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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2011

Transcribed by:
CLARA C. ROTRUCK
Court Reporter

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

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. We are
3 going to ask everybody to find their seats so
4 we can get started. If we can get everybody to
5 find a seat, we are going to go ahead and get
6 started.

7 If we could, before we get started, Ben, I
8 would like you to call the roll.

9 THE CLERK: Representatives Adkins?

10 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Here.

11 THE CLERK: Bernard?

12 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Here.

13 THE CLERK: Chestnut?

14 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Here.

15 THE CLERK: Dorworth?

16 REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH: Here.

17 THE CLERK: Eisnaugle?

18 REPRESENTATIVE EISNAUGLE: Here.

19 THE CLERK: Fresen?

20 REPRESENTATIVE FRESEN: Here.

21 THE CLERK: Frishe?

22 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Here.

23 THE CLERK: Holder?

24 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Here.

25 THE CLERK: Hukill?

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Here.

2 THE CLERK: Jenne?

3 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: Here.

4 THE CLERK: Jones?

5 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Here.

6 THE CLERK: Kiar?

7 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Here.

8 THE CLERK: Legg?

9 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Here.

10 THE CLERK: Nehr?

11 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Here.

12 THE CLERK: Precourt?

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Here.

14 THE CLERK: Rogers?

15 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Here.

16 THE CLERK: Rouson?

17 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Here.

18 THE CLERK: Schenck?

19 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Here.

20 THE CLERK: Workman?

21 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Here.

22 THE CLERK: Chair Weatherford?

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Here.

24 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, a quorum is

25 present.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Great. Thank
2 you, Ben.

3 Members, I apologize for my voice. My
4 three-and-a-half-year-old passed on a cold that
5 I have not been able to shake for 12 days, so I
6 am still fighting the good fight, but bear with
7 me.

8 I first want to thank the Committee for
9 having patience. I think a lot of us were
10 hoping to start to have the beginning of maps
11 produced at the last committee week, which was
12 a few weeks ago. The amount of work that goes
13 into producing the maps that we are going to go
14 over today and have been released is
15 tremendous, and I first want to thank our staff
16 just for putting in the long hours that it's
17 taken to do this job, they have worked
18 extremely hard, and I think we have a product
19 here that I will talk to you about. So,
20 Alex -- led by Alex Kelly, thank you for your
21 work, and we appreciate you guys getting us
22 prepared for today.

23 I also think that when you talk about the
24 importance of these maps, that taking our time
25 was important. This process -- this journey

1 has started all the way up until the beginning
2 of this year when this Committee was formed,
3 and public testimony across the state, and we
4 are now in the process where we are making
5 maps, and soon we are going to be in the
6 process where votes will be taken. And so we
7 have a long way to go, but I think we have made
8 a lot of progress.

9 Likewise, I think that what we have today,
10 I believe that we have maps that are different
11 variations of maps, but maps that are legal and
12 maps that are very compliant to what we have
13 been asked to do at the federal and state
14 level. Likewise, we are very open to making
15 these maps better between now and the time that
16 we pass them during session. So let me say at
17 the outset that the maps that you see here
18 today, as they are workshopped this week on
19 Thursday and studied over the next few weeks, I
20 am very open to making changes, I am very open
21 to making improvements and I am very open to
22 making these maps better. Regardless of
23 whether it is congressional, State House or
24 Senate maps, every member of the House is
25 welcome to propose an amendment if they wish,

1 and every member of the public is welcome to
2 communicate with us about how they think we can
3 improve these maps.

4 Now, the test to passing an amendment is
5 going to be extremely clear. Any amendment
6 that any member of this body would offer, or a
7 member of this Committee would offer, has to
8 make the maps more compliant with state and
9 federal redistricting standards. So what I
10 want to make sure everybody understands is we
11 are welcome to amendments, we hope that there
12 will be improvements to this map, but they have
13 to be shown to be improvements to the legal
14 compliance that we've set forth and said that
15 we would follow and we have followed.

16 So with that said, at approximately noon
17 today, we published seven options for the
18 congressional map and five options for the
19 House map. They are available on the Web.
20 Most of you have probably seen them. You can
21 go to floridaredistricting.org or
22 myfloridahouse.gov.

23 Those options are also in your packets
24 that you have before you for you to view. Your
25 packet is essentially a guide to each one of

1 these options. We have already published this
2 packet on the floridaredistricting.org website
3 for the millions and millions of viewers around
4 the world who are interested in this. That was
5 a joke, hear a lot of laugh. In the guide you
6 will also find, for each redistricting map,
7 there is an overview page that details some of
8 the broader metrics for these plans, how many
9 counties, how many cities were kept whole, et
10 cetera. For each map, you will also find a
11 district-by-district summary of the population
12 and the demographic data. For each map, you
13 will also find a regional map. In your
14 meetings later this week, the subcommittees
15 will workshop maps and go into a much greater
16 detail than what we will do today.

