boundaries are gerrymandered then why are
20 we using them, or are these existing political
21 boundaries city boundaries, because a lot of
22 times city boundaries may not be compact, which
23 should mean new districts would not fit the
24 vague intent of Amendments 5 and 6 either.

25 I fully support the government embracing

1 the will of the people which is the hallmark of
2 our great democracy. However, I think there is
3 some logical and legal concerns regarding
4 Amendments 5 and 6.

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the
6 Committee for taking the time to listen to the
7 people of the great state of Florida. Thank
8 you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your,
10 Mr. Olszewski. Next we have Eugene Cloud
11 followed by Bruce Mount and then if Astrid
12 Garcia and Tony Suarez can start working their
13 way down as well. Mr. Cloud.

14 MR. CLOUD: Yes, thank you very much for
15 being here. I am from Orange County, and when
16 I look at the --at the map of the Congressional
17 Districts with U.S. Congressional Districts
18 with respect to Orange County, I see that the
19 county is divided into four at least and maybe
20 five different Congressional Districts.

21 And to think that there is a logical
22 reason why the Representative from Jacksonville
23 has got a foot in Orange County makes no sense
24 to me whatsoever. So I think that kind of
25 thing needs to be fixed.

1 The next thing is I worry about the idea
2 of diversity and people claiming that there
3 isn't any and I look at this group of people
4 that are representing us. How much more
5 diverse do we need to be. Thank you very much.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
7 Next we have Mr. Bruce Mount, and he will be
8 followed by Sue Jantz.

9 MR. MOUNT: Good evening. First of all,
10 thank you all for coming for us to go through
11 this process.

12 My name is Bruce Mount, Mayor of the
13 historic town of Eatonville, incorporated in
14 1887, the oldest African-American town in
15 America.

16 We are small, with a small budget, but we
17 have those same unfunded mandates. So it is
18 imperative that we be represented. We have to
19 be represented because we are very, very small,
20 but guess what, everybody matters. Every
21 single citizen matters.

22 So we have to be cognizant that we are
23 represented. I echo Reverend Bracy, echo
24 Father Pinder, but we need to be represented
25 not only in the Senate but in the House and the

1 Congress.

2 Minorities have to be represented, because
3 we are part of the process and we will be part
4 of the process. Although we are small, we are
5 very important, so remember us, the oldest
6 African-American town in America, and we must
7 be represented. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Mount. Next we have Sue Jantz. She
10 will be followed by Astrid Garcia and if Marion
11 Cannon and Terrence Brown can start working
12 their way down as well. Ms. Jantz.

13 MS. JANTZ: Hello, I live in Lake County.
14 I attended The Villages meetings and I stayed
15 right through to the end and my questions were
16 not answered, so I was disappointed by that.

17 I am back today with those same questions
18 again and we will see what happens. I disagree
19 with the gentleman from the Chamber who
20 believes that having public input into these
21 maps is a very valuable process.

22 I think it would be more valuable for
23 people to be able to see drafts of proposed
24 maps, especially some that might be made by
25 impartial third party professionals who

1 understand the legal and other implications of
2 this process.

3 I am concerned that organized stauling and
4 chaos serves those who don't want us to have
5 fair elections. I am concerned about
6 transparency and the process for the final map
7 selection.

8 The availability of your online map
9 program whereby any one from the public,
10 including school children, can create maps for
11 consideration could result in avoidable delays,
12 and death by a thousand cuts.

13 Negative impact of delays on your our next
14 election cycle if candidates for office can't
15 mount effective campaigns. It would be best if
16 districts were finalized in early January 2012,
17 not June of 2012.

18 My questions are, when will public
19 submission of maps end, and is that based on a
20 date deadline, or a limit on the number of map
21 submissions?

22 When and how will we see maps that meet
23 the Federal and State legal requirements? Will
24 you conduct another round of public hearings
25 like this to allow for public comment in

1 September perhaps, to facilitate preliminary
2 citizen reviews and comment of draft maps that
3 can provide some valuable input?

4 Thank you to all of the volunteers who
5 have worked for years to enhance democracy by
6 enabling us to put an end to gerrymandered
7 congressional and legislative boundaries that
8 prevent neighbors from getting together and
9 talking about different candidates and
10 advocating for people that they feel will
11 represent them well. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
13 ma'am. Next we have Astrid Garcia, he will be
14 followed by Tony Suarez. Mr. Garcia, and if
15 Paul Spitzer and Linell Ela could start working
16 down, we would appreciate it. Ma'am.

17 MS. GARCIA: Thank you, good afternoon, my
18 name is Astrid Garcia, Director of State
19 Election Policy and Redistricting for NALEO
20 Educational Fund, the National Association of
21 Latino Elected and Appointed Officials.

22 Thank you so much. I have heard you have
23 had a grueling schedule, 26 hearings through
24 the summer, so thank you for your service and
25 for allowing the community to have input into

1 this important process.

2 The NALEO Educational Fund's mission is to
3 facilitate full Hispanic participation in
4 America's political process. Our members are
5 both Republican and Democrats and we are a
6 non-partisan, non profit organization.

7 We believe it is critical that Florida's
8 redistricting respects the voting rights of its
9 growing Hispanic population and that the maps
10 drawn by this Committee reflect this growth.

11 This Committee will be drawing lines for
12 the districts for the State House of
13 Representatives, Senate and Congress that will
14 determine the landscape for the state's
15 governance for the next ten years.

16 As this Committee proceeds with this
17 important task, we urge it to comply strictly
18 with the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965,
19 which protects the rights of Hispanics and
20 other under represented groups to elect
21 candidates of their choice.

22 As the state's second largest and fastest
23 growing population, Florida's Hispanics must be
24 able to elect leaders that will be accountable
25 to the specific needs of this community.

1 We are a part of this great state and we
2 need to be part of this important dialogue. We
3 ask the Committee carefully, that the Committee
4 carefully consider the significant growth of
5 Florida's Hispanic population in central
6 Florida specifically.

7 We note that the area encompassing Orange,
8 Osceola and Polk grew by 30 percent in the last
9 decade and the Hispanic community was
10 responsible for 58 percent of the population
11 increase in this region.

12 Therefore, we believe that this Committee
13 should creating a Congressional District in the
14 area which reflects this growth and provide the
15 Hispanic community a strong voice in the
16 electorial process.

17 We believe that all communities deserve
18 this representation. Latino Justice has
19 presented where it is possible for this area we
20 ask that you consider that.

21 We also believe that this Redistricting
22 Committee shares our vision for a redistricting
23 process that will strengthen Florida's
24 democracy by providing fair electoral
25 opportunities for the state's residents.

1 We look forward to working with this
2 Committee to achieve this important work and we
3 thank you again for your service.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
5 ma'am, appreciate that. Tony Suarez is next,
6 followed by Marion Cannon. Mr. Suarez, thank
7 you for being here.

8 MR. SUAREZ: Good morning, everyone, my
9 name is Anthony Suarez, known as Tony Suarez,
10 and I was a member of the Florida House and
11 representing District 35 in '99 and 2000, and
12 since then I have taken as an adjunct professor
13 at Barry University School of Law,
14 incidentally, teaching redistricting in the
15 legislation class.

16 So I am very familiar with Thornburg
17 versus Gingles that came down since then
18 interpreting, and so we know, I know that you
19 have got a tough job in front of you to try to
20 balance what we are doing.

21 What I am suggesting to you is I am also a
22 member of the Central Florida Redistricting
23 Council which is a bipartisan, where both
24 Republicans and Democrats and Non Party
25 Affiliates, members in this group try to

1 propose a map which we have or you have already
2 seen and we will propose the data for you.

3 What we are trying to do with that is to
4 ensure the recognition that the growth, the
5 reason why we have two additional seats is
6 because we have this great increase and
7 55 percent of the total increase in the
8 population of Florida has come from the
9 Hispanic community and in central Florida,
10 reflects 58 percent of the growth in the
11 population comes from the Hispanic community.

12 So what we don't want is to be placed as
13 other speakers have said in a position of
14 minority versus minority. We would like to see
15 that there is a district that represent the
16 African-American community and a district that
17 represents the Hispanic community and these
18 giving the opportunity for those communities to
19 reach out to someone on the community of
20 interest as the words are, and these are the
21 community of interest.

22 That district which is drawn can be
23 mapped, I mean, the La Prensa, the Spanish
24 language newspaper, will have a route right
25 through the entire community from Haines City

1 up to Union Park.

2 I live in Union Park, so I like the
3 district. The -- but you also have the main
4 streets, Semoran Boulevard runs through it, you
5 have got business, you have got community, you
6 have got paper.

7 My radio show which I do on a daily basis,
8 the entire district is inside the signal of the
9 radio show. So this is a way that people can,
10 and I daresay that about six Hispanic or
11 Spanish language radio stations, all of the
12 signals concentrate on the east side of Orange
13 County, Osceola County.

14 So I suggest to you that the community of
15 interest is definitely there, and we of course
16 understand this is a political issue. The
17 Supreme Court of the United States has said it
18 is political and you have the right to draw,
19 use political considerations.

20 However, the '65 Civil Rights Act had
21 given us a situation in which it imposes upon
22 it the protection of the minority, minority
23 communities.

24 What we don't want is have a situation and
25 I ran as a Republican in the State Senate

1 against Senator Siplin who is here, a district
2 that was designed, designed for minorities, a
3 Democrat. A Democratic seat because the
4 Republicans wanted to ensure safe districts
5 around that Senate as a Democratic seat, but
6 the way it was designed it was designed to be
7 African-American heavy. In the primary, they
8 win the primary and that is the end of it, of
9 course, I ran as a Republican, came close but
10 didn't have enough bananas, so to make it
11 happen.

12 But that, we don't want that to happen
13 again. That is why we are in a situation, we
14 draw a district that is heavily Hispanic as we
15 have indicated in our map which is fair, it is
16 consistent, it is a community of interest, it
17 is contiguous, it has no problems.

18 It does not take away from any other
19 community. I think it is perfect and I urge
20 you to consider it with it, thank you very
21 much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
23 Mr. Suarez. Next we have Marion Cannon. And
24 she will be followed by Terrance Brown and Paul
25 Spitzer. Ms. Cannon, and if Vern Ela and Sue

1 Casterline can start working their way down, I
2 would appreciate it. Thank your, ma'am.

3 MS. CANNON: Good afternoon, I am Marion
4 Cannon, and I am the President of the Retired
5 Educators of Orange County, and I have, I hope,
6 a simple request for you.

7 Even though we are retired, we go into
8 schools quite a lot. We mentor teachers. We
9 mentor students, we tutor and we hear the
10 problems of the schools today, and what we hear
11 is teachers who haven't had raises in a long
12 time.

13 We hear about students who have lost
14 beloved teachers because they can't afford to
15 stay in teaching anymore, and we have also
16 heard about schools lacking supplies and in the
17 case of Seminole County we heard about schools
18 that --

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Ma'am, I am sure
20 you are heading here, but --

21 MS. CANNON: I am getting there. I am
22 getting there.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

24 MS. CANNON: We even hear about schools
25 closing. So the request I have for you is, the

1 money that you set aside to deal with your
2 lawsuit, why don't you put it back into the
3 public schools?

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
5 ma'am. Appreciate your time here. Terrance
6 Brown and he will be followed by Paul Spitzer
7 and then Linell Ela. Mr. Brown.

8 MR. BROWN: Hi, I am a member of a number
9 of Veterans Associations here in central
10 Florida. I am pretty much most of the time
11 that I have left Florida in the last 40 years
12 has been for military service which has taken
13 me to about 17 countries.

14 I want to congratulate you all for holding
15 these hearings, because these -- Amendment is
16 so ambiguous and so conflicting in its criteria
17 that it would be the same as if I had ordered
18 one of my military units to line up
19 alphabetically and in size order at the same
20 time. Thank you very much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
22 appreciate that. Next we have Paul Spitzer who
23 will be followed by Linell Ela. Mr. Spitzer.

24 MR. SPITZER: Thank you, Representative
25 Precourt, Senator Gaetz, Representative

1 Weatherford, and my Representative, Senator
2 Simmons and Representative Nelson who
3 disappeared and Speaker Cannon who is evidently
4 watching from an undisclosed location.

5 I would just like to say like so many
6 people before me, do not gerrymander. Please
7 stop this in our redistricting here in Florida.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

9 MR. SPITZER: I didn't bring a plan with
10 me, but I do have an example to use. Look at
11 the present Congressional U. S. District map.
12 Don't use that. Okay. Right now we are in the
13 Florida third, which makes its way all of the
14 way up to Jacksonville, via east Gainesville,
15 often less than a mile wide.

16 I understand that is a minority
17 represented district, but I just don't
18 understand why it has to stretch from here to
19 Jacksonville in order to accomplish that
20 unless, of course, it is meant to put a lot of
21 people into one district.

22 I live four blocks from here in the
23 Florida eighth. It meanders its way up to
24 north of Ocala, but in order for me to stay in
25 that district and drive up there, I have to

1 drive east, south eight miles, west a few miles
2 and then back up north.

3 It doesn't make sense, and the Florida
4 seventh starts in Winter Park, goes all of the
5 way up to east Jacksonville -- south
6 Jacksonville, and I am assuming this was
7 probably designed for the white minority
8 district, I am not too sure.

9 You know, I have been both Democrat and
10 Republican, I am neither now, okay. And I know
11 that on occasions both parties have known to
12 put politics before legislation, but this year
13 the Republicans have truly scared me.

14 With the legislation passed increasing
15 voting and registration restrictions for no
16 tangible reasons and the Governors and Attorney
17 Generals changes in rules that makes it more
18 restrictive for felons who have done their time
19 through --

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Sir, I need you
21 to keep your comments focused on redistricting.

22 MR. SPITZER: I am sorry about that.
23 Okay, but their rights are restricted for
24 voting purposes. That was my point.

25 And then there is Speaker Cannon's obvious

1 displeasure of Amendments 5 and 6 going so far
2 as to join the lawsuit against Amendment 6. I
3 believe he intimated it is splitting the
4 Supreme Court because of the disallowing
5 Amendment 7, not very comforting.

6 So I please ask you, respect what the
7 voters have asked for, abide by Amendments 5
8 and 6. Of course, abide by guidelines required
9 by the Voting Rights Act. Don't use that cover
10 for any shenanigans. We deserve better than
11 that.

12 In this January, please change the law so
13 that the next time in ten years you will be
14 able to show us proposed districts right now
15 and avoid the problem with the debacle that
16 shows up after the January legislative session.
17 Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
19 much, sir. Next we have Linell Ela who will be
20 followed by Vern Ela and Sue Casterline, and if
21 Doug Head and David Montanez can start working
22 their way down as well, I would appreciate it.

23 MR. ELA: My point has been well made sir.
24 I cede my time to someone else.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Ms. Ela cedes

1 her time, thank you very much. Vern Ela.

2 MR. ELA: I cede as well.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Similarly.

4 Thank you very much. Sue Casterline, are you
5 down here? Okay, here she comes and then
6 following Ms. Casterline will be Doug Head and
7 David Montanez, and if Stephanie Porta and Mark
8 Lainer start working their way down as well.
9 Ms. Casterline.

10 MS. CASTERLINE: At a time, I am Sue
11 Casterline from Orange County. At a time when
12 the Legislature just made huge cuts to social
13 services, schools, et cetera, I would like to
14 express my outrage that the Legislature has
15 been paying \$300 an hour to lawyers in-house
16 Speaker Cannon's former firm to try to find
17 fault with Amendments 5 and 6 passed in last
18 election.

19 It has been estimated that a million
20 dollars of taxpayer money has already been
21 spent to subvert the will of the people. If
22 you want to look for ways to redistrict to keep
23 incumbents in power, I would like to see that
24 you at least spend your own money rather than
25 the taxpayers.

1 At a time when our troops are in other
2 countries to spread democracy, quote, unquote,
3 it is extremely disturbing to see that
4 democracy is being subverted at home by your
5 resistance to fair districts and the voter
6 obstruction legislation passed in the last
7 section of the Senate. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
9 ma'am. Next we have Douglas Head, followed by
10 David Montanez and Stephanie Porta, and if
11 Holmes McKoy and Ronita Sanders can start
12 working their way down as well. Mr. Head.

13 MR. HEAD: I am glad to be here this
14 afternoon to have this opportunity to publicly
15 call for you to draw rationale districts which
16 makes sense to voters.

17 Examples of the horrors of the last
18 redistricting process ten years ago abound, but
19 I want to point out the ridiculous districts
20 that the Legislature carved right here in
21 Orange County in 2001.