17 What I wanted to do today is to cover some
18 basic points to see if any of our subcommittee
19 Chairs have any comments, and then open it up
20 to any questions or answers that a few of the
21 members from the Committee may have. However,
22 I would like to make a few points about these
23 maps.

24 The first is I think that our subcommittee
25 Chairs have given good direction to our staff

1 in making sure that these maps correspond to
2 the law first and foremost, to the public input
3 and also to the discussions that have occurred
4 so far in our subcommittees.

5 Second, I believe that these options
6 demonstrate a commitment to the basic notion of
7 not doing this process, the redistricting
8 process, the way that it has been done in the
9 past.

10 Third, I think that as you look at these
11 maps over the next few days, you will dive into
12 the details in your subcommittee, and I think
13 that you will find that a lot of the effort has
14 gone into making sure that these maps meet the
15 standards and the law in a way that can be
16 translated to real people and in plain
17 language. For example, all summer long, we
18 heard from people who wanted their legislators
19 to serve in smaller, more county-based, more
20 city-based districts, and in order that they
21 can focus on a few needs rather than struggling
22 to serve many counties and many cities. I
23 think several of these maps accomplish that
24 goal.

25 Fourth, everyone here and everyone back

1 home has at least one month between now and the
2 earliest that the subcommittee possibly could
3 vote on these maps. I expect the subcommittees
4 to target a vote around the first week of
5 session. So you have an entire month to share
6 with these maps with your constituents, to meet
7 with me, the subcommittee Chairs to work with
8 their staff or to just use the My District
9 Builder to ponder ways to improve maps. I will
10 make myself available to anyone. I will make
11 special trips to Tallahassee or anywhere else
12 to meet with anyone on this Committee or anyone
13 in the Chamber that wishes to meet and talk
14 about the maps. I want to make that clear.

15 With that said, I am going to take a
16 couple of moments to visually walk everyone
17 through how you can access these maps from the
18 Web, both today and in the future. So Katie
19 Crofoot who is with us and is helping us in the
20 office and doing a wonderful job, she is in
21 front of the computer, Katie, if you could,
22 first things first, you will see at the top of
23 the page buttons that link you to the social
24 media sites, I think everybody sees that, the
25 Facebook icons and Twitter and YouTube and

1 such. And then, Katie, if you would scroll
2 down to the bottom of the page, you will see
3 that our mailing address, phone, fax and e-mail
4 address is all there at the bottom. So all of
5 the same ways people have been communicating
6 with us thus far can still communicate with us
7 this way.

8 Scrolling back up to the My District
9 Builder, Katie, which is there on the right, My
10 District Builder is still up and running for
11 any members who want to utilize it, and I think
12 most people on this Committee are familiar with
13 that process. If you look down into the
14 "Public Input" button, that is where you can
15 see all the written and map submissions by the
16 public, and you can also blog about the options
17 that we release here today.

18 And then last, but probably most pertinent
19 to what we are doing today, is the
20 "Redistricting Bills" button. Katie, why don't
21 you click on that button for us real quick.
22 Okay. If you have not seen this page before,
23 it is a link to the myfloridahouse.gov website
24 where all the options will be listed. And
25 these options -- as these options become PCBs,

1 then formal bills and possibly amendments, the
2 data and supporting information for all of
3 those will be listed here and will be updated
4 very regularly. Of course, if you feel like
5 you are technically challenged, like I do, you
6 are always welcome to reach out to our staff,
7 and many of you, I know, have already been
8 working on that.

9 With that said -- thank you, Katie -- I am
10 going to offer the subcommittee Chairs an
11 opportunity to give brief comment, and if you
12 have anything to share, please do so.

13 Representative Dorworth, do you have
14 anything to share with the subcommittee?

15 REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH: No.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: No? Okay.

17 Representative Holder, as Chair of
18 congressional committee, do you have anything
19 to share?

20 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: I do. Thank you,
21 Mr. Chair.

22 I just wanted at a high level to point out
23 a couple of things about congressional maps.
24 You are going to see a few consistencies in all
25 the maps, and then you are going to see some

1 differences.

2 What is consistent generally is South
3 Florida and the Panhandle. From working with
4 our staff and the presentations that we have
5 had in committee, south Florida is probably the
6 most difficult part of the map to draw in terms
7 of the legal issues, and the Panhandle is
8 probably the easiest. So we directed our staff
9 to focus the options on central Florida, Tampa
10 Bay, north and northeast Florida. In doing so,
11 we found that there really are several
12 legitimate ways to draw the central and
13 northeastern parts of the state, and so the
14 options essentially look at those regions from
15 the point of view of perhaps different counties
16 and different issues that were raised by the
17 public.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Great. Thank
19 you very much, Representative Holder.

20 Representative Dorworth, did you have
21 something you wanted to add?

22 REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH: Yes, sir. Thank
23 you.

24 I wanted to kind of take a plain language
25 approach to complying with the law here. As we

1 heard throughout all the testimony that we have
2 seen from the many meetings around the state,
3 there was a huge emphasis on keeping counties
4 whole. The current map keeps 21 counties
5 whole, and a couple of these proposals may keep
6 as many as 37 counties whole. Considering that
7 it is physically not possible to keep more than
8 38 counties whole in the State House map,
9 that's pretty good.

10 Regarding the House maps, you will see
11 that there has been a real focus across the
12 board to do so. So I think that is a positive
13 step for us. Even in those counties that are
14 larger than a single district, these maps
15 stress locating districts entirely within the
16 boundaries of a single county as often as
17 possible. I think that is consistent with what
18 we heard from people around the state, and, of
19 course, it is consistent with using
20 geographical boundary lines as the law
21 requires.

22 That's it, Mr. Chair.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, Chairman Dorworth.

25 I do want to note that when I announced

1 last week to all of you in an e-mail in regard
2 to the Senate maps, I talked about the fact
3 that the Senate Committee on Reapportionment
4 has opted not to release a proposal on the
5 State House map; rather, the Committee has
6 opted to focus on the options that we have
7 already released today for the House map.
8 After consulting with Chairs Hukill and Nehr
9 and Vice-Chairman Workman, we opted to do the
10 same. We are beginning our work-shopping
11 process with the State Senate map produced by
12 the State Senate as of a few weeks ago. In
13 addition, on the subcommittee, we will workshop
14 a State Senate map submitted by the NAACP in
15 our Thursday meeting. I know there's probably
16 some concern and questions about that issue,
17 and I would be more than willing to answer any
18 questions that you may have. I just want to
19 tell everyone that I -- what I have told you,
20 which is if you have any questions, you can ask
21 today or reach out to me at any point.

22 Regardless, the expectations are still the
23 same, to produce a legally compliant and
24 appropriate State Senate map that is reflective
25 of public input. The difference is simply that

1 we are agreeing to start by work-shopping to
2 produce a product by the Senate. Members and
3 committees are still free to use the full usage
4 and the range of the legislative process in
5 work-shopping and ultimately considering these
6 maps. And so I just wanted to stress that
7 there's nothing in my discussions with my
8 counterpart, Senator Gaetz, is meant in any way
9 to take away from your ability as a member of
10 this Chamber and a member of this Committee to
11 participate in the making of a Senate map.

12 Lastly, before we move forward to
13 questions, I think it is important to talk
14 about the timeline. As I stated before,
15 Thursday we will do a workshop and all the maps
16 that have been submitted thus far and work done
17 by staff. The hope is to have a vote in the
18 first week of session. We don't have to have a
19 vote on the first week of session, there is no
20 deadline, but I think that there has been a
21 commitment made by the Speaker and the
22 President and myself and my counterpart in the
23 Senate, after touring the state for several
24 months, that the timeline is very important,
25 and that the sooner we can get this done and

1 give certainty to this process, the better off
2 our Supervisors of Elections will be, the
3 better off our constituents will be. And so
4 our hope is by the first week of session to be
5 in a position to vote to send three maps to the
6 full Committee, which would be this Committee.

7 At that point, we will take our time to
8 evaluate the three maps that are submitted to
9 us and hopefully pick a map or pick a variation
10 of maps that are being considered.

11 So with that, everybody has a month to
12 study this. I hope you take the time to
13 understand it. This is a very serious process,
14 it is a very important process, it is a very
15 inclusive process, and we hope that everybody
16 in this room and in this Committee particularly
17 will take full usage of that.

18 So with that, I am now ready to take any
19 questions that any members may have. We will
20 start off with Representative Rouson. You are
21 recognized, sir.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Thank you very
23 much, Mr. Chair.

24 Some of us who attended the redistricting
25 hearing down in Sarasota/Manatee area, I can't

1 remember now where we were, but I politely put
2 some Band-Aids on my forehead, because District
3 55 was getting whooped on a little bit.