22 Districts were so distorted that they make
23 easy comic relief for a painful experience.
24 The dead dog district drawn for House -- as
25 District 35 represented by Mr. Cannon, the crab

1 drawn for House District 36, these should be
2 trashed.

3 The map of District 40 is really a
4 message. It really looks like a toilet, flush
5 it. In the Senate, it is no better.

6 For ten years central Florida has had a
7 district which is laughingly referred to as the
8 bunny rabbit district, two ears, four paws, a
9 tiny body, a big rump and a big foot, it is
10 literally looks like a bunny rabbit.

11 I don't need to show you the distortions
12 of the Congressional Districts, but I can tell
13 you that if you go to the intersection of
14 Limone Avenue and New York Avenue in the middle
15 of Winter Park, one community, you can cross
16 the streets and enter three different
17 districts, and walk a quarter of a mile north
18 and you enter a fourth.

19 This gives you a community with four
20 Congressmen and no voice. I believe that there
21 is a rationale space in Orange County to create
22 two State House Districts with a heavy Hispanic
23 voice.

24 I believe there is plenty of room for two
25 State House Districts with a heavy black voice.

1 In central Orlando there is a community of
2 interest that is integral and cohesive.

3 I believe that in central Orange there are
4 associated communities that deserve to be one
5 district, not three.

6 The people around Apopka deserve a
7 district and a voice, but they can best achieve
8 their voice and representation by joining
9 Winter Garden and other communities of west
10 Orange.

11 And in east Orange, where there is much
12 growth, the new communities need a voice and
13 will have it if they are drawn together around
14 Alafaya. That is another district.

15 The communities need a voice, please stop
16 the games in the defense of incumbents and give
17 us real districts with real candidates.

18 Orlando needs the two and-a-half Senate
19 Districts to which we are entitled, not more.
20 We need the eight House Districts to which we
21 are entitled in Orange County, not pieces of 11
22 separate districts.

23 We need to have rationale districts, three
24 Congressional rationale districts penetrating
25 the territory of Orange, not five. Give us

1 rationale districts, we will give the right
2 candidates the vote.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
4 and if you have some maps and exhibits as I
5 see, if you could leave them with our staff,
6 that would be terrific.

7 David Montanez is up next, followed by
8 Stephanie Porta. Mr. Montanez, and -- he
9 yields his time. Thank you very much, sir.

10 Stephanie Porta followed by Mark Lainer.
11 Stephanie, thank you.

12 MS. PORTA: Hi, it is actually Stephanie
13 Porta. First I would like to thank the middle
14 class heros who fought hard for Floridians who
15 are here today.

16 Representatives Thompson, Thurston,
17 Steinberg, Williams, Jenne and Randolph, thank
18 you, thank you for standing up.

19 Secondly I want to ask that the rest of
20 you become heros to the rest of us. Almost
21 two-thirds who voted for Fair Districts. To
22 the members of the Florida House who voted to
23 spend my tax dollars to attack and invalidate a
24 provision of our State Constitution, and you
25 call yourself constitutionalists, supported by

1 the majority.

2 All of this money is being spent while the
3 teachers are being fired, social services are
4 being cut, and Florida still leads the country
5 in unemployment, and as apparently, apparently
6 now you are stopping dollars from coming to our
7 state to prevent child abuse. Where are your
8 priorities?

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Madam, I need
10 you to focus your comments on redistricting.

11 MS. PORTA: I am there, I am there.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

13 MS. PORTA: Why must you fight the voters?
14 If you don't like the voters and you don't want
15 to listen to them, then really why are you
16 here?

17 If the legislative majority would stop
18 trying to get out of following the new Fair
19 Districts standards and apply them as the
20 voters intended there would be no need for
21 litigation and no need for the massive amounts
22 of taxpayer money you are ready to spend.
23 Thanks.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
25 much. Next we have Mr. Mark Lainer and he will

1 be followed by Holmes McKoy, and then if I can
2 have Deirdre MacNab and Billy Butterfield work
3 their way down here, I would appreciate it.

4 Mr. Lainer.

5 MR. LAINER: Thank your, and thank you for
6 getting my name right. It is rare. I just
7 want to say with the very short time that it
8 looks like there is going to be between map
9 drawing and the elections, this really is
10 seeming like an incumbency protection program.

11 Safe districts have been drawn -- thank
12 you, safe districts have been drawn, extremes
13 more likely to win primaries and elections so
14 that we do end up with polarization.

15 We also have -- I live in the district
16 that Corrine Brown represents that runs from
17 Orlando to Jacksonville. I understand the need
18 for minority representation, but I also know
19 that there are like four safe Republican
20 districts around that district, so that even in
21 the state which has majority Democratic voters,
22 that we have a super majority of Republicans in
23 the House and the Senate which makes no sense
24 to me whatsoever.

25 Also, also I am very concerned about the

1 vote suppression bills that have been passed,
2 the shortening of the time of early voting, and
3 the difficulty --

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Sir, I need you
5 to focus on redistricting.

6 MR. LAINER: I understand that, but this
7 has to do with the redistricting. As you
8 redistrict, please make sure that you don't do
9 the same thing that you have done in terms of
10 -- in terms of suppressing voting and in terms
11 of disenfranchising voters.

12 And I would also finally say that even
13 though this doesn't have a lot to do with early
14 voting, we need public financing, we need
15 corporate money out of elections.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your, sir.

17 MR. LAINER: And we need this to change
18 now.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: We are going to
20 go ahead and move on to Mr. Holmes McKoy and he
21 will be followed, she will be followed by
22 Ronita Sanders and Deirdre MacNab. Ms. McKoy.

23 MR. MCKOY: Good afternoon, everyone, my
24 name is Alice Holmes McKoy. I am the former
25 Director of Special Projects and scheduling for

1 retired Congressman Diane Watson of Los
2 Angeles.

3 I am a new resident to Orlando, and today
4 I chose to come and speak on redistricting, as
5 it affects minority population and
6 representation in this community.

7 I am going to say that I believe this is
8 one of the most significant issues of the
9 current times and that there appears to be a
10 campaign to take us back to a period when we
11 were truly underserved.

12 Washington is based on seniority that
13 allows you access to leadership, you are sought
14 for your knowledge on the legislative process,
15 you are able to sit on key committees that
16 allow you to address issues that can affect
17 your district.

18 Indeed, it takes several years to achieve
19 enough seniority to really be effective in the
20 position. It is very important that whomever
21 represents the community to be seasoned and
22 skilled with the nuances of Congress while
23 being sensitive to important minority concerns.

24 The move toward fair representation could
25 come at considerable cost to the community

1 which has enjoyed robust and productive
2 constituent advocacy from events such as job
3 fairs, housing, healthcare, with the current
4 constituent leadership.

5 In that regard there has been an effective
6 stellar Representative already looking out for
7 constituents in the third district. With the
8 possible redistricting and redrawing of the
9 lines, which would remove Orlando from the
10 current configuration, possibly opening the
11 district to new and untested leadership at the
12 Federal level on issues such as appropriations
13 and legislative policy, it could dramatically
14 change the landscape to one that would effect
15 Orlando's minority population in an adverse
16 way.

17 To this end I am hoping that Orlando's
18 minority community would not fall victim to
19 this new idea of disenfranchisement and
20 retrogression as described in today's Orlando
21 Sentinel.

22 Indeed, my home state of California in the
23 33rd District there was one of the areas which
24 was about to go through a similar challenge.

25 However, I am happy to report with strong

1 rebuttal from the community they were able to
2 forestall this serious breach to the minority
3 population living in that district.

4 In closing one of my favorite statements
5 is that the more things change the more they
6 remain the same. However, the change must come
7 in a positive fashion and not at the cost of
8 hard work and hard fought victories which have
9 held constituents to achieve a better life in
10 the Third District of Orlando.

11 I would like to reference today's Orlando
12 Sentinel again, which in part references the
13 1965 Voting Rights Act.

14 Legislators have to consider race and
15 ethnicity as well as voting history. In three
16 decades of redistricting litigation since the
17 Federal Civil Rights legislation, courts have
18 permitted -- prohibited what is called
19 retrogression or the weakening of the ability
20 of minority groups to elect lawmakers of their
21 choice.

22 In short, Members of the Commission, it is
23 important to consider the minority
24 representation is essential as it relates to
25 the 1965 Voting Rights Act and we cannot afford

1 to lose knowledgeable and seasoned leadership
2 in these very difficult times for this key
3 constituency in Orlando.

4 Thank you for allowing me the opportunity
5 to voice my concerns on this most significant
6 issue.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
8 ma'am. Okay, folks, we only have a few more
9 minutes left in this afternoon's session of our
10 redistricting hearing.

11 I am going to call out a few names. I
12 understand a couple of them may have already
13 gone though. Ronita Sanders and she is going
14 to be followed by Deirdre MacNab. Ms. Sanders
15 is not here. Deirdre MacNab does not appear to
16 be here. Okay. Great, and then she will be
17 followed by Billy Butterfield and Robert
18 Spooney.

19 So if you guys would come down to the
20 front row so I know you are here, I would
21 appreciate it. Madam.

22 MS. MACNAB: Good afternoon, and welcome
23 to Orlando. I am the President of the League
24 of Women Voters of Florida. Here we are --
25 here we are at the halfway mark and as you

1 know, our organization has worked on this issue
2 for over 70 years.

3 You have heard from our members as well as
4 today at every spot, every stop, and we have
5 been paying close attention to all of the
6 hearings.

7 There have been several instances of
8 joking and with my two minutes today I would
9 like to share a relevant one of my own.

10 W. C. Fields was deathly sick while on
11 vacation. His close friend came in while he
12 was in bed waiting for the doctor and saw W. C.
13 Fields carefully reading the Bible.

14 W. C., he says, you know you have never
15 read the Bible in your whole life, why start
16 now? Looking for loopholes, looking for
17 loopholes says W. C. Fields.

18 Unfortunately, this is no laughing matter,
19 because that is precisely what we have seen the
20 leadership of this Committee to be doing,
21 looking for loopholes such as fighting the
22 Amendments in court.

23 Senator Gaetz, I have heard you several
24 times sum up by saying to those who have spoken
25 that while they are entitled to their own

1 opinion, they are not entitled to their own
2 facts.

3 Regretfully and I know once again you will
4 have the final word at today's meeting. We
5 must take a dose of your own medicine. Our
6 members in several other stops have clarified
7 some of the facts regarding litigation and the
8 constitutional timeline.

9 These jokes would be much more
10 entertaining if there was not so much at stake
11 and did not involve taxpayer money and the
12 critical integrity of Florida elections.

13 We have heard at every stop Supervisors of
14 Election expressing their concern about their
15 ability to properly run careful and ethical
16 elections because of the timeline that has been
17 proposed.

18 We have begun to hear suggestions that
19 that timeline might be changeable. I ask you
20 today as the President of the League of Women
21 Voters of Florida to take the responsible
22 course of action, to move the timeline up so
23 Florida is not last.

24 Ensure orderly elections in 2012, give
25 voters a real chance to comment on real maps

1 and I would like to ask you since the gag order
2 has been lifted, if all present today would be
3 willing to please raise their hand if you would
4 commit to moving up the timeline so there could
5 be a vote the first week of legislative session
6 in January, and I would like to see who among
7 you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
9 Ms. MacNab, we are not going to go ahead and do
10 that at this particular hearing. We are not
11 here to vote. We are here to listen to you at
12 this time. So thank you for your comments.

13 I am going to go ahead and move on to
14 Mr. Billy Butterfield now.

15 MS. MACNAB: Thank you, Representative
16 Precourt, thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Mr. Butterfield,
18 Mr. Butterfield? Are you Mr. Butterfield? Is
19 Mr. Billy Butterfield here? Okay,
20 Mr. Butterfield, we are going -- next, Robert
21 Spooney. Mr. Spooney, and then the last for
22 this afternoon's session will then be Nelson
23 Betancourt.

24 I am going to make a couple of short
25 comments, Senator Gaetz is going to make a few

1 comments and then we will stand in recess, but
2 before we do that, Mr. Spooney.

3 MR. SPOONEY: Good afternoon, my name is
4 the Reverend Dr. Robert M. Spooney. I am
5 Pastor of the historic Mount Siani Missionary
6 Baptist Church which is located in historic
7 Paramore in part of Districts 3.

8 I am also the President of the
9 African-American Chamber of Commerce of central
10 Florida here in Orlando.

11 As a United States citizen, a life long
12 Floridian and a registered voter, I believe
13 that we are experiencing a defining moment in
14 our state's history.

15 In this particular case if minority access
16 for communities of interest and of color is not
17 preserved, is not preserved, when Florida
18 redraws the boundaries, African-Americans and
19 Hispanics who collectively make up over
20 two-thirds of our state's population, may be
21 finding themselves mired in a difficult
22 situation.

23 That being the case, I stand in complete
24 concurrence with the statements made by Father
25 Pinder, Reverend Ohara Black, Pastor Cabaris,

1 the Honorable Mable Butler and the new
2 Floridian, Ms. MacKoy, by changing the policy
3 and frame work already provided in Article III
4 of the Florida Constitution, we are definitely
5 dilute go the collective strength of
6 African-Americans in our governmental process.

7 Don't allow Florida's redistricting to
8 destroy the minority vote. Let us continue to
9 honor the spirit and intent of the Civil Rights
10 Act of 1965. Thank you, and God bless you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your, God
12 bless you, too, Mr. Spooney. And finally, this
13 after, for this afternoon's session, we have
14 Nelson Betancourt, Mr. Betancourt.

15 MR. BETANCOURT: Thank you, historian
16 Lawrence Goodwin recently stated that the
17 economic fate of America's inherited democratic
18 process in the sense that a majority of us have
19 had, have always had, that we are in this thing
20 together. It is absolutely on the line right
21 now.

22 And the election of 2012, is going to
23 define the meaning of the American idea. I
24 therefore have no doubts that the current
25 leadership in Tallahassee will use this

1 districting process to manufacture a crisis in
2 the electoral process, in the electoral system
3 in order to continue to undermine our
4 democratic process as they are presently doing
5 in Washington, D. C.

6 Even though deception eventually contains
7 the seeds of its own destruction, at what cost
8 in suffering and strife to the American people?
9 And I hold in scathing contempt politicians of
10 both parties in Tallahassee and Washington who
11 purport to be Christians and Jews yet have no
12 compunction about reaping havoc with the least
13 of these, the elderly, the poor, the disabled,
14 the strangers.

15 These -- this redistricting process should
16 be about fairness, justice and opportunity, not
17 a naked power grab to cause chaos and
18 disruption in the 2012 elections. In 2012, the
19 fate of our Democratic process and dream is
20 absolutely on the line.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
22 Mr. Betancourt. Okay, one final administrative
23 task. I would like to recognize Ms. Daisy
24 Lynum who represents this area, the city of
25 Orlando. Commissioner, are you here? Hi, how

1 are you, do you want to stand up and wave to
2 everyone.

3 She represents this area of the city of
4 Orlando, thank you for letting us use this
5 facility, appreciate it.

6 Okay, and thanks to all of those folks
7 that have talked today for your contributions,
8 making representative democracy work in our
9 state.

10 If you have more to add we will accept
11 written extension of your remarks and we will
12 post these things online as well. If you
13 didn't speak now, but have signed up you will
14 be in line during the 6:00 to 8:00 period this
15 afternoon and we will also take comments any
16 other way you want to submit them. We have got
17 all sorts of things out there, from the
18 website, to social media and Twitter, e-mail,
19 Snail Mail and the list goes on.

20 All of the records for today's meetings
21 will be on video, podcast and transcripts via
22 the Senate and House Redistricting websites, so
23 please continues to follow us throughout this
24 process, and with that I am going to recognize
25 Chair Senator Gaetz for some final remarks

1 before we stand in recess.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: The kind of information
3 that we have received here today, Mr. Chairman,
4 particularly about neighborhoods and counties
5 and communities has been extraordinarily
6 helpful.

7 There is no way we could have received a
8 lot of that information about your localities
9 sitting in an echo chamber in Tallahassee. So
10 thank you.

11 As a person who lives in Niceville,
12 Florida, way up in the panhandle by Destin,
13 somebody is waving at me from Niceville, that
14 is good. This has been extraordinarily helpful
15 to me and I am sure to other members as well
16 who don't live in this area and really needed
17 to hear your points of view.

18 We received a number of questions that
19 have come in and we would like to just try to
20 provide some factual information which you can
21 use or not use as you choose.

22 Here are some questions that were, that
23 were submitted in writing. First, these are
24 from Susan Jantz. These questions are, am I
25 correct that the 2010 Census indicated a need

1 for a two seat increase for the U. S. House of
2 Representatives? Shouldn't one of those be in
3 central Florida?

4 The answer to the first part of the
5 question is yes. The answer to the second part
6 of the question would appear to be yes if you
7 look strictly at population and where the new
8 population would be.

9 The second question is, when will public
10 submission of maps end, and is that based on a
11 date deadline or on a limit on the number of
12 map submissions?

13 There is no limit on the number of
14 submissions that can be made by special
15 interest groups, by Legislators, by individual
16 citizens, and there will be no deadline on the
17 submission of maps by anyone until the last
18 vote is cast in the Legislature.

19 Next question, when and how will we see
20 maps that meet Federal and State requirements?

21 That is a difficult question because we
22 don't know if a map or maps meet all State and
23 Federal legal requirements until they are
24 submitted to the Florida Supreme Court and then
25 to the Justice Department or the Federal

1 Courts.

2 We don't get to draw the maps that even
3 you may want or that we may want. We have to
4 draw maps that then pass legal muster with the
5 Supreme Court and the Justice Department.

6 So we won't know what maps will pass that
7 muster until after the legal process is
8 completed and the courts get to, in many cases,
9 you know, set their own timelines, but our hope
10 would be that all of those legal clearances
11 would finish in the spring as soon as possible
12 and we would hope that those who have urged the
13 Legislature to move up its timeline would also
14 encourage our Attorney General and the courts
15 and the Justice Department not to take all of
16 the time they need but to take the time, all of
17 the time that they can, but rather to take only
18 the time that they need.

19 The next question, will we conduct other
20 public hearings to allow for public comment to
21 facilitate preliminary citizen reviews and
22 comments during October through December?

23 The answer to that question is yes. We do
24 intend, Chair Weatherford and I do intend that
25 there will be public hearings that will be held

1 on every map that comes forth to the
2 legislative committees in the form of Bills,
3 and Bills can be submitted by any Democrat, any
4 Republican, any House member, any Senator,
5 based on anything that comes from a member of
6 the public or an interest group or developed by
7 that Legislator and no maps will be voted on
8 even in Committee until there has been an
9 opportunity for public comment.

10 Now, we are holding 26 hearings around the
11 state. Several people here say today that
12 those hearings are not terribly useful, but, so
13 I am not sure that we can hold another 26
14 hearings around the state in October and
15 November, probably because there wouldn't be
16 time and then there would be those here that
17 would object and say now you are holding more
18 hearings.

19 We just want you to show us the maps that
20 you would like to see, but I can tell you that
21 it is our intention that no maps will be voted
22 on even in committee until there is an
23 opportunity for the public to comment. If you
24 wish to comment face to face, or if you wish to
25 comment by e-mail, by contacting your

1 Representative or Senator, and many
2 Representatives and Senators of both parties
3 are intending on holding their own meetings
4 later in the process to gather even more input
5 that can be used -- that can be used in the
6 legislative deliberations.

7 The next issue that came up was, what
8 about other states, aren't they completing the
9 process sooner and why is Florida dragging
10 behind?

11 Well, the U. S. Bureau of the Census does
12 not release census data to all of the states at
13 once. It releases census data in groups.

14 Now, Florida is not the last state to get
15 our census data, but we were one of the last.
16 So one of the reasons why some states are ahead
17 ever us is because some states got their census
18 data a long time before we got our census data.
19 As soon as we got ours, we put it on the
20 Internet and then we put the redistricting
21 software on the Internet as soon as that was
22 available, so that you, we and everyone could
23 begin to see that data as fast as possible.

24 But there are some states that are ahead
25 of Florida, even though they got their census

1 data late. Illinois is one of them. In
2 Illinois, it happens to be a state that is
3 dominated in the Legislature by one party. The
4 Legislators went quite literally into the back
5 room, developed a set of maps came out, said
6 here they are, they went to the floor of the
7 Legislature, cast votes in a record short
8 period of time and that was that.

9 We have decided here in Florida that that
10 is not a good idea, that it is better to do a
11 heavier lift, it is a bit of a messy process,
12 but representative government is a messy
13 process.

14 But the other point that we would make
15 about timing in other states is, and this is
16 not commonly known or thought about by
17 everybody, is that some states do off year
18 elections, like Illinois -- I am sorry,
19 Louisiana was one of the states mentioned.

20 Well, Louisiana does its elections on odd
21 numbered years. So therefore they get their
22 data and they are able to move their process
23 along to have elections on odd number years.

24 By our Constitution we have our elections
25 on even numbered years. So that is four

1 reasons why our process is a little different
2 from some other states, but there is no intent
3 to make the process anymore elongated than
4 possible.

5 The President of the League of Women
6 Voters who has traveled with us to other
7 hearings, spoke eloquently today and she asked,
8 would there be --

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: All right,
10 ladies and gentlemen, if you would please take
11 your seats, we are going to try and get going.
12 We are going to dispense with any of the
13 introductions and the like, for those of you
14 who were here earlier, you have heard our
15 introduction already.

16 For others who would like to re-listen to
17 me speaking on the Internet, we will have it up
18 in the next day or so, but we are here to give
19 you all a chance to speak.

20 So we are going to go right to the cards.
21 We have about 90 of them. We have two hours to
22 get through this. Please keep your comments as
23 concise and direct as possible. We are going
24 to limit things to two or three minutes or so.

25 And first off we have Commissioner Daisy

1 Lynum. So we would love to have you come up
2 and give us your testimony, presentation.

3 Followed by Benjamin Chavis, and Eric
4 Gray, and for those of you who weren't here
5 earlier, if you can come down once your name is
6 called and sit in the front row so you can be
7 ready to get right to the microphone as soon as
8 we get to your name and then that will be just
9 that many more people that will get a chance to
10 speak.

11 Also, if Nancy Jacobson and Terry Gancarz
12 can come down. Ms. Lynum, thank you for being
13 here.

14 MS. LYNUM: Thank you for being in my
15 district and good evening. I just really
16 wanted to reiterate some of the folks who have
17 already spoken to you ladies and gentlemen,
18 thank you for the hard work that you do.

19 My mother and father were married in
20 Orange County in 1935, but I was born and
21 raised in Lake County 65 years ago, but I don't
22 tell anybody my age too often, but I am here to
23 look forward to a minority district.

24 I know that I am going to put the trust of
25 this community in your hands and I really

1 anticipate a good job that you are going to do.

2 The city is in the middle of redistricting
3 also. So I know the hard work you got to do.
4 Just sitting would drive me batty twice a day
5 for two hours at a time.

6 So enjoy, listen to our comments, over
7 90 percent of what was said earlier, I ditto,
8 particularly when it pertains to
9 African-American districts and Hispanic
10 districts, but particularly for the group of
11 people who have paved the road for the state
12 and for this country, African-Americans, thank
13 you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, and
15 thank you so much for what you have done for
16 this community. You really are a local icon
17 and thank you also for the use of this
18 facility. It is really helping us out a lot.

19 Next, Benjamin Chavis, followed by Eric
20 Gray.

21 MR. CHAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I am
22 Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. As a 50-year veteran
23 of the Civil Rights Movement and the former
24 National Executive Director and CEO of the
25 NAACP I am submitting this statement concerning

1 the fundamental redistricting question before
2 the Florida State Legislature.

3 Will you protect and reaffirm the 1965
4 Voting Rights Act that ensures the voting
5 rights of African-Americans and Latino
6 Americans as well as other minority voters in
7 the State of Florida?

8 Any proposed redistricting plan or map
9 that results in the decrease of
10 African-American or Latino American
11 Congressional representation from the State of
12 Florida is a serious violation of the Federal
13 Civil Rights law as specified by the 1965
14 Voting Rights Act.

15 Earlier today as I listened, Mr. Chairman,
16 many of the persons who testified asked for a
17 map. I think there is a map. The current map.
18 That is where you should start, because the
19 current map was found by the United States
20 Department of Justice to be under the Voting
21 Rights Act.

22 So any change to the current map should
23 build on the progress, not regress on the
24 progress. Given the fact that Florida's
25 African-American and Latino American

1 populations have increased according to the
2 2010 census, there cannot be any plan, map or
3 the slightest inference that the distinguished
4 officials of this Florida Legislature will
5 consider a redistricting plan that would
6 decrease, take away, step back or regress from
7 the current minority voter representation in
8 the Congress of the United States.

9 I am not only speaking for myself as a
10 registered resident of Florida, but I am also
11 speaking on behalf of other veterans of the
12 Civil Rights Movement, such as Congressman John
13 Lewis, Congresswoman Corrine Brown, the
14 Reverend Jessie Jackson and Martin Luther King,
15 Jr., III and many others who have fought hard
16 and sacrificed to get the Voting Rights Act
17 established.

18 The truth is the current number of
19 African-Americans and Latinos that are now
20 serving in the Congress of the United States
21 from Florida is a direct result of the Voting
22 Rights Act of 1965.

23 We know, Mr. Chairman, as has been pointed
24 out to this Committee before, prior to the
25 Voting Rights Act we did not have members from

1 our minority sector in the Congress of the
2 United States.

3 So we should build on what the progress
4 that has been made over the last years, not use
5 this as an opportunity. This is an opportunity
6 in redistricting, but it is also a
7 responsibility to follow the Federal and Civil
8 Rights law as the law of the land is today.

9 Lastly, it is a sad commentary that this
10 redistricting search is in a context of the
11 whole national debate about voter suppression,
12 and I know, Mr. Chairman, you want us to stay
13 on redistricting.

14 The reason why this is relevant to voting
15 suppression, because at the end of the day, if
16 the map that you draw, the new map winds up
17 decreasing or regressing African-American or
18 Latino voter representation in the Congress of
19 the United States, then that would, in fact, it
20 is tantamount to suppressing the vote of
21 Latinos and African-Americans.

22 We call this to your attention. Start
23 with the map that you have. Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
25 thank you. And just as a reminder, ladies and

1 gentlemen, he made a couple of excellent
2 points.

3 One being, please stay focused on
4 redistricting, but he made a very clear
5 connection between the two issues. So that was
6 good testimony.

7 Also for those of you who weren't here
8 earlier, Senator Gaetz who is Chair of this
9 Committee is taking notes on all of the
10 questions that are brought up by speakers, and
11 at the end we are going to reserve a few
12 minutes for him to respond to those.

13 Next we have Eric Gray, who is going to be
14 followed by Nancy Jacobson. Is Mr. Gray here?
15 I know some people have gone home already.
16 Okay, so we will put that aside. Nancy
17 Jacobson, are you here?

18 Okay, Nancy will be followed by Terry
19 Gancarz and if Kevin Gaston and Anna Eskamani
20 could come down front, I would appreciate it.
21 Ma'am, you have the mike.

22 MS. JACOBSON: Good evening, my name is
23 Nancy Jacobson. I am a retired attorney and I
24 live in house District 35. I always vote.
25 However, I do not often have a real choice

1 among the candidates because our districts are
2 not competitive.

3 I live in the city of Orlando,
4 approximately half way between downtown Orlando
5 and Winter Park, and I know that my small
6 neighborhood is once again in the eye of the
7 storm, and a pawn in 2011, as it was in 2001,
8 when it was snipped off and put in Winter Park,
9 in a Winter Park district.

10 I believe we citizens must always try to
11 do whatever we can to be active to preserve our
12 democracy, and in accordance with that, I
13 worked very hard to get Amendments 5 and 6 on
14 the ballot and to get them approved, and I am
15 deeply disappointed but sadly not surprised
16 that you are fighting implementation of 5 and
17 6.

18 What is currently occurring in our
19 nation's Capitol is the strongest possible
20 argument against gerrymandering and in favor of
21 fair districts. There will always be safe
22 seats. However, there will be far fewer of
23 them and more competitive seats if the
24 districts are drawn according to the standards
25 in 5 and 6.

1 So I am here today to implore you to do
2 two things. One, please stop spending our tax
3 dollars to fight the will of the voters on 5
4 and 6.

5 And two, please do whatever it takes to
6 speed up the timeline on producing and
7 approving the maps. It is beyond the pale that
8 they will not be done until late spring. That
9 only serves to protect incumbents, and I am
10 sure you wouldn't want to do that. Thank you
11 for your time.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
13 ma'am. Next we will have Terry Gancarz,
14 followed by Kevin Gaston. Is Terry here?
15 Terry Gancarz, going once? Okay, great, Kevin
16 Gaston is next. Is Kevin here?

17 How about Anna Eskamani? Anna, thank you
18 for being here. And if Caroline Emmons-Schramm
19 and Randy Stephens and Elenita Brodie if they
20 can work their way down, I would appreciate it.
21 You have the mike, ma'am.

22 MS. ESKAMANI: Thank you so much. My name
23 is Anna Eskamani. I was born east Orlando and
24 raised there as well. I am now a senior at the
25 University of Florida and I am a proud member

1 of the League of Women Voters here in Orange
2 County.

3 I come to you as a very concerned student.
4 Obviously, based on the hearings that we have
5 had in the afternoon and today, Floridians want
6 fair districts and you had four months after
7 the census information has been made available
8 to us and with 26 district hearings in motion
9 we have yet to see a legitimate maps.

10 Instead, we see our money and time being
11 wasted and honestly I feel that many of you are
12 practicing in the ideology of convenience, and
13 it is extremely frustrating because here in the
14 State of Florida we have races that really
15 aren't that competitive, because politicians
16 are choosing the voters rather than the voters
17 choosing their politicians.

18 With Bills, like House Bill 1355 and
19 Senate Bill 2086, we are seeing student votes
20 being hurt and the voters registration being
21 criminalized --

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Ma'am --

23 MS. ESKAMANI -- which is extremely
24 frustrating. I am getting back on topic.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I ask you, to

1 remind you to keep focused on redistricting.

2 MS. ESKAMANI: Thank you, Freedom of
3 Speech. Now, as I was saying, as a University
4 student from the University with 56,000
5 students I would encourage you to, one, not
6 divide our vote into two or more districts as
7 it is now.

8 And two, to perhaps use the money that you
9 are wasting to actually encourage voters and
10 give us more polling locations that you see
11 because students shouldn't have to wait three
12 to five hours to vote for their candidate.

13 If you are scared of voters, I would
14 suggest you not run for office. Thank you very
15 much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. So,
17 next we have Ms. Caroline Emmons-Schramm, is
18 Caroline here? Okay, no Caroline. Randy
19 Stephens. Oh, Caroline is here. And folks,
20 we, as a courtesy to the 100 more people that
21 we have to speak, the more that you applaud and
22 I love it, but you use up other people's time.

23 MS. EMMONS-SCHRAMM: Yes, it was hard to
24 hear my name over the applause.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Caroline.

1 MS. EMMONS-SCHRAMM: Good evening, my name
2 is Caroline Emmons-Schramm and I am a Florida
3 citizen and a voter. I am pleased to see the
4 number of people attending the hearing. You
5 all are getting lots of stories.

6 I know you have been hearing a lot of
7 comments. Often focusing on what the speakers
8 don't want you to do. My comments tonight will
9 focus on what we do want you to do.

10 We want you to draw the maps quickly,
11 debate them in the fall and pass them the first
12 week of the session. We want you to follow the
13 spirit of the standards. Draw voting districts
14 that do not favor or disfavor a political party
15 or candidate.

16 Districts that utilize existing political
17 and geographic boundaries like counties and
18 cities and neighborhoods and are compact and
19 contiguous, and we want districts that will
20 continue to allow racial or language minorities
21 the equal opportunity to participate in the
22 political process and elect representatives of
23 their choice.

24 But most of all, we want you to do the
25 very best job that you can, to fulfill your

1 responsibility of drawing voting districts that
2 will allow the voters of Florida to choose
3 their representatives at the State and Federal
4 level. Thank you very much.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
6 much. Appreciate it. Next we have Randy
7 Stephens and he will be followed Elenita Brodie
8 and if Clay Selfridge and Maria Luyanda can
9 start working their way down I would appreciate
10 it. Mr. Stephens.

11 MR. STEPHENS: My name is Randy Stephens,
12 and again, I am very grateful that ya'll have
13 come to Orlando for this session.

14 As a voter, as a Florida resident, as an
15 American citizen, I am frustrated, I am
16 frustrated with a lot of things.

17 Part of my frustration is with you. One
18 of my frustrations is that the Speaker of the
19 House is not here, and he is from this area and
20 I am embarrassed that he does not show up for
21 this meeting, because he is primarily one of
22 the people responsible for the challenge of
23 Amendments 5 and 6 and he should at least have
24 the guts to show up here.

25 I am frustrated because I grew up in the

1 America that I learned as a kid. We were a
2 democracy, we have the best democracy in the
3 world, but it was based on fairness.