4 One of the things you said, Mr. Chair, is
5 adhering to a basic notion that -- of not doing
6 what was done before, and as much as possible
7 adhering to the law. I have had an outcry from
8 some people in parts of 55 that say although
9 the number has been changed to 70, nothing else
10 substantial -- substantially different was
11 done, and they are in quandary about effective
12 representation. And I am just wondering
13 what -- maybe if we can have staff answer what
14 was really done differently --

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I can answer
16 it.

17 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: -- other than
18 changing the number.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Well, first
20 of all, I would never question the quality of
21 their representation, Representative Rouson. I
22 think they've got great representation in you.
23 But that being said, I think there's going to
24 be a lot of time in the workshops of these
25 committees to talk specifically about -- I

1 don't want to get in a process today where we
2 talk about specific districts, because that is
3 what workshops are for, but I will address this
4 issue, because it speaks to a broader issue,
5 and that is of the districts that are
6 minority-majority districts, particularly
7 districts that are in Section 5 counties.

8 And let me just say this: We have stated
9 from the very beginning of this process
10 certainly we are all aware of the Voting Rights
11 Act and what comes with that in Section 2 and
12 Section 5, but we are also very aware of what
13 the Constitution says. And it is our intention
14 on this Committee, and I think in this Chamber,
15 to make sure that minority communities are
16 still able to vote for a candidate of their
17 choice and that we do not have retrogression.

18 And so what I will tell you is not just in
19 any specific district, but in a broad sense
20 across the state of Florida, that will be a
21 consistent theme. We think the Constitution is
22 very clear, we feel that the Voting Rights Act
23 is very clear, and whether it is District 55 or
24 another district in another part of the state,
25 we feel that it is incumbent upon us to make

1 sure that there is not retrogression and that
2 those communities have the ability to vote for
3 a candidate of their choice, and that is why it
4 is reflected in this map. But going forward,
5 as we get into the workshop, there will be a
6 lot of opportunity to talk about the very
7 specifics of individual districts and the
8 counties that may be represented.

9 Representative Jenne.

10 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: Thank you,
11 Chairman.

12 My question does not deal with specifics.
13 Instead, it is out of the seven congressional
14 maps that we have before us and the five House
15 maps that we have before us, how many of those
16 maps are based on citizen submissions?

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Citizen
18 submissions? Are any of them entirely a
19 submitted map from a citizen, is that what you
20 are saying?

21 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: Yeah, either that
22 or how many of the maps had some basis in a
23 citizen submission?

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yeah, that is
25 a good question.

1 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: A significant
2 portion thereof.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I can't speak
4 to -- I don't think we have any maps that were
5 a carbon copy of any map that was submitted
6 from the citizens, but I think there's --
7 there's two components to drawing every map.
8 The first component and the most important
9 component is to follow the law. All of us
10 swore to uphold the Constitution, put our hand
11 on the Bible and said that we would do so,
12 myself included. And so making sure we comply
13 with the standards of federal law and state law
14 are very important. We feel like these maps do
15 that, and the congressional maps I am speaking
16 of specifically.

17 Secondly, the second part is that we felt
18 like the public input was also extremely
19 important, it is extremely important in drawing
20 these maps. So I would say all of the maps are
21 a reflection of public input and an effort on
22 our part to make sure that we comply with all
23 the standards that we have to comply with both
24 at the federal level and state level.

25 So maps that were submitted, I am sure a

1 lot of the ideas and a lot of the concepts that
2 you see in our congressional maps were
3 submitted by the public, and if you would like
4 to sit down and meet with our staff and go
5 through those, I know they would be more than
6 willing to do so.

7 And as Representative -- as Alex Kelly
8 just told me, he said that a lot of those
9 questions will be addressed Thursday, too, in
10 the workshop. They will actually show a lot of
11 the public submissions and how they interact
12 with the congressional maps.

13 Any other questions, members?

14 All right. Well, I will tell everybody
15 one thing: This has been a -- a lot of work
16 has gone into this, and I appreciate the
17 patience of everyone on here, but this is
18 something we do once in a decade. It needs to
19 be done right, it needs to be done legally and
20 it needs to be done transparently. And I am
21 here to tell you that we have done that so far,
22 and I believe the House has honored its word in
23 the way that we said we would conduct ourselves
24 through this process. We will continue to do
25 so, and we look forward to each one of you

1 having a part of it. So thank you very much.

2 With that, Representative Rick Workman

3 moves we rise.

4 (Whereupon, the proceedings were

5 concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

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

That the foregoing pages 2 through 22 represent a true, correct, and complete transcript of the tape-recording;

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

Dated this 16th day of February, 2012.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014