4 We have now alienated ourselves too much
5 from one party or another. We don't look at
6 the issues. We don't look at the people. We
7 look at the R or the D or the T or the I. We
8 have got to quit looking at that.

9 You cannot draw up these plans based upon
10 the R's and the D's. This is supposed to be
11 fairness.

12 Now, we definitely, I do not want anything
13 to dilute anything from the Civil Rights Act of
14 1965. Those districts should stay and I think
15 there is enough safeguards that we already have
16 that once it is passed by the Legislature, then
17 the Attorney General looks at it and it is
18 reviewed by the U.S. Department of Justice and
19 then it goes to the Governor.

20 So there are safeguards in there, but we
21 mostly are just frustrated right now that we
22 are having to go and going to spend up to \$30
23 million to challenge what the people of this
24 state voted for us to have for Amendments 5 and
25 6 for this fair district and I am very upset

1 that we have got a lot of needs in this state,
2 whether it be in education, whether it be in
3 disabilities or whatever, that we are going to
4 be wasting money on this.

5 You need to enact what the people wanted
6 you to do. Thank you for your time.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
8 Okay, next, we have Elenita Brodie and she will
9 be followed by Clay Selfridge. Do I have
10 Elenita Brodie, is she here?

11 No, okay, Clay Selfridge, Clay Selfridge,
12 is Clay working his way down? No. Okay, Maria
13 Luyanda, Maria, are you here, if you are, wave.

14 Okay, Wardell Sims, Mr. Sims has left.
15 Jose Balasquide. He is gone. Anthony Borka,
16 do we have an Andy Dubois? All right, Andy
17 Dubois, and let me call a few additional names.

18 Anna Eskamani, who I think we just heard
19 from, great, and then Alita Chappell, Nancy
20 Rudmen, and Sylvia E-k-a-g, I think. If you
21 all can work your way down.

22 Mr. Dubois, and you have, I believe you
23 have several maps.

24 MR. DUBOIS: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank
25 you, distinguished Representatives, I want to

1 thank you for having these hearings. I am a
2 resident of Lake County, Florida. I live in
3 Howie-in-the-Hills.

4 I have found out how to use District
5 Builder after several attempts and I find it a
6 very useful tool. One of my concerns is the
7 map that I have up there now, and currently in
8 Lake County our Congressional, we have four
9 Congressional Representatives for Lake County,
10 and this map here is a suggestion on possibly
11 so how Lake County, Sumter County, and Citrus
12 County and pieces of Orange County can have
13 just one, one U. S. Congress Representative
14 rather than four. And that is just a
15 suggestion.

16 I understand after going through using the
17 District Builder, the huge task that you, that
18 you have in front of you, and I want to just
19 submit this as a suggestion.

20 I have another map that I drew and I am
21 anxious to see which one comes up. I think it
22 will be the State Senate, there is right there.
23 This is the State Senate.

24 Right now we have two Reps in Lake County,
25 and this map here, although Lake County is the

1 northeast corner of Lake County will be plopped
2 off and we will still have two Reps, but this
3 will give a suggestion that maybe the benefits
4 will be that Citrus, Sumter and the largest
5 portion of Lake County can be consolidated on
6 some contiguous boundaries, existing
7 boundaries.

8 I have one more map for the House, and
9 this map here takes Lake County and gives us
10 two Reps, one for the north and one for the
11 south, and I just wanted to submit these maps
12 to you guys.

13 I understand the huge undertaking that you
14 have, and hopefully this will -- this will help
15 as a suggestion. I want to thank you very
16 much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Well, thank you.

18 MR. DUBOIS: That is all I have got to
19 say.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
21 appreciate that, and I want to reiterate that
22 that is -- this mechanism is one of the best
23 ways of having an impact is to actually submit
24 maps with lines on them and that is not open to
25 the interpretation that a lot of the words are.

1 Next we have Alita Chappell, followed by
2 Nancy Rudmen. Alita Chappell, are you here?
3 No Alita Chappell.

4 Nancy Rudmen, there she is, okay.

5 A VOICE: She is not here today.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Have you
7 submitted a card as well? Okay, well, why
8 don't you do that when your name is called.
9 Sylvia, E. K., I can't quite read the last
10 name, Glice, no. Rae Capen, Rae, C-a-p-e-n,
11 Bill Negron, is Bill Negron here? James
12 DeCocq, Karie Brown? Okay, great. I should
13 have just let you go before.

14 And if Gregory Teague, Richard McCay, Jill
15 Giese and N. Y. Nathiri can work their way
16 down, I would appreciate it. The microphone is
17 yours.

18 MS. TEAGUE: Well, I am super nervous to
19 be up here, but I do want to speak my heart in
20 this, and let me read Nancy's thing first and I
21 am super nervous but I think I might shake.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: You are doing
23 great.

24 MS. TEAGUE: I am a voter on paper, okay,
25 all right, so again this is Nancy. She asks

1 that you stop fighting the will of the voters.
2 She wants for us to stop using, for you to stop
3 using our money to fight your will and vote for
4 fair districts.

5 She says stop playing games, show us the
6 maps you give us, the voters, time and
7 meaningful chance to review and give input to
8 the maps that will either thwart or respect our
9 vote, and in your gerrymandered districts you
10 don't represent anyone because you elected
11 gerrymandering. And if you are worried you
12 can't win a fair race you shouldn't be running
13 at all.

14 She works with, I think, who else knows
15 Nancy here, she is with the League of Women
16 Voters? So she will be speaking from that
17 place.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay.

19 MS. TEAGUE: I personally listening to the
20 discussions and I am really kind of speaking
21 off the cuff from my experience with that, and
22 it seems like there is a bit of a false
23 dichotomy.

24 I look at our representation and I see a
25 lot of white faces, no offense, you are

1 beautiful people, a lot of white, white faces
2 and I think if you respect our -- if you look
3 at our representation of people that is not
4 really the situation.

5 And I just would like to see, I feel that
6 gerrymandering is the very thing that I am
7 mostly frustrated with politics today and it is
8 politics for politics' sake, whereas I want to
9 see my vote count.

10 I want to see when I call my politicians
11 that they respond, and I have to say I am very
12 vocal and I very rarely get a response and I
13 think that is because you don't have to care
14 what we say, because you draw your own
15 districts, you get to do what you want.

16 You vote yourself in when you draw it this
17 way, and I think as a voter who, I vote
18 Republican, I think I would love to have my
19 Representatives care when I see something that
20 is happening and I don't feel that I have seen
21 that so far. So that is my statement.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Next
23 we have Karie Brown, Karie, got you, okay,
24 Gregory Teague, Gregory, are you here? Richard
25 McCay, no Richard McCay? Okay, Richard is

1 coming. And if then I could have, move up
2 front, Jose Balasguide and N. Y. Nathiri, which
3 I mentioned earlier, I would appreciate it.
4 Okay. Go ahead.

5 MR. MCCAY: All right, distinguished State
6 Representatives, not to offend you, but this is
7 kind of a traveling circus that you are going
8 on. So I can, you know, there is somewhat of
9 an attitude and I do have an attitude because
10 it is Richard Vogel McCay. So I have the
11 distinct so I have the distinct honor of coming
12 from an African-American information and a
13 Cuban and Panamanian mother.

14 And what, those that didn't come to the
15 2:00 to 4:00 session, we had two of some of the
16 greatest central Floridians to speak, and that
17 was the Honorable Mable Butler and the
18 Honorable Reverend Pinder, and Reverend Pinder
19 said that this should not be an issue putting
20 minority against minority because in the '70s,
21 the 60's, the '80s, it was, oh, God, here comes
22 the blacks, what do they want now.

23 And now the attitude is, oh, God, here
24 comes the Hispanics and Latinos, what do they
25 need now.

1 Now, the Hispanic population deserves a
2 Congressional seat. If we -- if you guys are
3 so skillful as making a third Congressional
4 District that goes all the way to Jacksonville,
5 cuts into Gainesville, into Eatonville, into
6 Sanford, all of the way down to Orlando, then
7 you can come up with a Congressional District
8 for Latinos in central Florida, because all of
9 the Congressional Districts for Latinos cannot
10 come from Miami-Dade and Broward County. We
11 live also up here in central Florida as well.

12 So that is all I have to say, and to those
13 that are clapping, I sure do hope that you all
14 are voting, because it is nice to come out
15 here, but you need to be going to the ballot
16 box. Thank you very much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
18 okay, Jill Giese, are you here, Jill? Okay,
19 and in addition, if Douglas DeClue could come
20 on down, DeClue, and Wesley Leonard. Jill.

21 MS. GIESE: First of all, I am very
22 impressed with the pronunciation. I am Jill
23 Giese, and I am a regular voter. I am a
24 20-year resident of Orange County in Orlando,
25 and I am here today because I think it is

1 absolutely critical that we have the dialogue
2 so that you understand where the people were
3 who voted for Amendments 5 and 6.

4 It is very clear to me by listening to all
5 of the other people that have spoken that we
6 are asking for the support of the overwhelming
7 majority that voted yes to those Amendments,
8 and what I keep hearing is frustration, and
9 that is probably I think that is the word I
10 wrote down first when I started thinking about
11 what the message was that I wanted to say.

12 Because the frustration from not feeling
13 like the way our districts are drawn makes
14 sense is something we would really like to see
15 go away, and it can make sense and fulfill what
16 we voted on, and it can fulfill the needs of
17 minorities.

18 The frustration in this process has as
19 much to do with the fact that we are here
20 today. It is great to have a forum, but I
21 think this is a waste of time. I think it is a
22 waste of money, and I really wish that rather
23 than fighting for what we asked for, we, the
24 voters, asked for, that you guys would get to
25 work, put together some maps, look at them,

1 check them against what we asked for.

2 Share them with us, then get our feedback
3 so we can move forward and have districts drawn
4 in time so that when we can get elected
5 officials to know where they are going to run.

6 I am really fearful that we are going to
7 have elections upon us next year and people
8 don't know where they are going to run, and
9 that is what I would ask for today. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Great, thank you
11 very much. N. Y. Nathiri, followed by Jose
12 Balasquide.

13 MS. NATHIRI: Good evening, Mr. Chairman,
14 and members of the Committee. The story I
15 would like to tell is a tale of two districts,
16 I am from Eatonville. I have a bias for
17 Congressmen Corrine Brown, because frankly, she
18 has given us an example of something that might
19 seem counterintuitive to you, because our
20 district is that off the line snaked district
21 which runs from Jacksonville to Eatonville.

22 I want to share with you a true story.
23 Eatonville is a little bit to the east or to
24 the west of Winter Park, and in the '70s and
25 '80s, we were represented by a gentleman who's

1 office was on Lee Road.

2 Now, for those of you who know Eatonville
3 and Lee Road, you know that we could probably
4 walk to Lee Road and to that Representative,
5 but that Representative held us in such
6 disregard that he may have well been in
7 Timbuktu.

8 Counterintuitive though it is,
9 Congresswoman Corrine Brown, who's -- who has
10 District offices so close to us, really has
11 served us very well. She has that district
12 that would seem to belie the fact that distance
13 works against good representation.

14 And so I just felt it incumbent to come
15 forward to say that there is a different
16 perspective perhaps that needs to be kept in
17 mind, and that is that an energetic and
18 concerned elected official will do everything
19 in her power to work on behalf of her
20 constituents no matter how much effort and
21 energy it takes.

22 And frankly, whatever you do with the map,
23 please keep our district in Congressman Corrine
24 Brown's office. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Jose

1 Balasquide. Followed, he will be followed by
2 Doug DeClue.

3 MR. BALASQUIDE: Thank you. First of all,
4 I want to say good afternoon to all of the
5 Honorable Members of the Committee and all of
6 the respectful constituents who came today.

7 I am Jose Balasquide and Vice-President of
8 the Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida. I
9 am is a member of the committee of the Central
10 Florida Redistricting Council at Large.

11 First of all, I want to -- I want to
12 address one of the most important common
13 interests, if not the most important financial
14 and from the mental, especially the business
15 organization in our community of interest,
16 covering Osceola, Orange and Polk Counties
17 areas.

18 The Hispanic or Latino community
19 represents \$12 billion in purchasing power to
20 our region's economy. The area is a common
21 ground for supermarket chains like Brownells,
22 Sedanos, Publix and financial institutions like
23 Bank of Opalord, BB Banco and among others.

24 There are several Hispanic universities in
25 the regions, including the large universities

1 such as Ana Mendez University Systems and
2 Polytechnical University, Interamerican
3 University of Florida and Technical College and
4 soon to come, Mechanical and Technical College
5 among others, where professionals and technical
6 education is facilitated.

7 The Hispanic population was responsible
8 for 58.6 of the combined population growth of
9 Orange, Osceola and Polk Counties. The
10 community of interest in Orange, Osceola and
11 Polk Counties share a common professional
12 organizations, including the Hispanic Bar
13 Association, the Puerto Rican Chambers of
14 Commerce.

15 The Hispanic Chambers of Commerce among
16 others as the second largest population group
17 in Florida, the Hispanics will shape Florida's
18 future and are a community that contributed to
19 the reaches of the greatest state.

20 We have Hispanic Floridians that are
21 engineers, teachers, elected officials and much
22 more. As Hispanics contribute to the
23 prosperity and well-being of Florida, we must
24 have a fair opportunity to choose the leaders
25 that will govern this state.

1 We must be able to elect candidates of our
2 choice who understand the unique opportunities
3 and challenges facing our communities. I
4 respectfully urge this Redistricting Committee
5 to consider and create a Congressional District
6 in the region of Orange, Osceola and Polk
7 Counties in which Hispanics can elect
8 candidates of their choice.

9 The Redistricting Committee should
10 accomplish this by drawing a Congressional
11 District that in the area with as close of
12 50 percent of voting age population of Latino
13 as possible. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
15 Next we have Douglas DeClue, followed by Wesley
16 Leonard, and if George Hooper, Jose Fernandez
17 and Jose Bosque can head on down, I would
18 appreciate it. Thank you, sir, you are on.

19 MR. DECLUE: Yes, my name is Douglas
20 DeClue, and I am an engineer by trade so I know
21 numbers and computers and data, and in my spare
22 time I have become something of a political
23 consultant to Democrats in this area who work
24 on campaigns, and I would really like to see
25 this be a multi party democracy here in Florida

1 for a change, and so I brought a few maps.

2 These aren't maps for proposals. Just to
3 let everybody see how things are now, and some
4 numbers. What you see up here, this is
5 Congressional Districts as they are now, and
6 they are shaded. For, of course, my Democratic
7 friends, it is shaded blue, various degrees of
8 blue and pink, if you will, and you can see how
9 there is only, all of the Democrats have been
10 pushed into one little district. It is very
11 dark blue and this is District 3.

12 And if we could go to the next slide, the
13 Excel sheet there, it goes with this. You can
14 see here, this is in Orange County. District 3
15 is favorable to Democrats, at least in Orange
16 County by 53 percent, and there is no need to
17 make it 53, 54 percent in favor of one party or
18 the other party in order to assure that a
19 minority gets elected to office.

20 We could have both, we could have both a
21 minority get elected to office and make these
22 districts more competitive. There is no reason
23 to have these gerrymandered districts.

24 Next slide, please. This is the State
25 Senate and again, I am looking, this is our

1 famous bunny rabbit in Senate 19, okay. If you
2 -- if we go to the numbers.

3 The next slide, please, the Senate
4 spreadsheet, please. And again, here we see in
5 Senate 19 in Orange County, plus 37 percent.
6 Okay, there is no need to have plus 37 percent
7 in order to assure that we get a minority
8 elected to one of the Senate Districts in
9 Orange County in Florida. We can have fair
10 districts and we can satisfy the Civil Rights
11 Act.

12 Next slide. This slide is a little bit
13 more confusing because there are 12 House
14 Districts that you might be aware of that come
15 through Orange County, but now, this one is a
16 bit more favorable only because there are more
17 districts.

18 But let's go to the numbers slide, please.
19 Again, you will see there is a few districts
20 like 36 where I am represented by Scott
21 Randolph and 49 where my friend, Darren Soto is
22 in office, and 39 where Representative
23 Geraldine Thompson, excuse me, is in office,
24 where the Democrats have all been clustered
25 together and the other nine districts are not

1 nearly as competitive, or in many places, they
2 are just uncompetitive, because we have played
3 games with the numbers and I know and you know
4 about FRED'S and that you can use this program
5 to manipulate the numbers and draw districts to
6 down to households if you would like to
7 basically skew the numbers so that you can
8 gauge what is called pack and stack where you
9 put tons of minorities into single districts,
10 and thereby create a system that is not
11 competitive, not multi party.

12 I would like to be able to have an honest
13 debate about issues with my friend, Doug
14 Guetsloe over there, but instead, I have got to
15 play games with numbers, because you gentlemen
16 and you ladies are more concerned about
17 protecting your incumbency and protecting
18 control by one party in this state than you are
19 about the will of the voter, and the
20 willingness to be accountable to the voters.

21 And I would like to see you just for once
22 do what the voters ask and respect Amendments 5
23 and 6.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

25 Next we have Wesley Leonard, is Mr. Leonard

1 here, Wesley Leonard? No Wesley Leonard,
2 George Hooper, Mr. Hooper, are you here? Jose
3 Fernandez.

4 Mr. Fernandez, will be followed by Jose
5 Bosque and then Tom Hill, Paul Lilling and
6 James Penna. Mr. Fernandez.

7 MR. FERNANDEZ: Good evening, Honorable
8 Legislative Redistricting Committee, elected
9 Officers, ladies and gentlemen.

10 My name is Jose A. Fernandez and I am the
11 State Director for the League of the United
12 Latin American Citizens. I am -- that is LULAC
13 Florida, and it is one of the oldest and
14 largest National Hispanic civil rights
15 organization at this moment.

16 I am here as a partner with the Central
17 Florida Redistricting Council, Inc., and I am a
18 Puerto Rican Hispanic and live in Orange County
19 for the past 15 years.

20 I retired from the government of Puerto
21 Rico and also from the Armed Forces. I am also
22 a veteran of the Viet Nam War.

23 I am the President of the Democratic
24 Hispanic Caucus of Florida, and as a concerned
25 Puerto Rican we want to ensure that the Florida

1 Congressional Redistricting Committee respects
2 the voting rights of the Hispanic by ensuring
3 that the state Hispanic community has a fair
4 opportunity to elect the candidate of its
5 choice.

6 The Hispanic population was responsible
7 for 58.6 percent of the combined population
8 growth of Orange, Osceola and Polk County. The
9 Hispanic population in Orange County, Orange,
10 Osceola and Polk Counties grew by 103 percent
11 from 2000 to 2010.

12 I respectfully urge the Redistricting
13 Committee to consider creating a Congressional
14 District in the region of Orange, Osceola and
15 Polk County in which Hispanics can elect a
16 candidate of their choice.

17 The Redistricting Committee should
18 accomplish this by drawing a Congressional
19 District in an area with a close to 50 percent
20 Latino voting age population as possible as a
21 group of interest.

22 As a partner with the Central Florida
23 Redistricting Committee, Inc., I strongly
24 recommend that the Congressional Redistricting
25 Committee here adopt the Central Florida

1 Redistricting Council, Inc., the Congressional
2 District recommendation map and data submitted
3 prior.

4 We want to ensure that the Congressional
5 District Committee adopt our accommodations for
6 the benefit of the Puerto Rican Hispanic
7 community group of interest. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
9 Okay, next we have got Jose Bosque. Is
10 Mr. Bosque here? No? Tom Hill? He has
11 already gone. Paul Lilling? James Penna,
12 Mr. Penna, and following Mr. Penna will be
13 Jimmy Perry, James Rutherford and Phillip
14 Fettig. Mr. Penna.

15 MR. PENNA: Good afternoon, good
16 afternoon. I am James Penna. I am from Ocala
17 in Marion County. I would like to ask that
18 Marion County with a population of over 300,000
19 people not be further cut up like the
20 proverbial chicken.

21 I am a member of the third party, neither
22 the donkey nor the elephant own my vote. My
23 national heritage is a Heinz 57 of all peoples
24 in the Mediterranean basin from Carthage to
25 Italy to France, Spain and Portugal.

1 I want to see a Florida where all of her
2 citizens gets a fair deal. As a member of the
3 Constitution Party I would like to see the
4 legislation -- Legislature consider a fusion as
5 a tool to help the voter know where the
6 candidates stand on issues not specifically
7 addressed by the two major parties. Thank you
8 for your time.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
10 Mr. Penna. If you could hand it to the staff
11 right over there.

12 Mr. Perry, Rue Jimmy Perry? No. Okay,
13 Reverend Jimmy Perry maybe. No. Okay, James
14 Rutherford. James Rutherford. No? Phillip
15 Fettig, Mayor Gary Bruhn, and I know he left.
16 Unita Orr. Delores Crosley, Delores.
17 Reverend, I think this is Reverend Randolph.
18 He has gone. Julius Melendez? Anthony Suarez.
19 Monty Knox, is Monty here?

20 Monty is coming on. While he is working
21 his way up, let me call another half dozen
22 names just to see if anybody can work their way
23 down here.

24 Charlie Gene Salter, Jacquelyn Shields,
25 Clint Salter, Samir Gupte and Mary Jane

1 Arrington. Mr. Knox, thank you.

2 MR. KNOX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, how
3 are you doing?

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I am doing
5 great, thanks.

6 MR. KNOX: We grew up four doors down from
7 each other. I want to thank you all for
8 coming.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: In a different
10 world.

11 MR. KNOX: A very different world. I want
12 to thank you all for coming to Orange County.
13 I am the owner of the 99th largest nursery in
14 America. We are located in Winter Garden.

15 We are a very rural type of industry and a
16 very urban county. Orange County is the number
17 two nursery and landscape county in the state
18 of Florida only behind Miami-Dade, another very
19 urban county, and we, and the state of Florida
20 is the number two state in the country when it
21 comes to nursery and landscape.

22 What I am up here for is that we have a
23 voice in both Tallahassee and Washington when
24 it comes to rural issues and agricultural
25 issues.

1 Agriculture in the state of Florida is now
2 the number two segment of the state economy,
3 and we have been fairly steady in the last four
4 years, and we need to keep our voice in
5 Tallahassee and Washington. We have earned it.
6 We are a significant part of this state's
7 economy.

8 Now, agriculture is one of the reasons we
9 have all of these very strangely shaped
10 districts, but those strangely shaped districts
11 are basically designed to keep that economic
12 engine represented in both Tallahassee and
13 Washington, and it is in the best interest to
14 keep rural, rural issues, you know, represented
15 in Tallahassee and kind of a catch phrase, is
16 urban solutions for urban problems usually
17 create major headaches for rural people. Thank
18 you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
20 much, Monty, good seeing you. Charlie Gene
21 Salter. Charlie Gene Salter. Okay, Jacquelyn
22 Shields. Is Jacquelyn Shields here? No.
23 Client Salter? Yes? Did I hear someone say
24 Clint Salter is here? Okay, great, and he will
25 be followed by Samir Gupte, Mary Jane

1 Arrington, Wesley Leonard, Todd Catella and Pam
2 Powell.

3 And if ya'll could come down and sit in
4 the front row to be prepared to come to the
5 mike, I would appreciate it. Mr. Salter.

6 MR. SALTER: Sorry for the delay in
7 reaching the podium. Thank you, Commissioner,
8 for allowing me to speak today, as you have
9 many of my neighbors, many of my friends today
10 earlier.

11 You heard from many of the faith based
12 community representatives of churches in our
13 community and community based organizations,
14 much like myself. I represent Cross Roads
15 Community Revitalization and Development, and
16 originally we were founded as a homeless
17 shelter.

18 One of the first, if not the first, in
19 central Florida, and we are located just at the
20 perimeter of the site we are on right now.

21 And I want to actually echo some of the
22 things and concerns that many of the
23 constituents from our districts shared with you
24 earlier, which is that, you know, I have heard
25 a lot of folks in their frustrations about not

1 being able to reach their Commissioners, not
2 being able to reach their Representatives for
3 service, not having a response because they are
4 so far disbursed or that their districts are so
5 disbursed, it is so wide ranging, as they say,
6 gerrymandering, that they don't have that in
7 touch feeling with their Representatives.

8 And like previously mentioned by a number
9 of folks, in particularly, in giving a
10 district, a group of citizens numbering, in
11 numbers upwards and in now in Orange County,
12 upwards of 250,000 people.

13 A voice in your board, in your chambers in
14 the State House and the Senate, as well as in
15 Washington, D. C., it is imperative that those
16 rights which were fought for for years that
17 came about in the last 30 years, that they be
18 continued and upheld by this board, by this
19 Commission.

20 I know your recommendations are going to
21 be ratified by the Justice Department, Attorney
22 General and many others. I think as a
23 Representative of community based community,
24 many of which, as I said earlier, were voiced
25 their opinions and their feelings, that our

1 district, the Third Congressional Seat, the
2 Congressional District of Florida, as well as
3 our State Senate and House of Representatives
4 seats be in touch for the reason that the Voter
5 Rights Act actually secured for our district an
6 opportunity for disenfranchised people to have
7 representation.

8 As Latino citizens, Afro Hispanic citizens
9 of our community we share with you, that is
10 vital, they want it, they need it. They need
11 to have an opportunity to reach out as members
12 of your communities have for you.

13 It doesn't seem like gerrymandering is as
14 helpful and needed as it has been for our
15 community, but when you look at the fact that
16 40 years ago you could count on one hand the
17 number of African-American voices that were
18 heard and had reasonably and more than
19 reasonably participated and gave great
20 contribution to the United States of America.

21 We think that in Florida there,
22 particularly in our county, there is 250,000
23 people that have swelled our county in the last
24 ten years.

25 When I grew up there was seven million

1 people in the state of Florida. Now it is
2 upwards of 18 million. This is a great place
3 to live. It didn't just happen to become a
4 great place to live, but it was because of the
5 many contributions that are reflected by this
6 Commission, white, black, Latino, Native
7 America, all of these people go into one pot
8 that is called America, and I think that it
9 would be a great disservice to undo the work,
10 undo the Voting Rights Act impact upon the
11 Third Congressional District in particular
12 because of what it has meant to the voters,
13 constituents in my district to whom I serve and
14 community based capacity.

15 It would be a disservice to them to undo
16 some of those things that I think are protected
17 by some type of mandate because it helped
18 disproportionately impacted people have
19 representation.

20 I thank you for your time and I pray that
21 God really blesses you with the temperament and
22 the patience to wade through some of the
23 things, some of the great suggestions that have
24 been heard from all of our communities, and I
25 think our Congresswoman as well as our State

1 Representatives have worked in a bipartisan
2 manner here in central Florida, as a result,
3 the recently communicated throughout the state
4 and the Sunrail project that will bring
5 millions and millions of dollars, thousands
6 upon thousands of jobs, and our Congressional
7 Representative was a part of that heart beat of
8 that, and I think that we have to take those
9 things into consideration and we do look
10 forward to having active participation.

11 I have other questions, too, which for you
12 can be answered later when you address us, is
13 that for the community based, faith based
14 leaders that have spoken today, will we be
15 included as part of that, that type of
16 communication as to what your recommendations
17 will be as far as the redistricting, because I
18 think that we have to have some say and some
19 type of approval process between us, because
20 our community is very much, very much involved
21 and interested in what is going on here.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Well, thank you,
23 sir, we appreciate that. We will definitely
24 answer that question.

25 MR. SALTER: I look forward to it, thank

1 you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay, Samir
3 Gupte, is Samir here? Okay, great, and he will
4 be followed by Mary Jane Arrington and Wesley
5 Leonard. Mr. Gupte.

6 MR. GUPTE: Good evening, thank you for
7 the opportunity to speak and thank you for
8 taking the time to come listen to us.

9 My name is Samir Gupte and I am an eight
10 year resident of Orlando, Florida, the College
11 Park neighborhood and I am also the President
12 of the Central Chapter of the ACLU.

13 The ACLU promotes and protects
14 constitutional rights and liberties. We do our
15 work through education, supporting non-partisan
16 legislation and when necessary, through
17 litigation.

18 Our focus is on church, state role
19 clarity, women's health, LGBT quality and
20 voting rights. It is the last platform that
21 brings me here to speak to you today.

22 We partnered with many of the groups in
23 the people in this room on both the ballot
24 initiative as well as the Amendments 5 and 6
25 that were passed by approximately 63 percent of

1 the voters during the last election.

2 So clearly the voters are asking you, our
3 Representatives in Tallahassee, that we want
4 change, we want something different, that we
5 want a principle approach to redistricting that
6 is fair, that is consistent and that is
7 transparent.

8 I recognize that change is hard, but the
9 voters want a different Florida. They want a
10 different approach to politics in Florida and
11 that is what we are asking you to do.

12 As a life long student I also understand
13 that it is human nature to want to protect what
14 you have achieved, what you have gained, what
15 you have conquered, what you have acquired.

16 That goes back thousands of years in
17 humanity, and it is human nature to want to do
18 that. I am also a 20-year human resources
19 professional, and I, in a lot of ways, envy
20 your opportunity and your power to basically
21 define your own job security by taking a
22 scalpel of information and carving out these
23 districts that will ensure your reelection, but
24 I ask you to do something different.

25 We of the ACLU ask you to do something

1 different. We ask you to answer what the
2 voters have put forth in the spirit and the
3 letter of Amendments 5 and 6 to have districts
4 that actually make sense.

5 If you mapped out, put all of the maps of
6 the districts of every state in the country,
7 Florida is in the bottom five in terms of the
8 most gerrymandered, the most bazaar designs of
9 the districts.

10 The only explanation that one could have
11 is it is all politically based. We ask you to
12 do something different. We ask you to use
13 principles that are fair, consistent and
14 transparent, and we ask you as you get into the
15 process of drawing the maps and we ask you to
16 do it soon, if I was a confrontative person I
17 would say you are foot dragging, but I am not,
18 but I am saying it is taking too long.

19 As you sit down to draw the maps, ask
20 yourselves honestly in your head and your
21 heart, is this for the public good or is this
22 for my political party's good or is this for my
23 personal good.

24 We ask you to follow the spirit and the
25 letter and thank you for your time.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your, sir.
2 Okay, next, we have Mary Jane Arrington, and
3 she will be followed by Wesley Leonard, and if
4 the following folks can make their way down to
5 the front row, Denise Diaz, Linda Stewart,
6 Michael Sheils, Rosalyn Anderson-White and
7 Melinda McCurry.

8 MS. ARRINGTON: I am Mary Jane Arrington.
9 I am Supervisor of Elections at Osceola County
10 and I would like to address the process
11 tonight, mainly the timeline.

12 I am not super human nor are any of my
13 fellow supervisors, and the projected timeline
14 really does not give us much time once these
15 districts are adopted and approved.

16 It is about two weeks, and that really
17 isn't enough time for us to accurately draw new
18 precinct lines, notify the voters, mail
19 ballots, and in sometimes we are probably going
20 to have to find new voting locations.

21 So if possible I would love for ya'll to
22 expedite, compress this process wherever you
23 can so we will have more time to notify our
24 voters.

25 Come election day if they are confused

1 they are not going to be mad at you, they are
2 going to be mad at me.

3 Also, your redistricting legislative staff
4 and the census staff have drawn VTD's. Please
5 use them. They take into effect communities of
6 common interest, traffic patterns, natural and
7 physical barriers, and they also provide for
8 compactness, and a compact district is an
9 efficient district when it comes to operating
10 an election. It saves money.

11 I appreciate the work you are doing. None
12 of us are going to be happy with everything you
13 do, but try, let it be super human since I
14 can't be. Thank you, and I appreciate your
15 time.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your,
17 Ms. Arrington. Okay, next, we have Wesley
18 Leonard and he will be followed by Todd
19 Catella.

20 MR. LEONARD: Mr. Chairman and other
21 elected officials from all across this state.
22 I am Wesley T. Leonard, Senior Minister of the
23 Southside Church of Christ here in Orlando,
24 Florida, a native Floridian from Tallahassee,
25 Florida, Leon County, and -- amen.

1 I also represent the Florida Civil Rights
2 Association where I am currently serving as
3 Chairman of Religious Affairs.

4 As our state now approaches almost
5 19 million in population and 42 percent of that
6 population in the recent census revealing that
7 are minorities, it is our position that it is
8 unconscionable, immoral and unfair for the new
9 districts to be drawn and not reflect a
10 minority position where we have more elected
11 officials.

12 It is the position of the Florida Civil
13 Rights Association that those two Congressional
14 Seats should reflect the new census data that
15 we just received. That our minorities should
16 be represented in those seats.

17 We believe as it is constitutionally true
18 that taxation without representation is
19 charity, and we all are law abiding, tax
20 paying, church going, law abiding citizens of
21 this state, and we ask that you be fair in your
22 drawing of these lines, that they reflect the
23 new census.

24 And it is our position at the Florida
25 Civil Rights Association not only is this

1 reflective of the new census, but you all get
2 to do something that is rarely been able to
3 have been done in politics, which is you can
4 have the trifecta of good policy, good
5 principle and good politics at the same time.

6 It is good principle because it is moral
7 to do the right according to the minorities in
8 this state. It is good policy because it is
9 the right thing to do and it is about politics
10 for now and in the future many votes will lie
11 in our community.

12 So on behalf of myself as a representative
13 of the Florida Civil Rights Association, and as
14 a husband and as a Pastor, as a loyal citizen
15 of this state we ask you to do what is right.

16 We ask you to do what is fair, we ask you
17 to do what is principle. We ask you to do what
18 is good policy and what is good politics. God
19 bless you, thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your, God
21 bless you, too. Todd Catella who will be
22 followed by Pam Powell. Mr. Catella, good to
23 see you.

24 MR. CATELLA: Thank you, sir, Todd
25 Catella, I live in Orlando. I have lived in

1 Orlando since 1966, when my folks moved here
2 from Vermont after the announcement of Disney,
3 and you asked for my story.

4 I am going to give you a little bit of my
5 political story. In 1980, was my first
6 election. As a Conservative I voted for Ronald
7 Reagan, proudly.

8 I have followed throughout the years as a
9 Republican, many of you, straight Republican as
10 many Democrats are straight democrats, and I
11 have the value of conservatism. I have the
12 value of fairness, I have the value of equal
13 rights. I do have also a value of protecting
14 our ecology.

15 If I pass a piece of paper on the street,
16 I pick it up and I put it where it should be.
17 I don't just walk by it if I at all can, and I
18 might even be walking with somebody of
19 importance and I will stop and I will pick up
20 that piece of paper and I will do what I need
21 to do, because that is good citizenship.

22 Now, there is amiss -- well, let me back
23 up just a hair. I was never politically active
24 in any way, ever, other than --

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Mr. Catella, I

1 need you to get to the redistricting part. I
2 know you are.

3 MR. CATELLA: I am. This is important.
4 This is important.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay.

6 MR. CATELLA: Two years ago, a little over
7 two years ago I was throwing things at the TV
8 as the conversations were going on, and was at
9 the first Tea Party at Lake Eola, all right,
10 because I felt I needed to take action.

11 My -- the Republican Party that I knew was
12 not representing me anymore at all, and I felt
13 I needed to take hold of that again. So I
14 became active and I was very active, and there
15 was a Congressional Democrat that I wasn't
16 happy with and I worked against him, because he
17 was way out there.

18 Now, I said all of that to say that there
19 is a current conversation of Hispanic
20 representation. I want you to know that I
21 believe in fairness. I believe that the
22 Hispanic people in this area, even though they
23 are a Democrat, have the right to try and solve
24 their own problems, okay.

25 So if it is at all possible to get a

1 Congressional District that represents them,
2 that they can solve their problems with, please
3 do so.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Next
5 we have Pam Powell. Pam, are you here? Great,
6 and she will be followed by Denise Diaz and
7 then Linda Stewart, and if --

8 REVEREND POWELL: Good evening, everyone.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

10 REVEREND POWELL: I am the Reverend Pam
11 Powell. I am here today to just perhaps give
12 you some of my thoughts regarding the
13 redistricting.

14 When I thought about the whole plan and
15 the Voting Rights Acts of 1965, I was reminded
16 that the word redistrict spells what it is all
17 about anyway and I wanted to just kind of
18 re-enforce and speak a word regarding that,
19 because it is very important for our society
20 and I just want to take the word redistrict and
21 remind you and us that the R, it is about our
22 right to be counted.

23 The E is about equal representation of our
24 African-America and minority communities as
25 well.

1 The D is Dr. King's dream that the
2 diversities of our communities would always be
3 represented fairly.

4 The I, it is time for us to be in-tensed
5 rather than tensed and participate in the
6 process of voting.

7 The S, we must stand for the Voting Rights
8 Act of 1965, because if we don't stand for
9 something we will fall for anything.

10 The I is as I look at the district, it
11 talks about the fact that together we stand and
12 divided we fall.

13 The R is resurrection time. It is time
14 for us to look up, hook up, so we can go up to
15 the next level.

16 And I, when we look at that, we must
17 insist on fairness for all of our voters.

18 C, I think about Congresswoman Corrine
19 Brown, someone who has always fought a
20 courageous fight, someone who has never quit
21 and we need her in our district. I don't know
22 whether we can clap for her, but we should clap
23 for Congresswoman Corrine Brown and the work
24 that she has provided in this community.

25 And last, but not least, the T in

1 district, it is not time to take a giant leap
2 backwards. As our foremothers and forefathers
3 have fought a great fight, and when we look
4 hard we must tell the world that we are not
5 looking back, turning back, backing back,
6 falling back, crawling back, we are pressing on
7 the upward way and new heights we should be
8 gaining every day, still praying as we are
9 onward bound, Lord plant our feet on higher
10 ground. We need to be fair with redistricting.
11 Thank you so much and have a good evening.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
13 Denise Diaz with be our next presenter. Is
14 Ms. Denise Diaz here? Linda Stewart? Is Linda
15 here? Michael Sheils? Rosalyn Anderson-White.
16 Melinda McCurry. Holly Winsman, Andrew Bell?
17 A. C. Janney, Amy Ritter, Reverend Leroy
18 Powell, Amy? We got a couple of them coming?
19 Okay.

20 REVEREND POWELL: Good evening.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Reverend Powell.

22 REVEREND POWELL: Mr. Chairman, to all of
23 you who are present tonight, I stand as one who
24 has come through the struggle, come through the
25 fight for equality and for civil rights.

1 I stand as one who had been born
2 injustices from the day that I knew myself up
3 until the Civil Rights Acts and the Civil
4 Rights Movement and all of the gains that we
5 have made, and I stand today to appeal to the
6 could common decency of those in charge of
7 making this decision, that you would just be
8 fair and think about if you were a victim of
9 racism and inequality or a victim of poverty or
10 struggling to live and to have a decent quality
11 of life, that you would put yourself, that you
12 would empathize with those who are affected
13 negatively by the decisions that we make.

14 And I feel that if you would honestly and
15 earnestly do that, that you would make the
16 right choice. So again, I appeal to all of you
17 who are in control of the process to do the
18 right thing. God bless you, God be praised and
19 heaven continue to smile upon you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
21 blessings to you as well. Amy Ritter. While
22 Amy is working her way over here, Carmen
23 Torres, Mayor Ken Bradley, Lynn Veitch and
24 Louise Turner. Ms. Ritter.

25 MR. RITTER: Hi. I just have two really

1 quick questions that I am expecting to be
2 answered since you are going to be answering
3 questions at the end of this testimonial
4 session.

5 But question one, is there a private non
6 government entity that is holding the maps that
7 the legislative leadership has drafted already
8 and to be clear, I don't mean people or groups
9 that have gone on the website, the District
10 Builder online, but actual special interest
11 groups that are holding already drawn maps?

12 Question two is, is there any other
13 entity, public or private besides the state of
14 Florida, that has contributed financially in
15 the States's lawsuit against Amendments 5 and
16 6. So two easy questions that I expect to be
17 answered. So thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
19 Carmen Torres, is Carmen Torres Here? And she
20 will be followed by Mayor Ken Bradley and Lynn
21 Veitch. Ms. Torres.

22 MR. TORRES: Mr. Chair, thank you for the
23 opportunity to come before this committee. My
24 name is Carmen Torres and I have been a
25 resident of Orlando for 18 years.

1 We all know that historically incumbents
2 control the process. It occurs in both
3 parties, Democrats and Republicans alike. For
4 now Republicans rule in the Florida Legislature
5 and actually seek to preserve and expand GOP
6 representation through gerrymandering.

7 You may not be aware of this, but the
8 Speaker of the House and leadership has pulled
9 the wool over your eyes, Senate Chair.

10 I am personally offended as are most folks
11 in this room that this Legislature has set
12 aside \$30 million, and yes, I heard earlier
13 that this was not so.

14 You plan to spend \$30 million taken from
15 schools, from the medically needy, from working
16 families of this state to fight against the
17 will of the people.

18 The people of this state voted for Fair
19 Districts Amendments 5 and 6 by an overwhelming
20 majority of 63 percent of the vote and we
21 expect that our votes be honored.

22 I appeal to this body, please honor our
23 votes, draw compact contiguous districts
24 representative of our communities. I ask that
25 you respect the growth of the Hispanic

1 community and take into consideration
2 communities of interest between Osceola and
3 Orange Counties when considering the newly
4 created Congressional District.

5 I ask that you do this in a timely manner
6 and not three months before an election cycle.
7 Thank you very much.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
9 Okay, Mayor Ken Bradley. I believe he left.
10 Mayor Bradley? No? Lynn Veitch, Lynn Veitch,
11 Louise Turner? Louise Turner here? Ernie
12 Langda, Daniel Fisher, Oliver Finnigan?

13 We have a Daniel Fisher? Okay, and then I
14 am going to call out a half dozen other names
15 while he is working his way down here.

16 Oliver Finnigan, Charles Jackson, John
17 Farah, Patricia Graves and David Tropf.

18 If ya'll could start working your way down
19 to the front if you are here so we can get more
20 folks to speak. I still have a pretty good
21 sized stack of folks that would like to speak.
22 Mr. Fisher.

23 MR. FISHER: Hi. All right, well, as I
24 have been waiting, I have been here since 2:00.
25 I have heard a lot of people speak and express

1 their discontent with the political fear that
2 is going on right about now, and so I can rant
3 about two or three minutes on this, but they
4 have already exposed the fraud of the process
5 this is.

6 So I am going to go and tell a story like
7 your projection wants me to tell. So I am an
8 Independent from Ormond Beach, Florida. I was
9 raised by a single mother. She had two jobs
10 and she went to college while doing so.

11 I was able to make it through this process
12 and these hard times because she was promised
13 to me how special and how powerful democracy is
14 and how powerful education is, and so I always
15 had that in the back of my mind.

16 I always knew if I had democracy and
17 education I would be able to overcome these
18 struggles. Today those premises are in doubt.

19 With our spending \$30 million today wasted
20 on this process, \$30 million can pay for about
21 680 teachers, about 25,000 students, that is
22 25,000 dreams that we are destroying today.
23 That is 25,000 layers of hope that we are
24 ripping away due to political greed and power
25 grabbing.

1 I implore you to stand with the will of
2 the people. Shame on anybody who stands in the
3 way of the will of the people.

4 Shame on all of you who try and silence
5 the majority, 63 percent to be exact, and shame
6 on all of you who oppose this process. Thank
7 you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Next
9 we have Oliver Finnigan, Mr. Finnigan here?
10 Oliver Finnigan, I don't see him. Charlie
11 Jackson. Is there a Charlie Jackson? John
12 Farah, Mr. Farah, Patricia Graves.

13 While Ms. Graves is heading over here,
14 David Tropf, Peter Lee, Kelli McNair-Lee,
15 Kenneth Dwyer and Fedorah Philppeaux. Ma'am,
16 you have the mike.

17 MS. GRAVES: Ladies and gentlemen, good
18 evening, thank you for coming to Orlando. I am
19 the President of the Seminole County League of
20 Women Voters and a resident of northwest
21 Seminole County for 20 years.

22 I am here today to encourage you to speed
23 up your timeline of drawing districts so that
24 you can vote on them in January of 2012.

25 I know that the Florida Constitution

1 mandates that the vote can be no earlier than
2 that, but we have five full months until then
3 where much can be done to make an early January
4 vote doable.

5 As an aside, this is a side bar, I also
6 know that the process includes the Justice
7 Department and others. So it would be
8 beneficial if that reach information of those
9 entities and people were posted on your
10 redistricting websites so citizens could hurry
11 them along after we are finished with hurrying
12 you along.

13 Back on point, keeping your current
14 timeline will reap havoc on the 2012 elections,
15 making Florida once again the laughing stock of
16 our country.

17 Your current timeline also provides scant
18 time for candidates to file and for citizens to
19 learn about their candidates so they can make
20 an informed vote.

21 Most importantly, under your current
22 timeline, the absentee ballots, especially for
23 our service people overseas, may not make the
24 deadline effectively disenfranchising the very
25 mean and women who are fighting for democracy.

1 Please don't take that chance.

2 Second point, any monies you have set
3 aside and are using to pay for the litigation
4 for both striking down and defending Amendment
5 6 should be sent, should be sent and used for
6 more worthy causes, such as schools, services,
7 job creation.

8 Seminole County schools could really use
9 the help. Lawyers and their firms already have
10 jobs, so stop financing them. So please
11 respect our vote from last November. Please
12 respect the votes that will be cast in 2012,
13 and get to work in Tallahassee.

14 Work in the sunshine, work with citizen
15 input in good faith. Most importantly, let's
16 get to work now.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
18 Okay, next we have David Tropf. David, are you
19 here? David Tropf? No? Peter Lee, and Peter
20 will be followed by Kelli McNair-Lee. Mr. Lee.

21 MR. LEE: Thank you for having this
22 hearing. I really do appreciate it. I have
23 been relatively disgusted from what I have
24 heard.

25 I have been a central Florida resident for

1 about ten years. I lived in Miami-Dade before
2 that. I have lived in Pine Hills area and my
3 neighbors have always been my neighbors.

4 I have Hispanics living right next to me.
5 I have a black couple lives two doors down. I
6 have got college kids that live across the
7 street from me. That is my community.

8 Apparently I am hearing that the
9 African-Americans in my community are not
10 really part of my community. The Hispanics
11 that come over and play dominoes with us, they
12 are not really part of my community.

13 You know, is this not the United States of
14 America, the melting pot? Now, we are pretty
15 much all here because, okay, yes, it has gotten
16 a little political, so fine, let's redraw
17 districts, we have to anyway.

18 We are going to get two more
19 Representative seats, which that is a good
20 thing. Let's have the Post Office do it. They
21 don't care about who is, you know, what
22 politician they are putting mail into. They
23 don't care about what color that person's, you
24 know, the residents of the house are.

25 So, you know, for those who want to make

1 this about identity politics, you should be
2 ashamed of yourselves.

3 I live in District 24. In 2008, we had a
4 Democrat in office. In 2010, we have a
5 Republican in office. It is the same people.
6 If you want to change who is elected in office,
7 guess what, you have to get up and you have to
8 do something, you have to knock on doors and
9 you have to make a difference. That is the way
10 it is done in America.

11 We can't make you guys do our work for us.
12 Thank you very much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
14 Mr. Lee. Kelli McNair-Lee. Are you here?
15 Kelli. She will be followed by Kenneth Dwyer
16 and Fedorah Philppeaux.

17 MS. LEE: Hi. That is my husband. I am
18 very proud of him. I live in east Orange
19 County and I bought the house 16 years ago. My
20 neighbor, Alma, a Puerto Rican woman, I would
21 give her a kidney if she needed it.

22 She takes care of me after I have surgery.
23 She came to my wedding. Her Cuban boyfriend, I
24 would bleed for either one of them.

25 My black neighbors, the white guy across

1 the street and half the UCF population that the
2 party, parks and vomits in my yard, I don't
3 care if they have to stand there for four hours
4 waiting to vote. I am a little fed up with it,
5 quite frankly.

6 France Cabru wrote a book called Stolen
7 History. It gives more factual history of our
8 nation and how strong we have been in civil
9 rights and we need to honor that history, and I
10 look at you and I am very proud of the
11 different colors of faces and the women, that
12 just really, I was a women's studies major, I
13 am sorry, minor in college. I couldn't even
14 put it on my resume when I graduated in 1986,
15 because I couldn't get a job up in D. C. with
16 it.

17 So I want to encourage you to end
18 segregation once and for all. Stop the
19 identity politics. We are Americans. Make it
20 about being an American and not a separate
21 American.

22 Let us work on issues. Senator Siplin, I
23 actually want to thank you for that baggy pants
24 thing, because I am a public school teacher,
25 honey, and let me tell you, I am tired of

1 seeing their underwear, okay. Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: All right, let's
3 focus on redistricting here.

4 MS. LEE: It is on redistricting.
5 Representative Republicans is what we are. So
6 it is like the squirrel thing out of one of
7 those movies recently, squirrel.

8 All right, redistricting. I don't want it
9 to be a racial thing. I want it to be a
10 contiguous area thing. I want it to represent
11 my neighborhood in east Orange County, my area.

12 You can take the students out as far as I
13 am concerned, but my area. That is what I
14 want it to be. I don't want to be voting
15 against my neighbors just because we are
16 different colors. We are Americans. Let's
17 remember that, please. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
19 Great testimony. Kenneth Dwyer, Mr. Dwyer. Is
20 Kenneth Dwyer here? Fedorah Philppeaux. She
21 is, Fedorah, okay, great, you are next and then
22 let me call out a couple more names, Susanne
23 Carrion, Kevin Gustafson, William Breazeale,
24 Clinton Salter and Reginald McGill, if you can
25 come forward. Fedorah.

1 MS. PHILIPPEAUX: Thank you. Good
2 evening, my name is Fedorah Philppeaux and I am
3 currently a student at the University of
4 Central Florida.

5 I simply want to discuss my views on this
6 issue which have been important to me from the
7 minute I stepped on to campus as a freshman in
8 2008.

9 The rally and cry behind Fair Districts
10 was that we wanted our voices to be heard and
11 we wanted to be represented by Legislators who
12 actually lived somewhere near us instead of
13 over a bridge or across a lake or across 15
14 counties or on the other side of the swamp.

15 We wanted transparency and we wanted
16 actual representation rather than listening to
17 more lies about how we would be represented
18 fairly or more lies about why we aren't being
19 shown maps, but overall the point was to have a
20 greater voice in the voter inclusion, not voter
21 suppression.

22 So I am here to ask you today to keep that
23 into account as you redraw your districts. I
24 am in District 24 and as I am at UCF, we have
25 been separated into two State House Districts,

1 33 and 35.

2 But again, splitting up the youth vote and
3 splitting up the University vote would not be
4 the way to follow the voter inclusion.

5 So I ask I tonight that if you truly care
6 about anything that is being said, then I ask
7 you to demonstrate the fairness as the title of
8 the Amendments called for and to heed the
9 requests of the 63 percent of your constituents
10 who have voted for compact maps.

11 And ideally, if you would, please get
12 these maps done on time so that we can have
13 some candidates out there who will actually
14 represent us rather than figuratively
15 representing us.

16 I ask you tonight to bear in mind that we
17 want voter expression, not voter suppression.
18 Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
20 Susanne Carrion, Susan or Susanne Carrion.
21 Okay, Kevin Gustafson, William Breazeale? No?
22 Clinton Salter? I think he spoke, yes.
23 Reginald McGill, and Elizabeth Buckley will
24 follow that and Barbara Young. Mr. McGill.

25 MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, and members of

1 the Committee. I am Reginald B. McGill, a
2 product of Orange County for over half of a
3 century. I am concerned, committed contributor
4 of this community, and this is, in order for me
5 to tell my story I have to tell my struggle and
6 I understand I only have two minutes.

7 The point that I want to raise is, this is
8 the third time that I have been through this
9 process. In 1990, with the census, I Chaired
10 one of our subcommittees. In 2000, I actually
11 was the Chair of our Orange County Orlando
12 Complete Count Committee, and then just last
13 year I was, I Chaired two of our committees.

14 I say all of that to say that I have been
15 active, actively involved in this community. I
16 want to raise two things I just now heard.

17 The one thing that I do understand that
18 you are mandated to do that you must divide 27
19 districts in the state of Florida. In order to
20 do that when we look at the panhandle, you will
21 have to, because by doing this, the numbers in
22 the districts have to be about the same, around
23 600,000 people.

24 The only way that you are going to do that
25 in the panhandle, you will have to pull

1 several, several counties together to come up
2 with those numbers.

3 I hear so much conversation about District
4 3, but I would venture to say that most of the
5 people who have voiced concerns about District
6 3 don't live in District 3 like I do.

7 So when I see the district up in the
8 panhandle that goes from Panama City all of the
9 way to Lake City, and then I see another
10 district that goes from West Palm Beach all the
11 way down to Key West, there has not been a
12 whole lot of conversation about those
13 districts. It is about service and
14 representation.

15 For several years I was privileged to
16 serve as the Human Relations individual, I had
17 over-site for the Human Relations operation.
18 So there is no way that I can say that I want
19 African-American districts without also wanting
20 Hispanic districts, because the numbers in this
21 region demands that if we are going to be fair.

22 And so as I get ready to take my seat I
23 would ask that you not take steps back. I have
24 been fortunate to live in this community where
25 I had -- where I, my delegation, the

1 Congressional Delegation had no
2 African-Americans and no Hispanics.

3 I have been fortunate to live in a time
4 where we have four African-Americans and three
5 Hispanics. And as I take my seat, I live in a
6 county where we have an African-American
7 Sheriff, not because he is black, but because
8 he is qualified, but unfortunately he is the
9 very first that we have ever had county-wide in
10 this county.

11 So I say we have extreme talent throughout
12 this country and when I look at the diversity
13 of even this committee I recognize that many of
14 you sit here because of minority districts and
15 I applaud that.

16 As I take my seat, the last thing I really
17 want to say to you is, I live about 10 minutes,
18 really about 15 minutes from where I grew up,
19 but on about another 15 minutes on the other
20 side, there are homes that are 1.5 to five
21 million dollars.

22 Other than good human beings, that is
23 about all that we really have in common, and so
24 when we talk about communities of interest,
25 let's be honest. It is not about who is next

1 to you. It is about the issues that you are
2 concerned about that make what our community
3 is.

4 And so I understand that you have a
5 tremendous mandate, but I would ask you as we
6 move forward and progress not let us -- and we
7 stand on the shoulders of those who have
8 sacrificed to get us to this point, let us
9 think about our children and our children's
10 children so that we will be reflective,
11 realizing that Orlando has been voted the
12 number, the vacation capital of this whole
13 world, which means that people from all over
14 this world come to Orlando.

15 We want to make sure that we have a
16 representation on all levels from Congressional
17 to our city that reflects our community.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
19 Mr. McGill. Appreciate it. Okay, next we have
20 Elizabeth Buckley, and is Elizabeth here?
21 Barbara Young? Is Barbara here? Jackie Colon?
22 Jackie Colon? Jim Callahan? Mr. Callahan, are
23 you here? Okay.

24 While he is working down here, Charlie
25 Williams, Mary Yasgur, Doug Guetsloe, David

1 Rucker, Bobby Beagles, and the other thing,
2 folks, I want everyone to keep in mind, we have
3 got about 20 minutes or so of testimony time
4 left.

5 We have probably got about 45 cards or so,
6 so if somebody has already said it, please be
7 very brief and concise. Mr. Callahan, go
8 ahead.

9 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, thank you,
10 Mr. Chairman. I live in downtown Orlando a few
11 blocks from here. Before that I lived in
12 Maitland, and at that time --

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Go ahead.

14 MR. CALLAHAN: At that time that was a
15 piece of Congressional District 3, and I was
16 very ably represented by Congresswoman Corrine
17 Brown and her staff, Anita Saunders and Reggie
18 McGill and Chester Glover.

19 In terms of the House -- we have a
20 different situation with respect to the House,
21 the Florida House districts, the smaller
22 districts and the larger districts, because of
23 the way the numbers fall out in Orange County.

24 The Congressional District is just under
25 700,000 people. We have about 1.2 million

1 people here in Orange County, so you won't be
2 able to fit two Congressional Districts in
3 there, but there is enough room for one.

4 The city of Orlando's population is just
5 under 240,000. So if the Amendment is binding
6 and that is a political district we have to
7 obey, that could cause some problems with the
8 larger districts, the Congressional District
9 and the Senate District.

10 There could be a conflict between do we
11 obey those boundaries, those political
12 boundaries as suggested by the Amendments or do
13 we obey the Voting Rights Act where the
14 demographic groups are.

15 There is always competing interests in
16 redistricting. I have been involved in the
17 process two previous cycles. I helped do the
18 Public Records Act to get the FRED software
19 released.

20 I want to second the comments made by my
21 friend, Doug Head this afternoon. There is the
22 possibility of two African-American districts
23 and two Hispanic districts, House Districts,
24 State House Districts here in Orange County.

25 The African-American districts, one would

1 be in, centered in the city of Orlando and the
2 other would be in the unincorporated area of
3 Pine Hills, possibly taking in Eatonville.

4 And on the east side there is a
5 possibility of two Hispanics districts. If you
6 look at the census designated places, there is
7 a large census designated place in the northern
8 part of the county. I believe it is Azalea
9 Park and there is a large Hispanic census
10 designated place, neither of these are
11 Incorporated, Meadow Woods and each of those
12 could be a component of a House District.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Can I ask you to
14 go ahead and make your final points, because I
15 have got a lot of people to go to and if
16 somebody has already said it, it is on the
17 record.

18 MR. CALLAHAN: Well, I wanted it to be a
19 bit more specific then.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Please get with
21 our staff to submit very detailed stuff and it
22 will be on the record and we will consider it.

23 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay, thank you very much.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

25 Next, Charlie Williams. And again, several

1 Representatives have asked me to bring other
2 people up. I have got to take them in the
3 order that they have come in.

4 So the more concise you can be the more
5 people can speak. Charlie.

6 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Chairman
7 Precourt, good to see you. My name is Charlie
8 Williams. I am a Florida native and a resident
9 of Winter Park here in Orange County. My
10 Representative in the Florida House is Speaker
11 Cannon, although I don't see him on the dais or
12 in the audience, I am sure he may be watching
13 via the Florida Channel tonight and I have some
14 concerns I would like to express with the
15 Speaker and members of the House.

16 Like many of you today, I have been
17 watching the 13 days of hearings conducted by
18 our Redistricting Chairs and Co-Chairs. To
19 quote FSU Professor Lance deHaven-Smith,
20 Amendments 5 and 6 are the most significant
21 reforms in Florida since the 1968 revisions to
22 the Florida Constitution.

23 As I have watched these hearings I have
24 one question that has been asked many times, in
25 which I don't think we have been answered

1 truthfully. Why is the legislature continuing
2 to spend taxpayer dollars to oppose the will of
3 the people as expressed when 63 percent have
4 voted for fair districts standards?

5 And Senator Gaetz, I have been watching
6 you wrap up during each panel discussion and I
7 have been paying attention, but what I have
8 been hearing in the House participation with
9 the lawsuit filed by Diaz Balart and Brown
10 against Amendment 6 which is congressional
11 reapportionment is that it was orchestrated by
12 the House to clarify Amendment 6 and not to
13 challenge its constitutionality.

14 From reading the Court filings which I
15 have brought today, this is simply not true.
16 To the Florida Senate's credit, it declined to
17 join the Balart/Brown lawsuit and it has no
18 intention to do so according to President
19 Haridopolos.

20 President Haridopolos said the voters
21 spoke, we want to respect the voters, end of
22 quote. This is how it should be. Thank you to
23 the Senate members that are here today for
24 following his lead.

25 I have with me three of the Court

1 documents that have been filed by the House of
2 Representatives, using attorneys from Orlando
3 law firm, Gray, Harris, Gray Robinson,
4 Attorneys George Meros and Alan Windsor.

5 I have looked at the document that
6 contained the House complaint and the
7 intervention. The House's motion to intervene
8 and the Motion for Summary Judgment filed by
9 all Plaintiffs, including the House.

10 Let me just read and underscore a few
11 points from the complaint to intervene.

12 Whereas the Florida House of
13 Representatives respectfully request the Court
14 to --

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Charlie, if that
16 is actually in the record, it would be much
17 easier if we would just submit it to staff.

18 MR. WILLIAMS: I will continue, but wrap
19 up.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: But again, we
21 have a whole bunch of folks that I need to get
22 to.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: For the Senator because I
24 know this is a part of his wrap up. The other
25 language in the House Motion to Intervene, the

1 House has a considerable interest in
2 establishing the unconstitutionality of the
3 Amendment.

4 To cut to the chase, there is never a
5 mention of clarification. It is about the
6 unconstitutionality of Amendment 6. So here is
7 the question.

8 There is nothing for the courts to
9 clarify. Speaker Cannon, you are my
10 Representative, I ask you to stop wasting
11 taxpayer dollars on this pursuit.

12 And I thank Senator Storms, Margolis,
13 Siplin, Gardner and others who are here for not
14 entertaining this pursuit. The fact is, and it
15 has been in the media, you all read about it.

16 We spent in the House close to a million
17 dollars engaging the services of firms like
18 Gray Robinson, Latham & Watkins and Miguel
19 DeGrande to fight redistricting and challenge
20 Amendment 6.

21 This is not leadership on the part of this
22 Legislature. This is fiscal irresponsibility
23 and misplaced stewardship of the taxpayers of
24 Florida.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,

1 Charlie. We are now going to have to move on
2 to the next speakers now.

3 MR. WILLIAMS: When I saw the voters
4 accept Amendments 5 and 6 I thought we were all
5 in. So my message tonight to the Speaker, my
6 Representative and members of the House, this
7 is not acceptable. This must stop. Let's move
8 forward.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
10 Charlie. Next we have Mary Yasgur. Is Mary
11 here? Doug Guetsloe, is Mr. Guetsloe still
12 here? Yes, he is, and while he works down he
13 will be followed by David Rucker, Bobby
14 Beagles, Elmo Dunn, Zulayka Costillo and Victor
15 Sanchez. Mr. Guetsloe.

16 MR. GUETSLOE: Mr. Chairman, Legislators,
17 I am Doug Guetsloe, I am Chairman of a group
18 called Acts Attacks, many of you are familiar
19 with it.

20 We have been fighting taxpayer issues
21 since 1982, so I come to you not only as a
22 leader of anti tax organization that has had 17
23 successful victories helping to save taxpayers
24 47.5 billion dollars, but also as a citizen,
25 and I want to thank all of you for being here

1 today, because free speech has been under
2 attack in this community lately, even as late
3 as yesterday when a man was sent to jail for
4 passing out campaign leaflets, but that is
5 another issue.

6 The fact that you all are here, I was also
7 struck by the fact you are in a theatrical
8 area. And most of the theaters really come
9 from behind me, among the people, and quite
10 frankly, I think that is refreshing to see the
11 expression that we have had of the different
12 view points and things of that nature and I
13 want to commend all of you for being as patient
14 as you have, because I know what it is like to
15 be, you know, be vilified and attacked on a
16 different, a different level.

17 But the one thing that has also struck me
18 about the redistricting process is that the
19 only way for there not to be fair districts in
20 the state of Florida is for the folks behind me
21 and their neighbors to not become activists and
22 to not become involved.

23 If they will not become a statistic or an
24 R or a D or a number, then there will be fair
25 districts throughout the state of Florida,

1 because it is up to the people to make those
2 kind of decisions, and quite frankly, some of
3 the attacks on you all I will
4 uncharacteristically defend all of you
5 collectively and I know for some of you that
6 will be unusual, but you all are the people.

7 You represent the people of the state of
8 Florida. You all were elected to represent the
9 people, and that is one thing that some of the
10 discussion of the percentages here in
11 63 percent and you are not representing the
12 people, you are the people, and I commend you
13 all for coming.

14 But getting right to the point, the other
15 800-pound gorilla in the room which no one
16 really wants to address is partisanship. When
17 I got, when the first campaign I ever ran was
18 in 1972, for a guy named Curt Keiser and some
19 of you Legislators probably know Curt as a
20 lobbyist now.

21 I ran his campaign and we were in Young
22 Republicans together and he won, he beat an
23 incumbent, got elected in 1972. He went to
24 Tallahassee and to hear some of the Democrats
25 talk about it, it was somewhat humorous.

1 His office was a broom closet, literally a
2 broom closet in the Old Capitol, and none of
3 you I don't think were around. I know some of
4 the guys that worked in the Sergeant's Office
5 are still there, but I came up there to
6 Tallahassee, worked in the Senate in 1975, and,
7 oh, Senator Margolis, of course, was there.
8 Yes, you are back.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Doug, get to the
10 point on redistricting.

11 MR. GUETSLOE: The bottom line, yes, we
12 will get to the point, is that partisanship is
13 part of the process. So I have created, I
14 spent a great deal of time creating a map for
15 you.

16 I have taken every street and every person
17 and this is what I recommend you do to save
18 everyone a lot of trouble, is we have got good
19 representation in Congressman Webster, Mica,
20 Adams, Posey, and you take their districts and
21 create a nice big district right in the middle
22 and regardless of race, creed, color or
23 national origin, put every Democrat you can
24 find in that district. This is, this is our
25 new -- this is my district map.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay.

2 MR. GUETSLOE: I knew they would love it.
3 But this is my official map. We are going to
4 submit that. But anyway, I think you all are
5 doing a great job and I appreciate you all
6 being here.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Doug.
8 David Rucker is up next. Mr. Rucker, are you
9 here? I am going to start moving fast, so if
10 you are here, yell. Bobby Beagles, are you
11 here? All right, Bobby is here, and Elmo Dunn,
12 Zulayka Costillo, Victor Sanchez, Nadia
13 Douglas, come on down. Mr. Beagles.

14 MR. BEAGLES: Thank you, Steve. You know,
15 it is a pleasure to stand here tonight and see
16 so many friendly faces. I am a resident of
17 Orange County since 1942, which will soon be 70
18 years.

19 I can tell you that we have the best
20 elected officials in central Florida that we
21 have ever had. I can pick up the phone and
22 call my Representative who is in Brevard County
23 on the Senate side, or I can pick up the phone
24 and call Andy Gardner, or I can pick up the
25 phone and call Gary Siplin.

1 The same way with the House. I can get
2 the information I want when I want it and we
3 appreciate that, but being in the agricultural
4 community and being in the agriculture since
5 1956, my family started a cow/calf operation in
6 east Orange County.

7 Today we have a fight every way we look
8 trying to stay in business. We have good
9 representation. We have good elected
10 officials, and my good Representative,
11 Mr. Steve Precourt, excuse me, Jason Brodeur,
12 who took over Sandy Adams's seat, then we sent
13 Sandy to Washington along with Dan Webster.

14 I had an opportunity to visit both of
15 them. My heart goes out to them. My heart
16 goes out to ya'll for having to listen to what
17 you have to listen to.

18 It is a shame that you have to put up with
19 what you have to put up with. For the amount
20 of pay that you get, it is a shame that the
21 voters in the state of Florida treat you the
22 way they treat you.

23 It isn't very fair, and let me say, I have
24 come to the solution if ya'll would pass a Bill
25 in Tallahassee that we would not develop no

1 more wetlands and put houses in it, we could
2 stop some of this.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Redistricting,
4 focus on redistricting.

5 MR. BEAGLES: But our district has been
6 cut out to help the agricultural and
7 representative, the agricultural. We are the
8 number two commodity in this state. For years
9 we was number one.

10 After 911 we bounced back to number one in
11 the state. Please, look at these districts,
12 keep us together because the only way we are
13 going to be strong is to have good
14 Representative in Tallahassee and good
15 Representative in Washington, and I urge you to
16 get this done as soon as possible.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

18 MR. BEAGLES: Because where we can hit the
19 campaign trail and see that we get the people
20 we need in those positions. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
22 Mr. Beagles. Elmo Dunn. Is Mr. Dunn here?
23 Okay, we are within the last couple of people
24 that we are going to have time to speak. So
25 please come down quickly. Mr. Dunn.

1 MR. DUNN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, ladies and
2 gentlemen, my name is Elmo Dunn, and to repeat
3 what has been said briefly, it is appalling to
4 me that the Florida Legislature is wasting
5 hundreds of thousands of dollars holding
6 hearings for Fair Districts when the people
7 have clearly spoken.

8 The Florida Legislature defies all logic
9 when they continue to fight the cause of fair
10 districts by wasting millions of taxpayer
11 dollars fighting it when they cannot even
12 properly fund public schools.

13 The Legislature fighting Fair Districts is
14 a disgrace to the people of Florida. The
15 people are fed up, so it is time to act. Thank
16 you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Mr.
18 Dunn. Zulayka Costillo, Ms. Costillo, are you
19 here? No, Victor Sanchez, Mr. Sanchez? Then
20 Naudia Douglas.

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes, good evening, my name
22 is Victor Sanchez. I represent the Legal
23 Counsel for Latin American Advancement here in
24 central Florida.

25 I live in Seminole County and I would like

1 to ask to everybody that is here tonight and
2 voted for Fair Districts to stand up, please.
3 Everybody that vote for Fair Districts, please
4 stand up, okay.

5 Let's show this Committee that we want
6 fair districts done right away. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
8 Larry Davis. Are you here? Mr. Davis, come on
9 forward.

10 MR. DAVIS: I will make this very quick.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: You are
12 recognized.

13 MR. DAVIS: Honorable elected officers and
14 officials, distinguished Legislators and
15 Mr. Chairman, of course, thank you for coming
16 by here.

17 I appreciate you coming to our district
18 and hearing what we have to say. I come from
19 Oviedo in Seminole County, and our district was
20 carved up so that a Former Speaker of the House
21 could run for Congress.

22 I have firsthand experience with
23 gerrymandering. I wish that you would speed up
24 this process. This is going to take a very
25 lengthy thing, lengthy amount of time.

1 You have had the census information for
2 four months, with hearings through September,
3 like what you are doing now. March 9th, you
4 are supposed to have a special convening with
5 this and vote on it in the Legislature.

6 The Attorney General has two weeks to
7 consider this, the Supreme Court has another
8 month, the Justice Department has 60 days, the
9 Governor has 15 days, Federal government has
10 60-day review. The public has three days to
11 look at your maps.

12 I am an architect, I design houses. I
13 can't design houses with words. It has to be
14 done visually. You have to see, show us the
15 maps.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
17 Thank you, sir.

18 MR. DAVIS: Folks, let's be honest. You
19 have had this information for four months from
20 the census. Every one of you has a map. You
21 go home with a map of Florida to see what your
22 district is going to look like.

23 We don't get to see what you are thinking,
24 and we would appreciate if you respect the
25 Sunshine Law and show us the maps.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank your, sir.
2 Appreciate it.

3 MR. DAVIS: Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Next we have
5 Rebecca Dumes, Rebecca Dumes, Dan Fanelli, is
6 Mr. Fanelli here? Come on down. And
7 Mr. Fanelli, and then he is going to be,
8 whoever comes after Mr. Fanelli will be the
9 last speaker for the night. Are you Rebecca?

10 MS. DUMES: Yes. I am Rebecca.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay, go ahead.

12 MS. DUMES: Hi, my name is Becky Dumes and
13 I am a proud public school teacher in Seminole
14 County. I would like to start off with three
15 questions.

16 Do you believe that the majority rules?
17 Do you believe the State Constitution is the
18 highest law of the state? And do you believe
19 that our government is for the people and by
20 the people?

21 Last November 63 percent of the voters
22 expressed their wishes by voting in favor of
23 Fair Districts. This delay is an insult to the
24 voting citizens of Florida. That was nine
25 months ago.

1 As a teacher, if I waited nine months to
2 return a call to a parent, send home a report
3 card, have a parent/teacher conference or did
4 not turn in the paperwork to my administrator,
5 I would lose my job.

6 There always seems to be a delay when the
7 request of the people of the state does not
8 agree with the personal and political agenda of
9 our Legislature.

10 The \$30 million that is being spent on
11 these meetings could have kept my school,
12 Longwood Elementary open, that closed because
13 of budget cuts.

14 Let's meet the wishes of the citizens of
15 Florida and let's get this done fairly, now.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
17 Mr. Dan Fanelli.

18 MR. FANELLI: Chairman and
19 Representatives, it is honor to get to speak to
20 you. I feel it is important for the people to
21 have a forum like this, and I think you are
22 doing a great job.

23 I do believe that it is important for you
24 to understand, and I believe you do, you have
25 been elected by the people to do what is right,

1 to do what is fair. That you have a litany
2 test that you -- is it the right thing to do.

3 Now, we know that good government is going
4 to be close together, that there are going to
5 be in areas where the Representative can get to
6 the people and the people can get to the
7 Representative.

8 So let's have compact areas that makes
9 sense geographically, that makes sense where
10 agriculture is in certain areas and cities are
11 in other districts like that.

12 You are not going to get everybody to be
13 pleased, okay, but for those that say I have a
14 great Representative and I love that
15 Representative and I want them to serve me,
16 because I might say, they are a great
17 Representative, go out, support them.

18 I know Representatives that ran for office
19 and they have people come, I ran for office, I
20 had people coming from Volusia County to
21 support me. If you believe in that
22 Representative, support them and they will get
23 elected.

24 So help the Representatives that are good,
25 that do the right thing to be elected and if

1 you will concentrate on using the leadership
2 that you have to get this job done and get it
3 done quickly and fairly so that we can get
4 behind the next group of people that are going
5 to run for office. I thank you very much.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
7 Mr. Fanelli.

8 Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes the
9 time that we have for public testimony today.
10 Thank you for your contributions in making
11 representative democracy work in our state.

12 If you did not get a chance to speak or
13 have more to add we will accept a written
14 extension of your remarks. Post it online, you
15 can e-mail us or Snail Mail or use social media
16 to reach us. There is a great deal of
17 information available on our websites and the
18 like.

19 All of the records from today's meeting,
20 video, podcast and other transcripts will be
21 available in the coming days on our Senate and
22 House Redistricting websites.

23 Before we close I am going to recognize
24 Senator Gaetz to address a number of the
25 questions that were raised today. Senator

1 Gaetz.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
3 Mr. Chairman. I tried to make notes of the
4 factual questions that were asked. Some of the
5 questions of course were rhetorical.

6 We will try to get to them, but we will
7 certainly get to the factual questions. And I
8 wrote them in the order that they came tonight.
9 I will try to get to all of the ones that we
10 have time for.

11 The first question was, will you protect
12 and reaffirm the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and
13 that came from Benjamin Chavis who is, of
14 course, a respected leader of the Civil Rights
15 Movement in this country, and the answer is
16 yes, we have to.

17 We have all taken an oath to preserve,
18 protect and defend the Constitution of the
19 United States and of the State of Florida and
20 the laws of the United States and the State of
21 Florida.

22 Mr. Chavis pointed out in his testimony
23 the potential and I emphasize the word
24 potential, tension between current maps, he
25 said, and I quote him, build on existing maps.

1 There is a potential tension between that and
2 the request of others who were here tonight who
3 gave very eloquent and moving testimony that we
4 ought to dramatically change the maps.

5 So, yes, we would certainly have to and
6 need to uphold the Voting Rights Act of 1965,
7 but there has been, if you have listened
8 carefully and I know you have, some tension
9 between those who believe that we ought to, we
10 ought to remain or build on existing maps and
11 those who believe that the maps ought to be
12 remarkably different, and I would just ask you
13 to bear in mind that it is probably not quite
14 as easy as the bumper stickers might suggest in
15 order to implement all of these laws and court
16 cases in a fair and legal fashion.

17 Secondly, a question was asked, could we
18 speed up the timeline. And I think the quote
19 from this individual was, you won't be done
20 until late spring.

21 Well, the fact is that we wouldn't be done
22 until late spring only if all of the parties,
23 the Legislature, the Attorney General and the
24 Courts and the Federal government take all of
25 the time that they can take legally instead of

1 taking the time that they need to take.

2 If you were hear earlier today you heard
3 that Speaker Designate Weatherford who Chairs
4 the House Redistricting Committee and I both
5 indicated that from the very beginning of this
6 process we have urged a speeded up approach.

7 That is why the Legislature is not meeting
8 at its usual time in March, we are meeting in
9 January, the first time we can legally vote.
10 Not according to us, but according to the State
11 Constitution. And we are having committee
12 meetings so that we can sort out maps that
13 might be suggested by interest groups, by
14 individuals, by Legislators as early as
15 September, instead of December, so that we can
16 move as quickly as possible.

17 So it is our intent to move more quickly
18 than perhaps some people may have suggested.
19 And we would urge you to let the Attorney
20 General, the Federal Justice Department and the
21 Supreme Court know that you want deliberative
22 process, but you also want a process that moves
23 as quickly as necessary, and if you go to the
24 website, somebody asked the question, how do we
25 -- how do we know what the timelines are. How

1 do we know what the milestones are as to where
2 and by whom maps have to be approved.

3 That is on the website and the website
4 that the Senate has, the House has a very good
5 one, too, the Senate website is
6 flsenate.gov/redistricting, you will see who
7 has to approve what, and how much time they can
8 take. They certainly don't need to take all of
9 that time.

10 And then there was someone who said you
11 have yet to see legitimate maps. You know, the
12 Central Florida Redistricting Council presented
13 a map which I consider to be a legitimate map.
14 Andy Dubois presented maps today and how could
15 someone say that the only maps that would be
16 legitimate would be those hatched in
17 Tallahassee.

18 Maps that are developed by citizens, by
19 interest groups are also legitimate maps.
20 Mr. DeClue who represented himself as a
21 Democratic consultant pointed out problems with
22 existing maps and referenced how those problems
23 could be solved perhaps. Very legitimate
24 comments.

25 There are 20 maps that have already been

1 suggested and posted and I am just one Senator,
2 but I can tell you that I am already seeing
3 some very, very useful aspects to some of those
4 proposals that I hope would be included in
5 options that are finally presented to the
6 Legislature.

7 I think citizens are legitimate, you know,
8 I think they are legitimate to make
9 presentations as well as politicians.

10 And then certainly there were a number of
11 folks who said draw the maps quickly. I have
12 tried to reflect on the fact that we have moved
13 up the session as fast as we legally could and
14 there is absolutely no prohibition to
15 discussing maps sooner than January, and
16 beginning to try to narrow down those features
17 of maps which seem to make sense.

18 That is why we posted 17 maps already on
19 our website. That is why three more were
20 recommended today and will be studied by
21 Democrats, Republicans, House members and
22 Senators.

23 It is not as though there is some magic
24 map. I know there may be some people who
25 believe there is, that there is some magic map

1 that will spring fully grown from the brow of
2 Zeus.

3 The fact is that the maps that ultimately
4 get to the floor of the House and the Senate
5 may be drawn in a lot of ways from the maps
6 that have been presented now and it will be
7 presented in the other hearings we will have.

8 Mr. Chairman, there was then an individual
9 who said how frustrated he was. He said, you
10 know, we are not looking at issues or people,
11 we are only looking at Republicans and
12 Democrats.

13 There is a fact here that needs to be just
14 introduced into the blood stream, and that is
15 that earlier today we had former State
16 Representative Quinones, now County
17 Commissioner Quinones who was here.

18 His district is a Democratic district
19 numerically, but he is a Republican but he got
20 elected. So Democrats vote for Republicans in
21 Democratic districts, just like there are 40
22 Senate Districts, 28 of them are held by
23 Republicans, but eight of those 28 districts
24 were carried by President Obama.

25 So in eight Republican Senate districts,

1 Republicans voted for President Obama. It is
2 the person and not the party that is mattering
3 more and more in Florida, and the fastest
4 growing group of voters are neither Democrats
5 nor Republicans, but Independents and Non Party
6 Affiliated individuals and we are never going
7 to be able to get party parity and guarantee
8 that we will have, you know, the same number of
9 districts that are Democrat or Republican as we
10 have Democrats and Republicans, because we have
11 a secret ballot and Republicans vote for
12 Barrack Obama.

13 They did in the last he section and
14 Democrats voted for Representative Quinones and
15 other Republicans.

16 Amendments 5 and 6 ought to be
17 implemented, a number of people have said. As
18 is obvious by the four hours of great testimony
19 that we heard today, Amendments 5 and 6 are not
20 a candy jar where you can reach in and everyone
21 can get exactly what they want.

22 There are folks who say that Amendments 5
23 and 6 ought to guarantee a Puerto Rican seat or
24 ought to guarantee an African-American
25 Congressional Seat, and then you heard eloquent

1 testimony from a husband and wife team who
2 said, nonsense, you know, it ought to be, we
3 ought to be viewed as Americans and we ought
4 not to be divided up for redistricting purposes
5 along racial lines.

6 So the only thing I would say is,
7 Amendments 5 and 6 are not simple to, they are
8 not simple bumper stickers. They are moral
9 imperatives that have to be worked through
10 because not everybody will be happy. Fairness
11 will often be in the eyes of the beholder.

12 And then, Mr. Chairman, a question was
13 asked, will community based and faith based
14 leaders be included in ongoing communications
15 about redistricting and the answer is,
16 absolutely.

17 But as you saw tonight and today, there
18 are frankly some differences of opinion among
19 community leaders and faith based leaders about
20 how we ought to go forward.

21 So we as Legislators would encourage you
22 to have more dialogue among the communities so
23 that it will be easier to get to we the people
24 instead of just we, one group against another.

25 But the answer to the question factually

1 is, yes, we have added every single person who
 2 has come here today to our communications
 3 network and we will be communicating directly
 4 with the leaders of the faith based communities
 5 and the ethnic communities and every other
 6 group that was represented today to let them
 7 know how the process is proceeding, share with
 8 them every single map that is being suggested.

9 And then there was a comment made by
 10 someone who said that we have the opportunity
 11 to define our own job security. Well, I wish
 12 that were the case. First of all, let me say
 13 that most of us, I think all.

14 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
 15 concluded.)

16 C E R T I F I C A T E

17 STATE OF FLORIDA)

18 COUNTY OF LEON)

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

23 That the foregoing pages 2 through 216
 24 represent a true, correct, and complete transcript of
 25 the tape-recording;

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

5 Dated this 11th day of October, 2011.

6

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8

9

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

10

Notary Public

11

State of Florida at Large

12

Commission Expires:

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November 13, 2014

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